

SM-71  
DEEP FALLS  
Chaptico  
Private

circa 1745

Twice restored since its construction date, this two-story frame house with a low-pitched gable roof possesses many interesting architectural features, including the almost seamless, flush-board siding of the two side elevations and the pair of brick chimneys with triple one-story pents at each end. Most of the delicate interior finishings are of the Federal period. At one end stands a kitchen dependency now connected to the main house by a one-story frame hyphen. On the grounds stand several outbuildings, including a smoke-house, dairy, and log quarter. The hill on which the house is situated is terraced in a series of falls, a typical feature of Southern Maryland landscape architecture.

Deep Falls was patented to Thomas Thomas under the name Wales in 1680. The property has remained in the same family to the present day. Among the many notable Thomas family members to be associated with Deep Falls was James Thomas, Governor of Maryland, 1833-1836.

A pre-Revolutionary cemetery of the Thomas family survives here.

Also see archeological listing.

This property has been included on the National Register of Historic Places, United States Department of the Interior.

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Maryland</b>
COUNTY: <b>St. Mary's</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE:

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Deep Falls**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**WALES**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**North side of Maryland Route 234, approximately 1 mile southeast of Chaptico.**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Chaptico**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
**First**

STATE: **Maryland**      CODF: **24**      COUNTY: **St. Mary's**      COLI: **037**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Bath	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Richard Thomas, et al.**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**109 Overhill Road**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Baltimore**

STATE:  
**Maryland**

CODF:  
**24**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
**St. Mary's County Courthouse**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**One Court House Square**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Leonardtwn**

STATE:  
**Maryland**

CODF:  
**24**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODF:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Maryland St. Mary's  
STATE: Maryland COUNTY: St. Mary's  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The property known as Deep Falls is situated on the north side of Maryland Route 234, one mile south of Chaptico and nine miles west of Leonardtown, in St. Mary's County, Maryland. The principal dwelling house on the property, easily visible from the road, is fronted by an attractive tree-lined drive with brick entrance posts.

Because of its unusual plan and the excellence of some of its interior and exterior detail, this two-story seven-bay frame house is believed to be one of the most interesting examples of Southern Maryland architecture, displaying an intriguing blend of eighteenth and nineteenth century styles.

Deep Falls began as a one-story four-room frame house that is said to have been built in 1745 but, if so, was apparently extensively remodeled at some time during the last two decades of the eighteenth century then again during the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Of the original house only the basics are known, largely because the later alterations appear to have obliterated any easily available evidence as to its earliest appearance. It is known that it measured about forty by thirty feet and that there was at least one pair of external chimneys with triple pents at the east end. A second pair of chimneys, also possibly with triple pents, may have stood at the west end of this first stage but were conceivably removed when the house was extended in that area. This interesting combination of chimneys and pent closets, of which near duplicates were built at the west end when the extension of the house was made, are perhaps unique in their overall design. Although chimney pents are a common feature of eighteenth century Southern Maryland architecture, and are also found in areas of Virginia and North Carolina, there are no other extant examples of this particular form in the Southern Maryland region. Of further interest is the fact that apparently the area enclosed within the pents was with one exception, never utilized as closet space but rather provided recessed areas into which windows were set. The treatment of the original facade has not yet been established but the present arrangement, taking into account several obvious changes, indicates that it had a five-bay principal (south) facade with a centrally located entrance door. Although that door has now been altered the original that formerly occupied that location is believed to be the door now occupying the third bay from the west end; this door now opens into a later (west) end room. Like several windows

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<sup>1</sup>Land records of the mid-eighteenth century specifically refer to a house standing on this property at that time, as well as the landscaped terrace or falls. It was about this time that the name of the property was changed from "Whales" to "Deep Falls."

see continuation sheet #1

SM-71

Form 10-300a  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #1

STATE	
Maryland	
COUNTY	
St. Mary's	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Deep Falls

7. DESCRIPTION, continued

that are believed to be contemporary to the late eighteenth century stage of the house, this door has a three-part architrave with a heavy quarter-round outer molding, as well as a finely detailed six panel door and a four-light transom. The original house is known to have been of a one-story height but no other evidence about its exterior appearance is known at this time.

It seems apparent that although the surviving interior details of the earliest part of the house are consistently Federal in style and of a uniform type--all of it undoubtedly installed at the same time--that the initial first floor room configuration remains unaltered (see plan). The entrance door of the south facade (original house) opens into a large southwest room. This room has fairly simple woodwork, including a shallow dentiled ceiling cornice, all of the Federal period. Triple doors on the east wall of the room open into the present dining room which has an attractive Federal mantle, a closet to one side of the fireplace, and a three-part ceiling cornice. A door on the north wall of this room provides access to a slightly smaller rear room, also with a good, Federal-style mantle, and two windows set within arched niches formed by the pent closets flanking the fireplace. A large arched doorway on the north wall of the southwest room opens into a rear stair hall; and an early, transomed doorway on the north wall of that room opens onto the garden side of the house. The stair is of a distinctly Federal style and is a particularly outstanding interior feature of the house. Its balustrade consists of a dark maple rail and newel, the latter surmounted by a rosewood cap and ivory knob, square curly maple balusters, and delicately shaped spandrels. During the residency of Deep Falls by Governor James Thomas, a sixth generation owner of the property, extensive alterations were made to the house. These later changes display a most remarkable combination of simple Federal period woodwork and ornamental neo-classic details. It was during the residency of Governor Thomas that the house evolved into its present form. Most notably this includes: 1, the extending of the house about twenty-five feet at the west end; 2, the clerestory-type addition to the roof to provide for a full second floor; 3, the addition of deep, piazza-type porches to both the front and rear facades that cover the protruding first floor front and rear walls as well as successfully mask the variation in wall position; and, 4, the construction of the frequently photographed west end chimneys.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>The only difference in the chimneys, beyond the quality of brickwork, is that the later chimneys have stepped weatherings and flat arched windows as opposed to the flat tapered weatherings and round arched windows of the earlier chimney. The chimneys at the west end extend across the full width of that elevation while those of the east end are slightly smaller in width to allow for a door connecting the southeast first floor chamber to the kitchen hyphen.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #2

SM-71

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY St. Mary's	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Deep Falls

7. DESCRIPTION, continued

When the west end and second floor additions were made, the principal facade was altered to its present appearance. This includes the sheathing of both the upper and lower exterior wall surfaces with vertical flush boards which were then lightly stuccoed, the introduction of two windows and a door in the area of the extension, and the five second floor windows, including the larger center window of twelve over eight sash and arched molded pediment decorated with dentils and a stylized carved sunburst. It was at this same time that the original entrance door was removed, relocated, and replaced by a classically inspired door enframing composed of round columns with Ionic capitals and a heavy entablature into which is set a decoratively treated transom. This door framing is of the same style and date as a shallow three-sided bay window that replaced two former windows on the east side of the door. The bay window has round tapered columns with Ionic capitals dividing the three double-hung sashes, as well as a paneled base. Oddly enough, considering the late date of this particular window and the other decorative elements believed to have been introduced at the same time, all of the windows across this facade, even the sashes of the bay window, are stylistically of an earlier period, having nine over nine panes, three part architraves, and molded sills. The same is also basically true of the second floor windows, although the sash is of nine over six panes and the molding a simplified variation of those of the first floor.

The rear elevation (garden side) of Deep Falls is similar to the principal facade in the arrangement of its windows excepting that the center second floor window is of the same type as those flanking it. A near duplicate of the one-story bay window of the principal facade occupies a location near the northwest corner of the first floor level. This window, as well as a single entrance door of mid-to-late eighteenth century stylistic detail, and the two windows between them are sheltered by a one-story porch whose design follows closely that of the principal facade. Both of these porches have square posts with decoratively molded caps.

The interior detail in and contemporary to the two later west rooms includes a plaster ceiling cornice of a classical form and tapered columns with Ionic capitals on an arched doorway connecting the southwest room to the smaller room behind it. Other decorative elements introduced to the interior at this time are ornamental plaster ceiling medallions in all first floor rooms except the present kitchen (northeast room), and the stair, the design of which has already been discussed. The stair which rises from west to east on the south wall of the hall,

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian
- 15th Century
- 16th Century
- 17th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATES (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Humanities    | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                             |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |  |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Construction of the initial stage of Deep Falls is attributed to Major William Thomas who is believed to have built the house around 1745 on land patented to his grandfather, Thomas Thomas, in 1680 under the name "Wales." In addition to its obvious architectural interest, (i.e., the unusual treatment of the principal facade, the sophistication of some of its nineteenth century neo-classic detail, its handsome Federal staircase, and the unusual plan of its end chimneys), the property is further distinguished by the fact that it has remained in the Thomas family from 1651 to the present. During this time the Thomas family has made numerous valuable contributions to the social and political development of this state.

Major William Thomas, the alledged builder, was born in 1714. Late in his very active political life he was a member of the Committee of Safety for St. Mary's County and a delegate from St. Mary's to the Revolutionary Convention in Annapolis in 1775. His son, also named William, distinguished himself as a member of the Maryland House of Delegates and as President of the Maryland Senate for the twelve years preceeding his death in 1813. His son, James, a graduate of St. John's College, Annapolis, was elected Governor of Maryland in 1833 and served a three-year term. James Walter Thomas, a <sup>grand</sup>son of the Governor, was a successful Cumberland, Maryland, attorney and wrote "Chronicles of Colonial Maryland." ~~The Thomas family left Deep Falls early in this century and developed a shipping interest located in Baltimore. They have been most recently recognized as a major contributor toward the multi-million dollar Thomas and Hugg memorial wing of the Maryland Historical Society headquarters in Baltimore.~~

Deep Falls has long been recognized as one of the most interesting, attractive, and best preserved eighteenth century homes in Southern Maryland. The terraced garden side of the house is perhaps one of the best surviving examples of this particular form of landscape architecture in the region. The unique manner in which the house developed into its present form physically reflects the increasing prosperity of a single St. Mary's County family from the colonization of

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

see continuation sheet #3

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #3

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STATE	
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FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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(Number all entries)

Deep Falls

7. DESCRIPTION, continued

opens into a second floor hall from which five bedrooms open. All of the doors, moldings, and hardware in these rooms date from the mid-nineteenth century.

At the east end of the house is a three-bay frame hyphen that originally was closed only on the north side. The hyphen, apparently introduced during the late eighteenth century and remodeled in the early nineteenth century, connects the house to the semi-detached kitchen, the latter positioned at a right angle to the house. When Deep Falls was last restored by the Thomas family in the early 1960's this kitchen was in a dilapidated state and a great portion of it needed substantial repairs, including a complete reconstruction of its massive north end chimney.

In close proximity to the north end and east side of the kitchen is a frame, pyramid-roofed dairy, and a frame combination smokehouse and tool shed. Both of these buildings have been carefully and accurately restored.

Deep Falls sits on the crest of a knoll and the grounds around the house are terraced in a series of "falles", a typical feature of eighteenth century Southern Maryland landscape architecture. Situated on a second similarly landscaped knoll, about 150 yards east of the house, is one of the largest, most interesting, and beautifully maintained private cemeteries in Southern Maryland. Here lie the remains of several generations of the Thomas family including those of Governor James Thomas amid decorative Victorian iron fencing, large shade trees, and emmense boxwood.

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

Maryland to the present day. The house today stands as a monument to their many achievements.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY, continued

Survey and Inventory files, Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis Maryland.

White, Frank F., Jr. The Governors of Maryland, 1777-1970.  
Annapolis: Hall of Records, State of Maryland, 1970.

Wilstach, Paul. Potomac Landings. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1937.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Abell, Mirian Billingsley. "Deep Falls." Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine. April, 1970.

Forman, H. Chandler. Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland. Private: Easton, Maryland. 1934.

St. Mary's County Land Records. Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

Scarborough, Katherine. Homes of the Cavaliers. Tidewater Publishers, 1930.

(See continuation sheet No. 3)

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	38° 21' 42"	76° 45' 33"						
NE	38° 21' 33"	76° 45' 17"						
SE	38° 21' 18"	76° 45' 33"						
SW	38° 21' 25"	76° 45' 43"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **41.6 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **J. Richard Rivqire**

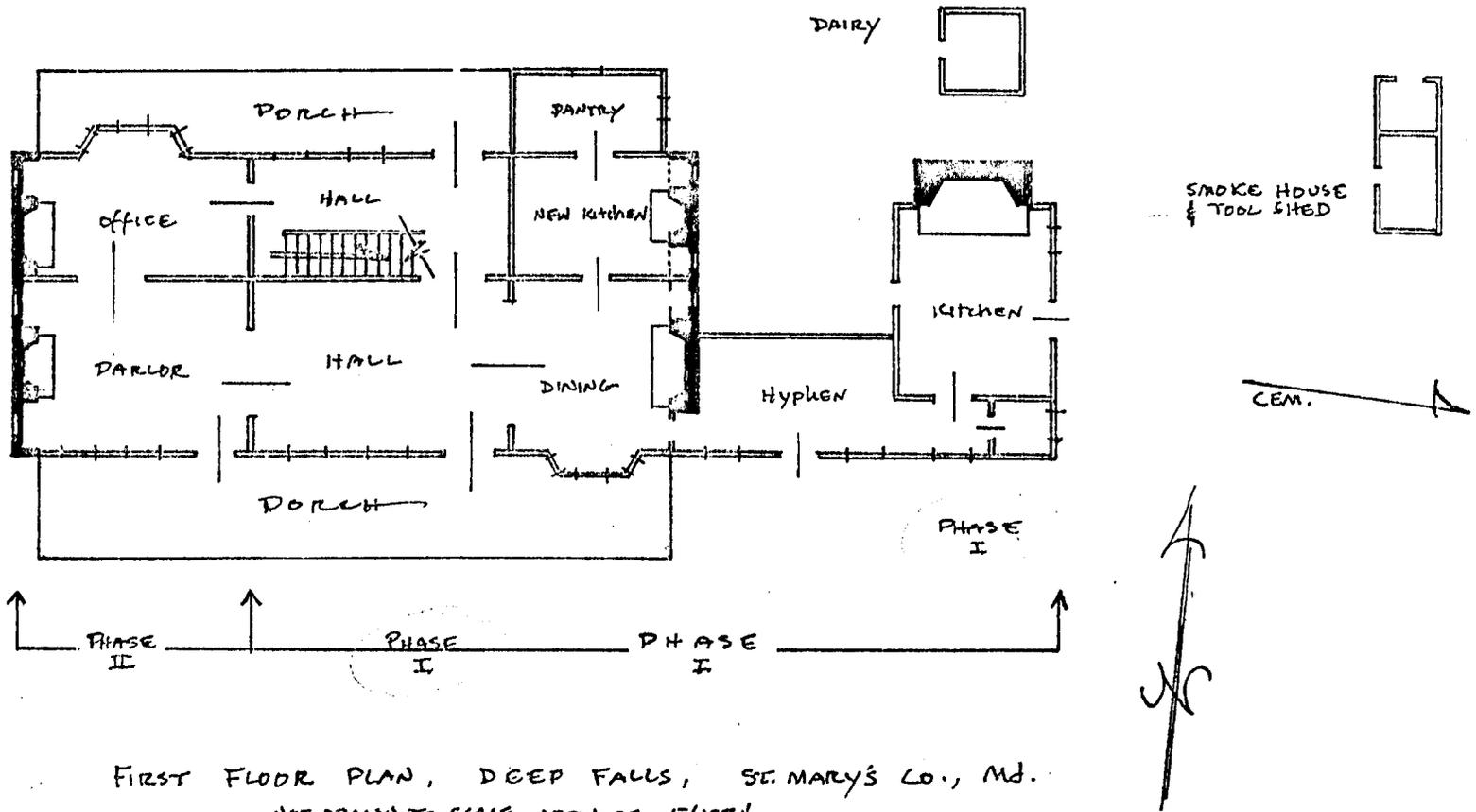
ORGANIZATION: **Maryland Historical Trust**      DATE: **May, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER: **2525 Riva Road**

CITY OR TOWN: **Annapolis**      STATE: **Maryland**      CODE: **24**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/>    State <input type="checkbox"/>    Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: <b>Arthur C. Townsend</b></p> <p>Title: <b>State Historic Preservation Officer</b></p> <p>Date: <b>February 20, 1975</b></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: _____</p>

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



FIRST FLOOR PLAN, DEEP FALLS, ST. MARY'S CO., MD.  
 NOT DRAWN TO SCALE, DREVORE, 5/1974

MECHANICSVILLE

ROCK POINT QUADRANGLE  
MARYLAND  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
SE 1/4 WICOMICO 15' QUADRANGLE

76°45'  
38'22"30"

870,000 FEET

4 200'



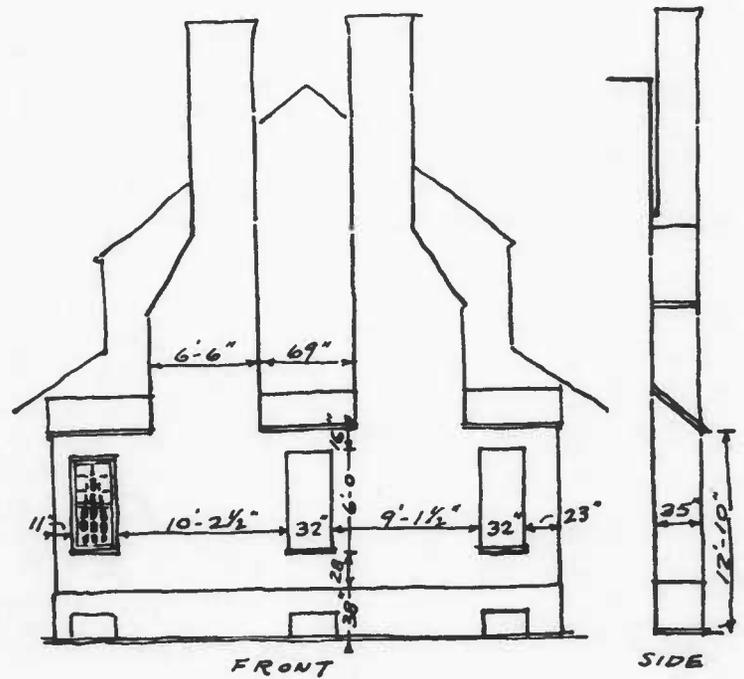
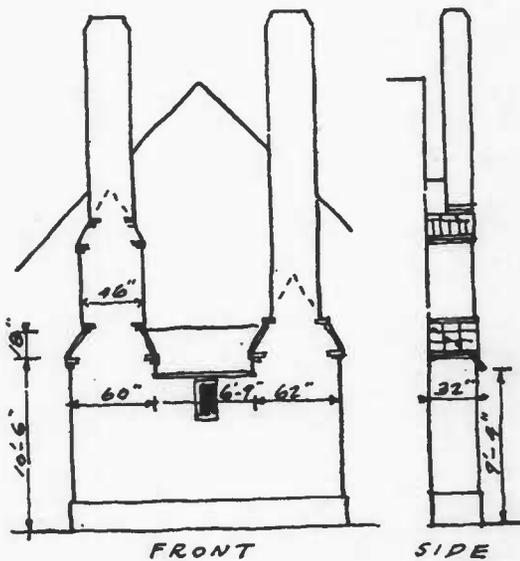
ALL POINTS  
 21' 42"  
 21' 33"  
 21' 18"  
 21' 25"  
 45' 33"  
 45' 13"  
 45' 33"  
 45' 43"

SM-71



• SAINT PETER'S KEY •  
JOHN HARRIS

• DEEP FALLS •  
BUILT 1745; A THOMAS HOME



\* See corrections Sheet, 8.



St. Mary - 71

DEEP FALLS

1/22/74

Deep Falls - W. end SM-71



DEEP FALLS, SM-71 - South facade -

Drivone 5774







DEEP FAILS -  
SE corner, main block

Purple / 5774

SM-21



SM-71

Deep Falls



SM-71

Deep Falls

St. Mary's County, Md

Kirk Ranzetta

Md SHPO

Nov 1999

Looking N + E

1 of 5



SM-71

Deep Falls

St Mary's County, Md

Kirk Ranzetta

Md SHPO

Nov. 1999

Looking N + E

2 of 5



SM-71

Deep Falls

St Mary's County, Md

Kirk Ronzetta

Md SHPO

Nov 1999

Looking S

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SM-71

Deep Falls

St. Mary's County, Md

Kirk Ranzetta

Md SHPO

Nov 1999

Meat house - N + W elevations

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SM-71

Deep Falls

St. Mary's County, Md

Kirk Ranzetta

Md SHPO

Nov. 1999

Cemetery - Looking S

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