

Capsule Summary

SM-457

U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarter

Piney Point

Private

1941-1943

The Enlisted Quarters were built for married enlisted men stationed at the U.S. Navy Torpedo Testing Range at Piney Point in the 1940s. These small one-story dwellings are significant because they represent the wide ranging effect of World War II on the growth and development of St. Mary's County. The Ralph Watson House is a relatively unaltered example of an Enlisted Quarter at the Piney Point facility.

The type of housing provided for enlisted men at the torpedo test unit depended upon their marital status. Married enlisted men were housed in one and two bedroom dwellings with their families. The first of these small houses were built in 1941 on property located between Route 249 and Stark Drive. Some of the houses were built as duplexes. Most are still standing although many have been enlarged and winterized over time. Only the Ralph Watson House remains virtually unchanged. Even the original concrete clothesline poles are located in the backyard of the Watson House.

SM-457, U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarter
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Modern Period, 1930 - .

Historic Period Theme: Military

Resource Type

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use: Residence

Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarters

2. Location

street & number Piney Point Road (Route 249) not for publication

city, town Piney Point vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county St. Mary's

3. Classification

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

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

name Jimmy Allen Watson & Ralph Watson

street & number P.O. Box 142 telephone no.: (301) 994 2458

city, town Piney Point state and zip code Maryland 20674

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber MRB 547

street & number folio 433

city, town Leonardtown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM 457

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

Contributing Resource Count: 1

The Enlisted Quarters built for married men who served at the U. S. Navy Torpedo Test Range were constructed on property located between Stark Drive and Route 249. Most of the small one and two bedroom quarters have been significantly enlarged over time. The least changed of these quarters is the Ralph Watson House, named for one of the current owners. The one-story, frame building is located on the west side of Route 249. It is the third house north of Furlong Drive. A gravel drive is located on the south side of the quarter. The dwelling faces east with the principal gable oriented on a north/south axis.

Built in 1943, the Watson House is supported by a cement foundation. It is sheathed with artificial siding molded to imitate wood grain. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A plain fascia board extends under the slight roof overhang on the east and west longitudinal elevations.

The east (main) elevation consists of a six-light-over-two-panel entrance door flanked on either side by a six-over-one sash window with wide surrounds and drip moldings. A shed roof portico extends from the roof and shelters the entrance door. South of the entrance bay, the east elevation is pierced by one six-over-one sash window with wide surrounds.

The north elevation is a flush gable end pierced by two six-over-one sash windows with wide surrounds and drip moldings. A small vent pierces the eave.

The west elevation is pierced by two six-over-one sash windows with wide surrounds and drip moldings.

The south elevation is pierced by one regular sized six-over-one sash window and a smaller six-over-one sash window. A six-light-over-two-panel side entrance door acts as the eastern most bay. A vent pierces the eave.

The interior of the house was not seen. According to the owner, the main entrance door opens into a central living room. Two bedrooms, each equipped with a closet, are located off of the living room. The kitchen and dining area are located south of the living room. The house is also equipped with one bath and a linen closet. The interior is finished with cedar flooring.

A modern metal shed is located in the back yard. Two concrete posts supporting a wash line are also located here. These posts are original to the quarter.

8. Significance

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1941 1943 Builder/Architect Unknown

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.

The Enlisted Quarters were built for married enlisted men stationed at the U.S. Navy Torpedo Testing Range at Piney Point in the 1940s. These small one-story dwellings are significant because they represent the wide ranging effect of World War II on the growth and development of St. Mary's County. While most of these buildings have been enlarged over time, the Ralph Watson House is a relatively unaltered example of an Enlisted Quarter at the Piney Point facility.

The U. S. Navy Torpedo Testing Range at Piney Point was established in 1940. The purpose of the Piney Point facility was to test whether torpedoes could hold a straight course. Torpedoes produced by the Alexandria Torpedo Factory were transported to Piney Point where they were fixed with dummy heads, fired from boats or planes, and then retrieved by men on tenders. This testing was conducted twenty-four hours a day. Occasionally, torpedoes would run ashore on Tolson's beach or hit one of the tenders. Some of the them are said to have sunk to the bottom of the Potomac where they now rest in the mud.

The type of housing provided for enlisted men at the torpedo test unit depended upon their marital status. Prior to construction of the bachelors' barracks in 1943, unmarried enlisted men lived on a two-story barge anchored in the Potomac River. Married enlisted men were housed in one and two bedroom dwellings with their families. The first of these small houses were built in 1941 on property located between Route 249 and Stark Drive. Some of the houses were built as duplexes. Most are still standing although many have been enlarged and winterized over time. Only the Ralph Watson House remains virtually unchanged. Even the original concrete clothesline poles are located in the backyard of the Watson House.

At one point, the number of men stationed at the Piney Point facility totaled one thousand. Local merchants in Piney Point and Tall Timbers benefitted from the influx of people to the area. During their leisure time, many of the men frequented the Tall Timbers Dance Pavilion, the Red Barn, Oakwood Lodge, the Country Inn, Medley's Hotel, and Swann's Hotel. Swann's Hotel, Oakwood Lodge, and the Country Inn are

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM 457

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than an acre

Quadrangle name Piney Point

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The acreage which comprises the house lot

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 Elizabeth Hughes, Historic Site Surveyor

organization St. Mary's Co. Planning & Zoning date October 1994

street & number 328 Washington Street telephone (301) 475 4662

city or town Leonardtown 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
 Shaw House
 21 State Circle
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401
 (301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
 DHCP/DHCD
 100 COMMUNITY PLACE
 CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
 514-7600

SM-457, U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarter
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance

still open for business today.

The Torpedo Facility closed in 1954. The houses occupied by the married enlisted men stationed at Piney Point were subsequently sold to the public. In 1960, the Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship purchased a substantial portion of the former Torpedo Test Facility where they established a training program for merchant marines.

To the uninformed eye, nothing remains of the U.S. Navy Torpedo Testing Range at Piney Point. Many of the old buildings have been demolished or converted for use by the Lundeberg School. Most of the people who live here now know little about this important period in Piney Point's history.

SM-457, U.S.Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarters
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: Jimmy Allen Watson and Ralph Watson
FROM: Jimmy Allen Watson
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber MRB 547, folio 433.
DATE: July 18, 1990
NOTES: Transfer of Lot 3, Block D in subdivision "Piney Point Homes."

TO: Jimmy Allen Watson
FROM: Ralph Watson
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber MRB 208, folio 35.
DATE: February 8, 1985.
NOTES: Transfer of Lot 3.

TO: Ralph Watson
FROM: Joseph Claude Hughes and Virginia Elizabeth Hughes
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber MRB 124, folio 494.
DATE: August 27, 1982.
NOTES: Transfer of Lot 3.

TO: Joseph Claude Hughes and Virginia Elizabeth Hughes
FROM: Frank W. Smith and Mary E. Smith
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber MRB 64, folio 289.
DATE: August 10, 1979.
NOTES: Transfer of Lot No. 3 in the subdivision "Piney Point Homes" being part of DBK 171/59.

TO: Frank W. Smith and Mary E. Smith
FROM: James Thomas Abell and Helen Elizabeth Abell
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber DBK 171, folio 59.
DATE: July 30, 1971.
NOTES: Transfer of Lots 2 and 3 in "Piney Point Homes" subdivision. Being a portion of DBK 168/197.

TO: James Thomas Abell and Helen Elizabeth Abell
FROM: Frank W. Smith and Mary E. Smith and the First National Bank of St. Mary's at Leonardtown.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber DBK 168, folio 197.
DATE: June 8, 1971.
NOTES: Transfer of Lots 17 and 18; Lots 2 and 3 in "Piney Point Homes."

SM-457, U.S.Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarters
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

TO: Frank W. Smith and Mary E. Smith

FROM: Piney Point Inc. and Leola C. Zimmerman

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber DBK 144, folio 197.

DATE: August 18, 1968.

NOTES: Transfer of Lots 17 and 18; Lots 2 and 3 being part of CBG 89/161.

TO: Piney Point Inc.

FROM: United States of America via the Administrator of General Services.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber CBG 89, folio 161.

DATE: July 14, 1960.

NOTES: Transfer of three parcels.

SM-457, U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarter
St. Mary's County
84 Significance

Photo showing newly constructed married enlisted quarters.

Source: National Archives, Still Pictures Branch, RG - 71 Yards and Docks;
Photographs of Construction Projects 1879 - 1943; E - CA, Box 406, "Piney Point, MD,"
Housing Units File, NND 760215.

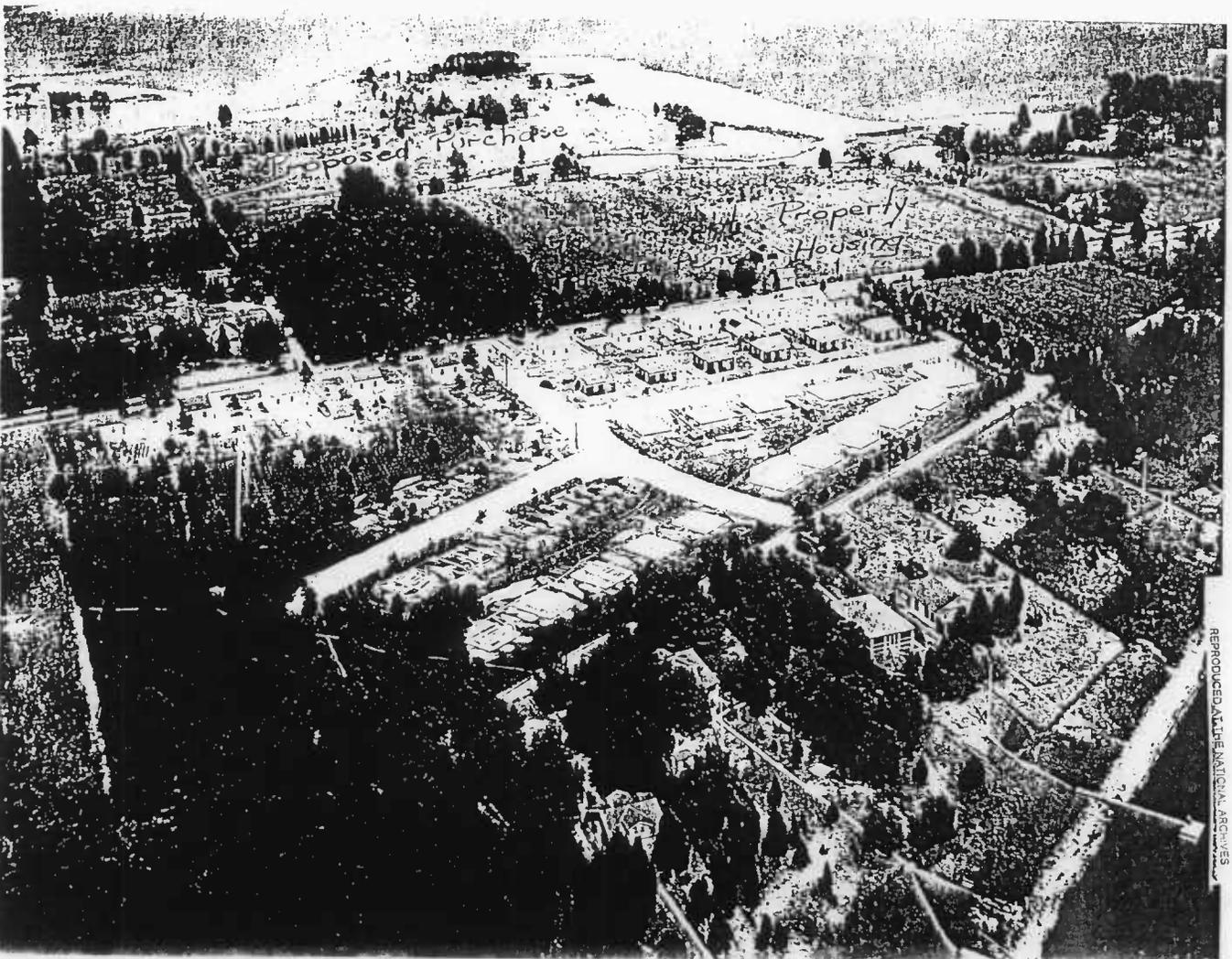


Naval Torpedo Proving Range, Piney Point, Md. Construction of 50 housing units,
Contract NOY-4489. Wm. P. Lipscomb Co., Inc. View of double house units.
Taken 1/21/48 PW. 166.

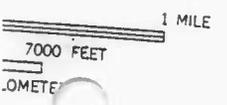
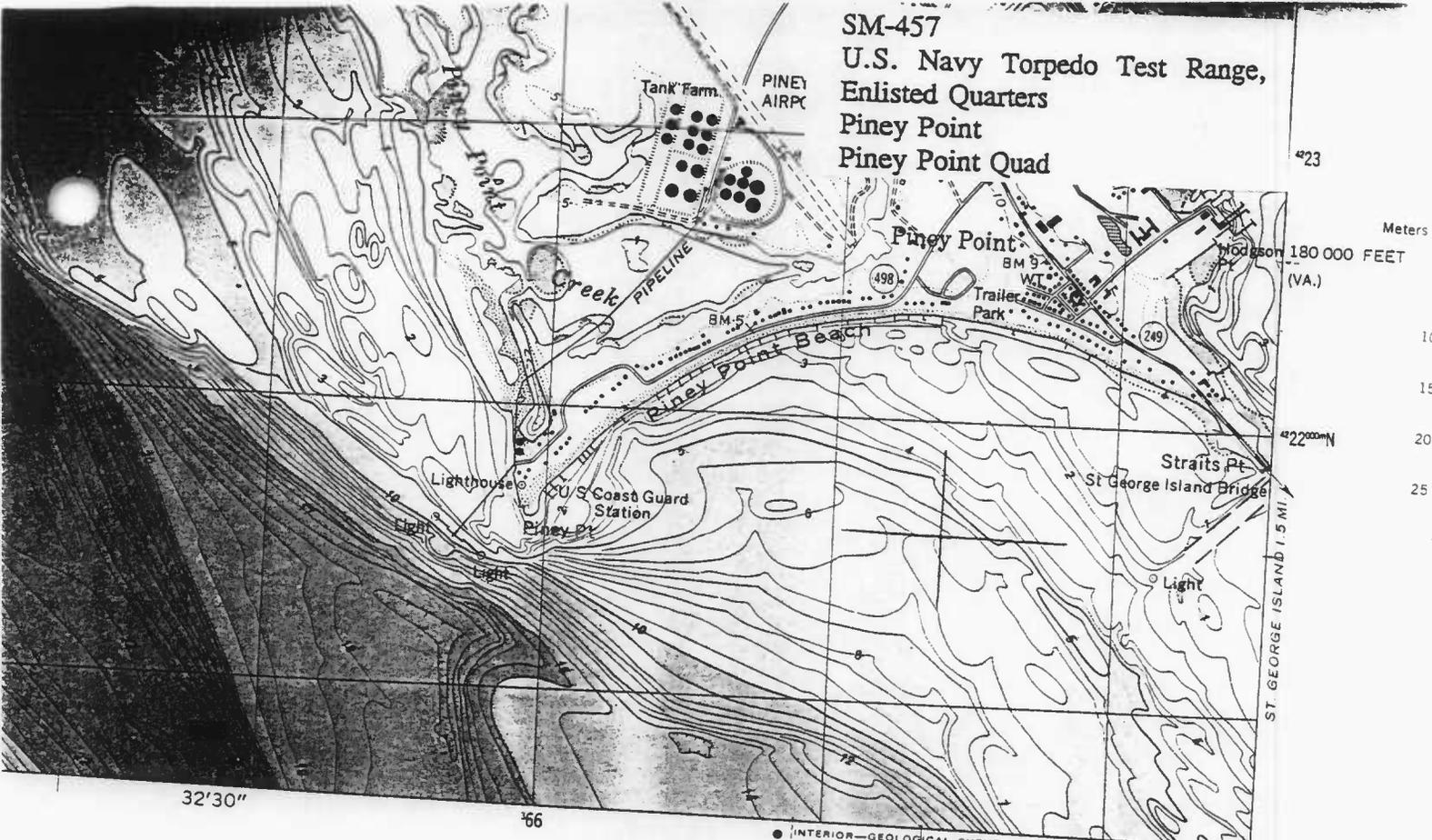
SM-457, U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range, Enlisted Quarter
St. Mary's County
8.5 Significance

Aerial photo showing construction of enlisted quarters.

Source: National Archives, Still Pictures Branch, RG - 71 Yards and Docks;
Photographs of Construction Projects 1879 - 1943; E - CA, Box 406; "Piney Point, MD,"
Aerial Views File, NND 760215.



SM-457
 U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range,
 Enlisted Quarters
 Piney Point
 Piney Point Quad



INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1988
 2 570 000 FEET (VA.)

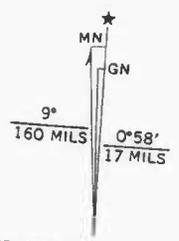
ROAD CLASSIFICATION
 Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface _____
 Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface _____
 Unimproved road, fair or dry weather _____
 ○ State Route



PINEY POINT, MD.—VA.

38076-B5-TF-024

1968
 PHOTOREVISED 1980
 BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982
 DMA 5660 II NE—SERIES V833



UTM GRID AND 1980 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

**HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY
 INFORMATION**

SURVEY NUMBER	SURVEY DATE	SURVEY SCALE	SURVEY LINE SPACING (NAUT. MILES)
H-7092	1946	1:10,000	.02-.15
H-7094	1945-46	1:20,000	.04-.18
H-8647	1959-60	1:10,000	.03-.10
H-8548	1960	1:10,000	.02-.07

H-8494	1959	1:10,000	.02-.05
H-8496	1959	1:10,000	.01-.06
H-8498	1959	1:20,000	.03-.10
H-8547	1959-60	1:10,000	.03-.10
H-8549	1960	1:10,000	.02-.07
H-8553	1960	1:20,000	.03-.20
H-8549	1960	1:10,000	.01-.05

VIRGINIA 22092
 A 22903
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 LE ON REQUEST

ESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
 52
 VIRGINIA 22903
 ON REQUEST

QUADRANGLE LOCATION



SM-457

U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Range Eastern District

St. Mary's County, MD

E. Hughes

MD 21150

1/44

NE elevation

1/3



SIA-457

V.6 Navy Torpedo Tube large well with 2000

to 1100, - nearby MS

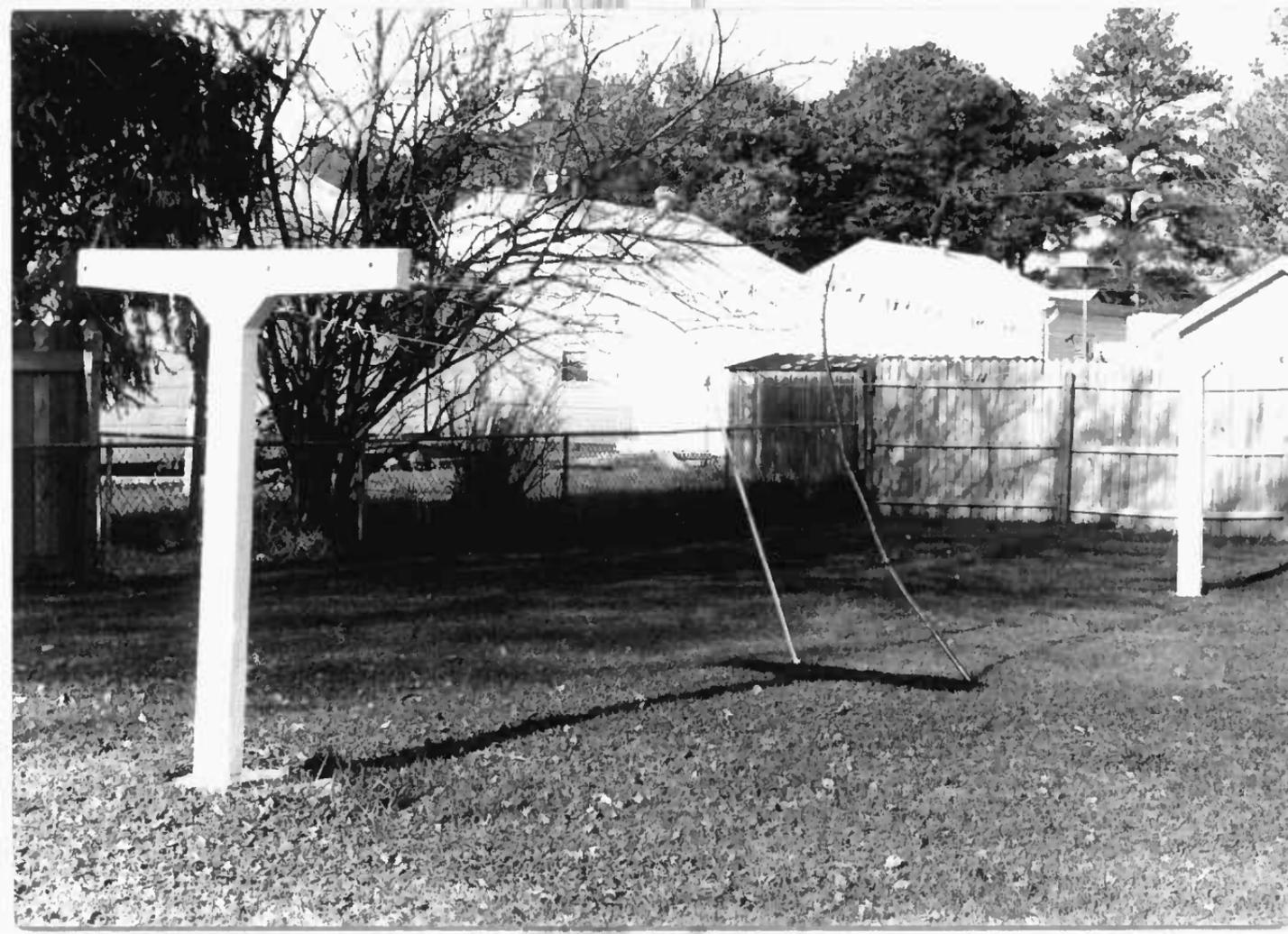
E. Hoyle

MS 810

" 104

SE elevation

2/3



SM-457

U.S. Navy Torpedo Test Facility, Lab #12, Quantico

St. Mary's County, MD

E. Hughes

MD SHPD

4/94

Current status is not in a known state.

1/2