

SM-613

Hencoop Farm Cemetery (Langley, Biscoe, & Dunbar Families)
49780 Cornfield Harbor Road

Note to file:

A report was produced in 2006 for the Department of Natural Resources:

Lawrence, Scott (2006) *"Gone But Not Forgotten": An Evaluation of the Hencoop Cemetery in St. Mary's County, Maryland.* (Grave Concerns) MHT # ST 234

Capsule Summary
SM-613
Hen Coop Farm Cemetery
Scotland
Public

1800-1898

The Hen Coop Farm cemetery, situated at the southern head of Potter's Creek near Scotland, Maryland, is a significant site that illustrates familial burial practices during the early to mid-nineteenth century in St. Mary's County. At least sixteen grave markers are found within the confines of the plot. The stones, largely oriented on an east/west axis, cover five generations of the Langley, Biscoe, and Dunbar families -- ranging in date from 1800 to 1898. All but one of the Langley family gravestones are located within a wrought-iron fence while Dunbar and Biscoe family members are all located just south of the enclosure.

At first glimpse to an uninformed visitor, the individual cemetery stones do not present any obvious connections between the three families. A cursory look at deeds, wills, and genealogical papers, however, reveals a tight knit group of families who are all inter-related. This cemetery, therefore, becomes a metaphor for how the local agricultural community of Scotland interacted and functioned. Today, it represents a crucial element in understanding the familial dynamics of mid-nineteenth century Scotland, Maryland.

For much of the nineteenth century, the Hen Coop Farm was owned by members of the Langley family. Remains of their original home, most notably a chimney engulfed by a later house, are still visible approximately 0.1 of a mile northwest of the graveyard. Prior to 1802 William Langley resided on the farm. In 1802 he conveyed the property to his son Walter Langley. Soon after Walter Langley died in 1845, the property was transferred to his son Walter B. Langley. While Walter B. Langley is buried in the cemetery, it appears Hen Coop Farm became a sharecroppers farm, for in his will "Bacon's Point" is listed as his home plantation.

SM-613, Hencoop Farm Cemetery
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Historic Period Theme:	Religion, Cultural

Resource Type

Category:	Site
Historic Environment:	Rural
Historic Function and Use:	Cemetery
Known Design Source:	None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-613

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Hencoop Farm Cemetery (pref.), Part of Scotland

and/or common Langley, Biscoe, and Dunbar Family Cemetery

2. Location

0.5 of a mile west of the int. of Cornfield Harbor Rd. & Maryland Rt. 5, 49780 Cornfield Harbor Rd.
street & number not for publication

city, town Scotland vicinity of congressional district 1

state Maryland county St. Mary's TM-73, G-21, P-61

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 checked="" 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 State of Maryland, Dept. of Natural Resources, Attn: Sally A. Lowe, Counsel

street & number 300 W. Preston Street, Room 601 telephone no.:

city, town Baltimore state and zip code Maryland 21201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber EWA 679

street & number folio 391

city, town Leonardtown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-613

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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" 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 Hen Coop Farm cemetery is located on the north side of Cornfield Harbor Road approximately 0.6 of a mile from the intersection of Maryland Route 5 and Cornfield Harbor Road.¹ This family cemetery is situated 183 feet southwest of the farm lane that extends northward from Cornfield Harbor Road to the main house of Hen Coop Farm (SM-xxx). The cemetery lies near the head of Potter's Creek and just north of the head of Point Lookout Creek. Cultivated fields, woodland, and marsh characterizes much of the 482 acre farm which surround the family plot. Much of the burial plot is overgrown with several fallen branches littering the ground. While overgrown, the cemetery was probably not visible from the main house, although a domestic archaeological site, indicated by brick fragments and oyster shells, may be located only fifteen yards from the cemetery's southern most point.

The cemetery exhibits the remains of at least sixteen visible head and footstones that range in date from 1800 to 1898. Of these, seven stones lie within a wrought-iron fence and nine lie outside. Those that lie within the fencing are all from the Langley family. These include:

James L. Langley d. 11 Apr. 1800 aged 45 years
T. Napoleon Langley b. 22 Apr. 1827 d. 28 Sept. 1883
Walter Langley d. 9 Feb. 1845 in the 69th year of his age
Rebecca Langley d. 3 Sept 1834 aged 50 years
Laura Ann Langley d. 16 June 1837 aged 18 years
William A. Langley d. 14 Oct. 1822 aged 5 years & 5 months
W. B. L. footstone and a large pedestal base and toppled obelisk bearing words "In Loving Memory"

Those stones that lie outside of the fence are largely from the Biscoe, but also Dunbar and hall family as well. They include:

Mary E. Biscoe b. 8 Dec. 1809 d. 14 Apr. 1811
Sardelia Biscoe d. 24 May 1828 in the 64th year of her age
McKay Biscoe d. 2 Mar. 1829 in the 75th year of his age
Thomas K. Biscoe b. 14 May 1806 d. 19 June 1849
Ann Biscoe relict of Thomas K. Biscoe d. 13 Oct 1868 aged 62 years
Susanna Langley d. 25 Dec. 1819 aged 65 years
Ann Eugenia Dunbar b. 15 Nov. 1841 d. 3 July 1852 aged 10 years 9 months & 29 days
Leonora Dunbar d. 22 Oct. 1855 aged 7 years 10 months & 6 days
One headstone fragment reads "scoe his life 831"

¹ While some of the information in this description comes from personal observation, a majority of the information was gleaned from Regina Combs Hammett's "Private Cemeteries in the First Election District of St. Mary's County, Maryland" in Chronicles of St. Mary's, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 1986.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-613

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 checked="" 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 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

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.

The Hen Coop Farm cemetery, situated at the southern head of Potter's Creek near Scotland, Maryland, is a significant site that illustrates familial burial practices during the early to mid-nineteenth century in St. Mary's County. At least seventeen grave markers are found within the confines of the plot. The stones, largely oriented on an east/west axis, cover five generations of the Langley, Biscoe, and Dunbar families -- ranging in date from 1800 to 1898. All but one of the Langley family gravestones are located within a wrought-iron fence while Dunbar and Biscoe family members are all located just south of the enclosure.

At first glimpse to an uninformed visitor, the stones do not present any obvious connections between the three families. A cursory look at deeds, wills, and genealogical papers, however, reveals a tight knit group of families who are all inter-related. This cemetery, therefore, becomes a metaphor for how the local agricultural community of Scotland interacted and functioned. (Please note: Highlighted names are of people whose graves are located in the cemetery.)

The oldest visible gravestone, dating from April 11, 1800, marks the remains of **James L. Langley** brother to William Langley (who was probably married to **Susanna Langley** (d. December 25, 1819 aged 65 years)) -- the owner and occupant of Hen Coop Farm prior to 1802. In 1802, William Langley conveyed the farm to his son **Walter Langley** (d. Feb 9, 1845) who was probably married to **Rebecca Langley** (d. September 3, 1834 at the age of 50).¹ Walter and Rebecca had several children including **Laura Ann** (d. 16 June 1837 aged 18 years), **William A.** (d. October 13, 1822 aged 5 years & 5 months), **Walter B. Langley** (b. April 14, 1821, d. December 5, 1898) -- the last Langley owner of Hen Coop Farm -- and possibly **T. Napoleon Langley** (b. April 22, 1827, d. September 28, 1883).² James R. Langley (b. 1824, d. February 28, 1886) was another son whose daughters Leila and Laurel inherited the farm from their uncle Walter B. Langley in 1898. When Leila and Laurel sold Hen Coop Farm in 1913 to Thomas C. B. and Agnes B. Howard, they specifically preserved access into the cemetery in order to keep up the

1 St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber A 1, Folio 110.

2 Walter B. Langley received the property from his brothers William A. Langley, James R. Langley, and Theodore N(apoléon?). Langley after the death of their father Walter in 1845. St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber WTM 2, Folio 75.

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St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

Another researcher, Mary Edna Smith, who visited this site in 1971 noted the presence of two other stones that included:

Ann L. Hall b. 15 Jan. 1795 d. 5 Aug. 1837
Walter Langley b. 14 Apr. 1821 d. 3 Oct. 1837
J. M. B. footstone

The iconography found on the gravestones is rather modest with most information being limited to name, date of birth, and date of death. The earlier stones tend to feature more elaborately carved tops than the later markers. The most distinctive marker is presumably for Walter B. Langley who died in 1898. In his memory, his heirs erected a small obelisk with the words "In Loving Memory" printed on the side. The wrought iron fence that surrounds the cemetery is in good repair with the gate located on the plot's south side.

SM-613, Hen Coop Farm Cemetery

St. Mary's County

8.1 Significance

graveyard of their uncle, grand-parents, and great-grand-parents.

When William Langley died in 1806, he left small portions of his estate to his son Walter and also to his daughters which included **Sardelia Biscoe** (d. May 24, 1828) who was married to **McKay Biscoe** (March 2, 1829).³ The Biscoes resided in the nearby Frank Smith House and plantation at the head of Long Neck Creek.⁴ Their daughter **Mary E. Biscoe** (b. Dec. 8, 1809, d. April 14, 1811) died at a relatively young age. **John McKay (Macai) Biscoe** (d. 1831) was one of the first trustees for First Friendship United Methodist Church.⁵ Two other Biscoe children are buried here. **Thomas Keaton Biscoe** (b. May 14, 1806, June 19, 1849) and his wife **Ann Hutchins Biscoe** (b. 1806 d. October 13, 1868 at the age of 62 years) were a prosperous farming family who inherited the dwelling at the head of Long Neck Creek, but did not raise any children.⁶ The other child, **Ann L. Hall** (b. January 15, 1795, d. 5 Aug. 1837) was married to three different men beginning with James L. Langley in 1821.⁷ Ann and James had a child named Ann Eliza (b. 1822) who eventually married James Abell Dunbar.⁸ Tragically, two of the Dunbar children died relatively young -- **Ann Eugenia Dunbar** (b. November 15, 1841, d. July 3, 1852) and **Leonora Dunbar** (d. October 22, 1855).

As this brief and incomplete genealogical synopsis shows, the Hen Coop Farm cemetery documents over four generations of the Langley and Biscoe family. It reveals the intimate connections of the local farming community and remains a crucial element in understanding the familial dynamics of mid-nineteenth century Scotland, Maryland. It also represents an excellent example of early to late-nineteenth century family burial practices.

³ St. Mary's County Will Records, Will of Walter Langley, Liber JJ 3, Folio 118. See also the Biscoe family file, St. Mary's County Historical Society.

⁴ See Biscoe family file, SMCHS. See also Henry Chandlee Forman, Tidewater Maryland Architecture and Gardens (New York: Bonanza Books, 1956), 111-113 and 138-139.

⁵ Notes from Pat Biondi regarding Hen Coop Farm Cemetery. See also St. Mary's County Land Records, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Liber JH 8, Folio 379-380.

⁶ Biscoe family file, SMCHS. St. Mary's County Will Records, McKay Biscoe, Liber EJM 1, Folio 70.

⁷ Biscoe family file, SMCHS. See also Regina Combs Hammett, "Private Cemeteries in the First Election District of St. Mary's County, Maryland" in Chronicles of St. Mary's, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 1986.

⁸ Dunbar family file, SMCHS.

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St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

Beginning in 1972 researchers, such as Mary Edna Smith, Regina Combs Hammett, and the St. Mary's County Historical Society began the huge task of recording and documenting many of the family cemeteries in St. Mary's County. Much of the information noted above is indebted to these avid field workers.

SM-613, Hen Coop Farm Cemetery
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber EWA 679, Folio 391

Grantee: State of Maryland - Department of Natural Resources

Grantor: John J. B. Jacobs, II, and W. Shepherdson Abell, executors for J. Bay Jacobs

Date: April 29, 1992

Notes: The property is composed of two parcels. Parcel A contains 422.742 acres and parcel B contains 59.584 acres. Parcel B is where the house and site is located. Eva H. Jacobs died on January 12, 1979 leaving the remainder of the estate with J. Bay Jacobs who died on March 3, 1988. Called "Part of Scotland" but more commonly called "Hen Coop," the entire tract was purchased for \$710,000.

Reference: Liber CBG 23, Folio 398

Grantee: J. Bay Jacobs and Eva H. Jacobs

Grantor:

Date: April 15, 1949

Notes: Nicholas S. and Eleanor Kimmel Hall were foreclosed upon and the property was sold at public auction on the steps of Leonardtown Courthouse.

Reference: Liber CBG 13, Folio 519

Grantee: Nicholas S. and Eleanor Kimmel Hall

Grantor: Margaret Gebhart

Date: September 10, 1942

Notes: The property is listed as containing 436 acres. An exception is made, however, for the burial ground and an easement for ingress and egress is allowed.

Reference: Liber CBG 12, Folio 273

Grantee: Walter A. and Laura Gebhart

Grantor: James and Mary L. Thomas executors for T. Rowalnd Thomas

Date: August 28, 1940

Notes: The deed describes the property as "partly on Pt. Lookout Creek and partly on Potter's Creek and containing 436 acres.

Reference: Liber JMM 3, Folio 397

Grantee: Walter A. and Laura Gebhart

Grantor: James Thomas and Mary L. Thomas, executors for T. Rowland Thomas

Date: December 5, 1925

Notes: The property is purchased for \$10,000. The deed refers to a plat made by surveyor Charles A. Heard on March 29, 1909. It also makes a specific provision of ingress and egress for Laurel R. and Leila Langley to visit and keep up the burial ground.

Reference: Liber JMM 2, Folio 459

Grantee: James and Mary L. Thomas

Grantor: John H. T. Briscoe, trustee

Date: November 13, 1924

Notes: As a result of Circuit Court case No. 1431 NE, the property is sold to the Thomas' after the Schechler family could not honor their mortgage.

SM-613, Hen Coop Farm Cemetery
St. Mary's County
8.4 Significance

Reference: Liber EBA 20, Folio 164
Grantee: Bessie Schechler
Grantor: T. Rowland and Mary L. Thomas
Date: August 12, 1921

Reference: Liber EBA 18, Folio 20
Grantee: T. Rowland Thomas
Grantor: Thomas C. B. and Agnes B. Howard
Date: March 8, 1919

Reference: Liber EBA 16, Folio 327
Grantee: Thomas C. B. and Agnes B. Howard
Grantor: St. Mary's Land and Seafood Co.
Date: March 17, 1917

Reference: Liber EBA 12, Folio 14
Grantee: St. Mary's Land and Seafood Co.
Grantor: Thomas C. B. and Agnes B. Howard
Date: August 7, 1913

Reference: Liber EBA 11, Folio 327
Grantee: Thomas C. B. and Agnes B. Howard
Grantor: Laurel R. and Leila Langley
Date: July 10, 1913
Notes: Thomas E. Fenwick is listed as a tenant on the property.

Reference: Will Record Liber PHD 1, Folio 57
Grantee: Laurel R. and Leila Langley
Grantor: Walter B. Langley
Date: October 18, 1898
Notes: Walter B. Langley devises much of his property to his daughters Laurel and Leila Langley which includes "Hen Coop."

Reference: Liber WTM 2, Folio 75
Grantee: Walter B. Langley
Grantor: William A. Langley, James R. Langley, Theodore N. Langley
Date: June 6, 1849
Notes: This deed notes that "Hen Coop" only contains 50 acres. Accompanying woodland, called "Scotland" contains only 20 acres.

Reference: Liber A 1, Folio 75
Grantee: Walter Langley
Grantor: William Langley
Date: February 8, 1802
Notes: William Langley conveys his property called "Hen Coop" to Walter Langley. The deed notes that William Langley presently dwells on the tract and that it is located on the E. side of Potter's Creek. Should Walter Langley die, the property would then fall to Susanna Langley, daughter of Walter, and to Britannia Langley, widow of James Langley.

SM-613. Hen Coop Farm Cemetery
 St. Mary's County
 8.5 Significance

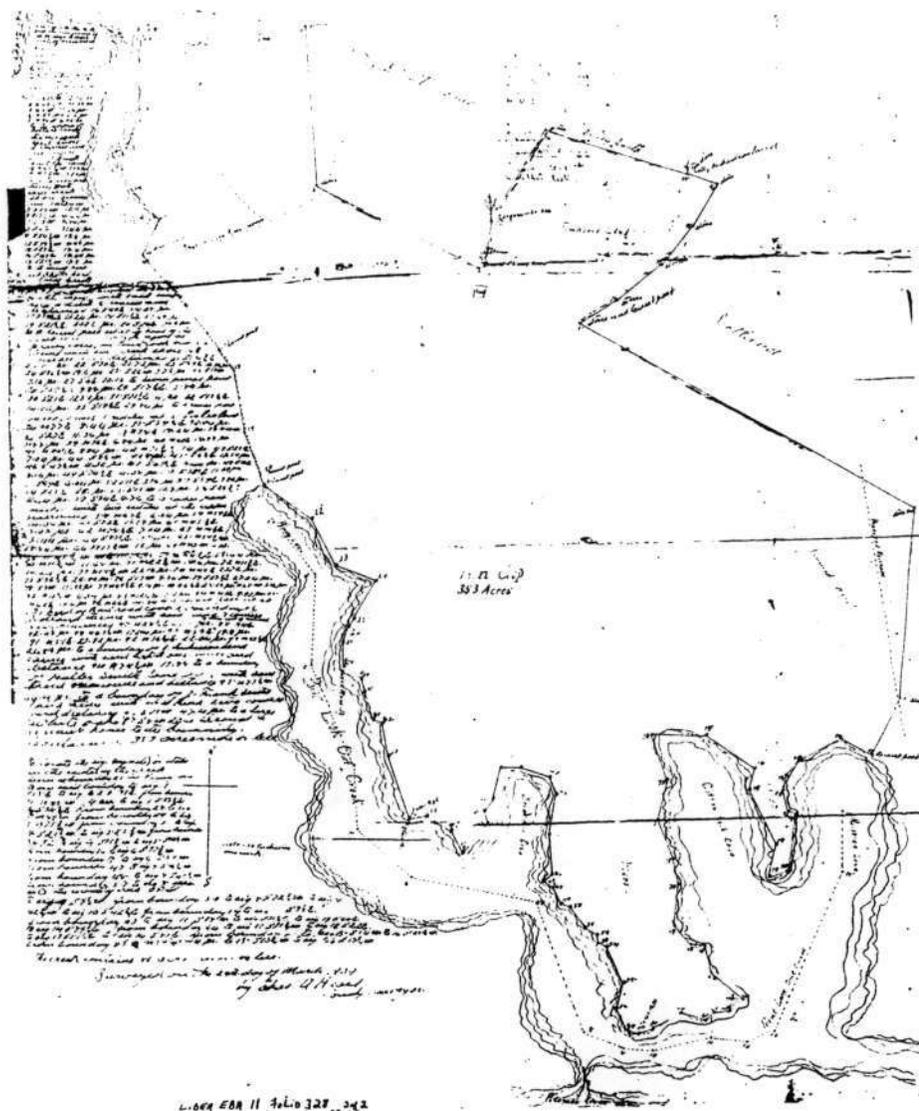
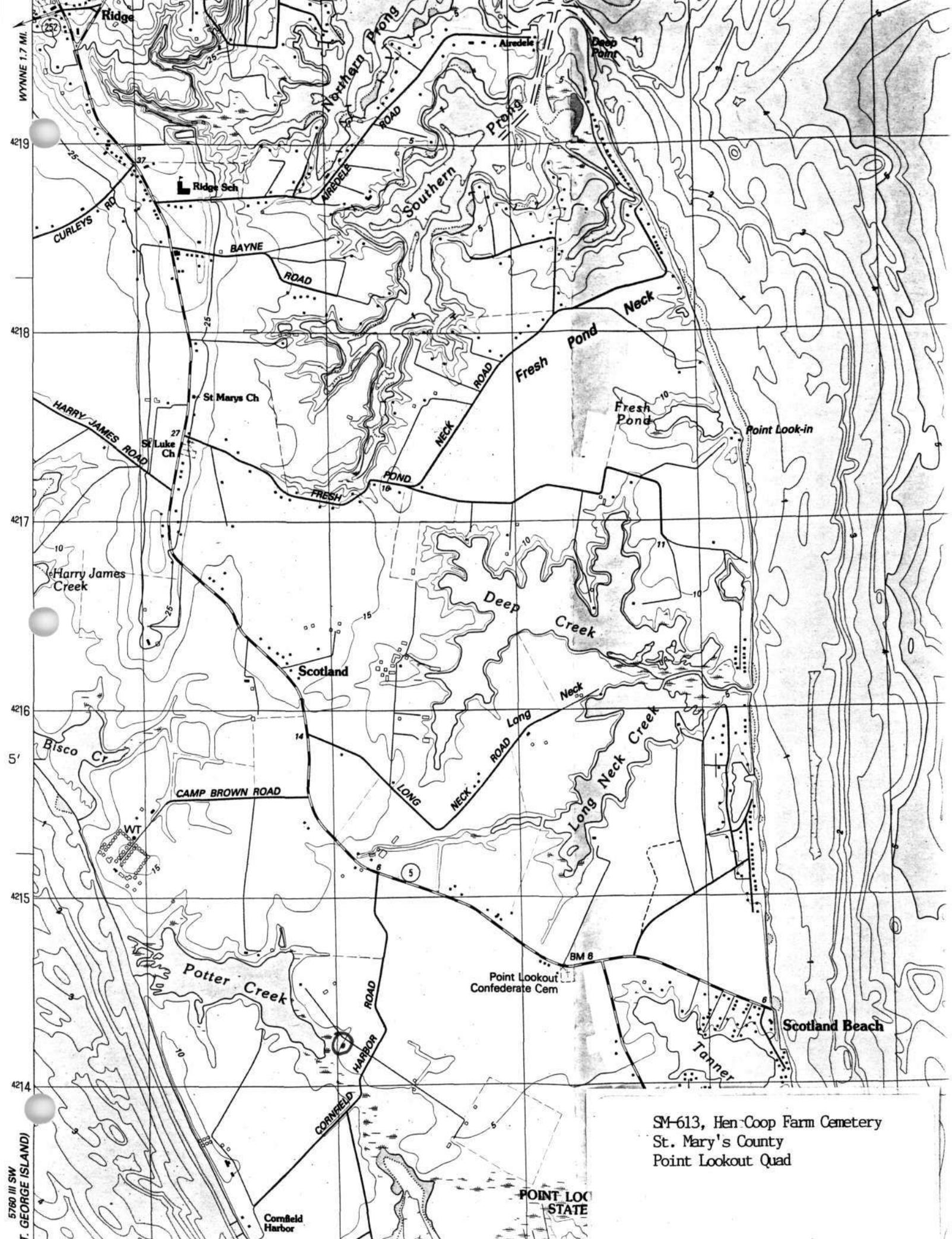


Figure 1. Plat of "Hen Coop" made by surveyor Charles A. Heard on March 29, 1909. The orange highlight represents the location of the present house. The yellow highlight notes the locations of barns and other houses that are no longer evident. The red highlight marks the shores of Pt. Lookout Creek to the south and Potter's Creek to the north. St. Mary's County Land Records, Plat Record Liber EBA 11, Folio 328.



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St. Mary's County
Point Lookout Quad

POINT LOOKOUT
STATE

WYNNE 1.7 MI.

5760 III SW
T. GEORGE ISLAND



SM-613

Hen Coop Farm Cemetery

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

April/98

Md SHPO

looking SW

1 of 1