Rev. prfs

K-91

Comegy's Bight House
Quaker Neck
1769

Comegy's Bight House is named after the bay or 'bight' of the Chester River into which the waters of Comegy's and Fore Creeks flow. It was erected on a tract called Sewell, patented in 1660 to James Sewell, and later purchased by and re-patented to Cornelius Comegys. In the process of acquiring Sewell, Comegys discovered an error in the original survey and eventually acquired 1224 acres which he renamed Utrick after the city of Utrecht in his native Holland.[1]

Cornelius Comegys became a well respected citizen of 17th Century Kent County, both politically and economically. He worked with other influential citizens of the period—men like Joseph Wickes, Michael Miller, Charles Tilden, Simon Wilmer and others. Though his inventory was not large (@332.9.4) after his death, his land holdings and gifts of land to his children totaled 3340 acres.[2] The inventory sheds light on the configuration of his house, as the items are listed by room. It is clear that Comegys' house had a typical hall-parlor plan, with kitchen and leanto room.

"Utrick" was left to Comegys' third wife, Rebecca, for her lifetime, after which it was to go to Edward, their son.[3] Edward Comegys married Mary Thraul at Utrick on October 15, 1737, as recorded in the Quaker records. The birth of their first child (Edward II) was also recorded the following year. When Edward I died in 1761, the plantation was left to his first-born son, and very little was bequeathed to the remaining seven children.

Edward II, grandson of Cornelius, was responsible for erecting the house which continues to stand today. Like Charles and Phoebe Hynson at Bongay and James and Rebecca Frisby at Violet Farm before, Edward and Mary Comegys had the mason install the date (1768) and their initials in the gable above the kitchen roof. There are other similarities to the Hynson and Frisby houses as well. Their chimneys have sloped weatherings at roof level and withes. They are each laid in Flemish bond, though Utrick or Comegys' Bight has no uniform glazed headers. Each has a central stairhall with flanking rooms, but the Violet Farm has two rooms on one side. When constructed, Comegys Bight had a back entrance to the stairhall with a second entrance at grade level for access to the basement, a feature shared with Violet Farm. In the first one hundred years there were no dormers in the low-pitched A roof.

Of the three houses, Comegys Bight possesses the best stair. It ascends with shallow risers in three flights to the second story and boasts paneled wainscoting on the wall and spandrel and balustrade with turned columnar newels and three rectangular balusters per step. The two flanking rooms were most likely finished in a similar manner, however, they have been altered since. Two cabinets in the living room were sold to Henry Francis duPont for his home on Long Island, and the dining room appears to have been reworked around 1800.

In general it is the kitchen wings of older houses that are most frequently changed. In this respect Comegys Bight is no exception. The once ground level kitchen was raised about two and a half feet to be level with the floor of the main house in about 1920-30. Its original entrance was the center of three bays on the river side, the formal entrance to Comegys

Bight.

In 1783, Edward Comegys was assessed on 1000 acres, but the assessor used the old name to the tract–Sewell. The "Brick Dwelling" was mentioned.[4] Sixty-nine years later, another Edward Comegys was listed as owner of "Utrick, alias Sewell."[5] This Edward, born in 1788, was probably the grandson of the builder. By this time, 180 acres had been separated from the original tract and a brick house was constructed to the east of the old house on the Chester River. Edward owned both, totaling 800 acres of the original plantation. In addition to the above, he owned two other farms, New York and Mount Pleasant, the two in excess of 800 acres. Before he died around 1865, Edward had acquired yet another 800 acre tract called Big Fairlee. The 1852 Tax Assessment also listed $33,000 in securities, one of the largest amounts in the District. He probably used his securities to purchase Big Fairlee.

By 1877 the same two parts of the home farm were owned by Mrs. M. E. Jones.[6] In Usilton's History of Kent County (1916), Comegys Bight is pictured before the kitchen wing was heightened. It also had a veranda across the river side of the house. H. M. Baker was the owner in 1916.[7] By the time C. Forman photographed the house for his first publication in 1934, the kitchen had been changed in both height and length. In the 1940's, however, the house was remodeled and enlarged with pedimented architraves at the doors and elegant brick steps. An extension on the east side of the house nearly doubled its size. Since then, it has seen another remodeling in the early 1980's by the present owners.

1. Warrants, WC 2, 1679-1681, Lib. 5, fol. 116, 219, 412; Lib. 2, fol. 185.

K-91

2. Inventories & Accts, 1708, Lib. 28, fol. 275.
3. Wills, Lib. 1, fol. 92.
4. 1783 Tax Assessment.
5. 1852 Tax Assessment.
6. Lake Griffing Stevenson Atlas.
7. Usilton, Fred, History of Kent County.

K-91
Comegys Bight House 1768
Chestertown
Private

Comegys Bight House is a two and one-half story brick dwelling with mullioned chimneys and the date 1768 in glazed headers in the gable. Built by the Comegys family, it typifies Kent County houses of the late 18th century, particularly, nearby Ringgold's Fortune (K-97). Behind the house is an interesting Victorian stable.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST K-91

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON
Comegys Bight House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Quaker Neck, end of Johnsontown Road

CITY, TOWN
Chestertown

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
First

STATE
Maryland

COUNTY
Kent

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY
__DISTRICT
X BUILDING(S)
__STRUCTURE
__SITE
__OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
__PUBLIC
X PRIVATE
__BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION
__IN PROCESS
__BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS
X OCCUPIED
__UNOCCUPIED
__WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE
__YES: RESTRICTED
__YES: UNRESTRICTED
X NO

PRESENT USE
__AGRICULTURE
__COMMERCIAL
__EDUCATIONAL
__ENTERTAINMENT
__GOVERNMENT
__INDUSTRIAL
__MILITARY
__MUSEUM
__PARK
X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__RELIGIOUS
__SCIENTIFIC
__TRANSPORTATION
__OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Mrs. C.B. Watson

Telephone #:(301) 778-3109

STREET & NUMBER
Comegys Bight House

CITY, TOWN
Chestertown

X VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21620

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Liber #: RAS 29
Folio #: LEB

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Kent County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Chestertown

STATE
Maryland 21620

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

K-91

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Comegys Bight House is a three bay, two and one-half story house with gable roof with an old three bay, one and one-half story kitchen wing on the northwest gable and a modern addition on the southeast. The main house and wing were both built with central entrances and are one room deep. The kitchen wing has been extended one bay with a frame addition and a one story porch across the approach front.

The main house has Flemish bond walls on the front and rear facades of both the main house and the wing. There is a beveled water table on all facades of the main house; on the front of the house, it steps up over basement window. A three-course belt course is used to define floor lovels. Mortar joints are grapevined. The chimney in the north west gable is cruciform in plan with sloping brick connecting the drip dourse with the plane of the chimney back. Also in this gable is a date, 1768, an initial, "E" and another initial which is undecipherable and partially hidden by the kitchen wing. The other chimney is straight sided; both have corbelled caps.

Window openings with 9/9 sash are evenly spaced; basement windows in all window bays have 8 small panes. On the front facade second floor, windows have rowlock arches, basement windows, segmental arches of two rows of headers; first floor window arches have been rebuilt. On the rear segmental brick arches are used above first floor windows and abo the stair landing window. All windows have molded and cavetto sills, but frames appear to date from two periods; on the rear facade, second floor windows have a delicate backband molding with ogee and fillet; other windows have the 1" bead frames commonly used in the mid-19th century. Green louvered shutters are used throughout the building.

Both front and rear doors have modern architrave trim and brick porches.

The gable roofs of the old house and wing are finished with box cornices. On the house, in addition to crown and bed molding is a deep fascia with molded lower edge; the entire assembly may be a replacement. Dormers in the main house roof are gabled with 6/6 sash and diagonally boarded sides. Old photographs of the house show two gable dormers in the wing; presently there are three dormers with overhanging eaves.

Paneling in the major room has been removed, and replaced by reproduction wainscoting. Early interior detailing remains in the stair hall and dining room. The chairrail in the dining room has a shallow reeded cove, and the baseboard has a reeded upper edge. Doors have six raised and beveled panels with quarter round moldings

The stair has scroll step bracketts on the open string course and three plain rectangular balusters per step; the handrail is oval with moldings; the newel and intermediates rounded and tapered with block-base and top.

Double doors are used at the river entrance; their three tiers of panels are raised and beveled inside but recessed with applied moldings outside. Like other doors, these are held in trim with a recessed ce section on head and sides and recessed corner blocks.

Making up part of the building complex is an interesting Victorian

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

K-91

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
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1768 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Comegys Bight House is one of the well-known houses of the county. Built by and long the home of the Comegys family, the building closely resembles Ringgold's Fortune (K-97). A comtemporary structure; both are valuable documents of the way of life of prosperous rural families of the mid-1700's on the Eastern Shore. Unfortunately much interior work of Comegys Bight House has been removed.

The Victorian stables are an interesting example of late 19th century architectural detailing.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

K-91

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Earle, Swepson, The Chesapeake Bay Country, New York, Weathervane Books, 1923, reissue.

Usilton, Fred G., History of Kent County, Maryland, 1630-1916.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Marsha L. Fritz, Consultant

ORGANIZATION
Kent County Historical Society

DATE
August, 1977

STREET & NUMBER
Church Alley

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN
Chestertown

STATE
Maryland 21620

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

PS-1108

7 Continued

stable. The building is sheathed with board and batten siding and bracketted cornices finish the roof and its two bay cupula. Sliding central doors and loft doors are batten.

1500915204

Form 10-445
(5/62)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
INVENTORY K-91

1. STATE Maryland
COUNTY Kent
TOWN Chestertown VICINITY Quaker Neck
STREET NO. Rt. 289 – Johnsontown Rd
ORIGINAL OWNER Comegys
ORIGINAL USE dwelling
PRESENT OWNER Mrs. C. B. Watson
PRESENT USE dwelling
WALL CONSTRUCTION Brick
NO. OF STORIES 2½

2. NAME Comegys Bight
DATE OR PERIOD 1768 – west gable
STYLE Colonial
ARCHITECT
BUILDER

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC NO

3 bays long – Flem bond
Chamfer water table – jogs above basement windows which have seg arches.
9/9 – lower on both floors.
3 brick belt – Simple wood box cornice.
modern trim w/ pediment – fluted pilasters
T – chim on W – with chamfered on both chimneys ~~in~~ ~~toward~~ the house (like other area)

3 bay wing on west – ~~[illegible]~~ raised floor ~~or [illegible]~~
+ 4th from bay – 3 dormers. 6/6 – overhang –
2 story wing – 3 bays long in the 2 story colonade on S. 6 square columns. – modern.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered NO Interior good Exterior good

Rear Seg arches – ~~[illegible]~~ flem bond – some glazing.
Seg arch over to door – entrance to basement –
Window at stair landing level

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.
Forman, Early Manor + Plantation Houses, 1934, p 217, 229

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
Michael Bourne

DATE OF RECORD Oct 12, 1968

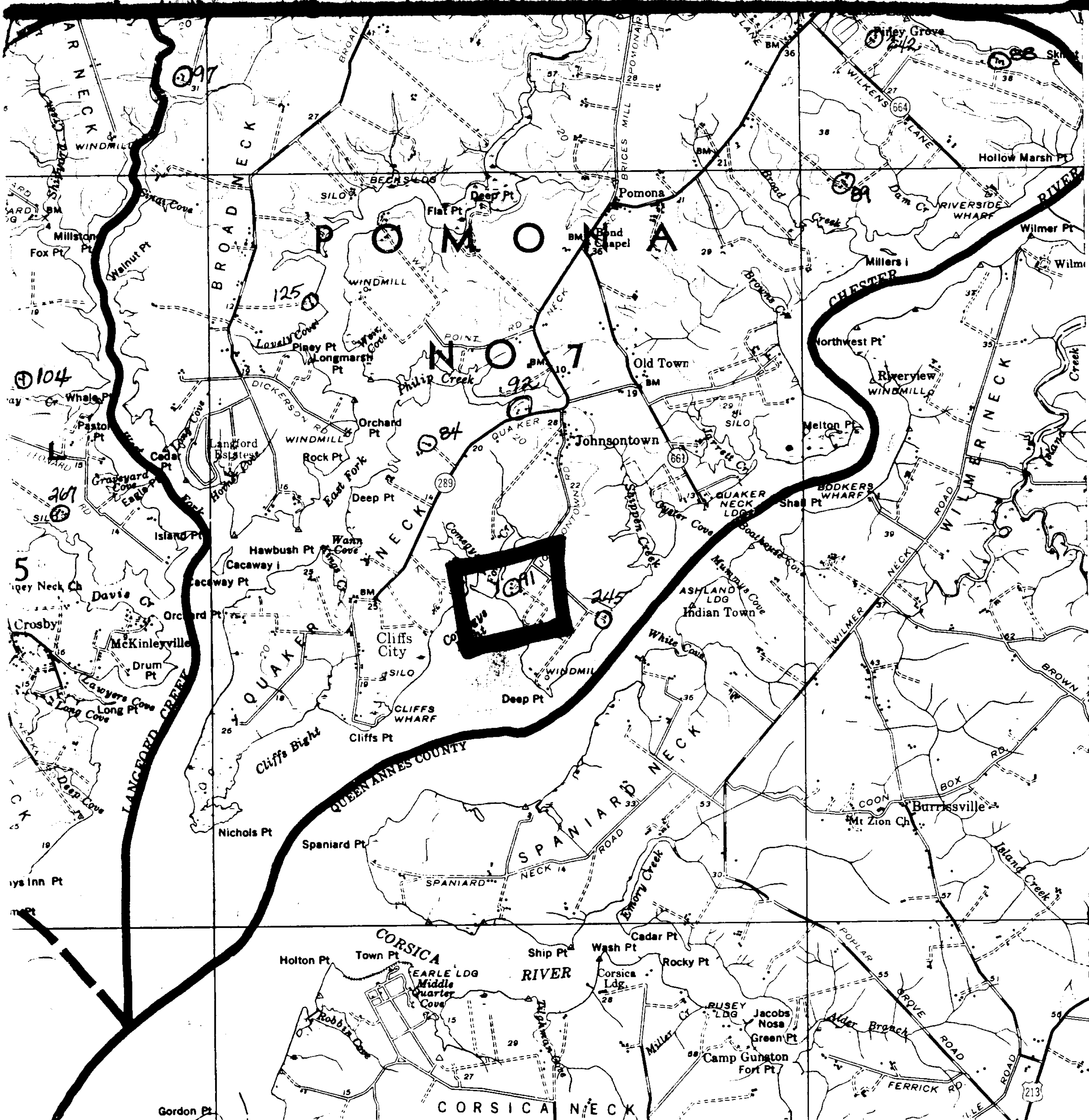
Comegys Bight is one of the houses in Kent County which has the date in glazed headers on the west gable. The initials are partially conceiled by the roof of the kitchen wing.

The three bay long brick house sits on a high basement which has segmental arches above the windows and a champhered water table which jogs above said windows. There is also a three brickbelt course between floors on the south facade. Both north and south facades are laid in Flemish bond and are partly covered with whitewash and paint. The windows have 9/9 sash and louvered shutters on both floors and those on the north have segmental arches above the windows. The ~~south~~ center door ~~is~~ are surrounded by a modern millwork architrave with fluted pilasters and a pediment, ~~while the north door is plain, retaining its wide frame and paneled door.~~ Beside the north door is a segmental arch in the brick which probably indicated the original entrance to the basement. The center windows on the second story of the north facade is located at stair landing level. On the west side of the "A" roof is a chimney with "T" plan and which is champhered inward on the outter wall. The east chimney also possesses this feature, fairly common in Kent County (e.g. Springfield Farm, K- 99; Boxley, K - 103, etc.).

As mentioned previously, the roof of the kitchen wing hides the initials in the west gable due to the floor and roof being raised at a later date. The wing was three bays long, built of brick. Another bay was added with the alterations, made of frame. This wing has a porch on the north side and three dormers on each side of the roof, as does the main portion of the house

A recent two story wing with two story colonade is attached to the east gable. This is an ungainly addition, not in keeping with the simplicity of the original design.

K-91


POMONA
NO 7
QUEEN ANNES COUNTY
CHESTER RIVER
CORSICA RIVER
CORSICA NECK
LANGFORD CREEK
BROAD NECK
QUAKER NECK
WILMER NECK
SPANIARD NECK
BRICES MILL
Pomona
Bond Chapel
Old Town
Johnsontown
Indian Town
Cliffs City
Langford Estates
McKinleyville
Crosby
Burrissville
Mt Zion Ch
Riverview
Piney Grove
Hollow Marsh Pt
RIVERSIDE WHARF
Wilmer Pt
Millers i
Northwest Pt
Melton Pt
BOOKERS WHARF
Shell Pt
QUAKER NECK LDG
ASHLAND LDG
Deep Pt
Flat Pt
BECKS LDG
Philip Creek
Orchard Pt
Rock Pt
East Fork
Hawbush Pt
Cacaway i
Cacaway Pt
Island Pt
Cedar Pt
Whale Pt
Pastor Pt
Fox Pt
Millstone Pt
Walnut Pt
Piney Pt
Longmarsh Pt
Lovely Cove
Davis Cr
Orchard Pt
Drum Pt
Long Pt
Cliffs Bight
Cliffs Pt
CLIFFS WHARF
Nichols Pt
Spaniard Pt
Gordon Pt
Holton Pt
Town Pt
EARLE LDG
Middle Quarter Cove
Ship Pt
Wash Pt
Corsica Ldg.
Cadar Pt
Rocky Pt
PUSEY LDG
Jacobs Nose
Green Pt
Camp Gunston
Fort Pt
Emory Creek
Island Creek
Alder Branch
POPLAR GROVE ROAD
FERRICK RD
COON BOX RD
BROWN
White Cove
Browns Cr
Broad Creek
Dam Cr
WILKENS LANE
DICKERSON RD
WINDMILL
SILO
BM
289
661
664
213
097
125
104
261
84
92
91
245
89
88
242
5

Carneggys Bight House MKT - K91
Johnsontown Rd
Quaker Neck
Chestertown
Weatherstrip
C Engstrom Aug 1977

Conegys Bight House MHTK91
Johnsontown Rd.
Quaker Neck - Chestertown
Stairs - Main -
C. Engstrom Aug 1977

Comegys Bight House MHT K 91

Johnsontown Rd - Quaker Neck

Chestertown. Md -

Mantel - Main House. North Room

C. Engstrom Aug 1977