Persimmon Point Farm **1875-1920**
CH-715
Mt. Victoria
Private

Persimmon Point Farm contains a 19th century farmhouse surrounded by a good collection of agricultural buildings spanning the late 19th to early 20th century. The farm includes 200 acres bounded by the Wicomico River to the north and Mt. Victoria Road to the south. The site's most exceptional feature is an interesting farm complex located to the south of the dwelling including two cornhouses, a granary, and a stable. In the valley below are several tobacco barns ranging in date from the late 19th to late 20th century. The dwelling, located on a high ridge overlooking the Wicomico, consists of two parts; a two story frame main block and a one story kitchen wing attached to the gable end. The kitchen is believed to have been constructed c. 1800, predating the main block.

Persimmon Point Farm is one of a number of historic farms situated on narrow parcel spanning Mt. Victoria Road to the west and the Wicomico River to the east. While it contains a sampling of many typical agricultural buildings found in Charles County during the late 19th and early 20th century, the site is significant for its unique grouping of early 20th century agricultural buildings related to grain storage and processing. The 205 acre farm was purchased by Somerset Cooksey in 1875 from John and Martha Fearson. The deed describes the tract known as "Persimmon Point" or "Horseshoe" as formerly owned by James William Simms. In 1916, Ferdinand C. Cooksey, trustee for Somerset Cooksey's estate deeded the entire farm to William P. Cooksey who retained possession until the 1970's.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-715

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Persimmon Point Farm
other	Somerset Cooksey Farm

2. Location

street and number	12550 Rice's Place	___	not for publication
city, town	Mt. Victoria	X	vicinity
county	Charles		

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

name	Jarrett L. and Clara Elois Rice				
street and number	12550 Rice's Place			telephone	301-259-2592
city, town	Newburg	state	MD	zip code	20664

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Charles County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	83 p. 78		
city, town	La Plata	liber	2710	folio	389

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

___ Contributing Resource in National Register District
___ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
___ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Recorded by HABS/HAER
___ Historic Structure Report or Research Report
___ Other _____

6. Classification

Category
___ district
X building(s)
___ structure
___ site
___ object

Ownership
___ public
X private
___ both

Current Function
X agriculture
___ commerce/trade
___ defense
X domestic
___ education
___ funerary
___ government
___ health care
___ industry
___ landscape
___ recreation/culture
___ religion
___ social
___ transportation
___ work in progress
___ unknown
___ vacant/not in use
___ other: _____

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	___	buildings
___	___	sites
6	___	structures
___	___	objects
9	___	Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
0

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-715

Condition

X excellent	___ deteriorated
___ good	___ ruins
___ fair	___ altered

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

Persimmon Point Farm contains a 19th century farmhouse surrounded by a good collection of agricultural buildings spanning the late 19th to early 20th century. The farm includes 200 acres bounded by the Wicomico River to the north and Mt. Victoria Road to the south. The site's most exceptional feature is an interesting farm complex located to the south of the dwelling including two cornhouses, a granary, and a stable. In the valley below are several tobacco barns ranging in date from the late 19th to late 20th century. The dwelling, located on a high ridge overlooking the Wicomico, consists of two parts; a two story frame main block and a one story kitchen wing attached to the gable end. The kitchen is believed to have been constructed c. 1800, predating the main block.

Granary (c. 1900)
This is a rectangular, gable roof structure standing on the corner of the intersection leading to the farmhouse and descending a steep hill to the fields located in the Wicomico River valley. The frame structure is sheathed in riven horizontal weatherboard siding and the roof is covered in galvanized metal. Two vertical plank doors are found on the west elevation while a shed extends from the east wall. The north gable elevation includes a porch or awning that protects a hammermill used to grind corn into feed for poultry.

Cornhouse (c. 1900)
The cornhouse stands on concrete block piers upon which rests a raised wooden sill. The frame is two bays in length and one bay wide. The eave elevations are supported by downbraces that span the width of each bay. Between the sill and the plate are two rows of horizontal nailers upon which the narrow slats are nailed on the interior of the structure's frame. The structure's most unique feature is the roofline that projects over the existing frame to shelter the hinged slat doorway on the east elevation which may have been intended to provide shelter as the cornhouse was being loaded and unloaded. The east gable is sheathed in riven horizontal weatherboard siding. Diagonal slats connect the extended roofline with the existing east wall above the top of the doorway and second nailer.

Cornhouse (c. 1920)
A second smaller and later cornhouse stands nearby. This structure includes a metal roof and a concrete block pier foundation. The wood frame includes only a single horizontal nailer between the sill and the plate and downbraces that extend to the center of each bay. The roofline is also extended to cover the entrance but does not include diagonal slats. Vertical slats are nailed to the interior of the frame with an approximate one inch space dividing each.

Pole Barn (c. 1875)
Likely constructed as a pole barn this tall structure has been heavily rebuilt to include horizontal weatherboard siding covering the wood frame which now rests on a combination of brick and concrete piers as well as some existing log posts. The original wood shingles can be found under the current metal roof and the west gable wall features the original weatherboard siding which is adhered to nailers using cut nails. Assumed to be constructed as a tobacco barn, the structure was used to house livestock in the 20th century.

Stable (c. 1920)
The frame stable includes board and batten siding and a metal roof. A continuous poured concrete foundation supports the structure.

Tobacco Barn No. 1 (c. 1875)
Sheathed in vertical bard siding and a metal roof, this barn has includes a combination of stone piers and continuous stone rubble foundation. Principal timbers are hewn and secondary lumber is circular sawn. Pegged mortise and tenon joins the posts to the plate. A mid-20th century stripping shed is connected to the east gable end. The attached shed, now altered to shelter machinery,

was at one time used to house corn or grain as evidenced by the narrow wooden slats separating the main block from the shed. Stenciled on several of the slats is the name "S. Cooksey". This is the larger of the two 19th century barns and is eight bays in length.

Tobacco Barn No. 2 (c. 1875)
Five bays in length and three wide, this barns has been significantly altered and now includes a good deal of replacement material including a concrete pier foundation, new sill and many posts. Original pegged mortise and tenon joinery is found at the plate. The shed was not original to the barn. Single isle double doors are found centered on the eave wall. Vertical board siding includes hinged boards to serve as the curing system. The roof is metal.

At the owner's request, the dwelling was not evaluated.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-715

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
__ 1600-1699	_X_ agriculture	__ economics	__ health/medicine	__ performing arts
__ 1700-1799	__ archeology	__ education	_X_ industry	__ philospohy
_X_ 1800-1899	__ architecture	__ engineering	__ invention	__ politics/government
_X_ 1900-1999	__ art	__ entertainment/ recreation	__ landscape architecture	__ religion
__ 2000-	__ commerce		__ law	__ science
	__ communications	__ ethnic heritage	__ literature	__ social history
	__ community planning	__ exploration/ settlement	__ maritime industry	__ transportation
	__ conservation		__ military	__ other:

Specific dates	1875-1920	**Architect/Builder**	Unknown
Construction dates	1875;1920		

Evaluation for:

____ National Register ____ Maryland Register _X_ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Persimmon Point Farm is one of a number of historic farms situated on narrow parcel spanning Mt. Victoria Road to the west and the Wicomico River to the east. While it contains a sampling of many typical agricultural buildings found in Charles County during the late 19th and early 20th century, the site is significant for its unique grouping of early 20th century agricultural buildings related to grain storage and processing. The 205 acre farm was purchased by Somerset Cooksey in 1875 from John and Martha Fearson. The deed describes the tract known as "Persimmon Point" or "Horseshoe" as formerly owned by James William Simms. In 1916, Ferdinand C. Cooksey, trustee for Somerset Cooksey's estate deeded the entire farm to William P. Cooksey who retained possession until the 1970's.

Following the Civil War, Charles County suffered the same fate as most of the southern states. The basis of the economy, slave labor, was gone. While planters continued to rely heavily on tobacco cultivation, slave labor was replaced with various systems of tenancy or wage labor. Due to dwindling profits, credit collapsed and many planters fell deep into debt. In addition, Federal taxes levied by the "carpet-bag" government threatened landowners with the loss of their land. This lack of capital made it difficult for farmers to branch out into other agricultural and commercial pursuits. As a result, new construction and architectural innovation was stalled. Despite, this tobacco remained the principal cash crop well into the late 20th century.

In addition some agricultural diversification took place during the late-19th and early-20th century, largely as a result of improved transportation. The construction of the Popes Creek and the growth of several towns led to a dramatic increase in food production. The number of chickens raised locally tripled between 1880 and 1910 as did dairy production.

Modernization of agricultural equipment also affected the output of county farmers. Reapers, threshers, and bailers as well as steam-powered and combustion equipment arrived from the railroad in the early-20th century, allowing farmers to produce more goods using fewer farm hands. Improved fertilizers shipped from plants in Baltimore enhanced the county's soils, increasing their yield.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-715

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 205

Acreage of historical setting 205

Quadrangle name Colonial Beach North

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Persimmon Point Farm is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 83, Parcel 78.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	Charles Count Planning Dept	date	10/9/01
street and number	200 Baltimore Street	telephone	301-396-5815
city or town	LaPlata	state MD	zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

Chain of title:

December 1941	William P. Cooksey to Grover Cleveland Cooksey of Washington D.C. and Geraldine Cooksey Dyson of St. Mary's County, Harriet A. Cooksey Wingate of Washington City. "Persimmon Point" or "Horseshoe" containing 205 acres. **WMA 75:426**
September 1916	Ferdinand C. Cooksey, trustee to William P. Cooksey. Estate of Somerset Cooksey. 205 acres. **30:272**
August 1875	John Fearson and Martha B. Fearson, wife to Somerset Cooksey. Tract formerly owned by James William Simms 205 acres. **BGS 1:77**

Major Bibliographic References:

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland, A History. Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Maryland.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland. La Plata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

Date: 9/2001

North arrow: N

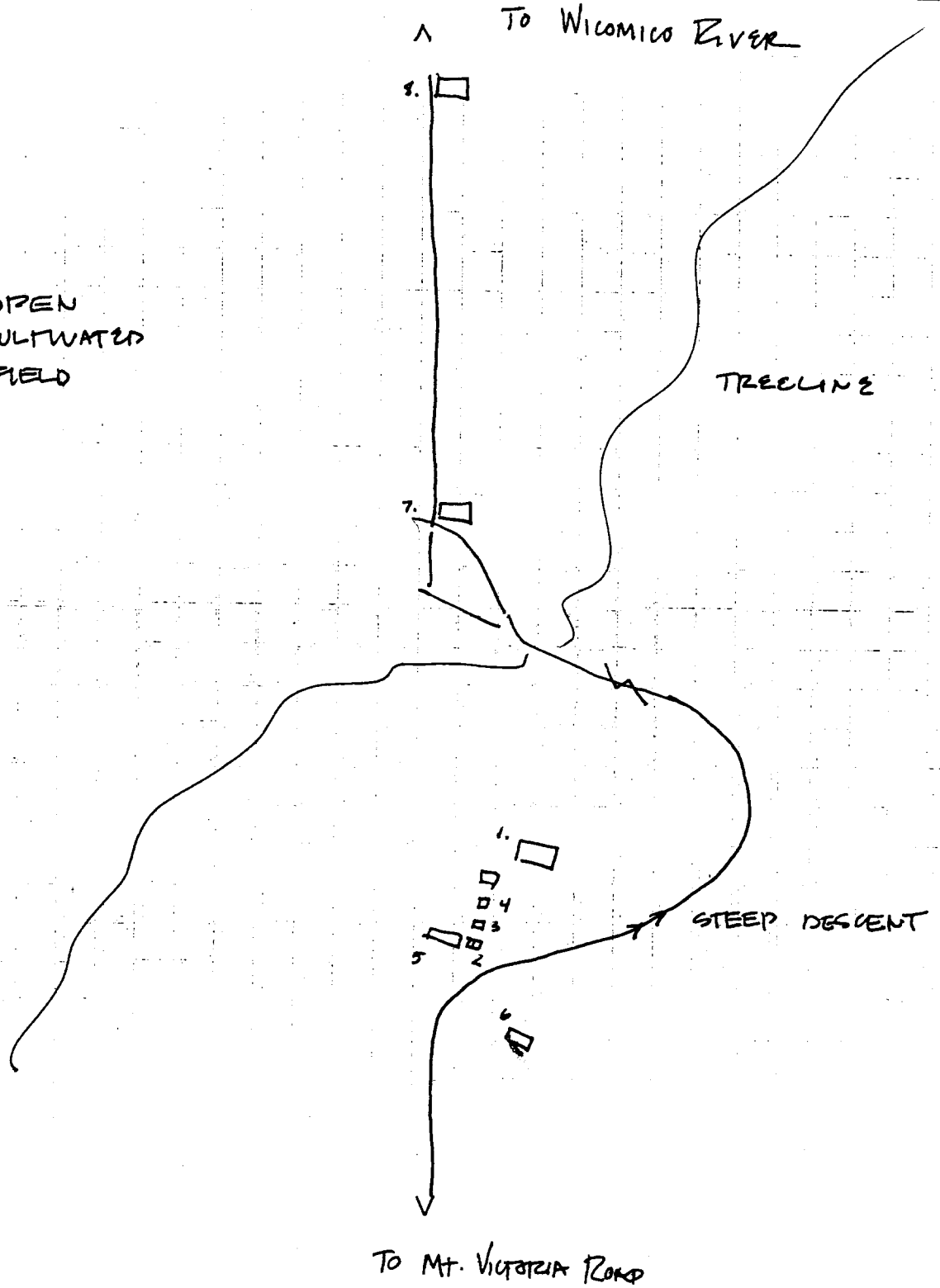
Name: PERSIMMON POINT FARM

Address: 12550 RICE'S PLACE

CH - 715

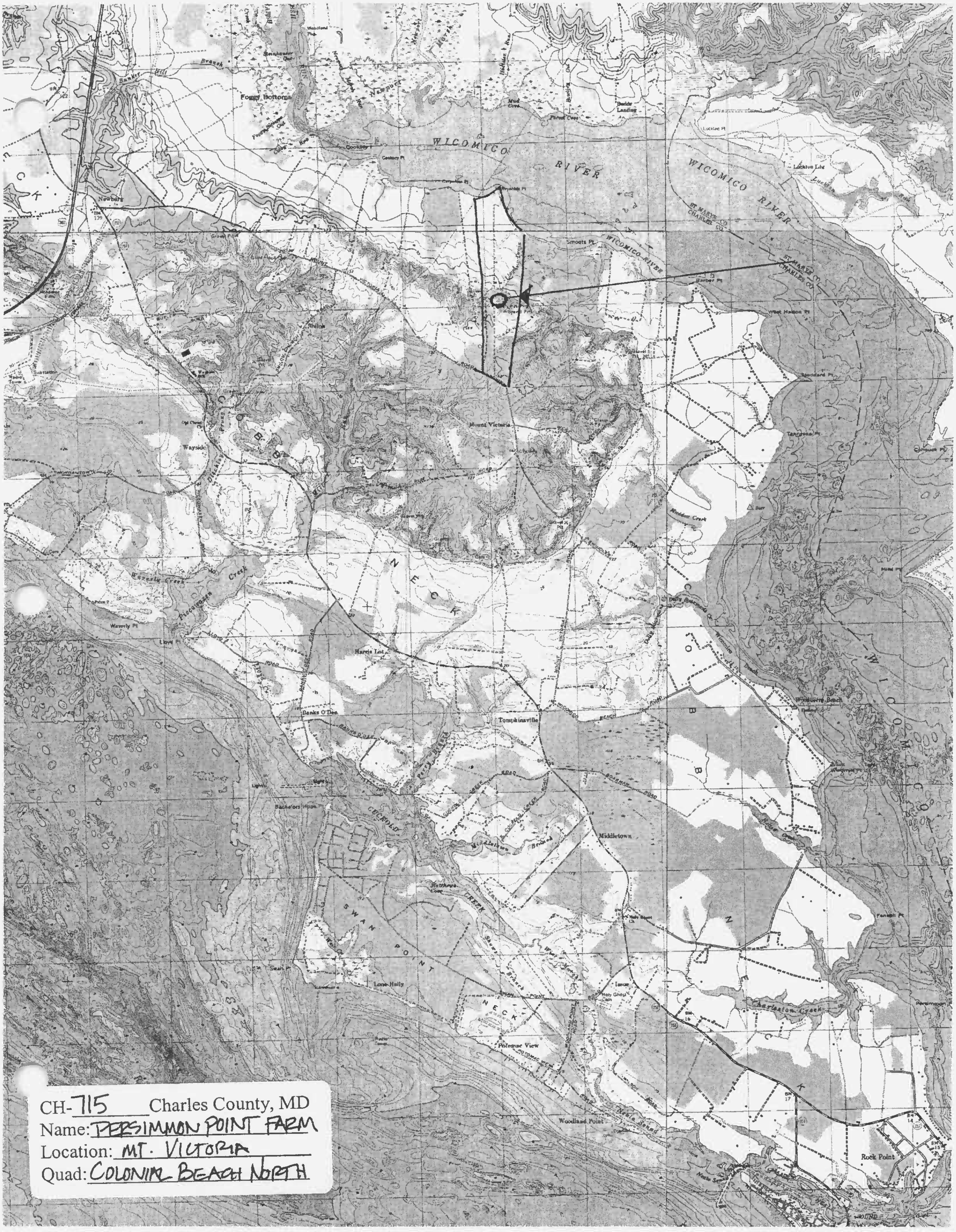
Charles County, Maryland

MT. VICTORIA ☒ Vicinity



1. DWELLING
2. GRANARY
3. CORNHOUSE
4. LATER CORNHOUSE
5. POLE BARN
6. STABLE
7. TOBACCO BARN NO. 1
8. TOBACCO BARN NO. 2

Not drawn to scale



CH-715 Charles County, MD
Name: PERSIMMON POINT FARM
Location: MT. VICTORIA
Quad: COLONIAL BEACH NORTH

CH-715
PERSIMMON POINT FARM
CHARLES CO. MD
8/2001
C. CURREY
MD SHPO
LOOKING NORTH
1 OF 6

CH-715
PERSIMMON POINT FARM
CHARLES CO MD
8/2001
C. CURREY
MD SHPO
LOOKING NW
2 of 6

CH-715
PERSIMMON POINT FARM
CHARLES CO., MD
8/2001
C. CURTLEY
MD SHPO
CORNCRIB, LOOKING W
30P6

CH-715
PERSIMMON POINT FARM
CHARLES CO. MD
8/2001
C. CUERREY
MD SHPO
BARN, LOOKING NW
4 OF 6

CH-715
PERSIMMON POINT FARM
CHARLES CO. MD
8/2001
C. CURREY
MD SHPO
BARN NO 1 LOOKING NE 5 OF 6

CH-715
PERSIMMON POINT FARM
CHARLES CO. MD
6/2001
C. CURREY
MD SHPO
BARN NO. 2 LOOKING SE

6 OF 6