# MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
# NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

**NR Eligible: yes** 1
**no** ___

Property Name: Ensor Farm Complex Inventory Number: BA-2949

Address: 15801 Buffalo Run Road City: Sparks, MD Zip Code: 21152

County: Baltimore USGS Topographic Map: Hereford

Owner: Charles E. Ensor, et al.

Tax Parcel Number: 39 Tax Map Number: 28 Tax Account ID Number: 0805062375

Project: ___ Agency: ___

Site visit by MHT Staff: X no ___ yes Name: ___ Date: ___

Eligibility recommended X Eligibility **not** recommended ___

Criteria: X A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G X None

Is the property located within a historic district? ___ no X yes Name of district: Western Run-Belfast Road

Is district listed? ___ no X yes Determined eligible? ___ no X yes District Inventory Number: BA-2214

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: MIHP form

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*
The Ensor Farm Complex, part of the Cold Bottom Farm, is a mid to late 19th century complex comprised of a bank barn, a small outbuilding set into a bank and called a 'goat house,' a carriage barn, and a dwelling. All have been extensively altered through additions and/or manufactured siding and replacement windows. The dwelling, reputedly constructed in 1890, appears to post–date the outbuildings. The carriage barn and bank barn both are post and beam structures, the principal elements of which a hewn, partially hewn, or merely barked. The buildings and their setting (a 112.46–acre farm) retain the character of a late 19th/early 20th century family farm, a direct descendant of the large farms previously worked largely through tenancy.

Occupied continuously at least since 1854 by the Ensor family, none of the owner occupants appears to have played a specifically identifiable role in the history of the community, State, or nation (Criterion B). The Ensor Farm Complex lacks the architectural integrity that would have made it eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. The sitedoes not appear to have the potential to yield information important to the understanding of history (Criterion D).

The Ensor Farm Complex, considered in the context of its current agricultural setting, is a fine example of a late 19th/early 20th century family farm (Criterion A). Such farms represent an adaptation of earlier practices to the 'new agriculture' that developed after the Civil War, an agriculture in this part of the state built around family ownership of the farm, increasing reliance on agricultural machinery, application of scientific principles to farming—as developed in agricultural experiment stations and transmitted through Farmers' Institutes and reformed rural schools—and reliance on household labor.

Prepared by: James G. Gibb Date Prepared: 11 April 2001

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**
**Eligibility recommended** ✓ **Eligibility not recommended** ___
**Criteria:** X **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D** **Considerations:** ___ **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D** ___ **E** ___ **F** ___ **G** ___ **None**
**Comments:** Contributes to significance of Western Run - Belfast Rd. Historic District, listed in NR

Rebecca M. Ruth 5-17-01
**Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services** **Date**

5/23/01
**Reviewer, NR program** **Date**

# Capsule Summary

Property Name: Ensor Farm Complex
MIHP: BA-2949
Location: 15801 Buffalo Run Road
Town: Sparks
Date of Construction: circa 1890
Access: Private
Prepared by: James G. Gibb

The Ensor Farm Complex is a late 19th–century farmhouse with three associated outbuildings in the midst of a 112.46–acre farm. Ancestors of the current occupants built the house and the family has occupied the farm at least since 1854, and possibly as early, or earlier than, 1842, and owned in since 1865. The current owners and occupants cultivate fields to the east, north, and west. Land to the south is wooded. The main building complex consists of: the dwelling with rear addition, enclosed front porch, and front deck; a carriage house now largely enveloped by garage and shop additions; and a renovated 'goat house,' now a storehouse. A bank barn lies downhill from the complex, a distance of about 200 ft.

Title research demonstrates that the farm and its buildings have been in the possession of the Ensor family at least since 1854, and the setting of the complex illustrates that of a typical farm of modest size and wealth from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, hived off from much larger plantations after the Civil War. It represents a significant trend in the agricultural economy of Maryland (Criterion A).

# Maryland Historical Trust
# Maryland Inventory of
# Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-2949

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

| | |
|---|---|
| historic | Ensor Farm Complex (preferred) |
| other | Cold Bottom Farm |

## 2. Location

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| street and number | 15801 Buffalo Run Road | _ | not for publication |
| city, town | Sparks | X | vicinity |
| county | Baltimore | | |

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

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| name | Charles E. Ensor, Jr., et al. | | | | |
| street and number | 15801 Buffalo Run Road | | | telephone | 410.343.1150 |
| city, town | Sparks | state | MD | zip code | 21152–9446 |

## 4. Location of Legal Description

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. | Dept of Assessments and Taxation | | | liber | 14979 | folio | 292 |
| city, town | Sparks | tax map 28 | tax parcel | 39 | | tax ID number | 0805062375 |

## 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 at MHT
__X__ Other: Located within the National Register Listed Western Run-Belfast Historic District (BA-2214)

## 6. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Current Function | | | Resource Count | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Contributing | Noncontributing | |
| _____district | _____public | __X__agriculture | _____landscape | | 1 | 0 | buildings |
| __X__building(s) | __X__private | _____commerce/trade | _____recreation/culture | | | 0 | sites |
| _____structure | _____both | _____defense | _____religion | | 3 | 0 | structures |
| _____site | | __X__domestic | _____social | | | 0 | objects |
| _____object | | _____education | _____transportation | | 4 | 0 | Total |
| | | _____funerary | _____work in progress | | | | |
| | | _____government | _____unknown | | | | |
| | | _____health care | _____vacant/not in use | | | | |
| | | _____industry | _____other: | | | | |

**Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory**

_____

# 7. Description

Inventory No. BA-2949

**Condition**

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

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

The Ensor Farm Complex is a late 19th–century farmhouse with three associated outbuildings in the midst of a 112.46–acre farm. Ancestors of the current occupants built the house and the family has occupied the farm at least since 1854, and possibly as early, or earlier than, 1842, and owned in since 1865. The current owners and occupants cultivate fields to the east, north, and west. Land to the south is wooded. The main building complex consists of: the dwelling with rear addition, enclosed front porch, and front deck; a carriage house now largely enveloped by garage and shop additions; and a renovated 'goat house,' now a storehouse. A bank barn lies downhill from the complex, a distance of about 200 ft.

The main part of the dwelling is a 2½ story, two–room deep, 5–bay cross–gable frame building on a mortared fieldstone foundation. All but five of the windows on the dwelling are 6/6 double hung sashes, recent replacements of what probably also were 6/6 double hung sashes. The original shutters have been replaced with red fixed plastic faux shutters. There are pairs of diminutive double–hung 6/6 sashes on each gable end for the half–story, and a single arched window occupies the pediment of the cross gable. The entire dwelling, including additions, is sided with white vinyl siding over asbestos shingles, which reputedly in turn overlie plain horizontal siding, and the entire structure is roofed with raised seam metal painted red. The lower portions of the roofing have been replaced with plain, unseamed metal, the lower original edges and attached metal gutters having deteriorated.

On the east (facing S79°E), or principal, façade, upper and lower pairs of windows are symmetrically placed about the front entrance, now obscured by the enclosed front porch (frame on concrete parged stone foundation). A fifth second floor window is centered over the front door. The north façade has two pairs of windows, one placed above the other, for the two main floors and two smaller windows near the apex of the gable. The south façade of the main part of the dwelling is identical. The owner–occupants report original horsehair plaster walls throughout the dwelling. A pair of well–pointed interior end chimneys extend above the ridgeline at each gable end. The finish on each is simple: two slightly protruding belt courses below the uppermost course.

The two–story frame rear ell with simple gable–end is centrally placed on the rear façade of the main part of the dwelling. There are two 6/6 replacement windows on the second floor of the north façade, and two 6/6 windows on the south façade, one for each floor, as well as a door on the first floor (a one–story wrap–around addition obscures much of the first floor). The wrap–around addition appears to replace an earlier rear porch or ell, as evidenced by two stone piers incorporated into the concrete block foundation, the addition having extended at least 15 ft out from the main rear ell. The rear ell chimney is identical to the two chimneys in the main part of the dwelling in terms of placement (interior of the west gable end, centered on the ridgeline, and with the same simple finish).

A paved parking area separates the dwelling from a small, two–story, gable–end carriage house of simple post and beam construction, a number of the horizontal members clearly having been hewn on two sides and barked

on the other two. Several exposed vertical members had been barked, but are otherwise unfinished. The original chestnut plank siding has been salvaged and used to cover some interior walls of the shop addition on the north side of the carriage house. The first floor is now a concrete slab and the second floor, used at one time to house chickens, has a relatively recent tongue and groove floor. Motorized garage doors replace the original doors. The two central beams run parallel to the long axis of the carriage house and span 20 ft or more unsupported. The shorter perpendicular joists, also hewn, however, carry the load of the second floor to the exterior walls. The building has white vinyl siding and a red raised seam metal roof identical to those of the dwelling.

A two–story frame outbuilding on mortared fieldstone foundation with shed roof stands directly behind (south of) the carriage house. A beaded board door with simple pull handle, hung on new leaf hinges, provides access to the second floor on the north side of the outbuilding. Paired divided doors of vertical tongue and groove board hung with strap hinges on pintles provide access to the first floor on the south façade. Fixed single pane sashes light the second floor on the north and south facades. Sliding glass sashes penetrate the east and west façades of the second floor. The red raised seam metal roofing is comparable to that on the carriage house and dwelling; aluminum painted white rather than vinyl, however, serves as siding.

Cultivated surfaces to the north and east of these two outbuildings were briefly inspected, but no indications of ruins or artifact deposits were noted, just stray fragments of coal, brick, and bottle glass.

The bank barn is of post and beam construction on a dressed and partially dressed, coursed, mortared stone foundation. The principal beams are spliced above each of the barked posts. The hayloft overhangs the first floor stalls on the east façade. Sliding hung doors replace the original doors on the entrance side (north) of the mow. The roof does not project far beyond the walls, but far enough to expose the rafter ends. Upper horizontal members project several inches through the aluminum siding. The windows perforating the stone foundation have been covered with molded plastic.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-2949

| Period | Areas of Significance | Check and justify below | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| _1600-1699 | X agriculture | _economics | _health/medicine | _performing arts |
| _1700-1799 | _archeology | _education | _industry | _philosophy |
| X 1800-1899 | X 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 history | _transportation |
| | _conservation | | _military | _other: |

**Specific dates** **Architect/Builder** unknown

**Construction dates** 1890s

Evaluation for:

_X_ National Register _____Maryland Register _____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 projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The Ensor Farm Complex is a two–story frame dwelling with cross–gable and rear ell, typical of late 19th and early 20th–century farmhouses in the Chesapeake Basin. It reputedly dates to 1890. Associated outbuildings may predate the dwelling, comprised as they are of hewn and partially hewn timbers. Each of the buildings has been altered, largely through additions, the application of vinyl and aluminum siding, and installation of new windows. Although the original window sashes were completely removed and replaced with those of non–restoration grade, they retain the overall appearance of the dwelling. The modern addition to the rear of the dwelling, partially enveloping the rear ell, is subordinate in scale to the main house block, although its massing and fenestration are inconsistent with the dwelling's verticality and pattern of window placement. The carriage barn is largely hidden beneath new construction. The so–called 'goat house' is somewhat hidden beneath aluminum siding and the fenestration undoubtedly differs from that originally intended, thereby obscuring original functions and materials. The barn retains its overall appearance and function, despite the aluminum siding and hung sliding doors.

Title research demonstrates that the farm and its buildings have been in the possession of the Ensor family at least since the 1850s, and the setting of the complex illustrates that of a typical farm of modest size and wealth from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This farm represents a class of modest size farms hived off from much larger plantations after the Civil War and, thereby, represents a significant trend in the agricultural economy of Maryland (Criterion A). Specific contributions of this branch of the Ensor family to the state's historical development, or that of the community, have not been identified (Criterion B), nor do any of the buildings retain sufficient integrity to meet any of the four requirements to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register under Criterion C. None of the buildings appear to contain information critical to the understanding of local, state, or national history (Criterion D). The Ensor Farm Complex appears to be eligible for the National Register as a property associated with the post–bellum agricultural development of Maryland and the rise of the 'new agriculture' of the Progressive era. The outbuildings, which appear to predate the dwelling, indicate an adaptation of an earlier pattern of farm tenancy on a large plantation to smaller, more adaptable farms relying principally on household labor and increasingly available agricultural machinery.

# Maryland Historical Trust
# Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-2949

Name
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 1

Table. Chain of title, Ensor Farm Complex.

| Grantor | Grantee | Acres | Date | Instrument |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raymond E. Ensor | | | | Deed |
| Mary Beulah Ensor, widow | Raymond E. & Gladys L. Ensor and Charles E. & Marguerite V. Ensor | 112a 124p$^2$ | 6 Dec 1972 | Deed 5322/314 |
| Wm. L. Ensor, widower | Mary Beulah & Robert L. Ensor | 112a 124p$^2$ | 08 Feb 1929 | Deed WHM813/230 |
| Charlotte Ophelia Ensor, est. | Wm. L. Ensor, widower | 112a 124p$^2$ | 25 Nov 1928 | Intestate conveyance |
| John E. Ensor of J. & Mary E. Ensor | Charlotte Ophelia Ensor | 19 | 07 Aug 1905 | Deed WPC289/318 |
| Orrick M. & Elizabeth D. Ensor | John E. Ensor of J. | 115a 56p$^2$ | 07 Aug 1905 | Deed WPC289/320 |
| Geo. E. & Delilah Ensor | Orrick M. Ensor | 115a 56p$^2$ | 05 Dec 1892 | Deed LMB195/223 |
| | | | | |
| Samuel S. Cole et ux | Charlotte O. Ensor | 110 | 21 Mar 1895 | Deed LMB 211/50 |
| Charlotte O. & Wm. L. Ensor | Samuel S. Cole | 110 | 16 May 1896 | Deed LMB 217/246 |
| John J. Yellott, assignee of Luke E. Ensor | Samuel S. Cole | 110.6 | 16 Dec 1890 | Deed JWS184/72 |
| Luke E. Ensor | Charles C. Wittig | 110.6 | 02 Apr 1883 | Deed WMJ106/135 |
| John & Ann Louisa Merryman | Luke E. Ensor | 155.25 | 06 Jan 1872 | Deed EHA73/425 |
| Geo. & Martha Ensor & Wm H. & Mary Ann Ensor | Luke E. Ensor | 110.6 | 20 Mar 1865 | Deed JHL44/363 |
| Luke B. Ensor | George, Wm H., & Luke E. Ensor | 155.25 | 1855 | Wills JLR1/250 |
| John Merryman, Jr. | Luke B. Ensor | 155.25 | 07 Nov 1854 | Agrmnt HMF10/27 |
| John B. Merryman | John Merryman, Jr. | 50 | 15 Jan 1842 | TK316/456 |
| Grafton Meryman | John Merryman | 54 | 27 Sept 1842 | TK324/70 |

The Ensor Farm Complex occupies a knoll in the midst of a 112.46–acre and dominates the almost exclusively agricultural landscape of the area. Comprised of at least three tracts, in whole or in part (Cold Bottom Farm [54 acres], part of Thomas's Addition [50 acres], and addition to Merryman's Lot [6 acres]), this farm retains it 1928 configuration, minor alienations to the State Roads Commission and utility companies excepted. It can be traced back at least as early as 1842 and appears to have been divided from the massive Merryman tract in 1865. Although the chain of title is somewhat confused by frequent conveyances among the Ensors and their collateral kin, the Ensor family occupied the land as early as 1854 when John Merryman agreed to convey Cold Bottom farm and part of the addition to Merryman's Lot, a total then of 155.25 acres, to Luke B. Ensor for $10,000. Ensor may have been a tenant at the time. He bequeathed the farm to his three sons George, William H., and Luke E. Ensor in 1855, reserving his wife Naomi's interest for the remainder of her life or duration of her widowhood. George and William, and their wives Martha and Mary Ann, sold their interests to Luke E. Ensor in 1865. The farm remained under mortgage until Merryman released it in 1872.

Luke Ensor mortgaged the property to Charles C. Wittig in 1883. He defaulted and Samuel S. Cole purchased it at public sale in 1890. Although the chain of conveyances and reasons for transference remain uncertain, Cole conveyed the property to his daughter Charlotte Ophelia Ensor, described as the wife of William L. Ensor. The tract has remained in the Ensor family, conveyed through inheritance. The post and beam construction of the outbuildings suggests that they may have been part of the earliest Ensor occupation, the extant balloon–frame house possibly replacing an earlier dwelling. A branch of the Ensor family operated a nearby mill in the 19th and 20th centuries, and other mills in the area could have provided milled dimensional lumber by the second half of the 19th century.

The Ensor Farm Complex was built and altered as early as the middle of the 19th century and adapted to the emerging 'new agriculture' of the 1890s and first decade of the 20th century; an agricultural economy that changed slowly during the post–bellum decades and then rapidly mechanized toward the end of the 19th century. It was a period in Maryland and Baltimore County history of significant social and economic change with the arrival of Eastern and Southern European immigrants, the development of a modern school system, annual Farmers' Institutes, and, by the second and third decades of the 20th century, widespread adoption of the automobile and the creation of a state highway system.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-2949

Land Records of Baltimore County, Baltimore County Courthouse, Towson, Maryland.

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Ensor, Jr., 05 April 2001.

## 10. Geographical Data

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Acreage of surveyed property | 112.46 | | |
| Acreage of historical setting | 112.46 | | |
| Quadrangle name | Hereford, MD | Quadrangle scale: | 1:2400 |

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

The farm complex lies within a 112.46–acre farm on the south side of cold Bottom road and on the west side of I–97. The boundaries of the current tract date at least to 1928 and, with some modifications, to at least 1865.

## 11. Form Prepared by


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| name/title | James G. Gibb | | |
| organization | Andrew Garte & Associates | date | 06 April 2001 |
| street & number | 6285 Shady Side Road | telephone | 410.867.4600 |
| city or town | Shady Side | state | MD 20764 |


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 21032-2023
410-514-7600

# Maryland Historical Trust
# Maryland Inventory of
# Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-2949

Name
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 9 Page 1

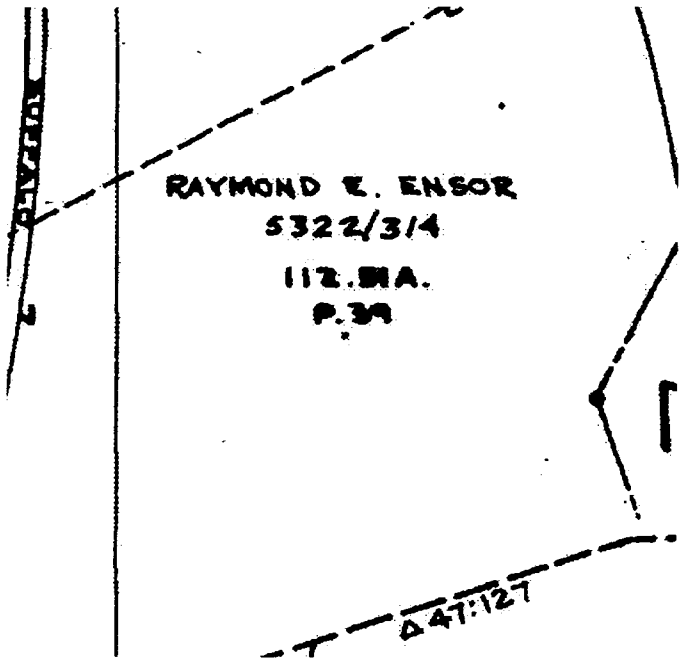



**Figure 1. Ensor Farmhouse tract.**

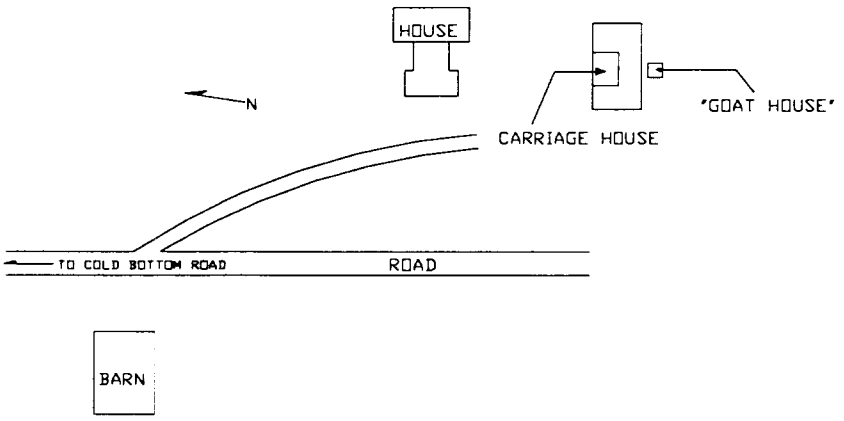
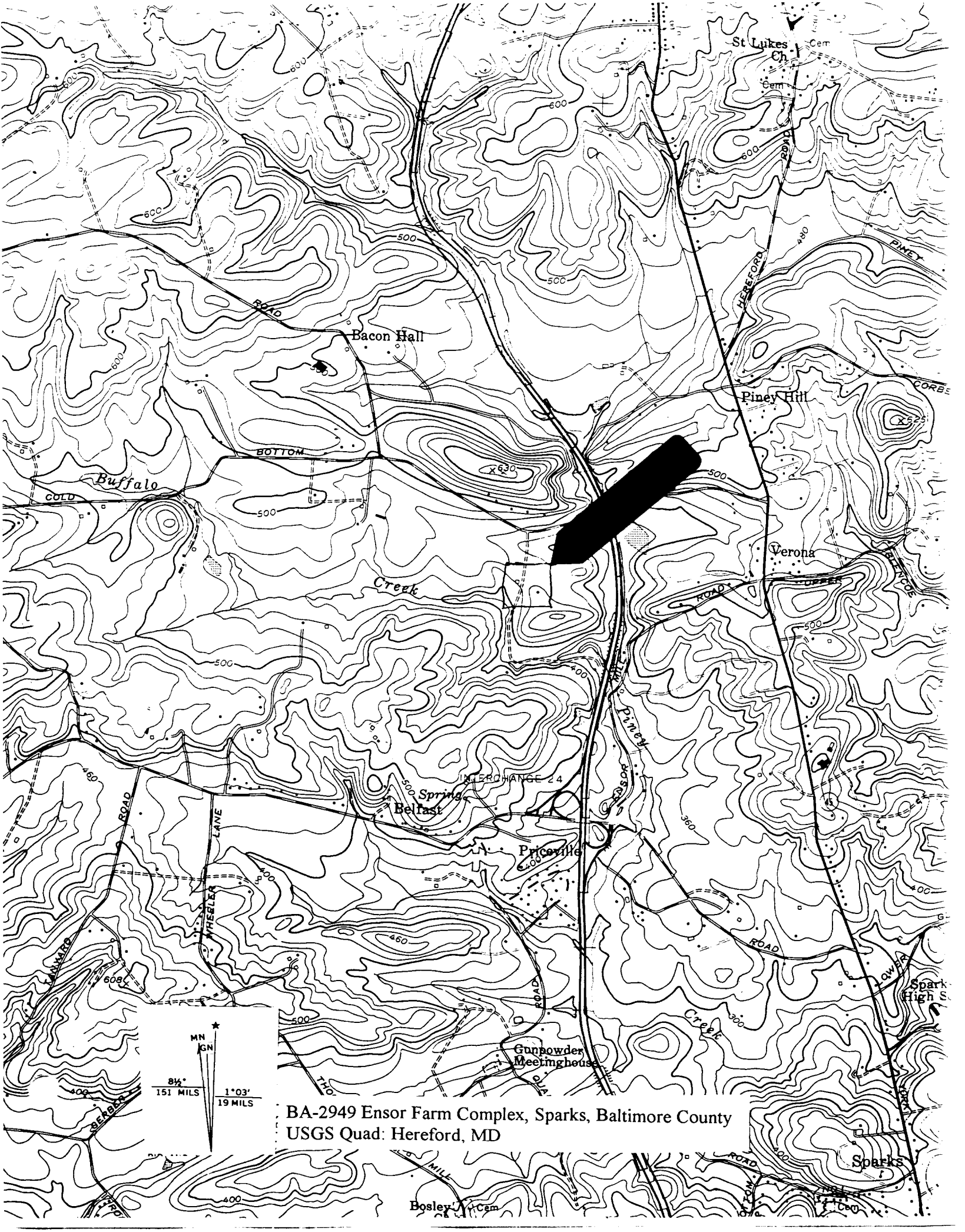



**Figure 2. Sketch map of Ensor Farmhouse and outbuildings.**




BA-2949 Ensor Farm Complex, Sparks, Baltimore County
USGS Quad: Hereford, MD

BA-2949

1/12

Ensor Farm Complex
Baltimore, MD
James G. Gibb

B1010ANX0 NNN 0 1716

April 2001
MD SHTC

02 [illegible] 60524

Principal (east) facade of the Ensor Farmhouse.

BA-2949

2/12

Ensor Farm Complex
Baltimore, MD
James G. Gibb

B1010ANX0 NNN- 1 1716

April 11, 2001
MD SHPO

022 RPU TMY 69522

North elevation of the Ensor Farmhouse.

BA-2949

3/18

Ensor Foam Complex
Baltimore, MD
James C. Gibb

B1010NXO NNN 0 1716

April 11, 2001
MD SHPO

021 BSW-THX 69521

Pier remnant (one of two), north elevation of recent addition.

BA-2949

11/12

Ensor Farm Complex

Baltimore, MD

James G. Gibb

B1010ANX0 NNN 0 1716

April 11 2001

MD SHPO

020 BAL TMX 69520

West and south elevations of the Ensor Farmhouse

BA-2949 5/12

Ensor Farm Complex

Baltimore, MD

James G. Cobb

B1010ANX0 NNN 0 1716

April 2001

MD SHPO

016 BRV-TMK 69516

North elevation of the carriage house and recent east and west additions.

BA-2949 6/12

Ensor Farm Complex
Baltimore, MD
James G. Gibb

B1010ANXO NNN- 1 1716

April 11, 2001
MD SHPO

013 [illegible] 69513

East and south elevations of the goat house?

BA-2949 7/12

Ensor Farm Complex
Baltimore, MD
James G. Gibb

B1010ANX0 NNN- 1 1716

April 11, 2001
MD SHPO

011 BRU-TMY 69511

East elevation of east addition to the carriage house.

BA-2949

8/12

Ensor Farm Complex
Baltimore, MD
James G. Gibb

B1010ANX0 NNN 0 1716

April 11, 2001
MD SHPO

B10 SOU_THN 69510

View looking north from the front of the Ensor Farmhouse.

BA-2949

9/12

Ensor Farm Complex

Baltimore, MD

James G. Gibb

B1010ANX0 NRN @ 1716

April 11, 2001

MD SHPO

809 SOU-THV 50500

View looking east from the front of the Ensor Farmhouse.

BA-2949

10/12

Ensor Farm Complex

Baltimore, MD

James G Gibb

B1010ANX0 NNN 0 1716

April 11, 2001

MD SHPO

008 [illegible] [illegible]

View looking west from the rear of the Ensor Farmhouse

11/12

BA-2949

Ensor Farm Complex

Baltimore, MD

James G Gibb

B1010ANX0 NNN 0 1716

April 11, 2001

MD SHPO

003 B0LL 7MX 69503

Splice beams, first floor stalls.

BA-2949 12/12

Ensor Farm Complex

Baltimore, MD

James G. Gibb

81010ANY0 NNN 0 1716

April 11, 2001

MD SHPO

001 BOU-THX 60501

North elevation of the bank barn.