

## ADDENDUM

CH-332  
Johnsontown Barn (MOVED)  
Charles County, MD  
Faulkner, vic.  
Cathy Hardy, May 2002

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### 7. Description

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Johnsontown Tobacco Barn was first identified by J. Richard Rivoire in 1978. At that time the barn stood on a 604 acre farm northeast of the Charles County Fairgrounds. The property has since been subdivided. During the 1980's the barn was dismantled, moved and partially reconstructed at Ocean Hall (SM 111-NR) in St. Mary's County.

A second barn which was not previously surveyed, still stands on the original property. It has been recently surveyed as Johnsontown Tobacco Barn No. 2 (CH-742).

5361 II SE  
(PORT TOBACCO)

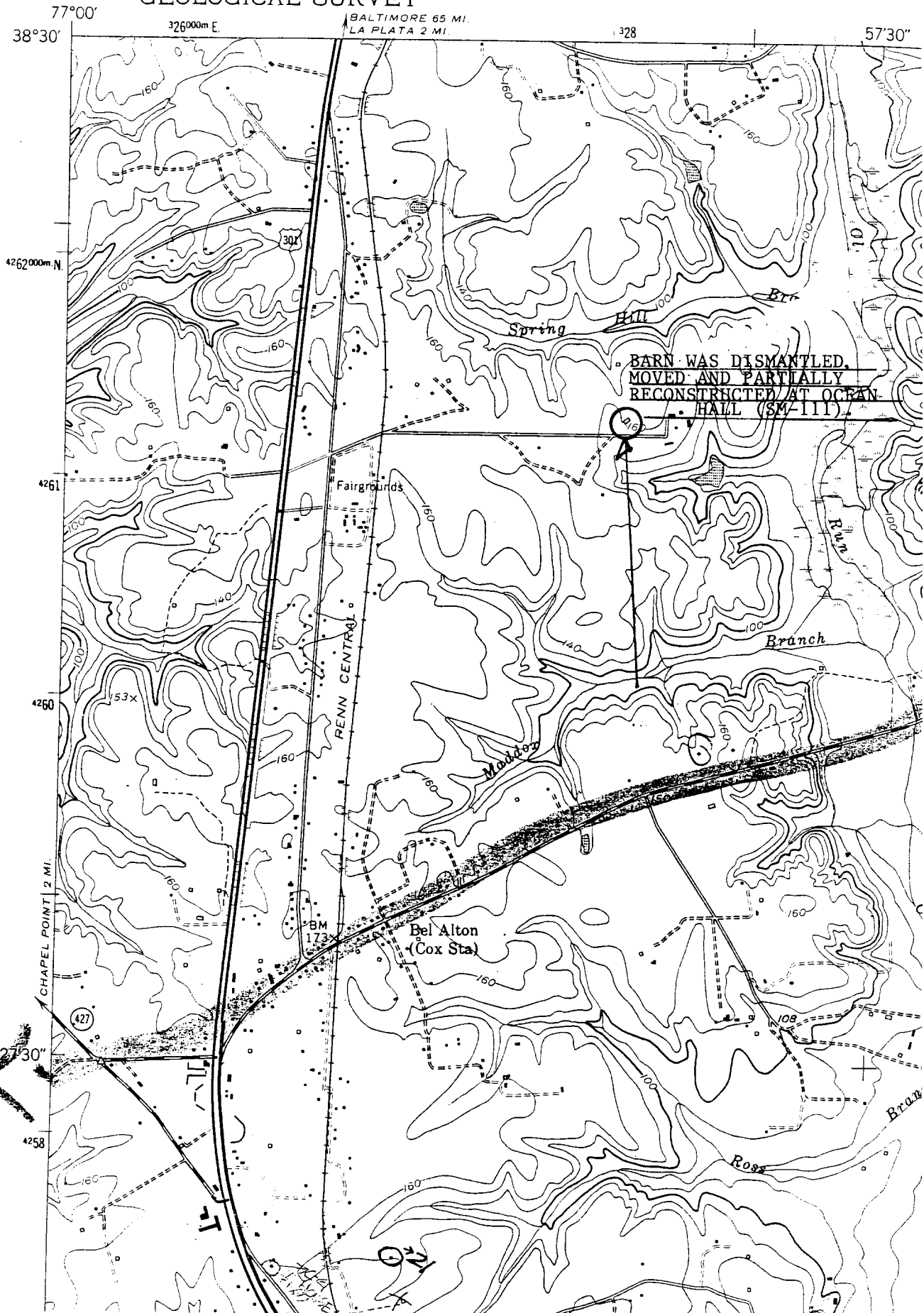
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

CH-332 Charles County, MD

Name: JOHNSONTOWN BARN

Location: BEL ALTON VIC

Quad: POPES CREEK



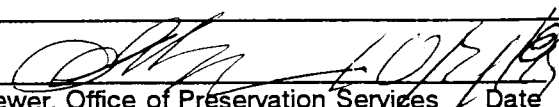
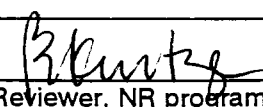
Property Address <u>One mile east of the Charles County Fairgrounds, vicinity of Bell Alton, Charles County</u>
Owner Name/Address _____
Year Built <u>pre-1800</u>

**Description:**

The Johnstown Barn was previously surveyed by the Charles County Planning Department in January 1978. No barn matching the description and photographs was found during the September 1996 survey.

**National Register Evaluation:**

The Johnstown Barn was not located during the September 1996 survey and is presumed to be no longer extant. The site of the Johnstown Barn is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The property is not eligible under Criterion A, as research conducted indicates no association with any historic events or trends significant in the development of national, state or local history. Historic research indicates that the property has no association with persons who have made specific contributions to history, and therefore, it does not meet Criterion B. It is not eligible under Criterion C, as the structure is no longer extant and the site does not possess sufficient integrity to represent an important architectural trend or distinctive characteristics of a type or method of construction. Based upon the date of construction, which the previous survey form identifies as pre-1800, and the property type, there is a likelihood that an archaeological component could exist on the property. However, as no archaeological investigation has been conducted, the eligibility of the property under Criterion D cannot be assessed at this time.

<b>MHT CONCURRENCE:</b>	
Eligibility <input type="checkbox"/> recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not recommended	
Criteria <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
Comments: _____	
_____	
_____	
 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	 Reviewer, NR program
<u>10/15/96</u> Date	<u>8/14/00</u> Date

Preparer:  
P.A.C. Spero & Company  
September 1996

125

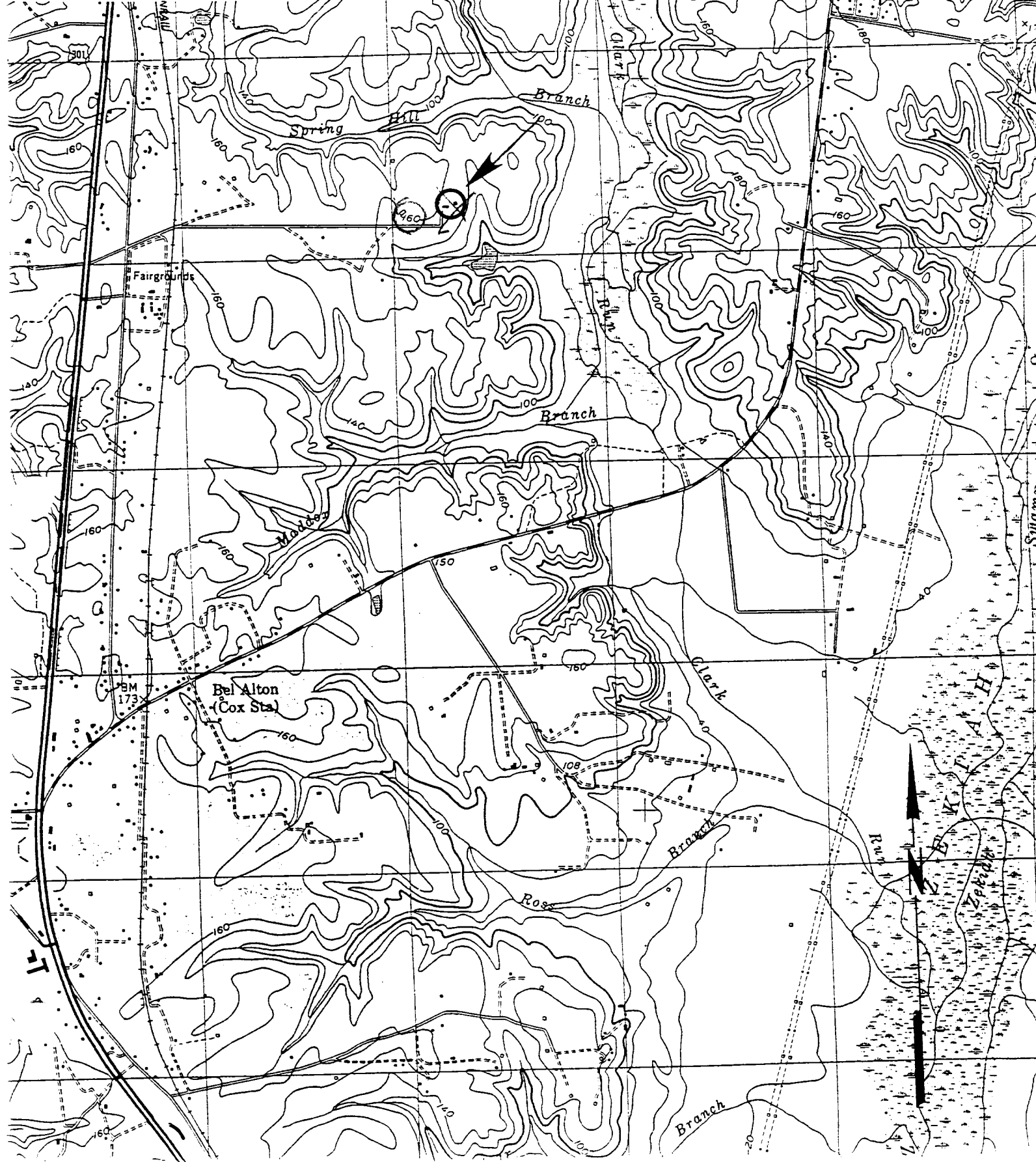
# U.S. 301 South Corridor Transportation Study

Survey # CH332

Property Name Johnsontown Barn

County Bell Alton vicinity (Charles Co.)

Trangle Popes Creek



CHAS-332  
JOHNSONTOWN BARN  
Private

18th century

For a region where tobacco has been the chief agricultural commodity for well over three centuries, it is surprising that so few early structures relating to the cultivation, curing and marketing of tobacco survive. In Charles County there are less than ten pre-1800 tobacco barns. Two of these, the Johnsontown Barn and the barn at "The Exchange", are perhaps the most important in that they retain many of their early features, such as "false" plate eaves construction and riven clapboard sheathing. Besides their significance as tangible physical reminders of a socio-economic history influenced and supported by the tobacco market, they also serve to illustrate the length of time it took before certain early building practices were abandoned and succeeded by less complex structural systems. This is particularly evident at the Johnsontown Barn where a nineteenth century extension to the original structure duplicated the earlier framing system, including the tilted "false" plate. A batten side door of the addition, retaining its original wood strap hinges, is thought to be a unique survival.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CH-332

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY (PAGE # 0908825206)

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

JOHNSONTOWN BARN

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

1 MILE EAST OF FAIRGROUNDS ROAD AND  
THE CHARLES COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS

CITY, TOWN

La Plata

VICINITY OF Bel Alton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Charles

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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 type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Feimster, Inc., c/o Maurice B. Feimster Telephone #: 934-8751

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 584

CITY, TOWN

La Plata

VICINITY OF

Maryland

STATE, zip code

20646

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Charles County Courthouse

Liber #: 301

Folio #: 107

STREET & NUMBER

Charles Street (P.O. Box B)

CITY, TOWN

La Plata

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

NONE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<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 _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

A long, frame structure, the Johnsontown Barn was built in three stages, the newest part appearing to be a wagon shed that extends the full length of its southeast side.

The oldest part is at the south end of the main body of the barn and makes up about one-third of the barn's approximately 75-foot length. Of probable eighteenth century date, it retains its original false plate eaves construction and almost all of its original hewn and pinned framing. Its east wall, now sheltered by the wagon shed, still retains most of its original riven clapboard sheathing, secured in place with wrought nails, and several of the outer doors are hung on wrought strap hinges of an early type. In the early nineteenth century the barn was extended on the north end by about 50 feet. The manner in which the addition was constructed repeated that of the older part, including the use of the false plate. One particularly interesting feature of the addition is a single batten door hung on wood strap hinges with wood pintels. These wood hinges survive in a remarkably good state of repair, actually being more serviceable than the wrought iron eighteenth and nineteenth century hinges on the remaining doors. It is undoubtedly the presence of the wagon shed, believed built at or shortly after the time the addition was made to the original barn, that aided in the preservation of both the riven clapboards and the wood hinged door.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For a region where tobacco has been the chief agricultural commodity for well over three centuries, it is surprising that so few early structures relating to the cultivation, curing and marketing of tobacco survive. In Charles County there are less than ten pre-1800 tobacco barns. Two of these, the Johnstontown Barn and the barn at "The Exchange", are perhaps the most important in that they retain many of their early features, such as "false" plate eaves construction and riven clapboard sheathing. Besides their significance as tangible physical reminders of a socio-economic history influenced and supported by the tobacco market, they also serve to illustrate the length of time it took before certain early building practices were abandoned and succeeded by less complex structural systems. This is particularly evident at the Johnstontown Barn where a nineteenth century extension to the original structure duplicated the earlier framing system, including the tilted "false" plate. A batten side door of the addition, retaining its original wood strap hinges, is thought to be a unique survival.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Johnsontown is a 604-acre farm located east of U.S. Rt. 301, between U.S. 301 and MD. 558 (Spring Hill-Newtown Road), and bordered on the east by Clark's Run. It is identified as parcel No. 39 on Map 55 of the Charles County Tax Map (revised Jan. 1976).

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

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

J. Richard Rivoire, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Charles County Planning Department

DATE

January 1, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Charles County Courthouse

TELEPHONE

645-6537

CITY OR TOWN

La Plata

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  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

CH-332B Tobacco Barn Site  
Johnsontown Farm

Constructed  
Fall-Winter, 1830

Now only one corner and a bramble-covered heap of charred timbers remain of a 19th-century rendition of the 10 "room" tobacco house. The building, measuring approximately 40 by 25 ft., hung six levels ("tiers") of tobacco: three in the body and three in the roof. It was well constructed. All the wall posts were downbraced to the sills, and all the box frame joints were mortised and tenoned. The common rafter roof members were mortised and tenoned (at rafter apexes) and half-lapped (collar to rafter). The building was covered with shingles and sided with horizontal plank. Ventilation was provided by large louvered windows in the gables.

The construction of the Johnsontown tobacco house may have been triggered by a rise in tobacco prices, 1829 to 1830, from bad to fair (from \$2.50 to \$3.72 a hundred pounds).

References:

Marks, "Economics and Society," p.93

J. Richard Rivoire, Field Notes, Architectural file  
CH-332, St. Mary's City Commission

THE KEY-YEAR DENDROCHRONOLOGICAL  
PATTERN FOR THE OAKS OF  
MARYLAND'S WESTERN SHORE 1570-1980

American Institute of  
Dendrochronology

APPENDIX

Building Descriptions

Garry Wheeler Stone

Historic St. Mary's City

1987



CHAS-332

JOHNSONTOWN BARN; View From  
South. J.R.Rivoire, 1978



CHAS-332

JOHNSONTOWN BARN; Clapboards  
& Plate. J.R.Rivoire, 1978





CHAS-332

JOHNSONTOWN BARN; South Side  
Door. J.R.Rivoire, 1978



CHAS-332

JOHNSONTOWN BARN; South End

Door. J.R.Rivoire, 1978