

SM-123

St. Clement's Island Historic District

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 01-06-2004

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE

SM -123

ST. CLEMENTS ISLAND

Blakistone Island

17th & 19th centuries

St. Clements was the first landing site of the Ark and the Dove in Maryland, made on March 3, 1634. A mass of thanksgiving was celebrated by Father Andrew White on March 25, 1634 when Governor Leonard Calvert took formal possession of the colony and proclaimed religious freedom for all. The colonists moved to a second landing site at St. Mary's City on March 27, where a permanent settlement was made.

The island was occupied by Richard Ingle in the 1650's, during the Parliamentary troubles in England. During both the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, the British employed the island as a base of operations. In 1851 a lighthouse was built here. It was raided by the Confederates during the Civil War and the lens ^{was} destroyed. In 1934 a large cross was erected commemorating the first landing.

In recent years a pre-Columbian burial ossuary was discovered here. Around the remains of the St. Clements Island lighthouse are many 19th century artifacts. There is also a large 19th century trash pit on the island.

This property has been included on the National Register of Historic Places, U.S. Department of the Interior.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

On National Register
(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland	
COUNTY: St. Mary's	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
St. Clement's Island Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC: Blackstones Island; Blakestone Island, St. Clements Island; Blakistone Island & Blackistone Island & Blakiston Island

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
South of Colton Point in the Potomac River

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24 COUNTY: St. Mary's CODE: 037

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Maryland Department of Game and Inland Fish
(Contact: Guy Rogers, Land Manager)

STREET AND NUMBER: State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Hall of Records

STREET AND NUMBER: St. John's College Campus

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Maryland Register of historic sites and landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Maryland Historical Trust

STREET AND NUMBER: 50 State Circle (Post Office Box 1704)

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	Maryland
COUNTY:	St. Mary's
ENTRY NUMBER	
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FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. Clement's Island is located in the Potomac River south of Colton Point, St. Mary's County, a peninsula formed by St. Clement's Bay on the east and St. Catherine Sound in the Wicomico River.

St. Clement's Island in 1970 covers forty acres of land. In 1634 when Father Andrew White wrote about the island in his Relatio Intieris in Marilandium, it covered 400 acres. Erosion by the Potomac River has gradually reduced the island to one-tenth of its seventeenth-century size.

A cross erected at the south end of the Island in 1934 commemorates the 1634 landing on St. Clement's Island.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATES: (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Clement's Island has continuing international, national, state and local significance as a site of the declaration of religious freedom and democratic worship for the English settlers of America, thereby having continuous and personal meaning for each citizen and visitor to the United States. This enables each to follow the dictates of his or her own faith. The Island is strategically located to have helped provide for the defense of the Potomac River, and Washington, D. C., the nation's capital, during the respective eras covering the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the War Between the States and World Wars I and II.

On March 25, 1634 the immigrants arrived to settle the Second Lord Baltimore's proprietary colony. The colonists maneuvered the first landing on Maryland soil at St. Clement's Island and immediately erected a wooden cross. Once ashore, Leonard Calvert (1606-1647), a brother of Cecilus, Second Lord Baltimore, as leader of the expedition read the Second Lord Baltimore's Instructions: the first formal pronouncement granting freedom of religion among the settlers.

On March 25, 1634 on St. Clement's Island, the first Roman Catholic mass in Maryland was read by Father Andrew White.

Before the 1634 landing and before the discovery of America by Columbus, the island had been inhabited by Indians. In 1963 one Indian burial site containing pre-Columbian relics was uncovered.

St. Clement's Manor, including the Island, was the first manor granted by Lord Baltimore and its Lord, Thomas Gerard (Gerrard), played a significant role in seventeenth-century Maryland history.

The landing of colonists on St. Clement's Island represents the fruition of George Calvert's (1578/79-1632) dream of founding a colony in the new world. Calvert, the first Baron of Baltimore, First Lord Baltimore, advisor to James I and

(see continuation sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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St. Clement's Island Historic District

#8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued, pg. 2)

Charles I, in 1621, founded a colony of limited success in Newfoundland. Eleven years later Charles I granted him the Maryland charter for lands in the New World, stretching from the Delaware Bay to the "first fountain" of the Potomac River and from the Chesapeake Bay to the Atlantic Ocean. George Calvert died two months before the granting of the charter. His son, Cecilius Calvert (1605-1675--Second Lord Baltimore) carried out his father's colonial aspiration by sending his brother Leonard Calvert with two ships, the Ark and the Dove, and a party of immigrants to found a permanent settlement in Maryland.

Father Andrew White (1579-1656), a Jesuit, a correspondent of George Calvert, First Lord Baltimore, and co-organizer of the expedition, recorded the voyage, the landing, the erection of the wooden cross, and Leonard Calvert's reading of Lord Baltimore's Instructions containing specific provision for equal treatment to both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Marylanders pride themselves that of all the British colonies in North America, Maryland was the first one founded on religious equality, and toleration to all Christians. Father White remained in Maryland until 1644, serving as a parish priest and missionary to the Indians as well as Protestant colonists. He arranged for a series of Jesuit manors in Maryland whose income would support the activities of the Society of Jesus in that province.

The 400-acre island, named for St. Clement who had been thrown into the sea with an anchor around his neck, proved too small as the site of a permanent settlement. Leonard Calvert, guided by Henry Fleet, chose instead what was to become St. Mary's City on the eastern bank of the St. Mary's River.

Five years after the landing, in 1639, the Second Lord Baltimore patented St. Clement's Island, as a part of the 1030-acre St. Clement's Manor, to Dr. Thomas Gerard.

Gerard arrived in 1637 and quickly rose in colonial politics from juryman (1638) to member of the Governor's Council (1643). Embroiled in the turbulent events of mid-seventeenth-century Maryland, Gerard's property was damaged. Richard Ingle (1609-1653) an English merchant, and William Claiborne overthrew the proprietary government and forced Governor Leonard Calvert to flee to Virginia. In the name of the Protestant cause, led by Oliver Cromwell in England, Ingle pillaged St. Mary's County. Ingle is believed to have used the island as a base. The

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St. Clement's Island Historic District

8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued, pg. 3)

Catholics eventually regained control of their proprietary and Ingle returned to England.

In 1654 Thomas Gerard again became involved in a revolution. As a captain in the provincial Maryland army Gerard aided the defense of Maryland during the Puritan uprising (1654-1656). In 1660 Gerard turned against the proprietary rule in another rebellion joining the faction, supported by Governor Josias Fendall, aiming to overthrow the Calverts. The Maryland Assembly, including the rebellious lower house, met in Gerard's house and in his son-in-law's house, both on St. Clement's Manor, instead of meeting in St. Mary's City.

The coup d'etat modeled after the Cromwellian example lasted only a short while for in May 1660, with the return of the Stuarts to the English throne, the Calverts were restored to power which crushed the Fendall's Rebellion in Maryland. Gerard left Maryland, after the return of the Calverts, for his domain across the Potomac River in Westmoreland County, Virginia.

Thomas Gerard had ten children, two of whom were married, at different times, to Colonel John Washington, great-grandfather of George Washington. His granddaughter Rebecca Gerard married Charles Calvert, Governor of Maryland (1720-1727). When Gerard's landholdings were divided his daughter Elizabeth, wife of Nehemiah Blakistone, received St. Clement's Island. In the eighteenth century the island became known as Blackistone (Blakistone) Island, named after the owner's family--descendants of Nehemiah Blackistone; on July 13, 1965 the Board of Geographic Names of the United States, Department of the Interior, renamed it St. Clement's Island.

During the American Revolution, and again during the War of 1812, the British based operations there, blockading, sacking and looting plantations on the Chesapeake Bay, the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers. Thomas Sim Lee wrote to Richard Barnes describing a British ship sighted off Blakistone Island which sailed up the Potomac River.

During the War of 1812, the Daily National Intelligence reported that on July 21, 1813, several British ships had taken possession of Blackistone's and Cheseldines' (St. Katherine's, St. Catherine's) Islands where they had sunk wells for water. There is little doubt that they continued to use these natural fortresses until the end of the war. It was from Blackistone

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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St. Clement's Island Historic District

#8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued, pg. 4)

Island on August 27, 1814, that Admiral George Cockburn (1772-1853), of the Royal Navy, with 1200 marines and 40 sailors, landed on the farm of John Kilgour at the mouth of St. Clement's Bay and systematically sacked the area. Admiral Cockburn commanded the British fleet in the Chesapeake Bay that attacked Baltimore and burned Washington, D. C.

During the Civil War, Confederates raided the island with intent to destroy the lighthouse, built during the 1850's. Considerable variance exists between the stories of Captain Goldsmith who led the raid and Commander Foxhall A. Parker of the Federal Potomac flotilla. Commander Parker, of course, minimized the damage which Captain Goldsmith maximized; Goldsmith, a St. Mary's countian from "Enfield," had crossed the Potomac and joined the Confederate Service. On May 19, 1864, Goldsmith landed on St. Clement's Island during the night, destroyed the lens and the lamp and made off with the oil.

Legend says it had been his intention to dynamite the lighthouse, but the keeper's wife, Mrs. Jerome McWilliams, was expecting a baby and her time was near. Jerome McWilliams, who knew Goldsmith, pleaded his wife's condition and that her life would be endangered if moved, so Goldsmith abandoned this part of the plan; that Goldsmith proposed to take McWilliams as a prisoner of war but Mrs. McWilliams frustrated him by insisting that Goldsmith take her too; that after the Confederates had left, Mr. McWilliams heroically signalled the Federal forces at Point Lookout and repaired the light before the Union men arrived or the Confederates had reached the Virginia shore.

During World War I and World War II, St. Clement's Island formed part of the United States Navy's defenses of Washington, D. C.

On July 24, 1963, an Indian, pre-Columbian burial site was discovered on the eroded east bank. The bones, potsherds and relics, protected by several feet of oyster shells were removed to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. It is probable other Indian burials exist there.

The island passed through various owners including descendants of the Blakistone, McWilliams, Coombs families; through a coffee company ownership and a beer-garden recreational area and successive private owners; an organized town plan was drafted but never materialized.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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#8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued, pg. 5)

On March 4, 1919, the President of the United States took title for Secretary of the Navy (Public Law #140, approved April 26, 1918) of the 66 acres and lighthouse. The land was farmed and a machine shop run for the watermen before World Wars I and II when it was used as protection for the Potomac River approach to Washington, D. C.

The lighthouse was destroyed by lightning on July 18, 1956 after which the ruins became a hazard to visitors and the Navy dynamited the remains.

Between 1942 and 1962 the St. Mary's County Historical Society endeavored to preserve the island from erosion. In March 1962 the United States Department of the Navy returned the property to the State of Maryland, Department of Game and Inland Fish. By agreement between this Department and the St. Mary's County Historical Society, twelve acres around the Cross, erected in 1934, commemorates the tercentenary of the landing on St. Clement's Island as a memorial area under the temporary jurisdiction of the St. Mary's Historical Society. A 30-foot path runs from the wharf and landing on the north side of the Island, extending along the east bank to the memorial area on the south.

#9. REFERENCES (continued)

David Spalding, "Thomas Gerard: The Study of a Lord of the Manor and the Advantages of Manor Holdings in Early Maryland," Chronicles of St. Mary's, VII (July 1959), 61-82.

Robert E. T. Pogue, Yesterday in Old St. Mary's County, New York: Carlton Press, 1968.

Edwin W. Beitzell, "St. Clement's Manor," Chronicles of St. Mary's, XII (April 1964), 32-33.

Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History, 4 vols, The Settlements, Vol. II, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.

Edwin W. Beitzell, "A History of St. Clement's Island," Blessing of the Fleet, St. Clement's Island, printed brochure, [?1969], files of the Maryland Historical Trust.

(continued)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Recorders: Edwin W. Beitzell, Gerard's Cove, Abell, Maryland;
Nancy Miller, Historian, Maryland Historical Trust,
P. O. Box 1704, Annapolis, Maryland, March 1970.

J. Thomas Scharf, A History of Maryland From the Earliest
Period to the Present Day, 3 vols., Baltimore: John B.
Piet, 1879.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	38° 13' 31"	76° 45' 52"				
NE	38° 13' 31"	76° 44' 20"				
SE	38° 12' 01"	76° 44' 20"				
SW	38° 12' 01"	76° 45' 52"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1,499 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Mrs. Preston Parish, Keeper of the Maryland Register

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust DATE: Nov. 18, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:
50 State Circle (P. O. Box 1704)

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Orlando Ridout IV
Orlando Ridout IV

Title State Liaison Officer
for Maryland

Date NOV 18 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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STATE Maryland	
COUNTY St. Mary's	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

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St. Clement's Island Historic District

#9. REFERENCES (continued)

_____, "Thomas Gerard and His Sons-In-Law," Chronicles of St. Mary's, X (October-November 1962), 300-311.

St. Mary's County, Land Records, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

St. Mary's County, Wills, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

Archives of Maryland IV Judicial and Testamentary Business of the Provincial Court 1637-1650, Baltimore; Maryland Historical Society, 1887.

_____, XLVII Journal and Correspondence of the State Council of Maryland (Letters to the Governor and Council) 1781, Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1930.

Dictionary of American Biography, 22 vols, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922, XX 87-88.

Dictionary of National Biography, 63 vols., New York: MacMillian, 1887, XI, 184-186.

SM-123

M L E S T O W N

CANOE RM

Shipping Pt

N O 7

RAILS

Clem Pt

BLAKISTON ISLAND QUADRANGLE

USGS 7.5 minute map

scale: 1: 24 000

Fresh Pond

revised 1946

Long Pt

NEWTOWN

NECK

Payne Pt

ROOF

PROVING

GROUND

ST CLEMENT RM

Cornish Pt

Kaywood Pt

L E O N A R D

Heron Island Bar

BLAKISTON ISLAND SHOAL LT

BLAKISTON ISLAND

MARTIN

BLAKISTON I LIGHTHOUSE



P O T O M A C

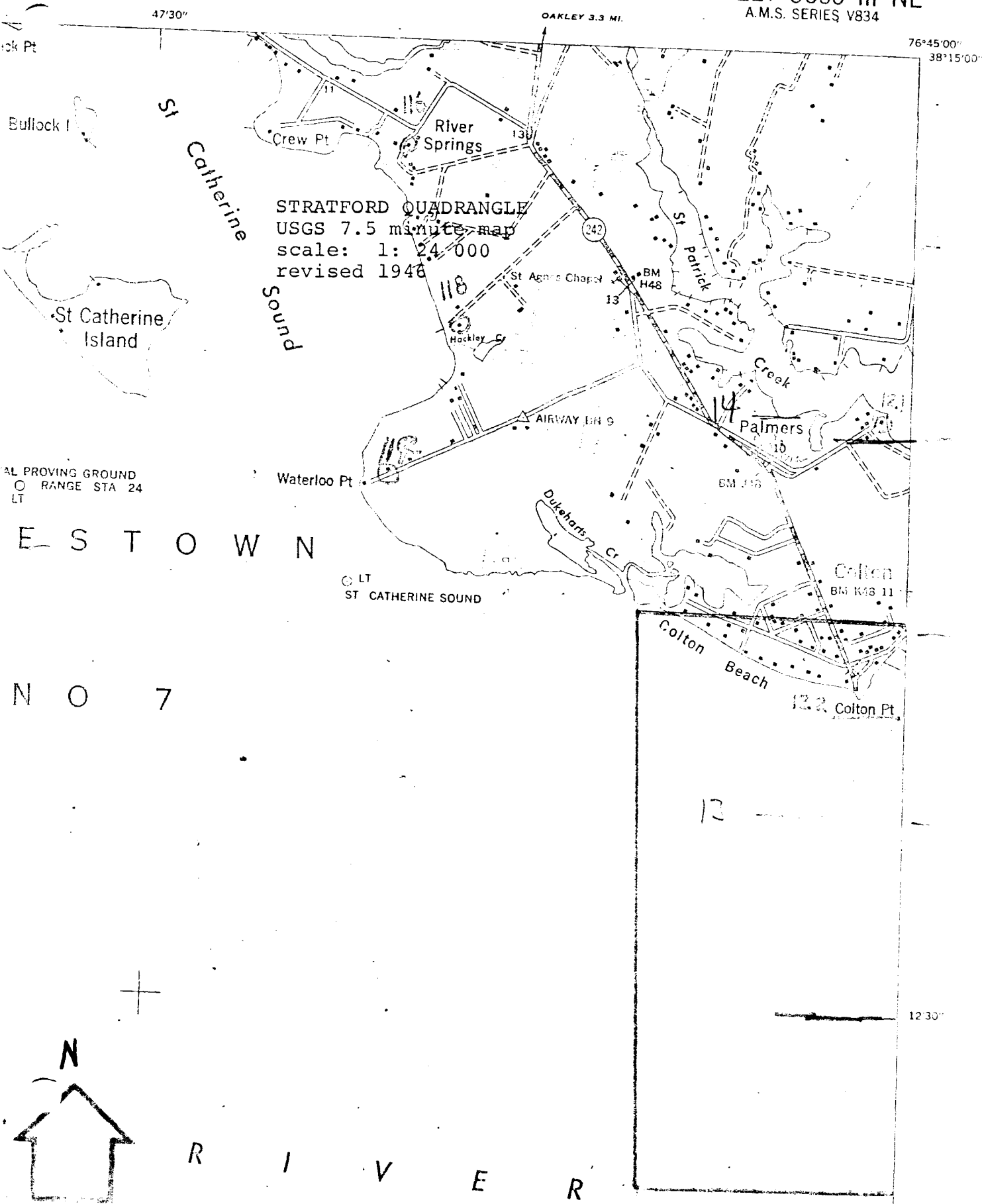
St Clement Bay

Back Creek

St Patrick Cr

30

SHEET 5660 III NE
A.M.S. SERIES V834



E S T O W N

N O 7

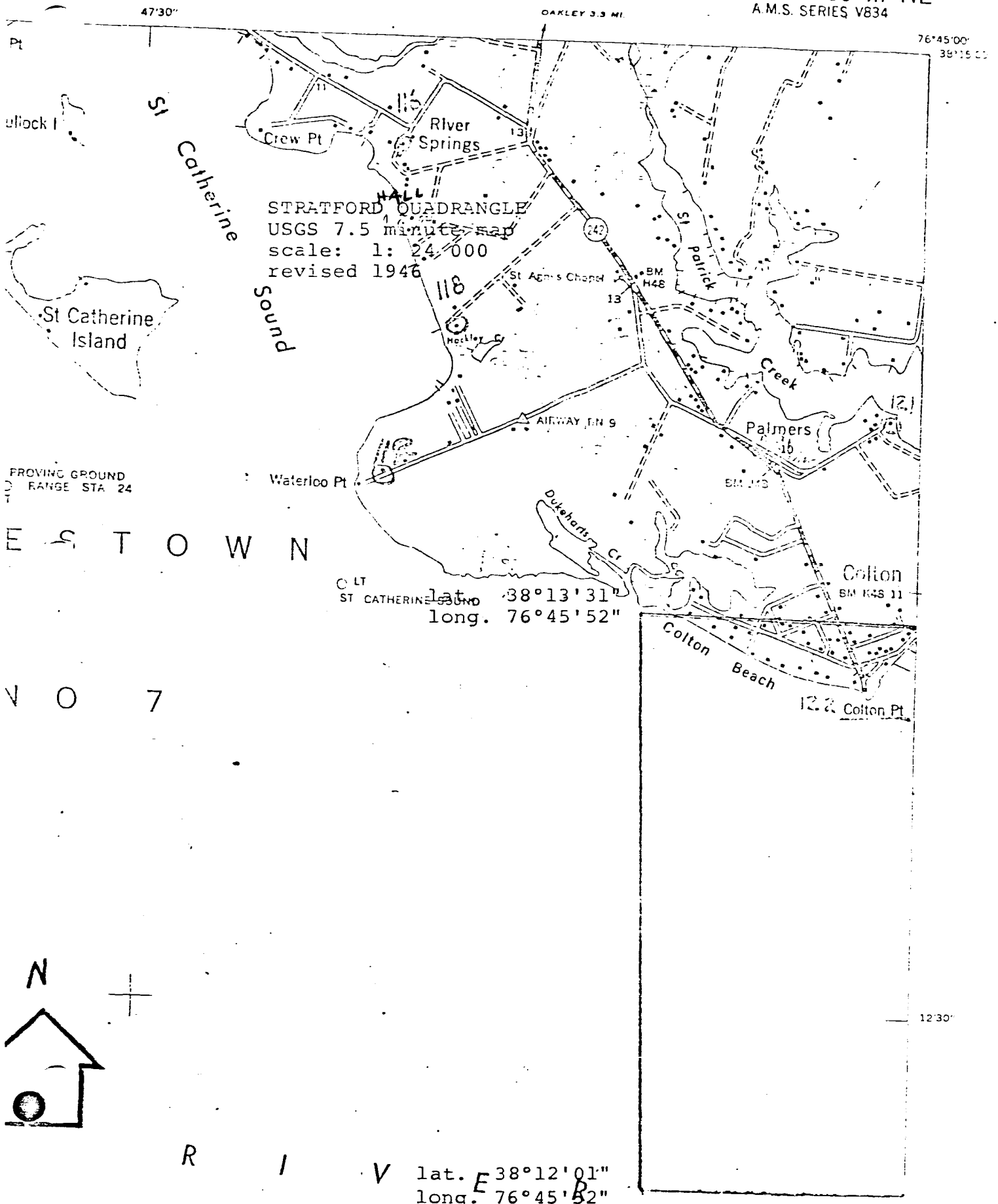


R I V E R

12 30"

ST. CLEMENT'S ISLAND HISTORIC DISTRICT
west segment (1 of 2 map sections)

SHEET 5660 III NE
A.M.S. SERIES V834



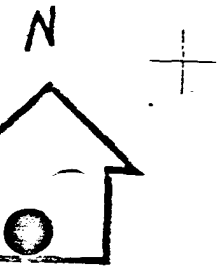
STRATFORD QUADRANGLE
USGS 7.5 minute map
scale: 1:24,000
revised 1946

lat. $38^{\circ}13'31''$
long. $76^{\circ}45'52''$

lat. $38^{\circ}12'01''$
long. $76^{\circ}45'52''$

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SM-123

M I L E S T O W N

RAILS

Clim Pt

N O 7

CANOE RM Shipping Pt

St. Clements
BLAKISTON ISLAND QUADRANGLE
USGS 7.5 minute map
scale: 1: 24 000
revised 1946

Fresh Pond

Bay

Long Pt

NEWTOWN NECK

Payne Pt

ROOF

PROVING GROUND

ST CLEMENT RM
Cornish Pt

Kaywood Pt

St Clement Bay

L E O N A R D

lat. 38°13'31"
long. 76°44'20"

Heron Island Bar

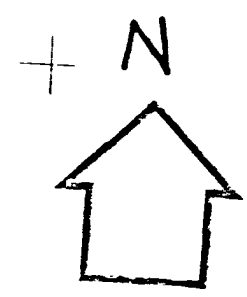
BLAKISTON ISLAND SHOAL LT

BLAKISTON ISLAND

MARTIN

BLAKISTON LIGHTHOUSE

lat. 38°12'01"
long. 76°44'20"



P O T O M A C

ST. CLEMENT'S ISLAND HISTORIC DISTRICT
east segment (2 of 2 map sections)



ST. CLEMENT'S ISLAND SM-123

MAY
PLEASE CREDIT

Photograph By

MAY 24 1969

Richard Weeks



SM-123

Percent original Cross St. Clement's Island - NR Hist Dist. - damaged from 1973?