

CH-701

Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse and Office

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: 11-21-2003

Doctor Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse and Office
CH-701
Wayside
Private

1899

Established at the turn of the 20th century, the Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse and Office, also known as "Pleasant View" is situated on a high rise overlooking the Potomac River valley in Cobb Neck. The 87 acre farm is anchored by an attractive Victorian farmhouse surrounded by a few domestic and agricultural outbuildings including a smokehouse, dairy, corncrib and ruinous stable. The frame two-story, three bay I-House is one room deep, and embellished with a characteristic decorative center gable and wrap-around porch. A two-story rear service wing extending from the northwest corner forms an overall L-plan. Victorian ornamentation consists of bracketed porch columns and fishscale shingles in the porch gable. Extensive landscaping in the form of terracing is visible in the steep decline from the dwelling's façade to the main road.

Thomas Lawson Higdon was born in 1868 near Pisgah at his family home known as "Planter's Delight". He graduated from Charlotte Hall Military Academy in 1889 and after teaching for several years, entered medical school at Georgetown University and the University Baltimore. Soon after receiving his M.D. in 1898, he set up an office at his home serving the maritime and agricultural communities of the Cobb Neck region until his retirement around 1950. One of his notable accomplishments was the establishment of an early health insurance policy with local organizations including the Watermen and Oystermen Association and the Willing Helpers Association. In 1989, a nearby elementary school was renamed in his honor.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. Ch-701

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse and Office

other

2. Location

street and number 11060 Milton Hill Place ___ not for publication

city, town Wayside ___ vicinity

county Charles

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

name Thomas L. Higdon Jr. et al

street and number P.O. Box 236 telephone Unknown

city, town LaPlata state MD zip code 20646-0236

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 83 p.22

city, town LaPlata liber 1923 folio 367

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	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
___ district	___ public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	___ landscape	___ 1 ___ buildings
___ structure	___ both	___ commerce/trade	___ 5 ___ sites
___ site		___ defense	___ 6 ___ structures
___ object		___ domestic	___ Total
		___ education	
		___ funerary	
		___ government	
		___ health care	
		___ industry	
		___ recreation/culture	
		___ religion	
		___ social	
		___ transportation	
		___ work in progress	
		___ unknown	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		___ other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0

7. Description

Inventory No. Ch-701

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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

Established at the turn of the 20th century, the Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse and Office is situated on a high rise overlooking the expansive cultivated fields of the Potomac River valley in Cobb Neck. The 87 acre farm is anchored by an attractive Victorian farmhouse that faces southwest. The dwelling is surrounded by a few domestic and agricultural outbuildings including a smokehouse, dairy, corncrib and ruinous stable. The frame two-story, three-bay I-House is one room deep, and embellished with a characteristic decorative center gable and wrap-around porch. A two-story rear service wing extending from the northwest corner forms an overall L-plan. Victorian ornamentation consists of bracketed porch columns and fishscale siding in the porch gable. Extensive landscaping, in the form of terracing is visible in the steep decline from the dwelling's façade to the main road.

The dwelling rests on a brick pier and infill foundation. The standing seam metal roof is pierced by two interior brick chimneys and equipped with a weathervane and lightning rod. The cornice is boxed and a decorative center gable holds a 3-light arched window. Original working shutters and 2/2 windows are found throughout with the likely exception of paired 6/6 windows in the rear wing of the dwelling. The hipped roof porch rests on concrete piers and is adorned with a decorative center gable of a lesser pitch than the center gable of the main block. Original weatherboard siding has been reclad with asbestos shingles.

The symmetrical façade includes three bays with three windows above and two below. A transom and sidelights surround the centered entry way. Moving clockwise, the northwest gable elevation has single windows, centered on each of the first and second stories. On this elevation, the service wing exterior wall is flush with the main block and holds four asymmetrical windows on the second story. The first floor includes two 2/2 windows near the main block and a pair of 6/6 windows to the rear. The rear gable elevation of the kitchen wing is without fenestration. The southeast elevation of the service wing includes three second story windows. The first floor has two door and two windows. One door is sheltered by the wrap-around porch. The other, flanked by windows, is open. The rear of the main block consists of a single second story window in the southernmost bay and one directly underneath on the first floor. A fourth door is found near the interior service wing corner.

The interior was not available for study at the time of the survey.

OUTBUILDINGS

To the west of the dwelling stand a pair of front gable outbuildings facing the drive. Both are sheathed in vertical board siding and attached with late machine cut nails. Each has a centered vertical plank door. The larger of the two served as a smokehouse stands on a fieldstone pier foundation. The other, believed to be a dairy, includes single windows on each of the eave walls. This structure, believed to be a dairy is entirely paneled with closely laid interior plank.

A small front gable corncrib with a metal roof stands to the northeast of the dwelling. It has a centered vertical plank door. The frame is exposed with narrow slats nailed to the interior of the structure. Near the corncrib is a collapse stable.

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Standing roughly opposite the smokehouse and dairy, the doctor's office is a one story front gable building built into a slope. The frame structure, sheathed in original novelty siding, rests on a poured concrete basement accessed from the rear elevation. A shed roof porch resting on narrow turned wooden posts protects the dual entryway flanked by windows on the exterior. Two windows are set symmetrically on either eave wall, while the rear elevation is without fenestration. All windows, doors and hardware appear to be original as does the pressed tin roof. The porch floor is of poured concrete. A small square 4-light window is set in the center of the front gable above the porch.

8. Significance

Inventory No. Ch-701

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

Specific dates	1900-1939	Architect/Builder	Unknown
Construction dates	1900		

Evaluation for:

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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse and Office is an outstanding example of late 19th century architecture and one of only a few examples of a intact physician's office in Charles County. Thomas Lawson Higdon was born in 1868 near Pisgah at his family home known as Planter's Delight. After attending Charles County schools he graduated from Charlotte Hall Military Academy in 1889. Higdon taught for several years and then entered medical school at Georgetown University and later the University of Baltimore. He received his M.D. in 1898. Soon after he established an office at his home, also known as "Pleasant View". Higdon practiced there until his retirement around 1950.

Dr. Higdon primarily served the maritime and agricultural communities of the Cobb Neck region. In 1989, a nearby elementary school, constructed on land owned by his wife Ella Norris, was renamed in his honor. At the time of the school's dedication, local residents recounted memories of this country doctor who visited patients in a horse and buggy. At times he would travel to the water's edge, before meeting fishermen to escort him to treat lighthouse operators in Morgantown and Cobb Point. His fee schedule was \$1 for an office visit, \$2 for a house call and \$5 for a night visit. Higdon arranged an early health insurance policy with local organizations. Patients who belonged to the Waterman and Oysterman Association and the Willing Helpers Association paid premiums of \$1 a month and the associations paid Higdon \$1 for his treatment, including medicine. Country doctors provided the only form of medical care in Charles County until the construction of the first Physicians Memorial Hospital in 1939.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. Ch-701

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 10

Acreage of historical setting 87

Quadrangle name Colonial Beach North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

Verbal boundary description and justification

This property is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 83, Parcel 22.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning Dept.

date 8/10/01

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

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-701

Section 8 Page 1

Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse & Office
name of property
Charles County, MD
county and state

Chain of title:

February 24, 1994	Thomas L. Higdon, Jr. to heirs. Part of Milton Hill. 87.61 a. 1923:367
April 11, 1972	Thomas L. Higdon for Ella R. Higdon estate to heirs. 253:237
April 18, 1899	Rachael and William Hamilton and Anne L. and A.T. Lloyd to Ella R. Higdon. (Real estate of late Dr. Patrick Hamilton allotted to Mary C. Sheiburn) 87.61 acres. 9:626

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No.CH-701

Section 9 Page 1

Dr. Thomas L. Higdon Farmhouse & Office
name of property
Charles County, Maryland
county and state

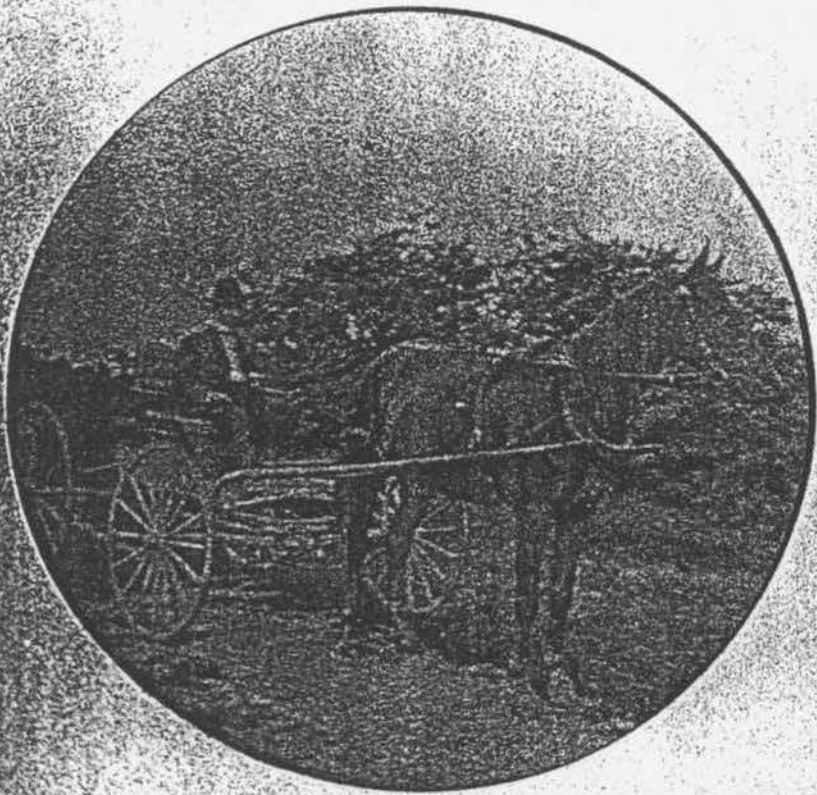
Major Bibliographic References:

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.

Vertical File & Documents Room, Southern Maryland Studeis Center,
College of Southern Maryland. LaPlata, MD



Thos. L. Higdon
(ca. 1898)

SOUTHERN MARYLAND STUDIES CENTER
COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN MARYLAND
LA PLATA, MD
850195 - # 83 thru 85
Persons - Thomas Higdon

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

Date: 7/01

North arrow:



Name: DR. T. L. HIGDON FARMHOUSE & OFFICE

Address: 11060 MILTON HILL PLACE

CH - 701

Charles County, Maryland

WAYSIDE Vicinity

ROCK POINT ROAD

TERRACING

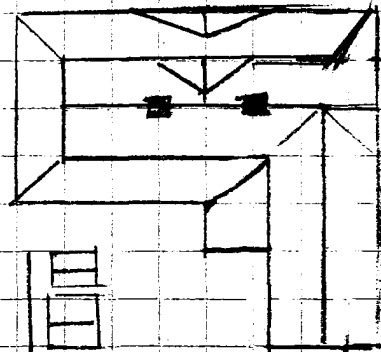
DWELLING

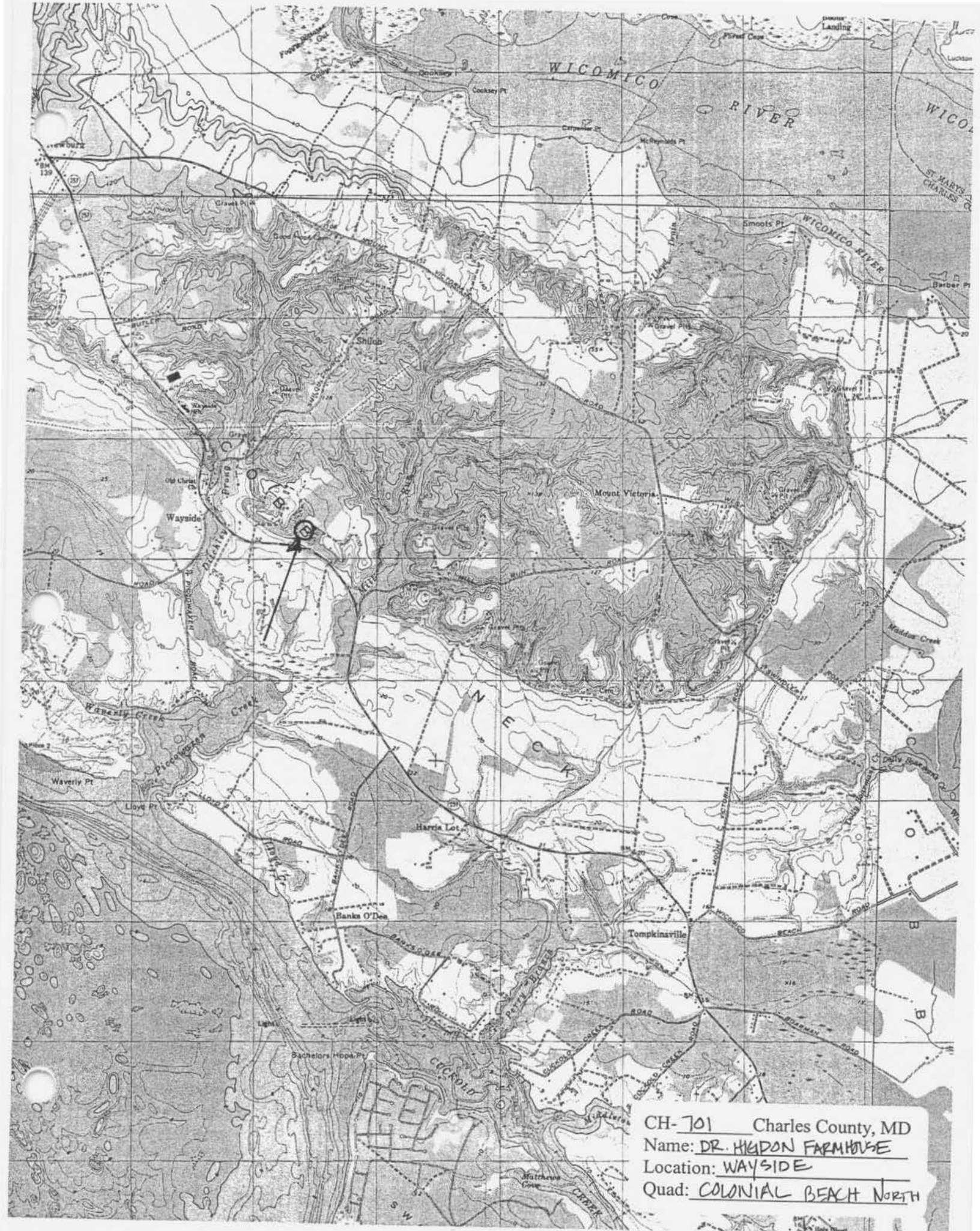
OFFICE

MILKHOUSE/
SMOKEHOUSE

RUINOUS STABLE

CORNCRIB





CH-701 Charles County, MD
Name: DR. HIGDON FARMHOUSE
Location: WAYSIDE
Quad: COLONIAL BEACH NORTH



CH-701

Dr. Thomas Higdon Farmhouse

Charles Co, MD

C. Currey

8/2001

MD SHPO

LOOKING NE

10F 2



CH-701

Dr. Thomas Higdon Farmhouse

Charles Co., MD

C Currey

8/2001

MD SHPO

LOOKING SW

20F6

↓ JOL



CH-701

Dr Thomas Higdon Farmhouse

Charles Co, MD

C. Currey

8/2001

MD SHPO

LOOKING S

3016



CH-701

Dr. Thomas Higdon Farmhouse

Charles Co, MD

C. Currey

8/2001

MD SHPO

SMOKEHOUSE & DAIRY, LOOKING NW

4 OF 6

CH-701



CH-701

Dr. Thomas Higdon Farmhouse

Charles Co., MD

C. Currey

8/2001

MD SHPO

OFFICE, FACING SE

5066

5066-6



CH-101

Dr. Thomas Higdon Farmhouse

Charles Co., MD

C. Curry

8/2001

MD 5480

BENHOUSE

6076