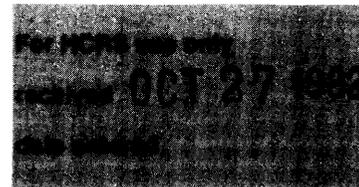


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic The Oaks II (preferred)

and/or common The Riggs Farm

2. Location

street & number 5815 Riggs Rd. N/A not for publication

city, town Laytonsville X vicinity of Eighth congressional district

state Maryland code 24 county Montgomery code 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Montgomery County Government; Charles W. Gilchrist, County Executive

street & number 101 Monroe Street

city, town Rockville _____ vicinity of state Maryland 20850

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse

street & number _____

city, town Rockville state Maryland 20850

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust
Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1972 federal state county local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

M-23-26

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>October 1980</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Oaks II is an early 19th century, 1-½ story gambrel roofed log dwelling with a one-story gable-roofed kitchen wing. The principal (south) facade is four bays wide, spanned by a one-story open porch. Entrances in each of the two central bays betoken a double-parlor first floor plan, unusual in the Central Maryland area. These entrances are flanked by 6/6 sash. The one-story kitchen wing which adjoins to the east is two bays wide, with an entrance in its western bay and a 6/6 window to the east. The entire building is clad in unadorned weatherboards, over full-dovetail log construction. An unusual feature of log construction technology appears at the door openings, where the logs are tenoned into slotted vertical posts. This feature is unrecorded elsewhere in Maryland. On the interior, the chairrail, window trim, and fine paneled mantel wall in the southeast parlor are original, as are the vertical board partition between the parlors, its six-panel door, and the chairrail and closet door in the southwest parlor. Original trim also survives in the three bedrooms on the upper floor; the second-floor hallway spanning the south side of the building is another uncommon feature of this house. The house and three 19th-century outbuildings were moved from their original location one-half mile away in October 1980, when the previous site was developed as a landfill.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Presently situated in a sparsely wooded area on the northwest side of Riggs Road northeast of Laytonsville, Montgomery County, Maryland, the Oaks II is an early 19th century gambrel-roofed dwelling with an adjoining one story gable-roofed kitchen. Both the main block and the addition are constructed of logs connected with full dovetail notching and chinked with wood chips, mud, and stones. An unusual feature of log construction technology, previously unrecorded in Maryland, is evident at the door openings: here the logs are tenoned into slotted vertical posts. Beaded weatherboards survive on the gable wall between the main block and the kitchen wing, giving evidence of the original sheathing material; the building is presently clad with simpler, unadorned weatherboards. In the main section, a huge exterior brick chimney with corbel capping is located on the west gambrel wall; a smaller interior brick chimney rises above the east facade. The kitchen wing displays a massive exterior stone-based chimney on its east gable wall.

The main block which faces south is four bays wide with a one-story open porch spanning the front. The porch with its standing seam tin roof and porch posts appears to have replaced an earlier porch. Entrances are found in the two central bays. Windows with 6/6 sash flank these doors.

Both the door and window trim are Victorian modifications. Three shallow pedimented gable-roofed dormers pierce the wood-shingled gambrel roof. The west facade is characterized by a single 6/6 sashed window to the north of the chimney. Two smaller 4/2 sashed windows flank the chimney at attic level. Molded rakeboards and shallow cornice returns further define this facade. The rear (north) facade is very plain; a doorway opposite the main facade's west entrance and a small 6/6 sashed window to the east. The steep gambrel roof is also distinguished by three shallow pedimented gable-roofed dormers.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

8. Significance

M-23-26

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 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 1797-1814 Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Applicable Criterion: C

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Oaks II achieves significance for its architecture as a well-preserved log constructed dwelling dating from the turn of the 19th century (1797-1814), embodying a unique combination of several features of form plan, and construction, all of which are highly unusual in its geographical area of Central Maryland. The gambrel roof form characterized dwellings in the Tidewater region of Maryland from the latter half of the 18th century into the 19th, but was seldom used as far west as Montgomery County. Similarly, the Oaks II's double-parlor first-floor plan is commonly associated with Pennsylvania, and is rarely found south of the northern and northwestern counties of Maryland. The transvers-hall second-floor plan is a unique variation of a configuration only occasionally seen on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Moreover, the Oaks II presents the only recorded example in Maryland of a variation in log construction technology: logs tenoned into slotted vertical posts at doorway openings. The survival of a great deal of original interior detailing enhances the architectural significance of the Oaks II; chairrails, baseboards, window trim, paneled doors, and a fine paneled mantel wall remain intact.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

In 1797 Samuel Riggs acquired two parcels of land from Isaac and Hannah Briggs.¹ When Riggs died in 1814 he left to his son, Reuben, 222½ acres "where he now lives." An additional note in his will (probated in Montgomery County 7/15/1814) states that this land was the property Reuben's father acquired from the Briggs' on December 9, 1797. County tax records of 1804 also list Reuben Riggs owning a 222½-acre farm in this vicinity. This information suggests that the house, The Oaks II, was erected between 1797 and 1814 and probably between 1797 and 1804 by Reuben Riggs. In analyzing the building's fabric, a construction date within this time period appears plausible.

Reuben Riggs, born May 25, 1775, married in February 1805 Mary Willson Thomas also from a prominent Montgomery County family. As a prosperous gentleman farmer, Riggs continued to expand his estate. At one time he owned 800 acres.² After his death in 1829, his widow Mary and her unmarried son Hezekiah remained at The Oaks II. Reuben's oldest son Samuel of R received a nearby tract of land totaling 282½ acres where he and his wife Milcah Griffith renovated the Oaks I.³ This house was probably built by Samuel of R's grandfather, Samuel. After the death of Hezekiah in 1851 the Oaks II farm was also acquired by Samuel of R.

Samuel of R continued to purchase property, owning at one time almost 1,000 acres of rich farmland.⁴ He also pursued a political career, serving as county commissioner from 1856-1861 and as delegate in the State House from 1867-1874. Under his ownership The Oaks II was no longer occupied by members of the Riggs

9. Major Bibliographical References

M-23-26

See Continuation Sheet #5

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 5 acres

Quadrangle name Sandy Spring Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>18</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>7</u> <u>1</u> <u>10</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>10</u> <u>6</u> <u>14</u> <u>10</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>18</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>1</u> <u>10</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>10</u> <u>5</u> <u>12</u> <u>10</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>18</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>10</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>10</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>10</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D	<u>1</u> <u>18</u>	<u>3</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>6</u> <u>10</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>10</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>10</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries are delineated on the attached map labeled Boundary Map. For boundary justification see Continuation Sheet #6

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
<u>N/A</u>			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Orlando Ridout, V, Mark R. Edwards, Bridget D. Hartman, Anne Wolfe, Peter Kurtze

organization Maryland Historical Trust

date August 1982

street & number 21 State Circle

telephone (301) 269-2438

city or town Annapolis

state Maryland 21401

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

10-20-82

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

date

For NCRS use only

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

date 11/30/82

Special Agent in Charge

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Oaks II

Continuation sheet Montgomery County, Maryland Item number 7 Page 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The one story kitchen wing to the east is two bays wide with its primary entrance located in the western bay of the south facade. A six over six sashed window is found to the east. A lean-to frame addition extends across the north facade. Unadorned rakeboards outline the east gable end.

Interior

The main building's first-floor plan, a double parlor floor plan which features single doors on the southern facade leading into each room, is a plan generally associated with Pennsylvania and northern and western counties in Maryland. The southeast parlor exhibits a very fine paneled mantel wall, complete with six-panel door which leads through a lobby to the mid-nineteenth century one-room addition. The chairrail and trim around the 6/6 windows are original. In the upper sash can be read "Sam Riggs and Buffalo Bill, Decem 1885." A modern pantry closet, which replaced a corner cupboard removed by the Letts family after 1930, has been inserted to the left of the mantel. A modern door leads into the pantry, which is now covered with thin 20th century vertical board paneling. A post 1930s mantel shelf built by Mr. Austin Geisbert now covers the original fireplace.

An original thin vertical board partition wall separates the two parlors. The door separating both rooms appears to be original, complete with six raised panels but later box lock. Later molding, a Victorian four-panel door on the north (rear) facade of the house and a simple mantel replacing the original have altered the character of the room, but much of the original decorative material remains. Here, the chairrail is intact, and a paneled door to a closet below the stairs reveals a number of wrought iron nails with rose heads and flat points (corroborating the pre-1814 construction date). Later but still historically significant names are scratched into the panes of the windows in the western gable and read "Ruxton Ridgely Nov. 27, 1892" and below it "Louisa Lilly Riggs Nov. 27, 1892." A small face is also etched into one pane.

A tight winder stair in the southwest corner of this parlor rises to the second floor. The second-floor plan is one of the most unusual features of the building. A hallway runs the entire length of the southern facade, leading to a door which opens into a space between the main block and the addition. A ladder leads to the attic (here, early machine cut nails - brads, for securing the attic flooring - were located, also pointing to a very early 19th century date) and through the gable end of the building into a small sleeping quarters above the addition. The hallway is highlighted by contrasting paint colors - cream on the baseboards, door rails and styles, and darker leaf green on the remaining stair balusters and wall surfaces. Three bedrooms of equal size are found on the other side of an original vertical beaded board partition which runs the length of the hall. The first and third doors are original, but with a minor variation: instead of the top two panels, three panes of glass forming a transom have been built in.

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2)

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Oaks II

Continuation sheet Montgomery County, Maryland Item number 7 Page 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

As with the rooms on the first floor, much of the original fabric can be found. In the northwest bedroom the chairrail and baseboards are intact. The mantel has been removed. The central bedroom retains original chairrail and baseboards, and has a window pane reading "S. Riggs Jan 11 1886." The northeast bedroom exhibits original trim, but has also had its fireplace blocked.

Three outbuildings (probably of somewhat later 19th century date) associated with the Oaks II house were also moved to the present site, and located so as to replicate their original orientations and juxtaposition. They include:

A shed, located about 25' northeast of the main house, a nearly square, gable-roofed frame structure of board and batten siding. Corner posts and plates are hand cut square members. Measuring 10' 6" X 14', the building appears to be used for storage.

Immediately to the east of this structure is the smokehouse. This building, measuring 14' 2" X 14' 2" is a board and batten structure. Its gable roof is covered with corrugated iron over its original dark green shingles. The blackened interior shows hand-hewn posts which support similar hand-hewn plates. A shelf running along the western facade appears original.

About 55' west of the shed is a curious building most recently used as a chicken coop but whose original use is unknown. Its heavy post and lintel framing system, hand-hewn, suggests that this structure is perhaps the oldest of the group. The construction features include windbracing at the corners, and hand-hewn rafters butt-jointed and pegged. It is sheathed with board and batten siding and has a feather-edged shingle roof.

THE MOVING OF THE OAKS II

The Montgomery County Government purchased The Oaks II farm, a 550-acre tract, from the estate of John C. Letts for use as a sanitary landfill. The county, realizing both its need to find a suitable location for this facility and its responsibility to preserve the county and the state's cultural resources, chose this site since it appeared that this location would affect the least number of known cultural resources. The obvious adverse impact on this architecturally and historically significant complex, however, prompted the county government to take the following action. The historic area work permit for the construction of the landfill was issued contingent upon several conditions. These conditions have been fulfilled:

1. The main building at the Oaks II farmstead and three outbuildings (the shed, the smokehouse, and the storage shed) have been moved intact to a new site. (See attached plat.)
2. The water tower and the pumphouse were made available to Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning for their use.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3

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Oaks II

Continuation sheet Montgomery County, Maryland Item number 7 Page 3

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

3. An archeological survey of the original site, performed by the Maryland Historical Trust, was executed prior to construction of the landfill.
4. A positive easement on the property will be given to The Maryland Historical Trust indicating that the restoration of both the interior and the exterior of the farmhouse would occur. The easement would cover both the exterior and the interior of the farmhouse. The county will make every effort to provide funds for the restoration through either its own channels or outside support.
5. The move of the complex has been fully documented.
6. A professional contractor who specializes in moving historic buildings has been employed by the County.
7. A minimum 5-acre site has been selected for the buildings. This site, located directly across Riggs Road, is topographically similar to the original site, and was part of the holdings of the Riggs family at the time of the construction of Oaks II.
8. The Historic Preservation Commission of Montgomery County will work with the Laytonsville community in attempts to establish plans for the adaptive reuse of the buildings.
9. The Oaks II complex will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

While there appeared to be no feasible alternative for the preservation of The Oaks II at its original site, the Montgomery County Government made great efforts to properly relocate the complex.

The setting and the general environment of the current site is topographically similar to the original site. Located not more than one-half mile west of the old site, this parcel of land was part of the original tract of land farmed by the Riggs family. The house and outbuildings were located on the site in such a way as to replicate their original orientation and juxtaposition.

In its previous location, the property's architectural integrity was seriously threatened. Used as a storage building by its previous owner, the main building had been abandoned for many years. The house and outbuildings have received minimal maintenance. While these buildings have escaped severe structural damage and have retained a surprising amount of their original fabric, they are in need of preservation attention. In moving these structures and committing itself to their restoration, the county has saved and preserved a group of buildings of great architectural significance.

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (Continued)

family but tenanted by a farm manager, Henry Crockett, who supervised the extensive farm operations for Samuel of R.

Samuel of R's son, Reuben, inherited the farm after his father's death in 1882. It appears that the Oaks II continued to function as housing for the farm employees. After Reuben's death in 1910 his sons ran the farm. Samuel Haines and his family rented The Oaks II from Sam Riggs II.

After more than one hundred years of Riggs ownership the farm was sold to John C. Letts in 1930.⁵ Before this final transfer of title the family graveyard was moved to St. John's cemetery in Olney. Letts, who farmed the land to grow feed for his dairy cattle at Ayrlawn on Old Georgetown Road, continued to lease the property. Austin Geisbert, using a frame house which had been moved to the farm as his residence, converted the Oaks II into a storage shelter. The Geisberts are widely known throughout the state for their farming as well as for the accomplishments achieved by their children in 4-H and State Competitions.

¹Montgomery County Land Records, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland. G/161; H/82.

²Roger B. Farquhar, History of Montgomery County, Maryland: Old Homes and History. Monumental Printing Co., Baltimore, MD.,

³Montgomery County Land Records. BS 7/283-5.

⁴Farquhar, op. cit. p. 310

⁵Montgomery County Land Records. 512/407.

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Oaks II
Continuation sheet Montgomery County, Maryland Item number 9



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- Riggs, Riggs Family of Maryland, 1939.
- Tax Records of Montgomery County, 1804-1810, Montgomery County Historical Society, Rockville, Maryland.
- U. S. Census for Montgomery County, Maryland: 1850, 1860.
- Interviews: Mrs. Cuyler Dwyer Duvall
Mr. Austin Geisbert
Mrs. Austin Geisbert
Mrs. Joyce Hawkins
Mrs. Maude Bell Riggs
Mrs. Dorothy White Tessier

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Oaks II

Continuation sheet Montgomery County, Maryland Item number 10

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BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the Oaks II site comprise a parcel of approximately five acres, shown on the attached map labeled "boundary map." The limits of the site are determined primarily by physical features: Riggs Road on the southeast; Theodore Drive on the southwest; and lines of mature trees on the west and north.

In planning for the move of the Oaks II house and outbuildings, every effort was made to make possible the replication of the historic environment of the buildings. The five-acre extent was selected as the minimum area necessary to convey the original orientation of the complex, and was stipulated as one condition of the historic area work permit sought by the County for the construction of the landfill.

The present location, less than one-half mile from the original site, is topographically similar to it, and the buildings have been arranged within the parcel to replicate their original orientations and juxtapositions. Historically, the parcel was a part of the holdings of the family associated with Oaks II, during the period of the house's construction.

OCT 27 1982

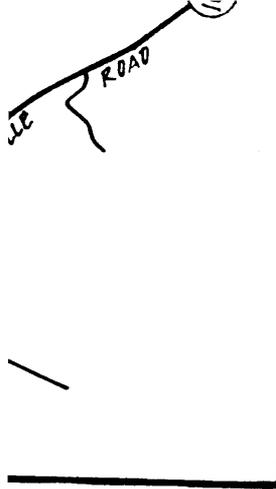
BOUNDARY MAP

Oaks II

Montgomery County, Maryland

M 23-26

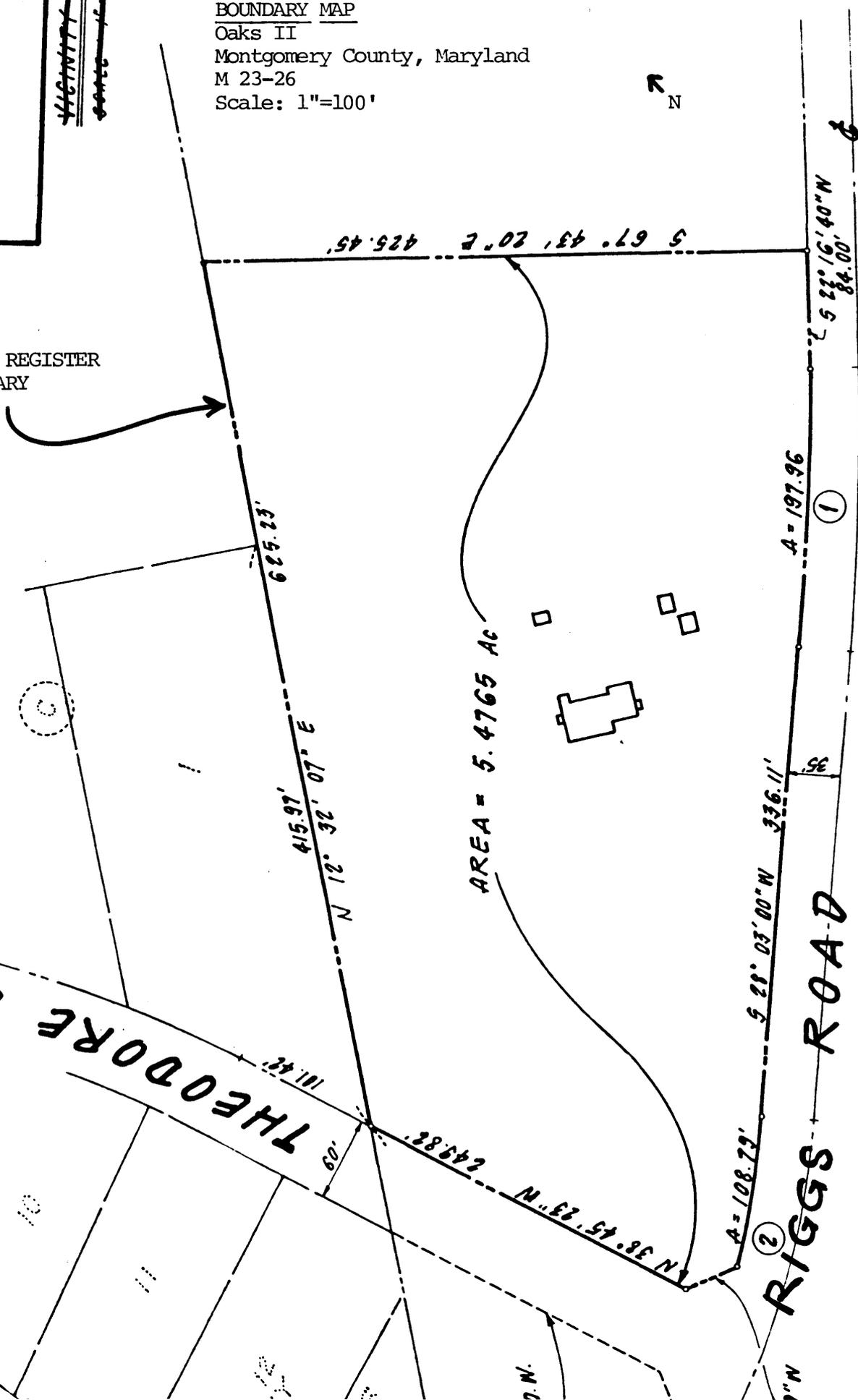
Scale: 1"=100'



~~VICINITY MAP~~
~~DATE 1/1/80~~



NATIONAL REGISTER
BOUNDARY



AREA = 5.4765 AC

THEODORE DRIVE

RIGGS ROAD

5 67° 43' 20" E 425.45'

5 27° 16' 40" N 84.00'

625.23'

415.97' N 12° 32' 07" E

A = 197.96

5 28° 03' 00" N 336.11'

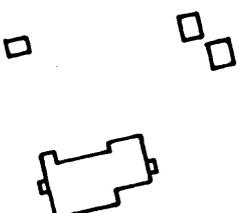
A = 108.79'

N 38° 45' 13" N 249.82'

①

②

⊙



35'

⊥

Oaks II
Montgomery County, MD
M 23-26

ORIGINAL
SITE

PRESENT
LOCATION

