

Plenty
CH-77
Port Tobacco
Private

1828; 1854

Constructed around 1828 and substantially enlarged in 1854, Plenty is a three-part, 2 ½-story frame dwelling approached by a long, winding drive at the edge of a fenced, open pasture. The house faces west and stands on a high knoll with an expansive view of the Port Tobacco valley. An early 19th century pyramidal-roof smokehouse shares the site. The original structure forms the north wing and is believed to have been built for General John Matthews and his wife Maria Bruce Matthews. In 1854, the property was willed to Matthews' son, William Bruce Matthews who added the impressive Greek Revival main block. Soon after, the two wings were joined by the construction of a 2-story, side-gable, center block. The dwelling rests on property that was once owned by Thomas Stone, signer of the Declaration of Independence. Additionally, the house is significant in its relationship to the nearby village of Port Tobacco which remained the center of governmental, economic and social life in Charles County until the end of the 19th century.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-77

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Plenty

other

2. Location

street and number 8600 Plenty Highlands Place not for publication

city, town Port Tobacco vicinity

county Charles

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

name Melvin Downes

street and number P.O Box 271 telephone Unknown

city, town Port Tobacco state MD zip code 20677

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 43 p.18

city, town LaPlata, MD liber 212 folio 34

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

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-77

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.

Constructed around 1828 and substantially enlarged in 1854, Plenty is a three-part, 2 1/2 story dwelling approached by a long winding drive at the edge of a fenced, open pasture. The house faces west and stands on a high knoll with an expansive view of the Port Tobacco Valley. An early 19th century pyramidal roof smokehouse shares the site as well as two non-contributing resources: a contemporary residential carriage house, and an equipment shed to the rear of the property. The earliest portion of the dwelling includes the north wing. In 1854, the impressive three bay Greek Revival main block was constructed and soon after the two were joined by the construction of a 2-story side gable center block. The entire structure is of frame construction and rests on a continuous brick foundation. The main block is sheltered by a metal seam roof while the dependencies have been reclad with asphalt shingles. Paired chimneys are found between the main and center block and a single exterior end chimney is found on the original 1828 cross gable wing west wall.

Plenty is an important example of Greek Revival architecture in Charles County. Characteristic elements include a prominent pedimented entry porch with reeded pilasters, pedimented dormers and interior bullseye molding. The southernmost wing forms the main block and consists of a side-passage, double-pile plan. Three bays in length and 2 1/2 stories in height, this wing is accentuated by three dormers on each of the east and west elevations and a pedimented porch on the west elevation.

MAIN BLOCK, c. 1854

The main block west elevation exhibits many of the home's most distinctive Greek Revival features found especially in the pedimented porch and dormers. The single bay porch has a wide plain entablature and rests on two square wood posts. The four panel door also includes a transom and sidelights. The entranceway is further accentuated by fluted pilasters on either side. Fenestration is symmetrical with three windows on the second floor above two windows and the entrance door below. While the windows have been replaced, original wood molding above the windows is intact. Also symmetrically aligned are the three prominent dormers which are ornamented with molded returns and flat reeded pilasters.

The south elevation of the main block includes typical fenestration with a centered attic story window above two first floor and two second floor windows. This is modified by the addition of a later fixed 6-light window which now provides light into a powder room added under the main stair.

The rear elevation has been altered and is currently obscured by the addition of a concrete block shed covering the first floor. The shed conceals the first floor fenestration which mirrors the front elevation. The rear door consists of a less elaborate 4-panel door with simple beaded molding. Otherwise, the second floor and dormer composition mirror the front elevation.

The end wing has a roof ridge running on an east west axis as opposed to the north-south axis of the other wings. The west gable end is dominated by a centered exterior brick chimney of American bond which is flanked by two first floor and two second story windows. The opposite elevation has single first, second and attic story windows. An enclosed shed addition extends from the north wall. This wing stands over an unfinished cellar accessed from an interior kitchen stair as well as an exterior passage under the first floor rear windows.

At the time of the field visit, only the first floor was available for survey. Bullseye molding is present throughout the main block first floor. The entrance hall has a random width pine board floor, chair railing and bulls eye window and door trim. The stair, accentuated by a massive newel, intersects the first floor rear window. Double parlors to the north of the formal entrance hall are divided by folding double doors and each room is adorned with a matching elaborate mantel.

C. 1828 WING

The end wing has a roof ridge running on an east west axis as opposed to the north-south axis of the other wings. The west gable

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No CH-77

Name Plenty
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

end is dominated by a centered exterior brick chimney of American bond which is flanked by two first floor and two second story windows. The opposite elevation has single first, second and attic story windows. An enclosed shed addition extends from the north wall. This wing stands over an unfinished cellar accessed from an interior kitchen stair as well as an exterior passage under the first floor rear windows.

CENTER BLOCK, c. 1860

Unlike the main block, the center block west, or front elevation is asymmetrical with three windows appearing on the first floor and two above. The rear or east elevation includes a centered first floor 6-panel door flanked by two windows. Above these are two second floor windows.

The entire house was extensively renovated late in the 20th century when vinyl replacement windows and aluminum siding were installed throughout. The plumbing and electrical systems on the upper levels were also upgraded at this time. Documentary evidence assigns a 1991 date to these alterations and improvements. The home is currently for sale and additional information on dimensions and upstairs finishes was provided by the realtor. This information is included as a supplement.

SMOKEHOUSE

A square pyramidal roof smokehouse stands near the northeast corner of the dwelling. It has a wood frame and a replacement asphalt shingle roof. The door is centered on the south wall.

ADDENDUM

CH-77

Plenty

Charles County, MD

Port Tobacco

Cathy Currey, November 2001

Page 1 of 2

7. Description

c. 1854 MAIN BLOCK

At the time of the recent survey, the interior of Plenty was not available for evaluation. A later field visit revealed that the main block consists of a side passage, double parlor plan. The hall holds a staircase on the south wall which is interrupted with a double-hung, wood sash 6/6 window. A massive newel, similar to that found at another Greek Revival home, Eutah (CH-79), adorns the stairway. Narrow vertical panels, also found at Eutah, form the staircase wainscoting. The hall includes crown molding and chair railing of questionable date. Windows surrounds, including wide trim and bullseye molding, are original throughout. A low exterior door is located opposite the principal entrance.

Each of the two parlors are entered by a 6-panel and include matching three-part ornate mantels with paired reeded columns on either end. Folding panel double doors with original hardware divide the rooms. The rear parlor accesses the center wing through a secondary doorway. Most doors include four panels with the exception of pocket doors which have six panels per pair.

The second floor includes three original room separated by a hallway lighted by a transomed door. A small unheated room is located in the front of the hall above the entrance porch. Next to that is another small heated room modified by the addition of a bathroom. Opposite the hall is a third room with matching mantel. The third floor has been extensively renovated with little observable historic features remaining.

C. 1828 WING

Architectural evidence in earliest portion of the dwelling, the north wing, is obscured with later finished, especially in the first floor. The basement west wall reveals a relieving arch and the original hearth framing where the existing exterior chimney stands. The second story includes a Victorian-inspired mantel, possibly reworked from the original 1828 construction. Original floors and wall finishes are found on this floor and it is possible that the window molding may also be original. Examination of the attic space revealed the presence of early machine cut nails with handmade heads.

CH-77

Plenty

Charles County, MD

Port Tobacco

Cathy Currey, November 2001

Addendum, Page 2 of 2

CENTER BLOCK

As in the north wing, architectural evidence in the center block is obscured by later finished. The first floor is completely sheathed in cedar paneling. However, a quarter-turn, boxed corner stair with an original slender turned newel is present.

At the top of the stair is a small space, lighted by a window, holding an altar. Given the long association of the Matthews family with the Catholic faith, and the rich Catholic heritage of the area, this may prove to have additional significance after future research is conducted. The presence of "prayer rooms" as well as individual bedrooms designated for traveling priests have been documented through oral tradition at the homes of other Catholic families including "Bowling Green" CH-215 (Priest's room) and "Locust Hill" CH-353 (Priest's Room and Prayer Room at top of stairs.)

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-77

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input 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"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input 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 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 1828; 1854

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates 1828; 1854

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.)

Believed to have been constructed for General John Matthews and his wife Maria Bruce Matthews, the dwelling rests on property that was once owned by Thomas Stone, signer of the Declaration of Independence. First constructed in 1828 and substantially enlarged in 1854 by Matthews son William Bruce Matthews, Plenty is a significant example of the Greek Revival style in Charles County. Additionally, the house is of note for its association with the nearby village of Port Tobacco which remained the center of governmental, economic and social life in Charles County until the end of the 19th century.

General John Matthews served in the War of 1812, enlisting in the militia on December 13, 1813 at the age of 30 and serving as Captain and later Major in the 5th Brigade, 1st Regiment of Charles County. Matthews also served in the Maryland legislature for 15 years. Residing at Plenty until his death in 1858, Matthews willed the property, then containing 250 acres, to his son William Bruce Matthews who added the impressive Greek Revival south wing. The property remained in the Matthews family until 1879 when it was sold to Dr. Robert and Mary Digges, in whose family it remained until 1939. (1)

First appearing in the 1820's, the Greek Revival style was the dominant style of American domestic architecture from 1830 to 1850. Despite its national popularity, very few examples have thus far been identified in Charles County. Other known examples include Green's Inheritance (CH-61 NR), Cedar Grove (CH-113 NR), and Eutah (CH-79). Green's Inheritance and Cedar Grove are believed to have been built by George Heinsler of Baltimore who may also have been responsible for Plenty as well as Eutah (CH-79) in the northern section of the county.

Founded in 1684 and established as the county seat in 1727, Port Tobacco once boasted over 80 structures. Once one of Maryland's most important colonial ports, by the early 19th century its status had somewhat declined. However it remained the largest village in Charles County, and continued to attract many of the areas most prominent families.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-77

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 12
Acreage of historical setting 250
Quadrangle name Port Tobacco Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Plenty is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 43 Parcel 18.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Cathy Currey/Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	Charles County Planning	date	3/30/01
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

N. R. FIELD SHEET

CH 97

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: PLENTY

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: PORT TOBACCO

STATE: MD. CODE: COUNTY: Chas. CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
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 type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	Comments <input type="checkbox"/>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:

STREET AND NUMBER: PLENTY

CITY OR TOWN: PORT TOBACCO STATE: MD. CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Chas. Co. Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: LA PLATA STATE: MD. CODE:

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER DATE FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Plenty is a 3 part frame dwelling with the main block at the S end. The main block is 3 bays with the door at the S end. There are 3 bays at the 2nd. level and 3 dormers above. At the N end are 2 double flue exterior chimneys.

The middle portion is 2 storeys and 3 bays in length.

At the 3rd. part the roof ridge runs E to W, is 2 storeys and has a double flue chimney at the W gable end.

At the main front door is a sm. porch with an "a" roof. To the N front of the last part is a 1 storey porch with lean-to roof.

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 DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> | Education <input type="checkbox"/> | Political <input type="checkbox"/> | Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/> | Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion/Phi-
losophy <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"/> | _____ |
| Art <input type="checkbox"/> | Landscape <input type="checkbox"/> | Social/Human-
itarian <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> | Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Communications <input type="checkbox"/> | Literature <input type="checkbox"/> | Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ |
| Conservation <input type="checkbox"/> | Military <input type="checkbox"/> | | _____ |
| | Music <input type="checkbox"/> | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

(This area is intentionally left blank for the user to provide a statement of significance.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Empty space for major bibliographical references.

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 ONE ACRE				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"	°	'	"

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: D. Richard Rivoire

ORGANIZATION _____ DATE _____

STREET AND NUMBER: _____

CITY OR TOWN: _____ STATE _____ CODE _____

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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



CH-77
Plenty
Port Tobacco vic.





CH-77
PLENTY
PORT TOBACCO, MD
1/2001
~~ETA~~ C CURREY
MD SHPO
LOOKING EAST FROM ROAD

1 OF 5



CH-77

PLENTY

PORT TOBACCO

U2001

C CURREY

MD SHPO

FRONT ELEVATION

20FS



CH-77

PLENTY

PORT TOBACCO

1/2001

C CURREY

MD SHPO

REAR ELEVATION

3 OF 5



CH-77
PLENTY
PORT TOBACCO
1/2001
C CURREY
MD SHPO
REAR DORMER DETAIL
40FS



CH-77

PLENTY

PORT TOBACCO, MD

7/2001

C. CURREY

MD SHPS

STAIR, PACING EAST

1 of 4



CH-77

PLENTY

PORT TOBACCO, MD

7/2001

C CURREY

MD SHPO

FRONT PABLORMANTEL, LOOKING NE

3 20F4



CA-77

PLENTY

PORT TOBACCO, MD

7/2001

C CURREY

MD SHPO

c. 1828 END BLOCK, LOOKING SW

30F4



CH-77

PLENTY

PORT TOBACCO, MD

7/2001

C. CURREY

MD SHPO
CENTER BLOCK STAIR, LOOKING W

4 OF 4



CH-77

PLENTY

PORT OBACCO

1/2001

C. CURRY

MD SHPO

SMOKEHOUSE + CONTEMPORARY 'CARRIAGE HOUSE'

6 of 5