

K-578

1887-1888

Whitaker's Store; Hicks' Store

Galena

Private

Located on the east side of Main Street, the Hicks-Whitaker Store is a frame, two-storey, three-bay-wide, gable-front-with-entry building with a one-storey rear wing. Attached to it on its south long side is a three-bay wide, two-storey, frame dwelling with its axis north-south, perpendicular to that of the store. The house has its own two-storey rear wing, with a later extension. Both the store and house were built for William Whitaker in 1887-1888 in a simple Victorian style. The house, the store owner's residence, is built with a common residential plan--central hall with one room on each side plus rear wing. The store has a large first-storey sales room, now partly partitioned off at the rear. Near the rear there is a south-wall stair with catalogue parts leading to a balcony-like rear section whose floor is lower than the second-story that is above the front two-thirds of the building. The Whitaker-Hicks store was one of several general stores that operated in Galena during the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century. It is one of a fairly commonly-built type of store in the county, well suited for a town lot with narrow street frontage but much depth. Relatively few of these store buildings have survived, either at all or without extensive changes. This one has been considerably altered, but its basic character is still evident. This store building is somewhat unusual in having a residence for the owner attached to a side. Only the Locust Grove General Store (K-568) has a perpendicular house attached that is complete in itself. The dwelling also housed Galena's early telephone exchange.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Hick's Store (preferred); Whitaker's Store

and/or common Downer's Emporium

## 2. Location

street & number 108 N. Main Street (east side)  not for publication

city, town Galena  vicinity of  congressional district

state Maryland  county Kent

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name H. Thomas & Darla H. Downer

street & number Main Street telephone no.: 648-5529

city, town Galena state and zip code Maryland 21635

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber EHP 99

street & number Cross Street folio 297

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. K-578

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

Hichs' Store is a frame, two-storey, three-bay-wide, gable-front-with-entry store building with one-storey rear wing on the east side of Main Street in Galena. Attached to it on its south long side is a three-bay wide, two-storey, frame dwelling with its main section's axis (north-south) perpendicular to that of the store. The house has its own two-storey rear wing, with an extension. Viewed from the rear the wings, with part of the house's main section as the base, create a U. Both the store and house were built in 1887-1888 in a simple Victorian style. The house the store owner's residence, is built with a common residential plan--central hall with one room on each side plus rear wing. The store has a large first-storey sales room, now partly partitioned off at the rear. Near the rear there is a side-wall stair with catalogue parts leading to a balcony-like rear section whose floor is lower and ceiling higher than the second-story that is above the front two-thirds of the building.

(Continued)

# 8. Significance

Survey No. K-578

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 type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1887-1888	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
	and/or	
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Whitaker-Hicks store was one of several general stores that operated in Galena during the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century. This three-bay, gable-front store was one of a fairly commonly-built type of store in the county, well suited for a town lot with narrow street frontage but much depth. Relatively few of these store buildings have survived, either at all or without extensive changes. This one has been considerably altered, but its basic character is still evident. This store building is somewhat unusual in having a residence for the owner attached to a side. Only the Locust Grove General Store (K-568) has a perpendicular house attached that is complete in itself. The dwelling section of the Old Gale Store (K-643) in Millington is somewhat different; the dwelling space there was behind and above the store. The house is also important for having had an early Galena telephone exchange.

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The store front is 24 feet wide, with three bays. The side bays are large-lighted display windows; the center bay is a double-doored entry. The store main section is 60 feet deep, with four bays on the north side. The one-storey rear addition is also 24 feet wide but 40 feet deep, bringing overall building depth to 100 feet. The dwelling's main section is 36 feet wide and 16 feet deep, with its original rear wing 14 feet wide and 30 feet deep. A pantry-bath extension was later added to the rear wing.

The exterior walls of the store main section are now covered with asbestos-cement shingles applied over the original horizontal, lapped weatherboard with 5-6" exposure. The one-storey section of the store is clad in horizontal, lapped weatherboard with 5" exposure; there double cornerboards. The facade of the dwelling is covered with 4" exposure vinyl siding, while the remainder has the old horizontal, lapped weatherboard with 5-6" exposure. The double cornerboards have a separate corner bead.

The main section of the store has a cellar that is very wet, which has created problems for the wood structure above. It is reached by a stair under the south-side stair to the balcony section. There are brick piers in the center to support a summer beam. The cellar is not entirely dug out all around, perhaps having been partly or entirely once a crawl space for the former building. Some of the old foundation may have been reused as well. Much of the foundation is fieldstone, with the remainder brick. The foundation is not visible from the exterior; the siding is very close to the ground, as indeed the entire frame, either because of subsidence or the nature of its original construction. The rear store wing may be built on piers. The house rests on a brick foundation, with a crawl space.

The gable roofs of all parts of the two buildings are quite shallow. The material of all sections could not be seen. The rear store wing has standing-seam metal.

The house main section has two chimneys, through the ridge on each side of the central hall and within the room on each side. Though there are mantels, they never were intended for use with a fire, only for stoves. They are vestigial, or symbolic mantels only. The mantels appear to be catalogue mantels of the time. The chimneys are built of brick. The north chimney has six corbelled courses, out and in, and is clearly a Victorian chimney. The south chimney is quite plain and short, with darker brick that has been partially parged. There is also a wing chimney that was for a kitchen stove. The store's original chimney rises within the center of the rear gable wall of the main section. It is built of brick, now heavily parged, and is strapped to an adjacent modern chimney to the south. Within the store stovepipe probably would have been run from this rear chimney to a stove location some distance away from it, for better radiation of heat.

On the first storey of the store there is still an old counter and some of the original shelving. The stair along the south wall, near the rear, to the balcony is a Victorian catalogue stair such as might have been installed in a  
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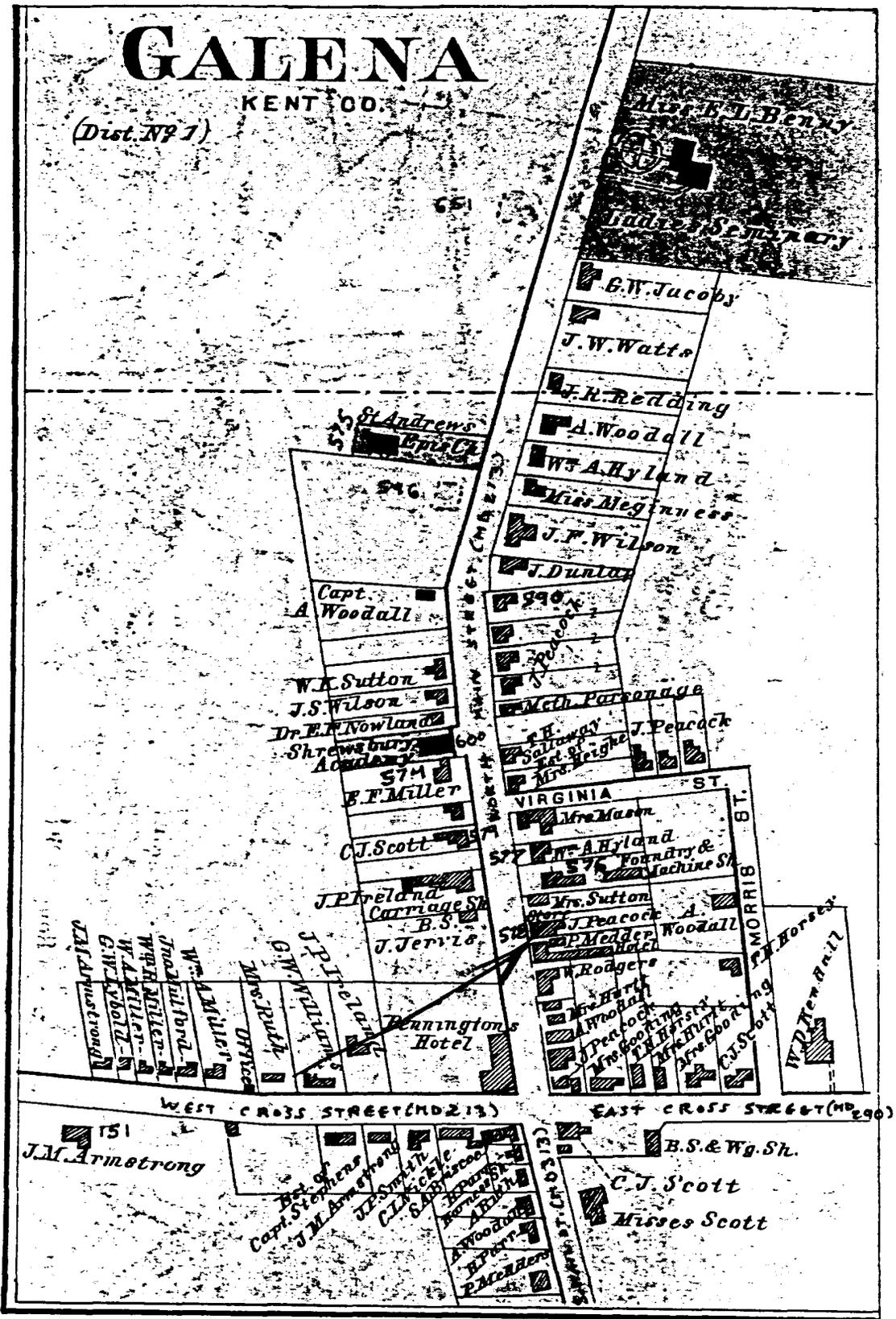
dwelling. The very bold newel and balustrade have been painted. The balustrade originally ran all the wall across the edge of the rear second-storey floor and around, up several steps near the north wall, to the edge of the higher second-storey floor. The balcony area was the width of the building and 16 feet deep. The upper second storey has now been closed off for an apartment, whereas previously there were only three enclosed rooms in that section, at the front, each with a front window.

Most windows of the main section are double-hung with 2-over-2 lights. The three front gable-end windows echo the three bays below.

The store display windows on each side of the main entry each have 2-over-2 large lights, with broad (1-1/2") muntins. Besides being necessary for good light in the days before electricity, as large a window as the glass technology of the time would allow was considered desirable for the display of goods and to open the store to the street. The side windows and door architrave have continuous head trim, being treated as a unit. The doors are double, within a 5-foot opening. Each has one large light over two vertical, slightly recessed and raised panels which have bold bolection molding. The large upper light is also surrounded by this molding. From the pavement level under the porch, there are two steps up to the entry. There is a three-bay shed-roofed porch that extends to the town sidewalk.

The general store-dwelling combination was built after an August, 1887, fire started by sparks from the nearby Hyland foundry burned the old Whitaker's Store, which was not attached to the family's residence though it evidently was next door. William Whitaker was the owner at the time, having bought the old store from a Mr. Medders of Cecil County after having first worked in the store for Mr. Medders. According to the 1877 atlas map of Kent County, a hotel was in this section of the block also, appearing to be in the location of the store, but it is not clear how the former buildings relate to the present ones. After Mr. Whitaker died, his widow continued it for a while. Her son-in-law George Hicks, a blacksmith, operated it for a time, and then it was rented to various storekeepers. About 1918 the north parlor, or library, as the family called it, was rented to the telephone company for the Galena area phone exchange. That same section, now with its own front entry, is now used for a real estate office.

There was access from house to store only on the second storey, and for one period the street-front south and middle rooms were used only by the family for storage. The north room was sometimes occupied by a clerk. The balcony-like rear second-storey of the store was used for Christmas decorations and toys, furniture (until the one-storey rear wing was built for that special purpose), glassware, and dishes. The front, higher second storey section is now used for an apartment and accessible only via an exterior door to the straight stair, now enclosed, along the north wall that always led to the front portion of the second storey, but from within the store.



**GALENA BUSINESS REFERENCES.**

- GEORGE STEEL**, Manufacturer of, and Dealer in Pumps of all kinds. Also Repairing done at short Notice.
- GEO. T. MCCAULEY**, Dealer in Groceries and Provisions. All kinds of Salt Meats, Fish, Flour, Meal, Choice Cigars, Tobacco, &c., very low for cash.
- HENRY PARR**, Manufacturer and Dealer in Saddles, Harness, Whips, Trunks, Valises, &c.

- G. W. WILLIAMS**, Blacksmith and Carriage-maker. Horse-shoeing and Repairing neatly and promptly done.
- G. W. LYBOLD**, Machinist and Engineer. Also Agent for Buckeye Reapers and Mowers and Sweep Stake Threshers, Eclipse Engine, Birdal Clover Huller, Ealien Rake and Agricultural Implements of all kinds. Engines repaired at short notice and reasonable terms.





K-578

Hicks' Store

Main Street, Galena

M. Q. Fallaw - 6/5/85

View to west

K578-35A



K-578  
Hicks' Store  
Main Street, Galena  
M. Q. Fallaw - 6/5/85  
View to east

K 578 - 34A