

K-595

1910-1911

Woodall-Davies House

Georgetown

Private

The frame, 2-1/2 storey Woodall-Davies House is one of two four-square houses built in Georgetown between 1910 and 1920 (also K-618, Welch-Woodall House, which is quite similar but later). There are also a few in Galena a few miles away. Almost square, the first storey plan divides the space into roughly four quarters: front parlor with dining room behind it on the west side, and large entry and stair hall in the north part of the east side, with kitchen to its rear. The stair hall is open to the parlor through a wide cased opening with large Ionian columns at each side. Classical Revival influence is also seen in the parlor mantel, where the Ionian column theme is repeated. With a quarter-turn-with-landing stair rising to a central location in the house, the second-storey rooms radiate around a small hall. A hipped-roof dormer centered in each slope of the sheltering hipped roof (with center platform) made usable space on the third level possible and relieved the cube; the east dormer is really a stair dormer and is considerably larger. Along with the wrap-around porch, shallow but wide three-part bay windows relieve the cube and add importance to the living room and dining room. Probably built from a purchased house plan featured in a builder's magazine, this vernacular four-square house is related to some extent to the Prairie School of Frank Lloyd Wright and others that emphasized the horizontal and a sense of sheltering. It perhaps also signified a reaction against the irregularities and increasing ornamentation of the late Queen Anne style. In Kent County the houses of the previous 25 years had not been compact, and the emphasis had been on the vertical, with Victorian Gothic Revival buildings with wings predominating among large houses. There was some precedent in the county for an almost square, cube-like house, during the period about 1840-1860, with hipped-roof, Italianate-Greek Revival houses, but they were few, and most were only one room deep and had wings. This house was intended to accommodate all functions under one roof; a wing was not needed, and a bathroom was included in the plan, not an afterthought. Although a large house, it is efficiently arranged. For many years the larger Kent County houses had been built with two parlors, one of which stood unused most of the time, largely because of its isolation in a central-hall plan. Four-square houses had only one parlor, intended to be used by family and company alike.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Woodall-Davies House

## 2. Location

street & number South side Front Street, 2nd house  
east of Rt. 213 \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Georgetown \_\_\_ 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Mr. and Mrs. H. Morris Davies, Jr.

street &amp; number Box 25 telephone no.: 648-5261

city, town Georgetown state and zip code Maryland 21635

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber EHP 109

street &amp; number folio 109

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. K-595

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	slightly	

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

Located on the south side of Front Street in Georgetown, the frame 2-1/1 storey Woodall-Davies house was built in 1910-11 in a four-square style, probably from a purchased plan. Almost square, the first storey plan divides the space into roughly four quarters: front parlor with dining room behind it on the west side, and large entry and stair hall in the north part of the east side, with kitchen to its rear. The stair hall is open to the parlor through a wide cased opening with large Ionian columns at each side. Classical Revival influence is also seen in the parlor mantel, where the Ionian column theme is repeated. With a quarter-turn-with-landing stair rising to a central location in the house, the second-storey rooms radiate around a small hall. A hipped-roof dormer centered in each slope of the sheltering hipped roof (with center platform) made usable space on the third level possible; the east dormer is really a stair dormer and is considerably larger. Shallow but wide three-part bay windows relieve the cube and add importance to the living room and dining room.

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# 8. Significance

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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** circa 1910-1911      **Builder/Architect**

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check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

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

The Woodall-Davies House is one of two four-square houses built in Georgetown between 1910 and 1920 (also K-618, Welch-Woodall House, which is quite similar but later). There are also a few in Galena a few miles away. Probably built from a purchased house plan featured in a builder's magazine, this vernacular four-square house is related to some extent to the Prairie School of Frank Lloyd Wright and others that emphasized the horizontal and envelopment. It perhaps also signified a reaction against the irregularities and increasing ornamentation of the late Queen Anne style. In Kent County the houses of the previous 25 years had not been compact, and the emphasis had been on the vertical, with Victorian Gothic Revival buildings with wings predominating among large houses. There was some precedent in the county for an almost square, cube-like house, during the period about 1840-1860, with hipped-roof, Italianate-Greek Revival houses, but they were few, and most were only one room deep and had wings. Very few were two rooms deep, as the four-squares are. This house was intended to accommodate all functions under one roof; a wing was not needed, and a bathroom was included in the plan, not an afterthought. Although a large house, it is compact. The second-storey hall is centrally located for efficiency, with the bedrooms and bathroom radiating around it. For many years the larger Kent County houses had been built with two parlors, one of which stood unused most of the time, largely because of its isolation in a central-hall plan. Four-square houses had only one parlor, intended to be used by family and company alike. In this house, as in others, the cube was relieved by a large, wrap around porch, shallow bay projections, and dormers.

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The house measures about 32 feet wide by 36 feet deep, not quite square. It is difficult to describe this house meaningfully by enumerating bays on the various facades. In general, fenestration was irregular, according to function but still pleasingly arranged and with some concern for aligning windows from first storey to second. The first storey of the north, approach facade is essentially divided into two parts visually--the entry on the east and the three-part bay on the west. On the second storey the bay is continued on the east, and there are two single windows evenly spaced in the east half of the wall space. So the main facade could be described as three bays wide. Centered above in the hipped roof is a single dormer. The west end, also has three bays in the second storey, but they are irregularly spaced, and not all windows are the same size. They are placed with some reference to the openings below, however. The rear bay's narrow window is aligned over the same kind of window below, which lights a long, narrow pantry behind the dining room. The middle-bay second-storey window, though not centered, is directly above the center window of the wide three-part dining room bay window below. This bay is one storey only, unlike the approach facade's bay. The second-storey window in the north bay is placed over the high living room window in the west wall. The east, driveway side, away from the town and the public in general, is plainer, as is the rear.

The walls are covered in the traditional material for Kent County frame houses: lapped, horizontal weatherboard, with c. 4-1/2" exposure. There are double 4-1/2" cornerboards with a separate quarter-round piece between them at the corner. There is a full cellar with brick walls that may have had a concrete floor from the beginning. This house may have been built to be heated by a furnace, seemingly a two-pipe steam system, rather than by stoves, though a stove would have been used for cooking. One chimney, for the living room fireplace, exits through the center roof section near its western edge. It has a two-course band and a corbelled cap; the brick is dark red. The other chimney is near the southeast corner of the roof platform, evidently for the kitchen stove and now used only for the furnace. Whether it served both functions originally is not known. It is built in the same manner as the other chimney.

The main entry is in the east bay of the north, main facade, through the house-wide (and more) porch. There is no transom. With sidelights on each side of the entry, the architrave measures 6'-6" wide overall. The sidelights have many diamond-shaped lights (13 full, more partial), divided by heavy muntins. The sidelights are above two recessed and slightly raised panels with composite bolection molding. There is a wooden screen door. The door, which has a dark varnish finish, has one large light above two horizontal panels that are recessed and slightly raised and molded with the same bolection molding as the sidelight panels. The same molding is used around the glass. The architrave trim is plain and 4-1/2" wide. The interior architrave, between sidelights and door has a narrow, plain, recessed panel. While the pilaster trim is plain, the lintel trim is not, though it is simple. Applied upon the face of the 4-1/2" trim (leaving about 2" revealed) is a modified cyma reversa over a cove with fillet. This is also used on the

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interior above the architrave, but the scale there is smaller. There is only one secondary entry, in the south, rear wall, from the screened kitchen porch into the kitchen. On this rear wall there are three windows on the second storey that are almost evenly spaced and are above three first-storey windows. The door, the fourth opening, is in the second bay from the east. The same architrave is used as at the front entry.

Windows are double-hung except for a 12-light awning window at the stair landing and the ornamental window high in the living room west wall. The sizes of the double-hung windows are not all the same but vary according to function. Some have 12-over-1 lights and others 16-over-1. The stair dormer has 9-over-1. Window trim is the same as at the doors. Sills are 2-5/8" thick. There never were any shutters. For the first time in Kent County they are being omitted, having been standard since the early colonial period.

The stair is a generous one; the treads are about 46" wide. Quarter-turn with landing, the stair rises from the first storey in a large reception hall along the east wall, toward the south. The string is closed, and there are square balusters that are quite closely spaced. There is a bold, square, newel whose two-part shaft has a recessed panel in each segment of each side. The base is about 8-1/2" square, and the cap is square, with applied foliate carvings at each side corner. The intermediates are smaller, plainer versions of the main newel. The rail is colonial revival in style. The newel and intermediates appear to be of mahogany or walnut. There are large, long, square, prominent drops below the intermediates. The longest is 17". The treads are of oak, and the risers are painted.

The house was built for Mr. and Mrs. James E. Woodall and remained in the family until recently. James E. Woodall, associated with the Georgetown family lumber (and other) business started by Andrew Woodall, his grandfather, was in a good position to be up-to-date on the latest housing styles. Very likely the lumber yard, which may have acted as a building contractor in the area as well, regularly had on hand various builders' magazines and other publications with house plans.

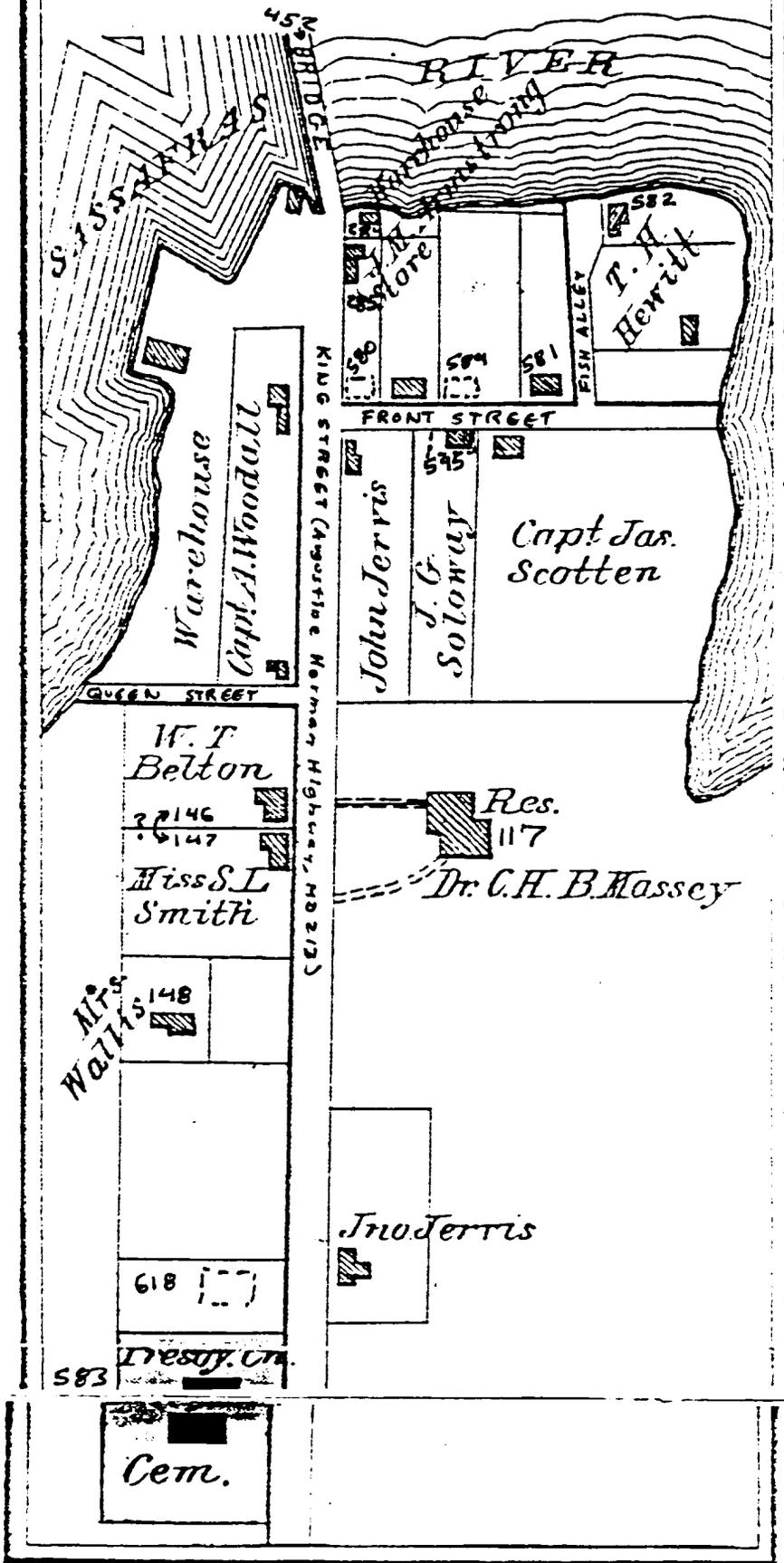
In order to build this house, an old, small planked-log house that stood close to the street was removed. It may have been one storey with loft or 1-1/2 storeys. It probably dated from the nineteenth century after 1813, for the reports of the burning of Georgetown in that year by the British were that all of lower Georgetown was destroyed, and Front Street is in lower Georgetown.

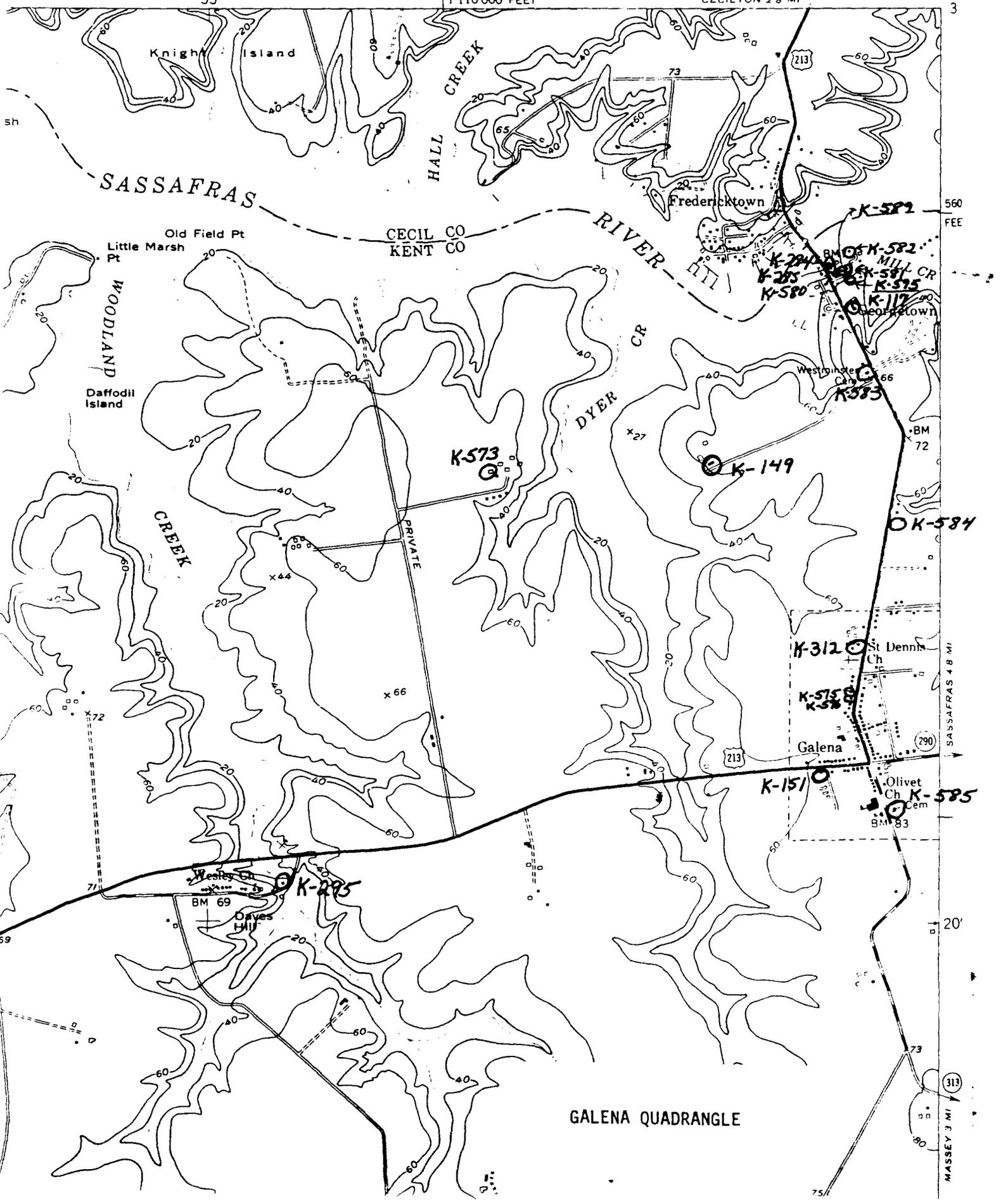
# GEORGETOWN

KENT CO.

Dist. No 7

K-595





GALENA QUADRANGLE

MASSEY 3 MI

SASSAFRAS 4.8 MI

560 FEE

20'

73

313

75



K-595

Woodall-Davies House

Front Street, Georgetown

M. Q. Fallaw - 11/19/85

View to southwest

K-595-16



K-595

Woodall-Davies House

Front Street, Georgetown

M. Q. Fallaw - 11/19/85

View to northeast

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