

K-599

**New Hynson's Methodist Episcopal Chapel**

**Near Fairlee**

**Private**

New Hynson's Chapel, begun in 1863 and built of brick (36' x 50') probably in a vernacular Greek Revival style similar to other Methodist churches in the area, was the direct descendant of Old Hynson's Chapel. New Hynson's was located at the northeast corner of Baker's Lane and Ricaud's Branch-Langford Road, where there is now only an untended cemetery in a woods. Old Hynson's (K-591), apparently abandoned about 1860-63, was two miles to the west. On that site had been the first chapel built by Methodists on the Delmarva Peninsula (1774); by 1806 there was a successor building. The Methodist society there, the first in Kent County, was organized in the 1770s by Francis Asbury, the noted itinerant known as the "Father of American Methodism." By about 1880 regular services ceased at New Hynson's, and by 1882 the circuit minister pronounced the church dead, probably the victim of too few people and too many churches in the vicinity. In 1890 Hynson's bricks were removed for the rebuilding of Walton's Chapel at Cliffs (thereupon renamed Mowbray Chapel, K-247), which had burned in 1889.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic New Hynson's Methodist Episcopal Chapel

and/or common New Hynson's Methodist Episcopal Chapel

### 2. Location

street & number Northeast Corner, intersection of Baker's Lane and Ricaud's  
Branch-Langford Road, 2.3 miles southeast of Fairlee, ~~not for publication~~

city, town Chestertown  vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Kent

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Cemetery

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

name Hynson Chapel Cemetery

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone no.: \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state and zip code \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber JKH 5

street & number Cross Street folio 526

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

Untended site, cemetery

**Condition**

\_\_\_ excellent

\_\_\_ good

\_\_\_ fair

\_\_\_ deteriorated

\_\_\_ ruins

\_\_\_ unexposed

**Check one**

\_\_\_ unaltered

\_\_\_ altered

**Check one**

\_\_\_ original site

\_\_\_ moved    date of move \_\_\_\_\_

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

The site of New Hynson's Chapel at Baker's Lane and Ricaud's Branch-Langford Road is now a small, dense woods. Nothing appears to remain above ground of the ca. 36'-0" x 50'-0" brick chapel, whose bricks were used in 1889-90 to rebuild the burned Walton's Chapel at Cliffs in Quaker Neck. There is a cemetery with a few marked stones.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The second building site of the Methodist Episcopal congregation called Hynson's Chapel (refer to K-591, Old Hynson's Chapel) is located in a now untended woods on the northeast corner at the intersection of Ricaud's Branch-Langford Road and Baker's Lane, southeast of Fairlee. Ricaud's Branch-Langford Road, essentially a winding east-west road, was part of the Chestertown-Rock Hall/lower county route dating from the early years of Kent County. It is now a secondary road; the present main route is State Route 20 to the north. Baker's Lane, straight from one end to the other, appears to be a middle nineteenth-century public road (though perhaps approximating earlier farm lanes) built to connect Ricaud's Branch-Langford Road and the Fairlee-Chestertown Road, now a part of Route 20.

In 1863, when the chapel was begun, the vicinity was sparsely settled, with widely spaced farmhouses the nearest dwellings except for two adjacent buildings, now gone. A little over one mile to the west was the community known as St. Paul's (around St. Paul's Episcopal Church), now largely vanished; about one mile to the east was the crossroads community first called Trappe and later Langford, also much reduced at present.

The vicinity is still sparsely populated. To the north and east of the dense, brushy woods of several acres are farm fields. In the eastern portion of the wooded area, which is elevated above the road to Langford, foundation and site work is being done for what appears to be several new houses. These appear to be where stood, according to the 1877 atlas of Kent County, two buildings owned by Comegys Cosden (the donor of the land for the chapel). He also owned the farm to the north and east of the woodland. There is now a mid-twentieth century dwelling on the hill across the road to the southwest.

The brush on the site was too dense to venture into the interior to search for the cemetery and evidence of the chapel. It is known, however, that bricks from New Hynson's Chapel were used for the rebuilding of Walton's Chapel at Cliffs in Quaker Neck after it burned in 1889, after which it was called Mowbray's Chapel (K-247). New Hynson's Chapel was brick, as is Mowbray Chapel, now in near-ruinous condition; a minister's account called New Hynson's a "substantial edifice." A Kent County News account of September 12, 1863, stated that the dimensions were to be 36 by 50 feet; the graveyard was to be "one of the finest in the county." Very likely it was built in a vernacular Greek Revival style similar to that of the other middle nineteenth-century Methodist churches in this part of Kent

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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 checked="" 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 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 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** 1863 **Builder/Architect**

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.

New Hynson's Chapel, begun in 1863 and built of brick probably in a vernacular Greek Revival style similar to other Methodist churches in the area, was the direct descendant of Old Hynson's Chapel, which had been located two miles to the west. The congregation at Old Hynson's had been organized personally in 1772 and 1773 by Francis Asbury, the well-known itinerant who became known as the "Father of American Methodism." Named eventually after (John?) Carvill Hynson, in whose home the group first met, it was the first organized Methodist society in Kent County and for many years, at least until the spurt in Methodist growth beginning about 1800, the only Methodist church in the lower county. The first Hynson's Chapel, completed in 1774, had been the first place of worship erected by the Methodists on the Delmarva Peninsula and was the only one that predated the American Revolution; a second building had been built by 1806 in the old location. Records of the circumstances and details of the demise of the old chapel and the building of the new in a new location have not survived. The problems of the developing Methodist denomination, which became dominant in Kent County during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, may be reflected by the fate of both Hynson's Chapels. Ironically, the success of Methodism in the lower county area may have been at least partially responsible, with new congregations formed in lower county communities whose residents preferred not to make the relatively long journey to Old Hynson's for services and whose numbers could support independent congregations. Perhaps the difference among Methodists during the independent congregations. Perhaps the differences among Methodists during the 1820's over governance, which led to a schism and the establishment of the Methodist Protestant Church in 1828-30, also played a role in the decline of Old Hynson's. Methodist Protestant Wesley Chapel, 2-3/4 miles to the south between Edesville and Rock Hall, was established in 1829, perhaps fatally weakening Old Hynson's. The political and social issues of the times also may have created divisiveness in the congregation. Both congregation and building of New Hynson's were short-lived. By about 1880 regular services ceased because of lack of support; by 1882 the circuit minister pronounced Hynson's dead, the evident victim of too few people and too many churches in the vicinity. In 1890 Hynson's bricks were removed for the rebuilding of Walton's Chapel at Cliffs, which had been burned in 1889.

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# 7 Continued

County, most if not all of them the second building of the congregations, the first having been frame (Bond Chapel at Pomona in Quaker Neck, Wesley Chapel between Edesville and Rock Hall, Salem at Fairlee, and Mowbray Chapel).

The Greek Revival style of Mowbray Chapel may, or may not, be a clue to the style of New Hynson's. It is possible, especially if the first Walton/Mowbray building was frame, that New Hynson's was essentially recreated on the Walton site after the fire. The year 1890 is an unusually late date to have built in this style in Kent County. In fact, by this time some congregations (Olivet in Galena and Shrewsbury near Locust Grove) had already rebuilt their Greek Revival churches in a Victorian Gothic Revival style. On the other hand, in the lower county churches tended to remain in the style in which they were built, most of them Greek Revival. It is possible that this style thus fitted the local concept of how a church should look and hence was continued. Regardless of Walton's original construction, nearby Bond Chapel could have been the model in 1890 as it very likely was earlier.

The parsonage for the minister serving this church (and others on this circuit) was first located in the community at Rees' Corner. It is shown on the 1877 map, though in that year application was made to the conference to sell it; a new one (K-458) was built at Pomona in 1880 and dedicated in 1881. The Rees' Corner parsonage may have served since fairly early in the century; it has not survived, nor has most of the Rees Corner community.

A cemetery-recording project completed in 1972 transcribed the inscriptions of seven grave markers, dating from 1867 to 1879; there may be more graves, but with the stones hidden, unmarked, destroyed or removed.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF HISTORY AND SUPPORT

During the Civil War, on September 10, 1863, the cornerstone was laid for a brick Hynson's Chapel in the new location. The "large company tent of Rock Hall was raised for the convenience of the audience." In his message on that day, The Rev. J.E. Smith, minister of the circuit of which Hynson's was a part, only alluded to problems within the local Methodist church which caused the demise of Old Hynson's and the establishment of the new. Using military terminology, he said that "in the old place their Methodistic batteries seemed to be useless; the enemy had retired beyond their reach, and as Methodism had never learned to strike her colors, they determined to take a more eligible position and strike anew for God and humanity." (Kent County News, Sept. 12, 1863)

Old records now held by Bond Chapel (K-280) in Quaker Neck, once on the same circuit as New Hynson's Chapel, indicate that the building was completed before the deed for the property was drawn. The minutes of the board of trustees of June, 1866, speak of the bills rendered for construction; \$3,356.56 was said to have been the entire cost. For the next several years there seems to have been controversy, between the building committee and the board of trustees (though some seem to have served on both), over the accuracy of the construction accounts. Minutes of February 19, 1869, state that "the Church has cost largely more than the reported amount." This controversy probably affected the growth and stability of what seems to have begun as a small congregation and one apparently involved previously in some sort of controversy.

The church's deed is dated July 17, 1866. The land (for which no square measure is given, an unusual omission, though there is a survey) apparently was donated to the church by Comegys Cosden and Lavinia Cosden, his wife; it was the southwest corner of their farm. He was also a member of the first board of trustees and its secretary. The property was described as "situated in the fork or corner of the olde (sic) and new roads leading from Chestertown to Rock Hall." (Kent County Land Records, JKH 5/526) Presumably Baker's Lane was part of the new route to Chestertown. The board of trustees listed in the deed were Gary H. Leaverton, Henry Bramble, Isaac Cordray, Samuel Watts, Thomas D. Burgess, Comegys Cosden, Jonathan W. Crew, and James H. Edes.

The minutes of February 12, 1869, state that "bro. George Leary (was to) be permitted to appropriate and move the foundation refuse of the Old Hynson's Chapel" upon his payment of \$8.00.

Later surviving minutes indicate cemetery policy. No cemetery lot was to cost less than \$5.00 nor more than \$20.00 (Feb. 19, 1869). Eleven plots in the southeast corner of the cemetery were to be set aside for a potter's field (April 11, 1870).

The few records that survive indicate that at least by 1877 New Hynson's was failing to thrive. The minister's report of April 21, 1877, (unsigned) said that "Hynson's congregation is small, but we are not without hope for it." Walton's Chapel at Cliffs in Quaker Neck, on the same circuit, was described as also having very small attendance. Bond Chapel was repaired and reopened about 1879. Circa 1879-80 the Rev. J.M. Foreman described the churches at Rock Hall; Bond, Salem, and Piney Neck as notably strong; numbers had dwindled at both Hynson's and Walton's. He thought it a waste of time

and energy to continue at Hynson's. In 1880 the circuit was divided and called the Pomona Circuit. Thereafter one minister served only Bond, Hynson's, Walton and, after 1882, Salem in Fairlee. Circa 1880-82 (probably early 1882) the pastor of the Pomona Circuit (prior to the addition of Salem) wrote that "Hinson's is a good substantial brick edifice beautifully situated. For some reason or other there have been no regular services held at Hinson's for nearly two years. It is with painful regret that we are compelled to write 'Hinson's is dead.'" He described the other two churches as better established and stated that they "hemmed Hinson's in." Bond Chapel was strongest, with 59 members on the books. Walton hadn't met church or Sunday School for six months, though 21 were listed as members. Hynson's still listed 29 members, but "the flock at Hinson's is scattered beyond the possibility of recovery." The relocated Hynson's congregation had lasted only about 14 years.

On October 6, 1889, Walton's Chapel was "destroyed by fire" during a revival. Under the leadership of the energetic minister appointed to the circuit in March, 1889, W. R. Mowbray, Hynson's Chapel, unused for about ten years, was granted to the Walton congregation. In 1890 Walton's Chapel was rebuilt, using bricks from new Hynson's Chapel. What other elements of Hynson's may have been used at Walton's is unknown, as also the condition of Hynson's at the time of the brick removal. Older local residents formerly of the Cliffs community (the location of Mowbray) remember parents' speaking only of hauling wagon loads of bricks from Hynson's to Walton's. At Walton's rededication in July, 1890, the chapel was renamed Mowbray Chapel in honor of its minister, who himself had done the lath and plaster work.

E. C. Hallman, in his history of Delmarva Methodism, is not really correct in stating that Walton's Chapel was the "natural successor" of Old Hynson's, as was true of New Hynson's. (p. 317) Though it is true that the bricks from New Hynson's were used to rebuilt Walton's after the 1889 fire, that is the only direct link. The land for Walton's Chapel was purchased in 1864 (JKH 4/218, Kent Co. Land Records), with a building presumably following shortly thereafter, making Walton's a contemporary of New Hynson's rather than a successor. When services were halted at New Hynson's, whatever membership remnant was left probably was scattered among the area's churches, Walton's among them, though it was not the closest to New Hynson's.

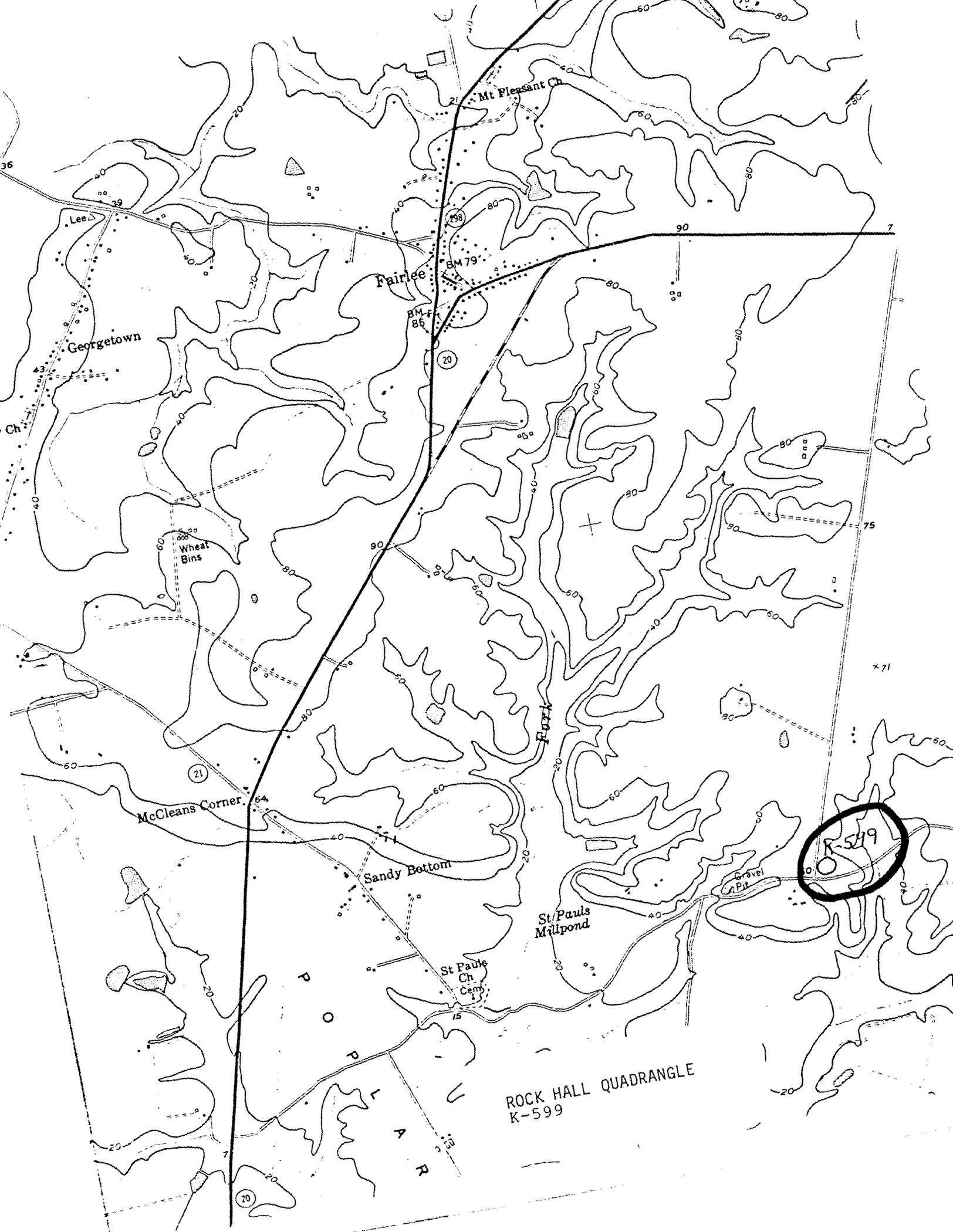
9.1 Continued

Copies held by Mrs. Arthur Willis (R.D. 3, Chestertown), of records held by Bond Chapel, Chestertown.

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland.

Kent County News, Chestertown, Maryland

E.C. Hallman, The Garden of Methodism. Published for the Methodist Conference of the Methodist Church, ca. 1948 (no place).



ROCK HALL QUADRANGLE  
K-599

K-599

Fairlee

Georgetown

Wheat  
Bins

McCleans Corner

Sandy Bottom

St Pauls  
Millpond

St Pauls  
Ch  
Camp

Gravel  
Pit

Mt Pleasant Ch

P  
O  
P  
L  
A  
R