

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. WI-8

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Poplar Hill Mansion

2. Location

street & number 117 Elizabeth Street not for publicationcity, town Salisbury vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Wicomico

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 City of Salisbury

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Salisbury state and zip code Md 21801

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse folio

city, town Salisbury state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties

date 1970 federal state county local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville state MD 21032

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" 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			

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

Poplar Hill Mansion is located at 117 Elizabeth Street in the Newtown Historic District in Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland. The two-story, five-bay, center hall frame house faces south with the gable roof oriented on an east/west axis.

Begun around 1795-96 and finished over the course of the following ten years, the two-story, center hall frame dwelling is supported on a high English bond brick foundation with an excavated cellar. The exterior is clad with a uniform layer of beaded weatherboards. The steeply pitched roof is covered with slate. Attached to the back of the main block is a single-story kitchen wing raised on a high brick foundation.

The south (main) elevation is a symmetrical five-bay facade with a center entrance and flanking twelve-over-twelve sash windows. The six-panel front door is framed by a neoclassical surround incorporating fluted pilasters that rise to pediment which surrounds an arched fanlight of radiating web-patterned muntins. The cornice of the pediment is enriched with small modillion blocks and as well as bed and crown moldings. The flanking windows are framed by narrow ovolo backband surrounds and each window features a bull-nose sill. The windows have louvered shutters to each side. The second floor is highlighted by a center Palladian or Venetian window. Characteristically divided into three sections, the center panel is a round headed window opening filled with a multi-paned upper sash of delicately curved muntins. The flanking panels, framed by fluted pilasters and trimmed with delicate modillion block cornices, are filled with narrow four-over-four sash windows. The adjacent bays are marked by twelve-over-twelve sash windows hung with louvered shutters. Each of the window openings has a bull-nosed window sill. Trimming the base of the roof is a modillion block cornice. Piercing the roofline are a pair of narrow brick chimney stacks topped with corbeled caps.

The east and west gable ends are defined by large twelve-over-twelve sash windows on the first and second floors, and each window opening is framed by an ovolo backband surround and a bull-nosed window sill. Louvered shutters hang on each window opening. The gable ends are enclosed within a pediment highlighted by an elaborately executed modillion block cornice. The gable end is sheathed with beaded weatherboards, and the wall is pierced by two tiers of windows. The bottom tier, which lights the main attic, features twelve-over-twelve sash windows and the upper tier boasts an elaborate round or bulls-eye window.

The north (rear) wall is partially covered by the single-story gable roofed kitchen wing that is extended by a shed roofed section to the east. Centered on the back wall is a rear door opening defined by a flush beaded edge panel door and an ovolo molded surround. Twelve-over-twelve sash windows mark the adjacent bays. Centered on the second floor is another Venetian window that repeats the same form as the front window.

(Continued)

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/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

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

Poplar Hill Mansion is the oldest documented structure to remain in the City of Salisbury. Its location outside the city proper aided significantly in its survival by escaping destruction during the ruinous town fires of 1860 and 1886. Estimations on the age of Poplar Hill have ranged between the late 18th century to the early 19th century. As it turns out, both arguments have validity. Construction of Poplar Hill was begun around 1795-96 by Major Levin Handy, who is identified in a 1795 deed for 357 acres of "Pemberton's Good Will" as "of Somerset County but formerly of Rhode Island."¹ The house Major Handy financed on his newly acquired plantation was an ambitious structure that outdistanced most buildings of its day in size and attention to refined detail. While architectural traditions distinctive to Rhode Island may have influenced his design decisions, a new house erected in nearby Snow Hill around 1792-93 more than likely had an impact on Levin Handy's Salisbury residence. Now known as Chanceford, the bold gable-front brick house was the high-style residence of James Rownd Morris, Clerk of Worcester County Court prior to his death in the mid 1790s. Following James Rownd Morris's death, his property was sold to Colonel Levin Handy (1754-1799), a second cousin of Major Handy's. Among friends, Major Handy was known as "Rhode Island Levin" in an effort to distinguish himself from this Eastern Shore relative of the same name. Before his death in 1799, Colonel Levin Handy served as the Clerk of Worcester County Court. It is without doubt that Major Handy visited Snow Hill, the county seat for the land on the east side of Salisbury, and knew of his second cousin's high-style residence.

While the two houses bear distinct architectural differences, there are similar aspects that offer compelling evidence that the Morris house influenced, in part, the design of Poplar Hill. In particular, the pedimented gable ends of Poplar Hill repeat the same hierarchy of window placement established on the gable-front wall of Chanceford. At Poplar Hill, large twelve-over-twelve sash windows light the first and second floors, while the gable end pediments are pierced by two tiers of windows. The main attic space is lighted by large multi-pane sash windows, while an upper attic is distinguished by a round or bull's eye window. The same fenestration pattern was established at Chanceford several years before Poplar Hill was begun.

¹ Worcester County Land Record, R/68, 16 November 1795.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A [][] [][][][] [][][][][]
Zone Easting Northing

B [][] [][][][] [][][][][]
Zone Easting Northing

C [][] [][][][] [][][][][]

D [][] [][][][] [][][][][]

E [][] [][][][] [][][][][]

F [][] [][][][] [][][][][]

G [][] [][][][] [][][][][]

H [][] [][][][] [][][][][]

Verbal boundary description and justification

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

Table with 4 columns: state, code, county, code. Two rows for data entry.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian
organization Private Consultant date 4/20/98
street & number P. O. Box 5 telephone 410-651-1094
city or town Westover state Maryland 21871

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

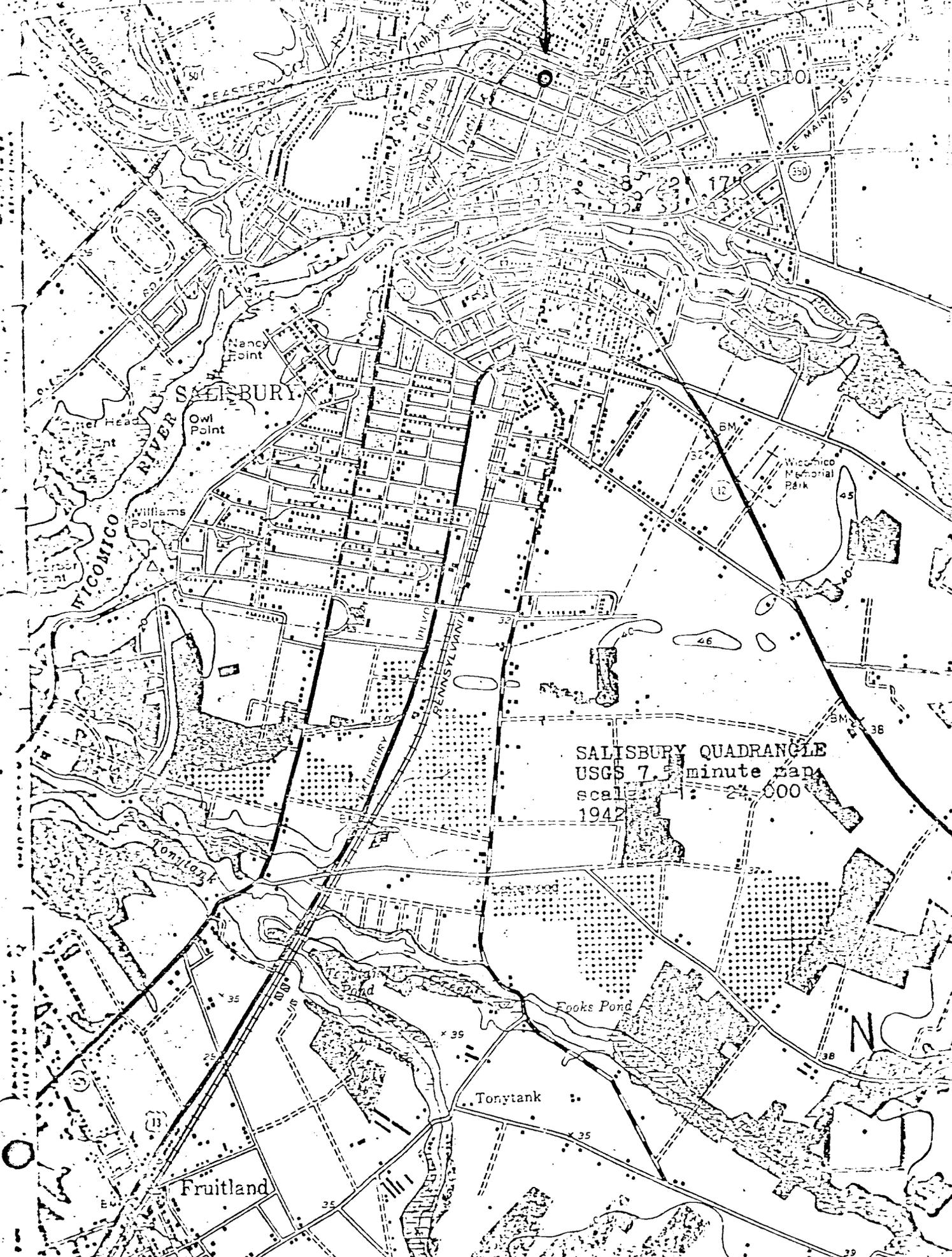
WI-8

CAMDEN 2 M. W. I. M.

44700m E

181° 00' 00" W. M. E. M. A. E. M.

35



SALISBURY QUADRANGLE
 USGS 7.5 minute map
 scale 1:24,000
 1942

Fruitland

Tonytank

Fooks Pond

SALISBURY

WICOMICO RIVER

Wicomico Memorial Park

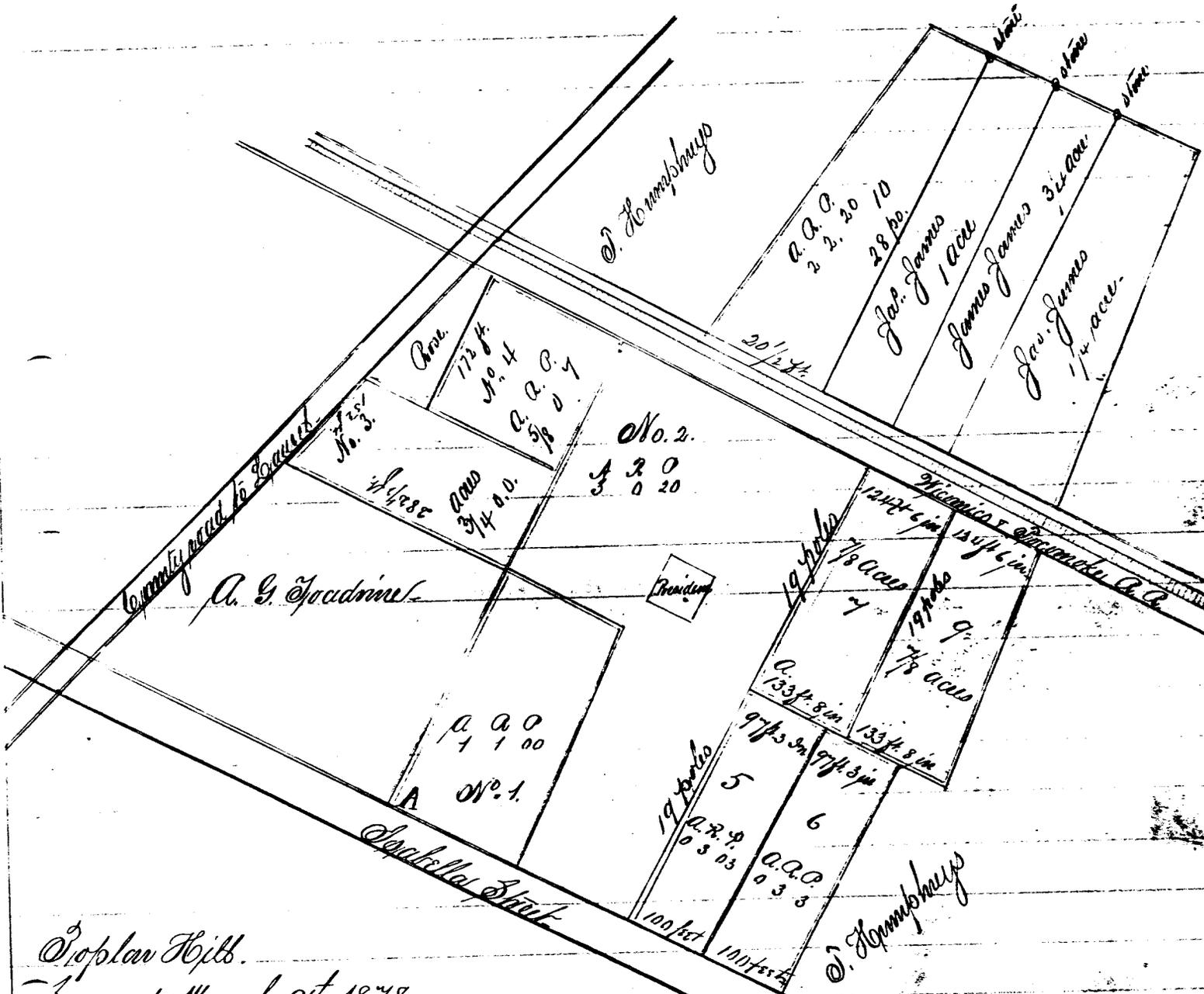
Nancy Point

Owl Point

Williams Point

Long Pond

N



Poplar Hills.

Surveyed March 9th 1878

Stat. 10 perches 165 feet to the inch

William Jackson

Deft surveyor of Wisconsin County

Dealer.
aler in, and Grower of Small

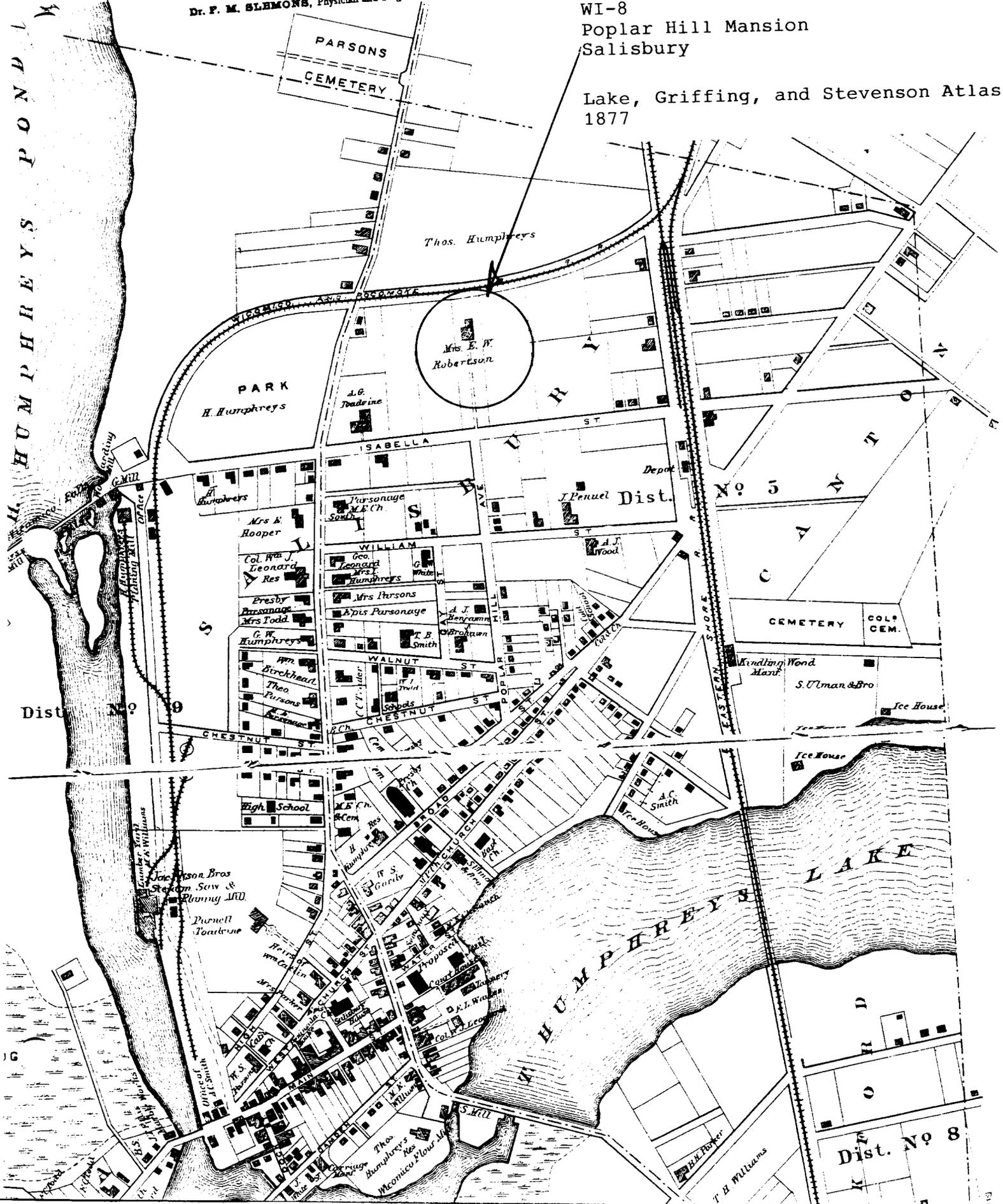
otel.
rictor of the "Peninsula Ho-
unic Hotel," "Ocean City."

JOHN W...
Saw and Grist Mill 5 miles north of
GEO. H. W. RUARK, Farmer and Proprietor of
"Ruark Mills" 3 miles north of Salisbury. Res.
Salisbury.
M. A. PARSONS, Proprietor of S. S. Mill, 2
miles west of Salisbury on Wicomico River. Also
Proprietor of Marine Railway.

Physician.
Dr. F. M. SLEMONS, Physician and Surgeon.

WI-8
Poplar Hill Mansion
Salisbury

Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson Atlas
1877



HUMPHREYS POND

HUMPHREYS LAKE

Dist. No 8

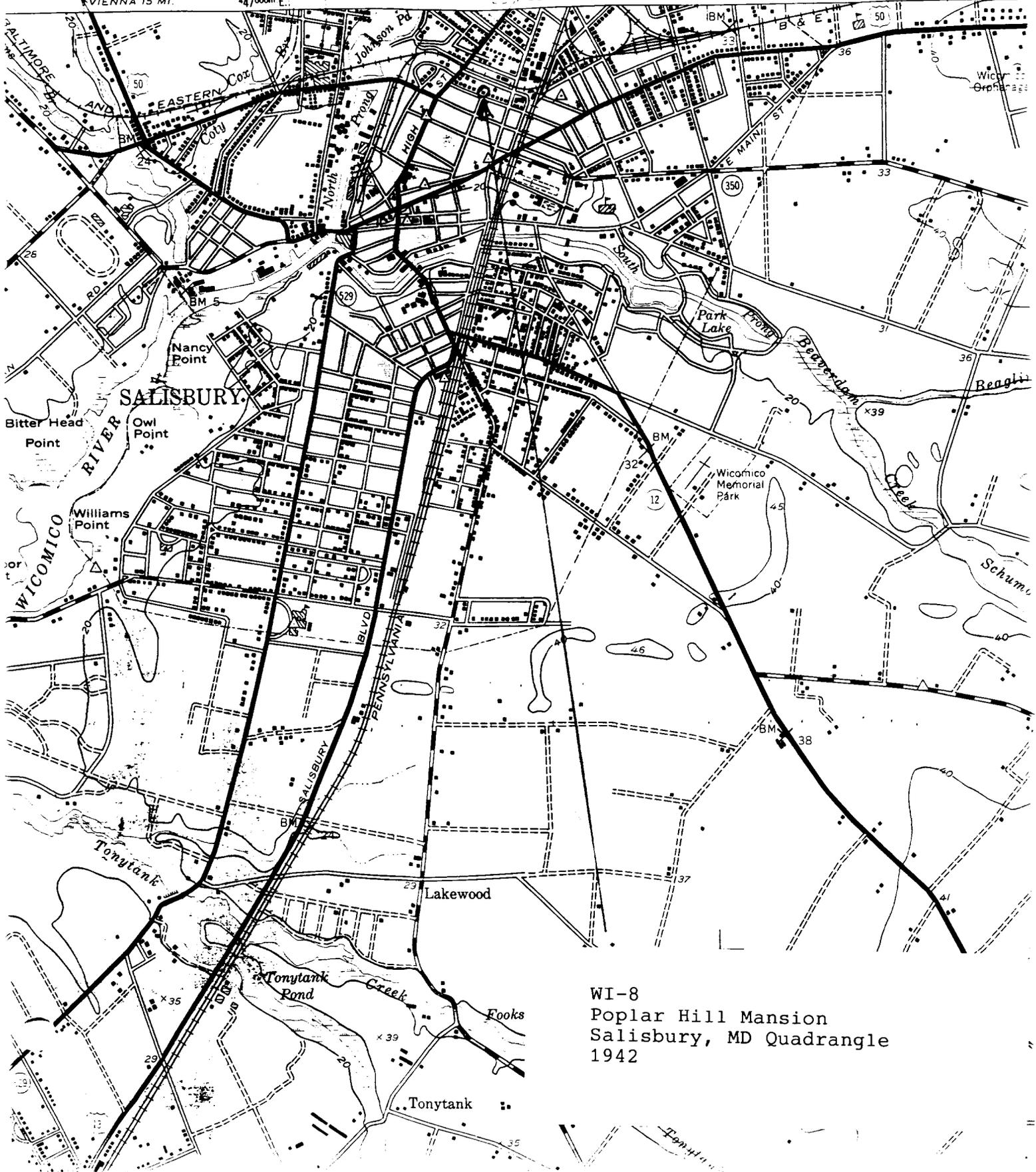
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

CAMBRIDGE 31 MI.
VIENNA 15 MI.

DELMAR 6 MI.

35'

450



WI-8
Poplar Hill Mansion
Salisbury, MD Quadrangle
1942





Poplar Hill
Wisconsin



page 17



W1-3

Poplar Hill Mansions

Springfield, Virginia, 1910

3/92, Pam Touart, Postmaster

146 / No. 146, St. Trust

1 of 10



2 2
Received of [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

2 01 10





W1-8

POPULAR STORE MANAGER
SPRINGFIELD, WISCONSIN Co., WIS.

CENTER STORE MANAGER AND PURCHASER

4/90, PAUL TOWNSEND, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEB. / AND HISTORICAL TRUST

4 OF 10



WI-0

POPULAR (the Mansard)
SALISBURY, WICOMICO CO., MD.

PRINCIPAL MASTER

4/90 Paul Touart, PHOTOGRAPHER
NEE/MA HIST. TRUST

5 of 10



W1-8

Poplar Hill Mansions
Spartanburg, Wicomico Co., Md.

PANORAMA MANTON DETAIL

4/98, PANI TOURNET, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEW / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

6 of 10



W1-8

POPLAR HILL MANSION

SMITHSBURG, WICOMICO CO., MD.

CORNICE - PARLOR

4/98, PAUL TOWNSEND, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEG / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

9 OF 10





