

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #84-1 Building Date: ca. 1834

Building Name: St. James Hill

Location: 14200 Livingston Road, Piscataway, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Excellent/Inaccessible

Description

St. James Hill is a multi-part building consisting of very old and very new components, which now makes up a large and complex private residence. The two principal sections, the brick central block and the frame section on the south, probably date from the early nineteenth century. The central block is built of brick; it is two-and-one-half stories, three bays by one, side gabled, and faces roughly west. Entrance is in the third bay of the three-bay main west facade, which is sheltered by a modern monumental two-story pedimented portico with fluted metal columns. The bricks of the main west facade are laid in Flemish bond. The other elevations are laid in 5:1 American bond. Windows are modern replacements. Two gable dormers break through the west plane of the roof. A one-bay one-story hyphen connects the central block to the one-and-one-half story frame structure which was originally freestanding. This frame section, which has been totally renovated, is connected by a modern breezeway to a small old kitchen building; a short distance behind the kitchen is a free-standing smoke house. In the 1980's a balancing north wing was built, reflecting the features of the south wing.

Significance

St. James Hill is a complex building, made up of a brick central block flanked by an early frame dwelling and a modern replica of it on the other side. St. James Hill was the home of Dr. Benedict J. Semmes, who had served in both the Maryland House of Delegates and the U.S. Congress. In 1834, after retiring from the House of Representatives, Semmes purchased 850 acres of St. James Hill; it is probably at this time that he built the brick Greek Revival style dwelling, attaching it to the corner of an earlier side-gabled building. Benedict Semmes died in 1863 and the plantation was divided among his children; in 1869, it was sold to Joseph Hofstetter, and remained the Hofstetter home place into the 1930's. During the Depression the house stood vacant for many years. St. James Hill was purchased in 1937 by H. Curly Boswell, who undertook the first major renovation. The frame section was moved a short distance, and a connecting hyphen constructed to join it to the brick main block. The house was again in need of repair when Boswell's heirs sold it to the present owner in 1976. A portico has been built on the west facade of the brick section, and a balancing wing was built on the north, reflecting the lines of the old frame section. The resulting complex house incorporates two early dwellings, and is a prominent landmark in rural Prince George's County.

Acreage: 24.037 acres

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic St. James Hill

and/or common

### 2. Location

street & number 14200 Livingston Road \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Clinton \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 4

state Maryland county Prince George's

### 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 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name William Briesmaster

street & number 14200 Livingston Road telephone no.:

city, town Clinton state and zip code Maryland 20735

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 5137

street & number Main Street folio 628

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Prince George's Historic Sites and Districts Plan

date 1981 \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Commission c/o MNCPPC

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	frame section moved
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			after 1937

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

St. James Hill is a multi-part building consisting of very old and very new components, which now makes up a large and complex private residence. The two principal sections, the brick central block and the frame section on the south, probably date from the early nineteenth century.

The central block is built of brick; it is two-and-one-half stories, three bays by one, side gabled, and faces roughly west. This section has a side-hall-and-single-parlor plan. Entrance is in the third bay of the three-bay main west facade through a modern glazed and panelled door which has a single light transom, surmounted by a flat arch lintel. The door has a narrow molded surround, and panelled jambs and soffit. The main west facade is sheltered by a modern monumental two-story pedimented portico with fluted metal columns; the wide shallow pediment is sided with white metal with a louvered bullseye window.

The bricks of the main west facade are laid in Flemish bond, and appear to have been sandblasted and repointed; the other elevations are laid in 5:1 American bond. Windows are modern replacements, with insets to simulate 9/9 on the first story and 6/6 on the second. They have splayed flat arches, plain wood sills and louvered grained metal shutters. Two gable dormers break through the west plane of the roof; the small 6/6 dormer windows have segmentally curved upper sashes and are framed by molded pilasters with returned cornices.

The gable roof is covered with brown asbestos shingle. The cornice is hidden on the west facade by the portico roof, but on the east (rear) a corbelled brick cornice is visible: one course of brick set in sawtooth design over one crown of projecting stretchers. Plain raking boards at the gable ends are painted white. There is one flush chimney at the ridge at the north gable end.

Interior is a stairhall on the south, which opens into one large parlor on the north. The stair has been replaced; it now has a metal trellis-type rail. The single north chimney serves a fireplace centered in the north wall of the parlor; the wood mantel has a plain frieze over fluted pilasters. The door and window surrounds are early Greek Revival in style, with slightly convex bullseye corner blocks, and beveled frieze with a narrow central channel.

A one-bay one-story hyphen connects this brick central block to the other historic section of this house: a one-and-one-half story frame

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

Survey No. PG#84-1

Description (continued)

Section 7 Page 2

structure which was originally freestanding. This frame section has been totally renovated; the two-room interior has all new materials. It is four bays by two, 40 by 15 feet, and has a gable roof. Entrance is now in the third bay of the main four-bay south facade; through a modern door with a single light transom and a beaded surround. Access to this door is by a concrete stoop with lateral steps and metal trellis railing. Siding is of plain horizontal board painted white. Windows are 2/2 double hung sash with louvered grained metal shutters painted brown. This building rests on a high brick foundation which encloses a basement under the west two bays, accessible by a small gabled entry vestibule. The gable roof is covered with brown asbestos shingle; there are four hip-roof dormers in the south plane of the roof and two in the north. At each gable end of this small frame building is an exterior brick chimney with weatherings above first story level, freestanding above the weatherings. The chimney at the east gable end is now enclosed inside a modern one-story breezeway which connects the frame building with the old kitchen.

The kitchen is 14-1/2 feet square with gable roof; it is one bay by two, and rests on a brick foundation, has plain horizontal board siding painted white, and brown asbestos shingle on the roof. Entrance is on the west through the modern breezeway. This building had served as a separate kitchen until the installation of a modern kitchen in the 40-foot frame section; it now serves as pantry/storage space.

A short distance east of the (originally) freestanding kitchen building is a small 10-1/2 foot square hip-roof smoke house. This small building, moved from another location, now serves as a bath house for the swimming pool recently installed in the east yard.

In the 1980's a second frame wing was constructed to adjoin the brick central block on the north, creating a balanced symmetrical five-part building when viewed from the west. The new north wing repeats the features of the old south wing (i.e. dormers, connecting hyphen, etc.) but does not have chimneys. On the main west gable end of the new north wing, a one-story projecting bay with 9/9 windows takes the place of the exterior chimney of the south wing.

The house at St. James Hill stands on a high point of land overlooking the valley of Piscataway Creek. There are fenced paddocks on lower ground to the north and south. A long drive approaches the house from Livingston Road; it is lined with fluted metal light posts. There are hollies and large shrubbery in both the east and west lawns.

# 8. Significance

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>			
<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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** ca. 1834 **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.

St. James Hill is a complex building, made up of a brick central block flanked by an early frame dwelling and a modern replica of it on the other side. The complex includes also a small kitchen building, attached by means of a modern breezeway; the main facade is dominated by a massive two-story pedimented portico.

St. James Hill, patented in 1663 to Captain James Neale, came into the possession, late in the eighteenth century, of John Fraser Bowie.<sup>1</sup> Bowie lived at Leith, a short distance to the north on the edge of the village of Piscataway; during Bowie's ownership, buildings at St. James Hill included only an overseer's house, four slave quarters, a corn house, and three tobacco barns.<sup>2</sup> When John Fraser Bowie died in 1815, he left all of his real estate to his wife, Elizabeth Ann Bowie,<sup>3</sup> and the plantation was purchased in 1834 by Benedict J. Semmes.<sup>4</sup> Semmes had attended the Baltimore Medical School and graduated in 1811. He had been elected to the Maryland House of Delegates and served from 1825 to 1828. In 1829 he was elected to the U.S. Congress and served in the Twenty-first and Twenty-second Congresses.<sup>5</sup> In 1834, after retiring from the House of Representatives, he purchased 850 acres of St. James Hill and adjoining tracts. It is probably at this time that he built the brick Greek Revival style dwelling, attaching it to the corner of an earlier side-gabled building already standing on the property, and this became the Semmes home place; Semmes was later elected (1842-43) to the Maryland State Senate; he farmed the land and practiced medicine in the area.

Benedict Semmes died in 1863 and the plantation was divided among his children. Parts of St. James and Edelen's Hog Pen totaling 370 acres were sold by Celestia Semmes, daughter of Benedict J. Semmes, to Joseph Hofstetter in 1869.<sup>6</sup> St. James Hill remained the Hofstetter home place into the 1930's. During the Depression the Hofstetters lost the farm,<sup>7</sup> and the house stood vacant for many years. It was in badly deteriorating condition when it was photographed in 1936 as part of the Historic American Buildings Survey.<sup>8</sup> It was purchased in 1937 by H. Curly Boswell, who undertook the first major renovation.<sup>9</sup> The frame section was moved a

short distance to the southeast, and a connecting hyphen constructed to join it to the brick main block. The smoke house was also moved to its present location behind the freestanding kitchen. For many years the two-part dwelling served as a summer residence for Boswell's elderly relatives.

The house was again in need of repair when Boswell's heirs sold St. James Hill to the present owner in 1976. Since that time, the frame section has been rebuilt on the interior with new materials, the separate kitchen has been reconnected to it by a modern breezeway, and a two-story portico has been built on the west facade of the brick section. The smoke house was also repaired to serve as a bath house.

Later, a balancing wing was built on the north, reflecting the lines and features of the old frame section. The resulting large and complex house is now composed largely of new materials, but it incorporates two early dwellings as well as two small outbuildings, and is a prominent and handsome landmark in rural Prince George's County.

Notes

- 1 Prince George's County Will #1:571
- 2 Federal Direct Tax, 1798.
- 3 Prince George's County Will TT#1:140
- 4 Prince George's County Deed AB#9:291
- 5 Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971.
- 6 Prince George's County Equity #452; Prince George's County Deed HB#2:774, 776.
- 7 Prince George's County Deed #423:184
- 8 HABS Photos #115, HABS MD. 17-PISC. v 1-1,2. Library of Congress
- 9 Prince George's County Deed #474:249

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG 84-1

cf. Chain of Title  
cf. notes, Item #8

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 24,037 acres

Tax Map 142 parcel 60

Quadrangle name Piscataway

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian

organization	<u>PG Historic Preservation Commission c/o MN CPPC</u>	date	<u>June 1988</u>
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street & number	<u>#4010 CAB</u>	telephone	<u>952-3521</u>
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city or town	<u>Upper Marlboro</u>	state	<u>Maryland</u>
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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

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

(revised information entered 11/9/81)

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC St. James Hill

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**STREET & NUMBER  
14200 Livingston Road

CITY, TOWN Piscataway \_\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF 4th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Maryland \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY Prince George's

**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 type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" 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 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"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME William W. Briesmaster, Jr.

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER  
14200 Livingston Road

CITY, TOWN Piscataway \_\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF Maryland STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC P.G. CourthouseLiber #: 5137  
Folio #: 628STREET & NUMBER  
Main Street

CITY, TOWN Upper Marlboro, Md. STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE P.G. Inventory of Historic Sites (also HABS 1936)

DATE 1974 \_\_\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS Calvert Mansion, MNCPPC, 4811 Riverdale Rd.

CITY, TOWN Riverdale, Md. 20737 STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

PG: 84-1

<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 type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>after</u> 193

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**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

St. James Hill is a two-part house: an eighteenth century frame section and an early nineteenth century brick structure built at right angles to it. The one-and-one-half-story frame structure is four bays wide, with the entrance in the third bay of the south facade. There is an exterior chimney at each gable end. There are four dormers on the south slope of the roof.

The two-and-one-half-story main house is a three-bay brick structure with flush chimney at the north gable end. The west (main) facade is laid in Flemish bond, and the entrance is in its third bay. On the west slope of the roof are two dormers with elliptical arches.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The St. James tract was patented to Captain James Neale in 1663. Early in the 18th century it came into the hands of Reverend John Fraser, who had been inducted as the first rector of Piscataway Parish in 1710. Reverend Fraser died in 1742 and the estate passed to his children and then to his grandson, Dr. John Fraser Bowie.<sup>1</sup> The original dwelling house must have been destroyed before 1798, for no dwelling house of any value is recorded on St. James at that time. The present brick house was probably built in the early years of the 19th century (before Bowie's death in 1815) and attached at the corner to the simple frame structure already on the site.

Dr. Benedict J. Semmes acquired St. James in 1834, after having served six years as a U.S. Congressman. Shortly after his death in 1863, the estate was sold by his daughter to Joseph Hostetter, whose descendants held the property until 1935.<sup>2</sup> At this time, the structures were in deteriorating condition, but in 1936 Lorena Boswell purchased the property, and her brother began restoration work on it. The frame section was moved a short distance to the southeast, and a hyphen was built to connect it to the south end of the brick structure. The present owners have again refurbished the house, and it is now a prominent and attractive landmark.

1. Wills #1:333; T#1:78; TT#1:140

2. Deeds AB#9:291,293; HB#2:776; Equity #452

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

PG:84-1

Wills #1:333; T#1:78; PT#1:140  
 Deeds AB#9:291,293; HB#2:776  
 Equity #452

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Susan G. Pearl

ORGANIZATION

P.G. Historical &amp; Cultural Trust

DATE

November 1980

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Calvert Mansion, MNCPPC, 4811 Riverdale Rd.

TELEPHONE

779-2011

CITY OR TOWN

Riverdale, Maryland 20737

STATE

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  
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 267-1438

CHAIN OF TITLE

ST. JAMES HILL

P.G.#84-1

- 5137:628  
2 Aug 1979  
Deed  
William W. Briesmaster to William W. Briesmaster Jr. et ux ; 24.04 acres
- 4627:437  
11 June 1976  
Deed  
William H. Boswell to William W. Briesmaster; 24.04 acres
- 4506:829  
18 June 1975  
Deed  
Camille V. Boswell to William H. Boswell; part of St. James known as the Hostetter farm, ca. 23.95 acres (Camille Boswell is ancillary administratrix of Lorena Boswell, who died possessed of 23.95 acre Hostetter farm)
- 432:422  
18 Jan 1936  
Deed  
William B. Streater et ux to Lorena Boswell; 23.95 acres, per Thorne survey
- 426:57  
16 July 1935  
Deed  
Philip & Cora Miller to William B. Streater; Lots #1 & #2 of St. James, 130 acres, which was owned by Hostetters (96:467) & which Millers acquired from Sheriff Bell  
(Streater in 474:249 sells 113 acres of St. James to Richard Boswell)
- 423:184  
16 July 1935  
Deed  
Sheriff J. Guy Bell to Philip Miller; 130 acres, Lots #1 & #2 of St. James, by decree of court to sell real estate of Horace J. Hostetter (#15 Judicials, Bank of Brandywine vs. Horace J. Hostetter) same land as 96:467
- 96:467  
16 Oct 1913  
Partition  
Milton & Emma Hostetter to Horace J. Hostetter; since both parties are heirs of Annie E. Hostetter, who died possessed of real estate described in HB#13:66, they now make equitable division; Horace gets Lots #1 & #2 of St. James plus vacancy,  $153\frac{1}{2}$ , + 95 +  $32\frac{1}{2}$  acres.
- HB#13:66  
13 Dec 1877  
Deed  
Joseph Hostetter to Annie E. Hostetter; all lots allotted to Celestia Semmes in division of real estate of her deceased father, Dr. Benedict J. Semmes (Equity #452) including Lots #1 & #2 and vacancy.

- HB#2:776  
16 Nov 1869  
Deed  
Celestia Semmes to Joseph Hostetter;  
370 acres of St. James, including Lots #1,  
#2 and vacancy
- HB#2:774  
6 Nov 1869  
Deed  
Pembroke & Matilda Brawnen to Celestia  
Semmes; 231 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land out of estate  
of their father Dr. Benedict J. Semmes
- #452  
28 Sept 1865  
Equity  
Division among heirs of real estate of  
Dr. Benedict J. Semmes (died 1863 intestate);  
231 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of St. James etc. to daughter  
Matilda Brawnen; 140 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of St. James  
etc. to daughter Celestia Semmes
- AB#9:291  
15 Dec 1834  
Deed  
Thomas Mundell to Benedict J. Semmes;  
St. James and part of Wade's Adventure,  
708 acres; all part of real estate of John  
P. Bowie, deceased, which Mundell bought from  
Stonestreet, trustee; except for  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre used  
as graveyard by Mundell
- AB#9:293  
10 Dec 1834  
Deed  
Nicholas Stonestreet, trustee to Thomas  
Mundell; Chancery Court appointed Stonestreet  
to sell real estate of John P. Bowie; sold  
said land to Mundell 29 Nov 1831, now executes  
this deed; St. James, etc. 847 acres
- TT#1:140  
24 June 1815  
Will  
Testator, John P. Bowie; property to wife  
Elizabeth Ann Bowie; mentions unsettled  
accounts between himself and brother-in-  
law Thomas Mundell.
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Will  
Testator, George Fraser: 1/3 of St. James  
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James to sister Verlinda (who devises it  
to nephew J. P. Bowie, T#1:78),; and 1/3  
to brother-in-law George Fraser Hawkins  
(whose daughter marries John P. Bowie).
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Nov 1742  
Will  
Testator, John Fraser, Rector of King  
George Parish; confirms deed of gift to  
son George.
- Q:621  
29 Dec 1732  
Deed  
John Frazer, Rector of King George Parish,  
and wife Anne; to son George Frazer,  
St. James, 244 acres

date entered 6/12/80

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITES SUMMARY SHEET

P.G. County Survey : 84-1 Date mid 18th, early 19th c.

Building Name St. James Hill

Location 14200 Livingston Road, Piscataway, Md.

Open to Public  yes  no

St. James Hill is a two-part house: an eighteenth century frame section and an early nineteenth century brick structure built at right angles to it. The one-and-one-half story frame structure is four bays wide, with the entrance in the third bay of the south facade. There is an exterior chimney at each gable end. There are four dormers on the south slope of the roof.

The two-and-one-half story main house is a three bay brick structure with flush chimney at the north gable end. The west (main) facade is laid in Flemish bond, and the entrance is in its third bay. On the west slope of the roof are two dormers with elliptical arches.

The St. James tract was patented to Captain James Neale in 1663. Early in the 18th century it came into the hands of Rev. John Fraser, who had been inducted as the first rector of Piscataway Parish in 1710. Rev. Fraser died in 1742 and the estate passed to his children and then to his grandson, Dr. John Fraser Bowie. The original dwelling house must have been destroyed before 1798, for no dwelling house of any value is recorded on St. James at that time. The present brick house was probably built in the early years of the 19th century (before Bowie's death in 1815) and attached at the corner to the simple frame structure already on the site.

Dr. Benedict J. Semmes acquired St. James in 1834, after having served six years as a U.S. Congressman. Shortly after his death in 1863, the estate was sold by his daughter to Joseph Hostetter, whose descendants held the property until 1935. At this time, the structures were in deteriorating condition, but in 1936 Lorena Boswell purchased the property, and her brother began restoration work on it. The frame section was moved a short distance to the southeast, and a hyphen was built to connect it to the south end of the brick structure. The present owners have again refurbished the house, and it now a prominent and attractive landmark.

Priv/occ/res/excellent

1704155304  
P.A. #24-1

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM  
for the  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**

COMMON:

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
St. James Hill

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
14200 Livingston Road

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE: Maryland COUNTY: Prince George's

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC	
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work In progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	Vacant	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	Vandalized	_____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Boswell

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Prince George's County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Upper Marlboro STATE: Maryland

Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #):

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1936  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:  
10 First Street SE

CITY OR TOWN: Washington, DC STATE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The house is a two story, brick structure with a three bay main (west) facade and a flush gable chimney at the north end. It is laid up in Flemish bond on the main facade and common bond on the sides and rear. The facade is three bays with the entrance in the south bay. The reveals are panelled and there is a transom light above the door. The jack arches above the openings are 1-1/2 stretchers tall. The windows on the first floor are 9/6 double hung sash and on the second floor 6/6 double hung sash. There are two A-roofed dormers on the main facade. The cornice consists of a row of bricks set saw-tooth like.

In plan, the house had a south end hall with one room to the north. The staircase rises along the south wall of the hall; the posts are tapered and the ballusters rectangular. The door and window frames are moulded with circle blocks at the corners. The doors have flat panels and are grained.

To the south of the house is a 1-1/2 story wing set at right angles to the house. It has external end chimneys. In plan it has a central hall and parlors.

Behind the house is a small, square, hipped-roof storage building. It is framed with mortise, tenon, and pegged hewn members. Tie beams run from plat to plate and support a king post, on which the top ends of the rafters are supported.

(Cont'd. on following page...)

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

**PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

- Pre-Columbian
- 15th Century
- 16th Century
- 17th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

**SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)**

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal<br><input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric<br><input type="checkbox"/> Historic<br><input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture<br><input type="checkbox"/> Architecture<br><input type="checkbox"/> Art<br><input type="checkbox"/> Commerce<br><input type="checkbox"/> Communications<br><input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Education<br><input type="checkbox"/> Engineering<br><input type="checkbox"/> Industry<br><input type="checkbox"/> Invention<br><input type="checkbox"/> Landscape<br><input type="checkbox"/> Architecture<br><input type="checkbox"/> Literature<br><input type="checkbox"/> Military<br><input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Political<br><input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy<br><input type="checkbox"/> Science<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture<br><input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian<br><input type="checkbox"/> Theater<br><input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br><hr/><br><hr/><br><hr/><br><hr/><br><hr/> |
|--|--|---|--|

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

West of the house is a twentieth century, colonial revival garden building. It is frame, with siding beveled to resemble stone. Each face has a round arched window with keystone surround. The roof is a semi-spherical dome.

A number of cast iron lamp posts stand in the gardens.

SEE INST. INSTRUCTIONS

**9. 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 TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

**Acreage Justification:**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Christopher Owens, Park Historian

ORGANIZATION: M-NCPPC

DATE: 31 July 74

STREET AND NUMBER:  
8787 Georgia Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Silver Spring

STATE: Maryland

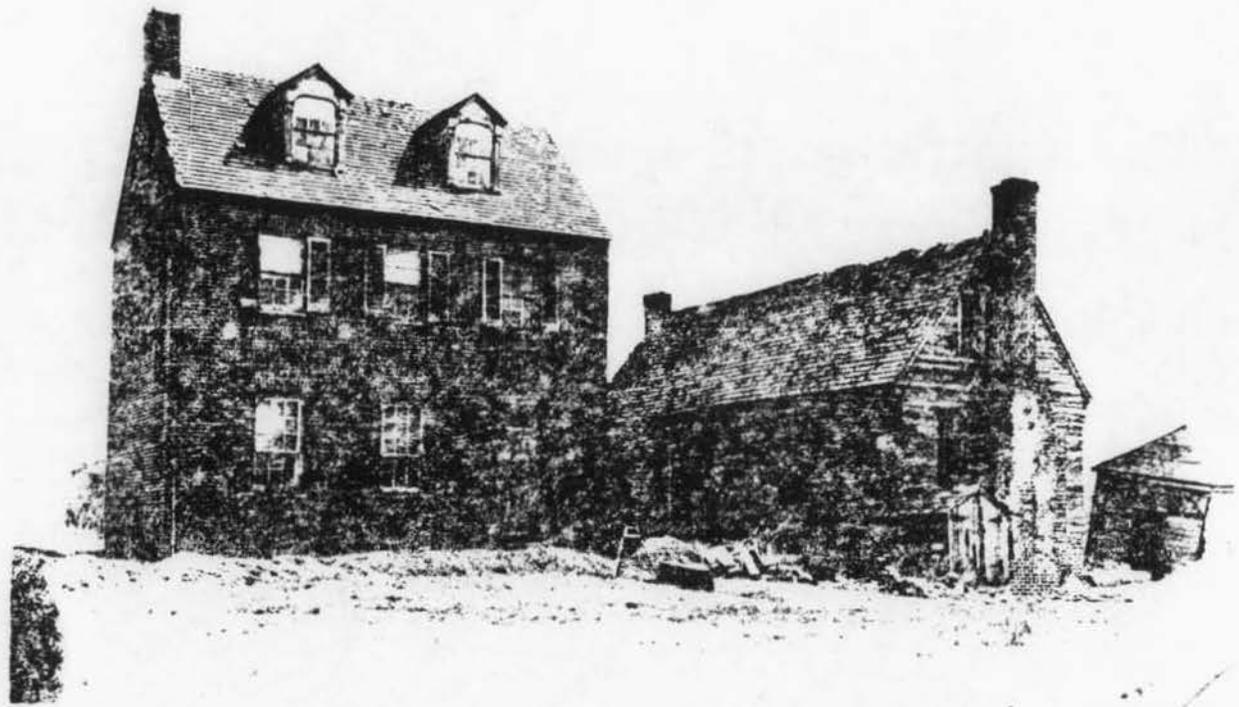
**12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)**

Significance of this property is:

National  State  Local

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

"St. James" (Hostetter House)  
(Near) Piscataway, Maryland  
Prince Georges County



Historic American Buildings Survey  
John O. Brostrup, Photographer

April 14, 1936  
1:25 P.M.

VIEW FROM NORTHWEST (front)

HABS No. 115

HABS  
MD

17 Piscatv

1-1

PG:84-1

"St. James" (Hostetter House)  
(Near) Piscataway, Maryland  
Prince Georges County

HABS No. 115

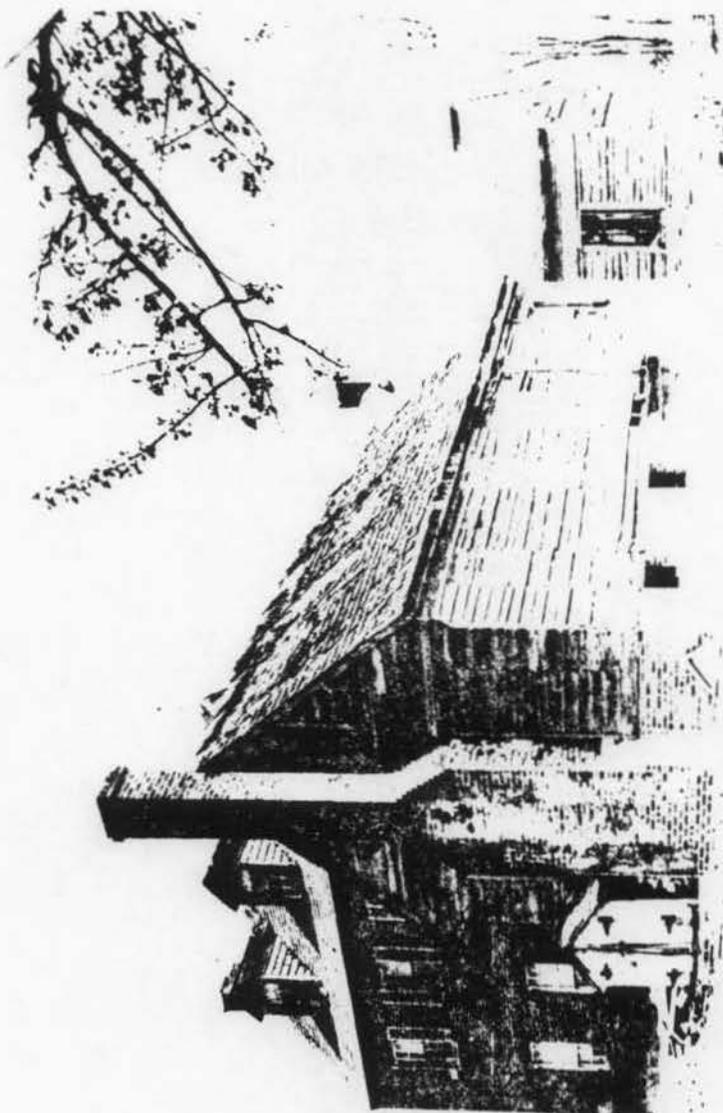
PG:841  
H/20

MD

17. Pisc.v

1-2

40



April 14, 1936  
1:30 P. M.

Historic American Buildings Survey  
John O. Brostrup, Photographer

VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST

CHAIN OF TITLE

ST. JAMES HILL

P.G.#84-1

5137:628  
2 Aug 1979  
Deed  
William W. Briesmaster to William W. Briesmaster Jr. et ux ; 24.04 acres

4627:437  
11 June 1976  
Deed  
William H. Boswell to William W. Briesmaster; 24.04 acres

4506:829  
18 June 1975  
Deed  
Camille V. Boswell to William H. Boswell; part of St. James known as the Hostetter farm, ca. 23.95 acres (Camille Boswell is ancillary administratrix of Lorena Boswell, who died possessed of 23.95 acre Hostetter farm)

432:422  
18 Jan 1936  
Deed  
William B. Streater et ux to Lorena Boswell; 23.95 acres, per Thorne survey

426:57  
16 July 1935  
Deed  
Philip & Cora Miller to William B. Streater; Lots #1 & #2 of St. James, 130 acres, which was owned by Hostetters (96:467) & which Millers acquired from Sheriff Bell  
(Streater in 474:249 sells 113 acres of St. James to Richard Boswell)

423:184  
16 July 1935  
Deed  
Sheriff J. Guy Bell to Philip Miller; 130 acres, Lots #1 & #2 of St. James, by decree of court to sell real estate of Horace J. Hostetter (#15 Judicials, Bank of Brandywine vs. Horace J. Hostetter) same land as 96:467

96:467  
16 Oct 1913  
Partition  
Milton & Emma Hostetter to Horace J. Hostetter; since both parties are heirs of Annie E. Hostetter, who died possessed of real estate described in HB#13:66, they now make equitable division; Horace gets Lots #1 & #2 of St. James plus vacancy, 153 $\frac{1}{2}$ , + 95 + 32 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres.

HB#13:66  
13 Dec 1877  
Deed  
Joseph Hostetter to Annie E. Hostetter; all lots allotted to Celestia Semmes in division of real estate of her deceased father, Dr. Benedict J. Semmes (Equity #452) including Lots #1 & #2 and vacancy.

Chain of Title, cont'd  
St. James Hill, P.G.#84-1

HB#2:776  
16 Nov 1869  
Deed  
Celestia Semmes to Joseph Hostetter;  
370 acres of St. James, including Lots #1,  
#2 and vacancy

HB#2:774  
6 Nov 1869  
Deed  
Pembroke & Matilda Brawnen to Celestia  
Semmes; 231 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land out of estate  
of their father Dr. Benedict J. Semmes

#452  
28 Sept 1865  
Equity  
Division among heirs of real estate of  
Dr. Benedict J. Semmes (died 1863 intestate);  
231 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of St. James etc. to daughter  
Matilda Brawnen; 140 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of St. James  
etc. to daughter Celestia Semmes

AB#9:291  
15 Dec 1834  
Deed  
Thomas Mundell to Benedict J. Semmes;  
St. James and part of Wade's Adventure,  
708 acres; all part of real estate of John  
P. Bowie, deceased, which Mundell bought from  
Stonestreet, trustee; except for  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre used  
as graveyard by Mundell

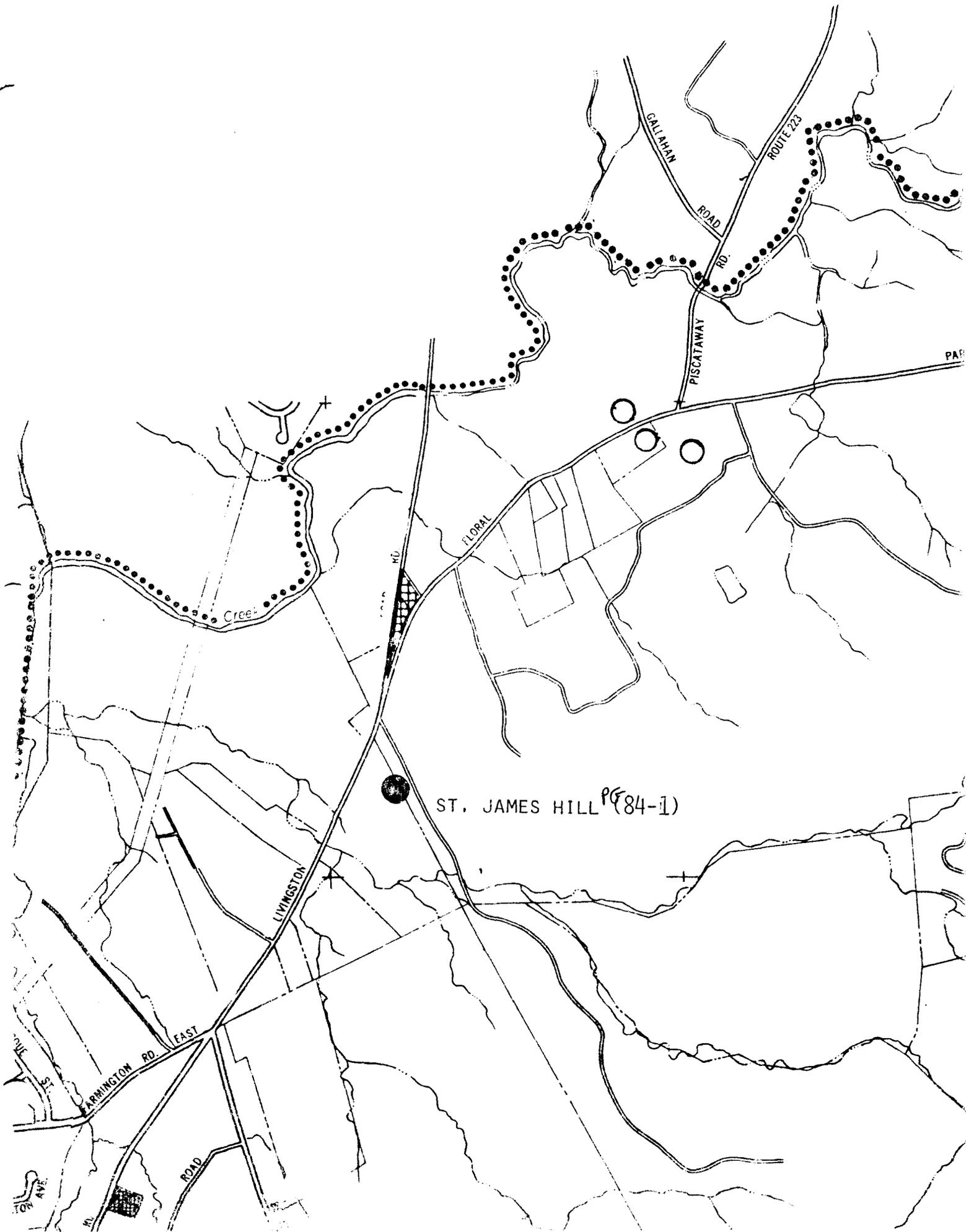
AB#9:293  
10 Dec 1834  
Deed  
Nicholas Stonestreet, trustee to Thomas  
Mundell; Chancery Court appointed Stonestreet  
to sell real estate of John P. Bowie; sold  
said land to Mundell 29 Nov 1831, now executes  
this deed; St. James, etc. 847 acres

TT#1:140  
24 June 1815  
Will  
Testator, John P. Bowie; property to wife  
Elizabeth Ann Bowie; mentions unsettled  
accounts between himself and brother-in-  
law Thomas Mundell.

#1:571  
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and wife Anne; to son George Frazer,  
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ST. JAMES HILL (84-1)

GALLAHAN ROAD

ROUTE 223

PISCATAWAY RD

FLORAL RD

LIVINGSTON RD

ARMINGTON RD EAST

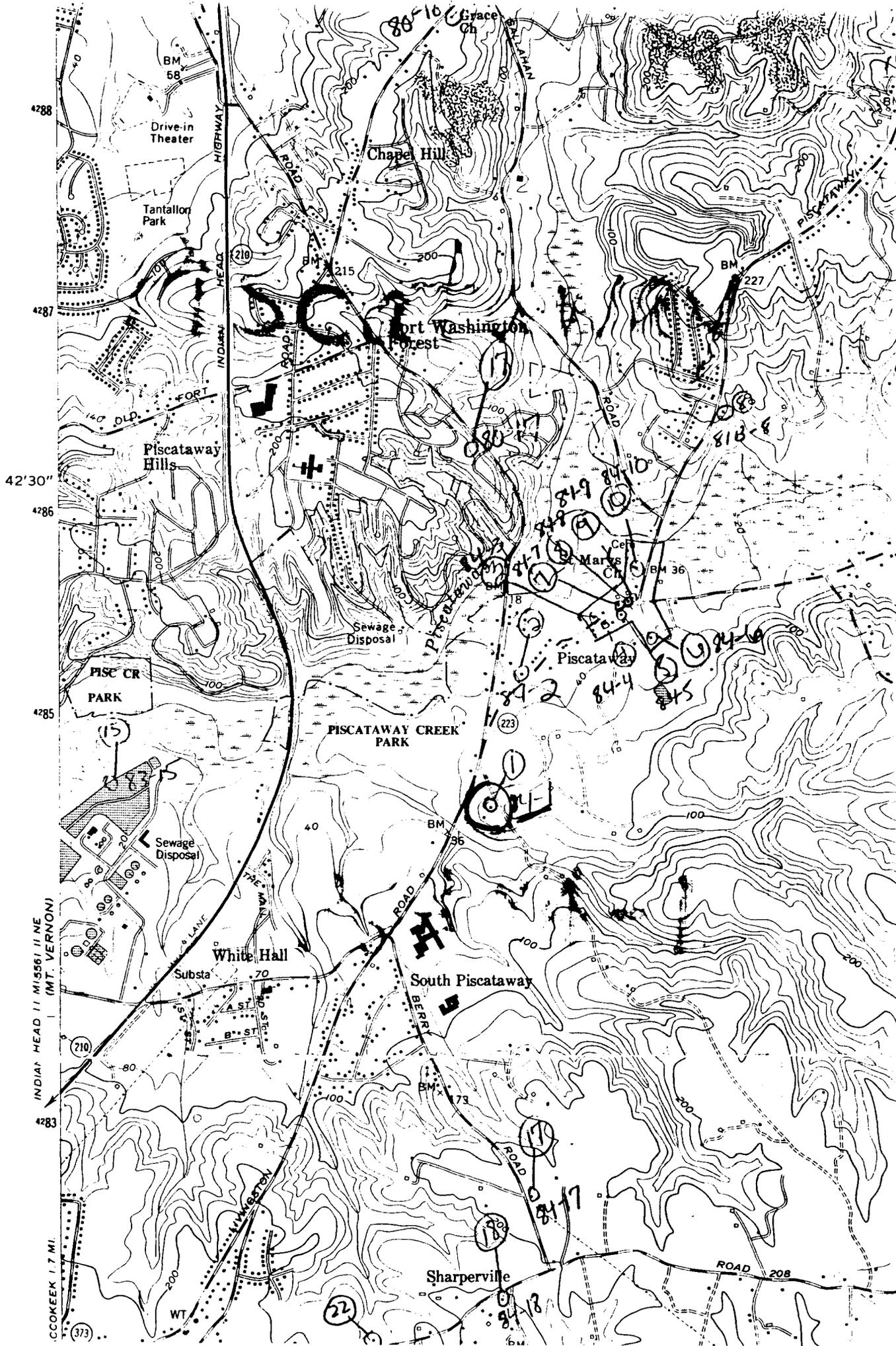
Cree

ST. ANNE ST

ROAD

PART





PG. 84-1

INDIAN HEAD 11 MI. 5561 IN. (MT. VERNON)  
COCKEY 1.7 MI.



26 # 84-1

At James Hill  
Prince George's Co MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1988  
front elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust,  
Annapolis, MD



PG # 84-1

St. James Hill  
Prince Georges Co. MD  
near St. Paul  
March 1988  
Forest elevation  
reg. Md. Hist. Trust,  
Annapolis, MD.



Pg #84-1

St. James Hill  
Prince Georges Co. MD.  
Susan H. Pearl  
March 1988  
Southwest 3/4 section  
Hwy: Md. West. Trust.  
Annapolis, MD.



Pl. #34.3

2<sup>nd</sup> Camp Hill  
Prince Georges Co. MD

Jesse H. Pearl

March 1988

Northwest  $\frac{3}{4}$  section

Neg. Mr. West Trust,  
Annapolis, MD



P.G.#84-1

Piscataway Village Historic District

St. James Hill

Susan G. Pearl

October 1984

From west

Neg: Md. Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD.



NAME ST. JAMES HILL

# 84-1

LOCATION FLORAL PARK Rd + LIVINGSTON Rd PISCATAWAY, MD

FACADE NE

PHOTO TAKEN 7/31/74 MDWYER