

Capsule Summary
SM-396
Commercial House
Mechanicsville
Private

circa 1870

This large two-story, ell-shaped structure is set back from Old Route 5 in a grove of trees. Now a private residence, the Commercial House served as a hotel in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 1894, an advertisement in the St. Mary's Beacon read, "The Commercial House, Mechanicsville, MD, G.W.Burroughs, Proprietor. Good rooms, good table, and everything first class. Give me a call. Livery attached, and travelers sent to all parts of the county. Rates low." In 1923 Rena Lacey Allen Baker Krause purchased the Commercial House and opened the "Allen Hotel" here which she operated until 1954.

The Commercial House is now sheathed with artificial siding and has been altered with the enclosure of the front porch and the construction of a shed roof addition on its east elevation. Despite these changes, the configuration of the house and its site contributes to the historic character of the village. This structure is one of the few buildings in Mechanicsville to retain many of its original outbuildings. The Commercial House is particularly significant because of its history as one of Mechanicsville's former hotels.

SM-396, The Commercial House
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930

Historic Period Theme: Architecture
Economic

Resource Type

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Village

Historic Function and Use: Boarding house
Store

Known Design Source: Unknown

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-396

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic The Commercial House (pref.)

and/or common Lacy Allen Baker Krause Hotel

2. Location

street & number 1025 Old Route 5 not for publication

city, town Mechanicsville vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county St. Mary'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	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 Thomas and Bety Wagner

street & number 1025 Old Route 5 telephone no.: 301-884-3405

city, town Leonardtown state and zip code MD 20659

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clerk of Court liber CBG 76

street & number St. Mary's County Courthouse folio 255

city, town Leonardtown state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-396

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.

Contributing Resource Count: 6

The Commercial House is located on the north side of Old Route 5 at the end of an unpaved road. This two-story structure faces south with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis.

This two-story, ell-shaped structure is sheathed with aluminum siding. The roof, originally covered with wood shingles, was covered with tin in the 1930s. The foundation of the house has been infilled with molded concrete block.

The south (main) elevation of the ell's western most gable end consists of a central entrance door flanked on either side by a six-over-six sash window with narrow surrounds on the first floor. This partially glazed entrance door replaced the original double door entrance with transom window and sidelights. The first floor is sheltered by a porch with a new cement pad floor supported by turned supports and replacement balusters. These scroll sawn balusters were found in the attic of Warren Burroughs' house. Both originals and copies of this scroll sawn pattern are used on all the porches of the Commercial House. The second floor is lit by two six-over-six sash windows with louvered replacement shutters. A smaller, shuttered six-over-six sash window lights the attic. An interior brick chimney pierces the center of this gable roof. To the east, extends the three-bay wing of the ell. An open porch once stretched across the first floor of this wing. This porch is now enclosed and pierced by a modern entrance door and three large eight-over-eight sash windows with glazed semi-circular crowns. At the eastern end of this enclosure is a small open porch with turned post supports and scroll sawn balusters. A pair of French doors provides access to the house from the porch. The second floor of this elevation is lit by two shuttered six-over-six sash windows.

The west elevation of the main block is pierced on the first floor by a modern entrance door and one six-over-six sash window, both with shutters. The second floor is lit by two six-over-six sash windows with shutters. To the north of the main block is a shed roof addition with a concrete block foundation. The first floor of this addition is lit by one six-over-six sash window. A two-story addition which rises behind this structure is lit on the west side by two pairs of one-over-one sash windows.

The north elevation of the western gable end is lit by two six-over-six sash windows on the first and second floors, and by one small six-over-six sash window at the attic level. An exterior brick chimney stands against this elevation. A modern, two-story addition projects from the eastern section of this elevation. This addition is pierced by a single-light-over-three-panel door flanked on either side by one six-over-six sash window. This rear entrance is sheltered by a gable roof portico with turned

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 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 checked="" 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 unknown **Builder/Architect** unknown

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 Commercial House is a large structure set back from Old Route 5 and mostly obscured by trees in both the winter and the summer months. John A. Fowler told the current owners that this house was built in 1852. The dwelling was certainly here by 1873, but a precise construction date has not been documented.

The Commercial House is now sheathed with artificial siding and has been altered with the enclosure of the front porch and the construction of a shed roof addition on its east elevation. Despite these changes, the nineteenth century configuration of this two-story, ell-shaped house contributes to the historic character of the village. The Commercial House is particularly significant because of its history as one of Mechanicsville's former hotels.

Now a private residence, the Commercial House served as a hotel in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. An historic photo, in the possession of the current owner, shows this structure with the caption, "Commercial House, G.W. Burroughs, Proprietor." G.W. Burroughs purchased this property in 1873 from George T. and Cassander Burroughs. Already, that property was improved by "a dwelling house and store combined" in 1873. The store was probably the one-story structure with a double door entrance attached to the western elevation of the house which is shown in the old photo. By 1894, and possibly earlier, G.W. Burroughs was advertising the Commercial House as a hotel in the St. Mary's Beacon. His advertisement read, "The Commercial House, Mechanicsville, MD, G.W. Burroughs, Proprietor. Good rooms, good table, and everything first class. Give me a call. Livery attached, and travelers sent to all parts of the county. Rates low."

The Burroughs family sold this property in 1910. In 1923 Rena Lacey Allen Baker Krause purchased the house and opened a hotel here which she operated until 1954. Her clients consisted primarily of revenue men and workers on the Patuxent Naval Air Sation. The Allen Hotel was possibly the oldest and certainly the last hotel to operate in the village of Mechanicsville.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-396

Guyther, Dr. J. Roy. "The Old Hotels of Mechanicsville."
Chronicles 38.3 (Fall 1980) 337-341.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 10.23 acres

Quadrangle name Mechanicsville

Quadrangle scale 1 : 24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

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

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

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

See Attached.

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 Elizabeth Hughes, Historic Sites Surveyor

organization St. Mary's Conty DPZ date December 1993

street & number _____ telephone 301-475-4662

city or town Leonardtown state MD

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

SM-396, The Commercial House
St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

post supports and scroll sawn balusters. The second floor is lit by two six-over-six sash windows and one pair of one-over-one sash windows. A shed roof addition, built in the late 1980s, extends to the east and is lit by one six-over-six sash window.

The east elevation of the main block is obscured on the first floor by a shed roof addition, built in the late 1980s, lit by five eight-over-eight sash windows with glazed semi-circular crowns. The southern end of this addition is an open porch with turned supports and scroll sawn balusters. A pair of French doors opens from this porch into the enclosed porch of the southern elevation. The second floor of the main block is marked by a centrally placed exterior brick chimney flanked on either side by an octagonal window. The second floor of the southern elevation's western gable end is lit on its east side by one shuttered six-over-six sash window.

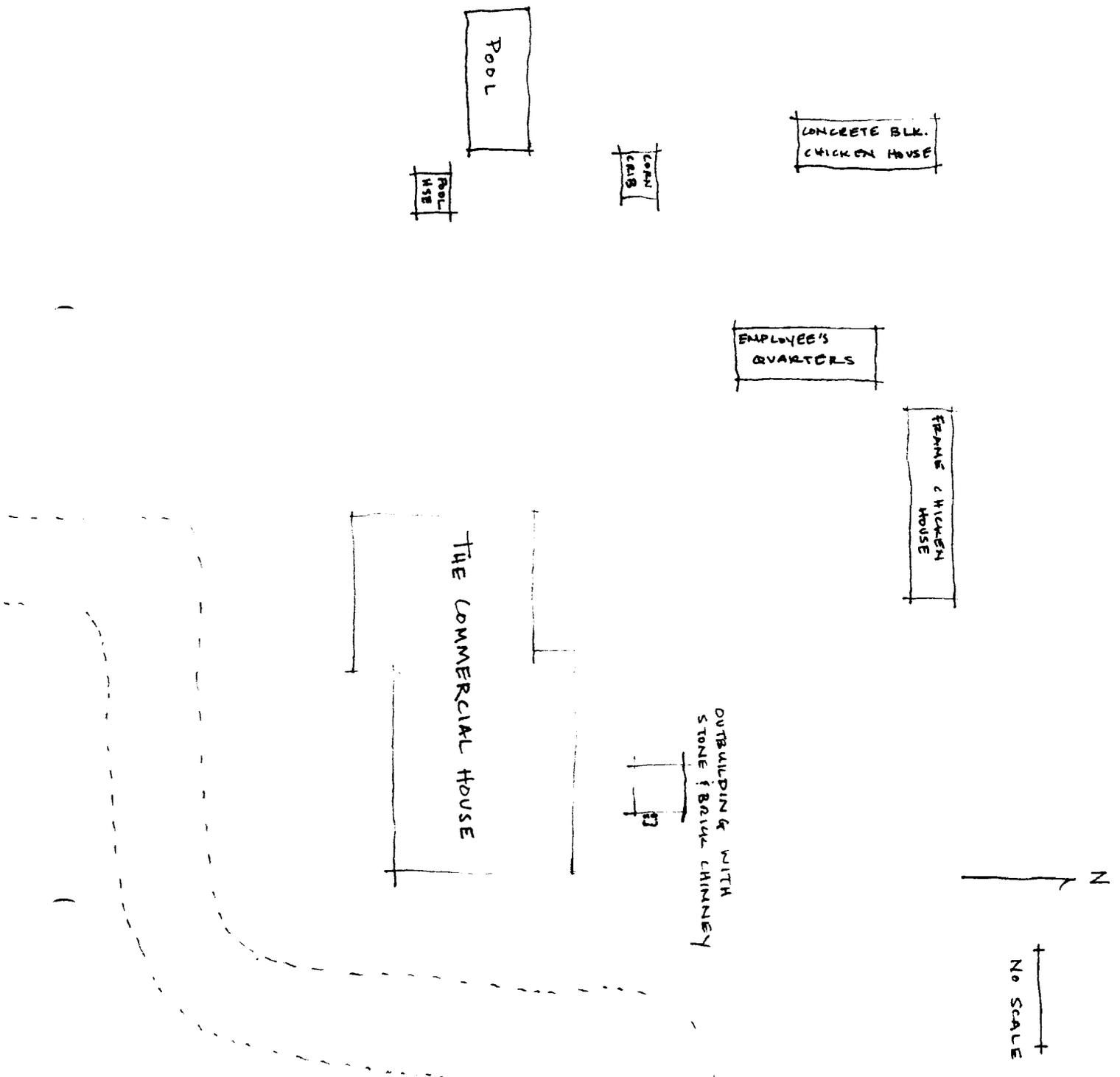
The interior plan of the house has been reworked. Its original pressed tin ceilings have been replaced, but the Georgia pine floors remain intact. An open stringer stair with ornamental brackets and a turned newell post and turned balusters remains intact in the eastern wing of the house. A two-panel door under the stairs leads to the house's partial basement.

There are six outbuildings on the property. The most interesting of these is a two-part weatherboard outbuilding with a corrugated tin roof and brick and stone chimney. This structure is located behind the house and faces south, towards the house, with the principle gable oriented on an east/west axis. It is supported by a brick pier foundation. This outbuilding is lit by two two-light windows on the north side, three windows on the west side which are now boarded up, and one shuttered two-light window on the south side. There are two four-panel doors on the east side and one vertical panel door on the south side. The northern, shed-roof portion of the structure is a later addition. The interior consists of two rooms. This building is currently used for storage.

A second outbuilding is sheathed in vertical siding and roofed with corrugated tin. This building was once used as a chicken house. Two doors provide access to the building on the south side, and two four-pane and two six-pane windows light the interior. Chickens roosted on one side of the building and nested on the other side. A third outbuilding is a shed roof structure sheathed in weatherboard and pierced by three five-panel doors and lit by two-light windows. The current owner noted that this was once used as a residence for someone who worked on the property. A fourth outbuilding is a large concrete block structure with a shallow gable roof. This was built in the 1930s and used as a chicken house. A fifth building is a corn crib with vertical weatherboard siding and a tin roof. The sixth building is a gable roof structure covered with asphalt shingle siding. This small structure, used as a pool house, is pierced by a vertical panel door and lit by four-pane windows. At one time a barn also stood here.

SM-396, The Commercial House
St. Mary's County
7.2 Description

Site Plan



SM-396, The Commercial House
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: Thomas Elmer Wagner and Betty Holloway Wagner, his wife.
FROM: Paul J. Bailey, John H. T. Briscoe, and William Alek Loker, Trustees under Equity Case A-926, and Oliver R. Guyther, Contract Purchaser and Betty M. Guyther, his wife.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber CBG 76, folio 958.
DATE: August 13, 1958.
NOTES: Transfer of 10.23 acres being the same as JMM 1/425, JMM 7/427, and JMM 9/432 excepting JMM 6/477.

TO: Rena E. Lacy Allen
FROM: Benjamin Millison and Sophia Millison, his wife.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JMM 1, folio 425.
DATE: May 22, 1923.
NOTES: Transfer of two parcels, both same as EBA 9/60. Price: \$2800.

TO: Benjamin Millison
FROM: E. Luther Burroughs, Executor of Last Will and Testament of George W. Burroughs.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber EBA 9, folio 60.
DATE: October 11, 1910.
NOTES: Transfer of two parcels. 1.) Beginning at a persimmon tree now designated by a bound stone on the left side of the main road leading from Mechanicsville to All Faith Church and near Sylvester Adams Shop and running in a westerly or straight line to an oak stump from thence in a straight line to a stone in a branch about 25 feet below an old spring from thence in a northerly course down said branch to the main road and with said road to the place of beginning...consisting of 2 acres more or less. Same as that conveyed by George T. Burroughs and Cassander Burroughs to George W. Burroughs on June 17, 1873. 2.) Beginning at a red oak stump on the line of the original G.W.Burroughs lot, thence in a straight line in a northwest direction to a bound stone of the property formerly owned by M.E.Mattingly and about 40 feet from the residence of the late G.W.Burroughs known as the Commercial Hotel and opposite the grocery room door, thence with said property formerly owned by the said Mattingly, southwestwardly and in a straight line to the Three Notched Road to a bound stone on the north side of said road thence with said road easterly 20 feet to an iron mine stone then from said stone in a north direction and in a straight line to a stone planted 20 feet from the property formerly owned by Mrs. M.E.Mattingly and opposite the east front window of the dining room of the Commercial House, thence from said stone east and in a straight line to the place of beginning. No reference for this parcel. Price: \$1500.

SM-396, The Commercial House
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: E. Luther Burroughs, Executor.

FROM: George W. Burroughs

RECORD: St. Mary's County Testamentary Record, Liber PHD 1, folio 317.

DATE: March 21, 1910

NOTES: "I hereby direct that my said executor sell...all the property both real and personal of which I may die, seized and possessed...and pay over the proceeds derived from said sale to the Vestry of All Faith's Protestant Episcopal Church."

TO: George W. Burroughs

FROM: Mary R. Burroughs

RECORD:

DATE:

NOTES: It appears that Mary R. Burroughs died intestate.

TO: Mary R. Burroughs

FROM: John Ballenger and Margaret Ballenger, his wife.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JFF 3, folio 491.

DATE: August 23, 1879.

NOTES: "Beginning at a persimmon tree...containing two acres more or less." Same description as Parcel 1 in EBA 9/60.

Price: \$800.

TO: John Ballenger

FROM: George W. Burroughs and Mary R. Burroughs, his wife.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JFF 3, folio 325.

DATE: February 27, 1879.

NOTES: Transfer of parcel "...with the improvements thereon consisting of a dwelling house and store combined...beginning at a small persimmon tree...containing two acres more or less." Same description as EBA 9/60. Price: \$800.

TO: George W. Burroughs

FROM: George T. Burroughs and Cassander Burroughs, his wife.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JAC 6, folio 400.

DATE: June 27, 1873.

NOTES: "Beginning at a small persimmon tree..." Same description as EBA 9/60.

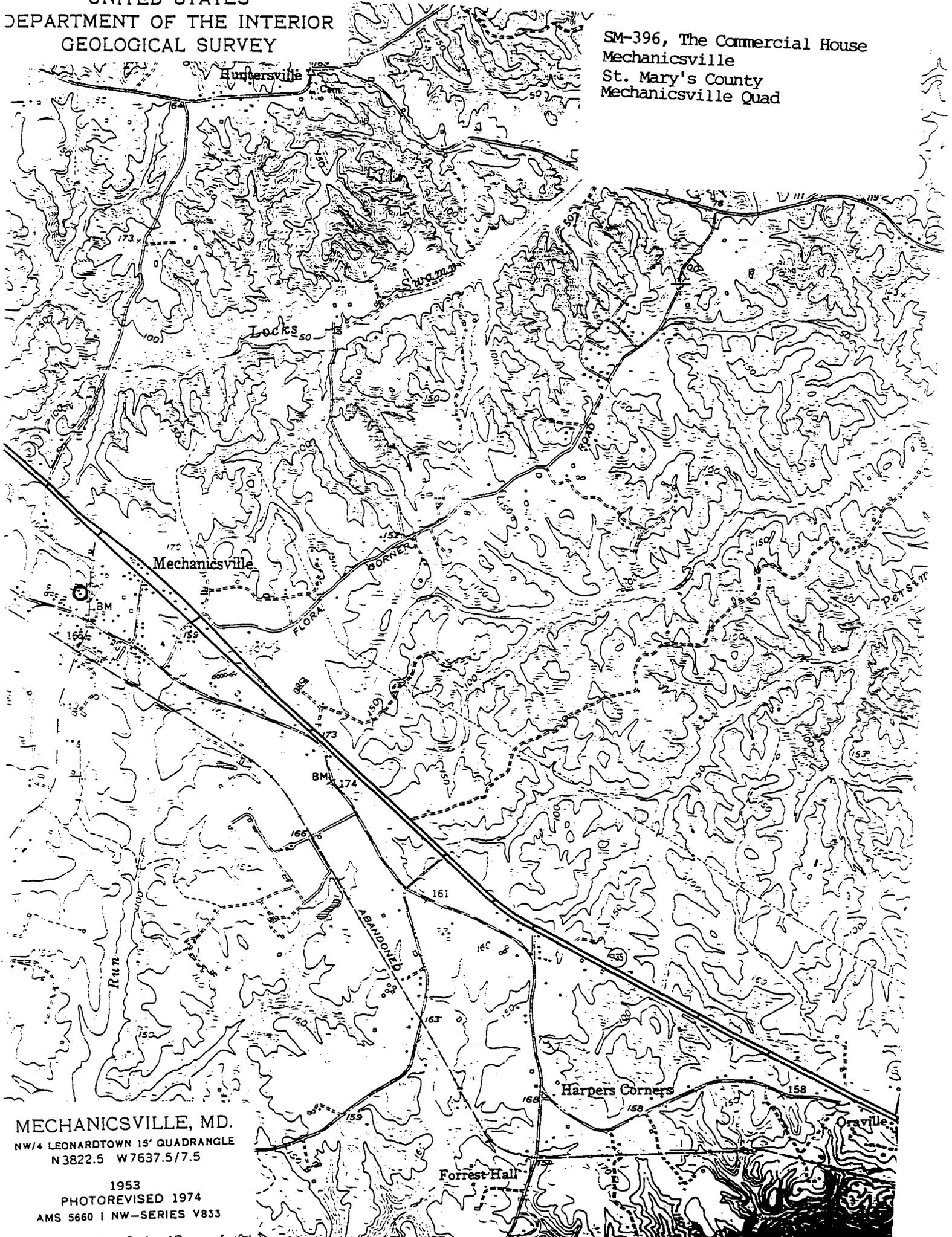
SM-396, The Commercial House
St. Mary's County
10.1 Geographic Description

Source: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JMM 1, folio 432.

Beginning for the same at A, an iron pipe, now set at the south east corner of Mary L. Adams hearse garage, a boundary of Mrs. Mary L. Adams land, thence running with said land N. $27\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ E. 79 feet to an iron pipe now set at the north east corner of the said Adams garden 2 N. 74° W. 206 feet to an iron pipe now set by a fence and said land 3 S. $30\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ W. 13 feet to an iron pipe now set at the corner of said fence 4 N. $67\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ W. 122 feet to an iron pipe now set at a boundary of Bernard Burch's land, thence 5 N. 18° E. 162 feet to an iron pipe set by said fence, 6 N. $74\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ W. 205 feet to an iron pipe set by said fence, 7 N. $21\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ E. 447 feet to an iron pipe set at the corner of said fence, 8 N. $53\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ W. 66 feet to an iron pipe set in a gully, 9 N. $45\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ E. 182 feet to an iron pipe set by a red oak tree on the southwest side of the public road leading from All Faith's Church to Mechanicsville, 10. S. $46\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ E. 302 feet to a post set on the south west side of said road a boundary of Mrs. Rena E. Baker's land, thence running with said land 11 S. $18\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ W. 476.5 ft., 12 S. $35\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W. 193 ft. to Mrs. Rena E. Baker's yard post, with said yard, 13 S. 3° E. 66 ft. to another yard post 14 S. $27\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ E. 79 ft. 15 N. $65\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W. 10 ft. to the place of beginning. Containing (6.67) six and sixty-seven one hundredths acres of land more or less. Being part of the land which the late J. Wilson Adams died seized and possessed and also being part of the land described in a deed dated September 17th 1928 and recorded among the Land Records of St. Mary's County, Maryland, in Liber J. M. M. No. 8 folio 209 etc. wherein J. Manning Adams conveyed all of his interest in the property therein described to Mary L. Adams.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

SM-396, The Commercial House
Mechanicsville
St. Mary's County
Mechanicsville Quad



MECHANICSVILLE, MD.
NW/4 LEONARDTOWN 15' QUADRANGLE
N 3822.5 W 7637.5/7.5

1953
PHOTOREVISED 1974
AMS 5660 | NW-SERIES V833



2M- 2012.10.28

ST. MARY'S SEWING CLUB

12/11/11 12:00 PM

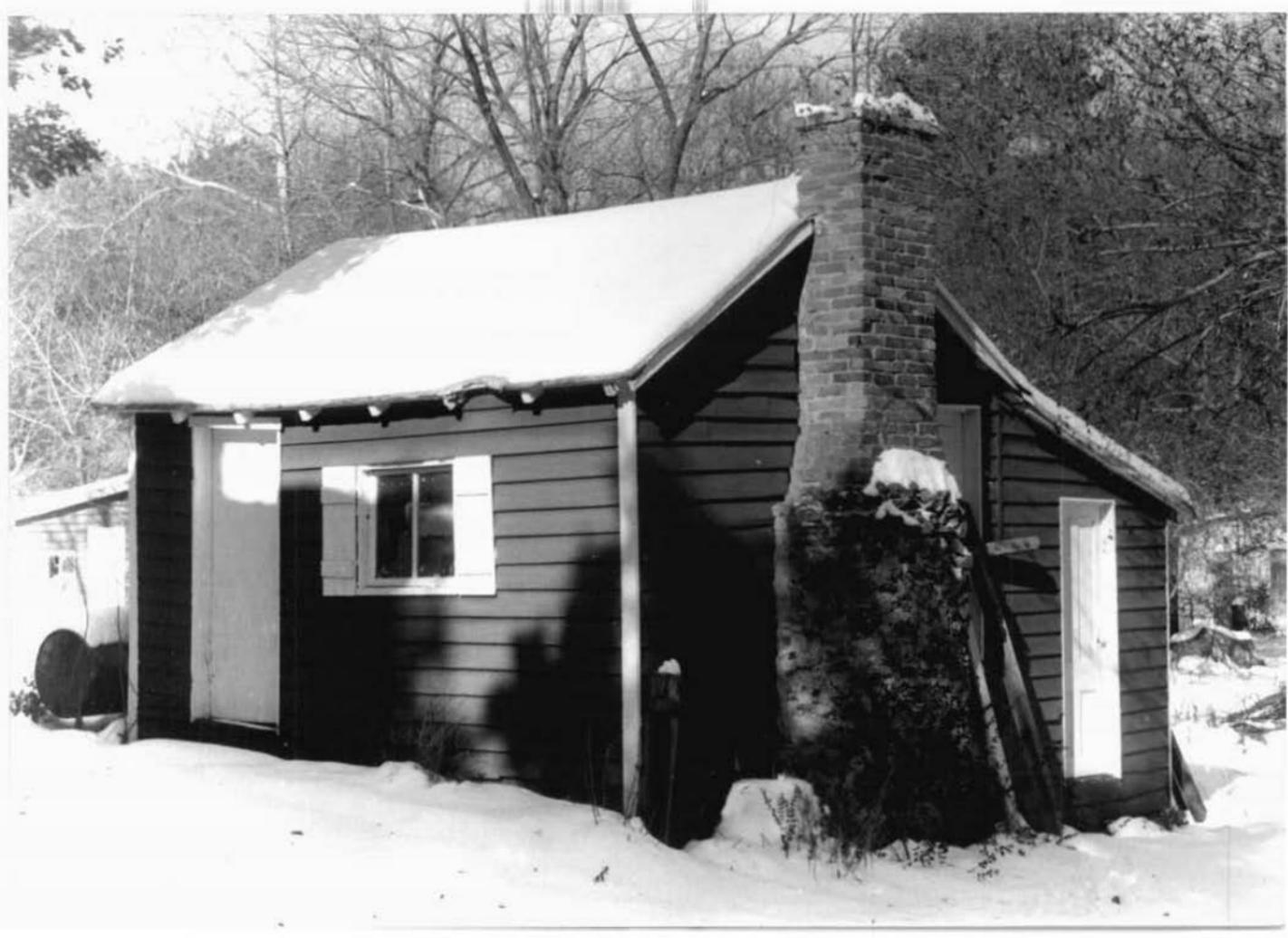
12/11/11 12:00 PM

MD SHPO

12/11/11

1/4





SM-396 COMMERCIAL HOUSE

ST. MARY'S COUNTY MD

BLISSVILLE QUINCY

DECEMBER 1912

1500000

1000000 - DUP BUILDING

1/4



COMMERCIAL HOUSE
MECHANICSVILLE, MD.
G. W. BURROUGHS, PROP.

EM-39a COMMERCIAL ROAD

DR. MARY J. QUINN - 1922

ELIZABETH HUGHES

WILLIAM H. QUINN

W. H. QUINN

W. H. QUINN - 1922

DR. + MRS. THOMAS W. QUINN

1/4