

Capsule Summary
SM-640
Prospect Hill Tenant House
Leonardtwn Vicinity
Private

c. 1900

The Prospect Hill Tenant House, constructed c. 1900, is a two story, three bay, single-pile frame dwelling with a one story rear wing located in the midst of agricultural fields just across Breton Bay from Leonardtown, Maryland. The house has been the residence Prospect Hill's tenant farmers for over 90 years. Ernie Johnson was one of the most recent tenants on the farm. Beginning in the late-1930s, Johnson and his wife Mary Elizabeth lived on the Knight family's farm and raised mostly tobacco, soybean and corn.¹ Like other early-twentieth century tenant houses in St. Mary's County, the Prospect Hill Tenant House is decoratively sedate. It follows traditional exterior and interior forms. One interesting deviation from the norm, however, is the placement of the large interior chimney. Constructed similarly to the main house (SM-639), the brick chimney appears to be shared by every space of the house including the rear wing.

According to a survey by Lewis C. Thompson conducted on May 25, 1923, the tenant house was conveniently located just east of a courtyard enclosed by three barns and outbuildings. Two of these barns have since been destroyed by a windstorm, but the remaining barn actually includes one of the earliest tobacco houses in St. Mary's County (See SM-641). The c. 1880s section of the barn, the tenant house, as well as the main house were all probably constructed during the ownership of George Pabst. Pabst's profound interest in agricultural pursuits (see SM-639), undoubtedly resulted in a rather organized agricultural landscape -- one that manifested itself in Thompson's survey. The deliberate positioning of the tenant house, barn, and main house within this agricultural setting adequately reveals not only how Pabst rebuilt the farm, but also how he conceptualized the relationship between the tenant farmer, the property owner, and the daily operation of a late-nineteenth century farm.

¹ Much of this information was gleaned from an interview conducted with Mary Elizabeth Johnson in June, 1998.

SM-640, Prospect Hill Tenant House
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Historic Period Theme:	Agriculture Architecture

Resource Type

Category:	Building
Historic Environment:	Rural
Historic Function and Use:	Residence
Known Design Source:	None

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. SM-640

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Prospect Hill , Gilmotts Hills, Gilmoth's Hills

and/or common Prospect Hill Tenant House (pref.)

2. Location

street & number 1 mile SE of intersection of Knight and Bull Road, on south side of Knight Road not for publication

city, town Leonardtown vicinity of congressional district 3

state Maryland county St. Mary's TM-40, G-17, P-94, Lot 1

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" 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 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 Mark H. Henderson, Jr.

street & number 223 Lake Drive telephone no.: 301-475-7967

city, town Leonardtown state and zip code Md 20650

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber EWA 1026

street & number folio 555

city, town Leonardtown state Md

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

repository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-640

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" 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: 1

The Prospect Hill Tenant House is located approximately 0.5 miles southeast of the intersection of Knight Road and Bull Road near Leonardtown, Maryland. Situated on a rolling cultivated tract, the building is approached via a 0.1 mile long dirt and gravel farm road that extends south from Knight Road. While the road terminates at the Prospect Hill Farmhouse (SM-639), the tenant house is actually situated on the east side of the drive prior to reaching the main dwelling. Directly to the west of the tenant house is the Prospect Hill Tobacco House (SM-641). The tenant house is oriented on an east/west axis and is surrounded on three sides by cultivated fields and on the fourth side by the farm road. The building is currently occupied.

Constructed in the early-twentieth century, the Prospect Hill Tenant House is a two story, three bay, single-pile frame dwelling with a one story rear wing. Resting on a brick foundation, the building's walls are sheathed with asbestos shingling. The cornice is enclosed with beaded matchstick and the gable roof is covered with decorative pressed metal shingles. A single, but oversize, brick chimney pierces the roof on the building's south side and appears to service both the main block and rear one story wing.

The primary or east elevation overlooks an expansive cultivated field that gently slopes down to Breton Bay. This elevation's fenestration consists of a six-over-six, double-hung sash window and a modern door. Both of these bays are shaded by a porch. To the north of the door, a small one story extension with a cinder block foundation has been added. It is pierced on the east side by a six-over-six window. Evidence on the south side of the extension reveals that it once contained a doorway onto the front porch. This was later covered over, however, with a new sheathing of asbestos shingles. The second floor is pierced by a centrally located set of paired six-over-six sash flanked on either side by a single six-over-six window.

The north elevation consists of the side of the east extension, the main block's gable end, and the side of the rear wing. The extension is pierced by a two-over-two window. The main block is pierced on the first and second floor by a six-over-six window and a fixed four pane window on the attic story. The rear wing features a single six-over-six window.

The west elevation consists of the wing's gable end and the rear of the main block. The wing is pierced by a six-over-six window. The first floor of the main block features a six-over-six window and a modern door entry. One six-over-six window is located over both of these bays on the second floor.

The interior was not accessible at the time of the visit.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-640

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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.

The Prospect Hill Tenant House, constructed c. 1900, is a two story, three bay, single-pile frame dwelling with a one story rear wing located in the midst of agricultural fields just across Breton Bay from Leonardtown, Maryland. Situated midway down a dirt drive that extends south from Knight Road, the house has been the residence Prospect Hill's tenant farmers for over 90 years. Ernie Johnson was one of the most recent tenants on the farm. Beginning in the late-1930s, Johnson and his wife Mary Elizabeth lived on the farm, then owned by members of the Knight family, and raised mostly tobacco, soybean and corn.

Like other tenant houses in St. Mary's County, the Prospect Hill Tenant House is decoratively sedate. It follows traditional exterior and interior forms. One interesting deviation from the norm, however, is the placement of the large interior chimney. Constructed similarly to the main house (SM-639), the brick chimney appears to be shared by every space of the house including the rear wing.

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SM-640, Prospect Hill Tenant House
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber EWA 1026, Folio 555

Grantee: Mark H. Henderson, Jr.

Grantor: Knight Family Limited Partnership

Date: September 26, 1995

Notes: This deed includes the transfer of 163 acres which consists of parcels 94, 151, 196, and 195 on tax map 40. A provision is also made for Mary Elizabeth Johnson, a tenant on the property, to remain on the property for the remainder of her life.

Reference: Liber MRB 273, Folio 261

Grantee: Knight Family Limited Partnership

Grantor: Janet D. Knight

Date: June 13, 1977

Notes: Two parcels are sold to the Knight family. The 164 acre parcel called "Prospect Hill" is the tract where the site is located.

Reference: Liber JMM 11, Folio 391

Grantee: Harold and Janet D. Knight

Grantor: William G. Fenwick

Date: April 12, 1939

Reference: Liber JMM, 11, Folio 391

Grantee: William G. Fenwick

Grantor: Harold and Janet D. Knight

Date: April 12, 1939

Reference: Liber JMM 7, Folio 201

Grantee: Harold Knight

Grantor: Harry E. and Helen Wray Knight

Date: January 13, 1931

Notes: Prospect Hill is listed as containing 244.68 acres.

Reference: Will Record Liber BC 1, Folio 239

Grantee: Harry E. Knight

Grantor: Mary A. Knight

Date: April 12, 1899

Notes: Mary A. Knight devises much of her estate to Harry E. Knight.

Reference: Liber EBA 16, Folio 198

Grantee: Mary A. Knight

Grantor: Thomas M. Purnell, et al

Date: April 11, 1917

SM-640, Prospect Hill Tenant house
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

Reference: Liber EBA 14, Folio 74
Grantee: Thomas M. Purnell, et al
Grantor: Helen O. Pabst (of Jersey City)
Date: June 11, 1915

Reference: Liber JFF 12, Folio 209
Grantee: Helen O. Pabst
Grantor: George F. Pabst
Date: September 9, 1890

Reference: Liber JFF 9, Folio 61
Grantee: George F. Pabst (of Jersey City)
Grantor: J. Thomas Abell
Date: April 12, 1886

Reference: Liber JFF 6, Folio 486
Grantee: J. Thomas Abell
Grantor: Mary P. Wathen
Date: September 1, 1883
Notes: Here the property is listed as containing 243 acres +/- . Unfortunately, the deed does not contain a bean clause.

Reference: Liber JTB 2, Folio 249
Grantee: Mary P. Wathen
Grantor: George C. Morgan
Date: March 4, 1856
Notes: Called "Prospect Hill" the property contains 276 acres.

Reference: Liber JTB 2, Folio 246
Grantee: George C. Morgan
Grantor: Robert H. Wathen
Date: March 4, 1856

Reference: Liber JTB 1, Folio 709
Grantee: Robert H. Wathen
Grantor: Clement Wathen
Date: May 30, 1854

Reference: Liber WTM 2, Folio 256-257
Grantee: Clement and Robert H. Wathen
Grantor: Mary L. Ford (widow of Dr. Joseph Ford)
Date: January 15, 1850
Notes: Here the property is called "Gilmotts Hills" or "Prospect Hill" and is listed as containing 316 acres. During the division of Lewis Ford's estate, Lot #1 which contained the above tract was purchased by Dr. Joseph Ford from John H. Turner.

SM-640, Prospect Hill Tenant House
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance

Reference: Liber JH 12, Folio 279-281

Grantee: John H. Turner

Grantor: George W. Morgan, Sheriff

Date: February 13, 1838

Notes: Part of Gilmotts Hills (otherwise called Prospect Hill) was designated as Lot #1. It features 316 acres.

SM-640, Prospect Hill Tenant House
St. Mary's County
8.4 Significance

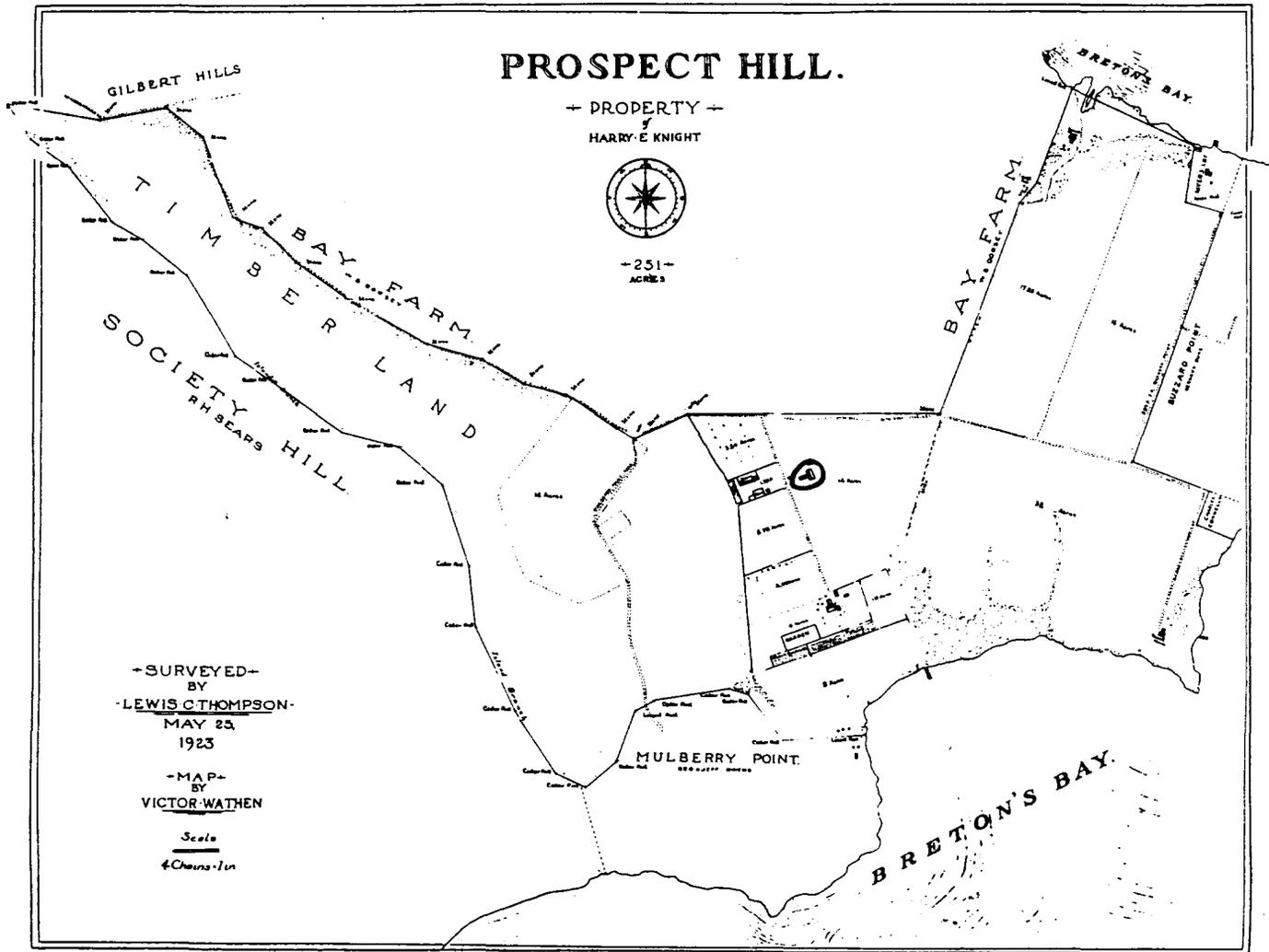


Figure 1. Map and survey of the Knight Farm. The Prospect Hill Tenant House is located to the east of the agricultural complex and farm road.



SM-640
 Prospect Hill Tenant House
 Leonardtown Vicinity
 Leonardtown Quad

RS
 '29
 ELEMENTARY



State route



SM-640

Prospect Hill Tenant House

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

May/98

Mid SHPO

E elevation

1 of 2



SM-640

Prospect Hill Tenant House

St Mary's County

Kirk Ranzeffa

May/98

Md SHPO

S+W elevations

2 of 2