

S M -8 WIDOW FENWICK FARM (ST. MARY'S HILL FREEHOLD) 18th century  
or LEIGH HOUSE  
St. Mary's City  
Private

One of only two 18th century structures surviving in St. Mary's City, this house was renovated completely circa 1960. The only original fabric remains in the *roof frame, the* first floor walls and the foundation. The latter ~~are~~ *is a combination* ~~partly~~ of English bond brick on low cobblestone footings and ~~partly~~ later stone walls capped with brick.

\*formerly STMA-185

190008204

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

DATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Leigh House

AND OR HISTORIC:  
"St. Peter's Key" *Leaving*

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Bauer Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
St. Mary's City

STATE: Maryland

CODE: COUNTY: St. Mary's

CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Restricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Agricultural <input checked="" 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 <input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:  
Margaret E. Keon

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Bauer Road

CITY OR TOWN: St. Mary's City

STATE: Maryland

CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 35

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
NHT - NARS Inventory (M.C. Barber)

DATE OF SURVEY: June 26, 1968

Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Maryland Historical Trust

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Box 1704

CITY OR TOWN: ~~Annapolis~~ Annapolis

STATE: Maryland

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: MARYLAND  
COUNTY: ST. MARY'S  
ENTRY NUMBER: DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

A small cottage-type of house, the Leigh House has gone through additive alteration (Forman calls it "amputation") throughout the years and only some of the foundations are framework of the early structure remain. Originally believed to have been one room with a loft and with a great, pent-with-double stack chimney at one end (illustrated in Forman, Early Manors p 42). Presently, almost every feature is from a later period; the chimneys, siding and sash are all quite recent. The location of the chimneys and general shape of the building, including the cat slide roof on the west probably approximate the shape of the earlier structure.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

c1650 - 1660?

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

If the early 17th century date is correct, the Leigh House is one of the oldest extant houses in the county and the state (nearby Clocker's Fancy is another) and would therefore be one of the few remaining examples of the early 'cottage' type of architecture built by English colonists in America, and somewhat modeled after structures they had known in England. Later additions replace or obscure the earlier house and restoration would need to be almost totally reconstructive.

Forman calls the Leigh House an excellent example of the "medieval country house in Maryland" or "the one-bay type, where a bay measures about sixteen or twenty feet. Such a one-room-and-loft home is exemplified by the original portion of Resurrection Manor .... 1652" (Maryland Architecture 1968 p 8). In an appendix to Tidewater Maryland Architecture and Gardens (1956) Forman stated that the Leigh House was not the same property as that known as St. Peter's Key (p 199).

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

H.C. Forman, Tidewater Maryland Architecture and Gardens 1956  
 pp 197-200  
Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland 1934  
 p 42  
Jamestown and St. Mary's: Buried Cities of Romance  
 1938 pp 302-304

Margaret E. Keen, Leigh House, St. Mary's City

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 ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
 William Morgan

ORGANIZATION: University of Delaware DATE: June 6, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Department of Art History

CITY OR TOWN: Newark STATE: Delaware CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SM-8, Leigh/Widow Fenwick House  
St. Mary's County  
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Rural Agrarian Intensification, 1680-1815
Historic Period Theme:	Architecture

Resource Type

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

SM-8, Leigh/Widow Fenwick House  
St. Mary's County  
8.1 Addendum

The Leigh/Widow Fenwick House is a heavily renovated one-and-a-half story, frame dwelling located at 47997 Memory Lane near St. Mary's City, Maryland. Situated on a knoll overlooking St. Inigoes Creek, the Leigh House was probably constructed c. 1780 by Edward Fenwick. A dendrochronologic analysis of the barked floor joists in the dwelling's basement by H. L. Heikkenen confirms this date.<sup>1</sup>

Research conducted by Cary Carson and Henry Miller in 1975 and again 1983 has revealed that the dwelling originally featured a double-cell plan -- a rare eighteenth century feature that has only been observed in two dwellings in St. Mary's County; the c. 1868 Carberry/Abell House (SM-155) and Spalding/Buckler House (SM-528) (Period II -- c. 1820). This plan consisted of two rooms -- one in back of the other. Subsequent changes in the 1960s and again in the 1980s, have completely changed the original finishes and spacial arrangements. The foundation, wall framing, and roofing represent the only remaining original features. The siding, one brick wall, and large exterior end chimneys with a central pent were removed and several additions have obscured the original fenestration.

The most visible section of the original dwelling lies in the two room basement where a randomly laid, cobblestone footer supports an English brick bond underpinning. The visible floor joists consist of logs hewn flat on one side and left unfinished on their undersides. These joists are interspersed with later replacements which feature different tooling marks and evidence they were reused from another site. Architectural evidence found during the recent rehabilitation revealed that three sides of the dwelling were covered with unpainted riven clapboard.<sup>2</sup> These have since been replaced with modern, circular sawn beaded clapboard.

The current building features a primary entrance on its west gable end between two exterior end, brick chimney flues which replaced the larger original chimneys. Modern one-over-one windows have replaced and disguised the original fenestration. A porch was enclosed on the south side and a new brick paved porch was added on the east elevation. The roof has been covered with asphalt shingles.

The interior presently features an open plan. The living room presently represents the most important space of the house. It features a tight stair to the two bedrooms on the second floor and also leads into a dining area and a sitting room. The second floor features two bedrooms.

The property also currently features a mid-twentieth century tobacco barn and a board-and-batten chicken house/storage shed.

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1 H.J. Heikkenen and M.R. Edwards, "The Key-year Dendrochronology Technique and Its Application in Dating Historic Structures in Maryland," *APT Bulletin* 15.3 (1983): 3-26.

2 Most of this discussion on original finishes was gleaned from drawings and fieldnotes completed by Cary Carson for the Historic St. Mary's City Commission in the 1970s and 1980s. These records can be found in the Architectural Research Files located at the Department of Research in St. Mary's City, Maryland.

Research conducted by Lois Green Carr supports the dendrochronology analysis conducted in the 1980s. A series of descriptions of the property in 1798, 1800, and 1817 reveal the Leigh/Fenwick House was constructed sometime prior to 1798. Carr surmises that Edward Fenwick, then owner of "St. Mary's Hill Freehold," probably constructed the house sometime prior to his death in 1789. In 1798 his heirs are listed as owners and Ann Fenwick, his wife, is listed as an occupant. The assessors described the property as containing:

...A Dwelling house of wood 29 by 20 ft, 2 Windows 5-1/2 by 2-1/3, 6 d'o 3-1/2 by 1-1/2 ft, Kitchen 16 ft sq with 8 ft shed, d'o 20 by 14 ft, Meat house 16 by 12 ft -- adjoining St. Mary's River...<sup>3</sup>

Just beyond the two acre house lot, the property, called "Part of St. Mary's," also contained a "Framed Quarter 35 by 20 ft d'o Tob'o House 40 by 20 with 2 - 10 ft sheds adjoining St. Mary's Creek - St. Peters.<sup>4</sup> Edward Fenwick's heirs were also listed as owning several tenant farms, called Clockers Marsh, Massom, and Part of Ennises Choice, which were worked by William Evans and George Rimer. Ann Fenwick was also listed as owning 14 slaves.<sup>5</sup>

After the death of Ann Fenwick in 1800, her sons Henry and Alexander split the estate with Alexander receiving the Leigh/Fenwick house. The assessors William Rooke Dixon and Robert Lilburn described the property as containing

...one Dwelling house 20 by 32 in good repair, one old house 24 by 16 in bad repair, one kitchen 16 by 18 in very bad repair, one Dairy 12 by 10 and one old Log house 10 by 10 in bad repair, 1 Quarter 34 by 16 in bad repair, one Barn 40 by 20 shed on two sides in tolerable repair, one apple and peach orchard about 1000 trees in bad order, 1500 pannels fencing in bad repair, a fenced Garden, about 15 acre Land in woods....<sup>6</sup>

Sometime between 1800 and 1817, the Alexander Fenwick transferred the property to Arnold Livers Leigh. After Leigh's death in 1817, he left the estate to his daughters Maria, Ann, and Eleanor. The assessors, Cornelius Combs and Benjamin Williams, described the 187 1/4 acre property called part of Saint Mary's hills and part Saint Peters as featuring

...a Dwelling house 20 by 32 feet in Tolerable repair, a shead room 12 by 12 feet in good repair, Kitchen 24 by 16 in good repair, Smoak house 12 by 12 feet in good repair, Barn 74 by 16 with a 50 foot shead on one side in good repair, small Poultry House and

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3 Federal Direct Tax of 1798, Maryland, St. Mary's County, List D. Microfilm copies available at the St. Mary's County Historical Society and the Maryland Hall of Records in Annapolis. The list has also been recently transcribed by Wanda M. Schuhart and can be purchased at the SMCHS in Leonardtown.

4 Federal Direct Tax of 1798, List B-6.

5 Federal Direct Tax of 1798, List F.

6 St. Mary's County, Registry of Wills, Orphans Court Annual Valuations & Assessments: 1780-1807, Liber i, Folio 83.

Nufsary House, old orchard about 100 Trees under Tolerable Fencing, Garden under Log Fencing, they are about 162 1/4 acres cleared Land and about 25 acres in Scantling large oaks...<sup>7</sup>

All three of these descriptions capture a property in transition. Within a matter of 30 years, the Fenwick/Leigh House and its surrounding property had experienced three different generations of owners. Each of these families transformed the landscape around them to fit their various needs. For much of the nineteenth century, however, the property was rented to various tenants who may have included Jenifer Taylor, William H. Ford, and the Norris family.<sup>8</sup>

In 1910, however, the farm was entirely subdivided by the National Slavonic Society who established a settlement that encompassed much of modern day St. Mary's City. In 1912 John Balta and Michael Kohut purchased Lot 90 and with the Kohuts subsequently living there.<sup>9</sup> By the 1960s, the house had fallen into serious disrepair, and the new owners undertook an extensive rehabilitation (See description above for discussion on changes). Today, the house is bordered by modern homes as much of the house's environmental integrity has been lost.

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<sup>7</sup> St. Mary's County Register of Wills, Annual Valuations and Assessments: 1807-1826, Books JF & EJM, Folio 44.

<sup>8</sup> Lois Green Carr, Unpublished report on the Leigh/Widow Fenwick House, Architectural Research Files, Historic St. Mary's Commission, Department of Research.

<sup>9</sup> Carr, n.p.

1. STATE <b>Maryland</b> COUNTY <b>St. Mary's</b> TOWN <b>near St. Mary's City</b> STREET NO. <b>None</b>  ORIGINAL OWNER <b>land owned F. Poulton</b> ORIGINAL USE <b>residence</b> PRESENT OWNER <b>Margaret E. Keen</b> PRESENT USE <b>residence</b> WALL CONSTRUCTION <b>original brick ends,</b> NO. OF STORIES <b>floor and loft, with cellar</b>		HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY  2. NAME <b>Leigh House (sometimes called</b> <b>St. Peter's Key)</b> DATE OR PERIOD <b>about 1650</b> STYLE <b>17th century Maryland</b> ARCHITECT <b>-</b> BUILDER <b>-</b>  3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE	
4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION  All that remains of this ancient house are the foundations and some of the framework. The land on which this house stands comprises St. Mary's Hill Freehold and was first granted in 1699 to Ferdinand Poulton. The house is believed to have originally consisted of one room with a loft, with a great chimney on one side of the house. As the years went by and the size of purse and family grew, it is believed that additions were added, the roof raised and other changes made.  In the twentieth century further alterations were visited upon this old dwelling and today it has been changed beyond recognition. The chimneys are gone, as is the pent, the weatherboards, etc.  This original small cottage represents the type of dwelling built during the first years of the founding of the colony. This dwelling is an importation into southern Maryland of the medieval country house so familiar and universally built in the rural England the colonists had recently left.  It is the hope of the St. Mary's City Commission (an agency of the state of Maryland charged with responsibility to preserve and develop the ancient capital of Maryland) that this small building may one day be fully restored as a typical cottage built by the first settlers of Maryland shortly after their arrival in Maryland.		OPEN TO PUBLIC <b>No</b>	
5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE <b>Endangered</b> <b>see above</b>		Interior <b>see above</b> Exterior	
See St. Mary's County Historical Society Map See also Outline Plan for Preservation and Development of Historic St. Mary's City published 7 March 1967 by St. Mary's City Commission, which contains map showing location of Leigh House			
6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)		7. PHOTOGRAPH	
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC. all by H. Chandlee Forman: Jamestown & St. Mary's City p. 259, 302 Tidewater Md., Architecture & Gardens, p. 198-200 Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland, p. 42		9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER Mary Combs Barber Piney Point, Maryland 2067L Volunteer Recorder for Maryland Historical Trust and St. Mary's County Historical Society DATE OF RECORD <b>6-26-68</b>	

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

**SM-8 Fenwick House**

Constructed  
Fall-Winter, 1780  
Enlarged  
Spring-Summer, 1784

The Fenwick House is an interesting illustration of how upper class Georgian buildings altered the venacular homes of middling planters. In late 18th-century Southern Maryland, the traditional hall and parlor farmhouse, a long narrow rectangle haphazardly expanded through sheds and ells, fell out of favor. A rising standard of living and the growing influence of elite architecture created a desire for more rooms within a symmetrical package. Few planters could afford a Mulberry Fields (see below), but a scaled down, one story version was within the reach of enough of the minor gentry so that it became the late 18th and early 19th-century ideal (see below, Sandgates). Planters with limited means could construct one incrementally. The Fenwick House is an extreme example of incomplete piecemeal construction.

The Fenwick House began as a modest, one room building measuring 20 ft. long by 14 ft. deep. The building was clapboarded on the exterior, and it may not have had a framed stair. (One was added in phase 2). But it was a substantial little house, with a good frame, a good brick chimney (in Flemish bond), and a masonry cellar. Four years later, its owner began upgrading it. The old roof was removed, the building was doubled in width, and a new roof was constructed over both sections. A second chimney was constructed to heat the new room, and the mason took care to duplicate the line of the period 1 chimney as far as possible, while providing a fireplace for one of the attic chambers. It is tempting to conjecture that its owner, Captain Fenwick, planned to lengthen the structure by two bays and two chimneys, a process that would have created an outwardly symmetrical farmhouse comparable to the dwelling of Reverend Tabbs to the north, or the Taylors' farmhouse then under construction across the river (SM-2, West St. Mary's Manor). But the architectural evolution of the Fenwick House was truncated by the death of its builder.

The builder of both phases of the Fenwick House was Captain Edward Fenwick a mariner-planter. The plantation had been given to him by his father after the latter's purchase of the property in 1767. Edward formally inherited the land after his father's death in 1776. Edward outlived his father by only thirteen years. His health may have been deteriorating in 1785 (when he made his will), and he was dead by April, 1789.

Without tree-ring dating, it would have been impossible to have dated this building. Its original architectural finishes have perished in repeated remodelings. Even the chimneys survive only in Dr. Forman's photographs. On architectural grounds, it was possible to surmise only that it was "almost certainly

18th-century" and that it was enlarged "probably late 18th or early 19th century." A better than average documentary record suggested three possible construction dates: c.1690, mid-18th century, or between 1772 and 1798. There seemed a good chance that the building predated 1760, as in 1774, Captain Fenwick's brother-in-law wrote that his sister lived in a former quarter, "a poor little house just large enough to hold two beds," a description that seemed to fit the original 20 by 14 ft. phase one structure. With the help of tree-ring dating, we can reinterpret the "poor little house" as the 20 by 14 ft. kitchen listed in the 1798 tax list, and both phases of the Fenwick House as the improved architecture of the late 18th century.

#### References:

Carr, Lois Green

"St. Mary's Hill Freehold." N.d., St. Mary's City file,  
St. Mary's City Commission.

Carson. Field notes and measured drawings, Architectural  
file SM-8, St. Mary's City Commission.

THE KEY-YEAR DENDROCHRONOLOGICAL  
PATTERN FOR THE OAKS OF  
MARYLAND'S WESTERN SHORE 1570-1980

American Institute of  
Dendrochronology

APPENDIX

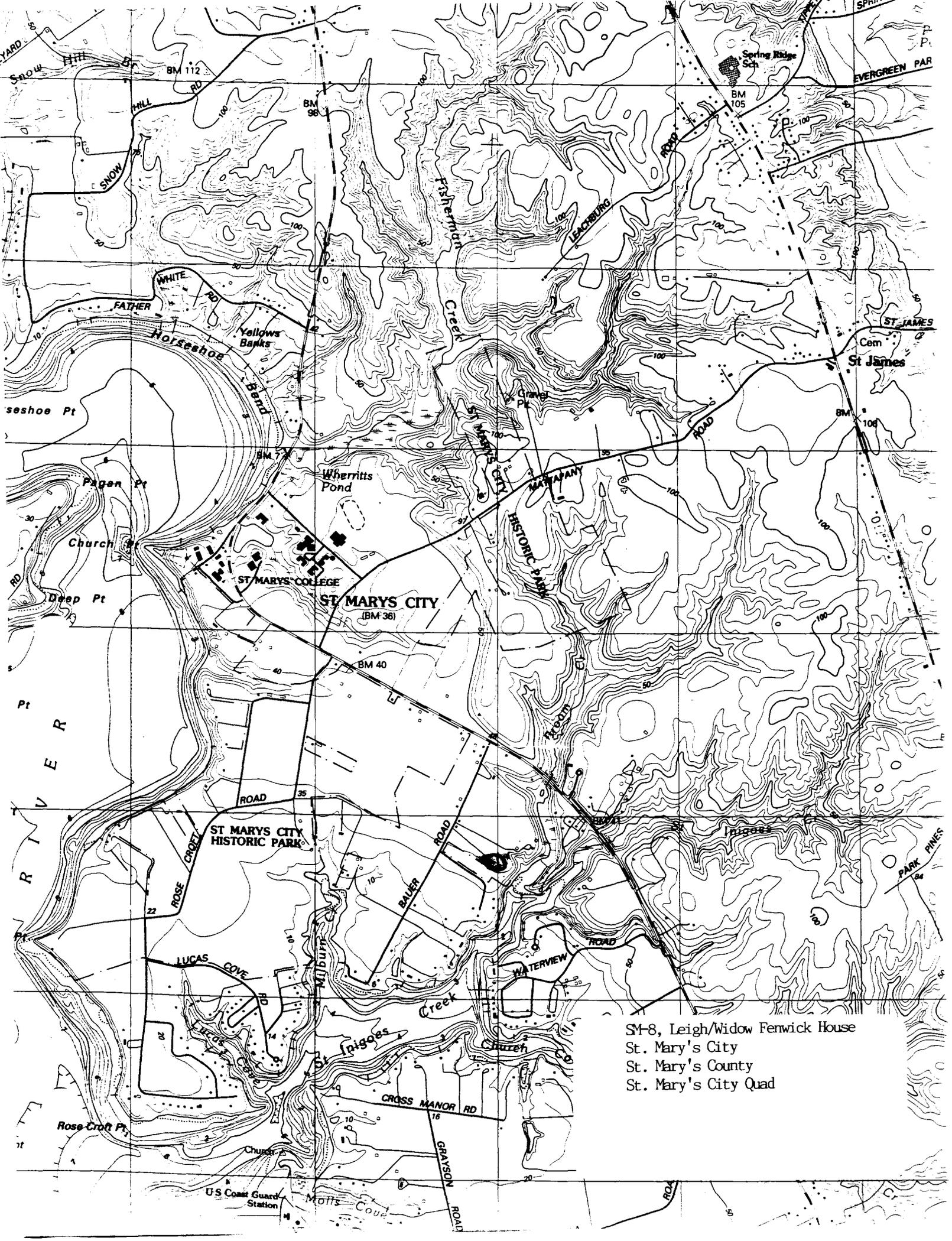
Building Descriptions

Garry Wheeler Stone

Historic St. Mary's City

1987





SM-8, Leigh/Widow Ferwick House  
St. Mary's City  
St. Mary's County  
St. Mary's City Quad



2-21-15 110052 - 51.07. 8

SM-8



Sm-8 Leigh House

June 6, 1969



SM-8 Leigh House

6/6/1969



SM-8

Leigh/Widow Fenwick House

St. Mary's County

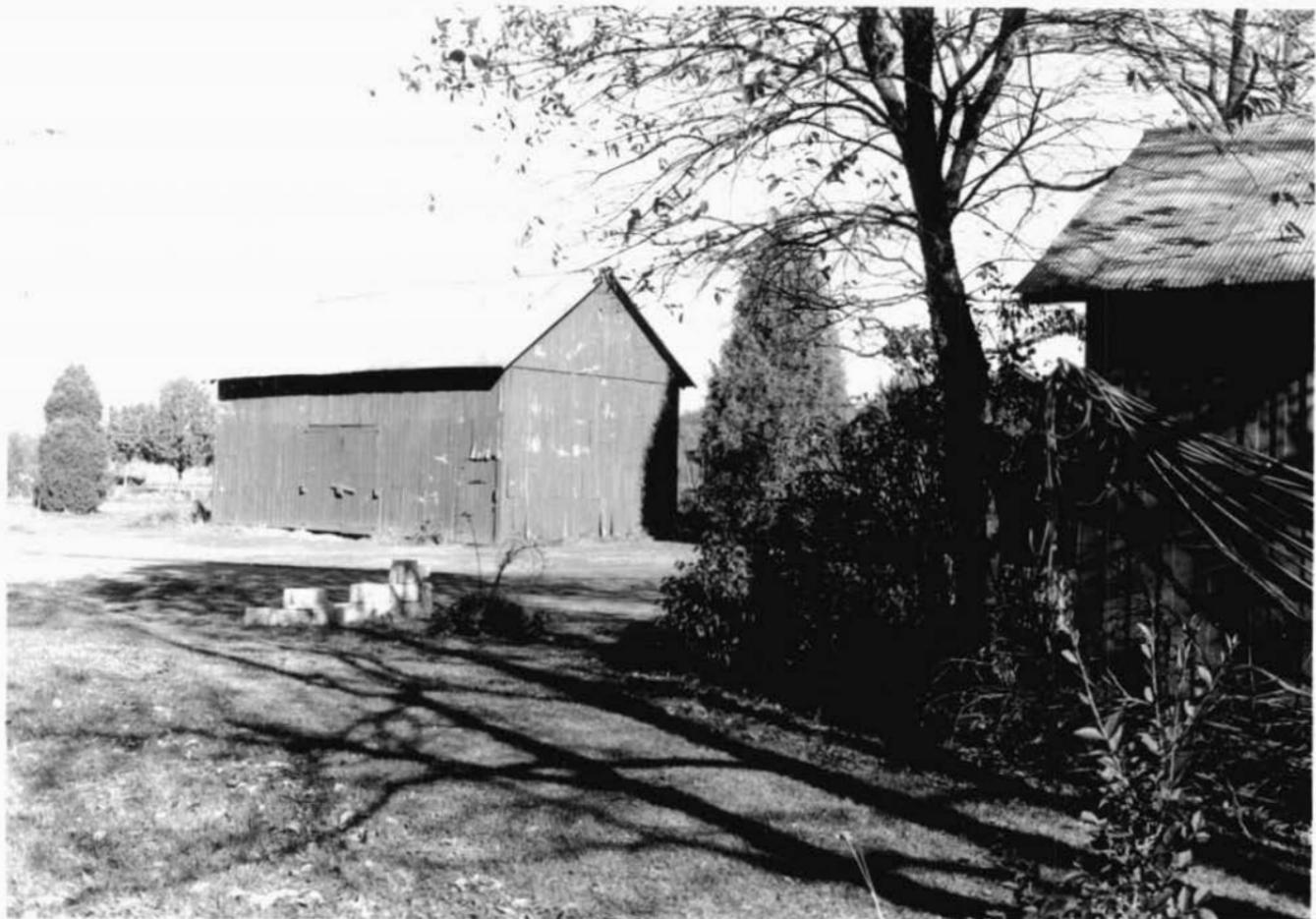
Kirk Ranzetta

Dec/97

Md SHO

W+S elevations

1 of 2



SM-8

Leigh/Widow Fenwick House

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

Dec/97

MD SHPO

Tobacco barn-looking N

2 of 2