

WI-571  
Powellville  
Public and private

19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries

Powellville is a small rural village in southeastern Wicomico County which developed on the edge of the great cypress forest that spread across the Pocomoke River drainage during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As road networks developed across the former forest region with the conversion of the forest to farms, small crossroads communities such as Powellville developed to serve the rural population. The earliest village history of Powellville is somewhat obscured by time, but a village formed around a mill situated on a tributary of the Pocomoke River during the early nineteenth century. Originally located in Worcester County, Powellville was later included within the new boundaries of Wicomico County in 1867. The fledgling village grew slowly during the mid nineteenth century, however, the construction of the Wicomico and Pocomoke Railroad from Salisbury to Berlin in 1868 signaled a spurt in commerce and industry in Powellville like it did in other communities. Although the railroad did not connect the village with other places, it did pass within a few miles with stations at Pittsville and New Hope. The new found commercial and economic vitality experience in Powellville did not go unnoticed in the public press. In 1875, a short article about the village appeared in the July 3<sup>rd</sup> issue of the *Salisbury Advertiser*:

*Powellville (sic) is a village of about 125 inhabitants, situated near the Pocomoke river, in the south-east part of Wicomico county, and is the voting place for Dennis' district. This place is about fifty years old, but its growth has been considerable since the formation of Wicomico county. Its chief manufacturing institutions are a saw and grist mill, propelled by a fine water power, a carriage and wheelwright shop, a blacksmith shop, a carpenter's shop, two large stores, and one institution which seems not to have the fear of Local Option before its eyes, a church and school house some distance from the village,*

*but an effort is now being made to place each of these necessary institutions in a little closer proximity to the good people of Powellville, who, by the by, are a good and clever people. Mr. K. V. White seems to be the leading merchant of the place, and is also Postmaster, while Messrs. Burbage & Son are doing a good and safe business. The lands in and around Powellville are in a good state of cultivation so far as the growing of corn with some oats is concerned, but, like all other parts of our country, the great staple, grass, has been neglected, while they have fine soil for its cultivation. So far as a knowledge of corn farming goes they are excellent farmers, and this section, after the great West, is fully up to the times in that branch of farming.*

The grist and saw mills mentioned in the description were operated by Elijah Stanton Adkins, who assumed control of the milling business after his father Stanton's death in 1871. Ownership of the mills can be traced back as far as the second quarter of the nineteenth century when Robert H. Powell sold 300 acres with "one grist mill and saw mill and plank-yard" to Joshua Holloway for \$4500. Eight years later, in January 1857, Joshua Holloway and his wife Mary, conveyed title to the grist and saw mills to John R. Adkins. In 1861 Stanton Adkins took over the mill operation on the edge of Powellville.

A cluster of houses, stores and work shops developed near the mill and along the road leading to Snow Hill. By the time the Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson atlas was printed in 1877, Powellville included the Adkins mills, a shoe shop, two blacksmiths, a wagon shop, and several stores. Over a dozen dwellings improved the crossroads village.

Like many rural villages, the economic growth and business development continued through the balance of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth. One fraternal organization, the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, met on the second floor of the Burbage store. The village was served by Methodist Episcopal and

Methodist Protestant congregations, although by the early twentieth century, these two denominations merged and structures were moved into the village.

Although the Elijah Stanton Adkins family relocated to Salisbury in 1893, the milling business remained very active until the supplies of cypress and cedar were played out during the early twentieth century. The area residents continued to rely on farming as a principal occupation, and several stores served the community until the mid twentieth century. The village of Powellville has not grown appreciably since the early twentieth century, but continued interest in a quiet rural life encourages many to seek out small acreages in and around the crossroads village.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. WI-571

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Powellville  
 other Powellville Survey District

### 2. Location

street and number \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication  
 city, town Powellville vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
 county Wicomico

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

name Various owners  
 street and number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court liber \_\_\_\_\_ folio \_\_\_\_\_  
 city, town Salisbury tax map \_\_\_\_\_ tax parcel \_\_\_\_\_ tax ID number \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- \_\_\_\_\_ Contributing Resource in National Register District
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- \_\_\_\_\_ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recorded by HABS/HAER
- \_\_\_\_\_ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>30</u>	<u>20</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	_____	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	_____	_____ objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<u>30</u>	<u>20</u> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry		
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape		
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion		
		<input type="checkbox"/> social		
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress		
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
			<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>	
			_____	

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. WI-571

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### Condition

excellent       deteriorated  
 good             ruins  
 fair               altered

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

The village of Powellville is located at the intersection of Mt. Hermon and Powellville roads in southeastern Wicomico County, Maryland. The main road access is provided by means of Powellville Road (MD Route 354) from the north or south and Mt. Hermon Road (MD Route 350) from the west. The Adkins mill pond on the north side of the village is part of Adkins Race, tributary of the Pocomoke River.

The historic resources that define the village of Powellville principally date to the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Approximately thirty (30) standing structures line the two primary roads. Principal among the historic resources is the old Burbage Store (WI-53), a well detailed mid nineteenth century frame commercial building trimmed with bracketed eaves and molded lintels. The store stands on the southwest corner of the intersection of the two roads. Standing directly behind the house is the Sampson Burbage house (WI-574), another third quarter of the nineteenth century structure built with a side hall/parlor plan common to the period. The center crossroads is also marked by the current "Powellville Store" (WI-573), a two-story, late nineteenth-century gable front frame structure. One of the most distinctive landmarks in the village is the Powellville Methodist Church, which includes two late nineteenth-century Gothic Revival frame buildings pushed together to operate as one facility. The eastern half of the twin structure is the former St. John's M. E. Church, whereas the western side is the former White's Chapel. Another dwelling of mid nineteenth-century vintage is the Powell-Burbage house (WI-630), which stands at the south end of the district on the Powellville Road. A couple of frame dwellings follow the regionally distinctive stepped or telescope form common to the Eastern Shore. The house known as "End of Dispute" (WI-458) stands on the south side of Mt. Hermon Road and dates to the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

Several late nineteenth century frame dwellings follow the common two-story, three-bay form with a side hall/parlor plan for the main block and a two-story rear service wing. The houses are generally supported on low brick foundation with exterior sheathings of plain weatherboards or later asbestos shingles. Steeply pitched roofs with extended eaves distinguish most houses. A number of four-square dwellings (WI-457), like the Lida V. Powell house, or story-and-a-half bungalows dot the village as well.

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. WI-571

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

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Name Powellville Survey District  
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

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*farming goes they are excellent farmers, and this section, after the great West, is fully up to the times in that branch of farming.<sup>1</sup>*

The grist and saw mills mentioned in the description were operated by Elijah Stanton Adkins, who assumed control of the milling business after his father Stanton's death in 1871.<sup>2</sup> Ownership of the mills can be traced back as far as the second quarter of the nineteenth century when Robert H. Powell sold 300 acres with "one grist mill and saw mill and plank-yard" to Joshua Holloway for \$4500.<sup>3</sup> Eight years later, in January 1857, Joshua Holloway and his wife, Mary, conveyed title to the grist and saw mills to John R. Adkins.<sup>4</sup> In 1861, Stanton Adkins took over the mill operation on the edge of Powellville.<sup>5</sup>

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Like many rural villages, the economic growth and business development continued through the balance of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth. One fraternal organization, the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, met over the Burbage store. The village was served by Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal congregations, although by the early twentieth century, these two denominations merged and were moved into the village.

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<sup>1</sup> Salisbury Advertiser, 3 July 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Mary U. Corrdry, "100 Years of Looking Ahead," no date, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Worcester County Land Record, EDM 2/628, 27 November 1849.

<sup>4</sup> Worcester County Land Record, JAP 1/418, 30 January 1857.

<sup>5</sup> Worcester County Land Record, WET 2/451, 18 January 1861.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name Powellville Survey District  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 2

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*Salisbury Advertiser*, July 3, 1875.

Powellville (sic) is a village of about 125 inhabitants, situated near the Pocomoke river, in the south-east part of Wicomico county, and is the voting place for Dennis' district. This place is about fifty years old, but its growth has been considerable since the formation of Wicomico county. Its chief manufacturing institutions are a saw mill and grist mill, propelled by a fine water power, a carriage and wheelwright shop, a blacksmith shop, a carpenter's shop, two large stores, and one institution which seems not to have the fear of Local Option before its eyes, a church and school house some distance from the village, but an effort is now being made to place each of these necessary institutions in a little closer proximity to the good people of Powellville, who, by the by, are a good and clever people. Mr. K. V. White seems to be the leading merchant of the place, and is also Postmaster, while Messrs. Burbage & Son are doing a good and safe business. The lands in and around Powellville are in a good state of cultivation so far as the growing of corn with some oats is concerned, but like all other parts of our county, the great staple, grass, has been neglected, while they have a fine soil for its cultivation. So far as a knowledge of corn farming goes, they are excellent farmers, and this section, after the great West, fully up to the times in that branch of farming.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. WI-571

Graham, John L. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of Eastern Shore of Maryland*. Salisbury: Wicomico County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Salisbury Advertiser, various issues, Microfilm collection at the Wicomico County Free Library.

Wicomico County Land Record, various volumes, Wicomico County Courthouse.

Worcester County Land Records, various volumes, Worcester County Courthouse.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 100 acres  
Acreage of historical setting 25 acres  
Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The metes and bounds of this property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Private Consultant	date	8/6/2001
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

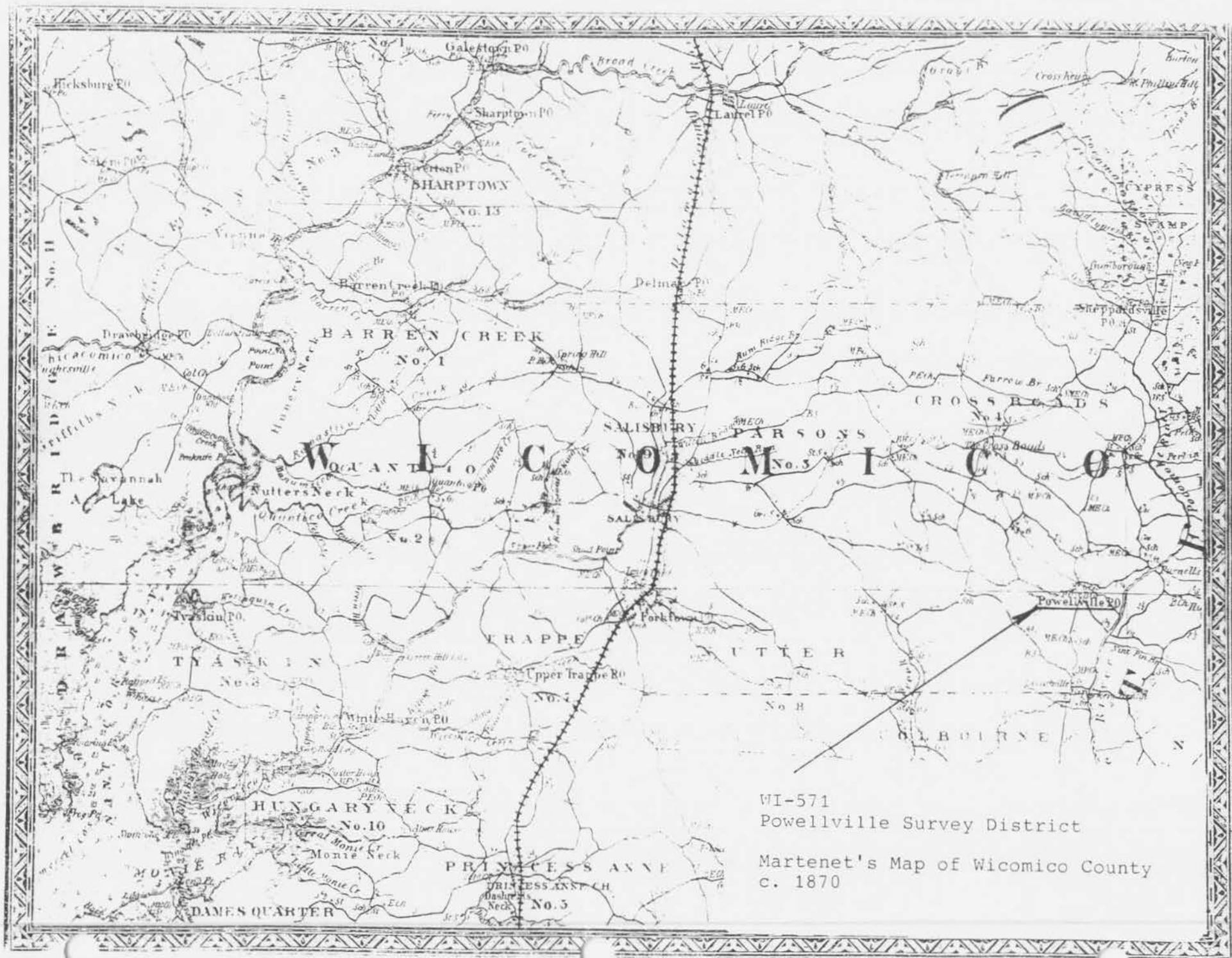
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

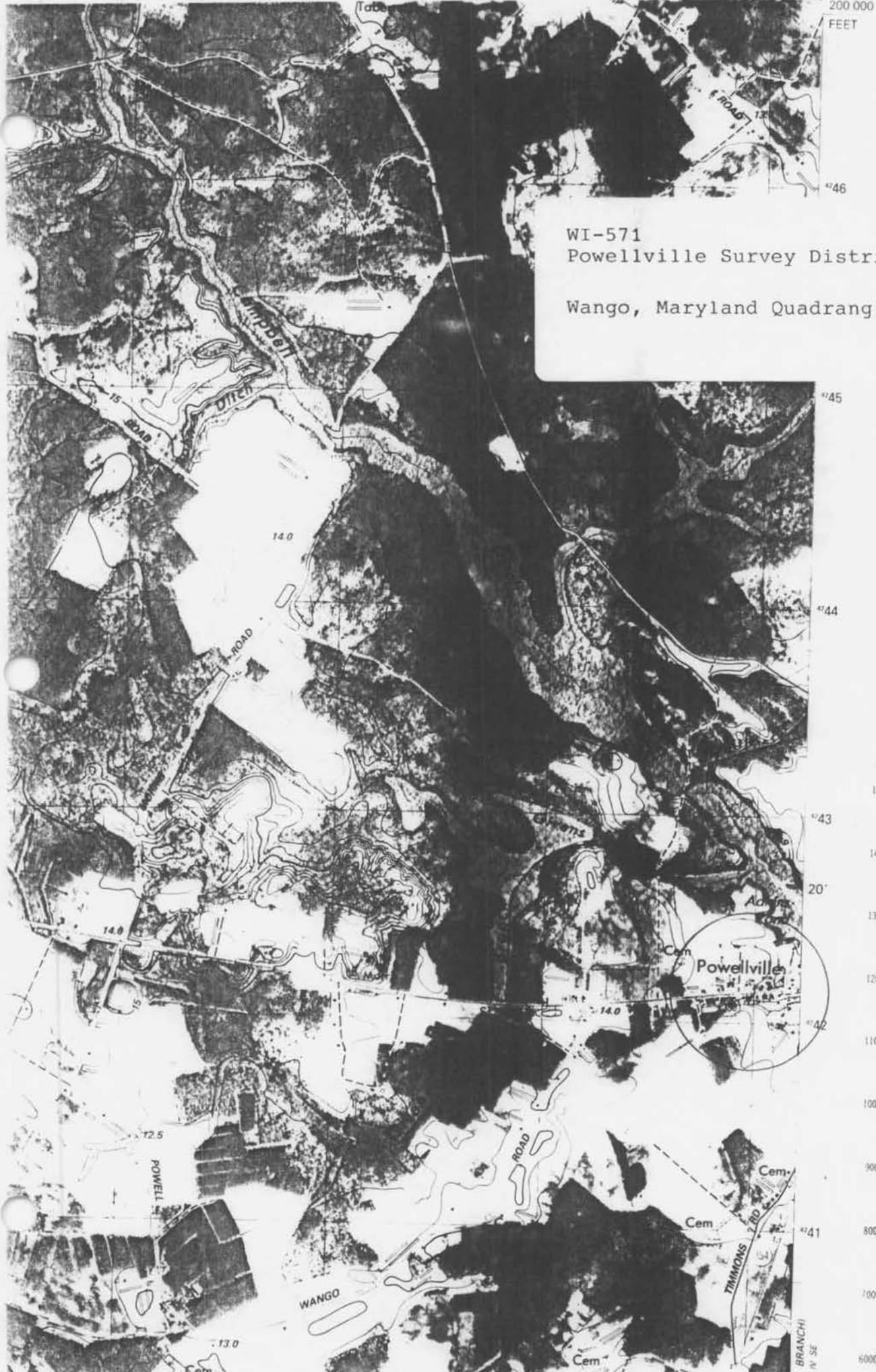






WI-571  
Powellville Survey District

Martenet's Map of Wicomico County  
c. 1870



200 000  
FEET

WI-571  
Powellville Survey District  
Wango, Maryland Quadrangle, 1982

CONVERSION  
SCALES



N BRANCH  
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