

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY MAGI # 0901065604

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC **ELSEMERE (Bella Vista; Riverside)**

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER **Northwest side of River Road, approximately one-quarter mile southwest from the junction of River Road and Route 227**

CITY, TOWN **Bryan's Road** VICINITY OF **Marshall Hall** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT **1st**

STATE **Maryland** COUNTY **Charles**

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME **Sam Hannish**

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER **Elsemere**

CITY, TOWN **Bryan's Road** VICINITY OF **Maryland** STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC **Charles County Courthouse**

Liber #: 236  
Folio #: 532

STREET & NUMBER **Charles Street**

CITY, TOWN **La Plata, Maryland** STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

**DESCRIPTION**

CH-106

**CONDITION**

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

See Attached

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

#7: Description:

Approached by a private, cedar lined driveway, Elsemere is located on the northwest side of River Road, approximately one-quarter mile southwest from the junction of River Road and Maryland Route 227 (Marshall Hall Road).

Possessing a sweeping vista of the Potomac River which borders the property to the north and west, Elsemere is a large, "T"-shaped frame house of basic, late-nineteenth century farmhouse styling. The five-bay principal facade of the two-story, one room deep main block faces east and has a centered, first floor entrance door. It and the two-story rear wing, the latter proportionately of the same scale and design as the main block, were probably built at the same time. A one story, glass enclosed wing standing at the north end of the main block, however, was added at a later date. The exterior of this simple yet dignified house is sheathed with lapped board siding and has deep, overhanging eaves with exposed roof rafters typical of the style and age of the house.

# SIGNIFICANCE

CH-106

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 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		

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SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

See Attached

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

(Bella Vista; Riverside)

#8: Statement of Significance:

A large, weatherbeaten frame house of typical, turn-of-the-century rural architecture, Elsemere is a simple but dignified structure notable for its ample proportions and the visual strength of its vertical lines. Possessing an aesthetically pleasing vista of the Potomac River across low-lying meadows and marshes, the house is approached by a private, cedar lined driveway flanked by several barns and a former carriage house.

Elsemere was probably built in about 1900 and stands on a part of what was once the vast Marshall Hall estate. This particular part of Marshall Hall was sold by Thomas Marshall V to Richard W. Bryan in 1854 and was subsequently purchased by Joseph Frank from Alexander M. Bryan of nearby Strawberry Hill in 1891.<sup>1</sup> In 1903 the then 335 acre property was sold by Harry Williams to Esten W. Hungerford, the latter the owner of adjacent Greenway (CHAS-107).<sup>2</sup> It is probable that the existing house was built by Frank and/or Williams between 1891 and 1903 since Hungerford, who retained ownership until 1925, used the land as part of his Greenway farm where he lived in a large home he had built there in 1895.

In 1925, Hungerford sold 220 acres of the Elsemere tract, then called Riverside and also referred to as part of the Marshall Hall Summer Resort, to Richard Tippet.<sup>3</sup> By 1943 Tippet had died and the administrator of his estate, Mercantile Trust Bank, transferred ownership of the 220 acres to William Winstead.<sup>4</sup> Three years later Winstead conveyed the house and a portion of the lands (about 31 acres) to John West and Dorothy Simmons.<sup>5</sup> Simmons, who inherited West's half ownership on his death in 1952, sold the property that year to Walter Espach.<sup>6</sup> Espach maintained possession of the land until 1956 when he conveyed the 31 acres, in four separate parcels, to Anna Wechler.<sup>7</sup> Wechler conveyed title to the same lands to its current owner, Sam Hanish, in 1971.<sup>8</sup> It is this last deed that refers to the property as Bella Vista, while the 1903 deed names it Riverside and the deeds between as both Riverside and Elsemere.

Although essentially a farmhouse-type structure, with a number of ancillary structures related to its history of agricultural use, Elsemere may have been built as a summer home, possibly as a prototype or guide for the types of homes promoters of the Marshall Hall Summer Resort hoped would be built. It is certainly not unlike the types of houses found at typical middle class summer resorts established throughout the mid-Atlantic region in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Footnotes:

1. Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Md. Liber JST#1, folio 301; Liber JST#4, folio 405.
2. Ibid. Liber BCS#13, folio 489
3. Ibid. Liber WMA#43, folio 535

ELSEMERE

(Bella Vista; Riverside)

#8: Statement of Significance

Page Two

## Footnotes, continued:

4. Ibid. Liber TBM#79, folio 38
5. Ibid. Liber TBM#84, folio 347
6. Ibid. Liber PCM#105, folio 60
7. Ibid. Liber PCM#126, folio 282
8. Ibid. Liber 236, folio 532

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CH-106

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 J. Richard Rivoire, Consultant

ORGANIZATION Charles County Planning Department DATE September, 1980

STREET &amp; NUMBER Charles County Courthouse TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN La Plata STATE Maryland

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

ELSEMERE

CHAS-106

(Bella Vista; Riverside)

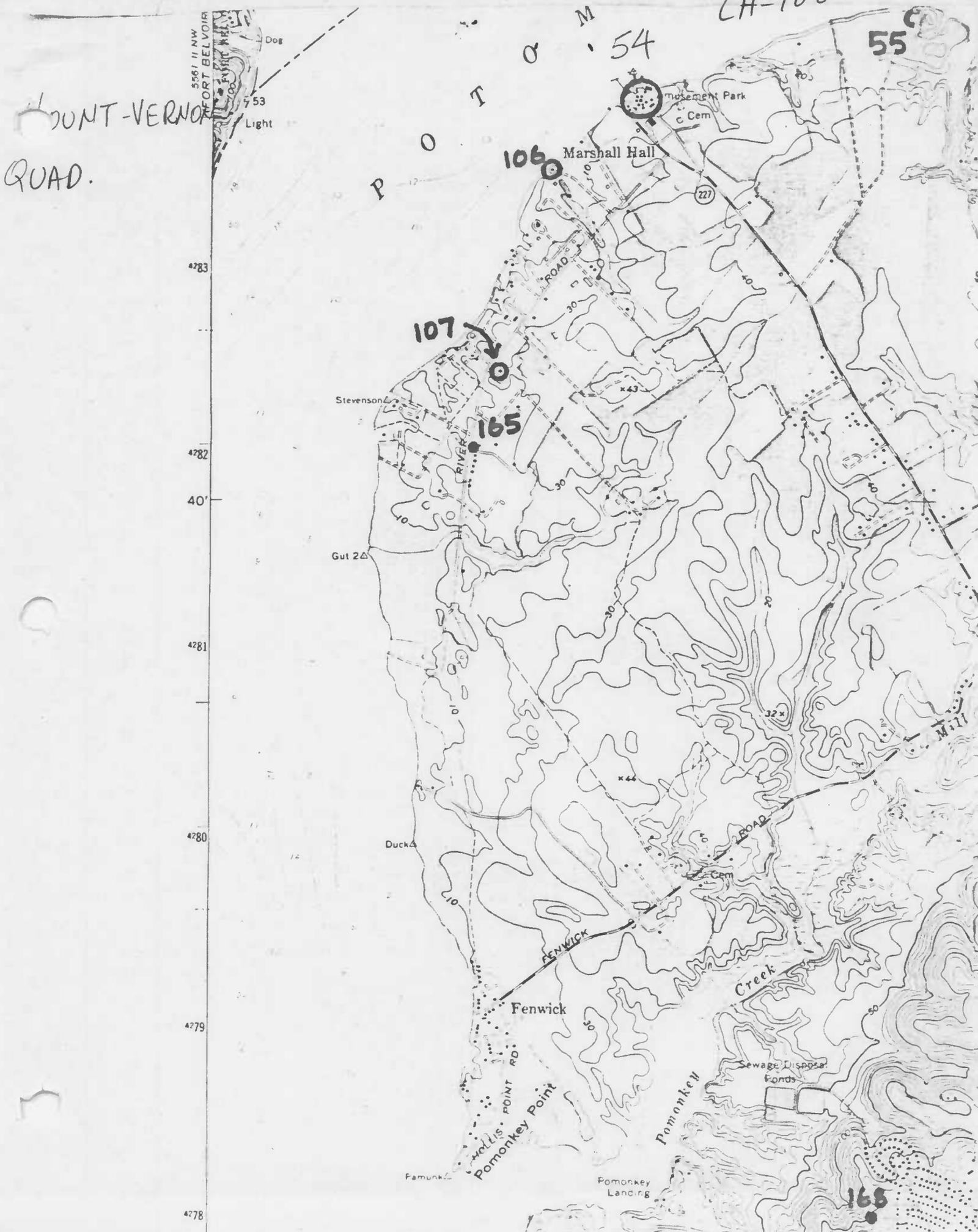
NOTE: The surveyor was unable to obtain permission to photograph this property at this time.

MOUNT-VERNON  
QUAD.

CH-106

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