

T-255  
Berkeley Hall  
St. Michaels  
private

c. 1840

"Berkeley Hall," also known as the Spencer house, stands prominently on the northeast corner of South Talbot Street and East Chestnut Street near St. Mary's Square. Construction of "Berkeley Hall" is estimated to date to around 1840, shortly after Matthew Spencer purchased Lots 27 and 28 from Edward Tenant in 1839. Matthew Spencer and his wife, Elizabeth Ann, owned the property only three years and then sold it to Joseph Spencer for \$2500, a price that well suggests the substantial brick house had been erected. Joseph Spencer retained ownership of property for five years and then transferred the title to Dr. John Miller, for whom the house is also known. The property remained under the Miller family name until 1936.

"Berkeley Hall" is one of the few prominent St. Michaels dwellings that dates to the 1840s, a period when money tightened across the Eastern Shore in the wake of the economic depression of 1837. Since this side hall-parlor house was built at that time, it is appropriately finished with Greek Revival woodwork, much of which remains intact. The plaster cornice and the ceiling medallion in the parlor are relatively rare features in St. Michaels. In addition, the small brick dairy or smokehouse that stands in the back yard survives as one of the few antebellum outbuildings in town.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. T-255  
Magi No. 2102555404  
DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic "Berkeley Hall" Spencer House  
and/or common Dr. Miller's Farmhouse

## 2. Location

street & number NE corner of South Talbot and East Chestnut Sts. <sup>(417)</sup>  not for publication  
city, town St. Michaels  vicinity of  congressional district First  
state Maryland  county Talbot

## 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 Marie S. Reeser  
street & number telephone no.:  
city, town state and zip code

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Talbot County Clerk of Court liber 358  
street & number Talbot County Courthouse folio 159  
city, town Easton state MD 21601

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historical Sites Inventory  
date 1967  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust  
city, town Annapolis state MD 21401

# 7. Description

Survey No. T-255

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<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.

"Berkeley Hall" also known as the Spencer house, stands on the northeast corner of South Talbot Street and East Chestnut Street in the center of St. Michaels, Talbot County, Maryland. The two-story, side hall-parlor brick house faces west with the principal gable oriented on a north/south axis.

Evidently erected around 1839-1840, this two-story brick house is laid in seven-course common bond and covered by a medium sloped asphalt shingle roof. Attached to the north gable end is a shorter two-story frame wing, and extending to the east (rear) is a two-story service wing dating from the mid nineteenth century. A brick outbuilding, probably a dairy, stands behind the house and is contemporary with the main house.

The west (main) elevation is an asymmetrical three-bay facade with an entrance in the north bay. The replacement six-panel front door is framed by two-over-two sash sidelights and a four-light transom. A slab of granite serves as the door sill. The adjacent bays are filled with two-over-two sash windows flanked with louvered shutters and topped by jack arches. The second floor is lighted by three unevenly spaced two-over-two sash windows also fitted with louvered shutters. The base of the roof is finished with a corbelled brick cornice. Piercing the slightly raised foundation are small vent holes.

Attached to the south gable end is a single-story square columned open porch trimmed with a rooftop balustrade. The same square baluster handrail stretches between the porch posts on the ground level. Two doors with transoms pierce the first floor wall, while the second floor is a plain brick wall with a flush gable end. An interior end brick chimney stack rises through the roof.

The north gable end is largely covered by a shorter two-story, three-bay weather-board frame addition. The west elevation of the addition is marked by an asymmetrical fenestration. An entrance is located in the southern bay which is covered by a gabled hood. The adjacent window openings are filled with six-over-six sash flanked by louvered shutters. The second floor is lighted by two different sized windows. A small six-over-six sash pierces the second floor wall above the door, and a standard sized six-over-six sash is located above the northern first floor window. The base of the asphalt shingle roof is finished with a plain boxed cornice, and the gable end is flush.

Extending eastward from the brick house is another two-story, three-bay wing evidently erected during the mid nineteenth century. The south side of the rear wing is distinguished by a circular two-story bay covered by a conical roof. The bay, added around the turn of the twentieth century, is lighted on both floors by four single-pane sash windows. Immediately west of the bay is a side door that opens into a rear hall, and located above the door is a small two-over-two sash

Berkeley Hall description continued.

ndow. The asphalt shingle roof west of the tower is marked by a small gabled dormer filled with a six-over-three sash window. The east gable end of the east wing is partially covered by a single-story shed addition, through which an exterior brick stove stack rises above the roofline. Located on the north side of the east wing is a two-story one-bay by one-bay infill sheathed with plain weatherboards and covered by a low pitched asphalt shingle roof.

The interior of the main house is divided into a side hall-parlor plan with a large percentage of the Greek Revival woodwork in place. The stair rises against the interior partition with a simple turned newel post, rectangular balusters and a oval-profile hand-rail. The stringer is decorated with a repeating semi-circular design. Six-panel doors with ogee inset moldings are framed by boldly reeded surrounds accented with bulls-eye corner blocks. The hall is also fitted with high baseboards topped by an ogee molding as well, and the rear hallway door has paneled reveals.

The parlor is a large, squarish room finished with a bold plaster cornice and a ceiling medallion. Centered in the circular ring of the medallion is a stylized open flower. The Greek Revival mantel on the projecting chimney breast follows a standard stylistic form with semi-detached Tuscan columns flanking the firebox and supporting paneled end blocks. Stretching between the end blocks is a widely molded frieze. The mantel shelf consists of several stepped moldings. Like the hall, the parlor is fitted with high baseboards and widely molded window and the door surrounds with bullseye corner blocks.

The second floor is finished in a similar, but less elaborate fashion. The hearth the bedroom above the parlor is fitted with a plain Greek Revival mantel, and new closets have been added to each side of the chimney breast. The six-panel doors and the sash windows are framed by the same mid nineteenth-century moldings.

The east service wing has been reworked to provide modern amenities such as a down-stairs bathroom and a new kitchen. Entrance into the north frame wing was not gained since the large house is divided into two apartments. Standing behind the north wing is a single-story brick outbuilding, probably a dairy, built in seven course common bond with a gable-front orientation. The west (front) side is pierced by a four-panel door, while the north side is marked by an off-center shuttered window opening and the south side has a six-pane window. The base of the roof on the north and south sides is finished with a corbelled brick cornice like the house.

# 8. Significance

Survey No.

T-255

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

## Specific dates

## Builder/Architect

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.

## SIGNIFICANCE

"Berkeley Hall" is one of the few prominent St. Michaels dwellings that dates to the late 1830s or early 1840s, a period when money tightened across the Eastern Shore in the wake of the economic depression of 1837. Since this two-story brick house was built during the 1840s, it is appropriately finished with Greek Revival woodwork, much of which remains intact. The plaster cornice and ceiling medallion in the parlor are relatively rare features in St. Michaels. In addition, the small brick dairy or smoke house behind the house survives as one of the few antebellum buildings in town.

## HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Construction of "Berkeley Hall" is estimated to date to around 1840, shortly after Matthew Spencer purchased Lots 27 and 28 from Edward Tenant in 1839 (51/252). Matthew Spencer and his wife, Elizabeth Ann, owned the property only three years and then sold it to Joseph Spencer for \$2500 (56/354). The large transfer price suggests the brick house had been raised on the corner lot. Joseph Spencer retained ownership for five years and then sold the title in 1847 to Dr. John Miller, for whom the house is also named. The property remained under the Miller name until 1936 (237/578).



SPENCER HOUSE (BERKELEY HALL, DR. MILLER'S FARMHOUSE)

T-255  
~~T-592~~

Year: 1959 Vol: 358 Page: 159

From: Amanda Stewart (widow of Lawrence H Stewart) Price: \$5

To: Marie S Reeser

Notes: (Parcel 1) East side Talbot Street

and Chestnut at SW corner. Run with Talbot St S 23.45 E 120' to N side Chestnut St; run with Chestnut St N 66.15 W 120'; then N 23.45 W 120'; then S 66.15 W 120' to beginning. Lots 27 and 28 of Braddock's original town.

From Henry E Harris to Lawrence H Stewart 1946, 265/450

Year: 1946 Vol: 265 Page: 450

From: Henry E Harris (unmarried) Price: \$5

To: Lawrence H Stewart + Mabel G Stewart (wife)

Notes: See 1959, 358/159.

From Louis M Denit, executor for Charles Gibson Ford to Henry E Harris  
1944, 258/468

Year: 1944 Vol: 258 Page: 468

From: Louis M Denit, executor for Charles Gibson Ford Price: \$2800

To: Henry E Harris

Notes: See 1959, 358/468.

William Thomas Jones and Vera Blanche Jones to Charles Gibson Ford  
1943, 256/137.

Year: 1943 Vol: 256 Page: 137

From: William Thomas Jones & Vera Blanche Jones Price: \$3300

To: C Gibson Ford

Notes: See 1959, 358/159

From Willie Belle Miller and Dorcas Louise Miller to William Thomas Jones  
and Vera Blanche Jones 1936, 237/578.

Year: 1936 Vol: 237 Page: 578  
From: Willie Belle Miller and Dorcas Louise Miller Price: \$5  
To: William Thomas Jones and Vera Blanche Jones  
Notes: See 1959, 358/159.

From Joseph Spencer to Dr John Miller. 1847, 60/494. Interest vested in Willie Belle Miller and Dorcas Louise Miller as heirs.

Year: 1847 Vol: 60 Page: 494  
From: Joseph Spencer Price: \$2085  
To: Dr John Miller  
Notes: Lots 27 and 28. See 1959, 358/159.

From Matthew Spencer & Elizabeth Ann Spencer to Joseph Spencer 1842, 56/354.

Year: 1842 Vol: 56 Page: 354  
From: Matthew Spencer & Elizabeth Ann Spencer Price: \$2500  
To: Joseph Spencer  
Notes: Lots 27 and 28. See 1959, 358/159.

From Edward Tenant to Matthew Spencer 1839, 51/252

Year: 1839 Vol: 54 Page: 252  
From: Thomas Tenant & Mary Tenant (heirs of Samuel Tenant) Price: \$500  
To: Edward Tenant  
Notes: Lots 27 and 28

Edward's share of father Samuel's estate.

Year: 1809 Vol: Page:  
From: Land Office, Eastern Shore Price:  
To: Samuel Tenant  
Notes: Ref: Talbot County, Unpatented Certificate of Survey number 239

On February 22, 1809 Samuel Tenant (who had made the 1804 - 06 survey for the Commissioners empowered to erect the new "Town of St. Michaels) was granted an "unpatented Certificate of Survey" for certain "escheated lands" in St Michaels which he named "The Polygon". [see copy attached]

Among the lots included were numbers 27 and 28 which thus came under Tenant's ownership. Lots 27 and 28 were originally sold to Ephraim Chick Toope by James Wignal in 1784 (21/421).

Year: 1798 Vol: 28 Page: 94

From: Margaret Chicktoope (sic) Price: p30 sp

To: James Bowdle and John W Needles

Notes: Lots 27 and 28. Lot 28 begins SW corner Elijah Marshall's lot; 60' with Marshall, then 125' to Chestnut St; with Chestnut St 65 deg W to the Poplar St. then to the beginning. Lot 27 begins NE corner of 28 runs N 65 E to Richard Keithley; with Keithley S 25 E 125' to Chestnut St.; with Chestnut S 65 W 60' then to the beginning.

Despite faulty metes & bounds, these are the correct lots. No further record of the lots under the ownership of Bowdle & Needles has been found. Samuel Tenant's "Certificate of Survey" transfer of the title to himself as "escheated lands" eliminates Bowdle & Needles. The act was apparently not contested.

Year: 1784 Vol: 21 Page: 421

From: James Wignal Price: p20 sp

To: Ephraim Chick Toope

Notes: Lots 27 and 28. These lots were acquired by James Wignal together with additional unsold property of James Braddock which Braddock had willed to John Thompson and which Wignal bought from Thompson in 1784 for p600 specie (21/417). The lots were part of the "Janes Progress" tract and were among the 58 lots of James Braddock's "Town of St. Michaels".

## Dr. Miller's Farmhouse

Dr. Miller's house is an odd composite of brick and frame with no thought to uniformity. The brick part on the corner of the lot was built as a townhouse probably around 1840-50. The brick is laid in all stretcher bond with flat arches above windows & doors <sup>+ a stepped brick cornice.</sup> It faces Talbot St. & has a wide door with ~~rectangular~~ transoms and sidelights. ~~Two~~ <sup>are placed</sup> Two windows <sup>south</sup> of the door and three above, on 2nd story, all with  $\frac{3}{2}$  sash and lowered shutters. A one-story porch is attached to the gable facing Chestnut St. with a door ~~to~~ on each side of the fireplace.

To the north side of the house is a 3 bay, 2-story frame wing, with 2-story porch, and having a round tower on the ~~west~~ corner facing the street. Behind this portion is a lean-to area and a small brick outbuilding close thereto.

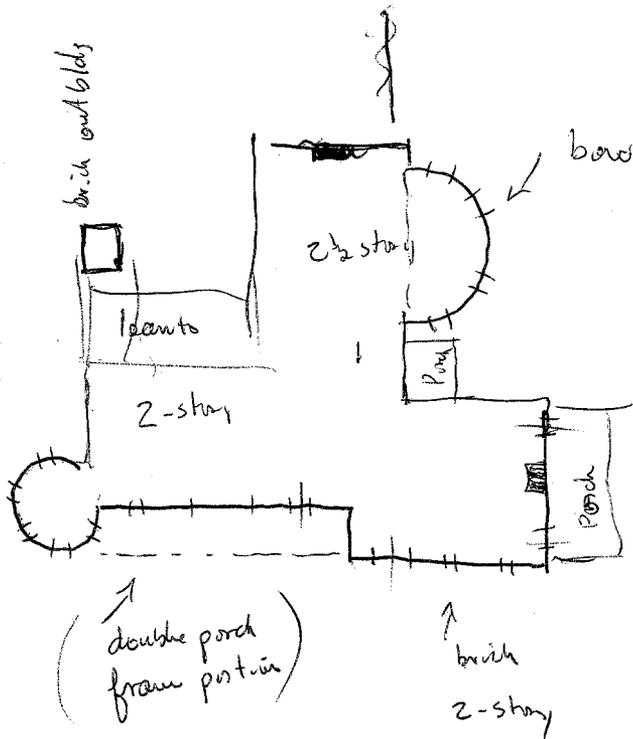
On the east side of the brick part is another wing, this one  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stories, having an entrance porch closest to the brick part and a very large semicircular bay ~~with~~ window with four sash units on its surface on both stories. It also has a brick chimney on its gable.

MFB 3/12/11

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Miller's Farmhouse

D. ~~Dutton House~~



brick - all stretcher - with flat arch  
 3-step cornice brick -  
 3/2 sash + low shutters

door w/ sidelights + transom

MMS  
 2/71

# ST MICHAELS

ST MICHAELS DIST. TALBOT CO.



## ST MICHAEL'S BUSINESS REFERENCES,

**DODSON**, Dealer in Drugs, Medicines, Chemicals, Fine Toilet Soap, Fancy Hair and Tooth Brushes, Perfumery and Fancy Toilet Articles, Trusses, Shoulder-Braces, Grass and Garden Seeds. Fine Wines and Liquors for Medicinal purposes, Oils, Varnishes and Dye Stuffs, Letter Paper, Pens, Ink, Envelopes, Glass, Putty, Carbon Oil, Stoves, Chimneys, &c. Physicians' Prescriptions carefully Compounded.

**HADDAWAY**, Insurance Agent and Conveyancer.

**W. DEAN**, Collector of Claims, Real Estate Agent and Conveyancer.

**ES DYOTT**, Carpenter, Contractor and Builder, Shop at St. Michael's.

**EDWARD HAMBLETON**, Carpenter and Builder, Shop at St. Michael's.

**ES B. ...**, Real Estate Agent and Collector of Claims.

**SPARKS**, Justice of the Peace and Collector.

**SMITHMAN**, Boot and Shoemaker. First class work done on short notice. Repairing promptly and neatly done.

**Y S. HAMBLETON**, Proprietor of "Hambleton's Mechanical Shop." Blacksmithing, Wheelwrighting, and all work appertaining thereto. Indicate Machinery carefully repaired. Farming implements on hand, and made to order at short notice. Carriage Repairing, Trimming and Painting Specially.

**WILLIAM CAULK**, Physician and Surgeon.

**JAMES SETH**, Physician and Surgeon, Office and Residence near St. Michael's.

**LIAM S. HARRISON**, Blacksmith and Wagon Maker. Repairing promptly and neatly done. Shop in Broad Creek Neck.

**NEAVITT & CO.**, Dealers in Dry Goods, Notions, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes, &c. Store in Broad Creek Neck.

**N T. HARRINGTON**, Proprietor of "Williams House." Newly furnished and fitted. Table carefully catered for. All the luxuries of the season. Ample Stable Accommodations. Charges moderate.

**NIEL J. KILMAN**, Carriage Maker and Dealer in all kinds of Wagons.

**ORGE W. COLLINS**, Tinner. Worker in Tin, Sheet Iron, &c. Also Dealer in Stoves and Tin, and Sheet Iron ware of every description.

**I. BLADES**, Carpenter, Contractor, and Builder. Persons having work in this line will do well to see him before contracting.

**SEPH HERGERSHEIMER**, Ship Builder. Repairing of all kinds promptly and neatly done.

**IVER FAIRBANK**, Boot and Shoemaker. Is skillful in his profession. Those wanting first class work done will do well to patronize him.

**RISON & RICHARDSON**, Carriage Makers. All work warranted. Repairing promptly and neatly done.

**J. HOLLAND**, Butcher and Dealer in Fresh Meats of all kinds. Shop on Talbot Street.

**PT. C. R. LEONARD**, Freighter of Grain of all kinds to point.

**OMA ...**, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Cigars, Tobacco, &c.

**SEMIAH HARRISON**, Dealer in Groceries, Confectioneries &c.

**S. KILMON**, Carriage Maker and Dealer in Carriages, Wagons, &c. Repairing promptly and neatly done.

**A. DODSON** Physician and Surgeon.



T-255  
BERKELEY HALL  
(Dr. Millers Farmhouse)  
St. Michaels, Md. Quadrangle  
1942

Broad

Creek

Long Haul Creek

E  
S

Fairview Pt

BALTIMORE

BM 12

BM

Navy Pt

Parrott Pt

St Michaels

BM 7

EASTERN

BM 7

R  
I  
V  
E  
R

H  
U  
N  
T  
I  
N

Domingo

Spencer Creek

Little Neck Cr

BM 8

33

Church Neck Point

Hopkins Point

B  
R  
O  
A  
D  
C  
E  
P

Lc  
Pc



DR. MILLER'S FARMHOUSE T-255

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., Md.

West elevation

3/87, photographer, Paul Touart

Neg./Md. Historical Trust



DR. MILLER'S FARMHOUSE T-255

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., Md.

Southwest elevation

3/87, photographer, Paul Touart

Neg./Md Historical Trust



DR. MILLER'S FARMHOUSE T-255

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., Md.

Parlor mantel

3/87, photographer, Paul Touart

Neg./Md. Historical Trust



DR. MILLER'S FARMHOUSE T-255

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., Md.

Stair

3/87, photographer, Paul Touart

Neg./Md. Historical Trust



DR. MILLERS'S FARMHOUSE T-255

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., Md.

South elevation of east wing

3/87, photographer, Paul Touart

Neg./Md. Historical Trust



DR. MILLER'S FARMHOUSE T-255  
St. Michaels, Talbot Co., Md.  
Brick outbuilding, north elev.  
3/87, photographer, Paul Touart  
Neg./Md. Historical Trust



DR. MILLER'S FARMHOUSE T-255

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., Md.

Plaster ceiling medallion

3/87, photographer, Paul Touart

Neg./Md. Historical Trust



(Dr. Miller's Farm house)

T-255

Dr. Kemp's Farmhouse

St. Michael's



17 x 1.93

50% 255

T-255