

CT-167  
DORSEY FARM  
Port Republic  
Private

mid 19th century

Among the many buildings on this large farm, the house and largest tobacco barn are the most notable. The house is a large frame structure with a Federal type plan consisting of an end-hall and double parlors. Two chimneys on the east end provide each room in both stories with fireplaces.

The tobacco barn, or at least parts of it, may be as old as the house. Its main significance, however, stems from the fact that it was used for heat-curing. Air-tight siding and a pit which contained the border-like curing apparatus document this fact. As far as is known, this method of curing tobacco began in this area in the 1860's but did not bring much success in this county.

(Capsule)

Dorsey Farm

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CT-167  
CLVT 167

MAGI # 05016756 35

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Dorsey Farm

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Scientist Cliffs Road

CITY, TOWN

Port Republic

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Calvert

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 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 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mason Weems

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Liber #: JLB 126/481

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

CT-167

**7 DESCRIPTION**

**CONDITION**

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

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CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input 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**

Among the many buildings on this large farm, the house and largest tobacco barn are the most notable. The house is a large frame structure with a Federal type plan consisting of an end-hall and double parlors. Two chimneys on the east end provide each room in both stories with fireplaces.

The tobacco barn, or at least parts of it, may be as old as the house. Its main significance, however, stems from the fact that it was used for heat-curring. Air-tight siding and a pit which contained the border-like curring apparatus document this fact. As far as is known, this method of curring tobacco began in this area in the 1860's but did not bring much success in this century.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

SEE ATTACHED SHEET.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 100+

**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

Wayne L. Nield, II  
Historic Sites Survey  
Broomes Island, Maryland 20615  
536-2050

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Winter 76-77

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

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

Dorsey Farm

This house was not examined on the interior; but from the outside, it was observed that it is a two-story end hall and double parlor type with two large chimneys on its original north end. A two-story wing was added onto that end which also has an exterior chimney. The owner says that every room has a fireplace which has been closed-up.

Modern siding covers the original clapboards.

The main block is three large bays wide and two large bays deep. The roof is gable-end and a central pediment or cross gable with a fan shaped window occupies the upper front (West) facade. This feature is probably a Victorian modification of the original appearance, which is much more Federal in character.

Being close to the Chesapeake Bay, the terrain of this 100 acre farm consists of hills, some of which are quite steep. The house occupies one of the steepest hills and commands a view of the rest of the farm, which unfolds with more buildings to the South in several hills and valleys.

A farmyard complex is directly below the house and consists of chicken houses, a cattle barn with pens, a stripping shed, and a modern haybarn. Further down the dirt lane which connects all of the buildings and lying on the right is a pond for waterfowl. The pond lies in a low valley. East of the pond and up on the hill south of it is a family graveyard with several tombstones, which lie on their faces beneath much brush and vines.

One stone bears the initials "J. B." The present owner remembers reading other stones and discovering these to be the graves of Dorseys. One of them, he remembers figuring, died about 150 years ago.

As the slope rises to the South, two modern tobacco barns are encountered and sitting on the crest of the hill, is a third tobacco house which is a building of great interest. The house and this barn actually occupy the two highest spots, and the rest of the complex lies inbetween.

With its sheds, this barn measures 36' x 68' overall. The frame of the main block, however, is a standard 24' x 40' (ten rooms) post-and-beam structure. The members of this frame are heavy prices hewn and joined together via mortise-and-tenon with trunnels.

This frame has been placed upon 3' brick piers, and the floor has been dug out into a pit so that there is a distance of 4' between the sills and the earth below. The present owner says that his father told him that this was done in order to accommodate a curring apparatus.

There is other evidence that the main block was an "air tight" barn. On all but the north wall, pieces of siding remain which reveal that the building was covered with heavy vertical siding. Each board was approximately 1" thick, 9" wide, and 13' long (eaves-sill). The boards are rabbled on the edges for half-lapping (vertical shiplap). On the south wall, one board is stamped "St. Marys" in two places. Such siding is obviously designed to prevent any flow of air. The sheds appear to be later additions

however, this special siding does not appear to be weathered. This fact suggests a couple of possibilities relevant to the age of the original structure:

1. A conventional tri-partite barn was altered in order to adapt it to heat-curring by removing its central transverse sills, raising it on piers and changing its siding. Sheds were added later. They are frame structures with circular sawn posts and sills but pre-date Weem's ownership. (19 ). A large prize is housed in the south end of the south shed.
2. The siding is original, and the frame was designed for this special process as is suggested by the uprights located in the ends where doors normally are. The condition of the remaining siding, however, suggests the original presence of sheds on both the east and west ends as well as the south side.

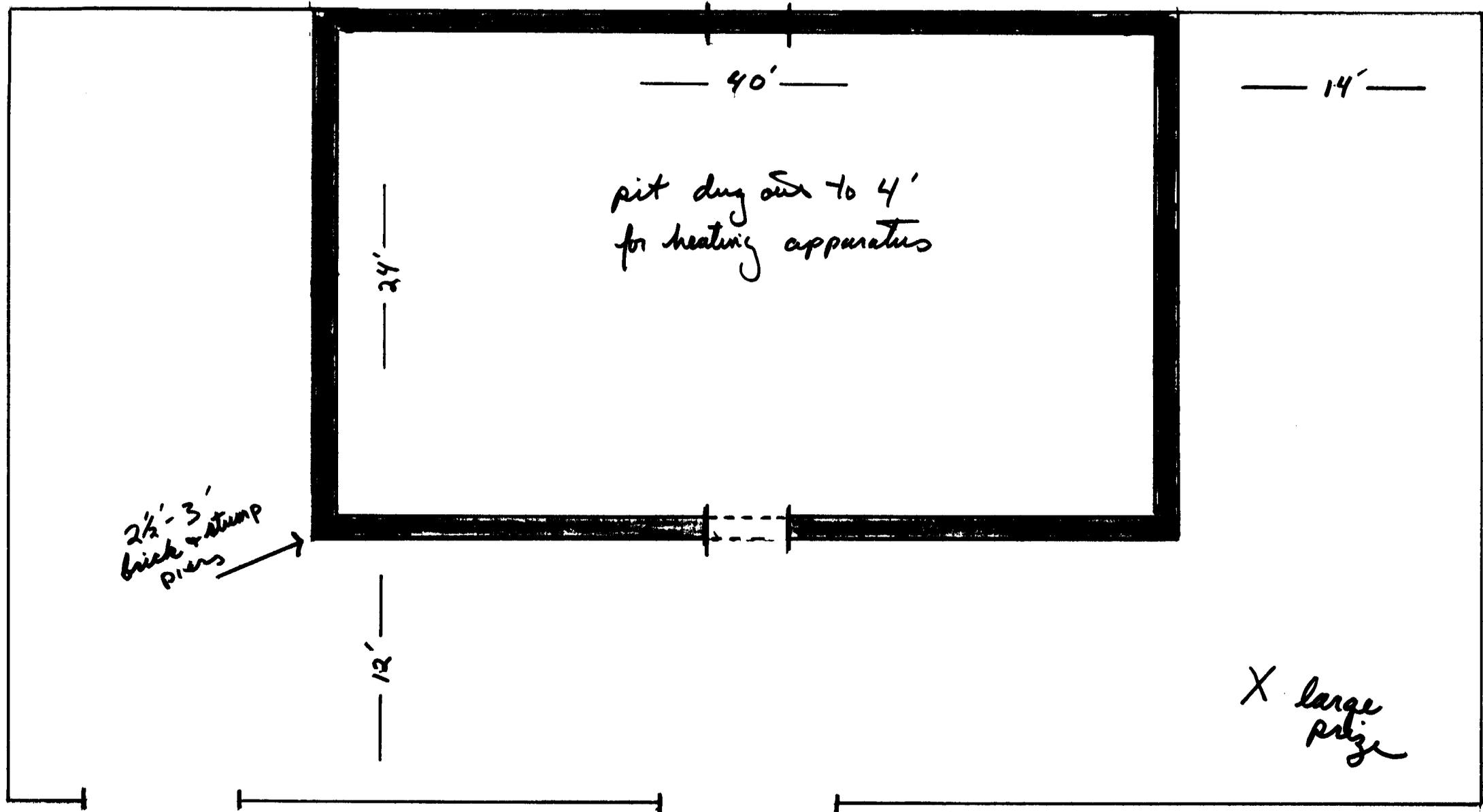
These possibilities are of importance in dating this structure since the available evidence indicates that the use of a curring apparatus in this area at least was a phenomenon of the third quarter of the Nineteenth Century. W. W. W. Bowie advocates the use of the Bibb apparatus in the article which he authored in 1867. In it the device was described in a manner suggesting that it was a relatively recent invention. Such an apparatus has been recorded in a barn in St. Leonards, which bears the Bibb name and a patent date of 1861. Oral history limits the use of this curring method to the Nineteenth Century.

In addition to its age and construction, this barn is important for its ability to document a phase of tobacco production, which appears not to have lasted in Southern Maryland after the turn of this century. The actual age of the frame is still undetermined. As stated, if it was constructed for this special use, the oldest portion of the barn is probably from the third quarter of the Nineteenth Century. Considering its site and the fact that the house appears older than that, the possibility of an older barn being adapted to this purpose remains for consideration.

Bibliography

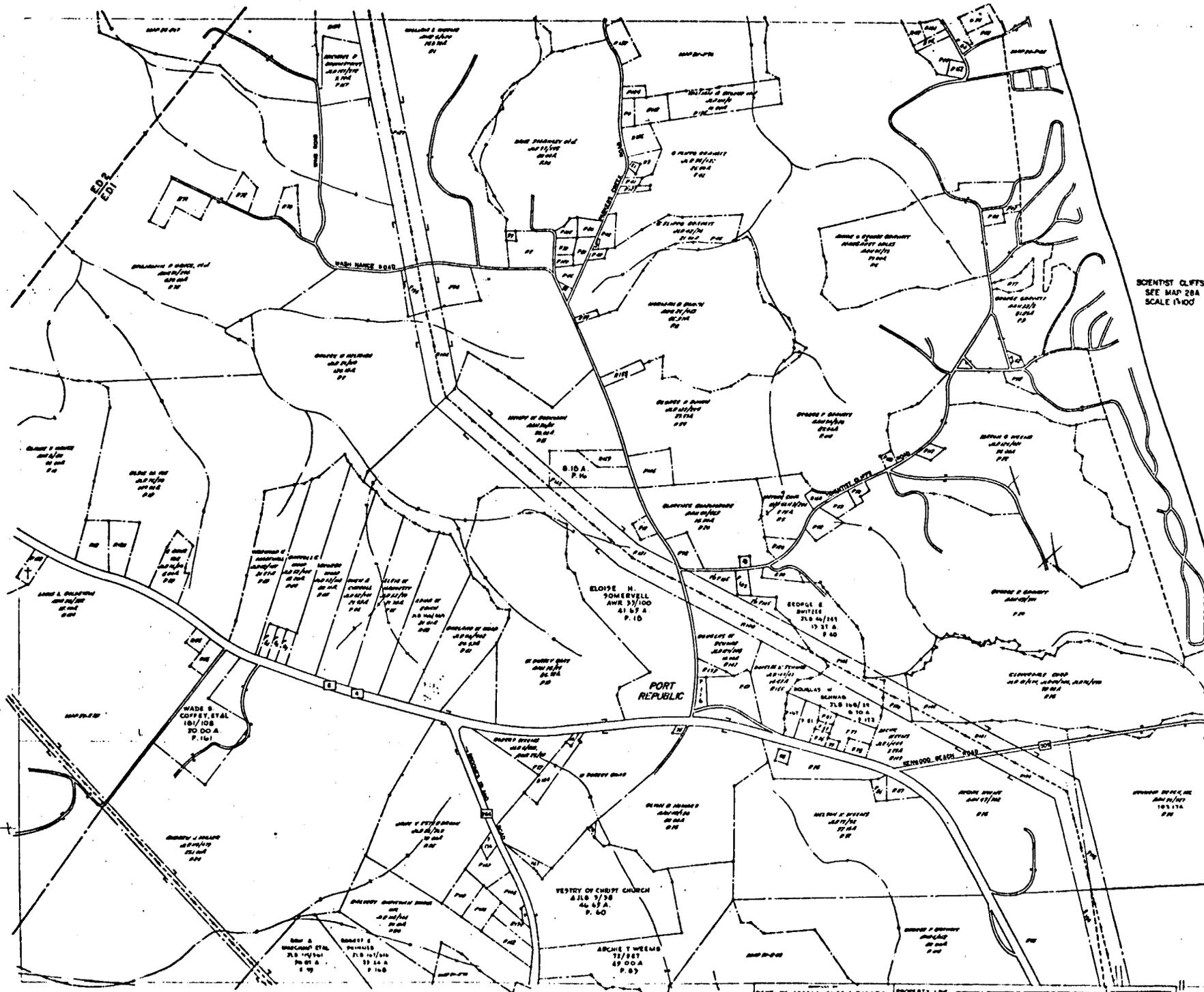
Bowie, W. W. W., "Culture and Management of Tobacco", Report of the  
Commissioner of Agriculture, 1867, Governments Printing Office  
Washington, 1868.

Sloan, E., An Age of Barns, N. Y. 1967.



Tobac. barn  
Dorsey Farm, Pot Rep.  
Feb. 1977

plates & sills in sheds are  
circular sawn, but pre-  
date Weems ownership



SCIENTIST CLIFFS  
SEE MAP 28A  
SCALE 1/400

27

926

COPYRIGHT - MAP DIVISION - 1927  
MD DEPT OF ASSES & TAX

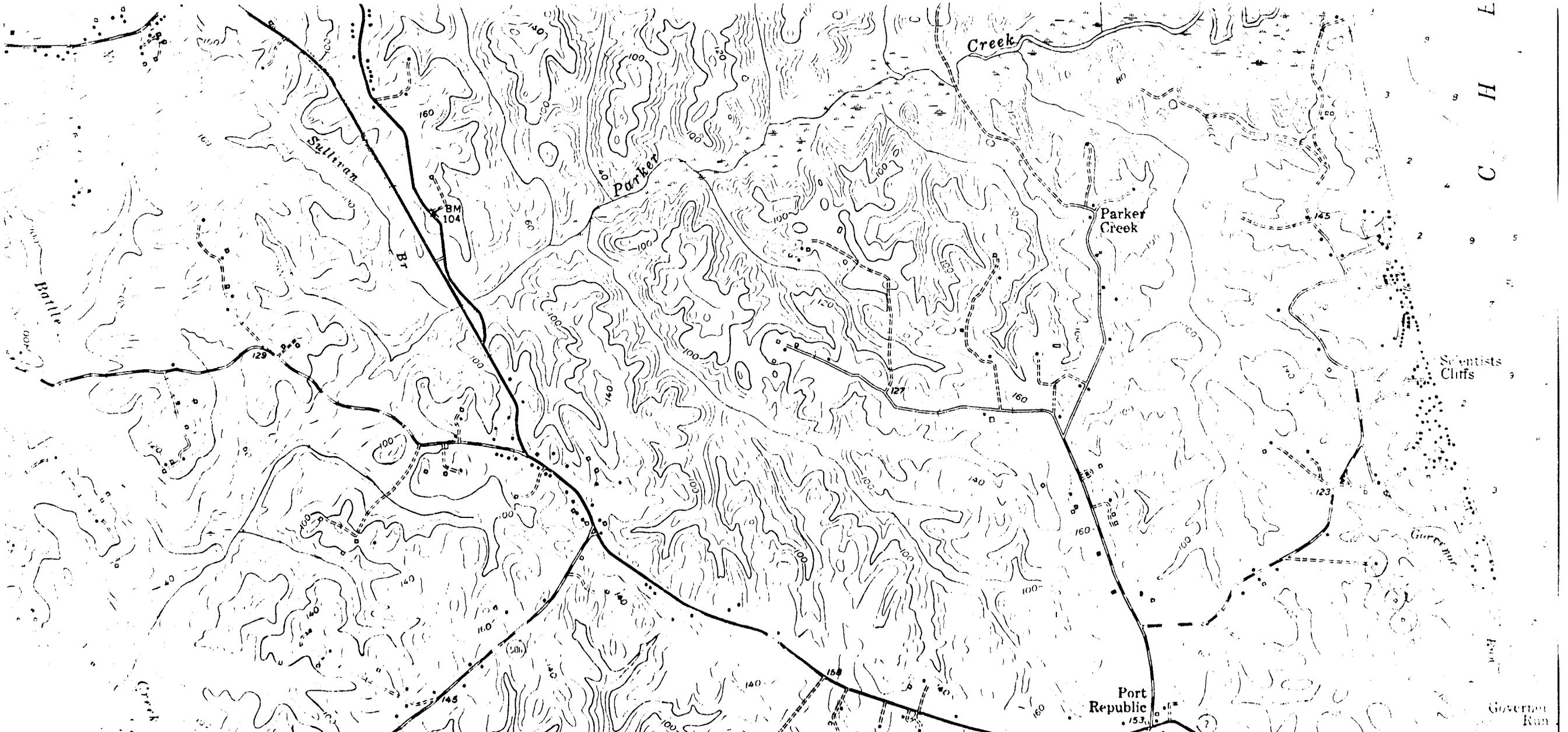
927

BASE MAP CONSTRUCTED  
FROM 1888 BLAD  
PLANNED BY REV. TO 1878  
MAP DIVISION 1927

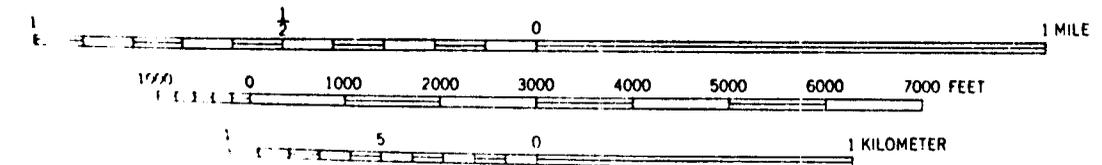
935

DEPT OF ASSESSMENTS & TAXATION 122 MAP DIVISION 1000 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE WASHINGTON, D. C.	PROPERTY LINE SHOWN BY DASHED LINE CONTAINING OWNERSHIP PARCEL NUMBER	
	SCALE 1" = 600' 1927	

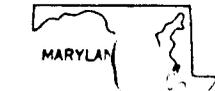
CT-167  
COUNT  
167



SCALE 1:24000



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty Light-duty   
Medium-duty Unimproved   
U.S. Route State Route



C H E

Scientists Cliffs

Governor Run

INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY WASHINGTON D.C.  
SAINT LEONARD 2 MI. 3680000 E  
LUNBY 6.7 MI.



CLVT-167

Dorsey Farm

Wayne L. Nield, II  
Historic Sites Survey  
Broomes Island, Maryland 20615  
535-2050



CT-167

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Dorsey Farm

Wayne L. Nield, II  
Historic Sites Survey  
Brookes Island, Maryland 20615  
588-2030



CLVT-167

Dorsey Farm

Wayne L. Nield, II  
Historic Sites Survey  
Broomes Island, Maryland 20615  
586-2050



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Wayne L. Nield, II  
Historic Sites Survey  
Stromes Island, Maryland 20615  
486-2050