Capsule Summary
SM-495
Physic Hill
Great Mills
Private Circa 1890

Physic Hill is significant as the site of the combined residence and office of a series of St. Mary's County doctors dating from the 1830s to 1918. The house currently located on the property dates to about 1890. This building replaced an earlier structure that burned in 1883.

Among those doctors who have lived and practiced here are Dr. John Delany (1802-1852), Dr. William Matthew Abell (1825-1876), Dr. Tom Lynch (1859-1942), and Dr. Henry Richardson (1841-1915). It was under Abell's ownership that the property, originally part of "White Plains" and "Charles Park," became known as "Physic Hill." According to an article published in the St. Mary's Beacon, the original Physic Hill house burned during ownership of John J. Allstan in 1883. The article, dated September 13, 1883, notes,

"The dwelling known as Physic Hill, located near Great Mills, in this county was destroyed by fire on Monday last about 4:00 in the evening. The fire was communicated to the roof by a spark from the kitchen chimney and had obtained a full heading and control before it was discovered. It was in the occupany of Mr. Alexander Milburn, undertaker, and belonged to Mr. John J. Allstan. The building was a handsome structure, finely furnished, about thirty years old, and its original cost is stated to have been $14,000...Both the building and furniture were insured in the Montgomery County Mutual."

SM-495, Physic Hill
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Agricultural/Industrial Transition, 1815 - 1870. Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 - 1930.
Historic Period Theme:	Economic Social/Educational/Cultural

Resource Type

Category:	Structure
Historic Environment:	Rural
Historic Function and Use:	Dwelling Doctor's Office
Known Design Source:	None

Survey No. SM-495

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Physic Hill

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Great Mills Road (Route 246) ___ not for publication

city, town Great Mills ___ vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county St. Mary's

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	X private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	X not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

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

name Vivian J. Steele

street & number 4728 Lee Highway telephone no.: (703) 669-5892

city, town Bristol state and zip code VA 24201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber MRB 111

street & number folio 132

city, town Leonardtown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-495

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date of move _____
X fair	___ unexposed		

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

Contributing Resource Count: 1

Physic Hill is located on a steep rise in the landscape on the north side of Great Mills Road (Route 246) in Great Mills, St. Mary's County, Maryland. There are no outbuildings on the property. The house faces east with the principal gable oriented on a north/south axis.

Built around 1890, the two-story, frame house is an ell-shaped structure with a one-story porch infill dating to about 1970 and a one-story rear addition dating to around 1950. It is sheathed with artificial siding and roofed with asphalt shingles. The foundation consists of brick piers infilled with cement blocks.

The east (main) elevation consists of an ell with a one-story enclosed porch infill. The porch is pierced by a series of six-light windows. Above the former porch, the second floor of the main block is pierced by one six-over-six sash window. The southern gable end wing is pierced by two six-over-six sash windows on both the first and second floors. An interior brick chimney pierces the roof ridgeline.

The south elevation of the ell is pierced by one six-over-six sash window on the second floor. The south side of the main block's gable end is pierced by one eight-over-eight sash window on both the first and second floors.

The west elevation consists of a one-story wing that extends across the full width of the elevation. This wing is pierced by a door and two one-over-one sash windows. The second floor is pierced by three eight-over-eight sash windows. The roofline is broken by a cross gable and is pierced by a two-light window with a triangular cap.

The north elevation of the main block gable end is pierced by one six-over-six sash window on the first and second floor. An exterior cinderblock chimney stands against this gable end. The first floor of the ell is mostly obscured by the enclosed porch infill which is pierced by a modern door and window. The second floor of the ell is pierced by a six-over-six sash window.

The interior consists of a center hall, single pile plan. The entrance door behind the enclosed porch has a two-light transom. The central hall has an open string stair fitted with turned balusters. The first floor consists of a living room, dining room, kitchen and rear sun room. The second floor consists of three bedrooms and a bathroom.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-495

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates Unknown **Builder/Architect** Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ___A ___B X C ___D
and/or
Applicable Exception: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G

Level of Significance: ___national ___state X local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Physic Hill is significant as the site of the combined residence and office of a series of St. Mary's County doctors dating from the 1830s to 1918. The house currently located on the property dates to about 1890. It is unoccupied and is in a deteriorated condition.

In 1835, Dr. John Delany (1802-1852) purchased fifty acres of land from Clement M. Williams, which later became known as part of "White Plains." In 1842, Delany purchased "Charles Park," part of the real estate of Grandison Asquith. By 1842 Delany was already resident on the Charles Park property. Delany received his degree from the University of Maryland Medical School in 1823. At his death in 1852, he was described as "one of the ablest and most advanced doctors in Southern Maryland."

Before Delany's death, he conveyed 180 acres of Charles Park and part of White Plains to Young P. Dawkins. No deed was recorded, however, and Eliza Delany formerly transfered this property to Dawkins in 1855 for $2000. Dawkins sold these tracts to James B. Thomas in February of 1859 for $3500. A mere four months later Thomas sells the property to Beal Kiebard for $6000, suggesting that considerable construction occured here during Thomas' ownership.

Kiebard sold the property to Dr. William Matthew Abell (1825-1876) in 1859. Abell had received his medical degree from the University Maryland School of Medicine in 1850. It was during Abell's ownership that the property became known as "Physic Hill." During the year of 1860, Dr. Abell was joined in his practice by Dr. John Wise Hebb (1839-1910) who also received his degree in medicine from the University of Maryland. A St. Mary's Beacon announcement of April 1860 noted "Drs. W.M. Abell and J. Wise Hebb offer their services to the people of the Factory District and can be found at the residence of Dr. Abell at Physic Hill."

During the Civil War Dr. Abell was arrested as a Southern sympathizer. In 1861 he was imprisoned without charges at Fort Lafayette in New York Harbor for one year. Shortly before his death in 1876, Abell's property was sold by virtue of a Circuit Court

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-495

Fresco, Margaret K. Doctors of St. Mary's County, 1634 - 1900 (n.p: N.p., 1992)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3 acres

Quadrangle name St. Mary's City

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Acreage surrounding house

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Hughes, Historic Sites Surveyor

organization St. Mary's County Planning & Zoning date

street & number 328 Washington Street telephone (301) 475-4662

city or town Leonardtown 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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

PS-2746

decree to George Combs, agent and president of the St. Mary's Savings Institution. In 1880, the property was again transfered as the result of a court-ordered sale.

John J. Allstan purchased Physic Hill in 1880. An advertisement of December 1882 shows that Dr. Tom Lynch (1859-1942) was offering his professional services at Physic Hill. According to an article published in the St. Mary's Beacon, the original Physic Hill house burned during his ownership in 1883. The article, dated September 13, 1883, notes, "The dwelling known as Physic Hill, located near Great Mills, in this county was destroyed by fire on Monday last about 4:00 in the evening. The fire was communicated to the roof by a spark from the kitchen chimney and had obtained a full heading and control before it was discovered. It was in the occupany of Mr. Alexander Milburn, undertaker, and belonged to Mr. John J. Allstan. The building was a handsome structure, finely furnished, about thirty years old, and its original cost is stated to have been $14,000...Both the building and furniture were insured in the Montgomery County Mutual."

In 1887, Allstan sold the 180 acre property to S. Spencer Greenwell of Baltimore County for $950. In 1893, the tract was sold to John F. Ching as the result of a court-ordered sale. Ching then sold Physic Hill to Susan Matilda Richardson, wife of Dr. Henry Richardson (1841-1915) for $805. Dr. Richardson received his degree in medicine from the University of Maryland in 1864. The Richardson family continued to own the property until 1918.

SM-495, Physic Hill
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: Vivian J. Steele
FROM: Burl T. Steele
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber MRB 111, folio 132.
DATE: January 1982
NOTES: Transfer of part of "Physic Hill" being on the left side of Route 246 from Great Mills to Lexington Park.

TO: Burl T. Steele and Vivian J. Steele
FROM: William A. Chapman and Elizabeth M. Chapman
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber CBG 66, folio 127.
DATE: October 25, 1956.
NOTES: Transfer of part of "Physic Hill."

TO: William A. Chapman and Elizabeth M. Chapman
FROM: Ada Lucy Norris, widow.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber CBG 22, folio 107.
DATE: October 4, 1948.
NOTES: Transfer of "Physic Hill" being 40 acres.

TO: Charles P. Cox and Theodosia Cox
FROM: George C. Herbert and Nellie C. Herbert
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber EBA 17, folio 372.
DATE: October 23, 1918.
NOTES: Transfer of "Physic Hill" being 40 acres. Price: $2500

TO: George C. Herbert
FROM: Susan M. Richardson
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber EBA 17, folio 271.
DATE: August 24, 1918.
NOTES: Transfer of "Physic Hill" being 40 acres.

TO: Susan Matilda Richardson, wife of Henry.
FROM: John F. Ching and Sarah I. Ching
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JJG 1, folio 148.
DATE: June 6, 1893.
NOTES: Transfer of "Physic Hill" formerly called Charles Park and part of "White Plains" being 180 acres, the same that belonged to the late Dr. John Delaney...
Price: $805

SM-495, Physic Hill
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

TO: John F. Ching
FROM: L. Allison Wilmer, Trustee
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JJG 1, folio 147.
DATE: June 6, 1893.
NOTES: Transfer of "Physic Hill," formerly Charles Park and part of White Plains being 180 acres as a result of a decree in Circuit Court dated February 6, 1893 in the case of Charles A. Councilman and William T. Councilman vs. Spencer S. Greenwell (see Decree Record JJG 1/117).
Price: $805.

TO: S. Spencer Greenwell of Baltimore County
FROM: John J. Allston
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JFF 10, folio 8.
DATE: May 17, 1887.
NOTES: Transfer of "Physic Hill" consisting of Charles Park and part of White Plains being 180 acres. Price: $950.

TO: John J. Allstan
FROM: J. Frank Smith, Sheriff
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JFF 4, folio 134.
DATE: March 17, 1880.
NOTES: Transfer of "Physic's Hill" being 180 acres as a result of a decree dated October 17, 1879 in the case George C. Combs vs. Jeannette A. Abell, Benjamin Hewett, John B. Pursell, John J. Allstan, John M. Brome, George Thomas, Thomas A. Lynch, Benedict I. Abell, and John W. Clements, surviving obligors of James S. Downs, William M. Abell, and J. Frank Greenwell.

TO: George Combs, Agent and President of the St. Mary's Savings Institution.
FROM: Robert Ford and Robert C. Combs, Trustees.
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JFF 2, folio 84.
DATE: March 21, 1876.
NOTES: Sale of property as a result of decree in Circuit Court dated June 18, 1862 in the case of Cornelius Combs vs. William M. Abell. Transfer of tract on which Abell resided and now resides called Physic Hill, composed of parts of Part of Park Hall and part White Plains being 180 acres. Price: $4300.

TO: William M. Abell
FROM: Beale Kiebard and Ellen S. Kiebard
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JAC 2, folio 13.
DATE: June 9, 1859.
NOTES: Transfer of Charles Park being 130 acres and part of White Plains being 50 acres. Price: $6000

SM-495, Physic Hill
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance

TO: Beal Kiebard
FROM: James B. Thomas and Benenia A. Thomas
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JTB 3, folio 128.
DATE: June 9, 1859.
NOTES: Transfer of Charles Park being 130 acres and part of White Plains being 50 acres. Price: $6000.

TO: James B. Thomas
FROM: Young P. Dawkins and Alethia E. Dawkins
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JTB 3, folio 66.
DATE: February 4, 1859.
NOTES: Transfer of Charles Park being 130 acres and part of White Plains being 50 acres. Price: $3500

TO: Young P. Dawkins
FROM: Eliza Delany
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JTB 2, folio 29.
DATE: January 4, 1855.
NOTES: States that John Delany did covenant and sell to Dawkins for $2000 the parcels Charles Park, being 130 acres, and part of White Plains, being 50 acres, which John Delany bought of Clement M. Williams on May 16, 1835. John Delany is now deceased. In his will (GC 2/408; July 13, 1852) he devises all of his estate to his wife.

TO: Dr. John Delany
FROM: George Combs, Trustee
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JH 12, folio 461.
DATE: June 21, 1842.
NOTES: Transfer of real estate of Grandison Asquith, deceased, as a result of a Chancery Court decree dated January 23, 1840. Sale of "Charles Park" being part of the real estate of Grandison Asquith, the plantation whereon the said John Delany now resides.

TO: John Delany
FROM: Clement M. Williams
RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JTB 2, folio 31.
DATE: May 16, 1835.
NOTES: Transfer of a lot adjoining a lot of land on which John Delany now resides and by him purchased of Clement M. Williams containing 50 acres being part of a tract of land known and called by the name of not known. Price: $600.

SM-495
Physic Hill
Great Mills
St. Mary's City Quad

UNITED STATES
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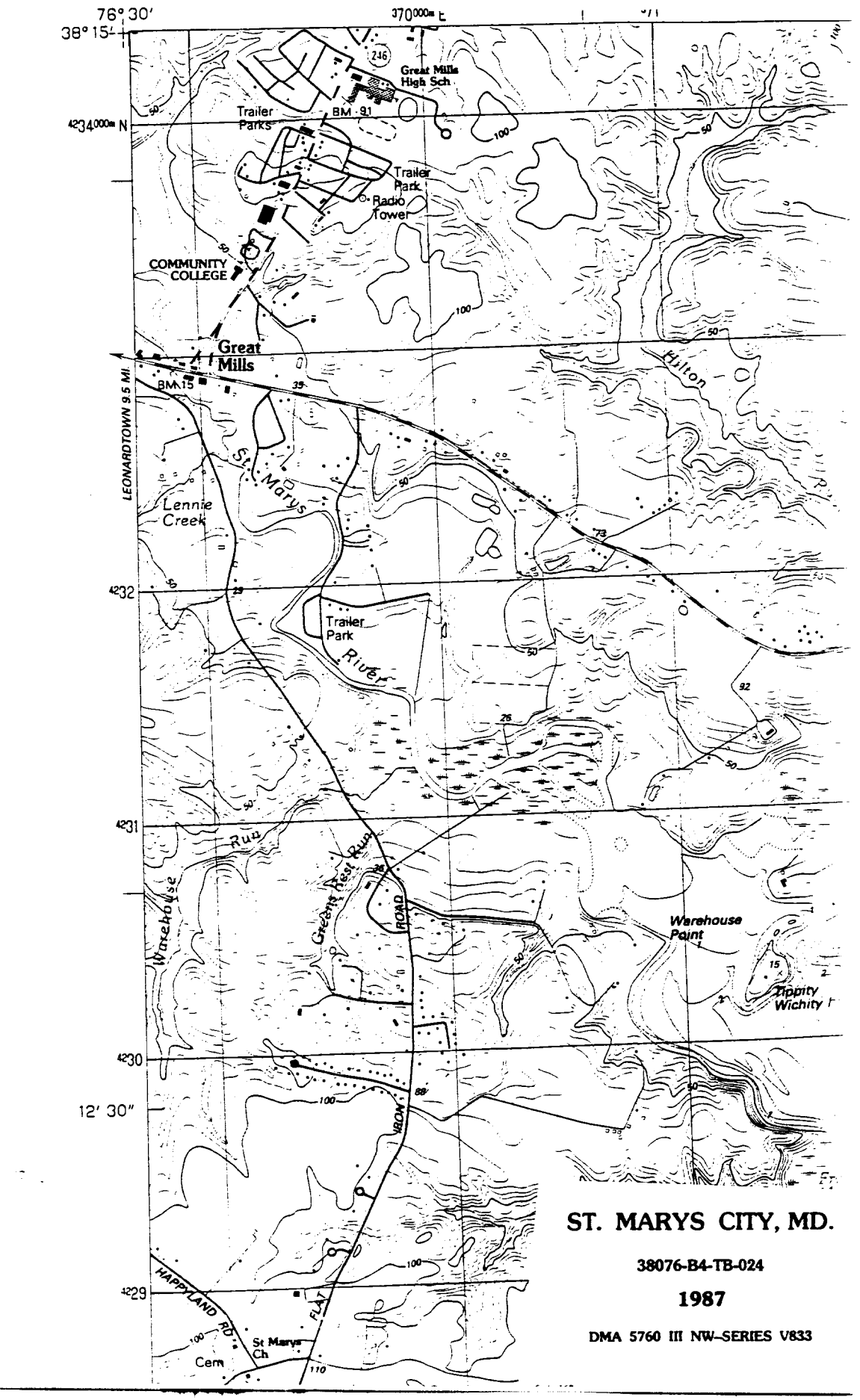

ST. MARYS CITY, MD.

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SM-495

Physic Hill

St. Mary's County

E. Higgins

Mar 6 1995

MD SHPO

1/2

NB Elevation

SM-495

Physic Ho

St Mary's County

E Hughes

March 1995

MD SHPO

2/2

SW Elevation