

(Rev. 10-90)

VLR-6/27/95 NRHP-8/18/95

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Poplar Hill

other names/site number DHR File No. 46-96

2. Location

street & number 7968 Purvis Lane, SR 673, .9 mi. NW of jct. SR 677.

[ ] not for publication

city or town Smithfield,

[x] vicinity

state Virginia

code VA

county Isle of Wight

code 093

zip code 23430

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this [ ] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [x] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*[Signature]* 6/26/95

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

[ ] entered in the National Register

[ ] See continuation sheet.

[ ] determined eligible for the  
National Register

[ ] See continuation sheet.

[ ] determined not eligible for the  
National Register

[ ] removed from the National Register

[ ] other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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### 5. Classification

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**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	1	buildings
4	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
8	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resource previously listed in the National Register**

0

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### 6. Function or Use

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**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic, single dwelling
- Domestic, secondary structure

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic, single dwelling
- Domestic, secondary structure

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### 7. Description

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**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- |            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| foundation | Brick              |
| walls      | Wood: Weatherboard |
| roof       | Asphalt            |
| other      |                    |

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

### Period of Significance

1793/1795 to 1930s

### Significant Dates

1793/1795

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

### Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository:

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** 6

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1 18	350425	4099835	3 18	350435	4099700
2 18	350560	4099860	4 18	350570	4099725

[x] See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

---

name/title Marilyn S. Melchor

organization

date 3 October 1994

street & number 1218 N. Fairwater Drive

telephone 804 423 6592

city or town Norfolk

state Virginia

zip code 23508-1115

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mr. and Mrs. Allen G. McCabe, Jr.

street & number 2901 Westchester Road

telephone 804 272 3896

city or town Richmond

state Virginia

zip code 23225

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**Summary Description**

Poplar Hill, a farm located in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, contains 125 acres. The site, about three miles northeast of the town of Smithfield, at 7968 Purvis Lane, abuts State Route 673, a gravel secondary road. The surrounding terrain is flat farmland; pine and hardwoods share the area with cultivated land. The historic building at Poplar Hill is a late-eighteenth-century, story-and-a-half, frame, hall/parlor-plan dwelling typical of southeastern Virginia. The original building measured thirty feet long by seventeen feet deep before later additions, which not only enlarged the house but also obscured all but the north facade. Four dormers, two on the north side and two on the south side, project from the roofline. This dwelling has an early-nineteenth-century leanto addition to the rear, a post Civil-War kitchen addition to the east, a 1920s one-room addition to the west, and a screened-in front porch on the main facade. Immediately behind dwelling, to the south, is a mid-nineteenth-century frame structure. This building, known to the family as the wash house, is one story high with an east-end chimney and a basement under the east end. See sketch map for approximate locations of smokehouse and kitchen, both surviving into the early twentieth century. There is evidence of an earlier road to the left or east of the main dwelling house. This earlier entry to the grounds passes a flat area that is the site of a carriage house. This carriage house, which also contained the farm office, was removed about 1930. The archaeological remains of an icehouse sit just to the east of the carriage house site. To the rear of the main dwelling are three structures; a shed, a garage, and a stable. The property is well maintained by the current owners.

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**Architectural Description**

**Exterior**

The main dwelling at Poplar Hill rests on a brick foundation four courses high and laid in Flemish bond. The original portion of the house is of braced frame construction clad with beaded weatherboard. Presently, there is a screened porch on the north or principal facade. The current roofing material is asphalt shingles.

There are four chimneys on the main house at Poplar Hill. Two opposing exterior chimneys are at each end of the original hall/parlor section. These two chimneys are laid in Flemish-bond brickwork with sloping shoulders. Both have had stack replacements. Two other opposing chimneys are on the east and west sides of the rear leanto addition. These chimneys are laid in a common-bond pattern of three courses of stretchers to each course of headers. These later chimneys also have stepped shoulders.

The front facade of the original house is three bays wide on the first floor. The principal elevation has a six-panel door, seven feet, six inches tall and four feet wide. The door surround is a plain 2 1/2 inch-wide molding. This front elevation is asymmetrically flanked on either side by one six-over-six double-hung window that is 6 1/2 feet high. The northeast window is six feet from the entrance while the northwest window is 2 1/2 feet to the right of the entrance. These two windows are the only ones at Poplar Hill currently shuttered. The louvered shutters, seven feet high, attached to the window frame by metal hinges, and held open with a wrought-iron hook and eye, are of uncertain date. An exterior window, the same dimensions of the previous two, is located in the east facade of the structure. These three windows are the only ones remaining from the original house on the first floor.

The gable roof is currently covered with asphalt shingles. Cedar shake shingles, several survivors of which are stored on the property, previously covered the roof. There are two dormer windows on the north side of the house and two on the south. All four dormers have four-over-four double-hung sash windows.

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**Interior**

The principal entrance opens immediately into the hall, the dimensions of which are 17' 3" x 16'. The adjoining parlor to the east measures 17' 3" x 14' 2". The hall has yellow pine flooring and recessed-panel wainscoting. The chairboard is a simple molding 2 1/2" wide. There is no crown molding. A picture rail 24" below the ceiling extends around the room. The parlor has modern oak flooring over the original yellow pine boards. This room has neither crown molding nor picture rail. Its chair board is also a simple molding but the wainscoting in this room consists of raised panels below the chair board. Ceiling height in both rooms is 10'. The hall has a fireplace surround that is identical to the one in the parlor. Both wood mantels measure 6' 6" x 7' 2". The shelf sits upon a simple frieze without ornamentation with ogee returns. The fireplace opening is arched and the surrounding area is covered with plaster.

The closed-string winder stair abuts the north wall west of the main entrance door into the hall. The yellow pine newel is of a simple square design. Five 2' 1"-wide steps, with one octagonal baluster with lamb's-tongue returns to each step, rise to a board-and-batten-door with metal latch that closes off the rest of the staircase. The next three risers beyond the doorway are painted with a stencil decoration of a floral motif inside a rectangular box delineated by white dots. Under the stair is a cellar area about half the size of the hall, approximately 10' x 8'. The walls of the cellar are brick, the floor is dirt, and it is probably an original enclosure. There is a line of mainly cut nails with a few wrought-iron nails in a first-floor floor joist exposed in the cellar. Access to this area is by a trap door in the closet floor. Access to the closet is by a door with wrought-iron strap hinges that retain their original leather washers. There is a brass knob pull on this door. The location of the closed-string winder stair in the far northwest corner of the hall adjacent to the fireplace is similar to contemporary neighbors. Two such examples are seen at the Joseph Jordan House, built in 1795, and the Britt House, built around 1789. Both of these structures are also in Isle of Wight County.

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All the doors at Poplar Hill have six panels with the exception of the four that are board-and-batten. These four are the short door under the staircase, the door between the parlor and the dining room addition, the staircase door that leads to the upper floor, and the door between the two chambers on the upper floor. The closet access door is hung with wrought-iron strap hinges, while the other two board-and-batten doors are hung with HL hinges. The door between the hall and the parlor has raised panels on the hall side and recessed panels on the parlor side. The door between the parlor and the later kitchen has recessed panels on the parlor side and raised panels on the kitchen side. The weathering of the door on the kitchen side, leads to the conclusion that it was once an exterior door. It is hung with HL hinges. The door between the hall and the parlor has recessed panels on the parlor side and raised panels on the hall side. The doorway between the parlor and the dining room addition appears to be a later cut. It is a board-and-batten door, hung with HL hinges, and had a nineteenth-century lock and keeper. The door leading from the hall to the dining room addition has recessed panels on the hall side and raised panels on the dining room side. Its lock and keeper date to the nineteenth century.

The second floor is divided into two rooms. In each room are two four-over-four sash dormers, measuring two feet wide with one-foot three-inch sills. The west room, which one enters directly from the staircase, measures 13' 6" x 16' 5". The top of the staircase has eight octagonal balusters with lamb's-tongue returns. The molded hand rail terminates in a simple square yellow pine newel. The flooring consists of yellow pine boards. Entry to the inner, or east chamber, is by way of a board-and-batten door (hung with wrought-iron HL hinges) in the partition wall. The east room measures 13' 6" x 13' 9". The end wall in this room has a square fireplace opening with a rectangular raised panel above the opening. The fireplace surround has a plain molding and a simple mantel shelf. The mantel measures 5'3" tall. The east room has a knee wall access door on both the north and south walls. Access is by an original door hung with H hinges. Both upper chambers have plain baseboards or washboards.

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**Additions**

The first addition was built onto the rear or south elevation of Poplar Hill shortly after completion of the main block. The presumed use of this two-room addition was that of a dining room and bedchamber. The overall dimensions of this addition are 30' 2" x 12' 7". In the 1930s the smaller of the two rooms, the bedchamber, was converted into a modern bathroom. Two opposing exterior fireplaces appear at the east and west ends of the addition. The fireplace surrounds are identical to each other. A recessed panel is located above each fireplace opening. The surround has a simple molding and a simple mantel shelf. The wainscoting in these two rooms is horizontal board sheathing below the chair board. The dining room now has an oak floor. The dining room/bedchamber addition was built two feet below the grade of the original house.

The next addition was a 21' 1" x 14' 3" kitchen wing built to the east side of the structure. Reportedly, this addition, which rests on several brick piers, was added shortly after the end of the Civil War.

The west addition was built in the 1920s. Originally a sun room, this room is now enclosed for use as a bedroom. The fireplace surround here, while of the same period and general style as the others in the structure, was brought to Poplar Hill from another site. The formerly exterior fireplace wall is now a painted interior wall, thus obscuring the reported date brick in this chimney.

**Outbuildings**

The closest outbuilding to the main house sits about 20 feet to the south. Family tradition dates the construction at mid-nineteenth century, and names it the wash house. It is a 26' x 20', three-bay, frame structure that is covered with beaded weatherboard. The south side of the gable roof has fiberglass shingles, while the north side has a corrugated metal roof. The exterior

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chimney, on the east end, is laid in the common-bond brick pattern of three stretcher courses to one header course. The west end of the structure rests on brick piers, while the east end is over a cellar. Access to the loft is by a hatch in the ceiling of the west room. The loft has one window on the west end. There are two interior partition walls, one running north/south and a shorter one running east/west. The first of these two walls divides the interior into two rooms; the west room is further divided forming a small closet or drying room. There is one exterior door in the north facade and one in the south. The fireplace on the east end wall has a surround. Entry to the cellar is by a pent on the east end next to the exterior chimney. Judging from a date in pencil on the back of the siding of the pent, it can be determined that the enclosed pent covering the entry was constructed in the mid-1950s.

The two outbuildings -- a log shed and a stable -- are of early-twentieth-century construction. The garage post-dates 1930. See sketch map for relative locations. Locations of the archaeological sites are based on family tradition; they are shown on the sketch map.

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**Statement of Significance**

Poplar Hill, a simple house, represents the small planter's or middle-class late-eighteenth-century dwelling of southeastern Virginia. Its basic form, a hall/parlor plan, is unaltered. Modifications have been of a practical nature with an early-nineteenth-century rear leanto, a post-Civil War kitchen added to the east, and a west-end sun porch, (now enclosed), added in the 1920s. The interior of Poplar Hill is typical of the hall/parlor-plan vernacular structures with simple wainscoting, mantels, chair boards, and batten doors. Poplar Hill is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion C for significance in the area of architecture. The evolutionary nature of the house also adds to its architectural significance.

**Historical Background**

John Stott was born in Scotland, immigrated to this country with two brothers sometime prior to 1793 and settled in Isle of Wight County, Virginia. Among his first land acquisitions was a 90 acre tract at the headwaters of the Pagan River near the town of Smithfield (Isle of Wight County Deed Book 17, 151). In addition, Stott purchased 138 1/2 acres from Thomas Harmanson, heir of John Harmanson (Isle of Wight County Deed Book 17, 90; Isle of Wight County Fee Book for 1793, 34). At some point shortly thereafter, Stott built Poplar Hill on land first patented by Colonel Nathaniel Bacon in 1652 (King, Historical Notes, 465). A brick at the base of the west exterior chimney bears the date either 1793 or 1795 (King, Historic Isle of Wight, 81 and McCabe, personal communication). Since this west chimney is now part of a painted interior wall for an addition, the date brick is no longer identifiable. Stott located his home at the headwaters of the Pagan River not far from an existing mill and pond known as Wrenn's Mill and Wrenn's Pond (King, Historical Notes, 465). The mill site was an established one when purchased by Stott. The first mention of a mill at this location was in 1685 when Thomas Green bequeathed his wife "the mill I purchased of Colonel Nathaniel Bacon" (Isle of Wight County Will Book 2, 252).

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According to Stott's will, which was probated 4 July 1814, he had amassed enough property to leave his wife and descendants two James River plantations, approximately 700 acres, a house, horses, steers, sheep, barrels of corn, pounds of pork, a brandy still, the mill at Wrenn's Pond, furniture, tableware, slaves, and \$1,350 in cash (Isle of Wight County Will Book 11, 402). This inventory reflects the comfortable status of a middle-class small plantation owner. Such men comprised a significant portion of Virginia's population. The dwelling house erected by John Stott falls into the description of vernacular houses as espoused by Dell Upton in "Early Vernacular Architecture in Southeastern Virginia." Upton stated that vernacular houses were "whatever are the most common ones in an area" (Upton, 3). Several other contemporaneous houses in the vicinity, including the Joseph Jordan House and the Britt House, feature the same hall/parlor plan (Upton, 369, 373, 374, 375). Henry Glassie, in Folk Housing in Middle Virginia, calls this plan the Type 5 Tidewater House (p. 51).

Poplar Hill has the distinction of having remained in the same family continuously to the present day. John Stott, who died in 1814, left the property to his son, Thomas, who died within weeks of his father. Thomas bequeathed Poplar Hill to his brother, Samuel who married Martha Butts (Isle of Wight County Will Book 11, 404). Their son, William Alexander Stott, next inherited Poplar Hill (Isle of Wight County Will Book 18, 319, 320, 328, 342). At his death in 1884, his wife, Sarah Frances Ward Stott, and four children became the owners (Isle of Wight County Deed Book 47, 313). In 1893, Sarah Stott's estate was divided among her four daughters. Ownership of the property was passed among the sisters for the next several years (Isle of Wight County Will Book 37, 401). In 1928, Alice Grey Stott, one of the unmarried sisters, willed the farm to her nephew, William A. Alley (Isle of Wight County Will Book 35, 301). At his death in 1967, his sister, Elizabeth Ward Alley McCabe, inherited the property (Isle of Wight County Will Book 37, 448). Her son, Allen G. McCabe, became the latest owner in 1969 (Isle of Wight County Deed Book 197, 589).

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES

**Primary Sources**

Bartlett, Martha Ward McCabe, personal communication

McCabe, Allen G., Jr., personal communication

Isle of Wight County Deed Book 17

Isle of Wight County Deed Book 47

Isle of Wight County Deed Book 197

Isle of Wight County Will Book 2

Isle of Wight County Will Book 11

Isle of Wight County Will Book 18

Isle of Wight County Will Book 35

Isle of Wight County Will Book 37

Isle of Wight County Fee Book for 1793

**Secondary Sources**

Glassie, Henry, Folk Housing in Middle Virginia. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975.

King, Helen Haverty, Historic Isle of Wight. Norfolk, VA: H.H.King, 1983.

King, Helen Haverty, Historical Notes on Isle of Wight County, Virginia. Isle of Wight: Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors, 1993.

Lounsbury, Carl R., *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Upton, Dell, *Early Vernacular Architecture in Southeastern Virginia*. Ph. D. Dissertation, Brown University, 1979.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

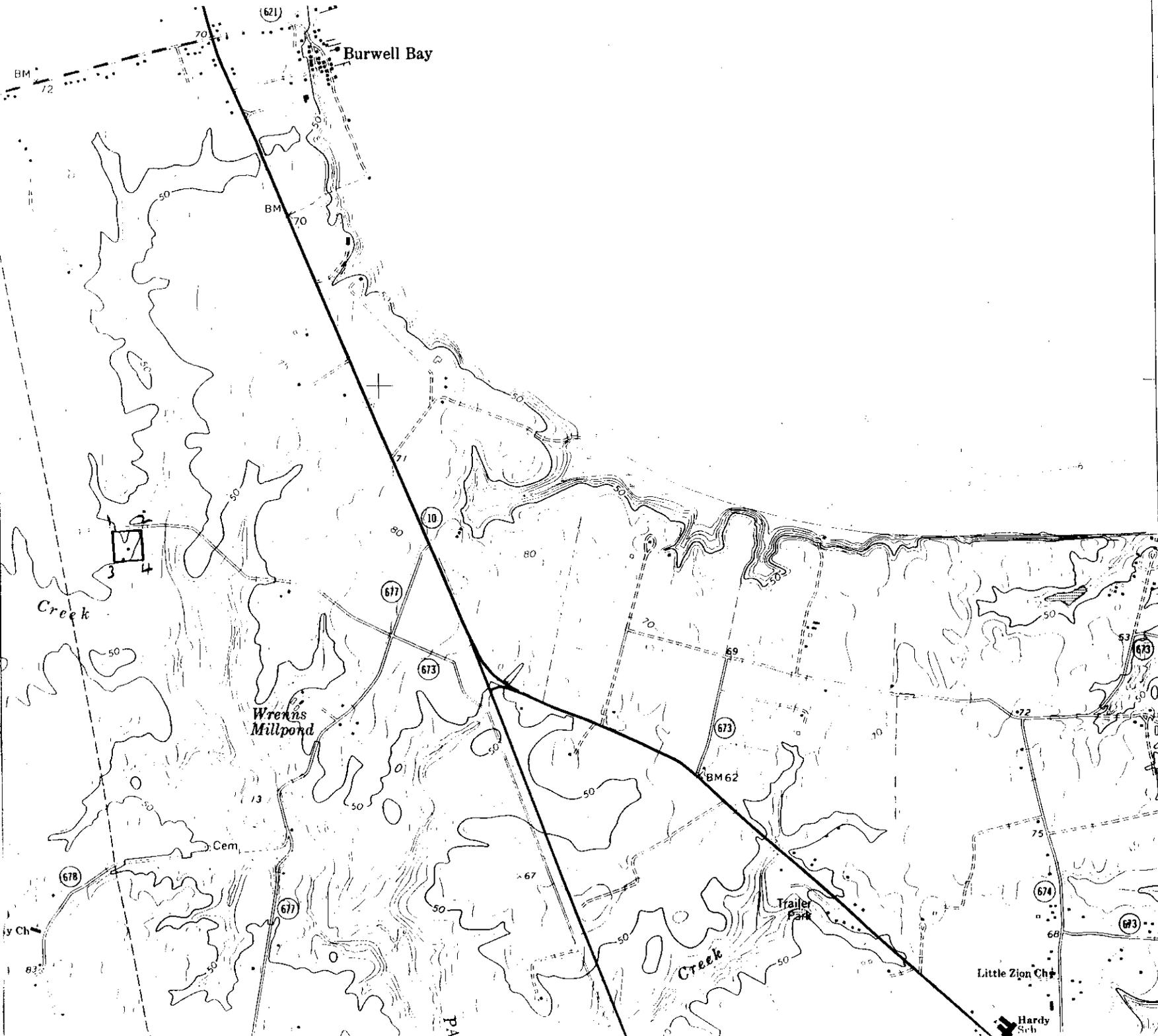
The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points:

1. 18/350425/4099835
2. 18/350560/4099860
3. 18/350435/4099700
4. 18/350570/4099725

The nominated property is located on the south side of State Route 673, 0.9 miles northwest from the intersection with State Route 677.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary of Poplar Hill includes the house, outbuildings, and sites of non-extant buildings, which sit on approximately six acres of open land. The six acres are bordered by State Route 673 (Purvis Lane), forest to the east, and open fields to the south and west. The described area has historically been part of Poplar Hill and currently maintains the historic integrity of its setting.



4102

4101

4100

4099

4098

SEACH 2.5 MI.

6 acres

- ① 18/350425  
4099835
- ② 18/350560  
4099860
- ③ 18/350435  
4099700
- ④ 18/350570  
4099725

center (house)  
18/350485/  
4099765

0.9 mile NW  
on Rt 673  
from X w/  
Rt 677

POPLAR HILL,  
ISLE OF WIGHT Co.

BACON'S CASTLE  
QUAD