

3061

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NOV 28 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Stagg Hall (preferred)
other names/site number Parnham-Padgett House; Spalding's Corner CH-13

2. Location

street & number West side of county route 469 (Chapel Point Road) not for publication
city, town Port Tobacco vicinity
state Maryland code MD county Charles code 017 zip code 20677

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 11-21-88
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. 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] Entered in the National Register 12/29/88

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

CH-13

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

domestic/single family

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

domestic/single family

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brickwalls Weatherboardroof Shingleother Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Stagg Hall, a one story frame house built on an east-west axis, stands adjacent to Port Tobacco's former town square, on the north side of "Commerce Street," and just west of the latter's junction with county route 469. A five-bay, gambrel-roofed structure with pedimented dormers, Stagg Hall has double-tiered end chimneys, and shiplapped siding. Built over a full cellar with walls of brick and stone construction, the house is of a one room deep plan consisting of an off-centered stair hall flanked by two rooms at both floor levels. All of the first floor rooms are embellished with paneled wainscoting and bold ceiling cornices. Other features include the nine-over-nine pane sash of the windows and paneled doors. The principal room features a fully paneled chimney wall with fluted pilasters flanking a fireplace with a molded surround and above the fireplace, a large panel formed by crosseted moldings applied over an even larger raised panel. The stair has a well executed balustrade of turned and fluted balusters, carved and fluted newels, and a molded rail. Extending from the east end of the house is a two-part frame wing rebuilt in the early 1750s. It is composed of a four-bay frame structure with a "T"-shaped central chimney, and is attached to the main block by a small hyphen.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
MarylandSection number 7 Page 1

General Description:

Stagg Hall, a one story frame house built on an east-west axis, stands adjacent to Port Tobacco's former town square, on the north side of "Commerce Street," and just west of the latter's junction with county route 469. Less than 20 feet from the west end of the house, but set slightly back from it, stands another historic building known as "Chimney House." A reconstructed 1819 courthouse, maintained as a museum, stands about 100 yards to the west.

Measuring 38'-10" by 19'-4", Stagg Hall is five bays in width on both side elevations below a gambrel roof with unusually steep lower slopes and flared eaves. On both principal elevations the door is positioned slightly off-center, with the two windows of the east half of the house spaced more widely apart than those at the opposite end. Above, on both sides, are three evenly spaced pedimented dormer windows. The first floor windows retain their original nine-over-nine pane sash, wide molded trim, and beveled and molded sills. The architraves of both doors repeat the profile of those of the windows. The boxed eave cornices are trimmed with double ogee crown and bed moldings, and all four exterior walls retain their early sheathing of wide, flush beaded boards. On the south front, an early sheathing of round end roof shingles remains preserved on the lower roof slope; the shingles of the upper roof, and both surfaces on the north side, are covered with corrugated metal roofing installed circa 1900. A full-length porch was added to the front of the house in the nineteenth century. It was removed earlier in this century, and both entrance doors are now fronted by brick stoops and steps.

The house stands on foundation walls enclosing a full, dirt-floored cellar. The foundations are of a mixture of quarried stone blocks and rubble for a distance of about 3-feet above the cellar floor, and English bond laid brick above that. The cellar, now one open area, is only accessible by an exterior entrance adjacent to the west end chimney. Additional light and ventilation is provided by small windows in the side walls. A series of beveled mortices on a central tie beam suggests that the cellar was originally partitioned into at least two areas by a frame wall.

At each end of the house stands a single exterior chimney of English bond, brick construction. Of a matching, double-tiered design, each has tiled weatherings and a boldly corbeled free-standing stack. An interesting detail of both is the manner in which the bricks forming the profile of the lower weatherings are set slightly forward of the surrounding masonry.

The interior room configuration consists of an off-centered stair hall flanked by two rooms at the first floor, and a hall, a small room at the front of the hall, and two bedchambers above.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
MarylandSection number 7 Page 2

All three first floor rooms retain their original paneled wainscoting, boxed and molded ceiling cornices, paneled doors with wrought hardware, door and window trim, and window sash. the largest of the first floor rooms is further embellished by a fully paneled chimney wall with a classical motif provided by fluted pilasters flanking a fireplace framed by a crossetted surround. Above the fireplace is a large crossetted panel fashioned from moldings applied over an even larger raised panel. A door at the left end of this wall was installed when the former detached kitchen was joined to the house. A built-in cupboard stands in the northwest corner of the same room. The upper arched doors of the cabinet are framed by molded pilasters supporting a molded and carved arch with a carved keystone. The absence of architectural elements that should have framed the lower doors, however, gives the overall design an incomplete appearance.

All of the woodwork in the principal room, including the flooring and window sash, was removed in 1932 when it was acquired by the Chicago Art Institute. It was returned and reinstalled in 1972. See also Section 8, Historic Context, page 4.

While the fireplace in the east room was apparently reduced in size in the nineteenth century, it was only by a few inches on each side. The fireplace in the west room, however, was initially substantially larger, having a much broader and higher arched opening according to evidence revealed when this room was recently replastered. It is assumed from the late-Federal design of its existing mantle that the opening was altered in the mid-1880s.

The stair is a particularly interesting feature of the first floor. Located on the west wall of the hall, it is of a closed string design that rises in a straight run to a series of winders fronting a narrow landing, and rises again in four steps to the rooms above. The paneled wainscoting of the hall continues along the inside wall of the stairwell to the landing. The balustrade, its most visually striking feature, is composed of balusters of a fairly sophisticated block, turned and fluted design. The newel and intermediate posts are octagonal in section, ornamented with flutes and lambs tongue carvings, and have uniquely executed knobs carved on the diagonal to repeat the angle of the molded railings. A first floor stair closet, enclosed by vertical boards, may be a later alteration.

The stair rises to a small passage fronted by a small room behind a partition wall of vertical boards. Now housing a modern bathroom, this space is probably a later though early alteration. It, the stair passage, and the two flanking bedchambers all retain their original doors with wood latches and wrought "H" hinges, door and window trim, and two-piece cornices and chairrails. In both bedchambers the recessed dormer spaces are fitted with

See Continuation Sheet 7/3

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
MarylandSection number 7 Page 3

window seats, each faced with a large fielded panel and with lids with locks and wrought "butterfly" hinges. A small paneled door in the north knee wall of the stair passage, and another below the dormer in the middle chamber, provide access to the eaves. Both are hung on wrought "H" hinges with foliated ends. The fireplace mantle in the west chamber has a dentiled shelf over a flush paneled frieze and dates from the eighteenth century, while that in the east chamber is a replacement whose design elements suggest a mid to late-nineteenth century date.

A noteworthy architectural detail of this floor level is that both bedchambers have flat ceilings, rather than the partially sloped ceilings usually found in one story gable and gambrel-roofed houses in this area. Interestingly, the section of ceiling directly over the dormered windows of these rooms, as well as the middle chamber, slant upward by several inches to compensate for the fact that the top of the sash frames extend slightly above the ceiling plane.

Considering the extent of the building's original interior and exterior fabric, the alteration/modifications that have occurred during its history are of a relatively minor nature. The only other changes in addition to those already discussed was the installation of plumbing, wiring and heat in the early 1950s and, more recently, the replacement of the window sash in the upper rooms.

The east wing, as briefly discussed in the Summary Description, was rebuilt in the early 1950s on the same foundations of its predecessor. A two-part frame structure, whose main section sits slightly forward of the main part of the house, the earlier building began as a detached kitchen, possibly the same one known to have been in existence in 1748. This was enlarged by the addition of a second room to its west end, creating a four bay front elevation with two windows and and two doors. The addition was provided with a fireplace built against the back wall of the kitchen chimney, resulting in a "T"-shaped central stack. The building, still detached, was again enlarged in the nineteenth century by a shed addition across its rear wall. Other shed attachments were subsequently built against its east end. In HABS photographs of the house taken in the 1930s the dependency appears to be in an advanced state of disrepair. By 1950 it was near collapse. Consequently, all but its original chimney and fireplace were replaced. With only minor modifications having been made, and the joining of it to the house by a small, one bay hyphen, the rebuilt structure is a reasonably accurate and historically sympathetic replication of the original.

According to a 1748 inventory there were a number of buildings standing on the property at that time. In addition to the house and detached kitchen, there was a store, at least two outbuildings, and servants quarters. By 1758

See Continuation Sheet 7/4

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 4

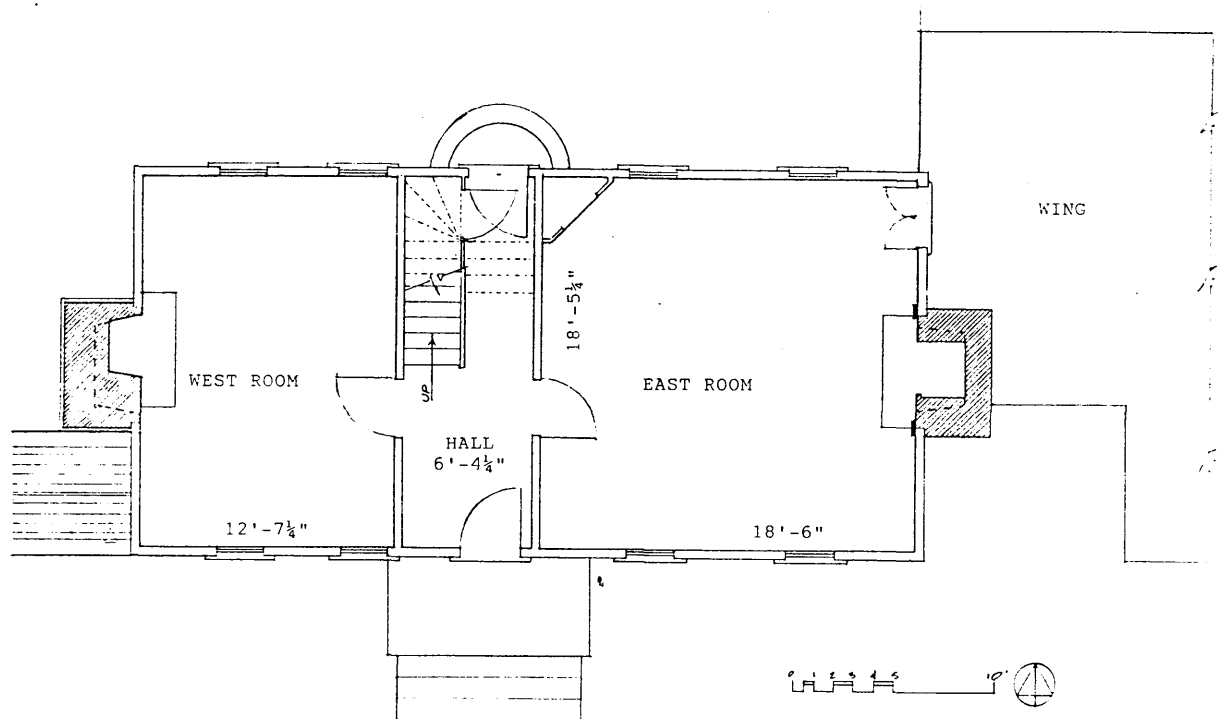
a "shop" and other buildings had been added. In 1798 there were eight buildings standing on the lot including the house. Descriptions recorded in the mid-1800s mention a store, a "bath house," and a granary with a "printing office" above standing between the house and the road fronting the property. Other than the house and kitchen, however, non of these buildings remain although there approximate sites are known. No archeological investigation has been made of these sites.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 5



Stagg Hall. First floor plan. Kitchen not shown. Rivoire, 1987.

See Continuation Sheet 7/6

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 6



Stagg Hall. South front. From a preliminary study drawing. Kitchen wing not shown.
Rivoire, 1987.

See Continuation Sheet 7/7

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 7



Stagg Hall. Section drawing through east end of house.

Cellar not detailed. Rivoire, 1987.

See Continuation Sheet 7/8

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 8



Stagg Hall. View of kitchen wing from northeast. Ca. 1930s.
HABS. Johnson photograph.

See Continuation Sheet 7/9

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 9



Stagg Hall. South front. Ca. 1930s. HABS photograph.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 10



Stagg Hall. View of kitchen wing from southeast. Ca. 1930s.
HABS photograph.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1740

1740

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Built circa 1740 for John Parnham, a prosperous Port Tobacco merchant, Stagg Hall is one of a remarkably small and steadily diminishing number of Charles County buildings dating from the first half of the eighteenth century. More importantly, its historic architectural integrity is unmatched by any other pre-Revolutionary structure recorded in this section of lower Southern Maryland. Of additional significance is the fact that its center hall two-room plan and gambrel roof predate by as much as a quarter-century or more other representations of their form in this locality. Equally notable aspects of its architecture include the preservation of an impressive amount of its eighteenth century exterior finishes, and the quality and extent of its original interior woodwork. Of the latter, its finely crafted stair, the paneling and cupboard of its principal first floor room, and the treatment of the upper chambers are of particular interest. Overall, it is an exceptional building of inestimable value to the study and interpretation of domestic architectural development in this region during the colonial period.

See continuation sheet for
HISTORIC CONTEXT and MARYLAND
COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Charles County Courthouse, La Plata: Land and probate records.

Hall of Records, Annapolis: 1798 tax assessments, Charles County.

Edward C. Pappenfuse, et al, A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979, 1985). Vols. 1 and 2.

Margaret Brown Klapthor, History of Charles County, Maryland, 1658-1958, (La Plata, Maryland: 1958).

Southern Maryland Studies Center, Charles County Community College, La Plata, Maryland. John M. Wearmouth Collection: Research material and related data on Port Tobacco history.

See continuation sheet

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 # MD 9 - Porto
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Specify repository:
Courthouse; Community College Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Three-quarters of an acre
USGS Quad: Port Tobacco, Maryland

UTM References

A

1	8	8	2	3	8	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing	

C

Zone		Easting				Northing	

B

Zone		Easting				Northing	

D

Zone		Easting				Northing	

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

As taken from the last recorded deed of conveyance, Charles County Land Records, Liber 91, folio 202: "Spalding's Corner," bounded on the south by a gravel county road (Commerce Street), on the west by the town square and the property of Jerry Volman ("Chimney House"), on the north by the Volman property and on the east by the property of Frank Wade, Jr. (No metes and bounds description available.)

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the house and the sites of associated buildings and features. It has remained unaltered throughout the history of the house, and has always been solely identified with it.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Richard Rivoire
organization _____ date March, 1988
street & number Post Office Box 132 telephone (301) 932-1000
city or town La Plata state Maryland zip code 20646

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 8 Page 1

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Rural Agrarian Intensification
A.D. 1680-1815

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture/Landscape Architecture/
Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Unknown

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

Known Design Source: Unknown

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Until 1903 Stagg Hall was owned by a succession of Charles County's most prominent merchant families--many of whom are believed to have maintained it as a town residence while their principal dwellings were located on outlying plantations--and was among the first substantial dwellings constructed in Port Tobacco following its establishment in 1727 as the county's seat of government and chief naval point of entry. Even in 1798, when the town comprised of 80 or more private homes and numerous commercial and public buildings, it was accorded the fourth highest valuation of all properties assessed in Port Tobacco that year. In 1895 the county seat was relocated to La Plata, and over the next several decades the town all but disappeared. Stagg Hall is unequivocally the most important of the four buildings remaining from that period when Port Tobacco was central to the economic, political and social life of this region.

Comprehensive, site-specific studies of Charles County's earliest standing structures carried out over the past decade have revealed that there are actually

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
MarylandSection number 8 Page 2

fewer than a dozen buildings dating before the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

The county's oldest known building for which a construction date has been firmly established is Sarum (NR), built in 1717.¹ While others are traditionally said to be earlier, their histories and architecture indicate otherwise. Most, in fact, were built during the second quarter of the century. With but one exception these few early surviving examples of local domestic architecture have all experienced considerable physical change; in many only fragments of the original building remain preserved. Stagg Hall is the only one of this elite group whose original architecture remains in a near perfect state of preservation.²

Further underscoring Stagg Hall's uniqueness is the fact that it is the earliest known example of a two room-center hall plan in this part of Southern Maryland. All other recorded representations of this spatial configuration date after about 1770. It is also Charles County's oldest gambrel-roofed dwelling, and the only example of a one room deep gambrel-roofed house whose historic architectural integrity remains intact.³ Its wealth of original interior and exterior finishes, and their overall degree of refinement when compared to that of other early buildings, is an especially significant feature.

In the context of Port Tobacco it is of no less importance. Not only was it one of the first substantial private houses built in the town following its designation as the county seat, and undoubtedly set a standard for other houses that followed, but has a long history of ownership by many of its most prosperous citizens. That it received the fourth highest valuation of those "Port Tobacco Town" properties listed in the county tax assessments of 1798 is a fair indication of its continued stature in the community throughout the eighteenth century. The property remained in combined domestic and commercial use until this century. Today, it is one of only four early buildings remaining within the incorporated town limits.

Stagg Hall's history is obviously integral with that of Port Tobacco, one of Maryland's most important eighteenth century port towns that for almost 200 years was central to the economic, political and social life of this region. Now principally a vast archeological site, Port Tobacco is eminently qualified for listing in the National Register; however, while several rather unorganized attempts have been made toward that end over the past fifteen years, they have been unsuccessful for a variety of reasons.

It is clear that Stagg Hall's significance extends far beyond its historical association with Port Tobacco, justifying individual recognition by its separate listing in the National Register. It is a house whose contributions toward enhancing our knowledge of vernacular architectural development in this

See Continuation Sheet 8/3

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
MarylandSection number 8 Page 3

region are beyond measurement. It is an altogether unique and wholly irreplaceable cultural artifact, and one of Charles County's true architectural landmarks.

NOTES:

1. Sarum's construction date was established by Dendrochronology. The 1717 house was later enveloped by a series of major additions, and only the original framework remains.
2. Circa 1725 Pryors Cleive was comparable if not superior to Stagg Hall in its retention of its original interior woodwork and overall architectural integrity, but has been dismantled and is now in storage. Maiden Point, a five-room brick house with clipped gables, has similar interior woodwork, but the integrity of its original finishes has been diminished by modern renovations and alterations.
3. Habre de Venture, owned by the National Park Service, is the only other example of a two room-center hall house with a gambrel roof in the county. Built in the 1770s, it was completely gutted by a fire that destroyed all of its original finishes and roof. Locust Grove (Beech Neck; NR), built about the same time as Habre de Venture, was a one room gambrel-roofed dwelling, but its roof was later altered and other changes obliterated its original architectural design.

PROPERTY HISTORY:

Port Tobacco was designated the county's new seat of government and principal shipping port by an Act of Assembly in 1727. In 1729, following construction of a courthouse and other public buildings, 60 acres were surveyed and divided into 100 lots, "with convenient streets and lanes." The lots were then offered for public sale. Lot #48, adjacent to the town square, was purchased by John Parnham, a merchant who maintained a dwelling and store in Newport in the southeast area of the county.¹

Parnham died at Newport in 1738 and, together with the dwelling plantation and other property, bequeathed his unimproved lot in Port Tobacco (then known as "Chandlers Town") to his eldest son, John. At the time of his father's death John was living on a tract of land about 2 miles north of Port

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
MarylandSection number 8 Page 4

Tobacco called Barbadoes. Already established as a successful merchant, John Parnham moved to Port Tobacco shortly afterward where, in about 1740, he built the house known today as Stagg Hall.

John Parnham, Jr. died intestate in 1747, married but childless. An inventory of his estate filed in 1748 gives a detailed description of the contents of the house and store, the kitchen, two "necessaries" and other buildings. The itemized listing of personalty found in the house (including a collection of "effigies of the British Monarchy") indicate that it was a very elegantly furnished home.³

In 1748 Parnham's widow conveyed her dower rights in the property to her late husband's brother, Dr. Francis Parnham, who then took up residence in the house and practiced medicine from that location. Francis died intestate in 1757, leaving as heirs his widow, Mary, and a son John, then about 10 years old. Mary soon afterward married a local merchant by the name of Philip Briscoe. It appears likely that the Briscoes resided in the house until Mary's son attained legal age and could claim the estate left by his father.⁴

John Parnham, the son of Dr. Francis Parnham, studied medicine and graduated from the University of Edinburg, Scotland, in 1772. A legislator who held numerous influential public offices between 1774 and his death in 1813, he was also a chief surgeon of Smallwood's Regiment during the Revolution and, in 1790, a founder of the Medical and Chirurgical Society of Maryland.⁵

It is possible that Parnham lived at Stagg hall following his return to Maryland in about 1773, but in 1778 he sold the property to Zephaniah Turner and moved to his family's plantation at Newport.⁶

Turner, a merchant and one of Parnham's fellow legislators, also maintained a fairly high public profile, serving as treasurer of the Council of Safety, member of the Constitutional Ratification Committee, Commissioner of the Tax, and Maryland Senate Elector. Two years after his purchase of the property Turner acquired a contiguous lot from Charles Cooper, but immediately sold both to another merchant, Thomas H. Ridgate. In 1785 Ridgate sold this and other Port Tobacco properties he owned to Robert Fergusson.⁷

Fergusson, who later served as Chief Judge of the county's Orphan's Court and lived at Rozier's Refuge (Mulberry Grove) southeast of town, immigrated to Maryland from Scotland sometime in the early 1760s and had established himself as a successful merchant in Montgomery and Prince George's counties before moving to Charles County in about 1780. By 1790 he was conducting business in Port Tobacco with two other merchants under the trade name "Henderson, Fergusson and Gibson." It is likely that Fergusson occupied the former Parnham home between the time of its purchase and 1802, when he is

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetStagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
MarylandSection number 8 Page 5

believed to have moved to Rozier's Refuge. It is presumed that the house was later leased to tenants, or lived in by one of many relatives Fergusson brought from Scotland.⁸

In 1816 Robert Fergusson's heirs sold the house to Basil Spalding for \$3,750. Spalding, whose business investments in Port Tobacco dated back to 1797, and a very wealthy man by local standards, probably used Stagg Hall as his town residence, while Oak Grove (NR), about four miles away, remained the family's principal home.⁹

On Basil's death in 1828 his vast real estate holdings in the county were jointly inherited by his three sons. Ten years later the two surviving heirs divided the properties, and ownership of the house and lot in Port Tobacco passed to Basil Richard Spalding.¹⁰

By 1840 Basil Richard Spalding was living in Baltimore, where he had a successful mercantile establishment. His considerable business interests in the county were handled by his friend and attorney, Walter H.J. Mitchell of Linden (NR). Receipts in a private collection record Mitchell's payment of \$27.87 to Joseph Hutton in 1841 for painting and making minor repairs to Spalding's store and dwelling in Port Tobacco. The following year Robert Monacy received \$3.75 for "work done in Port Tobacco on the bath house, pailing and lot in general for Basil Richard Spalding." It was during Spalding's ownership that the house and adjacent lots were combined in one parcel and named "Spalding's Square."¹¹

In 1852 Spalding sold the entire parcel to Elija Day for \$2,525. In 1859 Day divided the property and conveyed the lot on which the house stood and the land between it and the road leading to the courthouse to Samuel Padgett for \$1,800. An 1860 transfer between members of the Padgett family describes the land Samuel bought from Day as two lots known as "Spalding's Corner," containing a storehouse and a granary on one and a dwelling, kitchen and stable on the other. In 1867 and 1872 the granary, which stood by the road to the courthouse, contained a "printing office" on its upper floor level. The property remained in the Padgett family until 1903 when it was sold to Mary L. Barbour, the grandmother of its present owner.¹²

In 1932 the woodwork of the principal first floor room was sold to the Chicago Art Institute. The museum used the paneling to recreate a "colonial tap room," then later disassembled it and placed it in storage. The woodwork was purchased from the museum in 1972 and reinstalled in its original setting.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Stagg Hall CH-13
Charles County
Maryland

Section number 8 Page 6

NOTES:

(Unless noted, all records on file at the Charles County Courthouse,
La Plata, Maryland.)

1. Deeds: M#2, p. 179.
2. Wills: AC#4, p. 89.
3. Inventories: #36, p. 9.
4. Deeds: Z#2, p. 264; Inventories: #65, p. 79.
5. Pappenfuse, et al, Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, Vol. II, p. 365.
6. Deeds: V#3, p. 90.
7. Pappenfuse: Vol. II, p. 884. Deeds: V#3, p. 270; Z#3, p. 136.
8. "J. Richard Rivoire Collection," research data on Mulberry Grove and Robert Fergusson, Southern Maryland Studies Center, Charles County Community College, La Plata.
9. Deeds: RHM#1, p. 399.
10. ibid, IB#24, pp. 321-325.
11. Author's collection. Deeds: RHM#1, p. 399.
12. Deeds: JHC#1, p. 149, 347; GAH#1, p. 357; GAH#3, p. 527; BGS#13, p. 496.