Form No 10-300 (Rev 10-74) MAGI # 0121402328 AL-II-140 25

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Breakneck Road Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN — Flintstone — X VICINITY OF — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

STATE — Maryland — CODE 24 — COUNTY — Allegany — CODE 001 — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 6th

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| X DISTRICT | PUBLIC | X OCCUPIED | X AGRICULTURE | MUSEUM |
| BUILDING(S) | X PRIVATE | UNOCCUPIED | COMMERCIAL | PARK |
| STRUCTURE | BOTH | WORK IN PROGRESS | EDUCATIONAL | X PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | ENTERTAINMENT | RELIGIOUS |
| OBJECT | IN PROCESS | YES: RESTRICTED | GOVERNMENT | SCIENTIFIC |
| | BEING CONSIDERED | YES: UNRESTRICTED | INDUSTRIAL | TRANSPORTATION |
| | | X NO | MILITARY | OTHER: |

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Various Private Owners

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN — Flintstone — X VICINITY OF — STATE Maryland

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. — Allegany County Courthouse
Land Records of Allegany County

STREET & NUMBER — Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN — Cumberland — STATE Maryland

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Allegany County Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS — Maryland Historical Trust — FEDERAL X STATE COUNTY LOCAL

CITY, TOWN — Annapolis — STATE Maryland

## DESCRIPTION

AL II-A-140

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---|---|---|
| X EXCELLENT | X DETERIORATED | UNALTERED | X ORIGINAL SITE |
| X GOOD | RUINS | ALTERED | MOVED DATE |
| FAIR | UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Breakneck Road Valley Historic District is a collection of farms and parcels of considerable age of development, settled and maintained by a tightly knit collection of families which have held title to the land since the time of its settlement. The relatively low-lying land of the valley floor (900' - 1300') on which most cultivation and development exists, rests between the parallel ridges of Warrior Mountain on the east, and Bush Ridge and Martin Mountain on the west. Part of Warrior Mountain also encloses the valley on the southeast. The lowlands, bottomlands and floodplain extend northeastward to and beyond the Mason-Dixon line. The district proper may be roughly enclosed by a parallelogram with its long axis running from southwest to northeast.

The valley land is rolling and green with few exposed geological features, although numerous sizeable caves exist in the area. The upper slopes are heavily wooded, and views from the ridges are expansive and spectacular. From the top of Breakneck Road on the western boundary, one's view encompasses the entire district.

Within the lowlands, views are terminated by the various knolls and knobs which populate the valley floor, or are opened through saddles between them. Inasmuch as houses were built principally on high ground, most have wide views of adjacent farms. The network of roads which ties the valley together generally follows the watershed. Breakneck, Dickerson, Williams and Murley Branch Roads lie in natural troughs, cutting across contours. Only the northern portion of Wilson Road (above its junctions with Breakneck) follows the contours, in this case roughly parallel to the ridge of Martin's Mountain. Tertiary roads used as access to interior farms and farmlands also follow paths watershed.

The well defined image of the valley today is provided as much by its architecture as by its landscape. The two are intimately related, the purpose of the valley being almost exclusively agricultural. Variations on the agricultural theme, wander no further than hunting in the local forests, and only three sites are non-agricultural in the strict sense, a church and two small non-functioning schoolhouses. All domestic architecture is (or has been until recently) directly connected to a specific farm. All non-domestic structures, saving the above four, are related to farm services: barns, spring houses, smoke houses, slave cabins and minor structures like corn cribs and paddock

See Continuation Sheet 1.

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Breakneck Road Historic District
Allegany County
CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

The economy of the valley is sound, but the environment has not been subject to the outward signs of recent success visible in other communities (although various changes through time in the older structures doubtless reflect a rise in prosperity in earlier times). Most ancilliary structures have been maintained and used, in some cases, for more than a century.

Domestic architecture constitutes the single most salient feature of the valley, after the almost overwhelming greenery of the hills and farms in summer. There is a correspondence in plan among the houses which is suggestive of a common attitude toward farm life and approach to building, but there are no genuine representatives of any particular style. Instead, one finds a local vernacular which depends for its forms upon a single pool of labor, information and facilities. Construction techniques, which vary according to time more than to means and materials, are probably the best divisions by which to group and understand the houses of the valley.

As with most frontier areas, the first mode of construction in the valley was the simple log building. The very earliest no longer remain, and there are no large buildings in which the logs are still exposed. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century log houses which remain have all been swallowed up in frame accretions and wood and aluminum siding. There are a few outbuildings whose chinked walls and notched joints are still visible.

The early to middle nineteenth century is represented by two brick house, one stone house, and numerous frame structures. The latter have the present appearance of the later balloon frame houses, but are mostly built of heavy timbers with hand-pegged mortise and tennon joints and brick nogging. These are covered with locally milled siding.

Methods of heavy timber framing may be observed more directly in the exposed internal structure of many of the local barns.

In one anomalous house from this period, the structure depends entirely upon wide verticle boards secured at only the roof and foundation, with the usual milled siding exterior. The later nineteenth century and early twentieth century houses are all balloon frame.

As the houses appear today, they share certain details which seem not to relate directly to the period of construction. Roofs are generally of metal for houses barns and out buildings, of two types: the standing seam metal roof, painted red, or a roof covered with horizontal strips of embossed metal, of about a shingle's width, painted silver. The stamping of the latter is in a pattern which makes the whole resemble fish-scale shingles. The siding of the timber houses is either flush-boards or novelty siding, channeled along the upper exposed edge. This siding was probably milled locally at one or another of the mills operated by the farms.

See Continuation Sheet 2.

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The foundations of the houses are of slate laid up in coarsed rubble, in a very high quality of masonry. A few houses retain exterior chimneys which are of a piece with these foundations, but most have been removed for brick or concrete block furnace flues.

There is only one stone structure of any size within the district, the Tewell house. The oldest portion is the southern, of two bays and two storeys, entrance in the south bay, with a splayed flat arched lintel on the first storey window. To the north is an addition, not as long as the original, with a first storey of limestone and an upper storey of log, now covered with aluminum siding. There is a recent one-storey addition at the south end, with a garage in the foundation. The gable roof is continuous over both two storey sections and is covered in standing seam metal. There are two small square windows in the gables. The stone chimney was once an exterior feature of the north wall, and is now an interior chimney by virtue of the first addition. The masonry of the structure is the excellent coursed rubble of the area, with large dressed stones at the quoins.

The brick Patterson and Fletcher houses may be considered a pair, being morphologically similar and of comparable date and degree of pretention. Their principal facades are nearly identical, and during the restoration of the Patterson house, some elements of the Fletcher house (e.g. exterior shutters) were used.

The entrance elevation of each of these brick houses is two storeys high and five bays long (the central bay being separated from those adjacent by an extra width of wall) under a gable roof with ridge parallel to the facade. The central entrance has a glazed eight-pane door, with side lights and transom of small panes, a typical feature of many valley houses. The north end-walls are blank except for small square windows under the gables, two at Fletcher and one at Patterson. The roof of the Patterson House overhangs at the gable ends, with cornice returns, that of the Fletcher ends at the wall surface and has short eaves. Both have standing seam metal roofs.

The houses differ principally in their wings. Both are set at right angles to the main block, originally truncated along the north wall to make an asymmetrically gabled end. The double gallery porch along this side has been enclosed, in the manner of a frame addition, regularizing the gable end. The Patterson wing is more complex and elaborate. It is wider, has two widely spaced bays on the free end, and a hipped roof, the ridge of which is higher than that of the main block creating a protrusion on the roof of the latter which is coplanar with the facade slope. Owing to the slope of the site, the stone basement of the wing appears as an additional storey. The angle created by the junction of the two sections is entirely faced with a double wooden gallery porch which follows the angle. This remains open. On the south side the wing is of three regularly spaced bays, and the gable end of the main block has two. A one storey porch runs along the main floor of the wing, and the bay nearest the original main block has been given an entrance.

See Continuation Sheet 3

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The plan of the interior includes a formal entry hall at this bay, a fundamental change in the orientation of the house. The Patterson house is particularly noteworthy for the meticulous restoration work undertaken by the present owners.

The Stickley, Summerfield Hinkle and B.M. Hinkle houses are another similar group, the latter two being quite near each other and very likely using the same milling facilities and perhaps some of the same labor. Summerfield Hinkle sets the standard for the other frame and quasi-frame houses in the valley, being the most elaborate and obviously "designed" among them. The two storey house is composed of two sections, a main block and a wing perpendicular to it and set to one side of axis. The principle facade is composed of three widely spaced bays under a gable roof, ridge parallel to the facade. Over the central bay is a gabled wall dormer, giving three identical gables to the elevations of the main block. Along the first storey, only the entrance is coplanar with the wall above, the flanks being brough forward in three sided bows, one window to a side, the central being in line with the second storey window above it. Between these bows there is a small entrance porch, projecting further, with turned posts, jigsaw balusters and bargeboards in a lacy pattern. The whole confection is roofed as a piece, hipped to the wall of the second storey. The gable ends of the house are of single bays. All gables have cornice returns, jigsaw work at the apex of the gables which tapers outward along the eaves, and fretwork roundel ventilators of six points. The wing is two very wide bays long, one bay wide under a gable roof. The windows of the house are 1/1, enframed in modestly greek-revival aedicules with shallow pediments and scrollwork relief under the pediment mouldings. The entire house rests on a very fine stone foundation of coursed rubble, and is in excellent repair.

The Luther Mackelfish or Stickley house, is a similar structure, without any of the major features of the Summerfield Hinkle first storey or the gable-end jigsaw work. The wall of the wing is continuous with that of the east gable end and has a shed porch along its first storey with an entrance (the main entrance is on the facade) between its two bays, just north of center. Ventilators, window frames, and cornice returns are as at Summerfield Hinkle.

The Browning and Liller frame farm houses are two more frame houses in the configuration of block and wing. The wing of the Liller house is very wide, however, and its nature is further obscured by the addition of a frame porch and a second wing perpendicular to it (of a later date). The Browning house has a double gallery porch in the angle formed by the wing similar to that of the Fletcher house, and likewise enclosed along the wing.

See Continuation Sheet 4

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The Moyer House, as it currently appears, is also similar to the Summerfield Hinkle house, although the original structure beneath the main block is a two-storey log house. The facade retains the marks of a now removed hipped roof porch. The wall is now planar, with central entrance. The one-bay gable ends are very wide, with cornice returns and ventilators. The wing wall is continuous with the west gable wall, as at the Stickley house, with two bays crammed toward the north end of the wall and an entrance with a small hipped roof porch south of them. There are no elaborate window frames.

The B. M. Hinkle house is a simple version of the Summerfield Hinkle house, a two-storey, three-bay block with a gable roof, ridge parallel to the facade. Sash is 2/2, in contrast to the single pane sash of the Summerfield Hinkle house, which was more prestigious at the time of construction. The small front porch is almost a duplicate of Summerfield's, the only difference being in the use of simple chamfered roof supports. The house rests on one of the ubiquitous stone foundations.

Like the Moyer house, the other log houses of the valley have the superficial appearance of frame houses. Of this group only the Messick house fits into the morphological pattern of block and wings. The two-storey, three-bay main block of the house is the original "log mansion", now clapboarded (some heavy timber framing is visible in the basement). The north gable wall has a strikingly massive stone (slate) chimney, with one window of the second storey west of it. The three-bay hipped roof entrance porch on the east side is again similar to the Summerfield Hinkle porch, with a repeat of the jigsaw balusters. The two-bay long wing has a small shed-porch addition on the first storey north wall.

The Martin Gordon house is morphologically similar to the other frame houses in the valley, being of the usual configuration of main block (three bays and two storeys) and wing (two bays long) with gable roofs meeting at right angles. There is a two-storey porch which follows the angle of the two sections, as at the Patterson House. The construction technique, however, is unusual for this area of Western Maryland, if not for the entire region. The house has no framing as such but is supported by wide verticle boards running the height of the house from basement to attic. The exterior is covered with conventional siding, and there are reportedly a few studs behind the verticle boards. Entrance to the house is through a door with transom and sidelights, again of the type found at the Patterson and Fletcher houses. At the entrance is a small porch with half-hipped roof supported on turned balusters. Among the outbuildings on the property is a summer kitchen of considerable age in fine condition, with it original fieldstone hearth and chimney.

A number of the other pre-balloon frame houses, the Heavner and Earl Stonestreet houses, for example, are also built in in unusual manner. The spaces in the notched and pegged frames were filled in with brick, the exterior sided and the interior covered with lath and plaster. The brick "nogging" was most likely done for insulation.

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The House farm house presents another configuration, a long one-storey house with an attic made usable by two gabled roof dormers, the only such in the valley. A porch runs along the front, with jigsaw balusters, the forward slope of the main roof brought forward to shelter it. The dormers are set partly into this portion of the roof, which was apparently part of the late nineteenth century renovation which covered the logs with siding. There is a shed addition at the rear.

The Robinette house is another linear house, five-bays long and two-storeys tall. The original 18' x 18' log house exists under the aluminum siding at the north end. There is a small shed porch addition along the west wall at the south end, and a two-storey porch under the gable roof of the main house, set within the block. There is a hipped roof entrance porch on the east wall, with turned baluster railings.

The final linear house is the Gay Stonestreet place, consisting of two sections along a central axis, both of two bays and two storeys. The roof of the longer frame section is stepped down from that of the taller and wider original log house, the massive stone chimney of the latter rising out of the roof of the addition, at its ridge. The effect is of a telescope. Three sides of the first storey are surrounded by a promenade porch which defines its own regular rectangular perimeter. The porch roof (sloping toward the house on all three sides) is supported on simple posts. The end of the porch is enclosed by an extension of the house wall. Reportedly, the present owner required a chain saw to cut a passage between the two sections. Two houses in the valley beside the Summerfield Hinkle house display a regularity and an attempt at "style" which sets them slightly apart from the organic accretive, pragmatic dwellings of the rest of the area. They are the Willison house and the Shipley house, both early twentieth century frame houses. Both are large cubic blocks of two storeys with an attic. The Willison house has a large gable roof, ridge perpendicular to the facade. The house is of three widely spaced bays, the central of the second and attic storeys having double windows 1/1 double hung sash. The entrance, reached via a capatious porch which wraps around the northeast corner of the house, is central, with a transom. Simple doric columns support the porch roof, with railings of turned balusters. The house rests on a carefully terraced hill site, provided with steps which lead to the porch.

The Shipley house has a hipped roof with a short ridge parallel to the entrance facade with triple window hipped dormers on all four slopes. The facade is divided between two separate entrance doors (double house) into halves of two bays each. First storey windows on this side are very wide, all others are conventionally proportioned. The west and east facades are of four and three bays respectively. On the west, the three southern bays are widely but regularly spaced, the fourth bay cramped along the north end. The central bay of the east elevation is placed south of axis. The first storey window in this bay is a single diamond pane. There is a shed porch on doric columns along the facade. The main block and wing of the Earl Stonestreet house share common walls, i.e. are contained within a simple rectangular plan and would appear to be a

See Continuation Sheet 6

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single block if its roofs were not perpendicular. The ridges of the two roofs are perpendicular. The eaves of the wing roof are extended horizontally across the gable ends of the main block, enclosing a pediment. The facade of the two-storey house is three-bays wide, with sidelighted and transomed entrance on the south end. Windows are 6/6 double hung sash with pegged frames and many "wavy" panes. The two-storey porch along the west elevation, recessed within the wall, has been enclosed along the second storey with a gallery of nine 6/6 windows in three sets. There is a hipped roof porch along the rear, with two entrance doors. The interior has most of its original hardware and fittings, and built in cupboards. The property retains its original chinked log smokehouse and brick slave quarters, as well as its old mortised and tennoned log barn. The Greenmeadow cemetery is on the property as well as a slave buriel ground. The Luther Mackelfish house is the one farmhouse in the valley that looks like it might be a loghouse in disguise but is actually of frame construction. Another one storey, long gable roof house, ridge on the long axis, it is several irregularly spaced and fenestrated bays long, with a promenade porch sheltered by an extension of the facade slope of the roof, supported on simple posts. The gable ends are blank.

The Long house is a frame dwelling of three sections (apparently built at different times) arranged more or less telescopically, the largest at the northwest end, the smallest at the southeast along the long axis. The jogs of the walls are most extreme on the southwest. The northeast wall is nearly planar. The house is of two storeys, with a standing seam metal roof which is hipped at the southeast end and gabled at the northwest. There is a porch around three sides of the front of the building, its roof sloping toward the house on all three sides, echoing the hip of the main roof above. The porch is enclosed along the flanks. On the open end, the roof is supported by simple posts, embellished with jigsaw brackets.

The little church near Rush, generally known as the Murley Branch Methodist Church, is one of the three non-agricultural buildings in the valley, although intimately connected to the farm community. It is a one-storey gable-roofed frame structure of rectangular plan, with a small entrance box projecting on the front. The ridge of the roof is on the long axis of the building. The windows of the four bays of the east and west elevations are pointed arched with double hung sash, the upper of which is divided into five panes with two pointed arched muntins. The frames have small capitals at the springing of the arches and the arches themselves are lined with a narrow moulding. The transom of the paneled double door entrance is a three-paned pointed arch, likewise enframed. The gable of the entrance has a jigsaw bargeboard, tapered outward along the eaves, and a small hex-ventilator. Beneath this is a small shed awning on two brackets, sheltering the doors. The gable of the main roof on the facade is treated with a post and beam brace with jigsaw bargeboards, in the manner of the stick-style. Excellent coursed rubble provides the foundation. The roof is covered with corrugated metal.

See Continuation Sheet 7

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Adjacent to the church is the Old Rush School house, a.k.a. the Murley Branch School. It is a one-room, gabled-frame structure, four-bays long, with a central entrance on the three-bay east gable end. There are ventilators in the gables, a transom over the door and much original hardware. The windows are all either boarded, or sealed with pairs of four panel shutters.

There is another one-room schoolhouse, located on the Patterson property, now converted for use as an interior decorator's studio. Also a frame building, it is three-bays long with 6/6 windows, a gabled vestibule which projects from the east gable end, and a small bell-cupola with gabled roof on the main roof near the east end. The windows are shuttered and the entrance door has a transom. The structure has been moved from Spring Gap, Maryland about twelve (12) miles northeast, but a 1927 postal zone map places a school house in that vicinity (the Jamison School) of which there is now no trace.

Dependencies and outbuildings contribute strongly to the character of the district and of course greatly outnumber the major structures. Among these barns are the most prominent. The heavy timber barns at the Earl Stonestreet, Patterson, Heavner and Gay Stonestreet farms are noteworthy, and the Wilson and Fletcher barns, with wide board siding set in chevrons on the elevations, are especially handsome. There are at least two genuine slave cabins in the district, that at the Earl Stonestreet (brick, one room and attic) and the Browning farm (timber construction). The smoke house of the Earl Stonestreet farm and the summer kitchen on the Martin Gordon farm are rare examples of rough-hewn log buildings without exterior sheathing. The latter has a very fine fireplace.

Numerous other structures, springhouses, barns and smokehouses are scattered throughout the district, many of them dating from the original homesteads. None of the extant outbuildings can be said to be intrusive to the character of the district. There are in fact no real intrusions in the district as a whole. Two houses of relatively recent data and a few older but undistinguished houses exist within the boundaries, but simply do not contribute to the character of the district, and cannot be said to detract from it.

## SIGNIFICANCE

AL-II-A-140

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| —PREHISTORIC | —ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | X COMMUNITY PLANNING | —LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | —RELIGION | |
| —499 | —ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | —CONSERVATION | —LAW | —SCIENCE | |
| —1500-1599 | X AGRICULTURE | —ECONOMICS | —LITERATURE | —SCULPTURE | |
| —1600-1699 | X ARCHITECTURE | —EDUCATION | —MILITARY | —SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN | |
| X 1700-1799 | —ART | —ENGINEERING | —MUSIC | —THEATER | |
| X 1800-1899 | —COMMERCE | —EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | —PHILOSOPHY | —TRANSPORTATION | |
| X 1900- | —COMMUNICATIONS | —INDUSTRY | —POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | —OTHER (SPECIFY) | |
| | | —INVENTION | | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Breakneck Road Historic District, a valley wedged between the ridges of Martin Mountain and Warrior Ridge in Allegany County, Maryland, is a present day survival of an eighteenth century pioneer settlement and its nineteenth century development. As an entity it has few counterparts in Western Maryland, if any, and seldom does one find anything comparable outside the state. Spanning nearly two centuries of development, the fundamental unit of development has been and continues to be the family farm, an item of increasing rarity today. The character of the valley arises from these units in that they have remained in the possession of the families of the original settlers and have not changed substantially in their physical appearance for more than one hundred years The escape of modern incursion, the obvious richness of the agricultural and forest land, the age and excellent state of preservation of its dwellings, barns and outbuildings, and itsrole as the site of inter-related family histories, all contribute to a quality of rare strength of definition. This is reinforced by the visual enclosure of the mountains and knobs which surround the valley. The architecture of the valley contributes to and is reflective of this quality, a vernacular architecture of accretive changes and occasional displays of style and prosperity, always in touch with the pragmatic and utilitarian nature of farm life.

The area now known as Western Maryland underwent a period of instability prior to the American Revolution through a number of Indian wars. Fort Cumberland built in the 1750's was one effort to defend against such attacks. By the 1770's, former residents, their confidence restored, began to return to the western mountains. They were later joined by new settlers drawn by the availability of fertile land. It was such a group that laid the foundations for the town of Flintstone at the north end of the valley. Like others who moved westward, the migrants selected a promising valley for their new homes, in this case the one situated between Martin Mountain and Warrior Ridge. Flintstone and Twiggtown, at the south end of the valley, were first to be settled.

The National Pike built after the turn of the century provided a major east-west route through Maryland, just north of the valley, and lead to the further growth of Flintstone. Many of the first settlers to the district came from Frederick and their names survive: English, Scotish-Irish, Scotish and French descent.

Analysis of the 1800 Federal census shows the area known as Murley Branch was counted as a separate district, having established its own identity. The rolls show a number of Twiggs, Willisons, Robinettes and Chaneys, as heads of household. However, only a single MacElfish, Thomas, and a single Perrin, John appear. Most of these families have three to five children under age sixteen and two to four persons over that age. Several of the families have one or two slaves. The census does show a numerous household population for the area with middle size and relatively young families as would be expected for a newly settled area.

See Continuation Sheet #8.

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Development of the valley centered around these key families and their interaction. The Perrin and Twigg brothers were among the first patent holders. They were soon rivaled by the Willisons, a family of scotish origin, from Lancaster Co. Virginia. George Robinette and William House, two Revolutionary War soldiers, arrived in the late 1790's. Robinette, whose tract was "Robinettes Lot", and his offspring developed several farms. Both House and Robinette constructed log houses, as was typical of the first settlers. Robinette's log house and two others built by the next two generations of Robinette's, provide an interesting study in upward mobility within a single family as well as an illustration of architectural evolution within the valley as a result of 19th Century prosperity. The Messick (Captain George Robinette) Log Mansion was the first and most primitive of the houses. The second, built by Moses Robinette, son of Captain George, was a frame farm house with a large summer kitchen, and is still in the family while the third built by grandson George Tanner is a substantial brick home. George also operated a tannery near Flintstone.

William House erected his dwelling on land purchased from Robinette. The House family remained on one farm as did the Robinettes. The Heavners, MacElfishs, Robinettes and others in later generations established new farms. House's original homestead remained in his family for 195 years, until approximately 1970.

George Robinette's Log House (Messick) although covered with novelty siding, is a striking example of a log mansion with a massive outside end chimney constructed of slate. The house is an excellent example of an early 18th Century dwelling in Allegany County and its further evolution and adaption with time.

Robinette played other important rolls in addition to establishing his own farm. In 1791, authorized by an act of the legislature, Robinette along with three others surveyed a road from Fort Cumberland to Hancock, constructed of logs.

A second major road, now known as Williams Road, running east-west toward the southern portion of the district and leading from Cumberland to the old road at Pratt's Hollow, was blazed by a man named Williams who lived near George Twigg on Warrior Mountain. The road was built by John Twigg and others. The Twiggs, early settlers in the southern portion of the district, established Twiggtown. Once known as "Sink Hole Bottom" it had its origins in a tract of land conveyed from John Perrin to Robert Twigg in 1760. John MacElfish Twigg, a descendant of John Twigg, brother of Robert, erected a stone house cut from a nearby quarry in 1820. Built of natural limestone and logs it is one small group of stone structures remaining in Allegany County.

See Continuation Sheet 9

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Two other early families to arrive in the valley were the MacElfishes and the Wilsons. The MacElfishes' first house was the Moyer Log House, located on Murley's Branch Road near Flintstone in a tract of land known as the "Re Survey of Deer Path". The family in addition to farming, operated a gun powder mill and game chicken farm.

The Elias Wilson family, which settled in the valley in the 1830's, again illustrates both early pioneer settlement and later expansion as prosperity was achieved. Elias Wilson's plantation included both the Gay Stonestreet and Scott Robinette Log Houses. The two houses were on part of six different tracts of land originally surveyed for Wilson in 1838. The log portion of the Robinette house was built circa 1830. This simple log structure served as the Wilson family home until the farm prospered. At that point a 24' x 30' frame addition was built and the entire structure covered with clapboard. Prosperity is evident, not only from the size of the house, but from detailed moulding found in the frame section. In addition, as was common on several farms, a small slave quarters was located near the main house. Local legend has it that a slave, named Brady, lived in the building until he grew old, at which point he was moved into the house and later buried in the family graveyard. Small family cemeteries are also a common feature of several farms. One particular farm, Earl Stonestreet's, has a separate maintained slave cemetery. Wilson, who deeded the land to his own son, Issac Crum Wilson, in 1858, also built and operated a mill on the property which was destroyed in the 1882 flood. As the Wilson family expanded and prospered, it acquired other farms including the George Robinette (Patterson) farm in 1892, which it retained for over half a century.

About 1840, two new farms were settled to the north and south of the Robinette lands further developing the core area of the district. Henry Jamison purchased a tract of land from Amon Chaney in 1840 and erected a frame structure (Heavner). A few years later he built the new Jamison farm (Earl Stonestreet), another frame structure. This complete complex of extant outbuildings includes barn, log smoke house and slave quarters. Another Heavner later constructed the current Erickson House on land earlier obtained from John Twigg.

Jeremiah Berry had purchased his land from the tract "Robinette's Lot" in 1800, but the house, a brick dwelling (Fletcher), similar to and erected about the same time as George Robinette's (Patterson) was not built until 1845. Over the years it became known as Rose Hill Farm and was later purchased by a Wilson.

Jesse Chaney erected the Liller Farm House about 1845 on land acquired from George Slicer in 1836. The main beams and supports of the house are hewn logs but the building itself is of frame construction. A frame addition housed a summer kitchen and slave quarters. Like other farms, it was acquired by the Wilson family in 1864, when Issac Wilson purchased it. The family retained it for four generations.

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Expansion by kin of early settlers in the mid-century 19th Century is again seen in the erection, by Thomas MacElfish circa 1850, of the Riggleman House. The rectangular block frame house in near original appearance is an excellent cultural reminder of the way of life once found in the rural Flintstone area.

Another mid-century frame farm, the Browning House, is believed to have been constructed by a member of the Twigg Family and was known as the Francis Twigg Farm as late as 1909. The house is of special interest in that it is very similar in both size and mode of construction to several other houses in the area. The Summerfield Hinkle and Stickley houses are large "L" shaped balloon frame buildings with gabled roof and brick end chimneys which are typical of antebellum architecture in Allegany County. The Browning House has a particularly well-preserved group of outbuildings. These include a barn, smokehouse, tool sheds, a chicken house and a small building located next to the main house.

In addition to the development of family farms throughout the 19th Century which cemented the valley's reputation as one of Maryland's finest agricultural areas, a more short-lived enterprize also drawing on a natural resource was the local warm spring. For decades a popular resort in the county was at Flintstone on Mountain Vale as the town was called until the 1830's. The warm springs with a constant temperature of 68° attracted a number of vacationers. One brick and one frame hotel were built in Flintstone and the guests were transported about two miles by wagon to the Warm Spring Road area. Flooding in the late 1850's filled the Springs with mud and gravel and washed away the bath houses ending the resort era of the valley.

Mid 19th Century prosperity led to development of new farms in the second half of the 19th Century as a number of frame structures arose. "According to the 1878-79 County Directory there were 133 farmers in the Flintstone area, a very distinctive rural community." The main agricultural commodities at this time were wheat, oat, potatoes and corn and most farming was done in the valleys and the low hills.

The final period of farm expansion appears to begin about the 1870's and is generally carried out by families settled in the valley.

The May Long house, circa 1870 on land acquired from Argyle Twigg, abuts the Tewell Stone house property. The little altered frame house served as the dwelling for a simple farmstead.

See Continuation Sheet 11

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The Stickley house, in the same vicinity circa 1875, was erected by Luther MacElfish. Also on the site is the "Big Spring" with a board and batten spring house. One of the earliest grist mills of the Flintstone area was built by Joseph Robinette about 1790, about 100 yards below the "Big Spring".

A Hinkle farm is established within this valley in the 1870's with the purchase by Summerfield Hinkle in 1876 of the Branch farm originally owned by the Willison family. Summerfield operated the old mill built about 300 yards below the barn. On the main floor was the grist mill and beneath was the sawmill.

The B.M. Hinkle House, circa 1875, was constructed by Harvey Wilson. In 1895, Summerfield purchased the adjacent James Willison farm and in 1902 George Bonman and Dennis Bennett erected the handsomely trimmed Summerfield Hinkle House for him. This is the final piece of the last stage of architectural development as well as farm expansion. The 20th Century is characterized by a marked stability of existing farms, preservation of the status quo and quiet, unnoticeable functional improvements.

With the proximity of Flintstone and Cumberland, the valley did not develop many service institutions. However, a small "town center" now defunct, arose at Rush, with some stores and services and a post office. A small church, the Murley's Branch Methodist Church, was erected about 1850 on land purchased from George Slicer. Methodism was extremely popular in Allegany County as early as 1791. In 1886, the old structure was demolished and the cemetery erected. A one-room school house was erected behind the church circa 1875.

Architecture in the Breakneck Valley is characterized chiefly by aspects in the nature of a "pioneer farming enclave". The early buildings, leaving aside the more recent acretions and updatings, were built of home-grown, home-quarried and home-milled materials, entirely hand crafted. The most visible aspect of this character is the large number of very old barns and outbuildings, the pegged, mortised and tennoned barns at the Earl Stonestreet, Martin Gordon and Patterson properties and elsewhere, as well as the brick, stone, and log slave quarters, smoke houses and springhouses to be found throughout the valley. Handworked heavy timbers, fitted and pegged, and rough-hewn or simply stripped-log beams may be found exposed in the attics and basements of nearly all the older houses (pre-balloon frame).

In style and plan, the majority of these houses reflect a pragmatic approach to the needs of agricultural life. Initially there were very few concessions to comfort or elegance, but in the first houses these deficiencies were corrected gradually as the prosperity of the settlers grew. This occurred mostly in the form of clapboard siding and frame additions.

See Continuation Sheet 12

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Stages of development in the architecture of the valley may be seen in methods of construction. The first dwellings to be erected were log houses chinked against the elements. A number of these,notable the Messick and Moyers Houses, were two-storey "log mansions", of considerable size for this type of construction. The Gay Stonestreet House, parts of the Tewell House, and the House and Robinette Farmhouses were also built of logs. These were sided later in the 19th Century. The original portions of the House and Messick Farmhouses probably date from the end of the 18th Century, the others from the early decades of the 19th Century.

The next phase of construction was that of heavy timber framing. Many of the barns of the valley are from that era, and are the most visible relics of it. The barn of the Earl Stonestreet Farm is a particularly fine example, especially notable because of a latterday enlargement which used the same construction technique. Houses built in this way were generally nogged with brick, for insulation, and covered with clapboards. The Heavner and Earl Stonestreet Houses are fine examples of this, dating from the 1840's.

The anomolous house of this period is the Martin Gordon House, built of wide verticle boards secured at the basement and roof levels, siding on the exterior and plastered inside. The basement reveals heavy stripped timber beams, the attic lighter pole rafters. This method of construction is unique in the valley, and seems to be little known elsewhere, at least in Allegany County. The Cardinal Mooney House (1837) at Mount Savage, one of a row of houses, is said to be built in this way, roughly contemporary to the circa 1830 Martin Gordon House.

The latest method of construction is the balloon frame. Its best representative is the Summerfield Hinkle House, being of a plan which either copies or was copied by nearly all other houses in the valley (those built of a piece of well as those which achieved the plan gradually through accretions and additions) a matter of a main block of three-bays, ridge parallel to facade, with a wing off the rear wall, two or three bays long, perpendicular to the main block and set off-center. The Summerfield Hinkle House has, furthermore, the most comprehensive collection of architectural details to be found in the valley, and it is reasonable to look to it as a sort of standard for the numerous similar details which may be found in lesser quantity in other houses.

See Continuation Sheet13

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It would be difficult to chart precisely the changes, the accretions, additions, deletions and improvements which were made in the valley through its life. Doubtless, improvements in the operation of the farms always had first priority, and improvements in the appearance of the houses would have occurred only when there was sufficient prosperity to allow it. It may be safely assumed, however, the physical appearance of the valley, its man-made aspect, was for most the 19th Century a constantly changing thing, an organic response to changing conditions, mutually reinforced by the residents of this closely knit community. The fact that it has not changed appreciably since the turn of the century is not clearly explicable. To be sure, plumbing, wiring and heating has been improved where needed, and the spring houses which still exist seldom function as intended. But the buildings stayed the same The likeliest conclusion to be drawn is that they had reached some kind of optimum form for their overall function.

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Breakneck Road Historic District
Allegany County
CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 15

Beginning at the intersection of the ridge line of Martin Mountain and the southern right-of-way of U. S. Route 40, proceed easterly along said right-of-way to a point at which it intersects with a line drawn east and west from the intersection of the north side of the Old National Pike and the west side of Wilson Road; thence, east along said line to said point of intersection; thence, east along the north side of the Old National Pike to its intersection with a line offset 1000' and parallel to Wilson Road; thence, south along said line to its intersection with a line parallel to and 1000' offset from the northeast side of Dickerson Road; thence, southeasterly along said line to its intersection with a line parallel to and 1000' offset from the north side of Warm Springs Road; thence, easterly along said line to its intersection with the ridge line of Warrior Ridge; thence, southwesterly along said ridge line to its intersection with a line parallel to and 1000' offset from the south side of Williams Road; thence, westerly along said line to its intersection with a line parallel to and 1000' offset from the south side of Murley Branch Road; thence, westerly along said line to its intersection with a line parallel to and 1000' offset from the east side of Mill Run Road; thence, in a straight line to the intersection of the south sides of Mill Run and Murley Branch Roads; thence, in a straight line 30° north of west to the ridge line of Bush Ridge/Martin Mountain; thence, northeasterly along said ridge line to the point of beginning.

intersection of Warm Springs & Town Creek

center at SE corner

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(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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AS CORRECTED BY MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST APRIL 17, 1980:

UTM's Point B: 17/708700 4395720

AL-II-A-140

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet 14.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6,270

UTM REFERENCES

| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | 18 | 710,100 | 4,398,000 |
| B | 18 | 709,000 | 4,398,000 |
| C | 18 | 709,010 | 4,391,000 |
| D | 18 | 710,100 | 4,391,000 |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet 15.

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

John D. Hnedak/Steven S. Levy, Preservation Planners — June-July 1977
ORGANIZATION — DATE

Maryland Historical Trust — 269-2438
STREET & NUMBER — TELEPHONE

Shaw House, 21 State Circle
CITY OR TOWN — STATE

Annapolis — Maryland

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X LOCAL ___

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE — DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

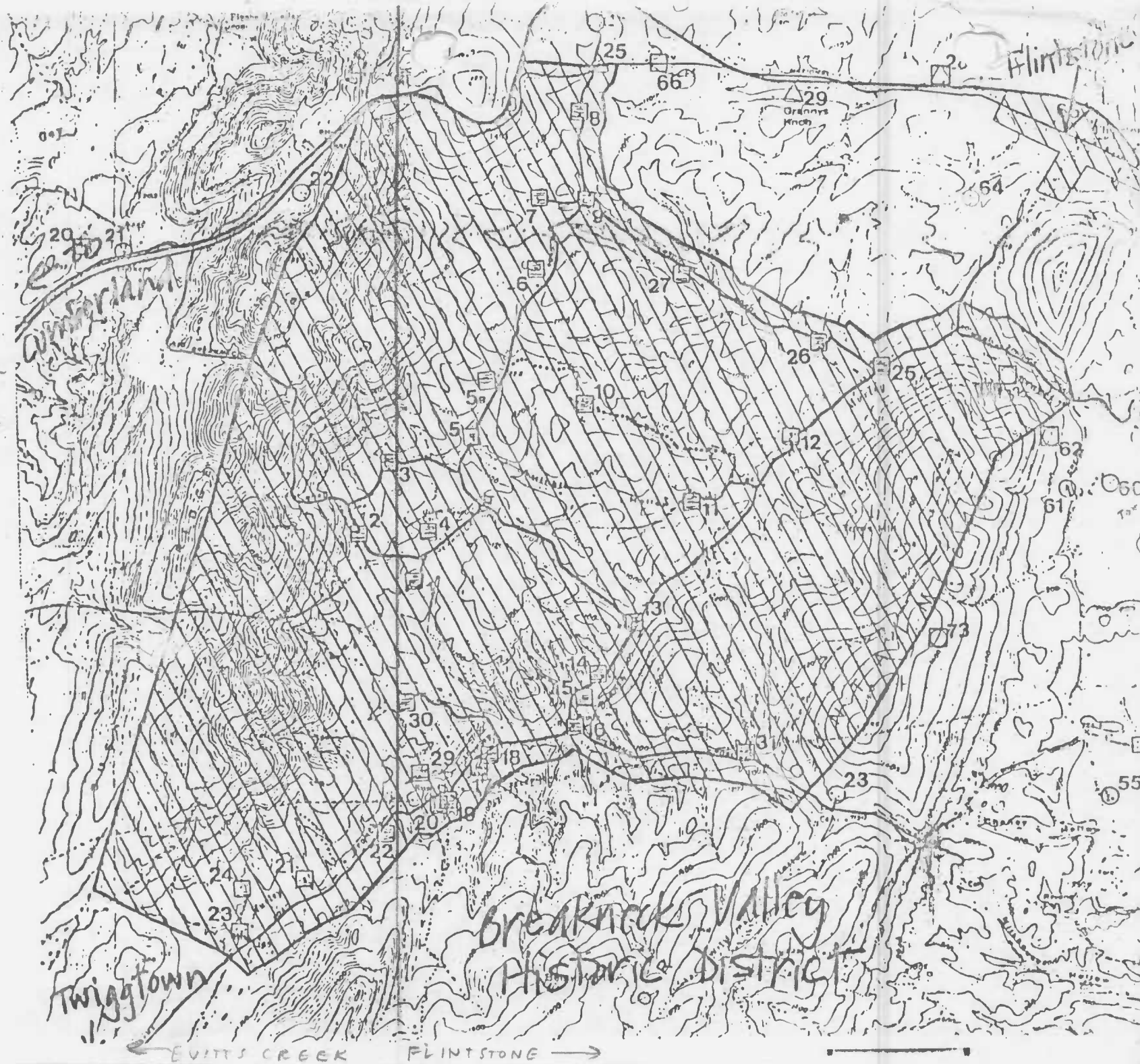
ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Breakneck Road Historic District

AL-11-A-140

Flintstone Quad & Evitts Creek Quad



AL-11-A-140

Breakneck Valley Historic District

AL-11-A-142

Brookside Valley Historic District

AL-11-A 140

AL-II-A-1410

AL-11-A 1412

PHOTOGRAPH BY
A. AUBREY BODINE

Allegheny Co., Md.

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