

AL-III-B-026

LOCK HOUSE #72  
C & O Canal, northwest of Oldtown  
1845

Lock House #72 is a rectangular shaped dwelling built on a high stone foundation and a fairly steep hill. It's now covered with vertical boards and plain battens, although it was originally a log structure. Featured are two original corbeled brick chimneys on the flush ends of the house. During the period 1850 - 1924, the house was occupied by a locktender and his family, whose sole responsibility was to operate the lock for passing canal boats. With the house came also one acre of land for the locktender to use for gardening and the grazing of a few livestock.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

AL-III-B-026

0101950404

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Lock House #72

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Along Route 51, Northwest of Oldtown

CITY, TOWN

Oldtown,

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sixth

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Allegany

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

National Parks & Recreation

Telephone #: 202-343-1100

STREET & NUMBER

C Street, Between 18th & 19th Street, N. W.

CITY, TOWN

Washington D.C.

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Allegany County Courthouse

Liber #: 469

Folio #: 102

STREET & NUMBER

30 Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Cumberland, Maryland

STATE

MD.

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

**CONDITION**

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

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

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

Lift-Lock House 72 is located along Route 51 northwest of Oldtown. The house is of rectangular shape built upon a high stone foundation and is two stories tall and two bays wide. In all probability, the original wall construction was log, but the structure is presently covered with vertical boards and plain battens. Windows and doors displaying flat arches are boarded up, but the plain trim is still visible. The roof is gabled and is covered with replaced asphalt materials. A front porch two bays wide is attached to the main dwelling and has a shed roof which is supported by 5 square columns. The porch itself is supported by square beams because the whole structure is built on the side of a fairly steep hill. Two original corbeled brick chimneys lie on each side of the house, specifically described as flush end.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE****PERIOD**

PREHISTORIC  
 1400-1499  
 1500-1599  
 1600-1699  
 1700-1799  
 1800-1899  
 1900-

ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  
 ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC  
 AGRICULTURE  
 ARCHITECTURE  
 ART  
 COMMERCE  
 COMMUNICATIONS

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW**

COMMUNITY PLANNING  
 CONSERVATION  
 ECONOMICS  
 EDUCATION  
 ENGINEERING  
 EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  
 INDUSTRY  
 INVENTION

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
 LAW  
 LITERATURE  
 MILITARY  
 MUSIC  
 PHILOSOPHY  
 POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

RELIGION  
 SCIENCE  
 SCULPTURE  
 SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN  
 THEATER  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER (SPECIFY)

**SPECIFIC DATES****BUILDER/ARCHITECT****STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Lift Lock Houses along the C & O Canal were built to house the locktender and his family. The locktender was on call 24 hours a day and his job was to maintain and operate his respective lock. 74 locks were built along the 184 mile canal to ascend the 609 foot rise from Georgetown to Cumberland. The canal opened for navigation to Cumberland on October 10, 1850, so the lock houses in Allegany County were probably built in the late 1840's.<sup>1</sup>

The locktender's salary was only \$25.00 a month, but he was granted the lock house to live in and an acre of land for a garden. Many of them also had hogs, chickens, or a cow or two that would also graze on the land.

If a boat approached at night, it was necessary to arouse the locktender. When near the lock, the mule driver would loudly chant, "Lock ready -- Lock ready -- Hey -- ey -- ey, Lock!", and the steersman in the back of the back of the boat would sound off a bugle. The locktender would then signal with a lantern as to whether or not the lock was ready to enter. It took ten to fifteen minutes for a canal boat to clear the lock with help of the boat crew as well as the locktender. This same system was used for all of the 74 years the canal was in operation.<sup>2</sup>

The canal ceased operation in 1924, and many of the locktenders remained in the houses until they found other jobs. Construction materials of lift-lock houses in Allegany County include frame and log with stone foundations. Their use is now limited in this county to public viewing in the C & O Park areas, although specific entrance into them is restricted.

1. History of Western Maryland, Scharf: Everts Pub. Co., Philadelphia, 1882, p. 712
2. Wolfe George, I Drove Mules on the C & O Canal, Dover Graphic Co., Dover, 1969, p. 51

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Allegany County Land Records, Cumberland, Maryland

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 27.96 Acres**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

John Nelson, Joan Baldwin, &amp; Steve Beale

ORGANIZATION

Allegany County Historical Sites Survey

DATE

9/1/76

STREET &amp; NUMBER

507 National Highway

TELEPHONE

777-8991

CITY OR TOWN

LaVale,

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

INVENTORY NO. A1-111-B-026

469/102

DATE: 8/4/76

27.96 ACRES

REMODELING: Drastic, moderate, minor

NAME OF PROPERTY: Lock House # 72

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: Along Rt. 51, Northwest of Oldtown

DIRECTION DWELLING FACES: South east

NAME OF OWNER: National Parks + Recreation

ADDRESS: C St. Between 18th + 19th St. N.W. 202-343-1100  
Washington, D.C.

STORIES: 1( ) 2() 3( ) 4( ) 5( ) 6( ) BAYS: 1( ) 2( ) 3() 4( ) 5( ) 6( ) 7( ) ( )

WINGS, ADDITIONS: Porch

Dwelling Shape: (square, cross, rectangular)

WALL CONSTRUCTION:

- FRAME: Bevel, clapboard, weatherboard, wood shingles, board & batten (type?) Verticle
- BRICK: Bond type- common, English, Flemish. Sketch variants.
- STONE: Bond type- rubble, ashlar (random or regular), quoins-plain, rusticated
- LOG
- Other: Coverings

WALL FEATURES: BELT COURSE, PILASTERS, OTHERS \_\_\_\_\_

FOUNDATIONS: HIGH, LOW, BRICK, STONE

WATER TABLE: NONE, PLAIN, BEVELED, MOULDED BRICK

WINDOWS, TRIM, SHUTTERS: 1/1( ) 2/2( ) 6/6( ) 9/6( ) 9/9( ) other( )  
Boarded pegged ( ) nailed ( ) wide ( ) narrow ( ) mitred ( ) pediment ( )

ENTRANCE, DOORS: LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

Boarded HARDWARE: original ( ) replaced ( )  
FAN LIGHT, TRANSOM, SIDE LIGHTS, PLAIN  
Paneled, Verticle, Horizontal Boards  
Boards

CORNICE, BARGE, EAVES: (crown, fascia, soffit, bed)  
original ( ) replaced ( ) Rafter Ends, Modillions, Dentils, Frieze, Architrave

ROOF: GABLE FRONT, GABLE FLANK, HIP, SHED, MANSARD, GAMBREL, FLAT, DORMERS # \_\_\_\_\_  
MATERIAL: wood shingles, slate, tin, asphalt original ( ) replaced ()

PORCHES: SHAPE OF ROOF - shed () hip ( ) gable ( )

CHIMNEYS: NUMBER 2 BRICK () STONE ( ) CORBELLED ( ) original () replaced ( )  
LOCATION: Flush end () Inside end ( ) Outside end ( ) Central ( ) Interior ( )

ARCHES: Door and window: Keystone, Flat, Segmental, Semicircular

COMMENTS:

Use - No Longer used  
Significance -  
Date Constructed - 1830-1840  
Condition - Fair - Good

## Key points regarding interior architecture.

## 1. Floor plan

No through hall--How many rooms long and deep?  
Where is stairway? Straight or winding?

With through hall--Rooms on both sides? How many?

Rooms on one side only? How many?

Is stair in through hall?

Open or enclosed? Straight--one run. Straight--landing

How many? Curved.

If not in hall, where is stair?

2. Wall finish: plaster, paneled, board partition  
Note presence of chair rail, cornice, etc.

3. Fireplaces: How many? Parallel to walls or diagonal in corner?

Mantels: wood--mouldings, pilasters, columns  
masonry--marble(what color? ), brick

3. Doors: on the inside of exterior doors, note the presence of applied flush boards and their direction (diagonal, vertical, horizontal). In general are doors paneled or ledge or other?

4. Door and window trim: plain, architrave; fluted, reeded; pilasters

5. Kitchen: Where is original if extant or known (marked by very large fireplace)? Separate building; wing to principal dwelling; within principal dwelling? On which floor of any of the above?

6. Note presence of wood (if any) on any window member described.





LOCK HOUSSE # 72

A1-111-B-026

C to Canal - Along Rt. 51

Northwest of Oldtown

John E. Nelson

8/4/76

Southwest



LOCK HOUSING # 72

A1-111-B-026

C+O Canal - Along Rt. 51

Northwest of Oldtown

John E. Nelson

814176

~~Northwest~~

South east



LOCK #72

A1-111-B-026

C+O Canal - Along Rt. 51

Northwest of Oldtown

John E. Nelson

814176

525T