for MHT-ASI file: Balto Co.

BA-III-COC-56 STEMMER HOUSE
MAGI #0300565204 BA-56

BALTIMORE COUNTY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

reviewed & approved 11/21/78 for preliminary landmark list

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC STEMMER HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON —

2 LOCATION

originally on Race Road, Stemmers Run; dismantled 1932 & reassembled at present location

STREET & NUMBER 2627 Caves Road

CITY, TOWN Owings Mills X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2nd 3rd Councilmanic District

STATE Maryland

COUNTY Baltimore County

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X 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	X YES RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	X OTHER book publ.

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Lawrence B. and Barbara Holdridge Telephone #: 363-3690

STREET & NUMBER 2627 Caves Road

CITY, TOWN Owings Mills __ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code Maryland 21117

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Liber #: EHK JR. 5414
Folio #: 542

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. County Courts Building

STREET & NUMBER 401 Bosley Avenue

CITY, TOWN Towson

STATE Maryland 21204

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE "Stemmer House," — Baltimore County Historic Sites Inventory MHT Inventory No. BA 56, Maryland Historical Trust

DATE BA-56 entered 7/29/65
On-going since 1964 __FEDERAL X STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS 21 State Circle

CITY, TOWN Annapolis

STATE Maryland 21401

B 9-56

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	__ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	X MOVED DATE 1931
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

STEMMER HOUSE is a very large, 2-1/2 story brick house in Georgian style with gable roof, two dormers, and broad, matching, flush end-chimneys. Each end of the house is flanked by a small 1-1/2 story wing, each with two dormers and a centrally located internal chimney. The wings have gable roofing which is incomplete, i.e., the roof rises to the normal ridge, but at that point, the rear wall begins and there is a vertical drop to the ground. The main block is five bays wide with a central entrance door set in a pedimented frame; the door is topped by a fanlight. Main windows are 12-on-12 sash type. There is a wooden box cornice running across the main facade; there are exposed end rafters on the eaves, painted white. The house is three bays deep. The larger windows are provided with shutters. The wings are four bays wide and one bay is a paneled door set in a frame topped by a rectangular transom of four lights.

Stemmer House is completely unchanged, except that it is cleaner and brighter, from photos published when it stood in the 15th District of Baltimore County. This house is the peer of houses that are featured on the James River garden tours.

Some other aspects of the restoration are described in <u>The Green Spring Valley</u>:

> The brickwork of Stemmer House is salmon-pink and laid in American bond. The plan is one often found in Maryland's colonial homes — a tall central building with flanking lower wings. The paneled front door, duplicated in the back door directly opposite at the end of the hall, is reinforced on the inside by five-inch boards applied diamondwise. Both doors are secured by huge brass locks and there is also a substantial iron bar that lowers across each. The windows, evenly arranged, consist of twelve panes of glass, most of which are original, in each upper and lower sash. The shutters are also original. Two wide chimneys rise on each end of the main house, set inside the exterior walls, to service six fireplaces. Opening off the central hall are four rooms, two on each side, that have heavily paneled doors, again equipped with brass locks. These serve as the drawing room (with an elaborately carved mantel), living room, dining room...., and stair hall. The stairway with its chastely carved chair rail, leads to three large bedrooms on the second floor and on upward to an

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY (continued)

attic, where were found handmade nails used in the roofing and wooden pegs used in the original construction.

The wing on the right, which was the old kitchen and still contains a massive fireplace, is today a spacious pantry and kitchen, a stair having been removed to make way for the pantry. The corresponding wing on the right is a library, believed to have been used as an office by Robert Howard.[1]

[1]Dawn F. Thomas, The Green Spring Valley (Baltimore 1978), p. 339.

SIGNIFICANCE

BA-56

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
_PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	_COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	_RELIGION
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	_CONSERVATION	_LAW	_SCIENCE
_1500-1599	_AGRICULTURE	_ECONOMICS	X LITERATURE	_SCULPTURE
_1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	_EDUCATION	_MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
X 1700-1799	_ART	_ENGINEERING	_MUSIC	_THEATER
_1800-1899	_COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	_PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
_1900-	_COMMUNICATIONS	X INDUSTRY	_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
		_INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Definitely before 1798 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

STEMMER HOUSE can be documented to the time of Captain Bernard Ulric Stemmer (also spelled Stammer), but may well be forty years older than that, and both lines of argument will be presented here. The detailed portion of the 1798 tax list for Back River Lower Hundred has been lost, but the front matter containing a summary and index remains, and B. Ulric Stemmer was charged with:

1	Dwelling House	
3	Outhouses	
2	Acres	$2250.

The two acres mentioned in these lists represent the space around a landowner's main dwelling, and the value assigned to Stemmer's home place is comparable to the figure set on a house of similar material, bulk, and quality — the Samuel Owings Ulm mansion, which, with three outlying buildings was assessed at $2000. In the index to the outlying land, U. Barnard Stammer, as it was spelled, had two dwelling houses, worth $50 and $45 respectively, on 663 acres. (Total area is one acre less than listed in his deed). (1)

There was no reason to doubt that Stemmer house stood on the tract Buck Range, and in 1931 a surveying firm confirmed that belief. (2)

Back in 1744, Dr. Charles Carroll had 100 acres condemned for a forge mill on a branch of Back River. (3) In 1750-51, a group of British investors and one prominent American, Lawrence Washington of Virginia, acquired parts of "Buck's Range" as well as Dr. Carroll's furnace and they developed Lancashire Furnace on this site; the partners traded as the Principio Company. While almost nothing has been published about Lancashire Works, voluminous documents survive in the Hall of Records and a day book and a "smith's and provision book" is owned by the Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington.

In 1780, to secure the bills of credit it had floated, the Maryland General Assembly passed an act to expropriate the Principio Company and other British-owned real estate. (4) The Commissioners for Confiscated British Property made an inventory of slaves, raw material, and household goods at Lancashire. (5) The entire place was offered for sale in the Baltimore papers in the autumn of 1781, and Colonel Job Garretson was highest bidder. (6)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY (continued)

Six years later, Garretson sued Attorney General Luther Martin and charged that he had been defrauded in the number of acres conveyed and that he had not received all the iron ore and charcoal stored on the premises when he bought. In fact, he alleged, the State's employees who were taking care of Kingsbury Furnace on Herring Run (which was still in blast), sent their slaves and wagons to Lancashire and stripped the place clean of meltable iron, rendering the gristmill and furnace inoperative. (7)

Garretson submitted numerous affadavits from persons who witnessed the public sale attesting that the vendue master had stated in a loud voice that everything material except the household furnishings came with the iron plantation. Garretson won the case and the sale was nullified, and in 1791, the State advertised 656 acres for sale, but the text of the notice gives no clues to any structures.

Captain Stammer bought the property in 1795 and by 1798 he was charged with a very substantial house and by 1800 he was dead at age 38. There are no firm biographical facts about the captain. (8)

Most recent historical writing has called this building Stemmer House, quoting an inscription found on its stone entrance posts. (9) Mrs. Stemmer, who was left with bringing up a family, would have been in no position to build such a house. Thus, it is safe to assume that the brick house we find offered for sale in 1839 when the captain's son came of age is a structure dating back at the very least to the seafarer himself, if not to the colonial iron company.

The arguments for construction of the house by the Principio Company between 1751-1781 are:

1. Its Georgian characteristics
2. An architect's opinion of 1921 that the house was then 160 years old (1761) (10)
3. References to houses on Buck's Range tract in the case of Garretson-vs-Attorney General
4. The fact that ironmasters were important personages, entitled to a fine house.

There were 54 slaves at Lancashire Furnace when the State's caretaker Thomas Russell made an inventory in March of 1781. One was Esther, a house maid, which would imply a house in which to employ her skills. (11) Two dwelling houses stood within the property that Garretson said was not conveyed to him, and Luther Martin in his replication stated that the disputed acres "were yet peaceably and quietly held by said Job." (12) One house was occupied by Sarah Ireland who lived at the works. (13) One of the witnesses, Robert Long, testified that on the auction day he could hear the speech of the vendue master "as he came near to the dwelling house." (14) The transcript also includes an exhibit, the inventory of the "Furnace dwelling house and kitchen," including three feather beds, seven chairs, a desk, and three tables—an assortment that would scarcely fill out the Stemmer House we know today. (15) In addition, Colonel Garretson testified that the commissioners

> took down the house bell and took all the iron backs out of all the chimnies of the houses about the works. (16)

(continued)

The present Stemmer House does have a fireback, obviously a modern replacement, marked "Mary An Furnace, 1763." That furnace was in SE York County, Pennsylvania; it would have been a long way to haul an item readily obtained in Maryland from Ridgely's Furnace during Captain Stemmer's time.

None of the famous traveler's maps shows the house and it first appears as "Mrs. Stemmer's" on the 1836 Map and Profile of the Baltimore and Port Deposit Railroad (now the route of Amtrak). The mansion was specifically described in the case of Ulrick B. Stammer [Jr.] et al.-vs-William B. Garden, et al., in 1839:

> The improvements consist of a large and convenient brick dwelling house, a large new BARN, with necessary out-buildings, a Brick GRIST MILL, with sufficient water power about 400 yards from the Rail Road with which it can be connected at a small expense. There is also sufficient water power for a Saw Mill or other similar purposes. There is also iron ore on the premises. (17)

The trustee of the Stemmer estate, William H. Collins, sold the property to Robert Howard in 1841. (18) Howard built a new furnace, a more modern works first powered by water and later by steam. He called both house and farm Locust Grove and his holdings appear on both the 1850 Sidney map and the 1857 Taylor map. In all, he owned three furnaces, including one at Elkridge and one at Philadelphia Road and Great Gunpowder Falls. In 1858, Howard conveyed his personal ownership of the furnaces to the Great Falls Iron Company for $223,000. (19) Howard's daughter Elizabeth was married to one of the principals of that company, John Spence Hayes. The 1877 atlas in an inset map of Rossville shows the furnace and grounds owned by the firm of Hayes and Brown. The complex genealogy of Stammers and Howards is traced in The Green Spring Valley by Dawn F. Thomas (who dates that house at 1796). (20)

The furnace and ironmaster's house tracts went into separate descents. Great Falls Iron in 1879 sold the water rights and "buildings and machinery ... appertaining to the iron furnace" to Levi Furstenburg. (21) The works was manufacturing car-wheel iron (for railway rolling stock), but the old-fashioned plant could not compete with western producers and closed down; Furstenburg's executor sold the property to Walter R. Townsend in 1892. The furnace had vanished without trace by 1938, leaving only two frame Victorian houses at the NW corner of Race Road and Golden Ring, still there in 1978. (22)

Mrs. Elizabeth Hayes in 1902 left the farm on which she resided to her three children, including Sallie Hayes. Miss Hayes was shown in tax ledgers of 1911, 1918, and 1928-40 with 100 acres, house (no dimensions given), corn house, spring house, and barn. In her later years, she had Mr. and Mrs. Frank Golombowski as live-in companions and gave the couple an option to buy the place on her death. (23)

Miss Hayes died in 1928, and Frank Golombowski took title and was planning to sell the hardware and woodwork, when Mr. and Mrs. Austin McLanahan came upon the place and purchased the entire house. The new owners appar-

(continued)

ently believed that Stemmer's Run area was about to go from truck farming, in which Golombowski was engaged, to heavy industry, and they had the house disassembled and moved to a 28-acre site on Caves Road. Golombowski built a new house in 1932, per the tax ledger. The neighborhood remained rural for some time, and a very recent industrial park structure, the Aetna Shirt Company, stands on the house site, now platted as the NE corner of Kelso Drive and Stemmers Run Road.

Removal and reassembly was supervised by architect Bayard Turnbull, and the mantels, floors, doors, and trim were reused. A complete floor plan was done first and each brick was numbered.

> Hand-made iron nails in the roofing and wooden pegs in many of the joists attested to its thoroughness of construction when it was taken apart by contractors at the direction of Mrs. McLanahan. (24)

NOTES

1. Federal Direct Tax List, Baltimore County, 1798. Microfilm 606, Maryland Historical Society (MHS).

2. Edward V. Coonan & Co. to William B. Marye, Baltimore, March 5, 1 General Clipping File under "Stemmer House," MHS.

3. Chancery Records, Liber IR No. 4:707, Hall of Records (HR).

4. Acts of May 1780, Chapter 45; Acts of May 1781, Chapter 37.

5. Commissioners for Confiscated British Property, Proceedings, 178 f. 8, 12-14; Hall of Records.

6. Maryland Journal, August 21, 1781. Also, Sales Book of Confiscat Property, 1781-85, f. 14.

7. Chancery Records, 19:385ff.

8. BC Deeds, WG No. VV:246.

9. Helen Henry, "A Storied Mansion: Two Centuries (and One Move) La Sun Magazine, December 4, 1977, p. 65.

10. William B. Marye, "Notes About Old 'Stemmer's Run House' at Ross Md.," 1921, one typed page, general clipping file, MHM.

11. Proceedings 1781-82, f. 12.

12. Chancery Records, 19:387.

13. Chancery Records, 19:393.

14. Chancery Records, 19:396.

15. Chancery Records, 19:402.

16. Chancery Records, 19:411.

17. American, September 12, 1839, p. 4, col. 2.

18. B. City Deeds, TK 310:361.

19. BC Deeds, GHC 21:224.

20. Dawn F. Thomas, The Green Spring Valley (Baltimore, 1978), p. 37

21. BC Deeds, WMI 117:324.

22. Walter K. Gross, Jr., "The Locust Grove Iron Furnace," term pape May 17, 1938, p. 9. MHS library.

23. Thomas, Green Spring Valley, p. 378.

24. "Old Stemmer House to Rise on New Site," undated clipping, c. 19 General Clipping file, MHS.

B4-56

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dawn F. Thomas, The Green Spring Valley (Baltimore 1978), pp. 335-339

Helen Henry, "A Storied Mansion: Two Centuries (and One Move) Later," Sun Magazine, December 4, 1977, pp. 64-69.

John Martin Hammond, Colonial Mansions of Maryland and Delaware (Philadelphia 1914), pp. 8-10.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 24.402

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Tax Map 59, Parcel 98.

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

STATE	COUNTY
None	None
None	None

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: John W. McGrain

ORGANIZATION: Baltimore County Office of Planning and Zoning

DATE: September 1978

STREET & NUMBER: County Courts Bldg., 401 Bosley Avenue

TELEPHONE: 494-3495

CITY OR TOWN: Towson

STATE: Maryland 21204

N/A

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

0300505204

Form 10-445
(5/62)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

1. STATE Maryland
COUNTY Baltimore
TOWN VICINITY Dist. III
STREET NO. Caves Road

ORIGINAL OWNER
ORIGINAL USE
PRESENT OWNER
PRESENT USE
WALL CONSTRUCTION
NO. OF STORIES

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
INVENTORY BA-56

2. NAME Stemmer House

DATE OR PERIOD about 1793
STYLE
ARCHITECT
BUILDER

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC

Moved brick by brick from its original site on Race Road near Stemmers Run, reassembled and restored. One of Maryland's outstanding Colonial houses.

The Washingtons of Virginia stopped here on their inspection tours of the iron furnaces in Back River and North East.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered Interior Exterior

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
(First HABS Report)
E. Frances Offutt
HABS COMMITTEE OF BALTIMORE
COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DATE OF RECORD July 29, 1965