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HA-370

AND

HA-371

HA-370 1857
Old Alms House
(County Poorhouse)
Tollgate Road
County

The Old Alms House is a five bay wide, 3 ½-story (including basement level) stone mansion. Windows are 6/6 sash, and the central entrance (on the first true floor) contains a wide double door surrounded by an enclosed porch topped by a broken pediment. The double doors of the porch itself are flanked by 1/1 windows. Ten steps lead up to the porch, as the basement level is visible with two windows on either side of the porch steps. Two dormers with 6/6 sash windows pierce the front of the roof.

On February 4, 1831,a contract was signed by the Trustees of the Poor for use of the 256-acre farm south of Bel Air called the Alms House Farm. The structure known as the Old Alms House was constructed in 1857 by the Bond family. It was not until 1861 that a fee simple deed was obtained by the County Commissioners who had taken over the duties of the Trustees for the Poor. An overseer, appointed by the County Commissioners, continued to minister to Harford's homeless poor until 1962, when that 175-year old institution gave way to more modern methods of care of the aged and indigent poor.

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST HA-370, 371

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Alms House- Overseer's Quarters

AND/OR COMMON:

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: Toll Gate Road

CITY, TOWN: Bel Air ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First

STATE: Maryland

COUNTY: Harford

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	X PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Harford County Telephone #: 838-6000

STREET & NUMBER: 45 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN: Bel Air ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code: Maryland 21014

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: WG 12

Folio #: 385

STREET & NUMBER: 40 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN: Bel Air

STATE: Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE:

DATE: __FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

CITY, TOWN:

STATE:

7 DESCRIPTION

HA 370.371

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	X DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This structure is located on the western side of Tollgate Road near the U.S. Route # 1 bypass overpass, and the building faces east. It has been abandoned for a number of years and has been boarded up. It consists of two sections; a brick two-story unit closest to the road and an adjoining two-story frame section on the first unit's southern extreme. The brick section has walls of Flemish bond and is three bays across and two deep. There are a pair of 2 X 2 attic lights, one on either side of the chimney, on either gable end of the section. The lower windows on the western side have brick arches over them. There were originally two doors, opposite each other (five panel), on the eastern and western elevations, with the western one having since been converted into a window. A belt course runs the length of the western facade, between the first and second level, although this may have been in actuality a support for a porch roof. The roof is gable flank and slate, with a soffit trim around it. The brick chimney on the gable ends were originally inside-ends, but the northern one was converted to an outside-end and the two tiers of windows were subsequently bricked over.

The southern wing is also two-story, with a low stone foundation, and is covered with shingles. It measures two bays by two, with doors on the eastern and western extremes. A small shed projects from the eastern facade near the northeast corner of the unit, and along the same side near the southeast corner is a small enclosed porch. The windows are 6 X 6 and are flanked by louvered shutters, and a pair of pentagonal vent-louvers are sited in the southern exposure between the bays of the first and the second levels. A closed-in porch encompasses the eastern entrance, and a cellar bay can be found on the southern embrasure near the southeast corner. The roof is gable-flank and slate, and a small brick inside-end flue is positioned at the southern gable-end.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

NR-370 371

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__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

In 1768, the Trustees for the Poor of each Maryland County were authorized to purchase and to maintain almshouses for the care of the indigent poor and vagrants. Harford was allowed in 1787 by the Levy Court to appropriate 50 acres for use as a poor farm, and seven trustees were appointed to carry this out. These were William Scott, Alexander Rigdon, Jesse Jarrett, Jacob Norris, Samuel Smith, George Patterson and Darrell Treadway, all of whom purchased 50 acres of Scott's Improvemnent, within Bel Air town limits. It was operated by the county until 1831, when the site now under discussion was acquired. The existing overseer's house dates from about the middle of the last century, while the long-since razed stone almshouse was built in 1857. It is interesting that this archaic facility was in operation as late as 1962.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

NR-370,371

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Harford County Land Records
Martenet's Map of 1878
Wright, C. Milton; Our Harford Heritage, 1967, French Bray, Baltimore.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 256

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The building is located on the western side of Tollgate Road, about 0.3 miles north of the Route 1 overpass. It is bounded to the north by the Winters Run Golf Course and to the south and west by the Harford Equestrian Center and The Susquehanna Environmental Center.

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

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Paul L. Penrod/ site surveyor

ORGANIZATION
Maryland Historical Trust

DATE
October 21, 1976

STREET & NUMBER
Shaw House, 21 State Circle

TELEPHONE
267-1212

CITY OR TOWN
Annapolis

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

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

HA 370

Old County Home Aug 70 JSE

HA-371 c. 1780
Aquila Scott House
(Alms House Farmhouse or Overseer's House
Tollgate Road
County

Sloughed off for years as "the old farmhouse by the Poor Farm," this two-story brick structure is now valued as the home of Aquila Scott, arguably the father of Bel Air. Aquila and his ancestors had owned the land now crossed by Bond and Main Streets since the early 18th century. By the time of the Revolution, thanks to the primitive agricultural practices of the time, the soil was played out and the tract was known as "Scott's Old Fields." (This was even noted in the 1795 *U.S. Gazetteer*: "In the vicinity of the town . . . the soil . . . is extremely thin.") When in 1782 it was time to choose a site for the new county seat, Harford's voters selected Scott's Old Fields. Aquila Scott subdivided the land, and Bel Air was laid out. The exact date of this house is not known, but the brick portion shows up in the 1798 tax list, which cites Aquila as owning 230 acres, six slaves, and a "36 x 22 2-story brick house." (There were also various outbuildings including a "shed," meathouse, and chicken house.) The exterior of the Scott house repeats certain elements seen down the road at Joshua's Meadows, including a three-bay façade, Flemish bond brickwork, a beltcourse, and a low service wing. (While Joshua's Meadows remains intact within and without, the Scott House, largely original without, acquired a center-hall plan in the early 19th century.) Encouraged by architect James Wollon, AIA, in 1978, the county parks and recreation department rescued Scott's house from certain

demolition and adapted its rooms into offices, carefully keeping most of the surviving doors, chair rails, mantels, and other original trim.

HA371

Aug 70

County Home Farm house

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