HA-1288

SUMMARY

Mitchell-Lauterbach House
Snake Lane
Churchville, Maryland 21028

The Mithcell-Lauterbach house is a large two story frame house with an el-plan probably built in the last quarter of the 19th century. Like other nearby houses, it is on land once owned by the Mitchell family.

HA- 1288

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST MAGI # 1312[illegible]

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON
Mitchell-Lauterbach House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
North side Snake Lane

CITY, TOWN
Churchville, ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE
Maryland 21028

COUNTY
Harford

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	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Marie Lauterbach

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER
Snake Lane

CITY, TOWN
Churchville, ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21028

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Liber #:
Folio #:

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Harford County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
40 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN
Bel Air,

STATE
Maryland 21014

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

NA 1288

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 two-story, el-shaped frame house, located on the north side of Snake Lane, has a gable roof and is set on a raised stone foundation. The south section, on an east-west axis, is five bays long and one room deep. The north section, whose east side is flush with the east end of the south part, is two bays long and one room deep. Both parts have gable roofs, and there are three brick chimneys: one each in the east and north ends, and one with a corbelled cap off-center in the south section. A one-story, shed-roofed porch runs around the inside of the el. The windows in the south and east facades have 2/2 sash and, in the other facades, 6/6 sash. Each of the three gables has two four-light windows.

The south facade has entrances in the east, center, and west bays with windows in between and five windows in the second story. The center entrance has a transom. The west end has a window in the second story and a basement entrance. The north side has two entrances in theend bays and two 2/2 sash windows in the center bays of the first story. In the second story are three variously-spaced windows. The east end has two windows in each story.

The north section has an entrance and window in the first story and two windows in the second story in both the east and west sides. The north end has one window in each story.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This house was on property owned by Elisha Mitchell and, subsequently, Adolphus O. Swartz until 1920[1], then John and Margaretha Hohlein[2], and finally the Lauterbachs.

Footnotes

[1] JAR 155/46

[2] 171/256

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land and Will Records of Harford County
Mitchell family records

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

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
Natalie Shivers, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION
Harford County Historic District Commission

DATE
July, 1979

STREET & NUMBER
45 S. Main Street

TELEPHONE
301-879-2000 Ext. 207

CITY OR TOWN
Bel Air,

STATE
Maryland 21014

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

Architectural Significance of Mitchell Properties in Snake Lane vicinity NA-1288

Although unimpressive singly, this cluster of houses in the Snake Lane vicinity represents a good cross-section of Harford County's small farmhouses built in the second half of the 19th century. Each is ordinary and, thus, together they represent the surprising variety of vernacular forms built at that time. None seems distinctive, but, on closer examination, no two are the same (although at least one house was a deliberate imitation of its neighbor).

There are certain common denominators among these buildings. They are all two story frame structures with gable roofs. Most are L or T shaped, with 6/6 sash windows and brick end chimneys (for stoves). They are of various construction: clapboard, shingle, board-and-batten. (However, most have been covered in asphalt shingles or aluminum siding, so the original materials are not apparent.) There is minimal exterior ornament: the shutters, gable returns, and carved porch brackets on the Winfield Mitchell house represent the height of fancy; the Wakeland-Gorrell house with its projecting vestibule and colored glass windows is an anomaly. Similarly, the interior plans are functional: one or two rooms in each story of the main section, one or two rooms in the el, with a staircase tucked in between. Or, if the staircase is in the center of the main section as in larger houses, it is not given undue prominence by being set apart in a hallway (again, except for the Wakeland-Gorrell house); it is against one wall of one of the rooms. Utilitarian, functional, with few conceits-these are the underlying themes of these houses.

Other motifs are subtler-the relationships between formal and informal elements, for instance. This dichotomy is represented in various ways: the symmetrical fenestration on the front facade versus the haphazard arrangement on the rear; the ambiguous relationship between the facade and the interior arrangement, wherein the former formalizes the latter. Perhaps the best way to discuss this cluster of seemingly non-descript buildings is to group them on this basis.

All houses have a front porch--less one for sitting than one to announce the entrance. It is the way visitors are introduced to the house and is often the one element that is decorated. The porches on these houses are of different shapes-their scale and ornament in direct proportion to the size and prosperity of the house: The George Jones house (HA-1053) is absolutely straightforward: three parts built side by side with an entrance in each. The formal entrance, in the west section, has a one bay wide, gable-roofed portico-and that is the only exterior element that could be considered extraneous. The Markline house and the Mitchell Tenant house #2 both having two parts, each two bays wide and two bays deep have undecorated shed-roofed porches spanning their front facades. The Markline house represents a slightly more formal arrangement than the other two-with its additions annexed to the rear, leaving the front facade symmetrical and singularly autonomous.

The Mitchell Tenant house #1, which is wider than the Markline house by one bay and has a central entrance, correspondingly has a more ornate porch with gable returns and collared posts. Likewise, instead of the stair being tucked between the front and rear sections as in the Markline house, the stair is in the center, against the east wall of the parlor.

The Winfield Mitchell house and the Mitchell-Magness house-both four bays wide, with entrances in the two center bays-illustrate well the formal-informal dichotomy that the other houses suggest. The symmetrical facades, the porches with carved brackets, collared or turned posts, and central flights of steps represent the public gestures; and the rear elevations, haphazardly arranged, are for residents' eyes only. The two entrances-one leading into the family parlor, the other into the formal partlo-manifest the duality.

The Bechtold-Lohr and Bonnett-Mitchell houses are both five bays wide-and the latter was copied deliberately from the former. The porch of the Bechtold-Lohr house with its

massive rock-faced concrete block piers, tapered columns, and hipped roof was constructed after the house was built but is appropriately-and symbolically-prepossessing for a house of this breadth. Its cousin, the Bonnett-Mitchell house, has a relatively scaled-down porch with square Doric posts covering the central three bays. Both houses have central entrances and central sets of porch steps-but no center hall on the interior. The formal symmetry of the exteriors bely the simply, functional interiors. Inside of both are two rooms, the room with the staircase (which is aligned with the entrance) larger than the other.

Finally-with the ultimate formal arrangement-the Gorrell house is three bays wide, with floor-length windows in the first story. Spanning the facade, the hipped-roofed porch with square posts shelters the projecting three-sided vestibule with a double-leafed door in the center, flanked by windows with colored glass borders. Inside, the house has a central hall plan. The principal facade of the Gorrell house has all three formal elements present in varying degrees in the other houses of this area: the extroverted porch, the inflected entrance, and relatively elaborate ornament.

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Background Information on Mitchell properties in Snake Lane vicinity

On October 4, 1779, Amos Cord conveyed 150 acres of "Stony Ridge Enlargement" to John Mitchell for the sum of 500 pounds.[1] In a description of the boundaries of Mitchell's land, this property was referred to as part of "Stony Ridge" and "Paca's Enlargement".[2] Originally, this land had belonged to John Paca, who in 1775 conveyed it to John Blackburn.[3] Blackburn then sold it to Thomas Perigrine Farsby who exchanged it with Amos Cord in 1776.[4]

Also, on December 17, 1783, John Stevenson sold 243 acres of "Stony Ridge" to John Mitchell for 486 pounds.[5] And in 1800, Captain James Philips of Baltimore City conveyed 100 acres of Stony Ridge, which he had inherited from his father, to John Mitchell.[6] This parcel had been confiscated from James Christie after the Revolution and sold by commissioners appointed to preserve confiscated British property to James Philips on October 1, 1782 for 100 pounds.

John Mitchell (b. 1737, d. 1801), has been described as "a respected and thrifty millwright." He married Mary Tidball in 1765 and had eight children. The property we are concerned with here-i.e. on the north side of Snake Lane-presumably passed to John Mitchell's son, Elijah, and then to Elijah's three sons William, Robert, and Elisha.[7]

It is said that in 1831 Elisha Mitchell possessed the land on which the Bechtold-Lohr house and the Mitchell-Lauterbach (HA-1286) house now stand.[8] William's house burned. Robert owned the property where the Winfield Mitchell house (HA-1286), the Mitchell Tenant house #1, the Markline house, and the Mitchell-Magness house are now situated. Robert probably lived in the house now owned by William Craig, located behind the Mitchell-Magness house. However, that structure has been altered extensively, and the house as Robert Mitchell would have known it is unrecognizable.

Robert Mitchell married Averilla Hawkins and together they had seven children: Robert Louis, Mary Jane, Samuel, George, John Thomas, Catherine, and Margaret. In the last quarter of the 19th century, Robert Louis Mitchell built the Winfield Mitchell house[9], Samuel built the Markline house (HA-1283)[10] and eventually occupied his father's house; John Thomas built the Mitchell Tenant house #1,[11] and Margaret lived in the Mitchell-Magness house.

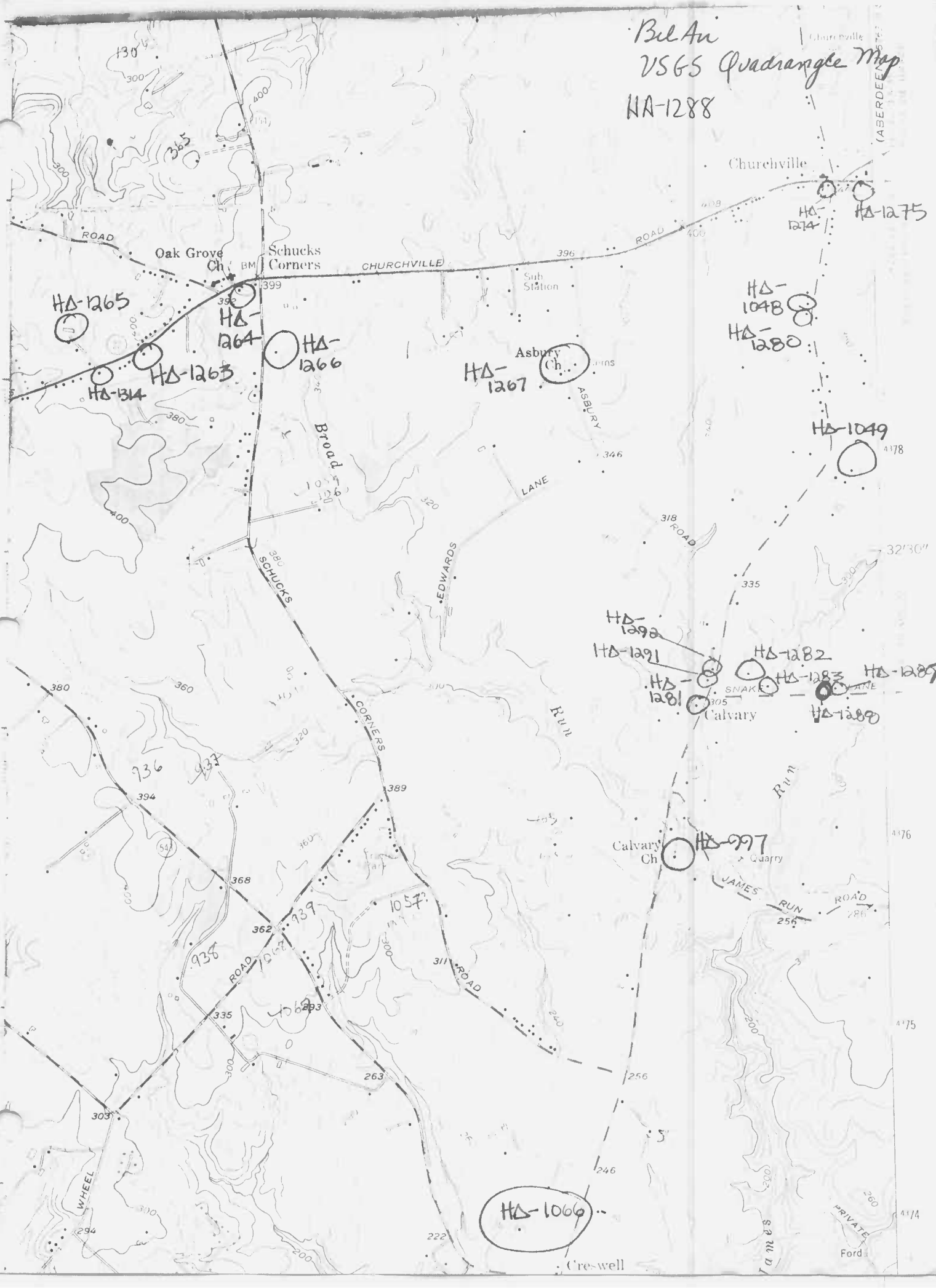
John Thomas Mitchell had two sons, George and Alonzo. George's house burned; Alonzo lived in what is called the Mitchell tenant house #1 and inherited Robert Louis Mitchell's house. John Winfield Mitchell, son of George Mitchell, then inherited the property of Alonzo Mitchell who had no children of his own.[12]

Thus, most of the Mitchell houses on Snake Lane were built during the last quarter of the 19th century by the children of Robert Mitchell.

Footnotes

1 Liber JLGC, Folio 239
2 Liber JLGD, Folio 16
3 Ref. Liber JLGC, Folio 239
4 Liber JLGA, Folio 257
5 Liber JLGE, Folio 416
6 Liber JLGP, Folio 430
7 Mitchell family archives
8 HD 14/87
9 ALJ 32/190
10 ALJ 32/464
11 ALJ 36/186
12 ALJ 64/373

Bel Air
USGS Quadrangle Map
HA-1288



HA- 1288

Mitchell-Lauterbach
Churchville, MD 21028

Natalie Shivers

March, 1979
Northwest

Ha- 1288

Mitchell-Lauterbach
Churchville, MD 21028
Natalie Shivers
March, 1979
Southwest