

SUMMARY

HA-1570
Brown-Fletcher House
29 Fort Hoyle Road
Magnolia, Maryland 21101

Architecturally, the Brown-Fletcher house is similar to most of the other 19th century dwellings in Magnolia. Its real significance today rests with its occupant, Mrs. Blanche Fletcher, a lifelong resident of Magnolia who has vivid memories of growing up and living in this village.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Brown-Fletcher House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
29 Fort Hoyle Road

CITY, TOWN

Magnolia

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland 21101

COUNTY

Harford

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" 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
Blanche and Robert Fletcher

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER
29 Fort Hoyle Road

CITY, TOWN
Magnolia

___ VICINITY OF

STATE zip code
Maryland 21101

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: GRG 496

Folio #: 302

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

HA 1570

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Fletcher house is located at #29 Fort Hoyle Road, on the northwest side of the roadway. The structure faces east, and is a 2 story frame gable roof residence with an L plan. It is a 3 bay wide I- house (1 Bay deep) with an ell to the rear that is also 1 bay deep. Across the front or east elevation is a 1 story shed roof porch, enclosed with modern windows. The roof is of modern materials and the entire dwelling, which had been clad with wood shingles is now covered with formstone. All windows are 1/1.

In the north bay of the east elevation is a side entrance. The original first floor plan consisted of 2 parlors in the main block, with a heating stove in the smaller (North) room adjacent to the entrance. The Fletchers later removed the partition, and so the 1st floor is now 1 large (living) room, with a kitchen in the ell to the southwest. The stairway is along the rear (west) wall of the 1st floor. It has a closed carriage and a rail supported by plain square balusters with a large square newel. In the second story are 3 bedrooms and a bathroom, the latter installed in 1957. Interior door and window trim is plain boards. Doors are 4 panels - 2 tiers, with surface mount locksets. Floors are random width boards, 3"-5" wide. The basement revealed circular sawn joists.

The house is typical of the other frame houses in Magnolia in its shape and plan. According to Mrs. Fletcher, this house was a rental property owned by George W. Brown. Its date of construction is not precisely known. However, it was the residence of George W. Brown's son Jesse Warren Brown, whose son George C. Brown was born at home in 1883. A construction date of between 1870 and 1880 is probable. The Fletchers rented this house from the Browns beginning in 1927 and purchased the property in 1957 from the estate of George C. Brown.

HISTORY

Blanche Fletcher was born in the house at #32 Fort Hoyle Road to John and Blanche Skillman. Her father was a blacksmith in Magnolia who had come to the area around 1890 and apprenticed himself to Morrison Swift. Swift had leased 3/4's of an acre from George W. Brown in 1872 (two leases ALJ 27/223, ALJ 35/1) for a dwelling house and blacksmithy. Swift's name appears on the 1878 Martenet Map of Harford County. Skillman bought out Swift's leases (ALJ 71/447) and set himself up in business. His shop stood in the center of the village, north of the Pennsylvania Railroad station. After his death in 1927, his widow had it torn down. Blanche Fletcher reported that her father did the usual blacksmithy work (tool repairs, horse shoes) and also carriage repair work, that included jobs for the well to do inhabitants of the Gunpowder Neck. John Skillman never owned an automobile in his lifetime; he depended on horses or the trains for his transportation needs!

Blanche Skillman married Robert Fletcher at the Magnolia Methodist Church (HA-187) in 1927. Robert Fletcher was the brother in law of George C. Brown, proprietor of the Magnolia Store (HA-188) and he worked in the store as manager, buyer and clerk for 53 years. The Fletchers set up housekeeping at #29 Fort Hoyle Road, (See Mrs. Fletcher's reminiscences about her wedding day - attached), and have been there ever since.

(SEE DESCRIPTION CONTINUATION SHEET #1)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
REHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES Circa 1880?

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The house at 29 Fort Hoyle Road is typical not only of the other late 19th century residences in Magnolia, but also of other dwellings built in the same period throughout Harford County. It lacks any kind of applied decoration (brackets, vergeboards, etc.) but has the ever important porch attached at the front.

The Village of Magnolia was also typical of many small rural 19th century settlements, that grew up in close proximity to the railroad lines. Settlement of the area was spurred on by George W. Brown, who bought 49 acres of land, and leased out 1/2 acre parcels for period of 99 years to homeowners and tradesmen. By 1900, the village had not only a Railroad station, but a store and post office, blacksmithy, church and public school. It served not only the area north of the Pennsylvania R.R. lines, but also the Gunpowder Neck to the South.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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
Phillip R. Lord, Historic Site Surveyor

ORGANIZATION
Hafford County Department of Planning and Zoning

DATE
April, 1981

STREET & NUMBER
45 South Main Street

TELEPHONE
838-6000 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

Brown-Fletcher House
9 Fort Hoyle Road
Magnolia, Maryland 21101

Blanche Fletcher has been designated as a Harford County Living Historical Treasure, by the County Council (1980). She has participated in an oral history program carried out by the Harford County Public Library geared to recording the reminiscences of the county's older citizens. A summary of Mrs. Fletcher's taped remarks is included in this report, as well as some additional comments on different aspects of life in Magnolia.

Mrs. Blanche Fletcher has a sense of place and a feeling for local history that is often difficult to find in our modern transient society. She has spent her entire lifetime in Magnolia, and has, vivid memories of what life was like in this small rural village. Perhaps more importantly, she has taken steps to ensure that Magnolia does not completely lose its identity. It is due in great part to her efforts that Magnolia still has its own Post Office (and individual zip code) in 1981. A quotation from her remarks sums up her feelings most accurately. "I am still fighting to keep the name Magnolia for my little area. The growth of the towns on each side, Joppatowne and Edgewood, haven't taken us over yet, and I don't think they ever will. Maybe I'm old fashioned but I was born and raised here. It's just sad when your neighborhood loses its identity."

MAGNOLIA

The growth of the Village of Magnolia is clearly illustrated by the following Maps:

1858 - Jennings & Herrick Map of Harford County

1878 - Martenet Map of Harford County

1904 - Maryland Geological Survey of Harford County Geological Formations

The 1858 Map shows 3 structures north of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore R.R. tracks, near the junction with the road leading south into the Gunpowder Neck (now Edgewood - Aberdeen Proving Ground). The only label for these buildings is "C.F. Smith Depot and P.O.". South of the tracks is a small area labeled "Magnolia Grove".

The 1878 Map reflects 20 years of growth in and around Magnolia. There is a school and James Carr & Harrison Swift, who were leasing ground from George W. Brown are indicated. Oddly enough, George Brown is noted only once as owning a structure south of the R.R. tracks.

The 1904 Map shows Magnolia in its most developed form. The houses near the intersection of Fort Hoyle Rd. and Magnolia Rd. (Md. 152) are all located. In 1917, the U.S. Government took over the area south of the R.R. tracks for a military reservation but this helped increase the activity in Magnolia as the main route into the installation passed through Magnolia. Not until 1943, when the R.R. station was demolished, and the military gate moved to northeast of the village did Magnolia's decline begin.

Robert and I were married on June 25, 1927 in our church. We celebrated our 50th Anniversary in 1977. We had 2 daughters, Ellen and Alyce (Ellen passed away this August 1980). Alyce and her husband, Donald Allegretto, had 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls.

Before and since our 2 daughters attended school I have always had an interest in education. I served in PTA at Magnolia and Edgewood Elementary Schools. Also served on Board of Education for 12 years, 1952 to 1965. I have the trowels for cornerstone laying of Edgewood High School in 1954, William Paca in 1964, and Magnolia Elementary in 1975. Took part in naming these and Riverside Elementary in Joppatowne, built on Riverside Farm in 1968 near Gunpowder River farmland.

I have served on local, county, and state council of Homemakers. Also as director of District 6 and secretary of Maryland Congress of Parents and Teachers. Have been one of Chief Judges of Election since 1965 in our district. Also served as Superintendent of Church School and a trustee and steward.

I'm listed in Who's who of Methodist Church, Personalities of the South, Who's Who of American Women, and Who's Who in the East.

As you travel down the narrow country road in the town of Magnolia, it's not easy to imagine earlier days when the area was the center of activities, in this southern end of 1st District of Harford County. In the late 1800's stage coaches to Baltimore stopped regularly at Magnolia station which was located at the Main General store. In the early 1900's the only blacksmith in the village was kept quite busy in his shop across from the store. Trains traveling on the Pennsylvania Railroad made stops often at Magnolia station, providing the main transportation for residents to the area. The post office was housed in the train station, as was the ticket agent and just down the road apiece was the only church in the area and a 2 room yellow school house, also a barber shop, shoe shop and a canning house.

I have lived my entire life in Magnolia, the youngest daughter of the village blacksmith, John Skillman. I can recall fond memories of my birthplace and with help from my Mother, my namesake, I have collected dates and facts about the town, its people and activities.

I am still fighting to keep the name "Magnolia" for my little area. The growth of the towns on each side, Joppatowne and Edgewood, haven't taken us over yet, and I don't think they ever will. Maybe I'm old fashioned but I was born and raised here and I guess I'll be carried away from here. It's just sad when your neighborhood loses its identity.

Warm memories are readily recalled about the old town's blacksmith shop, where "Papa" was a wheel wright too, who made farm wagon wheels and rimmed old ones, for local farmers. I can remember or picture the forge and anvil in the center, the forge was an open fire, where irons were heated by forced draught and fashioned into metal while it was hot. The anvil was an iron block used for the hammering and shaping of metals. There were also 2 different stalls used for unruly horses, to be lifted off their feet, for new shoes.

Papa always wore a canvas apron and a derby. Many days I would stay with him and raise a "horse tail" on a stick to keep the flies off the horses while being shod. Blacksmithing was big business in those days.

When the U.S. Cavalry was stationed at Edgewood Arsenal or Fort Hoyle the name of the road was changed because the cavalry used the railroad crossing to get in and out of the Arsenal. Trade was good with all the traffic funneled through Magnolia. During World War 1 Papa and my older brother, Raymond, went to work at the Arsenal because many residents were starting to get rid of their horses. We saw our first auto when H. G. McCommons purchased one and drove down through town on what is now Fort Hoyle Rd. I remember how excited we were and would run from the house to the road when we heard him coming in his machine.

Some of my most vivid memories are connected with the Magnolia Railroad Station and the signal tower. The ticket agent, in charge, lived on the 2nd floor and Magnolia Post Office was in the rear of the same building. There were 2 waiting rooms in the front and a wagon stable and outdoor toilet facilities were out back. Local history books recall that in 1864 Gilmer's Raiders led by Major Harry Gilmer of the Confederate Army led his troops through Maryland and Pennsylvania stopping off at the Magnolia Station. The first 2 trains that came up the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad near the Gunpowder River were captured and burned. Then also pushed on to the river bridge crossing and set fire to that. For years some graves were sighted near the tracks.

I attended the 2 room elementary school house built in 1873. Of my teachers I remember fondly Jessie Davis and Elizabeth Famous. (from whom I still hear from). They would start each school day by ringing the pull bell in the belfry. The more than 40 students in 7 grades would come to their two

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seated desks and studies would begin. At recess or lunch time, the students would take turns going across the road for spring water, to be used by drinking out of the dipper. In 1912 this school burned and we attended classes in the old church hall until a new one room school was built. The church hall was part of the Magnolia Episcopal Church which was built in 1888 by John A. Sheridan at the cost of \$1,750. The ground of the church was donated by George W. Brown, one of the 3 generations of owners of the Brown's store. Before this time the Magnolia residents for miles around attended the old Brick Church (Presbury or Gunpowder Meeting House) located within Edgewood Arsenal. The church still stands but is vacant. In 1968 a new church, Presbury United Methodist, was built on Edgewood Rd., merging Edgewood and Magnolia congregations. Our town is in a horseshoe shape which begins at Magnolia Rd. (Route 152) and ends at Trimble Rd. We got our name "Magnolia" from the many wild trees that grew in the swamp and wooded areas near by. Every morning, 6:50 a.m., I had to catch a train, in sight of home, to attend our nearest high school in Aberdeen, Maryland. After that I attended Professor Livingstone's Academy of Sewing and Designing in Baltimore, again taking the train for 2 years. They had good service in those days and our best and only transportation.

Again back to the famed Brown's General Merchandise Store. Customers would come on foot, horseback, or farm wagons from the end of Gunpowder neck (12 miles) or miles around, to shop or have work done at the village blacksmith shop. There was always time to sit on the front steps and pass away the hours or in the winter sit around the old stove to warm themselves. Many farm wives brought eggs and butter to trade in part for the groceries they needed, from huge barrels of flour, sugar, smoked or salted fish, pickles, etc. For the children was the large selection of penny candy. My husband,

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Robert, came to work for his sister Lula F. Brown and her husband, George W. Brown, in 1918. When his brother-in-law died in 1947 he managed the business until 1970. This was the 3rd generation of Browns. George W. Brown who was born in Baltimore in 1835 had the store and connecting home built in 1865. In those days stage coaches as I have said stopped enroute to Baltimore. There was also a traveler's bar, so was considered a lively spot of that day. George retired and opened a cannery nearby, canning some 12,000 cases of tomatoes each year.

The old station was torn down in 1943, the crossing was also closed to Edgewood Arsenal and an overhead bridge was built near the site of the old school and that took much of the traffic out of the village. The trains didn't stop at "Magnolia" after 1958. The name Magnolia on railroad property was taken down. I still have 2 of those signs. Going quickly by was the name, the identity of "Magnolia". With the railroad station closed the post office found a new home in Brown's store. Lula F. Brown was postmaster for 35 years. After retirement Mildred E. Price served for 15 years, until their deaths in 1970 and 1974. Before the closing of store there was talk in the town of taking "Magnolia" post office away and Joppa rural delivery serve the patrons. Many petitions were signed to keep "Magnolia" and I give Congressman Clarence Long, alot of credit that we still have our "Magnolia" zip code, 21101, in a portable trailer near Route 152, across from where the old school used to be, from old church hall in 1975. I have served as assistant to 2 former postmasters on vacations or in case of illness.

Many of our land marks are gone. Homes changed and old family names moved or died. At one time there were 4 canneries in good business, Armstrong's, Archers, Flottermesah and J. Warren Brown. No trace of them now in Magnolia. We do have 2 businesses, the Harford Sands and Susquehanna Concrete Products.

Blanche Fletcher and Magnolia

December 10, 1980 Page 5

Heavy trucks travel from early morning until late at nights. Penn Central or Amtrak trains speed by on newly laid track and concrete ties instead of wood, and school buses to and fro to Magnolia Middle School, Magnolia Elementary School, and to Joppatowne High School near by. When you lose your school, your train station, church, and store you lose the identity fo your neighborhood. That's a little disheartening and sorrowful when you're in love with an old town, your birthplace 76 years ago.

HA-1570

BLANCHE FLETCHER

ON MAGNOLIA

MARCH, 1981

THE RAILROADS

Steam engines were used by the Pennsylvania Railroad. Yes, they billowed out great puffs of black smoke and soot. And loud whistles. Water troughs were between the rails here in the block or section and water was drawn up to the engines - water supplied from large reservoirs with fine springs - piped under road up by the village church. This supply is still used by several homes, mine included. Railroad men used to keep it cleaned each Fall and replace wooden box covers - now as it isn't used by the railroad - the tree supply was given to land owners and kept up by same. A signal tower was near the station where trains in the flock were given a slow, go ahead or stop signals, by pull of levers. As a youngster the signal men and telegraph operator used to let me pull the levers (much as they use on joker's wild television show now, to beat the devil).

A gatekeeper was south of the station around the clock, for crossing the tracts into Gunpowder Neck. This was a hand cranked gate and he raised and lowered the gates for passing traffic - when train was in the block. A half mile down there was another unwatched crossing for families living along the banks of the Gunpowder and farm land. As I have recalled - we had many accomodations of trains North and South. 1919, when I went to Aberdeen H.S. and my sister before me and later to Baltimore. Housewives went to markets in City that they could not get at local store and for clothes.. My 2 daughters traveled to schools, music and secretarial in 1950's and I spent many hours washing, ironing skirts, dresses and blouses. In summer the windows and doors on rattling coaches were open and plenty of soot and dirt. We had large section or block track men to keep tracks in repair and can recall many wrecks - that brought things to a standstill and long hours of clean up.

During first World War thousands of workers traveled by rail, extra work trains scheduled to accommodate them. One time 15 including a railroad detective were killed when ones waiting inside pushed out to waiting platform, pushing workers in the path of a fast train, mistaken to be theirs. Later doors were cut in end of the 2 waiting rooms instead of facing the tracks.

Much shipping was done over the railroad, tomatoes, corn from canneries, milk from farms and empty cans shipped in and canned or fresh milk shipped out. Yes, horse shoes nails and supplies. We had two goods sidings for loading and unloading. Many local people were employed, postmaster, freight agent, and station agent, section boss and workers, telegraph operator, station master, ticket agent and gate keeper. Many still came to watch the trains go by. Metroliners, freight of all kinds and just railroad, for a hobby. Hundreds came to watch the funeral trains of President Roosevelt and Kennedy go through, also when the Freedom train stopped for a signal - (now all electrified.) Mail and parcel post were also carried by train. Pouches put on a post catcher as trains speeded by - or carried by baggage or main coach as trains stopped. Mail assorted enroute, to Baltimore. (Many carrier pigeons shipped here for release to Jersey and points North. Thousands of dollars bet on time and flight

General Merchandise Store

Only way like a present supermarket. You could buy anything you needed at one spot. (hardware, clothing - men's, boy's, girl's, women) hose - sweaters, shirts, underwear, dungarees, overalls, boots, rubbers, some shoes - other's could be ordered. All baking supplies and daily bakery goods, feed (horse, cow, chicken) fertilizer, lime, gas and oil and kerosene. (outside warehouse.) Dairy products, ice cream, sodas, penny candies, some non prescription drugs, stationery and school supplies. All canned fruits and vegetables, loose and boxed cookies. (Many charged from one month credit - lot of losses too). Also sold cosmetics, sewing and crocheting cottons, some cotton dresses

lengths and oil cloth. Cleaning and washings products, clothes pins, wash and foot tubs, enamel and galvanized buckets and basins.

(Business since 1865 - 3 generations - Geo. W. Brown (2 sons, 2 daughters), Jesse Warren Brown (1 son, 2 daughters) George Calvin Brown - no children. Robert work in store 53 years - (buyer and manager 23 years.) Community meeting place indoors and out on big front porches. Stage coach stop, bar and restover. Selling or buying while horses being shod (across the road). Exchange eggs and butter for other products. Railroad passengers meeting place (across the road) from station. Inside - 1st big log burning chunk stove, then pot belly stove, then oil heater with fan circulating heat. Cash register and safe and records in enclosed railing with 2 swinging gates. Walk in refrigerator, big show case display for meats, cheeses, lunch cuts, sodas and milk. Ice cream freezer and soft drink cooler. Glass show cases on counter around 2 sides and candy cases. (Post office enclosure) 2 scales, 1 with meats other for weighing up sugars, flour, corn-meal etc. bought by the barrel at first, later bought bagged and boxed. Many spices stocked. Also working gloves, canvas, rubber and leather palmed.

THE MAGNOLIA CHURCH

Church - will list some activities in which we both served then elaborate on some and offices filled by elected members. Supt. S.S. - treasurer, secretary, cradle roll, Crown pin attendance system, maintenance, janitor, organist, choir. Trustee, steward, treasurer, secretary, communion steward Ch. of mission-board - Ladies Aid, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treas. coupon ch. Attended workshops, studies of Bible Old and New, and othe books. Conventions (district and county) Had Oyster, chicken, ham, crab cakes, pot lock suppers. Icecream festival - peach and strawberry. Box socials, community sings, choir, Christmas, Children's Day, Rally Day programs. Decorations - Ferns, ramble roses, etc. Plays, mixed groups, Tom Thumb wedding. Weddings, Funerals, Anniversaries. Visiting ministers for dedications. Parents boarded ministers in their homes - one married my oldest sister, another the organist and my 3rd grade school teacher. Appts by district Supt. We attended annual conferences as delegates, attended Bible studies and work shops.

My wedding day June 25, 1927.

Manicure, hair marcel waved and I had made wedding dress and trousseau (white satin and lace) Church cleaned, decorated (ferns & flowers) new rubber runner for aisle. Reception held at bride's parent's home with buffet meal, cake (decorated) etc. Pastors (2) my brother in law and pastor of church (latter attended our 50th anniversary in 1977) Maid of honor my sister Idella Kiror - she and husband Fred brought out our flowers from (Savalls (Baltimore) evening before and had rehearsal also. 4 ushers - Lamar Creswell, Elmer Robinson, Fred Kisor, Elwood Armstrong. (2 living at 50th anniversary - 1 attended) Robert's brother, Charlie best man. My father, John Skillman, gave me away. (died following October 12).

Many from out of town attended - church filled (200). Rice thrown and happy time. Took train to Baltimore then on to Atlantic City for 4 days (Traymore Hotel) came

back here to live. Had worked many weeks, cleaning, papering, painting to restore home
 All new furnishings living room (3 pieces), bed room (6 pieces) dining room (10 pieces
 kitchen table 2 chairs, ice box, kitchen cabinet 3 burner oil (cook) stove. Living
 room dining room bed room rugs, neucleum for kitchen.

Bagby whole sale furniture - Baltimore - \$500. cash - 1927

Employment in Magnolia

Magnolia residents had employment here

Farmers
 Canners, Tomatoes and Corn
 Blacksmith - wheel wright, carriage curtains
 Shoemaker
 Barber
 Store-merchang
 Ticket Agent (Penny R.R.)
 Freight agent
 Telegraph operator
 Crossing Watchman (3)
 Postmaster
 Minister
 Railroad Section Boss
 Laborers on Track
 Track walkers
 Pullman Conductor
 R.R. conductor and fireman and engineers
 Teachers
 fisherman

Elsewhere

Book binder
 doctors
 government
 insurance
 salesman



Blanche Fletcher

"THE RECORD"

Blanche Fletcher

4 MARCH 1981

Blanche Fletcher, 76, of Magnolia worked only briefly outside her home for pay, though she did work in the general merchandise store that her husband had next to their home. The post office was located inside the store and when the postmistress went on vacation, Mrs. Fletcher would take over the postal operation for her.

The third woman to serve on the Harford County Board of Education, Mrs. Fletcher had a seat on the Board from 1952 until 1965. During that time, she helped scout out the location for Harford Community College and she gave out the diplomas to the first graduating class (of four students) at the college.

Growing up right across the road from her present home, Mrs. Fletcher said she never thought of preparing herself for a life as an active member of the community. "I didn't have any idea that I was going to be in the public eye," she said. But she has broken ground and laid cornerstones at three different schools. She has given out diplomas at school graduations and made speeches. She attributes some of her ability to speak in public from training she received in the most traditional way.

An active member in the Homemakers Club that the cooperative extension service provides, Mrs. Fletcher served four years as president of the Harford County Council of Homemakers. For "26 years straight," she attended a week-long summer course at the University of Maryland that the extension service offered to women. Known as the college week for women, the program gave women from all over the state a chance to live together in the college dormitories for a week, listening to noted speakers and college professors and taking day trips to Washington, D.C. for museum tours, boat trips on the Potomac River and evenings out.

Courses on home management and furnishing were offered, along with courses on clothing and food and family life, international relations, banking and money management, writing a will and public relations. She took a course there once on public speaking. "I can just see that teacher telling you how to preside," she said. "I don't know that I was very good at it, but I wasn't scared to death."

The courses she took at the University of Maryland "short-course" week became valuable later. Active in the PTA at four different schools in Harford County,

she served at one point as secretary of the Maryland Congress of PTAs and the district director of the PTAs in five counties. The Homemakers Clubs were organized by district as well and she has served as director there. "I used to go all over the county at night," she said, traveling Harford, Cecil and Baltimore counties to attend meetings. "There's a new school and you'd try to find it," Mrs. Fletcher said, laughing about the number of times she stopped to ask directions.

Mrs. Fletcher said she thinks women used their positions in traditional women's groups to become more confident about dealing with people in other settings. Homemakers Clubs and the PTA offered women a chance to hold office, run business meetings, speak in public and talk with other women who led similar lives.

Robert Fletcher, Mrs. Fletcher's husband, died two weeks ago after a long illness. Mrs. Fletcher credits him with being supportive of her activities. When the precinct at Joppa-Magnolia Fire Hall, where he had served as an election judge for years, was split in 1966, her husband decided not to continue working at the polls. He submitted his wife's name as his replacement and Mrs. Fletcher went to work as an election judge at the Joppatowne Elementary School voting place.

A graduate of Aberdeen High School in 1923, Mrs. Fletcher went on to study dress making for 18 months at Professor Livingston's Academy on Saratoga Street in Baltimore. When her granddaughter, a tenth-grader, recently had to write a school paper on the differences between her education and that of her grandmother's, Mrs. Fletcher said they talked for quite a while.

In addition to her other credits, Mrs. Fletcher has served as the superintendent of Sunday school at Magnolia Methodist Church. Asked how she ended up at the top of the ladder when she served in community groups, Mrs. Fletcher said, "I just worked my way up I guess." She also says, "I could have been president of the school board, but I didn't feel I was capable. I knew my limits; I didn't have the education I thought I should have to take on other projects."

Of the successes that have come to her in her life, Mrs. Fletcher said simply, "You've got to work for what you get."



Brown-Fletcher House HA-1570

29 Fort Hoyle Road

Magnolia, Md.

Phillip Lord 3/1981

southeast elevation