

HA- 1589

Davis Tavern  
High Point, Md.

summary

This log house is one of the larger such structures uncovered thus far in the Harford County Survey. Archival evidence strongly suggests that this was once a tavern on the old Joppa Road. The farm was most recently in the hands of the Schmidt family, who have sold the adjoining lands for residential development.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Davis Homestead

AND/OR COMMON  
Schmidt Farm

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
High Point Road

CITY, TOWN  
High Point

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
VICINITY OF High Point

STATE  
Maryland

COUNTY  
Harford County

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Mabel Schmidt

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER  
1722 Ingleside Road

CITY, TOWN  
Forest Hill

STATE, zip code  
VICINITY OF Maryland 21050

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 415

Folio #: 39

STREET & NUMBER  
40 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN  
Bel Air, Maryland

STATE  
Maryland 21014

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

NA-1587

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

A full two story log house, a bank barn and eight other outbuildings comprise this complex.

The house is a full two story log structure which was doubled in size by later frame additions. The original was 16'6" X 26' that eventually became 58' in total length (see drawing). At present (10/1/80) there is no evidence of any partition on the first floor suggesting a plan of one large room downstairs and two rooms up. There is no basement under the log portion.

The total structure is the equivalent of two bays in depth and six bays in length (under a gable-end roof) with the original house being 2 bays X 6 bays. Siding and interior trim make it difficult to ascertain original openings; there is an off center entrance in the central bay of the south facade. Modern 1/1 windows probably replace 6/6. Evidence in the attic (altered rafters) suggests that there was an interior end chimney and fireplaces on the west gable-end that was later replaced by a stove flue. The lack of exposed area on the first two floors prohibit any further report on the details of the log construction or plan except noting that the doorways average 10-3/4" in thickness and the present stairs in the log portion are a 12 treader straight stairs in the northwest corner. Like the trim elsewhere in the house the newel is treated with false graining.

The attic is the most informative area. One sees rafters that are lap joined pinned. While cut-nails fix the gable studs wrought nails were observed in the west wind brace. This brace spans three trusses while its counterpart of the east spans four. The attic flooring is tongue and groove up to 11" in width.

The disparity in materials and chimney alterations are cause for further examination for a possible roof raising.

The attached site plan shows a farm complex that has expanded over a period of successive generations. That a multitude of products were produced is suggested by buildings that housed different animals such as dairy cattle, chickens and turkeys and different grains such as corn and wheat. Chief among the outbuildings is a large drive through corn-crib and an even larger bank barn (demolished 4/81). The barn was a post and beam structure which also contained much circular sawn material. Vertical weatherboards were attached with cut-nails and white washed while the roof was covered with slate. Weathervanes in the shape of cows were both decorative and functional and stood upon the ends of the east west ridge. It measured 40' in depth and 60' in length and had the typical plan of byre below, mow above. The upper portion was tripartite with two hay storage areas separated by a drive. Other typical features included hay chutes on either side of the drive as well as ladders trunneled into the inner drive posts.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

NA-1589

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
REHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The "log cabin" still means many things to many people: Romantic notions of strength of character and the pioneer spirit persist and there is also a generation of poor people still alive who remember efforts at hiding the old log house with siding, additions etc.

Whatever the image that comes to mind at the hearing of "log house" few of us picture a full two story 16'6" X 30' building. This is in fact what the Davis house is, however, and it is at least 140 years old. Alterations leave us with few if any decorative clues or even a clear idea of plan. It does appear to have been a three bay central entrance plan; the size of the building and asymmetrical fenestration strongly suggest the likelihood of a transverse partition. However, evidence that John Davis operated a tavern on the old Joppa Road would explain a large single room plan as well.

Its construction type and size make this an important building which expands our understanding of log buildings in Harford County and the rest of Maryland.

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

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Wayne Nield II, Historic Site Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Harford 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

## HISTORY

HA-1589

Schmidt House

The Schmidt family has lived on and worked this farm since 1900, the John Davis family occupied it from 1825 until 1900 and there were several owners before them. The two story log house is probably the one appearing on the 1814 tax list owned at that time by Ebenezer Killough.

As late as 1954 the property description refers to it as being parts of "St. Albins", "Huetts Range", "Tucks and Things" and "Park Hill". These names have various spellings between 1705 and 1981 e.g. St. Albans, St. Albins, Hewit, Huett and Huit. For most of the time between 1806 and 1900 there was 128 acres with the breakdown being:

Huetts Range	95 acres
St. Albans	28 + acres
Tucks-and-Things	2 + acres

According to the important Harford Co. Certificates of Survey (H.W. Archer 1893) "Huitts Range" was granted to Robert Hewitt of Ann Arundel County July 26, 1705. It was a 200 acre tract adjoining "St. Albans." "St. Albans" was a 500 acre tract on a spring branch feeding into Winter's Run. "Park Hill" mentioned in the 1954 description is also mentioned as adjoining "St. Albans" in 1705 and is described as being "at the head of Bush River." This location probably places this property in the Bush River Upper Hundred which is one of the missing segments of the 1798 tax list.

It is interesting to note that the early 19th century deeds describe the property as being on the Joppa Road. The dirt lane running N-S just 50' or so west of the log house is probably a remnant of the old road to Joppa and is clearly defined as a major road on the Atlases of 1858 and 1878.

The physical evidence combined with the archival information raises some interesting questions. Chief among these concern the exact age of the house and the identity of its builder.

Full two story log houses are not numerous in this county. While predominately cut-nails are present in the roof framing wrought were found. If it is an 18th century building it is probably not pre 1790. Patience Taylor transfereed Hewetts Range to her son Richard in 1789. Taylor sold the land to John Hall in 1796. Hall does not appear in the existing portion of the 1798 tax list. Hall's widow sold the property in 1806 and by 1811 Ebenezer Killough owned the 128 acre farm. In 1814 he paid tax on "Meets? Range, 28X17, 2-story log house, kitchen (log) 16X11, Weavers shop (19X13), barn (35X17) 1½ story, log 2 out houses \$1025."

The present log structure measures 27' X 16', is built of materials that could have existed in 1814 and it stands on the tract which Killough owned at that time.

It is curious, however, that this long and narrow log house has a one room plan below. No evidence of any partition has yet been found (1/81). That this building was used if not designed to be a tavern beginning In 1825 is suggested by the will and inventory of the estate of John Davis who bought the three part 128 acre tract on March 12, 1825. In his will of 1835 Davis left each of his ten children a bed, four of his sons received portions of land and David and William got the tools and "bar furniture."

(See History Continuation Sheet #1)

## Schmidt House

John Davis died in 1839 and the inventory of his estate includes not only the bar furniture but a still, cider works, a barrel of cider wine, three gallons of brandy, 40 cider barrels as well as a barrel of sour wine, 8 salting tubs and 6 flour barrels. These are not normal supplies even for a family of twelve and it seems certain Davis was manufacturing spirits. The "bar furniture" and single large room in a house which stood directly on the Joppa Road suggest that Davis was brewing beverages for his own tavern.

That seventy-five people owed him a total of no more than \$34.56 at the time of his death further supports the likelihood that Davis sold drinks and possibly food in a retail rather than wholesale operation.



NA-1589

SCHMIDT FARM (DAVIS HOMESTEAD)

TITLE SEARCH

(Continuation Sheet #1)

- 5. HDW/189&190      October 10, 1811      Grantor: Ebenezer Killough (of Pennsylvania)  
Grantee: Aquila Green  
(Straw transaction)
- 6. HDS/499      August 26, 1806      Grantor: Susannah Hall, Widow  
Grantee: Aquilla Green  
97 Ac. of "Huetts Range"  
28+Ac. St. Albans  
2+Ac. Tucks and Things  
128+ acres
- 7. J.L.G. N/553      Nov. 18, 1797      Grantor: Saml. Raine  
Grantee: Jon. Hall  
Acreage: 2 ac. of "Tucks & Things" bordering  
Huetts, St. Albans, etc.
- 8. JLG N/353      November 23, 1796      Grantor: Richard Taylor  
Grantee: John Hall  
Acreage: 97 ac. called Hewitts Range conveyed  
to Taylor by his mother Patience  
Taylor Nov. 28, 1789
- 9. JLG K/442      November 28, 1789      Grantor: Patience Taylor  
Grantee: Richard Taylor  
Hewitts Range adjoins St. Alban near  
Winters Run.

Tract Names

Archer, H.W.  
Harford Co. Certificates of Survey

Huit's Range: 1893

- granted to Robt. Hewitt of A.A. Co.  
Jul. 26, 1705 200 acres adjoining "St. Albans."

"St. Albans"

- a 500 ac tract on a spring branch feeding Winters Run

"Park Hall"

- also mentioned; laid out in 1705 adjoining St. Albans  
and described as "at the head of Bush River", 100 ac.

(See Title Search Continuation Sheet #2)

## SCHMIDT FARM (DAVIS HOMESTEAD)

## TITLE SEARCH

(Continuation Sheet #2)

Bureau of Vital Statistics 1890

Will of John Davis - June 24, 1835  
(Deceased by May 20, 1839)

1st. - soul to God

2nd. - free all negroes by age 30-35

Negro Harry - free at 33

Hanna &amp; Hager (sp?) - free at 35

Hager's - all to be free at age 30

3rd. - Estate to wife Mary

Sons Luther - cane

Larkin - bed

daughter Emaline Watkins - chairs

son - Geo. W. - bed

daughter Mary - bed

Eliz. E. - bed

sons - David) -----St. Albins & Park Hill - 30 ac.  
Wm. J.)

one bed apiece, blacksmith and wheelwright tools, stove and bar furniture

sons - Aquilla) -----Hewitts Range, Tucks and Things - 100 ac.  
Jon. )Inventory TSB 7-305

Debts due the estate of Jon. Davis

75 people owed a total of \$34.56

Appraisers report:

Negro woman named Hager to serve 8 yrs. - \$.50

1 boy named Alvareder - 28 yrs. from Jan. 26, 1839

4 beds

1 barrel cider

3 gal. brandy

bar furniture

1 set cider works

1 still

40 cider barrels

5 .D. Hogsheads

8 salting tubs

6 flour barrels

JLG P/403

October 31, 1800 - transaction mentioning 200,000 pounds of tobacco  
and casks.

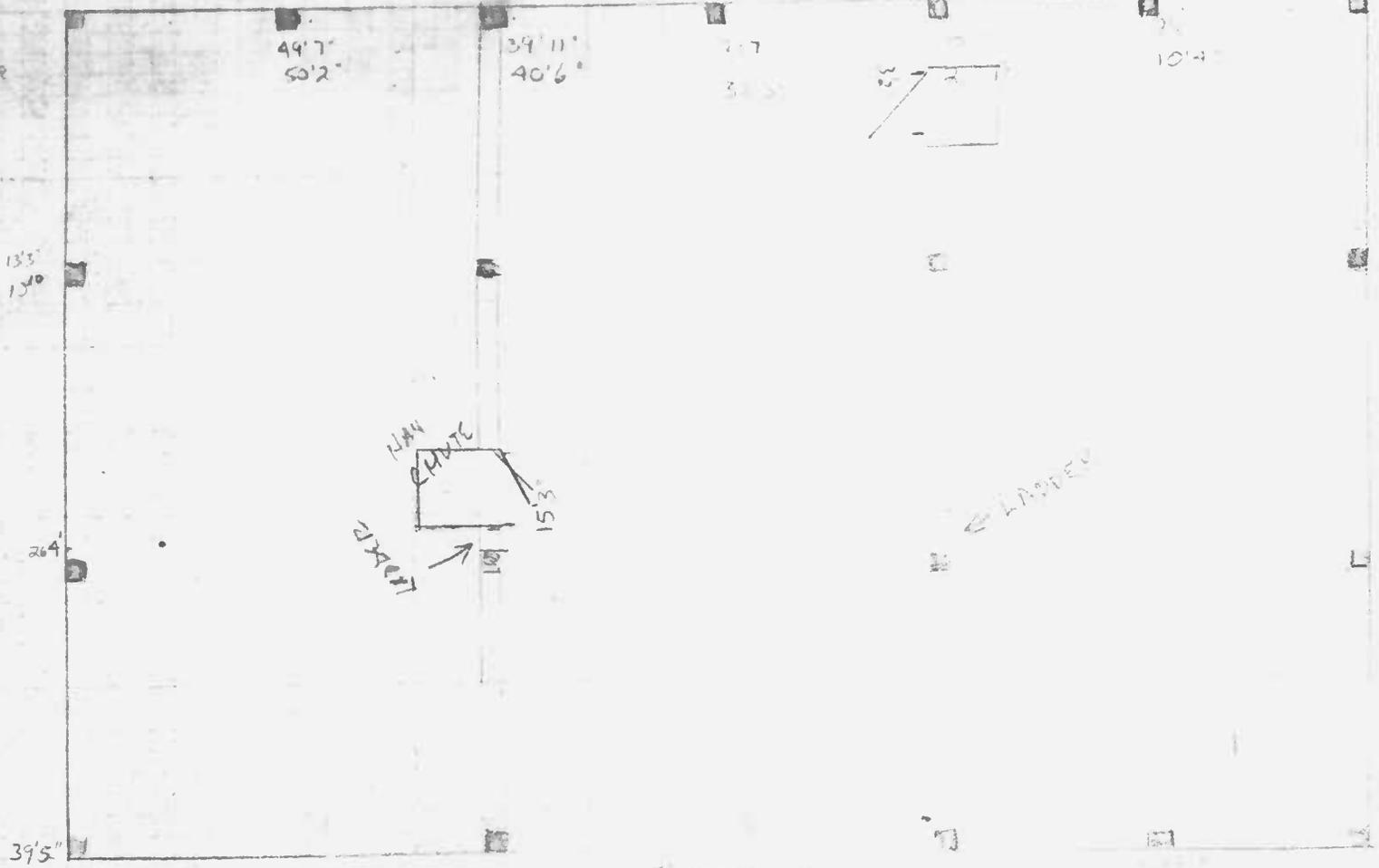


SHEET NO. \_\_\_\_\_ OF \_\_\_\_\_  
JOB NO. \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: 1 OCT 80 SUBJECT: Barn  
CHKD. BY: HA-1589  
BY: Schmidt Proj  
Taylors SD

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CHKD. BY: \_\_\_\_\_

8" Square Posts



POST + BEAM  
CUT NAILS  
CIRCULAR SAWN LUMBER  
Random width siding  
16' x 16' posts by 16' long



Jarrettsville  
MD  
7.5 MINUTE  
SERIES

HA-1589



HA-1589

Davis Tavern  
High Point, Md.  
Phillip R. Lord  
Southwest

10/80