

HA - 1752

Deaton Farm

Ca. 1885

Bel Air, Maryland

Private

The Deaton Farm is a small farm complex consisting of a house, barn, stable, and three sheds located in the midst of suburban strip commercial development and housing tracts. Scheduled for demolition in mid-1989, this is one of the most complete farm groups in the town limits. It exemplifies the transition from full-fledged agricultural economy to more town-oriented occupations in the late 19th century. The Deaton Farm was operated by its last private owners as a secondary occupation rather than their principal income. Its pasture along the busy Baltimore Pike was often grazed by cows, emphasizing the contrast with its surroundings.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Deaton Farm

## 2. Location

street & number 500 Baltimore Pike \_\_\_ not for publicationcity, town Bel Air \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 2ndstate Maryland county Harford

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name McGill Development Company, Inc.

street & number 6430-A Dobbin Road telephone no.: (301) 995-1535city, town Columbia state and zip code MD 21045

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harford County Court House liber CGH 1551street & number Courtland Street folio 198city, town Bel Air state MD

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. HA-1752

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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 of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Deaton Farm is a late nineteenth century agricultural complex consisting of a residence, stable/garage, barn, two small sheds presently used as chicken houses, and a third shed of undetermined use, all located on an approximately eight-acre site on the northwest side of the Baltimore Pike (U.S. Route 1) near the intersection of Kelly Avenue in Bel Air, Maryland. The complex is set back from Baltimore Pike about 300 feet at the end of a looping driveway. The area around the house and outbuildings is fenced off from an L-shaped open pasture which borders Baltimore Pike. Several large trees and shrubs screen the house from the road. The house is a two-story frame dwelling with novelty siding and a screened, columned one-story porch on its five-bay main or southeast elevation. An open porch is located on the northeast elevation. An ell with additions extends from the rear and a two-story polygonal bay is the main feature of the southwest elevation. The stable is a gable-roofed board and batten frame building which was extended from its front elevation to accommodate automobiles. The barn is a gable-roofed frame two-story building with vertical flush siding. The two chicken houses are small frame sheds with open sides on the southwest. The third shed is a simple clapboard-sided frame building with a gable roof and single door on the northeast. (See site plan.)

See Continuation Sheets for General Description



# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. HA-1752

Land Records of Harford County

Preston, Walter W. History of Harford County, Maryland. Baltimore, Md.: Press of The Sun Book Office, 1901.

Wright, C. Milton. Our Harford Heritage. Privately published, 1967.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 8.3

Quadrangle name Bel Air, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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## Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary includes the original 7-acre farm plus a less than 1 acre addition purchased in 1952 from the neighboring Kelly estate to correct an encroachment problem.

## List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janet L. Davis, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date May 1989

street & number 5632-C Loch Raven Blvd. telephone (301) 323-3852

city or town Baltimore state MD 21239

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  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Deaton Farm  
Bel Air, Maryland

Section 7, Page 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Deaton Farm dwelling house is a five-bay, two-story, frame building with a gable roof and a central projecting gable in the front roof. The foundation of the house is stone and the main section and ell are covered with novelty siding. Green louvred shutters flank most of the one-over-one windows. The central gable is shingled and has a small round-arched window with two-over-two sash. The cornice returns, setting off the central gable. The roof is slate. The one-story porch covers the central three bays of the facade. It has a brick foundation, suggesting it may have been added later, in the early twentieth century. The porch columns are Tuscan order. The screening is placed behind the columns, indicating a further alteration. The entrance has a 12-light beveled glass door, beveled glass sidelights and transom.

The southwest end of the main section is a three-sided, two-story bay extending the entire depth of the section. The gable face is shingled above the bay, which has a flat roof. The northeast elevation features a one-story open porch with the same Tuscan columns as on the front porch. It extends the depth of the house and the ell. Pilasters at the junction of the porch roof and house wall have scroll-sawn brackets. A door leads into the main section from the porch and a floor-to-ceiling six-light window opens into the ell, which contains the dining room. The upper story windows on this elevation are six-over-six and have no shutters. The cornice returns on the shingled gable of the main section. A brick chimney rises from the junction of the main section and the dining room ell. The ell has modern composition roofing.

The kitchen was probably built as a one-story shed on the dining room ell. At an undetermined date, the kitchen was given an additional half-story with its upper story windows just under the eaves. The windows are three-over-three in the upper story and six-over-six in the first story. A shed porch projects over an entrance on the southwest side. A second interior chimney with a corbeled cap rises from the northwest end of the kitchen. A further one-story extension was added to the northwest elevation of the kitchen at an unknown date in the twentieth century. Its shed roof is composition and the siding is clapboard.

The interior plan is basically a single pile, center hall type, (See Floor Plan.) The hall is separated from the northeast room by a columned archway. The southwest room with the polygonal bay is entered via a doorway with pocket doors. The staircase has a square newel with molding panels. The railing has plain square balusters. All the interior trim in the main section is dark stained oak. The living room on the northeast has an oak mantel with ogee curve brackets supporting the shelf. The fireplace is closed off. The walls are painted plaster over lath. The southwest room was used by Mrs. Deaton as a music room and once contained a grand piano. After her death and when Mr. Deaton's health began to fail, the room was made into a bedroom with a small bath added in the northeast corner. The dining room has a plain painted wood mantel over an arched opening.

The only other feature of importance is the floor-to-ceiling window opening on the side porch. The kitchen has been remodeled several times, but still has an entrance to the back stairs leading to the low-ceilinged room above, which suggests it was built as a servant's bedroom. The four upstairs bedrooms are notable primarily for the oak woodwork and raised panel doors. Each door has a working transom.

The outbuildings are clustered west of the house except the stable/garage, which is opposite the end of the rear ell to the north. This building was erected as a board and batten rectangular structure with a central cross gable and an arched window duplicating that of the main house. Twin vents ride the ridge of the main roof. The roof was probably originally slate like the main house, but it is now composition. In the early twentieth century, the facade on the northeast corner and in the center were brought forward and a second projecting gable with a slight bellcast was built. Double doors open into a central space for an automobile. The barn is a tall frame building with vertical flush siding. The three sheds, located south of the barn, show the different roofing and siding materials common to small agricultural buildings whose use has changed over time.

ADDENDUM: A further visit to the Deaton Farm was made after the property had been vandalized in late May. The beveled glass door and sidelights, the pocket doors, most of the interior stained doors, and the front room mantelpiece were stolen. The removal of the mantel revealed original wallpaper under the wood, indicating that the mantel was a later addition. A sample of the wallpaper was retrieved and was deposited in the Town of Bel Air file on the Deaton Farm. Based on this evidence, it is clear that the woodwork of the main section of the house was installed later, most probably in the early twentieth century.

CONTINUATION SHEET

HA-1752

Section 8, Page 1

Deaton Farm  
Bel Air, Maryland

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Industrial/Urban Dominance, A.D. 1870 - 1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Themes:

Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning  
Agriculture

Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use: Domestic/Single dwelling/Residence  
Domestic/Secondary structure/Garage  
Agriculture/Subsistence/Agricultural outbuilding/Barn  
Agriculture/Subsistence/Animal facility/Chicken coop

Known Design Source: None

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 8-2

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Deaton Farm  
Bel Air, Maryland

Section 8, Page 2

HISTORIC SETTING:

Harford County was formed in 1773 from Baltimore County as a result of travel difficulties between the upper part of the original county and the county court house, then located in Baltimore City. The new county seat of Harford County was first located near Bush, but in 1782 was moved to Scott's Old Fields, a tract further north. By 1787, this new town was known as Bel Air. The first court house was completed in 1791 and occupied a large lot near the center of town, a series of 42 lots laid out on the road from Rocks to Bush. Throughout the rest of the eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth century, the town of Bel Air slowly developed as a government and law-oriented town. Its population increased, then declined about the middle of the nineteenth century. Small shops were interspersed among the dwellings and law offices which composed the town. Surrounding Bel Air were farmsteads of various sizes, from large mansions to simple vernacular frame or stone houses, with their associated outbuildings. As transportation improved after the Civil War, increasing numbers of these farms came to be used as year-round residences by Bel Air townspeople. The farmsteads, large and small, shared several basic features in common, usually a main house and a group of domestic outbuildings clustered to the rear and sides of the dwelling house. The Deaton Farm is one of the small farmstead type. It was built about 1885, probably by the Coale family. The 7-acre property was enough to produce the basic needs of a family whose principal livelihood was clearly non-agricultural.

RESOURCE HISTORY:

The land which includes the Deaton Farm was part of the tracts "Joshua's Meadows Enlarged" and "Poplar Neck". Although the land title appears traceable to the 1840's, the first reference to the original 7-acre subdivision of land is in 1877 when Joseph A. Coale acquired it for \$490 in a sheriff's sale. Coale himself had to sell it in 1885, probably to settle a debt, and apparently his wife Mary was able to purchase it. The increased value is reflected in the sale price of \$1,500. This indicates that improvements probably including the main section of the house and the stable had been made. Ten years later, the estate of Mary Coale put the farm up for sale and got \$3,500 from Mollie V. Coale. The increased value over time may also be due to the adjacent development of the Fairgrounds of the Agricultural Society of Harford County. The 100-acre tract was laid out in the 1870's by G. G. Curtiss.<sup>1</sup>

The Coale family retained possession until 1915. In 1925, it was sold to Edna F. McClure, who later married Glen C. Deaton, a surveyor and engineer.

<sup>1</sup> Wright, C. Milton, Our Harford Heritage. Privately published, 1967, p. 298.

Since 1945, the farm has been associated with Deaton, who was County Surveyor from 1951 until the early 1970's.<sup>2</sup> As development in the town of Bel Air extended toward the southwest, the Deaton Farm came to symbolize the rural beginning of the county and its bucolic character.

RESOURCE ANALYSIS:

The Deaton Farm is an excellent example of a small family farmstead in the period of Industrial/Urban Dominance (A.D. 1870 - 1930) which reveals in its architectural details and compact size the increasing urbanization of rural vernacular architecture and agricultural development in the period. The town of Bel Air contained many examples of the type of dwelling house in the complex, some with barns and other outbuildings, but most of these now are missing their outbuildings. The Hopkins House (HA-1244, built 1879) contains considerably more elaborate architectural details, but has no extant outbuildings. The Dr. Benjamin Smith House (HA-1457, built 1884) has many similarities in exterior appearance to the Deaton house, but more elaborate interior woodwork.

The Deaton Farm is significant in the development of agriculture as it shows the transition from the fully self-supporting economic unit of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the less intensive homestead of the twentieth century, producing only the basic food needs of its owners. The extensive cultivation of fields and animal husbandry became less necessary as mass production made staples and luxuries more easily obtainable from other suppliers. The farm became almost a hobby or part-time occupation among the growing middle class whose primary income was earned in urban-oriented professions such as law, medicine, small businesses, and public service. This type of transitional agricultural-residential complex was most common near the towns of Bel Air, Aberdeen, and Havre de Grace.

The relative remoteness from Bel Air of the Deaton Farm emphasizes the rural character of the house and outbuildings and also helps to explain its present integrity. Only recently has the town annexed the Deaton Farm and the land around it has been increasingly developed with shopping centers and housing tracts. The farm is unique in its integrity as part of the town, but when compared to Harford County as a whole, it is clearly one of many such small farms of the same period. Most of the county examples, however, may be expected to have considerably more interior and exterior alterations than the Deaton Farm. The interior woodwork in its original stained finish must be highly unusual in either the urban or rural context, as the character of Harford County as a whole is changing so rapidly. The virtually original lot size is another element of integrity which contributes much of its historic character. As new housing and suburban commercial strip development surrounded

<sup>2</sup> Wright, p. 442.

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Deaton Farm  
Bel Air, Maryland

Section 8, Page 4

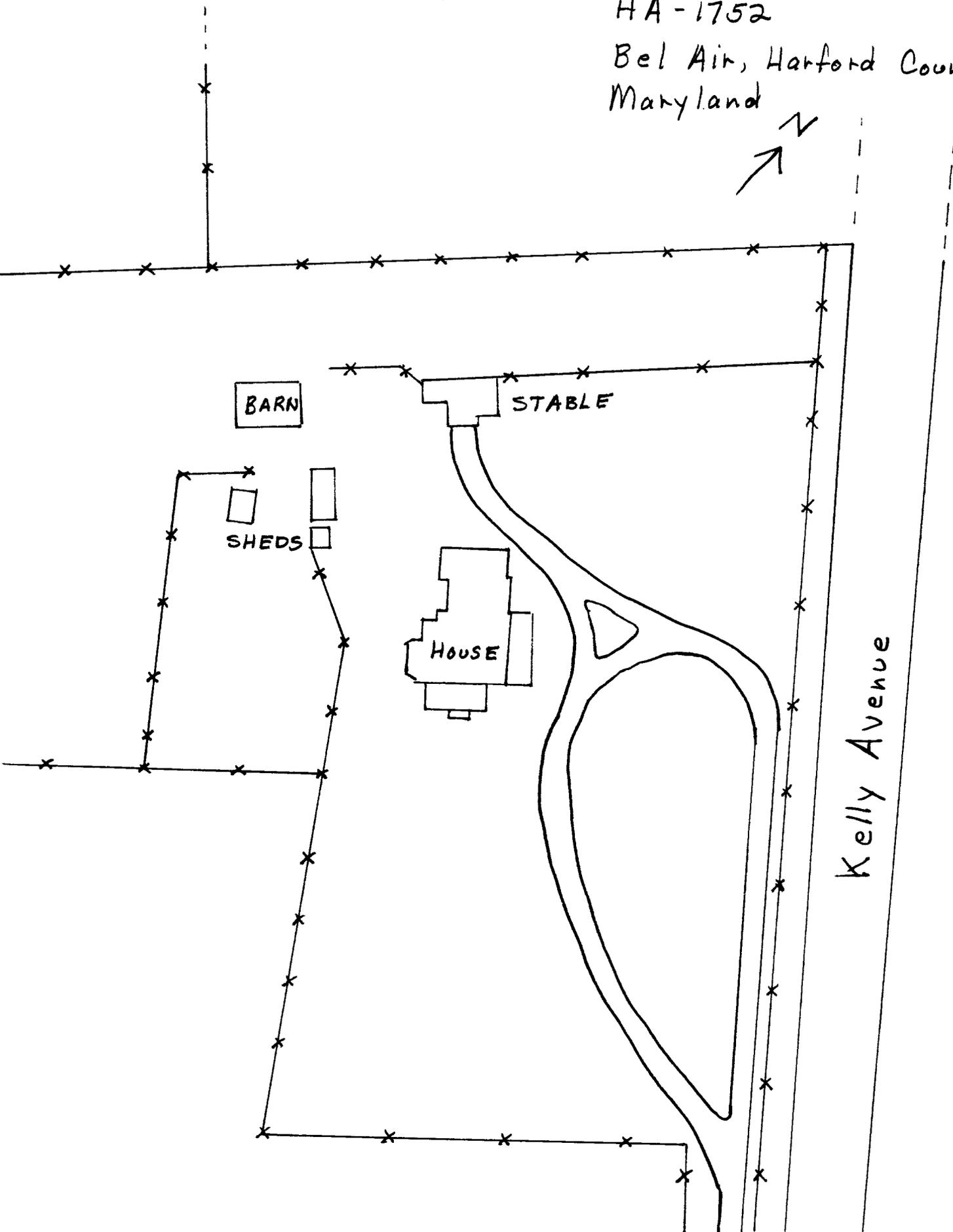
the farm, its pasture and setting amid a grove of trees drew attention to its nineteenth century origin. Until recently, the presence of cows in the pasture underscored the contrast.

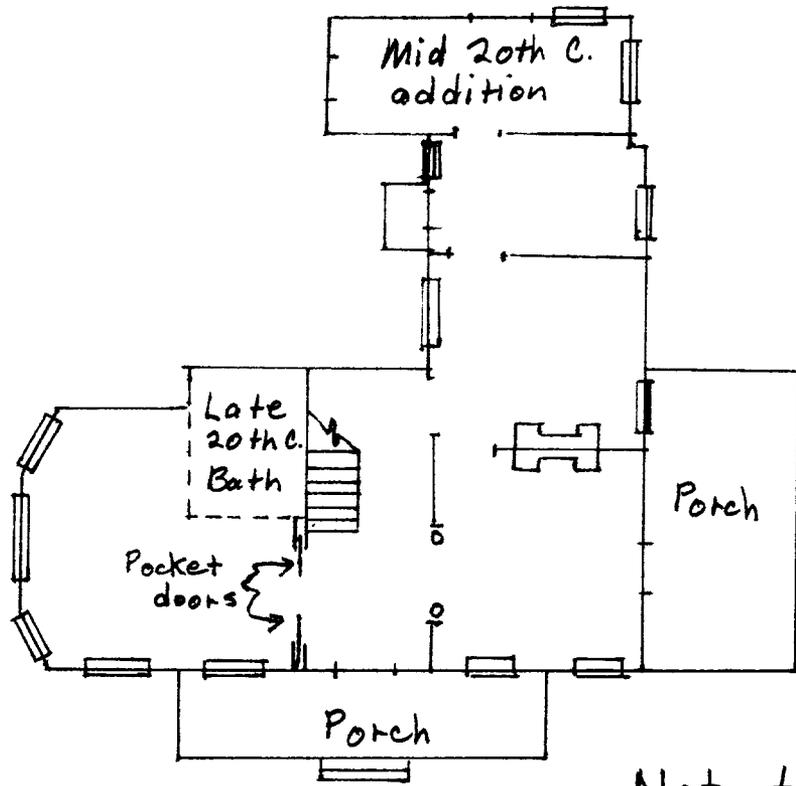
Site Plan

Deaton Farm

HA-1752

Bel Air, Harford County  
Maryland





Not to Scale

May 1989  
Janet L. Davis

Deaton Farm  
HA-1752  
Bel Air, Harford County  
Maryland



FAWN GROVE, PA 13  
FOREST HILL 1.7  
5763 III SW  
(JARRETTSVILLE)  
32°30'  
4375

Deaton Farm HA-1752  
Harford County  
Bel Air, MD quad



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet L. Davis

March 1987

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

General view from entrance drive of southeast elev.

1/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

Southeast elevation

2/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Hartford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPo

Northeast elevation

3/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

Southwest elevation

4/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

Northwest elevation

5/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

View of floor joists and foundation in cellar

6/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

General view, main hall and staircase

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Deaton Farm HA-1752

Hartford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

Main staircase

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Deaton Farm HA 1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

Mantel piece, dining room

10/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Hartford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

Typical door, second floor

11/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Harford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO

Stable/garage, southeast elevation

12/13



Deaton Farm HA-1752

Horford County, Maryland

Photographer: Janet Davis

March 1989

Neg. loc: Maryland SHPO

Barn and sheds, view from east

13/13