

ACHS SUMMARY FORM

M:13-10-7  
(date entered 5-4-88)

1. Name: Elizabeth Powers House

2. Planning Area/Site Number: 13/10/7 3. M-NCPPC Atlas Reference: Map 7  
Clarksburg H.D. A-4

4. Address: 23360 Frederick Road, Clarksburg

5. Classification Summary

Category	<u>building</u>	Previous Survey Recording	<u>M-NCPPC</u>
Ownership	<u>private</u>	Title and Date:	<u>1976 Inventory of</u>
Public Acquisition	<u>N/A</u>		<u>Historical Sites</u>
Status	<u>occupied</u>		
Accessible	<u>no</u>	Federal	<u>State</u> <u>x</u> <u>County</u> <u>x</u> <u>Local</u>
Present use	<u>private residence</u>		

6. Date: c. 1820/c. 1840

7. Original Owner: Henry Burnsides/Elizabeth Powers

8. Apparent Condition

a. good b. altered c. original site

9. Description: This three bay by five bay, two-and-a-half story, L-shaped house faces east. The clapboard siding is covered with asbestos, and the foundation is of uncoursed stone. The stone is laid very evenly with large, flat, wide stones alternating with smaller, flat sones; only a trace of mortar is visible. A small one-story porch is on the front. It has narrow tongue and groove ceiling painted blue, and a seamed metal shed roof supported by two square pillars. There is a central front door flanked by double windows. Windows are double-hung at the lower level, six-over-six double-hung on the upper story. There are decorative fixtures on the cornice similar to those of the Leonidas Willson house. The west (rear) elevation has a one story, two bay by two bay wing with a shed roof. There are three interior brick chimneys. The one bay by one bay outbuilding is clapboard; its gable roof is covered with corrugated metal.

10. Significance: The Elizabeth Powers house is associated with the early growth of 19th century Clarksburg as a communications center and major travel stop on the road from Washington to the north. Before 1820 the property was merely an adjunct to a tanyard and leatherworks occupying the next lot, but by the 1820 tax assessment a small building (probably the back one-story wing of the present house) is indicated. The owner, Bursides sold the property to John Poole in 1823, who sold it to Elizabeth and Isaac Powers in 1831. About 1840 the Powers built the main block of the house. Elizabeth became the town's postmistress in the 1850's, a position of importance since Clarksburg was a central mail disseminating point for upper Montgomery and the second oldest post office in the County. Mrs. Powers kept her position until after the Civil War. The house remained in the Powers family after Elizabeth's death in the 1890's, being willed to her children who sold it in 1926 to Kate Purdom. It was next sold in 1951 and again in 1969.

11. Researcher and date researched: Kevin Parker-7/79 Margaret Coleman Arch. Description

12. Compiler: Gail Rothrock 13. Date Compiled: 10/79 14. Designation Approval \_\_\_\_\_  
15. Acreage: .3252 acres

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 13/10/7  
 Clarksburg H.D.  
 MAGI#

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Elizabeth Powers House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 23360 Frederick Road

CITY, TOWN

Clarksburg

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Montgomery

**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	<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"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mrs. Rita Whalen

Telephone #: 972-3546

STREET & NUMBER

23360 Frederick Road

CITY, TOWN

Clarksburg

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 20734

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #: 3913

Folio #: 639

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Rockville

STATE

Maryland 20850

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

M-NCPPC Inventory of Historical Sites

DATE

1976

— FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
 SURVEY RECORDS

Park Historian's Office

CITY, TOWN

Rockville

STATE

Maryland 20855

**7 DESCRIPTION**

M:13-10-7

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

This three bay by five bay, two-and-a-half story, L-shaped house faces east. The clapboard siding is covered with asbestos, and the foundation is of uncoursed stone. The stone is laid very evenly with large, flat, wide stones alternating with smaller, flat stones; only a trace of mortar is visible. A small one-story porch is on the front. It has narrow tongue and groove ceiling painted blue, and a seamed metal shed roof supported by two square pillars. There is a central front door flanked by double windows.

Windows are double-hung at the lower level, six-over-six double-hung on the upper story.

There are decorative fixtures on the cornice similar to those of the Leonidas Willson house.

The west (rear) elevation has a one story, two bay by two bay wing with a shed roof. The intersecting gable roofs of the main block are covered with patterned metal. Snow stoppers face the edges.

There are three interior brick chimneys. The one bay by one bay out-building is clapboard; its gable roof is covered with corrugated metal.

There is a garden with trees and hand dug well which has been covered with cement behind the house.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      c. 1820/c. 1840      BUILDER/ARCHITECT

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Elizabeth Powers house is significant for its associations with the growth of 19th century Clarksburg as a communications center and major travel stop on the road from Washington to the north. The house is an integral part of the Clarksburg streetscape and representative of a type of small town rural architecture rapidly disappearing from the area.

Prior to the 1820's the property upon which the Powers' homestead sits was merely an adjunct to the tanyard and leatherworks occupying neighboring lot #10.<sup>1</sup> In the 1820 tax assessment for Montgomery County, however, lot owner Henry Burnsides is credited with improvements worth \$50.<sup>2</sup> This improvement probably refers to what is now the back wing of of the house.<sup>3</sup>

During the 1820's the house and lot changed hands rapidly. In 1823 Burnsides sold the property to John Poole,<sup>4</sup> and in 1831 Poole sold the "improved" lot to Elizabeth Powers.<sup>5</sup> Isaac Powers is recorded as the owner of lot #9 in 1831:<sup>6</sup> however, it was Elizabeth who signed her name to the deed, a common practice in Maryland at that period.

After 1831 the house changed hands little. Elizabeth Powers rose to prominence in Clarksburg, becoming the town postmistress during the 1850's. By virtue of the fact that Clarksburg was exactly one day's coach journey from the nation's capital, it became the most important mail disseminating point for upper Montgomery and the site of the second oldest post office in the County.<sup>7</sup> The position of postmistress thus carried considerable weight, and Mrs. Powers kept her position until after the Civil War.

In the 1840's the Powers home assumed its present form. The rectangular main block appears to have been built around 1840, as the assessment for lot #9 jumps from \$144 in 1838,<sup>8</sup> to \$500 in 1841.<sup>9</sup> After this date no major changes occur in the assessment besides the normal rise in property values in the post Civil War decades.

The house remained in the Powers family even after Elizabeth's death in the 1890's. She willed the house to her children,<sup>10</sup> who sold the property in 1926 to Kate Purdom.<sup>11</sup> The property again changed hands in 1951,<sup>12</sup> and once more in 1969 when it came to its present owners. The interior of the house is now restored.

FOOTNOTES:

See Attachment Sheet A

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Land, Assessment, and Orphan's Court.  
Martenet and Bond Map of 1865.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .3252 acres

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

Kevin Parker

Margaret Coleman  
Arch. Description

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

July 1979

STREET & NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland 20753

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

FOOTNOTES:

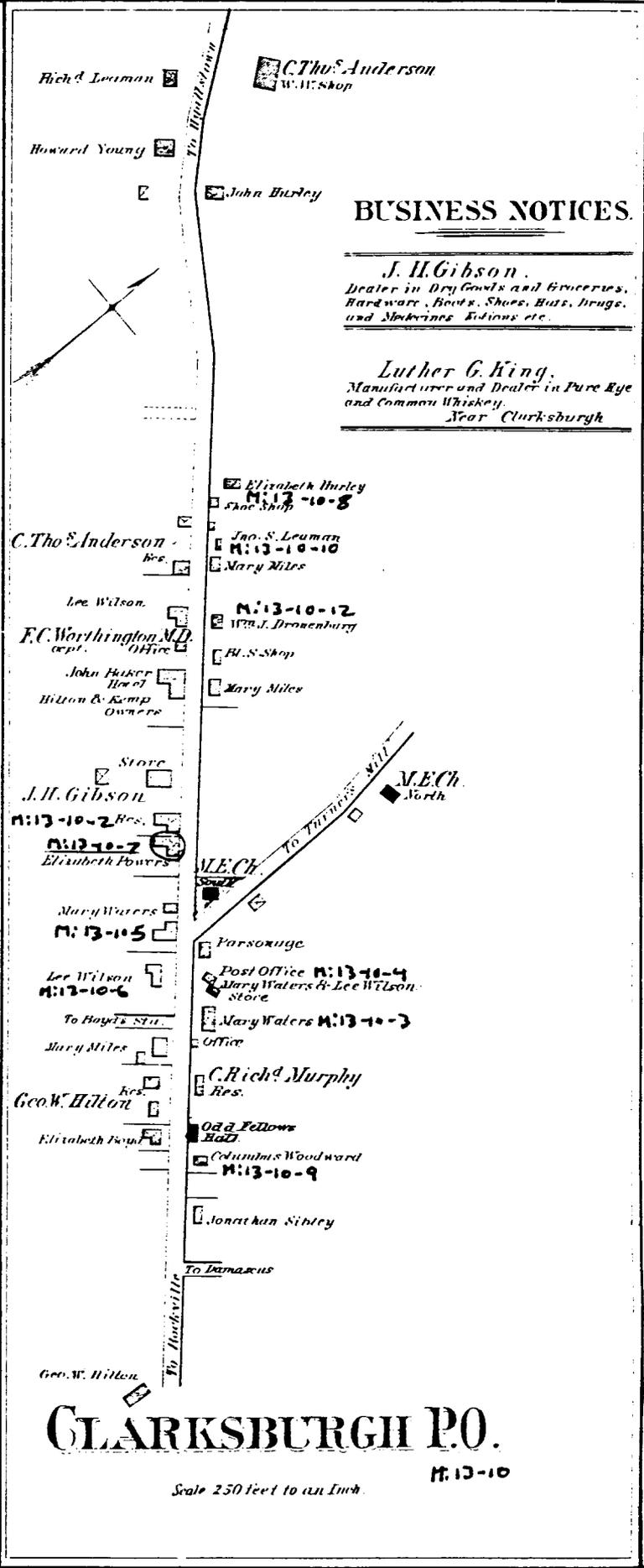
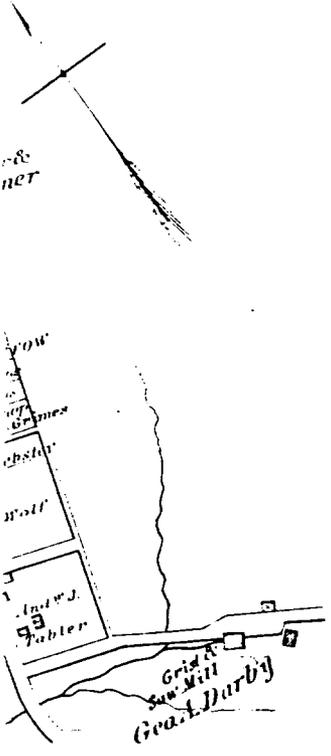
1. Montgomery County Tax Assessment (1820).
2. Ibid.
3. Interview with Mrs. Rita Whalen and tour of house (July 15, 1979).
4. Land Records of Montgomery County, Md., W/418 (February 24, 1823).
5. Ibid., BS4/198 (January 31, 1831).
6. Tax Assessment, op. cit., (1831).
7. Martz, Ralph Fraley, "Clarksburg Post Office -- Second Oldest in County" in Gaithersburg Gazette, 1965 (in vertical file on Clarksburg in Montgomery County Historical Society).
8. Tax Assessment, op. cit., (1838).
9. Ibid., (1841-42).
10. Will Records of Montgomery County, Md., GCD2/333 (March 3, 1896).
11. Land Records, op. cit., 408/338 (September 1926).
12. Ibid., 1497/212 (February 27, 1951).
13. Ibid., 3913/639 (October 27, 1969).

**NOTICES.**

*darby*  
Dealer in  
Buckwheat Flour,  
Kinds & Lumber.  
CORN,  
and Finney Goods, Dry  
Wares, Hoops, Shoes, etc.

**TOWN P.O.**

Scale 250 feet to an Inch.





Attachment Sheet B

Elizabeth Powers House

M: 13/10/7

Clarksburg H.D.



Front View