

ACHS SUMMARY FORM

M: 19-28

1. Name Zachariah Dowden House

2. Planning Area/Site Number 19/28\*

3. MNCPPC Atlas Reference\*Not on Atlas

4. Address 12400 Old Baltimore Road, Boyds

5. Classification Summary

Category building  
 Ownership private  
 Public Acquisition \_\_\_\_\_  
 Status occupied  
 Accessible yes; restricted  
 Present use private residence; commercial  
 Previous Survey Recording \_\_\_\_\_ Federal \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Local \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Title and date: \_\_\_\_\_ )

6. Date 1867

7. Original Owner Zachariah Dowden

8. Apparent Condition

- a. excellent
- b. altered
- c. original site

9. **Description:** This 2½ story frame house facing north on Old Baltimore Rd. was the original farmhouse in a modern subdivision. Originally it was arranged in a T plan; 2 rooms were on the west side & 1 centered on the east. There was an exterior end chimney on the east facade & a porch on the southeast corner. Originally covered by novelty siding, during the 1965 renovation a brick facade was applied to the first floor exterior on the north elevation. The house was enlarged to the east by the addition of a living room with a projecting bay window on the east wall. The exterior chimney became an interior one when the house was covered by a new roof.

10. **Significance:** The Zachariah Dowden house provides a continuity with the farming history of the Boyds-Clarksburg area. Once part of the early land grant "Manor of Conogocheague," & later called "Errors Corrected," the land was surveyed several times. Located on Old Baltimore Rd. (commissioned in 1793) & near the Great Rd. (Rt. 355), the land's convenient location made it attractive to purchasers. By 1828 Errors Corrected was owned by Lot Linthicum. In 1867 Zachariah Dowden, who had moved to the area in 1858, bought 22½ acres from Lot's son, Gassaway, & 21½ adjacent acres. Zachariah & his wife, Rebecca, built the house soon afterward & farmed the land for some 40 yrs. Charles Waters bought the house in 1902, renting it out while pasturing his race horses on the land. The second & only other owners who lived in the house while farming the surrounding land were William J. & Evelyn M. Selby, who lived there from 1933 to 1959. In 1963 the land was sold to a development company which was persuaded to renovate rather than tear down the old house.

11. Date researched and researcher 2/79 Margaret Coleman

12. Compiler M. Coleman

13. Date Compiled 2/29

14. Designation Approval \_\_\_\_\_

15. Acreage 1 acre

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC Zachariah Dowden House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 12400 W. Old Baltimore Road

CITY, TOWN Boyds CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 8

STATE VICINITY OF

Maryland MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. and Mrs. Martin M. Fritsch

Telephone #: 428-0921

STREET & NUMBER SAME

CITY, TOWN STATE, zip code 20720

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Liber #: 4615  
Folio #: 471

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Md.

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE NONE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

M.19-28

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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

Located on the south side of West Old Baltimore Road, and facing north, this house, built circa 1867 was considerably altered and enlarged in 1965.

Originally this frame house was two and a half stories, and was arranged in a T-plan -- two rooms were on the west side and one centered on the east. There was an exterior end chimney on the east facade and the exterior was covered by novelty siding. There was a porch on the southeast corner of the house.

In 1965 the house was enlarged to the east by the addition of a living room with a projecting bay window on the east wall. The exterior chimney became an interior one when the house was covered by a new roof. The southeast corner porch was enclosed and now provides access to the east living room from the kitchen as well as a laundry room and bathroom.

During the 1965 renovation a brick facade was applied to the first floor exterior on the north elevation. In addition a new two story porch was built across the north elevation. This porch has poured concrete foundations and 5 iron grillwork posts at each level. The new house roof extends out over the porch. The four-light carpenter gothic window of the original east gable was saved during the renovation and was inserted in the new east gable. The boxed eaves of the original roof have been repeated in the new roof. The novelty siding, however, has been covered or replaced by aluminum siding.

There are two outbuildings south of the house of note: A smokehouse and a barn. The smokehouse is nearly square, has log foundations, and is one story. It has a board and batten exterior and a gable roof. The barn is rectangular, has poured concrete foundations, and is one story. It has tongue and groove siding and a shed roof.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

M:19-28

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input 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. 1867

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Land

The Dowden house is located on Old Baltimore Road, about one-quarter mile from present Route 355, the main road from Georgetown to Frederick and once part of an old Indian trail.

In 1757, Henry Griffith was granted part of Cecil Calvert's Manor of Conogocheague,<sup>1</sup> which included the Dowden property.<sup>2</sup> In 1793, the same year that Old Baltimore Road was commissioned, Nicholas Ridgeley Warfield bought a tract of land from Griffith. Its boundaries were disputed with the adjacent landowner, Zachariah Waters. A resurvey was made, and a stone placed (which remains today).<sup>3</sup> Warfield and Waters returned to court for a boundary dispute settlement in 1796, and placed another stone which also remains.<sup>4</sup> The land was given the name Errors Corrected.

In 1826, Lot Linthicum bought Errors Corrected from the heirs of Nicholas Ridgeley Warfield,<sup>5</sup> and in 1867 his son, Gassaway, sold 22½ acres to Zachariah Dowden. Dowden had moved to the area in 1858, first buying ten acres across Old Baltimore Road from Errors Corrected.<sup>6</sup>

Zachariah's new land cost \$225, and the title recognized the compromise line of the 1793 deed.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, Dowden bought 20½ acres adjacent to Errors Corrected,<sup>8</sup> part of The Resurvey on Poplar Spring, owned by Enoch and Rebecca Holland.

Zachariah Dowden built the large, comfortable house. He and his wife, Rebecca, farmed the land for almost 40 years. Both are buried in the cemetery of the Neelsville Presbyterian Church, about one mile south of their home.

In 1902, Charles Waters, bought the property from the heirs of Zachariah and Rebecca. Waters lived at "Pleasant Fields", about a mile southwest of the Dowden House, and owned about 1,000 acres of adjacent property.<sup>9</sup> He rented out the Dowden House and pastured his race horses on the land. In the early 1930s, Waters lost his land in the nationwide depression. His houses and land were sold from his front yard at a sheriff's sale. The First National Bank of Gaithersburg became owner of the Dowden house and land.

William J. ("Jen") and Evelyn M. Selby bought the estate from the bank in 1933.<sup>10</sup> They farmed the land, and raised corn, hay, wheat, and even a crop of watermelons on the sandy soil near the creek. The Selbys were the first on Old Baltimore Road to have a telephone. They had electricity put into the house, but not water. A hand pump stood on the back porch, and water could be taken into the house in a bucket. Later, Selby added an electric motor to the pump. Their sons, William, Jr. and

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

(Continued on Attachment Sheet A)

## Zachariah Dowden House

Dallas, attended the two-room school in Clarksburg (now listed on the National Register), and then went on to school in Gaithersburg. Mrs. Selby was a teacher; she had commuted in a horse and buggy to attend classes at the University of Maryland. She also drove the first school bus between Darnestown and Gaithersburg, a shaky vehicle with canvas sides and roll-up windows. She carried a derringer pistol for protection.

The United States Cavalry rode north on Route 355 about 1937 or 1938. The men camped across from Selby's field, and bought fresh produce from the Selbys. Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Day remember bringing their children from Clarksburg in a horse and buggy to see the cavalry.

Zachariah Dowden and William Selby were the only owners who lived in the house, and farmed the surrounding land. After her husband died, Mrs. Selby leased the land to the Gaithersburg Canning Company, then in 1959, sold the farm to Harry Himelfarb.<sup>12</sup> Himelfarb did not live in the house, and in 1963 sold the property to a corporation (made up of Henry Revane, Dick Diller, Bobby Lee, Jimmy Deoudes and Kay Bowling),<sup>13</sup> which subdivided the land into "Beau Monde Estates".<sup>14</sup> Fifty-two families now live in Beau Monde Estates, on lots varying from slightly less than one to three and a half acres. The soil is still used for growing crops; nearly every Beau Monde has a vegetable garden.<sup>15</sup>

The corporation had planned to tear down the old house, but their chief carpenter, Clifford Strickland, convinced them they should renovate it instead. Mr. and Mrs. Rush Wright bought the house and 3 acres from the corporation, later selling it to Mr. and Mrs. John C. Gooch, Jr. The Gooches subdivided again making three one-acre lots, and selling the adjacent lots. The house was purchased from the Gooches by the current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Martin M. Fritsch, in 1976.

FOOTNOTES:

See Attachment Sheet B

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

SEE ATTACHED SHEET B

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY one acre

United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey, Germantown Quadrangle, Maryland - Montgomery Co., 1953. Longitude 77 degrees, 15 minutes, 30 seconds; Latitude 39 degrees, 13 minutes.

**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

Candy Reed  
Architectural Description

ORGANIZATION

Margaret M. Coleman  
Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

January 1979

STREET &amp; 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~~ SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS  
~~The Shaw House, 21 State Circle~~ Box 87, Stronghold  
~~Annapolis, Maryland 21401~~ Dickerson, Md. 20753  
~~(301) 267-1438~~ (301) 926-4510

## Zachariah Dowden House

FOOTNOTES:

1. Hall of Records, Annapolis, E1 #5/580 and BC & GS #38/72.
2. Ibid., Patented Certificate #999.
3. Ibid., Certificate #2950.
4. Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland, G/260 & 261.
5. Ibid., Y418 & 419.
6. Ibid., JGH 6/425. Two of the boundary stones mentioned in that deed remain, in the woods behind Ruby Drive. This property had belonged to Enoch and Rebecca Holland. Dowden's granddaughter, Mrs. Maude Dowden Burdette (recently deceased), owned a picture of a log cabin built on this ten acres. She believed her grandparents lived in the cabin until their home was completed. Interview, Mrs. Maude Dowden Burdette, Hyattstown; February 19, 1977.
7. Land Records, Op. Cit., EBP 4/167.
8. Ibid., EBP 4/91. The plot contained a graveyard presumed to be that of the Holland family. (Charles G. Linthicum, William J. Selby, Jr. and Letters of Mariah Waters confirm the graveyard. No identities are known.)
9. Ibid., TD 19/385 & 386.
10. Ibid., 554/216 & 217.
11. Interviews, William J. Selby, Jr., Rockville, and Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Day, Clarksburg; 1977.
12. Land Records, Op. Cit., 2639/515.
13. Ibid., 3132/610.
14. Interview, Kay Bowling, Gaithersburg, 1977.
15. Ibid., Plat 8149.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Hall of Records, Annapolis.

Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland.

Interviews: Burdette, Mrs. Maude Dowden. Hyattstown, 1977.

Day, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence. Clarksburg, 1977.

Jacobs, Mrs. Marian Waters. Washington Grove, 1977.

Selby, Mr. William J., Jr. Rockville, 1977.

Boyd, T.H.S., History of Montgomery County, Maryland, Clarksburg: 1879.  
Republished Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1972.

Coleman, Margaret M., "Roots for a New Neighborhood," Unpublished manuscript. Boyds, Maryland, 1977.