

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form



**1. Name** (indicate preferred name) PG # 68-4-33

historic Bullock House

and/or common \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number 4800 Sheridan Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Riverdale \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district \_\_\_\_\_

state Maryland \_\_\_\_\_ county Prince George's

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<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"/> 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 Donald H. and Mary A. Lanning

street & number 4800 Sheridan Street

telephone no.: 864-2737

city, town Riverdale

state and zip code MD 20737

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse

liber 4529

street & number Main Street

folio 525

city, town Upper Marlboro

state MD

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date \_\_\_\_\_

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_

city, town \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_

# 7. Description

Survey No. PG-68-4-33

<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.

The Bullock house is located on the northeast corner of Sheridan Street and 48th Avenue. Built in 1895, its vernacular victorian profile is characterized by variations of gables and projecting bays, but little of the decorative detailing of the lavish Queen Anne style.

The house is basically rectangular, two and a half stories high, three bays wide with a gable roof sitting frontally towards Sheridan Street. Each side has a projecting bay and additions have been added to the rear. The house is of frame construction with a shingle roof; aluminum siding now covers the original woodwork. The foundation is brick. A plain barge board covers decorative eaves and a cornice line separates the gable from the second story on all facades. Most windows are 1/1 double hung, while some are small square wooden sash windows, probably replaced at some point. Each window and door has plain box surrounds. An interior brick chimney is centrally located.

The main facade features the entrance in the westernmost bay with two single windows on the first level. A wooden four panel door has a semi-circular light at the top and is covered by a storm door. Three second story windows are symmetrically placed across each bay. A triple window is located in the gable. This facade is sheltered by a one-story porch constructed of wood with brick piers supporting the floor. Four turned posts, decorative knee braces and brackets support the shingle covered hip roof. Victorian elements extend to the two pilasters of the same turned posts. A square wooden railing encloses the porch and turns down the concrete stairs ending with a newel post at the bottom. Lattice work hides the area underneath the porch.

The west facade is asymmetrical and characterized by a full two-story projecting bay; surmounted by a gable roof, located on the southern end. A side entrance is placed to the north of the bay and is flanked by a small square window on each side. A similar window is located directly below the second story window in the bay. The second story has two 1/1 windows and a small square window in the projection from the rear. Another window is located in the gable.

Like its opposite side, the east facade also has a projecting bay with a gable but is larger and located near the rear. Windows on the first two floors are evenly spaced and can be found on the sides of the bays as well as its front. A single window is located in the gable of the bay. A one story addition has been extended from the northern end of this facade, probably at a late

4800 Sheridan Street  
Bullock House

7. Description (cont.)

date.1 It is covered with the same siding and has a single matching window on the first story.

The north, or rear, facade has been significantly altered over the years. A two bay, gabled projection is located on the western edge. Presently, a porch which had been added at an earlier date, is being closed-in along the length of this bay. The eastern half of the rear side has a one story gabled addition. The second floor has two windows in the bay and another above the addition; the gable on this facade, like the rest of the house, has a window.

Although the interior of this house was restricted, it is known that during the late 1960s the house was remodeled into apartments.<sup>2</sup> While it was returned to a single family dwelling a few years later, it is not known to what extent the original plan has changed or what architectural elements remain as original. The exterior has been covered with aluminum siding and alterations have been added to the rear of the house.

### 3. Significance

Survey No. F6163-4-55

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>					
<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 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/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

**Specific dates** 1895 **Builder/Architect** Joseph Blundon, builder

---

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Bullock house characterizes the late nineteenth century victorian suburban house with its variations of gables and projecting bays. Its basic features and porch with Victorian millwork are indicative of the type of suburban houses being built at the turn of the century as speculative housing and is similar to several other houses in this section of the community. It remains, in an altered state, as one of the extant houses from the first decade of Riverdale Park, one of several suburbs laid out along the B & O Railroad in 1889.

The subdivision of Riverdale Park was platted on land that belonged to the Calvert family of Maryland for much of the nineteenth century. In 1887, the Riverdale Park Company, a New York real estate firm purchased a 474 acre lot with plans to develop the subdivision of Riverdale Park.<sup>3</sup>

From its conception, Riverdale Park was promoted as one of the more desirable suburbs of Washington. Its location along a major transportation route from Washington afforded both the convenience of an easy commute to the city and the picturesque quality of a rural subdivision. The B & O Railroad enhanced the development of subdivisions along this corridor and Riverdale Park was platted in the typical grid plan but with open areas and circles. Villa sized lots were laid out to suit the purchaser and deed restrictions were placed to avoid nuisances or objectionable business in the new suburb.<sup>4</sup> The company itself built many of the first houses as well as erected the schoolhouse and railroad station while the residents built several goods stores, a church and began both telegraph and telephone communication. Individuals and developers invested in the land to build comfortable and affordable housing for the middle class. Developers, especially, hoped to play on the suburban ideal growing throughout the major cities of the United States.

In 1895, Joseph A. Blundon, a builder and carpenter, or contractor from Washington, D.C. purchased the lot from the

4800 Sheridan Street  
Bullock House

#### 8. Significance (cont.)

Riverdale Park Company. Blundon, living in Washington and listing himself as a "contractor" at 1006 F Street, N.W., Washington - a premier business street at the end of the nineteenth century - was one of a family of builders who speculated in northwest Washington as well as the suburbs.<sup>5</sup> Joseph, its appears however, is the only family member to concentrate on Riverdale real estate and even built his own house in the subdivision where he was living by 1897. Prince George's County land records show that Blundon purchased numerous lots from the Riverdale Park Company, which he built on and sold to individuals. The house at 4800 Sheridan exemplifies this process. Blundon bought the property in June of 1895 for \$100 and sold the property only two months later, in August 1895, for \$2600 (subject to a deed of trust to Hyattsville Building Association) suggesting he built the house in that short time.<sup>6</sup>

William A. Rutherford, along with his wife, Brendina, held on to lot 8 (of block 16) until 1913 although he lived several streets away on Jefferson Avenue. Rutherford, a clerk auditor for the Post Office Department, would have maintained the house as rental property and purchased lot 9 in 1903, possibly to raise the value of the property. In 1912, Marion E. Bullock was assessed for the property although he did not purchase it until 1913. Bullock, a proofreader for the government printing office, and his wife Ethel R., resided here until 1941. Their decision to sell began a succession of eleven owners in the next thirty-four years, none of which held the property for more than seven years. Finally, in 1975 the present owners moved into the house. Lot nine was sold separately in the 1960s.<sup>7</sup>

The Bullock house is one of the early houses still standing in Riverdale Park. Although significantly altered over the years, it remains as a symbol of the late nineteenth century, middle-class, suburban dwellings. It is also significant as an early speculative housing venture, built by a prominent builder, in the new suburb and home of one of the many government workers who moved out of the city.

4800 Sheridan Street  
Bullock House (cont.)

1. The extent of the alterations is unknown as the house was restricted for closer study (per phone conversation with owner 4 March 1990). Knowledge of some alterations, including this extension, came from a phone interview with Ken Embrey in April 1990.
2. Ken Embrey.
3. History of the Town of Riverdale, 1920-1970, p. 13.
4. Riverdale Park Real Estate booklet (undated), circa 1904.
5. Washington D.C. City Directory, 1895.
6. Prince George's County Land Deeds JWB32:282 and JWB32:633.
7. Prince George's County Land Deeds 88:272, 635:433; Tax Assessment Book, 1912; Washington D.C. City Directories.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P6 #68-4-33

Chain of Title, Prince George's County Land Records  
Prince George's County Tax Assessment Books, 1893-1912  
Washington, D.C. City Directories  
Nelson's Suburban Directory of Maryland and Virginia Towns Adjacent to DC, 1912-13

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Block 16, lot 8

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

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"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Verbal boundary description and justification

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 Marcia M. Miller

organization George Washington University

date April 1990

street & number

telephone

city or town

state

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