

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #70-9 Building Date: ca. 1860

Building Name: Bald Hill School

Location: 8701 Old Brown's Lane, Lanham, Maryland 20706

Private/Storage Shed/Occupied/Deteriorated/Inaccessible

Description

The Bald Hill School is situated to the west of the residence at 8701 Old Brown's Lane. It is presently used for storage and is in very bad repair. The building is frame, one-story, measuring 18 x 24 feet, with a shed roofed frame, one-story addition on its south side. The gable roof is covered with corrugated metal. The north facade has a 3 panel wooden door, east of the facade center line, and a window opening west of the door. The first bay of the south facade has an entrance door of wide vertical boards with a horizontal board at the top, center and bottom. It has exterior, triangular-shaped hinges and a wide, plain wood surround. There is a boarded window on the second bay of the facade, with a wide lintel and sill of rough siding. The interior has wide horizontal siding, painted white, with initials carved into the interior walls by the school's students. The ceiling is of narrow board paneling, also painted white. The ceiling boards are coming down and lath shows through on the walls. The wood flooring in the building is partially rotted away. The building appears to rest directly on the ground, with no foundation or support piers. The corner posts, exposed through the exterior siding, are large, square, finished posts which appear to be hand hewn.

Significance

The Bald Hill School, named for the ridges on which it was situated, was the first in the Lanham area. The construction date of the building is believed to be before the establishment of the Board of County School Commissioners in 1865, because of the survival of a Bald Hill School Record book dating from 1861-62. By 1885 the Board of School Commissioners was attempting to sell the acre of land the school was built upon and seeking bids to build a new Lanham school. The school house and lot were sold in 1906 to David Fairchild, who had acquired the property surrounding the school lot. The school was moved from its original site at 5613 Westgate Lane to its present site at 8701 Old Brown's Lane by Edgar Brown in 1906, to be used as a cow shed.

The Bald Hill School is one of a few examples of mid-19th century functional vernacular buildings remaining in the county. The interior, though deteriorated, remains unchanged from when it was used as a school. Initials carved by students on the interior and exterior document its original use.

Acreage: 3.32

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Bald Hill School

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 8701 Old Brown's Lane \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Lanham \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

## 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: storage

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

name Timothy Williams

street & number 8701 Old Brown's Lane telephone no.:

city, town Lanham, state and zip code MD. 20706

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 4417

street & number Main Street folio 720

city, town Upper Marlboro, state MD. 20772

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan

date 1981 \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records History Division, M-NCPPC, c/o Calvert Mansion

city, town Riverdale, state MD. 20737

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			1906

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

The Bald Hill School building was originally located at 5613 Westgate Lane. It was moved early in the 20th century to its present location at 8701 Old Brown's Lane. The building is situated to the west of the residence at 8701 Old Brown's Lane, in a large side yard. It is shaded by a very large linden tree at its north east corner. It is presently used for storage and is in very bad repair.

The building is frame, one-story, measuring approximately 18 x 24 feet. The gable roof was wood shingled, but is now covered with corrugated metal. The building has unpainted horizontal siding of varying width. The siding is wider on the west gable end than on the north and south facades.

The north facade has a three-panel wooden door, east of the facade center line. Siding piled against the building hides the window opening west of the door. The west gable end has a plain raking cornice. Centered on the west facade is a rectangular window opening that has been boarded over. The window has a plain, narrow wood surround. There is a square opening east of the window near ground level on the facade.

The south side of the building has an entrance in the first bay, through a board and batten door. It has exterior, triangular-shaped hinges and a wide, plain wood surround. There is a boarded window on the second bay of the facade, with a wide lintel and sill of rough siding. There is a shed roof, frame, one-story addition on the south side of the building. It is in very deteriorated condition.

The interior of the school has wide horizontal siding, painted white. There are initials carved into the interior and exterior walls, presumably by the school's students. The ceiling is of very narrow board paneling, also painted white. The ceiling boards are coming down and lath shows through on the walls. There is wood flooring in the building which is partially rotted away, exposing the ground underneath. The building appears to rest directly on the ground, with no foundation or support piers. The corner posts are exposed through the exterior siding at some points. They are large, square, finished posts which appear to be hand hewn.

# 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 checked="" 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** **Builder/Architect**

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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 Bald Hill School was the fourth school in the Bladensburg School District and the first in the Lanham area.<sup>1</sup> It was situated on the ridge that forms the watershed between the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers. The ridge apparently was sparsely vegetated at one time, hence the name Bald Hill. One source credits Basil Ridgeway, a local landowners, with donating the land and building the school house.<sup>2</sup> The school was built prior to 1872, when the railroad's passage through the area gave it the popular name of Lanham's Station. The construction date of the building is uncertain but it is believed to be before the establishment of the Board of County School Commissioners in 1865 because of the survival of a Bald Hill School Record book dating from 1861-62. The school appears in its original location on the Hopkins Atlas of Prince George's County 1878.

By 1885 the Board of School Commissioners were attempting to sell the acre of land the school was built upon and seeking bids to build a new Lanham area school.<sup>3</sup> The school house and lot were eventually sold in 1906 to David Fairchild, who had acquired the property surrounding the school lot.<sup>4</sup> The building was moved from its original site at 5613 Westgate Lane to its present location at 8701 Old Brown's Lane by Edgar Brown, around 1906, to be used as a cow shed.<sup>5</sup> It is still in use as a storage shed at this time.

The Bald Hill School is one of a few remaining examples of mid-19th century functional vernacular buildings in the county. It is an example of a type of building which was once commonly in use as a school house, store, residence, meeting house or outbuilding. The finished interior, though deteriorated, remains unchanged from when it was used as a school. Initials carved by students both on the interior and exterior of the building document its original use.



## #8. Continued

Notes

1 Journal of Proceedings, Board of Education, Prince George's County, 1865-1903. Volume I, pg. 46. Located at School Board Offices, Room 121, Old Crain Highway, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

2 "Schools of Early Lanham", Souvenir Book of the Lanham Area, 1872-1972, Lanham Centennial Committee, 1972. pg. 20.

3 Ibid. Footnote 2, pg. 214.

4 Land Records of Prince George's County, 29:279, February 13, 1906. Prince George's County Courthouse, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

5 Conversation with Mark W. Westgate, May 16, 1985.

MARSHALL HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

15# 20-9  
P. 99

NOMINATION FORM  
for the

1700955602

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME					
COMMON:					
AND/OR HISTORIC:					
Bald Hill School					
2. LOCATION					
STREET AND NUMBER:					
Whitfield Chapel Road					
CITY OR TOWN:					
Lanham					
STATE:			COUNTY:		
Maryland			Prince George's		
3. CLASSIFICATION					
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered			
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment		<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum		<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
Comments					
4. PREVIOUS PROPERTY					
OWNER'S NAME:					
STREET AND NUMBER:					
CITY OR TOWN:			STATE:		
5. LOCATION OR LEGAL DESCRIPTION					
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:					
Prince George's County Courthouse					
STREET AND NUMBER:					
CITY OR TOWN:			STATE:		
Upper Marlboro			Maryland		
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #)					
6. SURVEY STATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS					
TITLE OF SURVEY:					
None					
DATE OF SURVEY:					
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local					
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:					
STREET AND NUMBER:					
CITY OR TOWN:			STATE:		

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					(Check One)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Lousy	<input type="checkbox"/> Unrecovered	
	(Check One)			(Check One)			
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original photo			

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The school is a one-story, frame structure with an A-roof. The main (gable-end) facade has a doorway; the flanks are two bays.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
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SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Chain of Title

Bald Hill School  
P.G. #70-9

- #4417:720  
26 Sept 1974  
Deed  
Mark W. Westgate and Mae A. Westgate to Richard A. Ryan and Marian W. Ryan, Parcel D on the plat "Parcels C & D Westgate Estate," Plat B.B.7, #46, except that portion of Parcel D conveyed to John Manning Westgate and wife on September 15, 1971, #3989:640. Land conveyed 1.65 acres. Same land recorded in 536:187.
- #3989:640  
15 Sept 1971  
Deed  
Mark W. Westgate and wife to John Manning Westgate and Jean Carol (wife), a plat of 1.58 acres - part of parcel D, conveyed to grantor by #1231:362.
- #536:187  
12 June 1939  
Deed  
A. Gwynn Bowie to Mark W. Westgate and wife, land that Bowie obtained from Philip John Westgate and Mark W. Westgate 67:1939. Lots B&C of the subdivision of the tract surveyed by Walton G. Banks, in February 1939, containing 16.52 acres.
- #536:183  
7 June 1939  
Deed  
Mark W. Westgate and Philip John Westgate to A. Gwynn Bowie, that property conveyed to grantors by John Minton Westgate's will dated September 19, 1935, recorded in WTD 5:279, containing 35.4 acres, a part of the land John M. Westgate obtained from David and Marian Bell Fairchild on 3:12:1906, 34:160, and from Louis Gundling, January 13, 1910, 57:495.
- #34:160  
12 Mar 1906  
Deed  
David Fairchild and Marion Bell Fairchild to John Minton Westgate and Inez Wheeler Westgate, his wife, both of Washington, the land grantor obtained from Fillmore Beall, trustee, by deed dated January 18, 1906, 25:391, containing 64 1/6 acres, also the property described in a deed from the Board of County School Commissioners of Prince George's County, Maryland to said Fairchild February 13, 1906, 29:279.
- #25:391  
18 Jan 1906  
Deed  
Fillmore Beall to David Fairchild, whereas in March 1, 1888 Edward L. Wilson made mortgage JWB 11:243 to David Fairchild, and whereas default was made and the real estate sold at public auction on December 9, 1915 and bought by Fairchild (\$3,000), recorded in Equity #3236 in which Beall was made trustee to convey the property to Fairchild, a parcel of 64 1/4 acres.

#29:279  
13 Feb 1906  
Deed

Board of County School Commissioners to David Fairchild, for \$25. the grantor sells to grantee all that land situated near Lanham Station which used to be used for a school, containing approximately 1 acre of ground, being the property to be sold by order of June 10, 1885 (see old records 214) but which was not sold. Said land adjoins land described in a deed from Elizabeth Angerman and husband to Edward L. Wilson, JWB 11:241, now the property of the grantee.

JWB 11:241  
1 Mar 1888  
Mortgage

Elizabeth Angerman and J. George (husband) to Edward Wilson - to grant to the party of the second part that land in Kent district containg 64 1/6 acres.

JWB 11:243  
1 Mar 1888  
Mortgage

By Edward R. Wilson to Mabel G. Bell. Said Wilson owes Bell \$2,850. - to be repaid as follows - ...and Wilson assigns to Bell that property containing 64 1/6 acres, being the same property coveyed in FS #4:115 and 116 and WAJ 2:135. Wilson may possess the property until default. If default be made, Bell may sell the property.

Note on page 244 margin - "I hereby assign the mortgage to David Fairchild June 30, 1905. Mabel G. Bell."

FS 4:115  
10 Sept 1866  
Indenture

Basil Ridgeway and Margaret R. (wife) to George W. Durity, 2 tracts of land, a part of Waring's Lot and a part of Williams Range. Containing 101 acres. Grantor selling 63 7/8 acres.





P.G. #70-9

Bald Hill School

Prince George's County, Maryland

Marina King

May 1985

Northwest elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #70-9

Bald Hill School

Prince George's County, Maryland

Marina King

May 1985

Southwest elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #70-9

Bald Hill School

Prince George's County, Maryland

Marina King

May 1985

West elevation

Neg: Md. Hist.Trust, Annapolis, MD.



NAME #70-9 BALD HILL SCHOOL

LOCATION WHITFIELD CHAPEL Rd LANHAM, Md

FACADE NW

PHOTO TAKEN 3/11/74 MDWYER