

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

WA-I-040  
2200346227

*Bicentennial 1976*

NOMINATION FORM  
for the  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Mount Aetna Furnace Site  
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Mount Aetna Road, just east of Mount Aetna  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Mount Aetna  
STATE: Maryland COUNTY: Washington

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No except public
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____

on road

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Carl W. Shafer  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 1  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Hagerstown STATE:  
Maryland

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Washington County Court House  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
West Washington Street  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Hagerstown STATE:  
Maryland

Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #): 314/446

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Maryland Historical Trust Survey #3009  
DATE OF SURVEY: Summer, 1967  Federal  State  County  Local  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Maryland Historical Trust  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
2525 Riva Road  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Annapolis STATE:  
Maryland

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The site of the Mount Aetna iron furnace is located at the east end of the village of Mount Aetna, along the Mount Aetna Road. Little physical evidence of the furnace remains although numerous artifacts have been unearthed, indicating the presence of the iron furnace.

The Mount Aetna Furnace appears to have been located along a small stream, the Mount Aetna Creek. A few hundred feet south of the run is a bluff against which the furnace stacks may have been located. Between the stream and the bluff on the north side of Mount Aetna Road is a house which was built in the mid 1950's. The owner of the house has a number of cannon barrels and balls and various other iron objects which were extracted when the house was excavated. The earth on which the house stands is loose and ash-like suggesting the location of a waste heap from the furnace.

Most sources agree that the Mount Aetna Furnace was functioning prior to the Revolution and that it furnished cannon and ammunition for George Washington's army. Thomas J. Scharf, in his History of Western Maryland, identifies Mount Aetna as the second of four furnaces built by the Hughes family in Washington County, Maryland, and Franklin County, Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup> A paper prepared for the Maryland Bicentennial Commission by Michael Robbins, entitled "Maryland's Iron Industry During the Revolutionary War Era," lists Mount Aetna Furnace among several in Maryland which were in operation prior to the Revolution.<sup>2</sup> However, a publication of 1911, The Iron Ores of Maryland, written for the Maryland Geological Survey places the date for Mount Aetna Furnace at 1809.<sup>3</sup>

Although no surface ruins are visible, the artifacts extracted from the ground do mark the location of Mount Aetna Furnace. The exact boundaries of the site are not known at this time. The relics were found on the Shafer property which contains 1.1 acres. Other portions of Furnace land may now be the property of David G. and Mary G. Negley.

<sup>1</sup>Thomas J. Scharf, History of Western Maryland, Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968, p. 1012.

<sup>2</sup>Michael W. Robbins, "Maryland's Iron Industry During the Revolutionary War Era," prepared for the Maryland Bicentennial Commission, June, 1973, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph T. Singewald, Jr., Report on the Iron Ores of Maryland, Maryland Geological and Economic Survey, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, December, 1911, p. 143.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The importance of Mount Aetna Furnace lies in its contribution to industry in the colonies and early republic as well as its role in providing weaponry to the American army during the Revolution and probably also during the War of 1812.

The furnace was built and run by the Hughes family who were major suppliers of arms to the Revolutionary army. According to the Robbins' report, the Hughes operation which consisted of several furnaces and forges was the largest military iron producing facility in Maryland.<sup>1</sup> The Hughes' owned a large tract of land called Mount Aetna which contained 4,482 acres and was resurveyed on November 30, 1787.<sup>2</sup> No date has been found for the original patent of the tract.

Samuel and Daniel Hughes, who were instrumental in supplying Washington's army with weapons, were the sons of Barnabas Hughes who emigrated from Ireland in 1750 and settled near Lancaster, Pa. After moving to Baltimore, Barnabas relocated in western Maryland where he began a prosperous iron business. He built Mount Aetna and other furnaces near the Black Rocks above the Beaver Creek.<sup>3</sup> He died in 1780. It remained in the Hughes family until 1827 when it was purchased by John Horine. The association of the Hughes brothers with the American War for Independence attaches additional historical importance to the Furnace.

Although little remains to verify its existence, the Mount Aetna Furnace site should be marked to commemorate its role in the important early American iron industry and its military significance in the American Revolution. The site is definitely worthy of further research and examination.

<sup>1</sup>Michael W. Robbins, "Maryland's Iron Industry During the Revolutionary War Era," prepared for the Maryland Bicentennial Commission, June, 1973, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas J. Scharf, History of Western Maryland, Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968, p. 983.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 1011.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Robbins, Michael W., "Maryland's Iron Industry During the Revolutionary War Era," a report prepared for the Maryland Bicentennial Commission, June, 1973.  
 Scharf, John Thomas, History of Western Maryland, Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1968.  
 Singewald, Joseph T., Jr., The Iron Ores of Maryland, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1911.  
 Williams, Thomas J. C., History of Washington County, Md., Hagerstown: Mail Publishing Co., 1906.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.1 acres

Acreage Justification:

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE:		COUNTY:	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Paula Stoner Dickey, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Washington County Historic Sites Survey      DATE: January, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Court House Annex

CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown      STATE: Maryland

**12. State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)**

Significance of this property is:  
 National     State     Local

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

Deed Records -- WA-I-040

Liber 314, Folio 446, August 30, 1956

Grantors: David G. Negley and Mary G. Negley

Grantees: Carl W. Shafer and Velma M. Shafer

1.1 acres

Liber 275, Folio 188, May 1, 1953

Grantors: Harry I. English and Emma P. English

Grantees: David G. Negley and Mary G. Negley

315 acres, parcel #1

Liber 256, Folio 175, March 31, 1950

Grantors: John H. Marshall and Halsie L. Marshall

Grantees: Harry I. English and Emma P. English

The property is described as part of a tract called "The Resurvey of Adventure," part of "The Resurvey of Discontent" and part of "Walling's Luck," all lying contiguous, 399-3/4 acres, Parcel #1.

Liber 227, Folio 419, September 13, 1944

Grantor: Mary B. Towson, widow

Grantees: John H. Marshall and Halsie L. Marshall

\$4,938.04 and unpaid mortgages \$12,561.96, 399-3/4 acres

Liber 220, Folio 439, May 16, 1939

Grantor: Arthur L. Towson and Julie P. Towson

Grantees: Mary B. Towson and Robert F. Towson

399-3/4 acres

Liber 177, Folio 577, July 12, 1927

Grantor: Emily W. Towson, unmarried

Grantees: Robert F. Towson and Mary B. Towson

Parcel #3. The property is described as being known and designated as Parcel #2 on the plat of the real estate of John Horine, deceased, and part of the tracts "Resurvey on Adventure," "Resurvey on Discontent," "Walling's Luck," 399-3/4 acres (an undivided half interest).

Liber 177, Folio 576, July 12, 1927

Grantor: Robert F. Towson and Mary B. Towson

Grantee: Emily W. Towson

(an undivided half interest), parcel 3, 399-3/4 acres

Liber 173, Folio 200, October 21, 1925

Grantors: Arthur L. Towson and Julia P. Towson

Grantees: Robert F. Towson

\$2,000, 399-3/4 acres. The deed describes property in which Arthur L. Towson acquired the undivided 1/3 interest of William P. Towson by deed from Robert F. Towson, executor, October 28, 1919 (Liber 156, Folio 99). It is also the same property in which Robert F. Towson acquired the undivided 1/3 of George P. Spessard, March 15, 1920 (Liber 157, Folio 232).

Liber 137, Folio 683, December 19, 1911

Grantors: J. Clarence Lane, Henry H. Keedy, Jr. and William Kealfider, trustees

Grantees: Arthur L. Towson, George P. Spessard, William P. Towson \$17,249.22. The property was directed to be sold in the Case of Charles S. Lane vs. Charles B. Boyle.

Liber I.I., Folio 255, March 10, 1827

Grantors: William Price & Franklin Anderson trustees for Robert Hughes and Walter Boyd

Grantee: John Horine

\$10,000, 1,100 acres. The property is described as all that part of a tract of land called "Mount Aetna" granted to Daniel Hughes and Samuel Hughes, part of a tract called "The Resurvey on the Adventure," granted to James Walling, Jr.; part of a tract "The Resurvey on Discontent," granted to Matthew Clark, and part of a tract called "Walling's Luck" granted to Delashmut Walling, all lying contiguous to each other.

Liber DD, Folio 484, Deed of Trust, March 13, 1819

Grantor: John H. Hughes

Grantees: Robert Hughes and Walter Boyd

This deed is for all the property known as Mount Aetna estate conveyed for the purpose of "carrying on the iron business there at as by the name and description of the Mount Aetna Furnace ... carried on and conducted for the joint use and advantage of them the said Samuel Hughes, Jr., Daniel Hughes, Sr., and John H. Hughes."



WH-5 010

Paula Stoner Dickey  
Consultant, Washington, DC  
Historical Sites Survey

Oct. 1973



