

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. M:35-72

1. Name of Property (Indicate preferred name)

historic Simpson Family House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 7315 Brookville Road not for publication

city, town Chevy Chase vicinity of

state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district)	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Milo G. & L.H. Coerper

street & number 7315 Brookville Road telephone no:

city, town Chevy Chase state and zip code Maryland 20815

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse Tax Map and Parcel HN562; P431

city, town Rockville state Maryland Liber and Folio 02474/0591

6. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Individually Listed in the National Register
- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- HSR or Research report at MHT
- Other:

7. Description

Survey No.

M:35-72

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

Resource Count:

See attached

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson Family House (c1905)
7315 Brookville Road
Section 7:2

The Simpson Family House, located on the east side of Brookville Road in Section 5 of Chevy Chase, was built c1905 by local carpenter/builder John Simpson for himself. Set back from the road on a large, wooded lot, it is a stately 2-1/2-story American Four-square-type¹ house designed in a Colonial Revival style with craftsman details. It is a wood frame structure with weatherboard walls. It is covered with an overhanging, hipped roof with wide eaves and four hipped roof dormers, all clad with asphalt shingles, and an off-center brick chimney. A three-bay porch extends across the facade of the house.

The west (front) elevation of the house consists of an arrangement of openings which, though irregular, give an overall sense of symmetry and proportion. On the first story, an off-center entry door is balanced by a pair of 3/1 windows on the south and a single 3/1 window on the north. On the second story, two single 3/1 windows flank either side of a small, centered, square casement with cross panes. All of the windows have shutters and decorative crown moldings. A wide, plain frieze board separates the second story from the wide eaves and overhanging roof. The dormer window above has battered walls clad with wood shingles and a pair of union jack casements or fixed sash. The full width front porch is three bays wide with the entrance on the south side end bay. The hipped porch roof is supported by paired and attenuated Doric columns set upon brick piers, between which stretch a spindle porch railing.

The south elevation similarly consists of an irregular yet symmetrical grouping of windows. On the first story, two single, 3/1 windows with crown molding are located towards the front, while a narrow, four-bay wide window bay projects from the rear half of the wall. The bay window has four, narrow 1/1 windows and a balustraded ledge as its roof. The second story has a pair of 3/1 windows toward the front and a single, 3/1 window opening onto the balustraded ledge of the bay window at the rear. The dormer on this elevation is larger than on the facade with three casements (or fixed) windows under the wide hipped roof and within the battered side walls of the dormer.

¹ The interior of the house was not surveyed, so the floor plan has not been determined. However, the central entrance and three-bay facade indicate a central-hall plan rather than a four-square plan.

8. Significance

Survey No. M:35-72

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian	
	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater	
	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
c. 1905	

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

Level of Significance: national state local

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture and Community Planning

Resource Type: Individual

Category: Residential

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Residential

Known Design Source:

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson Family House (c1905)
7315 Brookville Road
Section 8:2

The Simpson Family House is an outstanding, well-preserved example of an American Foursquare house built for and inhabited by a prominent local family of carpenter-builders. The property served as the headquarters for the Simpson-Troth building consortium which built many of the houses in the Chevy Chase area, mainly in Section 3, Section 5, and the Town of Chevy Chase.

The Simpson House is an early example of the American Foursquare, a building form that evolved in Post-Victorian suburbs and became popular across the country. The house type is characterized by its two-story cubic shape, low pyramidal roof, hipped dormers, and full width porch. Typically the floor plan consisted of four nearly equal sized rooms per floor and a side hall.²

The Simpson family operated a successful construction business in the Chevy Chase area through the early and mid 1900s. John Simpson, Jr. was a general contractor. His father, John Simpson, Sr. (1834-1907), was a builder who constructed several houses in Cleveland Park. A native of England, John Sr. had lived in Virginia where he married Harriet Horn (1832-1911) in 1854. After the Civil War, the Simpsons moved to Montgomery County with their large and growing family, settling in the Jones Mill Road area. Their nine children, born between 1855 and 1872, were strongly influenced by their family's closeknit relationship and by their father's occupation. Many of them either worked or had spouses or children in the construction business, and their extended families worked together.³

In July 1905, John Simpson, Jr. bought a 3.2 acre lot from the Griffith family, who owned No Gain. He built the house within the next few months. Tax assessment records from 1906 included \$3,200 in improvements.⁴ One year after acquiring the property, John conveyed just under an acre to his nephew, Horace E. Troth, Jr. who was a house painter. These men established a cooperative working relationship in the tradition that had been established by their fathers. Horace Sr. had worked as a carpenter for his father-in-law, builder John Simpson, Sr.⁵

²Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House* (1986), 84-89. Barbara Wyatt, "Surveying and Evaluating Vernacular Architecture" (1987), 30.

³John Jr. occupation from U. S. Census of 1910. Jeannette Troth Hall interview (*Chevy Chase Historical Society Newsletter*, Spring 1994). Simpson Family Genealogy from David Orem interview, Chevy Chase Historical Society, 1988. William Offutt, *History of Bethesda*, p156.

⁴Tax assessment records, Maryland State Archives.

⁵Deed 182:397 (July 10, 1905). The Simpsons were in residence by 1910, according to census records, and the 1912 Nelson's Directory lists them on Brookville Road near Williams

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson Family House (c1905)
7315 Brookville Road
Section 8:3

John Jr. and his wife, Julia Dake Simpson, lived here with their two sons, John Park and Donald Dake. John was active in the local community, serving as Vice President of the Chevy Chase Citizens Association of Section 5. After his father's death in 1907, John Jr. appears to have continued the work established by John Sr., constructing, for example, the house at 3030 Newark Street in Cleveland Park, in 1910. Unfortunately, John died at the young age of 54, in 1919. Within a few years, his younger brother Frank moved from his house on Williams Lane to 7315 Brookville Road.⁶

Under Frank Simpson's supervision, the construction business flourished, staffed by members of a large, extended family. A common practice of the business was to buy farmland and subdivide it. Simpson had purchased property on Williams Lane, for example, and built the house at 3717, and probably also built 3801 and 3803. Speculative building projects were sold or commissioned through family members as well. Edward H. Jones, founder of the real estate company by the same name, was related to Simpson by marriage. The vice president and successor of the Edward H. Jones Company was William L. Orem, Jr., a nephew of Frank Simpson's.⁷

In the early days, plans for houses were obtained from local lumber dealers, which was the common practice. Thomas W. Perry at Chevy Chase Lake was the largest supplier of building materials in the area. Plans were used over and over if the house was popular and sold well. Examples of houses built by Simpson in the 1920s are found in Section 3, at 3707 Bradley Lane and 3608 Spring Street, and in the Town of Chevy Chase at 7003 Meadow Lane. By the 1930s, Frank Simpson worked with architect A. W. Smith since by that time plans required an architect's seal. Houses they collaborated on include 7409 Ridgewood Street (1937), and 4213 Thornapple Street (1939). Typically the construction work was subcontracted to relatives as the younger family members were trained as apprentices to do all carpentry while specialty work

Lane. Troth-Simpson relationship described in summary of Jeannette Troth Hall interview, Chevy Chase Historical Society Newsletter, Spring 1994.

⁶National Register Form for Cleveland Park Historic District lists one house built by John Simpson in 1910 (p7-22). This must be John Jr. since John Sr. died in 1907. Deed 190:33 (April 14, 1906). Simpson Family Genealogy, Chevy Chase Historical Society. See MHT Inventory Form for 35/77 Frank Simpson House, 3807 Williams Lane.

⁷MHT Forms 35/77 Frank Simpson House (op cit) and 35/71 Jones-Beall House, 7310 Brookville Road. David Orem interview by William Bushong, 1-24-1997.

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson Family House (c1905)
7315 Brookville Road
Section 8:4

such as plumbing, electric, or roof sheetmetalwork were subcontracted.⁸

This property on Brookville Road, including house and outbuildings, served as the manufacturing and business center of the operation. A two-story barn was a warehouse for lumber, with room for a table saw, while another spacious outbuilding was used for woodworking. Other structures included a pump house and small forge. The Simpsons and Troths continued to work together in the construction business. By 1931, the Simpsons had conveyed to Horace Troth, Jr. additional land at the back of the latter's lot. This reduced the Simpsons lot from 3.2 acres to 1.7 acres. Both lots extended back from Brookville Road more than 600 feet to woods and a ravine that fed into Rock Creek. Like Simpson, Horace Troth used his property for the business, with paint stored and mixed in a large barn.⁹

Grace Simpson continued to own the house in 1941, judging by the Klingé Atlas. At about this time (between 1938 and 1958), the two-story Simpson barn was converted into a residence, though structurally it remained largely the same. The Simpson barn was demolished after 1958. The Troth barn was converted to a residence, now 7309 Brookville Road, on a separate tax lot from the Troth house.¹⁰

⁸David Orem interview (op cit). Building Permits for Section 3 and the Town of Chevy Chase.

⁹Offutt, p. 196. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1938. Klinge Atlas, 1931. William Offutt, p.196.

¹⁰Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1938 corrected to 1958. 1941 Klingé Atlas.

9. Major Bibliographical References

M:
Survey No. Resource # 35/72

See attached

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 31,798 Sq. Ft.

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

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	Clare Lise Caviochi, Historic Preservation Planner, Architectural description: Kimberly Prothro Williams		
organization	Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission	date	November 1998
street & number	8787 Georgia Avenue	telephone	301-563-3400
city or town	Silver Spring	state	Maryland 20910-3760

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson Family House (c1905)
7315 Brookville Road
Section 9:2

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

Census, U. S. 1910 and 1920.

Directories:

Boyd, *Washington City Directory*, 1900, 1905, 1912, 1913.
Caldwell, S. D. *Directory of Bethesda District* (Bethesda, Md), 1911 and 1915.
Nelson, Justus C. *Nelson's Suburban Directory* (Washington, D.C.), 1912-1913.
Polk, R. L. *Polk's Washington Suburban Directory* (Washington, D.C.) 1927-1928.

Equity Records, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland.

Fisher, Thos. J. *Chevy Chase for Homes*. Washington, D.C.: Thos. J. Fisher & C., 1916.

Land Records, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland.

Maps:

Caldwell, S.D. *Map of Bethesda District*, 1915
Deets and Maddox, *Real Estate Atlas*, 1916.
Hopkins, G.M. *Northern Virginia and Bethesda*, 1894.
Klinge *Real Estate Atlas*, 1931 and 1941.
Maryland Geological Survey Map, Bethesda & Vicinity, 1910.
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1916, 1927, 1927-1959.

Plat Book 1, Folios 71 and 90.

Proctor, John Clagett. *Washington, Past and Present: A History*. Including Biographical Sketches of Prominent Citizens. New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1930.

Prominent Personages of the Nation's Capital. Washington, D.C.: The Washington Times Co, 1924.

Tax Assessment Book, 1896-1906, Series T221. Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, Maryland.

Who's Who in the Nation's Capital. Washington: W.W. Publishing Company. 1923-24.

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson Family House (c1905)
7315 Brookville Road
Section 9:3

Secondary Sources:

Cavicchi, Clare Lise. "Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form: 35/71 Jones-Beall House, 7310 Brookville Road," M-NCPPC, January 1998.

----- "Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form: 35/77 Frank Simpson House, 3807 Williams Lane," M-NCPPC, January 1998.

"Chevy Chase Methodist Church," file at Chevy Chase Historical Society. Newsletter of 9-25-87, with photograph of former Williams Barn. Booklet, "How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place: The Chevy Chase Methodist Church, 1912-1954," c1954.

Cleveland Park Historical Society, "National Register Nomination Form for Cleveland Park Historic District," Listed on the National Register 4-1987.

George, Mary Roselle. "Developer Influence in the Suburbanization of Washington, D.C.: Francis G. Newlands and Chevy Chase." M.A. Thesis, University of Maryland, 1989.

Gowans, Alan. *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture, 1890-1930*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1986.

Hall, Jeannette Troth, interview, summarized, in "Early Life in Chevy Chase Section Three," *Chevy Chase Historical Society Newsletter*, Spring 1994.

Henry, Samuel J. *Old Days with Horse and Hound: The Story of the Chevy Chase Hunt, 1892-1916*. (1960)

Offutt, William. *Bethesda: A Social History of the Area Through World War II*. Bethesda, Md: The Innovation Game, 1995.

Orem, David S. Interview by William Bushong, Historic Preservation Planner, M-NCPPC. 1-24-1997.

----- Interview by Mary Anne Tuohey and Marjorie Zapruder. Chevy Chase Historical Society Oral History Project. Chevy Chase, Md: Chevy Chase Historical Society, 1988.

Wright, Gwen; William B. Bushong; and Clare Lise Cavicchi; "Chevy Chase, Maryland, Survey District: Survey Report: Phase Two," Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, June 1997.

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson Family House (c1905)
7315 Brookville Road
Section 9:4

Secondary Sources:

Wyatt, Barbara (Editor) "Surveying and Evaluating Vernacular Architecture." Midwest Vernacular Architecture Committee. National Register Bulletin 31, Draft. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987.

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/72 Simpson House
7315 Brookville Road





MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FORM
LOCATIONAL MAP

SURVEY NO.: M:35-72
PROPERTY NAME: Simpson House
TOWN: Chevy Chase
COUNTY: MONTGOMERY