

AMB  
6/26/96

**K-129**  
**Rich Levels**  
**near Sassafras**  
**c.1790**

In 1771, at the time of the death of his father, Augustine Boyer, III inherited 300 acres of Rich Level (1). The Boyer family had been substantial landowners, holding over 1000 acres in Kent County, as well as land in Delaware. Rich Level had been in their ownership since the early 18th Century.

As the Boyers were obviously prosperous in their farming operations and in other business ventures (a mercantile business in Georgetown run in conjunction with John Rumsey), the construction of a fine brick residence on their plantation was a logical development.

Late in the 18th Century, Augustine Boyer, III built his house. Five bays long and two stories tall, the plan is one of a center hall with two flanking rooms. The exterior has a two-course molded water table and a three-course belt course in which the uppermost course protrudes from the others. The pedimented architrave has fluted pilasters. The windows have 12/12 sash on the first floor and 12/8 on the second.

Inside, the detailing is of excellent quality and remains intact today. The stair boasts turned balusters and a shadow rail with recessed paneled pilasters. Also, each of the four principal rooms is paneled. In the living room, the paneling is limited to the chimney breast with dentil molding in the mantel and Wall of Troy molding elsewhere. Each of the three other rooms, however, has a complete wall of paneling. In the dining room, the fireplace is flanked by raised panels which extend for the width of the chimney breast and paneled china closets with crosssetted trim.

Upstairs, the fireplace end walls each have one large recessed panel over their respective mantels and flanking vertical panels. Set back about four inches, the paneled walls contain closet doors which also have recessed panels.

The original service wing, located to the rear of the main block, has not

survived. A replacement was constructed in the 1950's.

At the time of the 1822 Tax Assessment, Augustine Boyer, III was in his heyday. In addition to his home farm, he owned an additional 288 acres, 8 slaves and 53 oz. of plate. However, by the time of his death just six years later, the picture had changed entirely. In debt to two banks and seven individuals, Boyer died intestate. In the accounts of his estate, \$151.00 was paid to two lawyers "for prosecuting suit against assignees of Caverly and Boyer in Philadelphia" (2). In the November 14 issue of The Telegraph (Kent County's weekly newspaper) that year, the farm was advertised for sale:

"...Valuable Farm. Lying and being in Kent County, one mile from Head Of Sassafras, on Road from there to Smyrna, Del. - - It contains about five hundred acres. . . The improvements consist of a Brick Dwelling, Meat House, Stables, Corn Houses, etc . . .

The outcome of this sale was not available from the records, but by the time of the Martinet Map in 1860, Edward Boyer appears as the owner. Boyer and his sister, Anna Maria Boyer sold the farm to one Joshua Clayton in 1870, but reserved the family graveyard (3). Clayton retained ownership until his death in 1892, but never lived on the farm. After his death, his executor sold the farm to Nathaniel J. Williams (4)

Sometime after the house was acquired by the grandfather of the present owner, the 'A' roof was removed and a third story was added with shallow-pitched roof. The overall effect was reminiscent of the earlier Italianate style. At the same time, or possibly earlier, a porch was built across the facade. This was removed when the farm was acquired in the early 1960's by its present owners.

#### Footnotes:

1. Wills: Lib. 5, fol. 87.
2. Accounts: Lib 15, fol. 26.
3. Land Records: Lib JKH 9, fol. 565 ff.

K-129

4. Land Records: Lib SGF 1, fol. 453.

K-129  
Rich Levels  
Golts  
Private

18th Century

In the middle of the 19th century a third story was added to a fine 18th century brick dwelling. Inside all four original rooms have paneled end walls. In the dining room, two cupboards with butterfly shelves flank the fireplace.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Rich Levels

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Caldwell Road, second farm on left from Sassafrass

CITY, TOWN

Golts

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Kent

**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 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"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. & Mrs. Olin Davis

Telephone #: (301) 755-6940

STREET & NUMBER

Rich Levels

CITY, TOWN

Golts

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21637

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent County Courthouse

Liber #: **WHG 59**

Folio #: **513**

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Maryland 21620

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL     STATE     COUNTY     LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

K-129

<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"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Old Rich Levels House was constructed in the middle of the 18th century as a two story, central hall building with a gable roof. About a century later a third story with hipped roof was added; in its present form the building resembles Rich Levels II (K-321), a neighboring building constructed about the same time this house was remodeled.

The house stands on a tall basement with modern iron windows and a water table. The south facade is laid in Flemish bond with Liverpool bond being used on other facades. The water table has a double molded course, the upper being a cove and the lower a quarterround. There is a belt course between the first and second floors; it consists of four courses, the upper and lower of which project. This detail is also used at the Kitty Knight House (K-147 in Georgetown. Bricks are quite small in size; mortar joints in the Flemish bond wall are grapevined. The walls and trim are painted white and shutters green. The east gable wall is stuccoed.

The building is five bays long and one room deep with a central entrance. Windows have 12/12 sash on the first floor, 8/12 sash on the second, and two pane casement windows on the third. Frames are unbeaded, sills project slightly from the wall surface, there is an ogee backband molding. Second floor shutters are louvered; those on the first have three raised and beveled panels with quarterround edges.

The main entrance has an entrance porch and railing which are modern. The door opening is flanked by fluted pilasters which appear to be original and a denticulated pediment. The front door has six raised and beveled panels on the exterior and recessed on the inside.

The roof is finished with a plain, shallow box cornice; enclosed in the end walls are squat, wide chimneys. Behind the house is a gambrel roofed kitchen wing constructed about 20 years ago by Olin Davis, Sr. when he restored the building.

Most interior woodwork, of very good quality, has survived. The main stair is a three-run type and open to the third floor.

There are scroll step bracketts and two turned balusters on the open string and the newel post is turned with entasis. The hand-rail, which meets the newel cap is oval with moldings; it meets the intermediate newels with their pendants.

Doors have six raised and beveled panels with ogee edges; they are set in frames with three-part crossetted trim. In the present living room is an overmantle with candle wick molding under the shelves; the dining room has a tabernacle overmantle and cupboards with butterfly shelves. The chairrail in this room is deep with composite molding. First floor window trim was partially replaced the 19th century. Second floor rooms have paneled fireplace walls; The added third floor is very plain.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

K-129

**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 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES    mid-18th C. with                    BUILDER/ARCHITECT  
                          mid-19th C. additions

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rich Levels is significant for its architecture; its interior paneled rooms and stair are very fine; well designed and made, they are valuable documents of the architectural ideas of the mid-18th century

The addition of the upper floor is an interesting attempt to up-date an old house. Aesthetically it is not as successful as other houses similarly altered; nevertheless, the change is part of the evolution of the building.

K-129

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

The Kent Shoreman, Kent County, Maryland, November, 1968, p. 7.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

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

Marsha L. Fritz, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Historical Society

DATE

August, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Church Alley

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown

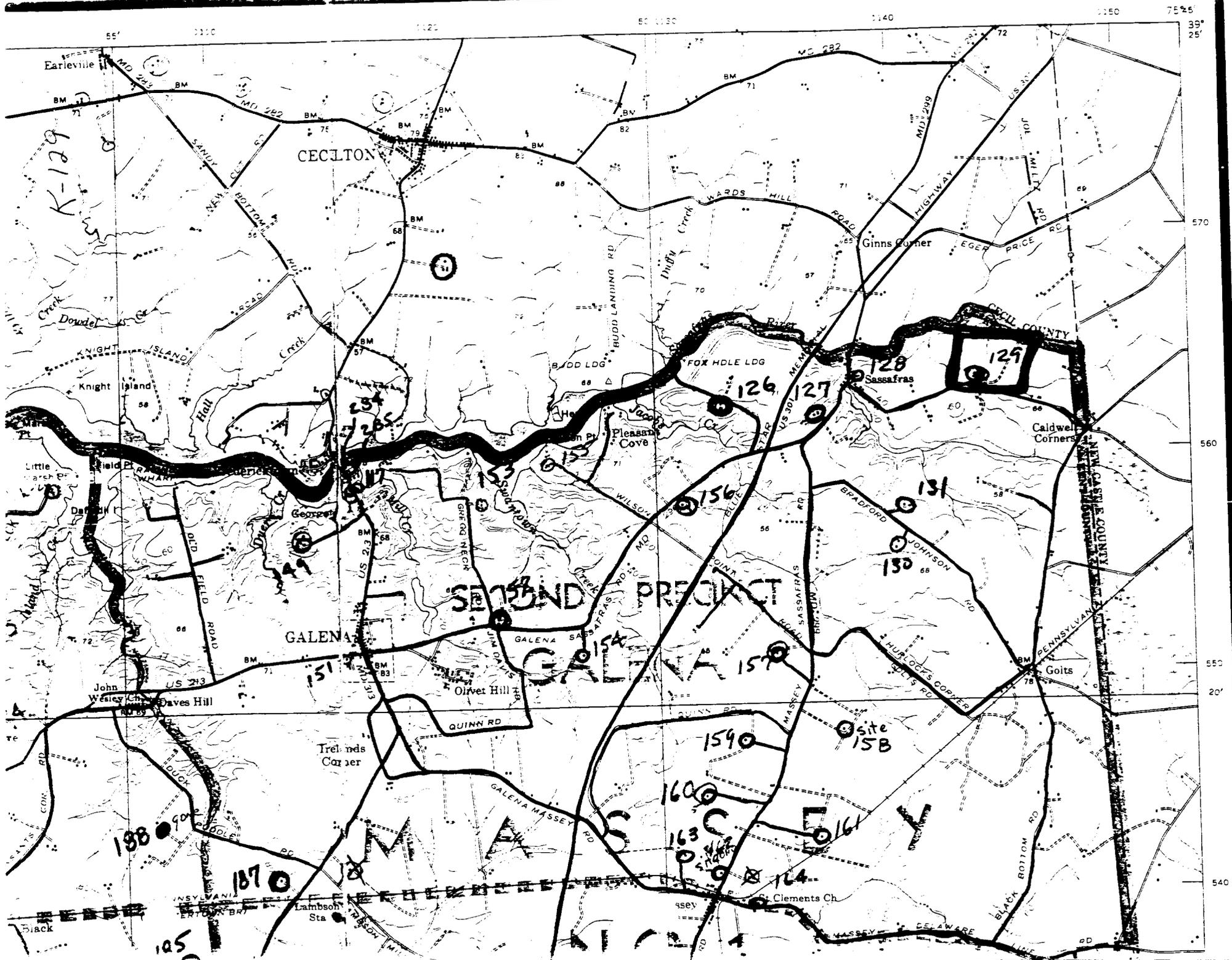
STATE

Maryland 21620

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  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438





K-129

RICH LEVELS

MHT-K129

CALDWELL RD

SASSAFRAS, MD

FRONT FROM SOUTH

C. ENGSTROM AUG. 1977



K-129

Rich Levels  
Sassafras, Md.  
Front. West, Living Room  
C. Engstrom Aug '977