K-253

Stephney Farm or Stephen Heath Manor
Broad Neck
1850

The name Stephney is a corruption/simplification of the original name of the 1000 acre tract patented in 1659—Mannour of Stephen Heath.[1] It is not the first such corruption. In the tax records of 1783, the land is called "Stephen Heath Manor" and in 1852 it is called "Stepney Heaths Manor."[2]

The Greek Revival house standing on a part of the manor possesses a brick with the inscription "Beck 1850." In the 1852 Tax Assessment, Benjamin F. Beck is listed as owning 386 acres referred to as "pt. Stepney Heaths Manor & Berwick." In the assessor's description, the mentioning of a "New Brick House & other Buildings in good repair" confirms the date of construction shown on the brick.[3]

Beck is also listed as owning the adjoining "Middle Plantation, Crows Chance and Addition, called Trap Farm with an Old House in Bad Repair. Formerly to John Claypoole."[4] Within the decade, he built another brick house for his son, Benjamin, Jr. which is called Middle Plantation. In 1865, Benjamin F. Beck purchased the mill and farm now called Brice Mill and operated the grist mill until 1882, when it was sold to John Brice.[5]

Benjamin Beck's residence is probably the earliest example of the Greek Revival style used for farmhouses in Kent County. The main difference between other farmhouses and Mr. Beck's is the use of the short third floor that is treated as a frieze for the cornice, the stepped parapet

gables and relatively shallow-pitched roof. The porches add a considerable amount of classical detail to the otherwise plain brick box of the plan. In the central bay is a small Ionic portico with pressed tin wreaths on the wall similar to the dormers of Beck's Landing. A larger Doric porch runs across the entire four-bay facade of the low two-story wing. Its lozenge balustrade is similar to those on the Davis House near Still Pond.

The plan of Stephney Farm is well developed and contains one more first-story room than most others of the antebellum period. The main block has a central stairhall with two flanking parlors. Continuing in a straight line are two additional rooms and behind the last is the original kitchen and a frame addition.

1. Patents, Lib. 4, fol. 528.
2. 1852 Tax Assessment, 1st District.
3. Ibid. No. 2.
4. Ibid. No. 2.
5. Land Records, Lib. fol.

Survey No. K-253

Magi No. 1502535304

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Stephney Farm

and/or common Stephney Farm

2. Location

street & number West side Broad Neck Road, ¼ mile South of Langford ___ not for publication

city, town Chestertown X vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	X private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	X not applicable	X no	___ military	___ other:

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

name Howard B. Strong

street & number RD# 3, Box 269 telephone no.: (301) 778-0860

city, town Chestertown state and zip code Maryland 21620

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Court House liber WHG 5

street & number folio 422

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-253

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	___ original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

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

A large brick house constructed in 1850, Stephney Farm has a wealth of fine Greek Revival period detail from the beautiful interior stair and mantles to the original exterior porches. The main house is 5 bays wide & three stories tall with a lower 2 story side wing & an even lower 2 story wing behind the side wing.

8. Significance

Survey No. K-253

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	X agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates **Builder/Architect**

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.

Stephney Farm is one of Kent County' best mid-nineteenth century houses. It is also a house which most strongly shows the impact a Greek Revival styling on Kent's vernacular "brick box." Still retaining the gable roof & side wings so common in the eighteenth & early nineteenth centuries, the crow's step gables and elaborate porches are obvious modifications. The brick "panel" at the top of the major facades is a clear attempt to create the impression of a heavy Greek Revival Cornice.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-253

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____ **Quadrangle scale** _____

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

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 Marsha Fritz, Surveyor

organization County Commissioners of Kent County
Historical Socity of Kent County **date** 6/8/81

street & number The Court House 778-4600
Church Alley **telephone** 778-3499

city or town Chestertown **state** Maryland

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

PS-2746

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.1 DESCRIPTION (continued)

Building Form and Material

1. Size - Main Section: 3 stories, 5 bays wide, 2 bays deep
   Wing A: 2 stories; 4 bays wide, 2 bays deep
   Wing B: 2 stories; 2 bays wide, 2 bays deep
   Wing C: 1 stories; 2 bays long, 1bay deep

2. Plan type - Central hall with side wings

3. Roof type - Main section; very shallow gable with crow's step curtains at the gable ends.

   Wings - A-same ; Wing B-shallow gable; Wing C-gable, steep

4. Chimney - Located in gables of main section & each wing except Wing C
   Material - Brick
   Decorative elements - Simple 2 step corbelled cap. Those in the main house are very short; the wing B chimney is taller.

5. Material/Walls - Main Section: Brick, Bond 1-5; Wing A: Brick, Bond 1-5; Wing B: Brick, Bond 1-5; Wing C: Frame, Type-lapped weatherboarding

6. Material/Roofs - Main Section: Standing seam
   Wing A: Same
   Wing B: Same

7. Material/Foundation - Main Section - Brick
   Wing A: Same
   Wing B: Same

8. Age - Main Section - A brick carved with "Beck June 1850" is set into the gable near the corner.
   Wings A - probably contemporary
   Wings B - contemporary or slightly later
   Wings C - later

9. Style - Greek Revival

Building Elements and Details

1. Main entry: Located at the center of east facade the main entry has a pair of 2 panel doors; a 7 light transom has smaller panels over the 3-light, paneled sidelights.

   Secondary entries: Located in the east facade of wing A, the second bay from the south is an entry with a 3 light transom & 4 panel door. There are also entries in the north wall of wing B & C & a rear entry in the center of the west wall of the main section.

2. Windows - Main Section: type - double hung; lights - floors 1 & 2 - 6/6; floor 3 - 3/3. Details - Bull-nose frame, plain sills, splayed flat brick arches. Shutters - Formerly wooden, now some metal.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.2 DESCRIPTION (continued)

Wings: type Double hung; lights 6/6; details same as main house; shutters same as main house

3. Dormers - None

4. Roof details - Main and Wing Section: The house has very simple roof finish with as enclosed box cornice with level crown & bed moldings. On the main section only this cornice returns. The roof is given visual weight by a panel of brick set our from the wall of the front & rear of the main house and wing A & painted white.

5. Porch - Main entry porch - one bay with dentil cornice & Ionic fluted columns. The porch ceiling is paneled with panels which run the width of the porch, are recessed & finished with panel moldings. Along the front of wing A is a one story flat-roofed porch with slender Doric columns and a railing made up of crossed sticks.

   Rear entry porch-one bay, similiar details to wing A porch.

6. Color - current Redbrick/white trim/green shutters Historic - unknown

7. Other - An interesting detail is the pair of cast metal weathes attached to the walls on either side of the main entry doors.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

1. Plan type - Central hall

2. Major stair - Dog leg, open to third. Simple but bold turned walnut newel, round walnut handrail; tapered round pine balusters & simple step brackets. Very handsome.
   Other stairs - Simple rear stair

3. Major mantles - Greek Revival wooden mantles are use throughout the house, the larger & slightly more decorative on the first floor.

4. Major Trim - Windows/doors 8" wide: fillet & bevel bb, split face, inside bead. In wing A bedrooms the trim is the same but narrower. Splayed
   Baseboard - 12"/w ogee & bevel & split face.
   Cornices - In no. room, first floor. Main section - cyma reversa & fillet
   Chair rails - no old

5. Major doors 4 - panel & 6 panel (small panel in cneter)

6. Floors-random medium

7. Walls/ceiling finishes - Plaster

8. Large panels beneath major windows

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.3 DESCRIPTION (continued)

OUTBUILDINGS/SITE DESCRIPTION

1. Major outbuildings
   A. Original use - Ice House
      Material-demolished

   B. Original use - Recent barns

2. Site Description - Lawns & ornamental shrubbery surround the house. The house & outbuildings are at the end of a lane bordered by trees, lawns and hedge rows. Because a nursery is a part of the farm the lawns include many beautiful plantings.

3. Views to/from site - Farm fields. No other structures are clearly visible from the house.

USE OF BUILDING

1. Current - Residence

2. Historic - Residence

HISTORY OF BUILDING/PAST OWNERSHIP

If the inscription carved in the brick is correct, this house was constructed in 1850 by a B.F. Beck , a man who also owned Middle Plantation, (K-252) and the Farm (K-). Mr. Beck lived at Stephney and reportedly build the house on Middle Plantation (1856) for one of his children. There are certainly similarities between the two. In the twentieth century both houses fell into decline. The parlors in Stephney still have stains in the flooring from their use as chicken houses & tomatoe warehouses. Stephney was carefully restored by Mr. & Mrs. Strong.

Feb 22, 1910
R. Strong

K-253

Staphney Farm

1850
built by Ben Beck
for bride —

owned by

Howard B. Strong Sr.

See - Ernest Strong

Staphney Farm is a very large 3 story brick house ~~dating~~ built in 1850 by Ben Beck for his bride. It is 5 bays long and one room deep with a 4 bay wing on the north side and a 2 bay wing west of the wing, all of brick laid in common bond. The center door of the east facade has double doors, transom and sidlights with an ionic portico. The 1st & 2nd ~~floor~~ story windows have 6/6 sash & the 3rd story has 2/3 sash and that story on the main facade is painted white. All of the windows had lowered shutters. Unusual for this area are the gables which form stepped curtain walls similar to work around Frederick County. On the center rear door and across the east & north sides of the wing are porches of doric influence, some having dentil molding. A wood cornice contains the gutter.

Inside, the ~~est~~ room arrangement is much like the typical ~~southern~~ Md. house with center hall flanked by a room on each side. Heavy simple trim ~~and~~ the windows & doors and simple mantels ~~etc~~ define the interior. The stair is made of walnut and is very simple with a large newel post and plain tapered ~~to~~ spindles.

no danger

fair condition

Oct 22, 1966

Stephney Farm is a very large three story brick house built in 1850 by Ben Beck for his bride. It is five bays long and one room deep with a four bay wing on the north side and a two bay wing west of the wing; all of brick laid in common bond. The center door of the east facade has double door, transom and sidelights with a Doric portico. The first and second story windows have 6/6 sashes and the third story has 3/3 sashes and that story on main facade is painted white. All of the windows have louvered shutters. Unusual for this area are the gables which form stepped curtain walls similar to work in Frederick County. On the center rear door and across the east and north sides of the wing are porches of Doric influence, some having dentil molding. A wood cornice contains the gutter.

Inside, the room arrangement is much like the typical Maryland house with center hall flanked by a room on each side. Heavy simple trim around the windows and doors and simple mantels define the interior.

The stair rail railing is made of walnut and is very simple with huge turned newel post and plain tapered balusters.

1502535404

Form 10-445
(5/62)

1. STATE Maryland
COUNTY Kent
TOWN Chestertown VICINITY Langford
STREET NO. Md. Rt. 446, 1 mile south of Langford west side of road
ORIGINAL OWNER Ben Beck
ORIGINAL USE dwelling
PRESENT OWNER Howard B. Strang Jr.
PRESENT USE dwelling
WALL CONSTRUCTION Brick
NO. OF STORIES 3

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
INVENTORY K-253

2. NAME Stephney Farm
DATE OR PERIOD 1850
STYLE Federal or Ante Bellum
ARCHITECT
BUILDER Ben Beck

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC NO

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered NO Interior good Exterior good

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

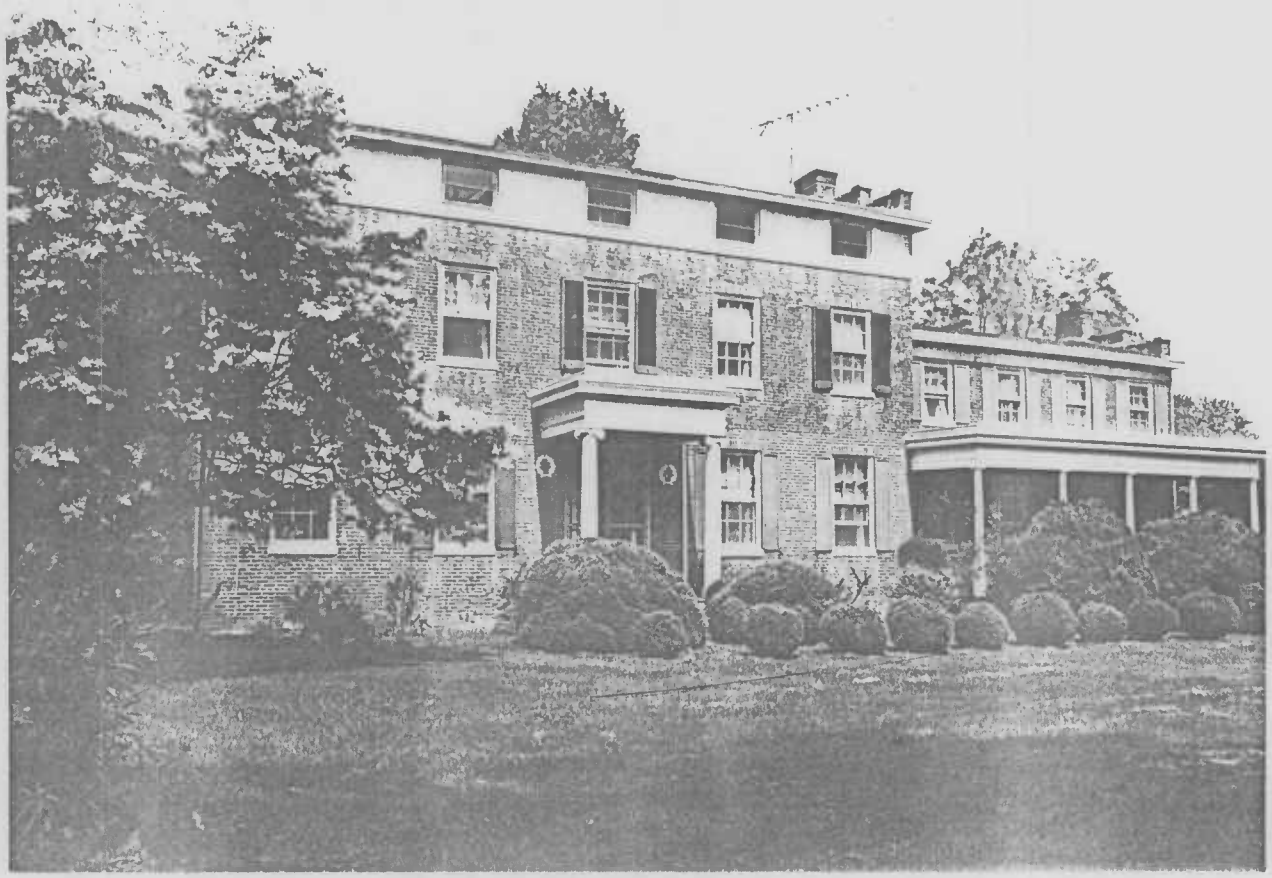
8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER
Michael Bourne

DATE OF RECORD Oct 22, 1968

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

K-253
West
97
253
N E C K
298
474
Swan Cove
Millstone Pt
Hadaway Chapel
475
Cem
B R O A D N E C K
Becks Landing
254
CREEK
Flat Pt
Deep Pt
Island Pt
248
244
LANGFORD
Windmill
WEST
FORK
Lovely
Lovely Cove
Piney Pt
Clay
Longmarsh Pt
Whale Pt
Pastor Pt
Cedar Pt
Long Cove
LANGFORD
266
255
Windmill
Orchard Pt
FORK
PHILIP
CR
Hoo
84
Rock Pt
282
ROCK HALL QUADRANGLE
256
Cvt
Deep Pt
EAST
Q U A K E R N E C K
Island Pt
REEK
Caraway
King
Hawbush Pt
462



View to West

STEPHNEY FARM (K-253)

Broad Neck, Chestertown, Kent County

Photograph: M. L. Fritz, June 1981