K-634 19th Century

Miller Farm

Near Chesterville

Private

The farmhouse on the Miller Farm, the first farm west of Mill Branch on the north side of the Chesterville-Millington Road, is an example of a modest nineteenth-century frame farmhouse. Both its sections, the 1-1/2 storey one the earlier, continued vernacular building forms with early eighteenth-century antecedents in Kent County. During the century in which the central-hall-with-stair plan became dominant, at least among the prosperous, the two-storey main section added to the earlier building's west gable-end repeated the three-bay-wide, hall-and-parlor plan with two corner stairs that largely had fallen out of favor. A plan nearly identical to the main section's is seen at the brick Nicholas Ryley House (K-153) in Gregg Neck, an early eighteenth-century building. The house was remodeled extensively during the 1960s so that elements that would help date it more precisely than ca. 1800-1875 are either covered or removed. The 1-1/2 storey section may have undergone earlier alterations, especially at the time of the addition.

Survey No. K-634

Magi No. 1506345504

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Miller Farm

2. Location

street & number North side Millington-Chesterville Road, 2.3 Miles east of Chesterville and .9 miles west of Rt. 301 ___ not for publication

city, town Chesterville X vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X 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 James R. Miller and Loran J. Miller

street & number 5802 Bryn Mawr Rd., College Park, MD 20740
Millington, Maryland 21651 telephone no.: 928-3575

city, town Millington, state and zip code Maryland 21651

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber EHP 153

street & number Cross Street folio 157

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-634

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
X good	___ ruins	X 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.

The first farm west of Mill Branch, the 165-acre Miller Farm is located on the north side of the old Chesterville-Millington Road about two miles east of Chesterville and one mile west of Route 301. Both sections of the simple, gable-roofed, frame farmhouse may date from the first half of the nineteenth century although the three-bay, 1-1/2 storey section is earlier than the two-story, three-bay section added at its west gable end. Front and rear walls are flush from one section to the other. Built in a rural vernacular style that persisted in Kent County form almost its beginning, both sections were extensively remodeled in the 1960s, making them difficult to date. The main, two-story section, with a partial cellar, has a hall and parlor plan on the first story with a stair in each of the rear, outside corners and three front-to-back rooms on the second story. Built over a crawl space, the 1-1/2 story wing, originally with two rooms on the first story, has a central chimney, rarely seen in Kent County. A corner stair leads to an unfinished loft, apparently once used for farm help; it is lit by two approach side gable-roofed dormers.

Measuring about 34'-0" x 16'9" deep, the main, two-story section is three bays wide and two bays deep, though the only openings on the west end are an attic window each side of the chimney, now with replacement fixed sash with six lights (2-over-2-over-2). There are no exterior openings in the east end. First-and=second-story openings align in each bay. The main entry is in the center bay, but slightly off-center to the west. Entry is into the west room near the partition wall. ·The fenestration of the rear side is the same, with a now-closed door opposite the main entry.

The exterior is covered by horizontal, lapped weatherboard, much of which is replacement. The exposure is ca. 6" on the west end and ca. 4-1/2" on the approach side, where it runs across the joint with the 1-1/2 story section. There are double corner boards. One of the owners says that there is mortared nogging within the walls.

A square chimney is located within the wall in the center of each gable end. They have been entirely rebuilt with new brick, including the chimney base in the cellar. The chimneys have no decorative elements. The east chimney is now used only for the furnace flue. No mantels are visible on the interior. One of the owners thinks there were mantels and fireplace openings but was not certain whether they were only suitable for use with stoves.

8. Significance

Survey No. K-570

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	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X 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.

The house at Miller Farm is a relatively rare example of a modest nineteenth-century farmhouse, built for a relatively small farm that probably would not bear the cost of a more elaborate house. It began with a frame 1-1/2 story section that continued a form frequently used in the eighteenth century, though with lower first-story walls. Either relatively few nineteenth-century buildings of this type were built or few survive. Most surviving nineteenth century frame farmhouses that are two-story have a central-hall-and-stair plan. With its pair of enclosed corner stairs and hall-and-parlor first-story plan, the added main section continues a building tradition dating locally from the early eighteenth century (for example at the brick Nicholas Ryley House, K-153). Why this particular plan was chosen for the addition instead of a central-hall plan is not known. Perhaps the owner realized the isolation and subsequent non-use of the room on the far side of the hall from the service wing, or perhaps it was a matter of recreating the familiar. Building a formal central stair also could be costly. Central-hall houses also may have had a reputation as draughty, but the penalty associated with enclosed corner stairs was difficulty in moving furniture up and down.j

Martenet's 1860 map of Kent County shows the heirs of Thomas Walker as the owners of the property, with a house in the approximate location of the present one. The Lake, Griffing and Stevenson 1877 atlas map shows a T. Price as the owner. Shown nearby, on the south side of the Chesterville-Millington Road slightly west of the farm lane, is School No. 8, First District, said to have been built in 1877. A one-teacher school listed in the school system's annual report of 1900, it evidently was no longer open by 1922, the year of the next-available school report. The building is gone. It is said to have been moved to Chesterville Forest after the school for black children there was burned.

The farm has been in the family of the present co-owners since the 1920s. their parents, Roland and Edith Miller, having bought it then.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-570

An illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties, Md. Philadelphia: Lake, Griffing and Stevenson, 1877.

Martenet's Map of Kent County, Maryland. Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet, 1860.

Eleanora M. Lynn, "A History of Education in Kent County, Maryland" unpublished typescript chapter of forthcoming history of of Kent County , Rock Hall, MD: n.d.

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 Margaret Q. Fallaw, Survey Consultant

organization The County Commissioners of Kent County
The Historical Society of Kent Co. **date** June 26, 1986

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

The roofs of both sections are covered with black asphalt shingles on plywood sheathing, the old wood shingles having been removed. Both have small, plain box cornices and flush, untapered verge boards. Surface materials are mid-twentieth century replacements.

The main section has a partial cellar, under the east room (now a dining room). The brick foundation has been parged on both interior and exterior and a concrete floor poured. As was true of most old cellars in Kent County, this one was whitewashed well into the twentieth century. The cellar is reached via enclosed stairs within the northwest corner of the wing; below first-storey level, the entryway's walls are of fieldstone. The first-storey joists measure 7-1/2" x 2-1/4" and show marks from an up-and-down-saw; they are ca. 26-28" on center. The floor seen above is of medium to wide boards; they have been whitewashed. A second layer of flooring has been installed, running the same direction as the first; they are narrower and painted. There are front and rear central cellar windows, the rear one now covered by parged bricks. In them are 3-light modern sash.

Although it is not entirely clear, the evidence in the cellar, in the cellar entryway within the wing, and in the wing attic indicates that when the main section was added, a cellar foundation wall for the addition was built adjacent to the end crawl-space foundation wall of the wing. The crawl-space foundation and 1-1/2 storey end wall appear to have been removed and the space from the end of the 1-1/2 storey section bridged. Another possibility is that the west- end foundation of the 1-1/2 storey section was removed, the cellar foundation built in its place, and the end frame wall of the wing rebuilt above first-storey level to main-section roof height; however, this is relatively unlikely. The east cellar wall is now the common foundation for both house sections, there is a single sill, and the first-storey wall above is not double in thickness. The most westerly joist and rafter seen in the attic are about 6" from the common wall; this last joist runs through the stair well, indicating that the stair is not original. The false plate floor board also ends the same distance short of the present end wall.

The weatherboard above the main entry indicates that there formerly (but predating the present family's ownership) was a porch about eight feet wide. There is now a brick stoop and steps with a modern metal balustrade. The six-panel door and trim are quite recent. The rear, opposite door was covered on the interior when the wall was sheet-rocked. On the exterior a door of 3" vertical tongue-and-groove board with battens can be seen. It is hung by two fairly smalll strap hinges; there is evidence of a former box lock. There is evidence of a former small canopy over the door. The steps are gone.

Except for the attic, all main-section windows are double-hung with 6-over-6 lights. The replacement rear-center second-storey window is larger than the others, for moving furniture in and out of the second-storey that will not fit through the corner stairs. Some sash have been replaced; on what appears to be old sash the muntins are quite wide. Trim is plain and 3" wide, with a drip at the head; the wooden sills are 2-3/4". Shutters are now fixed black plastic louvered shutters, on the approach-side windows only. Shutters were gone by the time the Miller family came to the farm.

On the interior of the main section most surfaces are relatively new. Sheet rock covers the walls and ceilings; there never was any paneling. All doors and trim of the main section are fairly recent; the old trim was remembered as being plain. In the north corners at both ends there are enclosed corner stairs. The northeast stair, with all winders, has been rebuilt. At the west wall of the first storey there is a closet on both sides of the chimney, the north one being under the stair.

The two first-storey rooms appear nearly equal in size. Between them are a pair of 15-light French doors that replaced former double doors. The trim is said to be that present when the old doors were there, a 2-5/8" fillet and a large (3/4") inside bowtell. The first set of double doors may or may not have themselves been original to the house. The first-storey ceiling is now 7'-8-1/2" high.

According to one of the owners, the second-storey doors had been board-and-batten. Second-storey partition walls are quite thin, evidently with studs turned sideways or spaced vertical boards to which lath and plaster were applied, evidently to save space. The center room of the three is the smallest; access to it is through a door from each side bedroom. Each room has a front and rear window.

The stair to the unfinished attic is in the northeast corner, above the stair from first to second storey. The attic was never finished, only floored with wide random boards. Rafters appear to be of oak and measure 3" x 4-1/4"; they are 22"-26" on center and mortised and tenoned, with pegs, at the roof apex. Roman numerals on the rafters are reminders of the cutting and fitting practices of local carpenters well into the nineteenth century.

The 1-1/2 storey wing is about 30'-5" wide x 16'-7" deep. Its three approach-side bays are not evenly spaced, though the windows of the outer bays are spaced equally from their respective corners. The door in the center bay is off-center to the west; entry is into the west room, now a remodeled kitchen. Wing first-storey windows on the approach side are double-hung with 6-over-6 lights; the sash in the west window appears old. The rear openings have been altered; there are now two recently installed rear windows with 1-over 1 lights, one in the kitchen and one in a bathroom. There formerly was a rear door, but it was not opposite the approach side door There is a door in the east end, in the south bay. One of the owners says there was never in his memory a window in the north bay end bay. The wing's first-floor level is two steps lower than that of the main section; ceiling height is about 7'-1" though there is a notable center sag in the ceiling. There were originally two first-storey rooms, one on each side of the center chimney. Now the east room is divided from east to west; the front section is a utility room and the rear partly open to the kitchen, with the northeast corner a bathroom. All visible building materials within the wing's first story are recently applied.

Two quite tall gable-roofed dormers are in the south roof slope only, placed without regard to the first-storey openings but each centered in the roof space between the chimney and its end of the wing. The windows are double-hung with 6-over-6 lights. The cheeks are plywood over diagonal

tongue-and-groove boards (seen on the interior). Trim is plain; the wood sills appear partially embedded in the roof. The eave overhang is slight (ca. 2-3"); there are plain, slender ca. 6-7" gable-end returns.

The approach side of the wing is, like the main-section facade, covered with horizontal, lapped weatherboard with 4-1/2" exposure; it is replacement material. The east end and the rear are covered with German shiplap weatherboard, applied by the Miller family after removing the old weatherboard.

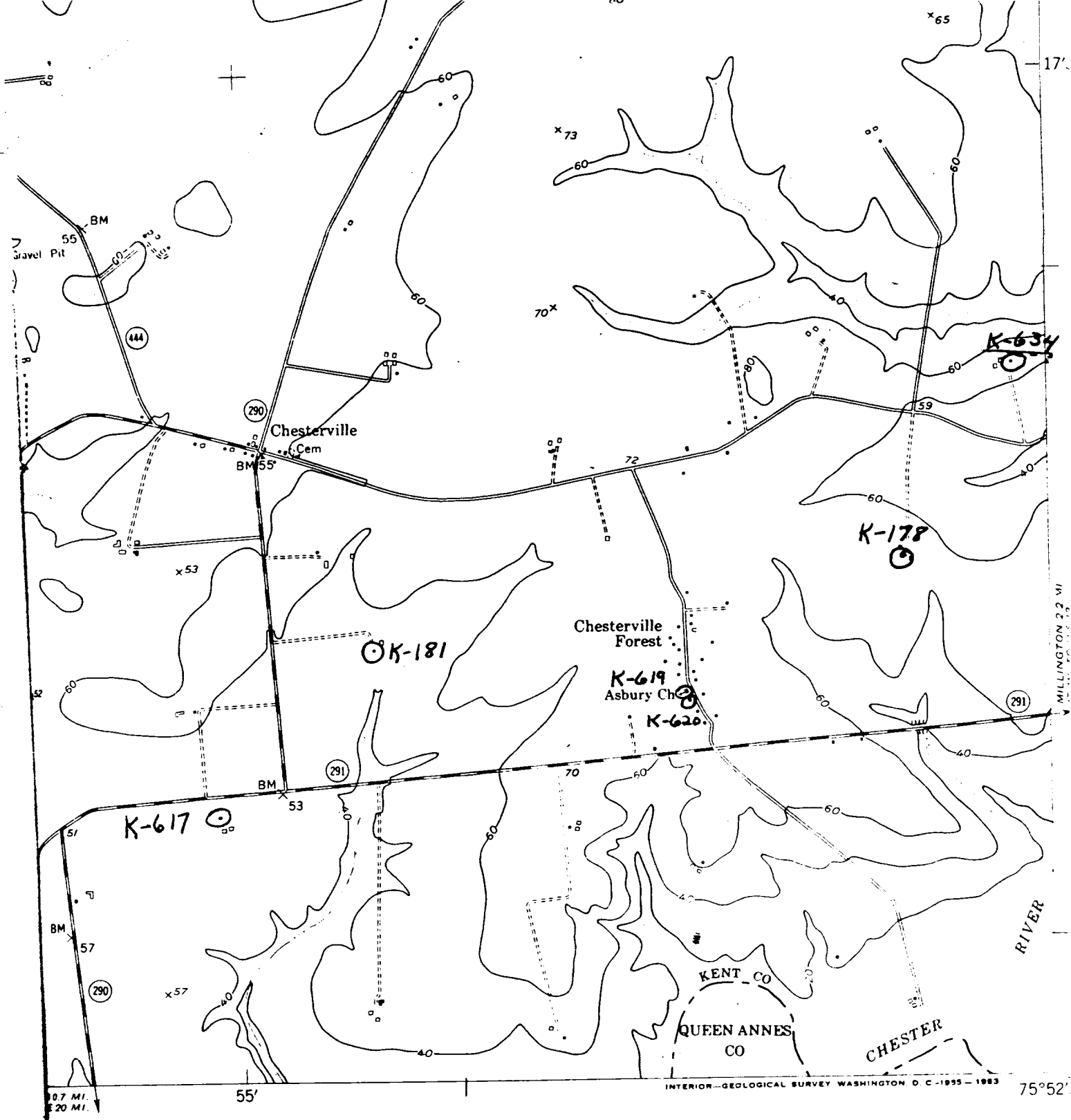
The wing is over a shallow crawl space. The foundation cannot be seen from the exterior because of a board perimeter. Little could be seen through a small opening in the east end except that the foundation may be of both fieldstone and brick. Some brick was seen at the southeast corner, but that may represent repair work. The joists are sawn (the saw marks could not be seen) and the sills hewn. There may be some sort of vertical-board enclosure in the vicinity of the chimney, but this could neither be well seen nor explained.

The wing chimney, in place since the present owners' family's occupancy but recently rebuilt above the roof, is square (ca. 17") and never for a fire. It rises within the present east utility room, near the partition wall with the kitchen. The bricks seen in the loft appear handmolded; their size is variable, with some as long as 8-1/2".

A wide (42") enclosed stair (quarter-turn-with winders) with a new door is in the northwest corner of the wing, leading to the loft. Two steps are within the kitchen. The wing rafters, which have been whitewashed but appear to be oak, measure ca. 3" x 3-1/2 to 3-3/4". Spacing appears random; they are pegged at the apex. A few rafters seem to be replacements. On what appears to be original rafters fine up-and-down-saw marks can be seen. Just west of the square chimney there is a board wall of vertical tongue-and-groove boards. There is no indication that the wing began as a one-room, smaller building. The loft was never finished except for a floor, which is of 6-1/2" to 7" uniform-appearing boards. The space probably was used only for farm help. There seems to have been a fire that affected the east end of the loft; there are some charred building parts, especially in the area of the east dormer.

All the old farm buildings are gone; the present ones all date from the period of the Miller family's occupancy. There had been a meathouse to the rear of the wing.

A fifth of a mile from the public road, the farmhouse is sited on a rise just south of its crest. There are approach-side foundation plantings, but otherwise the site is quite open, with only a mimosa on each side in the front lawn. The lane passes to the west of the main section, with the farm buildings to the west of the lane. There is a shallow, open rear lawn and large vegetable gardens behind it. Cultivated farm fields are on all sides, on slightly rolling ground, with trees beyond them. To the southwest in the distance, across the road, the house at Deer Haven (K-178) can be seen.



GALENA, MD.

SW/4 CECILTON 15' QUADRANGLE

N3915—W7552.5/7.5

PHOTOINSPECTED 1974

1953

K634 - 26

K-634
Miller Farm
Chesterville-Millington Rd., near Millington
M. Q. Fallaw - 6/23/86
View to north

K634-24

K-634
Miller Farm
Chesterville-Millington Rd., near Millington
View to south
M.Q. Fallaw - 6/23/86
View to South