K-639 Circa 1888-1890
Hickory Ridge Farm
Near Massey
Private

The house at Hickory Ridge is frame, 2-1/2 storeys tall, and five bays wide, with the main entry in the central bay. The main facade faces west. To the rear of the southern part of the main section is a 2-1/2 storey perpendicular rear wing that is three bays deep. It originally had one-storey porches on both its north and south long sides, but they are now enclosed, the south one enlarged as well. Originally mostly covered with horizontal, lapped weatherboard, the walls are now clad in white vinyl siding. One original patterned-slate roof slope remains. The now-screened five-bay front porch has elaborate, quite solid porch brackets and spindle-work between posts. Despite its mid-twentieth-century changes, the house is one of the most outstanding of the largest and best appointed of the vernacular Victorian Gothic Revival frame houses constructed in the county during the last quarter of the nineteenth century that are 2-1/2 storeys tall, five bays wide with central gable, and with perpendicular rear wing. Despite the horizontal, lapped weatherboard on their main walls, these were very vertical, pointed houses as the romantic Gothic Revival Style dictated. They are very tall, with steep gable roofs that overhang considerably, often with open, unboxed cornices, with triangular upper window sash, and sometimes roof spire-type finials. Until a hurricane, this house had spire finials that seem to have been of iron. By the time this house was built, the plan was virtually standard, with a secondary hall at the wing's main entry, with access to pantry, secondary stair, main section, and wing rooms. They had three-part bay-windows (on two storeys in most cases), very large main-entry architraves, almost floor-to-ceiling first-storey facade windows that opened onto the front porch, steep-roofed dormers. Other examples are Swan Meadow (K-587), the Piposzar House (K-633), Ivingo (K-565), Boxwood Place (K-615) nearby, and the Georgetown River House (K-580). Especially unusual at this house are the unglazed transoms with spindle-work, the unusual porch brackets, and the manner in which the first-storey windows that open to the porch rise into the wall above to allow true walk-out passage to the porch. No expense seems to have been spared.

Survey No. K-639

Magi No. 1506395604

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Hickory Ridge Farm

and/or common Hickory Ridge Farm

2. Location

street & number East side Rt. 313, 1.5 miles south of Massey ___ not for publication

city, town Massey 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 Clarence H. Docker et al., c/o Mr. and Mrs. John Quinn

street & number P.O. Box 153 telephone no.:

city, town Massey, state and zip code Maryland 21650

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber WHG 50

street & number folio 183

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-639

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

Hickory Ridge Farm is on the east side of the Millington-Massey road about 1-1/2 miles south of Massey. The house at Hickory Ridge is frame, 2-1/2 storeys tall, and five bays wide, with the main entry in the central bay. The main facade faces west. To the rear of the southern part of the main section is a 2-1/2 storey perpendicular rear wing that is three bays deep. It originally had one-storey proches on both its north and south long sides, but they are now enclosed, the south one enlarged as well. Originally mostly covered with horizontal, lapped weatherboard, the walls are now clad in white vinyl siding. One original slate roof slope remains. The now-screened five-bay front porch has elaborate, quite solid porch brackets and spindle-work between posts. The main section plan is central hall with one room on each side. There are numerous notable interiod details.. The house was built shortly after the earlier house on the site burned in 1888.

(Continued)

8. Significance

Survey No. K-639

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 1888-1890 **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 Hickory Ridge Farm, despite its mid-twentieth-century changes, is one of the most outstanding of the largest and best appointed of the vernacular Victorian Gothic Revival frame houses constructed in the county during the last quarter of the nineteenth century that are 2-1/2 storeys tall, five bays wide with central gable, with perpendicular rear wing. Despite the horizontal, lapped weatherboard on their main walls, these were very vertical, pointed houses as the romantic Gothic Revival Style dictated. They are very tall, with steep gable roofs that overhang considerably, often with open, unboxed cornices, with triangular upper window sash, and sometimes roof spire-type finials. Until a hurricane, this house had spire finials that seem to have been of iron. By the time this house was built, the plan was virtually standard, with a secondary hall at the wing's main entry, with access to pantry, secondary stair, the main section, and the wing rooms. They had three-part bay-windows (on two storeys in most cases), very large main-entry architraves, almost floor-to-ceiling first-storey facade windows that opened onto the front porch, steep-roofed dormers, and often a secondary facade, sometimes with central gable. Other examples are Swan Meadow (K-587), the Piposazar House (K-633), Ivingo (K-565), Boxwood Place (K-615), nearby, and the Georgetown River House (K-580). Especially unusual at this house are the unglazed transoms with spindle-work, the unusual porch brackets, and the manner in which the first-storey windows that open to the porch rise into the wall above to allow true walk-out passage to the porch. No expense seems to have been spared. The millwork catalogues seem to have been thoroughly searched for decorative details. This is an unusually large house, for the third-level rooms of the wing are finished.

(Continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-639

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	County Commissioners of Kent County Historical Society of Kent County	date	July 5, 1986
street & number	Courthouse 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.

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Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

PS-2746

The house is a very tall one, with 10-foot ceilings on the first storey, 9-foot ceilings on the second, and almost 8-foot ceilings (at the center) on the third storey under a tall, quite steep gable roof. The gable-ends of the main section have only center openings, most notably a two-storey, three-part bay window on the south end. Somewhat unusually in this sort of house, there is access from the rear of the main, central hall directly into the wing, as well as an adjacent door to the wing porch (now, in this case, partly a bathroom). The door to the wing is under the stair landing. A second way to the wing is through the door in the rear wall of the south parlor, now a dining room. The first storey plan of Hickory Ridge has been somewhat altered. The wing first-storey originally contained the kitchen at the rear and the dining room at the front, with pantry and secondary stair (the latter remaining). The partition was removed between the two major rooms, the entire space now used for a family kitchen. The south parlor, formerly the family parlor, has become the formal dining room. The south wing porch, formerly reached both via a kitchen door and a secondary hall door, has been extended southward, enclosed, and opened up to the large kitchen. It now is a family room-sunporch.

Vinyl horizontal siding has been applied over the original weatherboard, which can be seen inside the rear cellar entrance at the east end of the wing. The exposure of the horizontal, lapped weatherboard was about 5 to 5-1/2". The exposure of the new siding is 4". The body of the house was once said to have been painted gold, with Spanish brown trim. The central gable is covered with fish scale shingles of slate.

The main section was built over a crawl space, though part of it has been dug out to the depth of the cellar in recent years; the foundation is brick above stone. The cellar is under the entire rear wing; its foundation walls are all brick.

A pair of chimneys flanks the central hall of the main section, exiting through the roof at the ridge. This was a typical chimney location for late Victorian houses, a marked change from the persistent Kent County tradition of gable-end chimneys within the wall at the center. It gave opportunities for decorative treatment of the gable ends that were not possible with the chimneys there. As a result, in the west gable end of this house there is a two-storey bay; in the other end windows are centered on each level. These chimneys are built of red brick, but the south one has some parging and is somewhat deteriorated. The dining room mantel below for the fireplace that used this chimney has been removed. The chimneys are enriched with a one-course band and a five-course corbelled cap (out and in). They are typical Kent County Victorian chimneys. The rear wing chimney is in the east gable end, within the wall in the center. It was for a kitchen stove, with no flue for a second or third-storey heater. It is built of red brick, appears rebuilt, and has a two-course cap.

The original slate shingles remain only on the west slope of the main section. There are two horizontal strips of six courses each of hexagonal-exposure shingles that alternate with three strips of regular

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square-butt shingles. Within the center strip are four near diamonds in hex-patterned shingles. These are located at each side of the central gable and between the dormers and their respective roof ends. These now appear to be light green. There may have been some red, patterned sectons, but the pattern is not now discernible. At least two other large Victorian frame houses in the area also had slate roofs (Maple Lawn, K-646, and Boxwood, K-615), but the former has been coated and the latter covered. The other main-section roof slope and the wing roof are now covered with asphalt shingles; both formerly had slate roofs. Alterations were made to the roof edges over the years and when the new siding was applied. The cornices are now boxed. There are built-in gutters, but without the change in pitch usually involved. To build them in the usual way, that is, flat at the cornice, would have meant compromising the effect of the steeply-pitched, "Gothic" roof. There are no returns. Details are covered. The main-section ends have two large, covered, curved brackets near the front corners. The roof overhangs both sides and ends about 16". The dormers also no longer have some of their original details.

The main entry opens into a generous central hall with a pair of double, panelled doors to each side room, originally both parlors. The architraves are unusual in having shallow segmental arches, with the doors shaped to match. The trim is symmetrical with bulls-eye corner blocks. Above the doors to the south parlor, now the dining room, there is an unusual open transom, with trim like the architrave just below. In the transom there is bead-and-dowel spindlework. A similar transom, though narrower because of the single door below it, is above the other door of the south parlor, to the wing.

Windows of the main section are notably tall throughout. The second-storey windows run from the top of the shed roof of the porch below to the cornice frieze. They are double-hung and have 1-over-1 lights, an early use of this sort of window in Kent County. The first-storey facade windows are almost floor to ceiling, also with a very large single light in each sash; below the light the lower sash is panelled. The lower sash is very unusual in being able to be raised fully to the meeting rail, rising up within the wall above to do so. There must be no framing at all in the window area between the first-storey floor and the window frames of the second-storey windows. Effective in one sense, these windows are drafty in the winter, admitting air from within the wall unless plugged. These large, heavy windows use a rope pulley system. The same technique is used with the pointed window of the central gable, allowing the lower sash to be fully raised. This detail is also seen at the Piposzar House in Millington (K-633). White aluminum storm windows-screens are in place over most house windows. The shutters for the first-storey facade are tall to match the windows and panelled, four panels per shutter. They are now not hinged but are fastened to the wall. The two lower panels and the top one are tall and of equal size; the second panel from the top is square. They have panel molding of a small oggee. Latching hardware is of the sliding type. The backs of the shutters could not be seen. The second storey shutters are louvered and plastic or aluminum, fastened to the wall. The first-storey, north end window has the only remaining original

(continued)

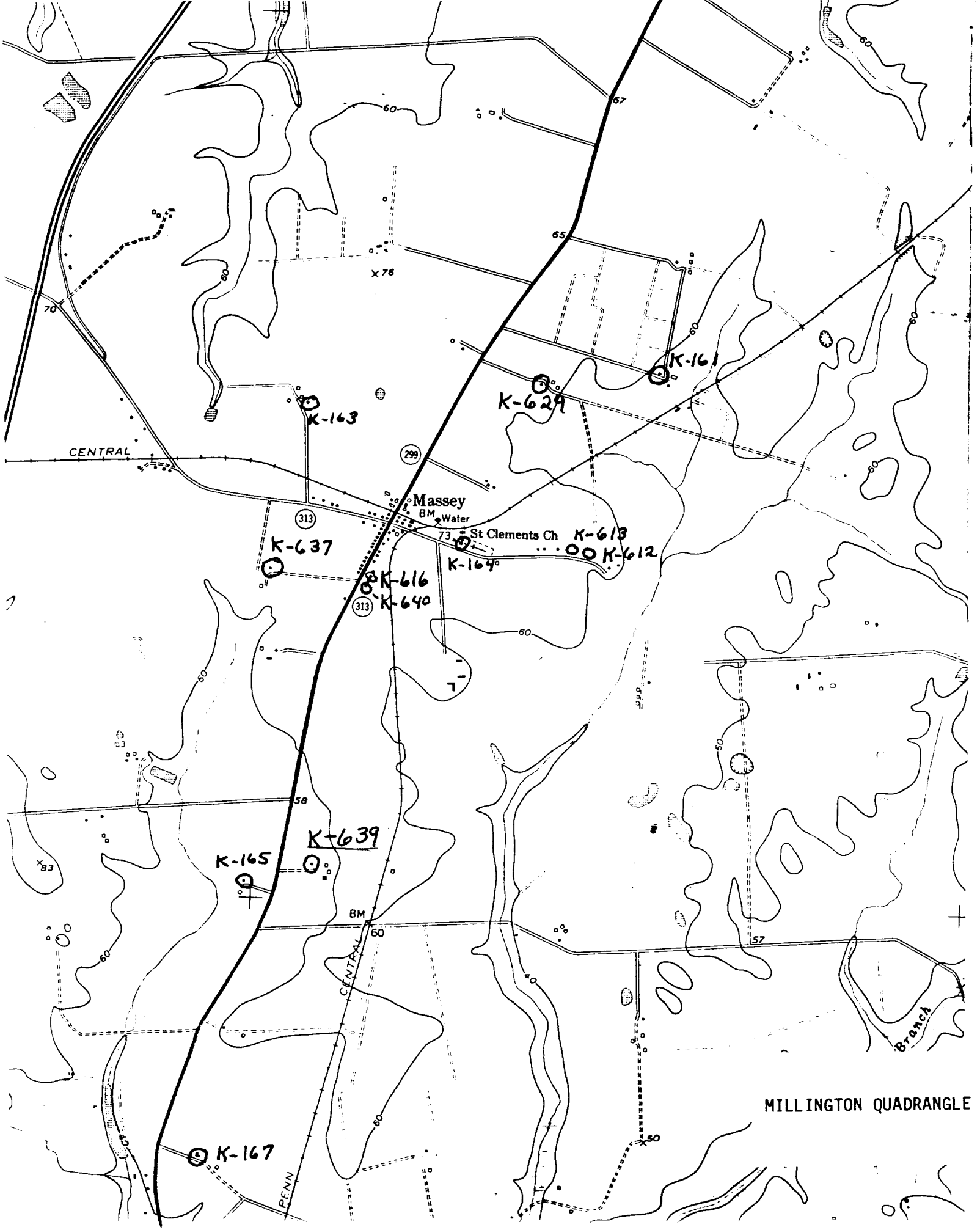
shutters except for those on the porch. They are three--panelled, with the middle panel square.

The main stair is doglog, with most of the ascent before the landing at the rear wall, which also opens to the rear wing. The newel is massive and mostly square, with a tall, compoundly turned heavy cap. The stair is open-string, with now-painted Victorian turned balusters.

The farm is now a calf--raising and grain operation. The old farm outbuildings are gone. A July 25, 1936 Kent County News article reported that the cow and horse stables at the farm burned after being struck by lightning; also burned was a large hog house and some sheeding, along with thirty tons of hay and some grain.

Hickory Ridge Farm was the home farm of Col. Richard Corbaley Johnson (1814-1892), who was a prosperous upper-county farmer, owning a number of farms perhaps totaling 1,000 acres. One, his family's original home farm was K-165, now known as Valhalla, nearly across the road from Hickory Ridge. According to the entry made in the family Bible, now in the possession of Mr. and Mrs. John Quinn of Hickory Ridge Farm, "My Dwelling House, on my Home Farm, was burned March 28, 1888, supposed to be on fire by a white girl living about the House." This earlier dwelling, about which details are not now known, was located to the rear of the present dwelling. Colonel Johnson was then in his seventies, and it evidently was his son Samuel Jackson Johnson (1862--1930s?) who took on the task of building a new house, probably for his own family as well as his father. By this time they probably were living in the same household as Colonel Johnson's wife (Agnes Rebecca Malsberger), to whom he had been married in 1846 at Old Bohemia Church in Cecil County, had died in 1885 after a fall down stairs. Nicknamed "Stonewall," Samuel Jackson Johnson undertook to build one of the finest frame Victorian houses of the upper county. According to family tradition, the construction crew was from Chestertown and came up on the train (whose nearby station was at Massey, with the track running across the back of the property) and stayed for the entire work week. The house reportedly cost $5,500 to build.

Samuel J. Johnson was the younger brother of Anthony Hookey Johnson, who was six years younger. The two brothers married two sisters, Wootten girls, who came up from Richmond with their mother after their father died in Libby Prison during the Civil War. The mother kept house for a relative in the Kennedyville area who agreed to provide for the young family. Evidently the sisters were rather competitive, resulting in two very lavish, unusual houses. Anthony Hookey Johnson and his wife were the first to build a house, in 1885 according to a date on a rafter, at Maple Lawn (K-646). Though it is earlier, stylistically it is more adventuresome, while the house at Hickory Ridge followed the symmetrical, by then standard Kent County Victorian Gothic Revival formula--2-1/2 storeys, five bays wide, with central gable and rear wing. However, numerous unusual details were included at Hickory Ridge, some of which are also seen at Maple Lawn. The two houses are clearly related. The house at Hickory Ridge is now the more altered of the two, most changes accomplished during a 1957 remodeling.


K-161
K-629
K-163
CENTRAL
299
Massey
BM
Water
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K-613
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K-637
K-164
K-616
K-640
K-639
K-165
BM
CENTRAL
K-167
PENN
Branch
MILLINGTON QUADRANGLE

K 639 - 29

K-639
Hickory Ridge Farm
Rt. 313, near Massey
M. Q. Fallaw - 7/5/86
View to east/northeast

K 639-27

K-639
Hickory Ridge Farm
Rt. 313, near Massey
M. Q. Fallaw - 7/5/86
View to west/northwest