

QA-122

Sally Harris Mill House

Queenstown vicinity

Private

late 18th century

Patented as "Mount Mill" in the 17th century, this was the site of a mill for over 200 years. According to Swepson Earle, the present mill house was "reconstructed" in 1793. This is one of a small group of brick gambrel roof houses in the county. Architectural features of interest include the plaster necking on the south chimney, the relationship of the first and second floor plans, and a superb collection-mold mantel in the first floor hall.

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Mount Mill, Seth's Mill, Sally Harris Mill House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

South side of U. S. 50 three miles east of Queenstown

CITY, TOWN

Queenstown

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

 VICINITY OF

1st

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Queen Anne's

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Donald H. Blouch

Telephone #:

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Queenstown

 VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21658

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Queen Anne's County Courthouse

Liber #: CWC 126

Folio #: 348

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

STATE

Maryland 21617

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

QA-122

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sally Harris Mill House is located on the south side of U. S. Route 50 approximately three miles east of Queenstown. The house rests on high ground along the west bank of Madam Alices Branch, a tributary of the Wye River.

The house stands near the site of an early mill constructed on a tract of land known as Mount Mill. This land was patented in the 17th century, and although it is unclear when the first mill was built, the Seth family is known to have operated a mill on this creek throughout most of the 18th century. According to Swepson Earle, the present mill residence was reconstructed in 1792, during the ownership of Thomas Johnings Seth. This building is of brick construction, one-and-one-half stories high and three bays wide, with a single flush chimney at either end of a gambrel roof. Shed roof dormer windows are ranged across each facade, and early 20th century

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.1 DESCRIPTION

one story porches provide protection to the window and door openings on both facades. A two story frame addition extends from the south gable of the main house. Although this addition is of no architectural significance, it more than likely replaces an earlier wing.

The principal facade of the house faces west, and is clearly defined by the bonding pattern. On this facade and the north gable, the brickwork is laid in Flemish bond above a plain water table and an English bond foundation. On the east (or rear) facade and the south gable, the walls are laid in English bond both above and below the water table. The north gable is further enhanced by a two-course belt course running across the gable at the level of the first floor eaves. Presumably this same feature is repeated on the south gable, but the later wing now covers the upper portion of that wall. The brick chimneys are of particular interest. The upper portion of the north chimney has been rebuilt, but the south chimney remains intact and is distinguished by a band of plaster necking between the corbeled cap and a drip course immediately below the cap.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.2 DESCRIPTION

The front entrance is located in the center bay of the west facade, flanked by a single six-over-six window on each side. All three openings are exceptionally wide. The door is a modern batten door hung on strap hinges, while the six-over-six windows are probably mid-19th century and may replace twelve-over-eight or eight-over-eight sash. There are two shed roof dormers on this facade, each offset towards the gable walls and fitted with late-19th century two-over-two sash.

The fenestration on the north gable has been altered somewhat, and a seam near the northwest corner adds further confusion. At present, there is a large window opening fitted with double casements to the left of the chimney on the first floor. Two smaller casements flank the chimney in the upper gable. The east window on the second floor may have been reduced in size, and the corresponding window on the first floor has clearly been changed. The seams to the west of the chimney on the first floor do not line up in any recognizable pattern, yet it is clear that some alteration has occurred.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.3 DESCRIPTION

The fenestration on the rear facade is virtually identical to the front facade except that there are three shed roof dormers instead of two. The south gable, as noted previously, is now covered by the frame wing. An original exterior door is located to the left of the chimney on the first floor, now providing access to the wing, and the original bulkhead entrance to the cellar remains to the right of the chimney. A door on the second floor to the left of the chimney presently allows access to the second floor of the wing, but it is unlikely that this is an original opening.

The original hall-parlour plan has survived intact on the first floor, but alterations have evidently occurred along the north gable wall. The hall fireplace is centered on this wall, and is strikingly set off with raised pine paneling and a superb bolection mold mantel surround. The paneling is carried across the entire chimney breast and includes a closet to the left of the fireplace, but does not continue around the corner to the right, leaving that side wall of the chimney finished with plaster. More paneling is carried across the alcove to the right, and the

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.4 DESCRIPTION

present casement window opening is framed in by an original door frame in the paneling. A simple stair rises along the north end of the west facade wall to a landing in the corner, then turns and rises to the second floor. This stair is clearly not original, though evidence suggests that the early stair was located in this same corner. The authenticity of the paneling is uncertain. It is very fine paneling, and the bolection mold mantel suggests a date in the first half of the 18th century. The use of English bond on two walls of the house is not inconsistent with this date, despite Swepson Earle's attribution of 1792. However, several factors suggest that the paneling has been introduced from another house, though it would appear that the work was done some time ago. Several aspects of the paneling suggest it was not originally constructed for this wall, but the most striking of these is the treatment of the right chimney wall. Examples of paneling in which a portion of the chimney breast is left exposed are almost unheard of, and the relationship of the paneling to the left of the fireplace and the relatively modern stair clearly suggest that

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.5 DESCRIPTION

the two were introduced at the same time. The casement window to the right of the fireplace is also quite clearly custom made to fit what was probably originally a cupboard door or an interior door. The most probable explanation of this is that a previous owner, most likely in the early 20th century, bought the paneling and reworked this wall to receive it.

The remainder of the first floor is relatively plain. The fireplace in the parlour has been reworked, and at present the plaster has been removed and the rough brickwork is exposed. A 19th century mantel has been removed, and is presently stored in the cellar. All of the interior trim is plain, probably dating to the late 19th century, and the exterior doors are modern board-and-batten reproductions.

The second floor plan has probably been altered. It now consists of a narrow hall running the length of the building along the west facade, with two heated sleeping chambers to the east, corresponding to the first floor rooms. The partition that forms the hall is not original, and a series of shallow closets have been installed along the west side of the hall.

There are two paneled doors opening from the hall into

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.6 DESCRIPTION

the north chamber and one leading from the hall into the south chamber. All three doors are typical of the 18th century and are hung on wrought H-L hinges, but have been reused or relocated from another source. Each sleeping chamber is heated by a small fireplace on the gable wall. The chimney breast on the north gable is paneled with vertical feather edge panels and beaded styles similar to Walnut Grove (QA-110), and the south fireplace is set off by a large mantel surround with a very fine complex shelf. It seems doubtful that either of these chimney pieces is in an original context. A patch in the floor to the right of the north fireplace suggests one possible stair location, the location of the present stair to the left of the same fireplace offers a second alternative.

A hatch near the north end of the hall allows access to the attic. The roof is of standard gambrel construction. The upper rafter pairs are secured at the ridge with a pegged mortise-and-tenon joint and rest on a flat curb plate. The curb plate is supported by the second floor ceiling joists, which are mortised into the lower rafters and secured with a wooden peg. An interesting feature of this roof are the early

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.7 DESCRIPTION

nailers running the length of the roof just above the curb plate. These are nailed to the inside face of each rafter with wrought nails, and were used to stabilize the rafters during construction. Also of interest is a piece of early crown mold stored in the attic. This retains one early wrought T-head nail, but was later reused for another purpose, as indicated by several large machine nails driven through from the back face.

The cellar is divided into two rooms by a brick partition wall directly below the first floor partition. Large chimney bases with arched recesses are centered on each gable wall. The foundation walls have been thickened on each facade at the center of each room, acting as a buttress for increased strength. The beaded batten door to the bulkhead entrance displays early blue paint on both surfaces, but the wrought strap hinges were added in the 20th century. The wrought iron latch appears to be original.

**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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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		

**SPECIFIC DATES**

**BUILDER/ARCHITECT**

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Sally Harris Mill House is one of a relatively small group of brick gambrel roof houses in Queen Anne's County. Although Swepson Earle describes the building as having been "reconstructed" in 1792, several features suggest this building could be considerably older. Most important of these is the extensive use of English bond above the water table. Unfortunately the house has undergone a number of alterations, and clear dating evidence is generally lacking. Particular details of interest include the brickwork, the plaster necking on the south chimney, and the early stabilizing nailers in the roof. The paneled chimney wall and the bolection mantel in the first floor hall are exceptional, although they may have been brought from another house. The feather-edge paneling in the second floor north chamber is relatively unusual, surviving in only a handful of houses in this county. The

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 8.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

mantel in the south chamber is also worthy of note, though both of these features may have been introduced from elsewhere.

QA-122

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Wilson, Everett B. Maryland's Colonial Mansions. New York: A. S. Barnes, 1965.

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

Orlando Ridout V, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Queen Anne's County Historical Society

DATE

3/22/79

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Centreville

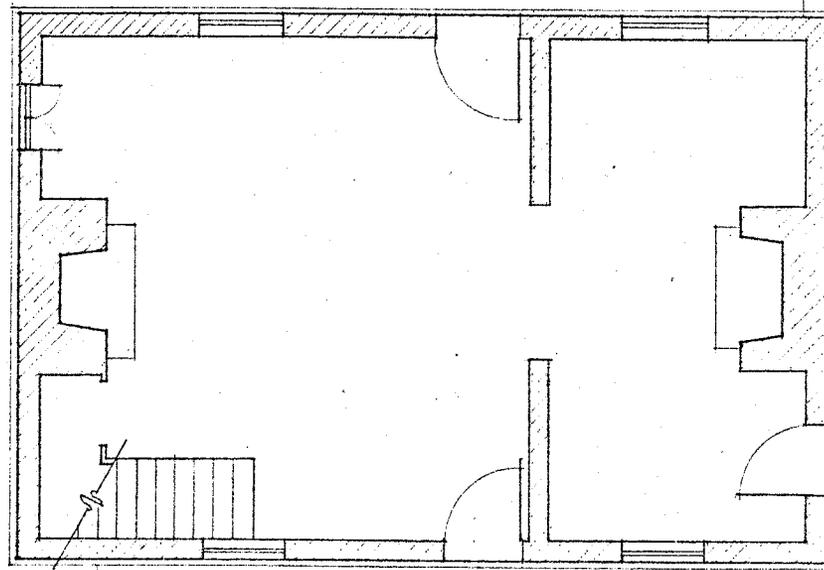
STATE

Maryland

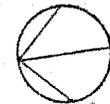
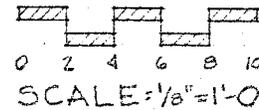
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

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



FRAME ADDITION



ORLANDO RIDOUT V.

QA-122 SALLY HARRIS MILL HOUSE  
QUEENSTOWN, MARYLAND

AUGUST 28, 1978





2A-122

~~2A-122~~

Sally Harris Mill House

near Queenstown

ORV 1970.

4



QA-122

Sally Harris Mill House  
near Queentown

ORV 1978

17



Q4-122

Sally Harris Mill ~~Stone~~  
near ~~Quenston~~

OLV 1878

D



QA-122 Sally Harris Mill House  
Queenstown vicinity, MD  
Orlando Ridout V, 1978 (MHT)  
Interior, North wall of hall

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