

QA-326  
Harry Chambers House  
101 South Liberty Street  
Centreville  
Private

early 19th century

The large frame house at 101 South Liberty Street in Centreville was constructed in several stages. The original house, dating to circa 1820-40, was a side passage plan with a single parlor to the north. This small dwelling was later enlarged to the south and rear, raised to 2 1/2 stories, and transformed into a shingle style house by Harry Chambers. Evidence of the earlier house may still be observed in the cellar and in the first floor passage and north parlor.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Harry Chambers House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

101 South Liberty Street

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

William R. Wilson, III

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

105 N. Liberty St.

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21617

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Queen Anne's County Courthouse

Liber #: MWM 164

Folio #: 491

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

—FEDERAL —STATE —COUNTY —LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

QA-326

**7 DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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 Chambers House is located on the southwest corner of Liberty Street and Water Street in Centreville.

This house has a relatively complex history of development. The original dwelling probably dates to circa 1820-40 and consisted of a 1 1/2 or two story house, three bays wide and one room deep with a side passage, single parlor plan. In the post-Civil War period the house was extended two bays to the south and raised to 2 1/2 stories. One or more of the rear wings was presumably added at the same time. Around the turn of the century, the house was extensively renovated by Harry Chambers. At that time, the front portico was added and the exterior was covered with wood shingles. Architectural evidence survives from all three principal periods of construction.

The front facade faces west to Liberty Street. The center bay projects forward about two feet from the front facade, with the entrance door in the center on the first floor, framed with sidelights and a transom, and a single 6/6 window centered on the second floor. There are two large 2/2 windows

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.1 DESCRIPTION

to left and right of the first floor door and two relatively small 6/6 windows flanking the center bay on the second floor. The building rests on a continuous brick foundation and is covered with wood shingles. The shallow pitched gable roof is covered with corrugated metal over an earlier covering of wood shingles. A large two story portico with square posts projects over the three center bays on this facade. A small, three-part "Venetian" window is centered in the tympanum of the portico. The eaves of the house oversail and are boxed in; the portico has a box cornice with crown mold. An open porch deck with a brick foundation extends on either side of the portico.

On the north gable wall, facing Water Street, there are single 6/6 windows in the east bay on the first and second stories, two vents in the upper gable, and a pair of three-light cellar windows in the foundation. The eaves oversail and are boxed in; the siding is wood shingle.

All but the center bay of the rear facade has been covered by additions. One two story frame wing projects to the east from the north end of the rear facade, a second adjoins the south end. The gable roof of the north wing is set on a right angle with the main house, the gable roof of the south wing is

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.2 DESCRIPTION

parallel to the main house. Both wings have 2/2 windows on the first floor, 6/6 windows on the second story, shingle siding and boxed eaves.

A small one story addition covers the east half of the first story on the south gable wall; a porch protects the first story of the west half. Openings in this gable include a 2/2 window in the west bay of the first story, two 6/6 windows on the second story, and two vents in the upper gable. The eaves are boxed; the siding is shingle.

The interior plan of the original, antebellum house consisted of a side stair passage to the south and a single parlor to the north. When the house was enlarged a new room was added to the south on each floor, forming a center passage plan. The south portion of the house is now utilized as a separate apartment, however, leaving the original floor plan nominally intact. The stair rises against the south wall of the passage. It is a Victorian stair with an Eastlake newel, turned balusters and a simple rail. A plain band of trim outlines the stair treads; the area below the carriage is plastered. A door opens into a closet under the east end of the stairs. The rear door of the passage now opens into a rear addition. The architrave trim consists of a beaded fascia with a cove/astragal backband.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.3 DESCRIPTION

A transom above the door is fitted with vertical diamond-section bars, similar to a first floor door at the Brosius House two doors to the south on Liberty Street (QA-158). Beaded baseboards also survive in the passage; the narrow flooring is not original. A wide doorway in the north wall of the hall opens into the parlor. This door opening is framed with turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival columns. The fireplace on the north gable wall of the parlor is no longer functional. Original trim in this room includes the beaded baseboard and a two piece chairrail with cove/astragal molding below the nosing. Later features of interest include a simple Eastlake mantel and a handsome decorative tin ceiling.

The second floor was evidently rebuilt when the house was enlarged in the late 19th century. At present, the stair rises to a hallway that runs across the east wall to the north, with a bath at the north end of the hall. There are two sleeping chambers to the west of the hall with a small enclosed stair in the center room rising to the attic. The south portion of the second story is part of the separate apartment and was not examined.

The roof is constructed of machine-sawn common

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.4 DESCRIPTION

rafters joined at the ridge with a mitre joint and nailed with machine nails. Many of the shingle nailers are reused, beaded exterior siding boards painted green or blue. These weatherboards were probably removed from the south gable wall when the house was enlarged. The outline of the original roof is visible on the north chimney in the attic; corbeled drip courses are also evident on both sides of the chimney. The roof of the front portico is constructed with wire nails and covers the earlier shingle roof, confirming that the house was enlarged before circa 1890 and the portico was added sometime after that date. Also of interest is a section of floral wallpaper on the south wall of the attic stair, presumably dating to the late 19th century.

There is a full cellar under the original portion of the house, measuring approximately 18 feet wide and 23 feet long (inside dimensions). A large fireplace opening on the north gable wall has been bricked up. The ceiling joists are hewn and whip-sawn and covered with whitewash. Early beaded siding secured with machine nails survives on the east facade of the house, visible from the cellar entrance.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

QA-326

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
100-1499	<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 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 frame house that stands on the southeast corner of Liberty Street and Water Street appears today to date to the early 20th century, but a careful examination of the building reveals that it was constructed in at least three distinct periods dating back to the first half of the 19th century.

The house was originally only 1 1/2 or possibly 2 stories high and was three bays wide and one room deep, with a side passage, single parlor plan. While architectural evidence suggests a date of construction of circa 1820-40, documentary evidence indicates there may have been a house on this site by 1797. It is not clear at this point whether the earliest part of the existing house dates to this early period or if it is a later replacement. Regardless, the early side passage plan house was enlarged in the post-Civil War period two bays to the south and was raised to 2 1/2 stories. At

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 8.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

least one of the rear additions was also presumably made at this time. The house underwent yet a third alteration around the turn of the century, probably shortly after the house and lot was purchased by the Chambers family in 1908. Despite the numerous changes over the years, much of the fabric of the earliest house survives intact.

QA-326

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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

**10/24/83**

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

**Centreville**

STATE

**Maryland**

**Field Notebook QA-XIX; Recorded September 16, 1980.**

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

QA-326  
Harry Chambers  
House

Mary McCarthy  
Spring/Summer 2003  
Digital color photo on file at MHT





QA-326 Chambers House  
101 South Liberty Street  
Centreville, Maryland  
Orlando Ridout V 1981  
Front facade from Northwest



QA-326 Chambers House  
101 South Liberty St.  
Centreville, Maryland  
Orlando Ridout V  
Front facade from Southwest