**Simms/Burch House** **Circa 1860**
**CH-626**
**Bryantown vic.**
**Private**

The Simms/Burch House, although now ruinous, is a unique example of Italianate inspired architecture in Charles County. Built circa 1860, this dwelling has a 2 ½ story, three bay, side-passage plan with paired exterior brick chimneys. A single-pile. 1 ½-story kitchen dependency is attached to the gable end. The subtle inspiration of the Italianate style is most evident in the decorative cornice brackets of the main block. Although quickly deteriorating, the dwelling retains a good deal of its original features including interior woodwork and exterior trim including a dramatic curved staircase. Occupied by Marcellus Burch, but owned by his uncle Phillip Simms of New Orleans until his death in 1888, the dwelling rests on part of a larger parcel known as "Land Tungan".

# Maryland Historical Trust
# Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-626

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

| | |
|---|---|
| historic | Simms/Burch House |
| other | Burch Place |

## 2. Location

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| street and number | 13705 Boothe Place | ___ not for publication |
| city, town | Bryantown | x vicinity |
| county | Charles | |

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

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| name | Donald Wade | | | | |
| street and number | 13705 Booth Place | | | telephone | 301-870-3683 |
| city, town | Waldorf | state | MD | zip code | 20601-0181 |

## 4. Location of Legal Description

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. | Charles County Courthouse | tax map and parcel: | Map 25 P. 1 |
| city, town | LaPlata | liber 636 | folio 243 |

## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

___ Contributing Resource in National Register District
___ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
___ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
___ Recorded by HABS/HAER
___ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
___ Other: _____

## 6. Classification

**Category**
___ district
x building(s)
___ structure
___ site
___ object

**Ownership**
___ public
x private
___ both

**Current Function**
___ agriculture
___ commerce/trade
___ defense
___ domestic
___ education
___ funerary
___ government
___ health care
___ industry
___ landscape
___ recreation/culture
___ religion
___ social
___ transportation
___ work in progress
___ unknown
x vacant/not in use
___ other: _____

**Resource Count**

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 1 | 2 | Total |

**Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory**
0

# 7. Description

Inventory No. CH-626

**Condition**

__ excellent
__ good
__ fair
__ deteriorated
x ruins
__ altered

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

Dating from the third quarter of the 19th century, the Simms/Burch House is a ruinous example of a two-story, three-bay, side-passage dwelling facing east with a two-story kitchen wing attached to the gable end. The dwelling shows the influence of the Italiante style in the use of decorative brackets adorning the cornice. Located on a 26.586 acre parcel and surrounded by open fields, the site includes two additional modest frame outbuidings not considered as contributing resources.

The frame structure rests on a continuous solid brick foundation, with later concrete block patches. Asphalt sheets cover the original wide weatherboards, and corrugated metal covers the roof. The dwelling was heated by two exterior-end chimneys on the south wall of the main block, and an interior brick chimney with double flues and a corbelled cap in the recessed kitchen wing. The dwelling incorporates a partial basement accessed from an exterior, poured concrete stair on the west end.

The front elevation faces east. The main block includes a door near the north wall next to two 6/6 wood sash windows. On the second floor are three 6/6 light windows. The kitchen wing is single-pile and stands recessed from the eastern wall of the main block. Fenestration includes two windows on the first floor and two above, all of 6/6 composition.

The north gable end of the main block includes two first floor 6/6 windows below two vertically symmetrical windows of the same composition. The rear mirrors the front with a wood panel door near the north wall, and two windows toward the south wall, with similar fenestration on the second story above.

The kitchen wing is flush with the rear wall of the main block and includes a centered doorway flanked by two 6/6 double-hung wood sash windows on the first floor and two windows of the same composition above. The southern elevation of the kitchen wing includes a single first floor 6/6 window.

The interior follows a side-passage plan with the entrance directly into the passage running the full depth of the house. The ornately carved stair rises through one window. Double parlors, of roughly equal in size, encompass the remainder of the fist floor, and the two rooms are joined by a connecting door. The simply carved mantles in each of the parlors show a striking similarities with the mantle at Friendship Farm (CH-101). Doors and windows are trimmed with wide wood molding. The second story includes identical molding as found on the first floor. The kitchen has a narrow enclosed stair along the exterior gable wall and a finished half-story above.

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-626

| Period | Areas of Significance | Check and justify below | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| __ 1600-1699 | __ agriculture | __ economics | __ health/medicine | performing arts |
| __ 1700-1799 | __ archeology | __ education | __ industry | philosophy |
| x 1800-1899 | x architecture | __ engineering | __ invention | politics/government |
| __ 1900-1999 | __ art | __ entertainment/ recreation | __ landscape architecture | religion |
| __ 2000- | __ commerce | __ ethnic heritage | __ law | science |
| | __ communications | __ exploration/ settlement | __ literature | social history |
| | __ community planning | | __ maritime history | transportation |
| | __ conservation | | __ military | other: |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Specific dates | Circa 1850 | Architect | Unknown |
| Construction dates | Circa 1850 | Builder | Unknown |

Evaluation for:

____ National Register ____ Maryland Register x not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Built circa 1860, the Simms/Burch House is a unique example of Italianate-inspired architecture in Charles County. During the middle of the 19th century, the farm once known as Land Tungen was owned by Phillip Simms, the son of Thomas (1773-1829) and Elizabeth Edelen Simms (1774-1852). At the time of his death in 1888, Simms resided in New Orleans and had apparently been there for some time.(1) Over the course of his life he had amassed a large fortune and in his last will and testament remembered his family still living in Charles County. To nephew Marcellus Burch the son of Simms' sister Elizabeth Simms Burch, he left "the farm he lives on." The other half of the farm went to nephew William Mason Simms who was living on the adjacent tract.

After Marcellus Burch died the property descended to his daughters Emma L. and Cecilia Burch in 1888. Within a decade it was sold to Julia Ann Booth in 1899. Today, the property is owned by descendants of the Boothe family today.

ENDNOTES

1. Phillip Simms had apparently been living in New Orleans for some time because he included several New Orleans charities in his last will and testament. Charles County Wills Liber 19 Folio 28.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-626

## 10. Geographical Data

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Acreage of surveyed property | 26.86 | | |
| Acreage of historical setting | 5 | | |
| Quadrangle name | Hughesville | Quadrangle scale | 1:24,000 |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property at 13705 Booth Place is associate with Charles County Property Map 25, Grid 10, parcel 135.

## 11. Form Prepared By

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| name/title | Cathy Currey/ Historic Sites Surveyor | | |
| organization | Charles County Planning Dept. | date | 10-23-2000 |
| street and number | 200 Baltimore Street | telephone | 301-396-581 |
| city or town | LaPlata | state MD | zipcode 20646 |

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

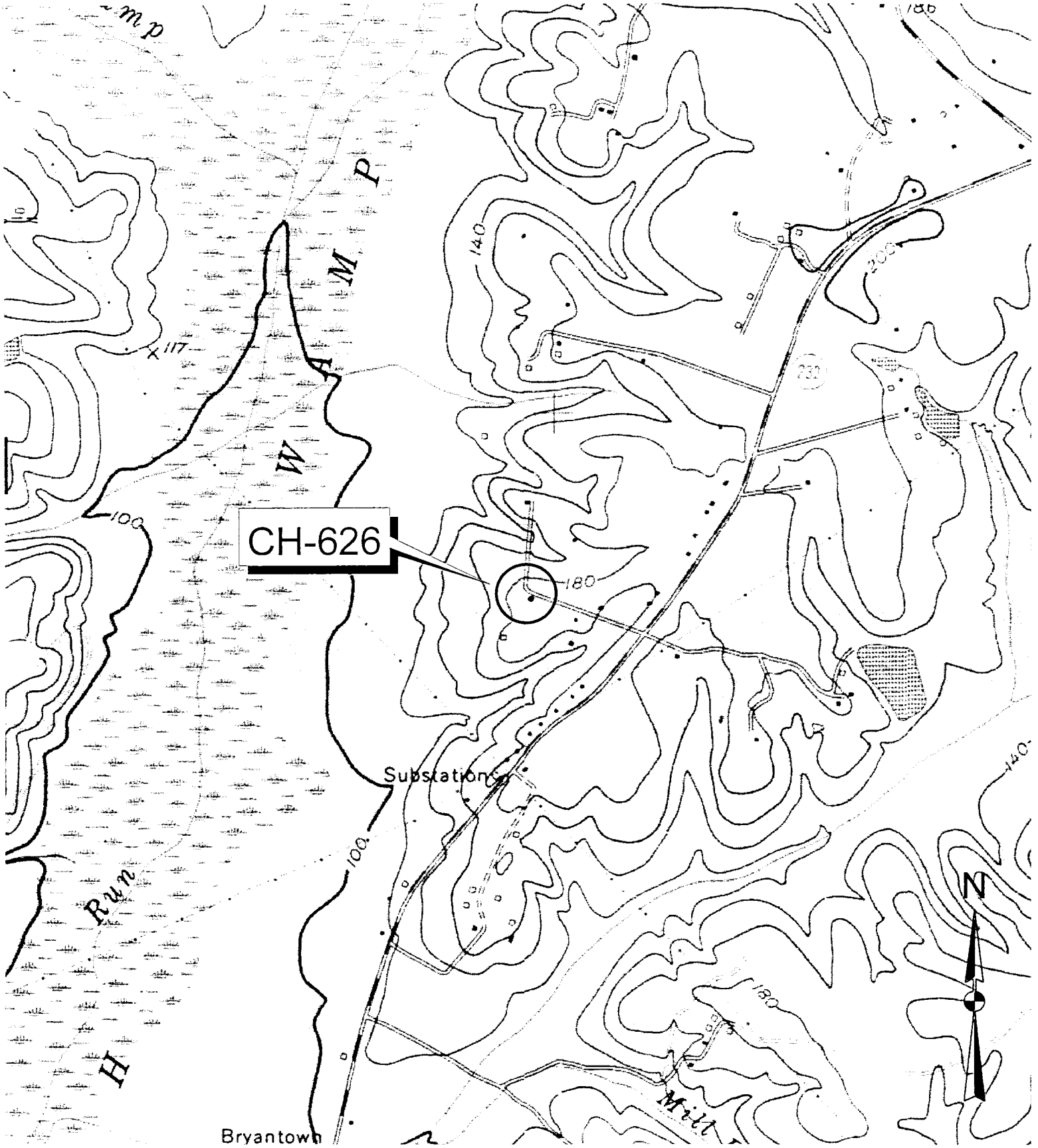
**Major Bibliographic References:**

Brown, Jack D., et al. Charles County, Maryland, A History.
Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, LaPlata, Maryland.

Humphreys, Anderson and Curt Guenther. Semmes of America.
Humphreys, Ink, Inc. Memphis, TN. 1989.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. The History of Charles County, Maryland.
Charles County Tercentenary, Inc. LaPlata, MD. 1958.




Simms/Burch House
CH-626
Charles County, MD
Hughesville, MD Quad

CH-626
SIMMS-BURCH HOUSE
CHARLES CO MD
1/2000
K.G. SMITH
MARYLAND SHPO
LOOKING SW
1 OF 5

CH-626
SIMMS-BURCH HOUSE
CHARLES CO. MD
1/2000
K G SMITH
MARYLAND SHPO
LOOKING NW
2 OF 5

CH-626
SIMMS-BURCH HOUSE
CHARLES COUNTY, MD
1/2000
K.G. SMITH
MARYLAND SHPO
REAR PARLOR
3 OF 5

CH-626
SIMMS-BURCH HOUSE
CHARLES CO, MD
1/2000
K. G. SMITH
MARYLAND SHPO
OUTBUILDING 1 RUIN
4 OF 5

CH-626
SIMMS-BURGH HOUSE
CHARLES CO. MD
1/2000
K. G. SMITH
MARYLAND SHPO
SHED, LOOKING SW
5 of 5