

Johnsontown Tobacco Barn No. 2
CH-742
Faulkner
Private

First quarter 19th century

The Johnsontown Tobacco Barn No. 2 is a remarkably well-preserved structure located in the Faulkner vicinity. Characterized by its steeply pitched roof, early or original horizontal siding under the gables, and the survival of original nailers for horizontal siding throughout, the frame structure is supported on a continuous rubble stone foundation. One of the structure's most remarkable features is the surviving evidence of smoke, presumably used as a method of curing tobacco. The process of fire cured tobacco was prompted by the European preference for "bright" tobacco, a highly-colored, streaked tobacco that acquired a smoky flavor. Fire-curing was a process in which fires were set in the floor of a tobacco barn. In the firing process, the tobacco is of a brighter color and is more quickly prepared for packing. During the 1830's demand for the bright, fancy cured tobacco dropped although fire curing continued into the 1840's when the inherent threat to barns associated fire curing and the growing popularity of flue-cured tobacco made most planters turn away from the earlier method. However, firing to counteract the effects of dampness and humidity that could cause mildew.

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-742

Condition

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> altered |
-

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

The Johnstontown Tobacco Barn No. 2 is a remarkably well-preserved structure located in the Faulkner vicinity. The barn stands just south of the Spring Hill Branch and east of Clark's Run, tributaries of Zekiah Swamp. Characterized by its steeply pitched roof, early or original horizontal siding under the gables and the survival of original nailers for horizontal siding throughout, the frame structure is supported on a continuous rubble stone foundation. Shed additions were added in the 20th century and extent from either eave end. The dwelling is five bays long and three bays wide. Principal posts are pegged and supported with diagonal down braces. Original doorways on the eaves have been enlarged to accommodate larger equipment in the 20th century. The roof ridge runs from east to west.

The barn is divided into two sections by a massive center post supported by diagonal braces that start at the eave walls and extend toward the center. Each eave wall includes four rows of interior rails that are notched into the frame's principal posts. Nails include hand forged tops and the timbers are pit sawn. The barn has three tiers under the ceiling joist and five above. Windbraces used in the placement of the roof rafters are still present. One of the structure's most remarkable features is the surviving evidence of smoke, presumably used as a method of curing tobacco.

According to the current property owners, this was one of four barns that once stood on the property. Johnstontown Tobacco Barn (CH-332) was identified by Rick Rivoire in 1978, prior to it being dismantled, moved at least partially reassembled in St. Mary's County. It is the only known barn to survive on the original Johnstontown property (CH-348).

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-742

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

Specific dates 1815-1840

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates 1815-1840

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

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.)

The Johnstontown Tobacco Barn is one of a small handful of tobacco barns to survive in Charles County that were originally built before the Civil War. It is also the only documented structure known to show evidence of the fire curing process. The structure was originally associated with the 18th century Johnstontown property owned by the Hawkins family. By 1798, a modest dwelling and kitchen standing on the property had been destroyed by fire and work began on the construction of the existing dwelling and granary (CH-348 NR) and the relocated tobacco barn No. 1.(CH-332) Around 1810 Caleb Hawkins, who is believed to have been responsible for the site's development, relocated to Kentucky. In 1818 Johnstontown was sold to John Baptist Wills, a former resident of Port Tobacco and a merchant-planter who owned about 40 slaves.

The process of fire cured tobacco was prompted by the European preference for "bright" tobacco, a highly-colored, streaked tobacco that acquired a smoky flavor. According to one 1821 source, fire-curing was a process in which fires were set in the floor of a tobacco barn. In the firing process, the tobacco is of a brighter color and is more quickly prepared for packing. In nearby Prince George's County, a farmer commented in 1821:

"It requires eight or ten cart loads of wood, say three to four cords to cure the contents of a house of ordinary size -- that is fifty by twenty-four feet, the usual size now built in Prince George's County, of this State. The manner of firing in that County, where the operation is much practiced is to kindle two rows of fires nearly the whole length of the house, approaching each end as near as can safely be done, say six feet; two fires being about equidistant from each other, and from the sides of the house. To make these fires a shallow trench is dug in the floor, which keeps the logs from rolling and spreading fire."

During the 1830's demand for the bright, fancy cured tobacco dropped although fire curing continued into the 1840's when the inherent threat to barns associated fire curing and the growing popularity of flue-cured tobacco made most planters turn away from the earlier method. However, firing to counteract the effects of dampness and humidity that could cause mildew.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-742

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 18.71 acres

Acreage of historical setting 600 acres

Quadrangle name Popes Creek

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Johnstontown Tobacco Barn No. 2 is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map No.55, Parcel 212.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Hardy/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning

date 6/26/2002

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

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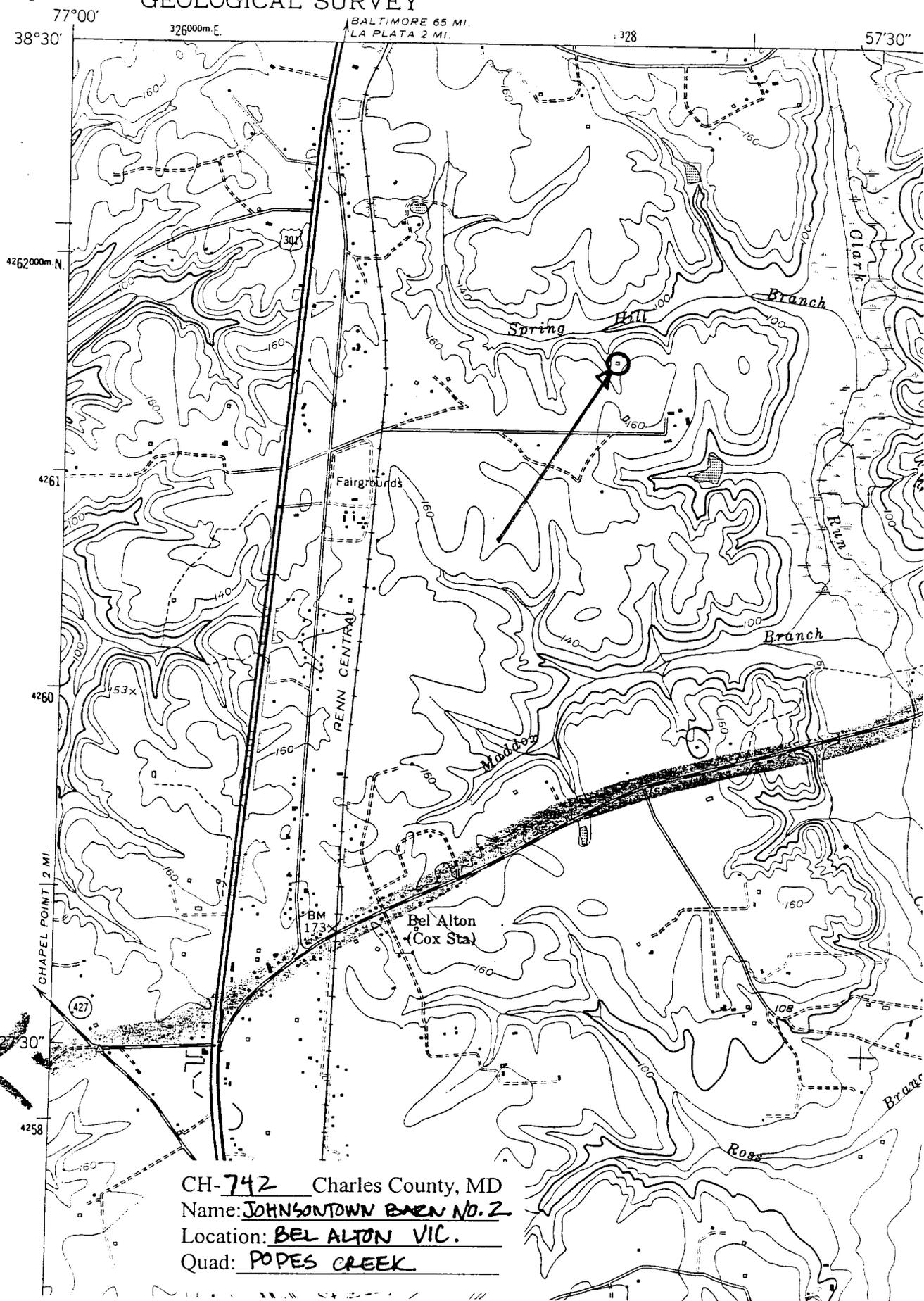
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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
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Crownsville MD 21032
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558) 11 SE
(PORT TOBACCO)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



CH-742 Charles County, MD
Name: JOHNSONTOWN BARN NO. 2
Location: BEL ALTON VIC.
Quad: POPES CREEK



CH-742

JOHNSONTOWN TOBACCO BARN NO. 2

CHARLES CO, MD

C. HARDY

4/2002

MO SHPO

LOOKING NE

① 1053



CH-742

JOHNSONTOWN TOBACCO BARN NO. 2

CHARLES CO. MD

C. HARDY

6/2002

MD SHPO
LOOKING W

26F3



CH-742

JOHNSONTOWN TOBACCO BARN NO. 2

CHARLES CO. MD

C. HARDY

6/2002

MD SHPO

INTERIOR,

NE
~~NE~~

CORNER LOOKING SW

30F3