

# Harford County Architectural Survey of At-Risk Villages

Survey Report  
June 2024



Prepared by EHT Tracerics, Inc.  
for the Harford County Department of  
Planning and Zoning

EHT ||| TRACERICS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Architectural Survey Report provides the results of the survey of at-risk architectural resources in three rural crossroad villages in Harford County, Maryland. The survey was conducted by EHT Tracerics, Inc. (Tracerics) for the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning with grant funding from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT). Tracerics conducted a survey and documentation effort for two (2) survey districts and four (4) individual properties located within Harford County's designated growth area, known locally as the Development Envelope. The villages of Abingdon, Magnolia, and Emmorton are good representative examples of Harford County's historic crossroad communities that prospered at the intersection of major thoroughfares during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. An essential part of Harford County's early heritage, crossroad villages acted as rural service centers for both nearby farmers and travelers through the mid-twentieth century. Increasingly, suburban and industrial expansion within the Harford County Development Envelope have jeopardized resources within these historic agrarian communities; the three village surveyed as a part of this effort are considered to be "at risk." The survey and document effort documents the early history of Harford County and locates opportunities for future local historic preservation designations.

The four individual properties in Emmorton and the boundaries of the two survey districts in Magnolia and Abingdon were selected by Harford County for survey and documentation, based on the existing resources and historic boundaries of each community. Field survey methods, reporting, and documentation were all conducted to meet *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland*, revised 2019. Survey efforts included both background research and field investigations. Each of the resources were evaluated to determine if they met individual eligibility based on National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility criteria.

Surveyed properties represent a range of resource types that include domestic properties, commercial buildings, schools, and cemeteries. Surveyed resources date from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century and represent the villages' growth from Harford County's agricultural heyday through the modern period. A few resources date to the time periods described in the 2010 *The Harford County Department of Preservation* as the Rural Agrarian Intensification Period (A.D. 1680- 1815) and the Agricultural-Industrial Transition Period (A.D. 1815-1870), although most of the resources were constructed during the Industrial/Urban Dominance Period (A.D. 1870-1930) as well as the early Modern Period A.D. (1930—Present).

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## INTRODUCTION

This report provides the results of an architectural survey of properties associated with Harford County's rural village heritage in Abingdon, Magnolia, and Emmorton, Maryland. EHT Tracerics, Inc. (Tracerics) conducted this project for the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning using grant funding from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT). This study documents two (2) survey districts and four (4) individual architectural resources associated with Harford County's villages architectural and historical heritage. The overall goal of the project was to identify and document historic resources in areas vulnerable to development pressure, and to provide an understanding of the ability of the remaining building stock to convey aspects of Harford County rural village history. The two survey districts and four individual properties were documented in MIHP forms and evaluated separately.

Harford County, Maryland has received Certified Local Government (CLG) funding from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) to survey sites within the historic villages of Magnolia, Abingdon, and Emmorton in Harford County, Maryland. EHT Tracerics surveyed resources to the MHT requirements for intensive level surveys and prepared historic architectural documentation, which includes background research to support the development of six Maryland Inventory of Historic Places (MIHP) forms and a final survey report, prepared in accordance to MHT standards. Field survey methods, reporting, and documentation were all conducted to meet Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland*, revised 2019. Study methodology included both background research and field investigations. In addition to the survey, this study was supported by historical research; researchers investigated deed records, census records, historic maps, county contexts, aerial photography, permits, and historic newspapers.

Tracerics conducted the architectural survey and background research in March and April of 2024. Laura Hughes, Tracerics Project Principal, oversaw the effort. The project was managed by Devon Murtha, Project Manager. To meet an expedited project schedule deadline, Tracerics utilized Architectural Historians Devon Murtha, John Gentry, Emily Pelesky, Nicole Starego and Neale Grisham to conduct the architectural survey. Tracerics worked with the Harford County Historic Preservation Commission and Harford County Historic Preservation Planner Jacob Benson.

This report contains six sections. Following this introduction is a discussion of the research design and methodology undertaken for this study. A historic context is provided in Section 3 followed by a summary of the architectural survey results in Section 4. A general summary and recommendations are provided in Section 5 followed by the cited references in Section 6. MIHP forms and addendums are provided in Appendix A.



## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### Objectives

The project objective documents two (2) historic districts and four (4) individual sites within Harford County's designated growth area, known locally as the Development Envelope. These sites are all located within Harford County's historic crossroads villages, which were developed at the intersection of important transportation routes within the county during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The historic resources within these communities are considered to be "at risk," due to development pressure within the Development Envelope and require timely documentation to preserve the early history of Harford County and locate opportunities for future local historic preservation designations.

This effort includes a full photo survey, and the preparation of a physical description, and background research for each site. Research focused on the development of context for the three villages, the relationship to major transportation routes, and the overall architectural context of Harford County and these specific towns. Architectural surveys were conducted to understand the architectural character and features of the buildings, current conditions, and notable changes to the building.

Other objectives of this study include:

- Evaluating surveyed resources for NRHP eligibility.
- Assessing integrity of surveyed resources based on the seven aspects of Integrity (location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, association and feeling)

### Identification of the Survey Area

The survey area for the properties was determined by the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning. During the architectural survey, EHT Tracerics confirmed the suggested boundaries and determined the overall acreage. The Abingdon Survey District included several blocks at the intersection of Abingdon Road and Philadelphia Road, with additional properties along Cokesbury Road. The Magnolia Survey District included properties along Fort Hoyle Road. The four (4) individual properties surveyed in Emmorton are located along Old Emmorton Road. Acreage for individual properties in Emmorton is included in *Table 1: List of Individual Resources to be Surveyed*. Three of the four properties represent the few remaining examples of early twentieth century development along Old Emmorton Road. One property, the James House (HA-2302) was found to have a later date of construction and does not contribute to the early twentieth-century development of Emmorton.

Research for the survey districts included identifying contributing and non-contributing historic resources within the survey district boundaries, construction dates, major alterations, notable events and individuals associated with the survey districts. Research for the four individual properties in Emmorton also included identifying families and individuals who owned the properties with a combination of deed, newspaper, and census research. Across all six MIHP documents, research supported an understanding of how survey districts and individual properties fit into the broader history of broader regional patterns of historical development in Harford County, Maryland.

### Methodology

The methodology for completing project objectives included tasks involving historical research, architectural survey documentation, MIHP form preparation with integrity and eligibility analysis, mapping and photographs, and the preparation of a survey report. All tasks have been completed according to MHT's *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland* (revised 2019).

### Historical Research

Traceries utilized existing historical information and conducted additional research to understand the history of the survey district communities and buildings, and the relationship with the existing villages, and the broader context of crossroads communities in Harford County. This research involved the documentation and identification of construction dates, original owners/businesses, notable people, and architects who designed the surveyed buildings. Research was conducted to understand the origins and history of the major transportation routes in the area, as well as to document the development of the three villages. Research was undertaken at the following archival repositories including the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., branches of the Harford County Library in Bel Air and Abingdon, the archives and library at the Historical Society of Harford County in Bel Air, the Maryland Historical Trust Library in Crownsville, Maryland and the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis, Maryland. Online sources regarding land records (Deeds and Plats) were accessed from mdlandrec.com, the Maryland Department of Taxation, Historical Society of Harford County, and newspaper articles were retrieved from Proquest.com. Documentation on previously recorded resources was accessed online from Medusa, Maryland's Cultural Resource Information System (Medusa). Other source material used in the documentation effort included historic maps, Harford County Living Treasures oral histories, ariel photography, Federal census records, tax assessment records, and existing MIHP documentation (Medusa).

### **Architectural Survey and Documentation**

Traceries conducted a survey for the selected resources during three survey efforts in April and May of 2024. The on-site survey work consisted of a visual inspection to identify and record buildings, structures, and landscape features. Resources were recorded with digital photography. Photo documentation captured buildings within their setting and context sufficient to understand their present character and condition. Notes were taken as necessary to assess character defining features and materials. Each view has been keyed to a sketch map identifying the directional location of the photograph. Architectural survey for the districts involved an exterior inspection of all properties located within the district boundaries to record buildings and landscape features. Streetscape views were taken to capture the layout and location of multiple resources. Field survey for the three properties to be individually recorded consisted of both exterior and interior inspection. The interior of The James House (HA-2302) at 2231 Old Emmorton Road was not accessible for this effort and the exterior survey was limited to the public right-of-way. For all other resources surveyed, photographs include contextual views of each building, views of entire buildings (all four elevations), exterior views of all parts of the buildings noting significant architecture features.

### **Historic Overview**

Documentation for this project includes historic and architectural information for three historic villages in eastern Harford County, Maryland. All three villages (Abingdon, Emmorton, and Magnolia) were developed along important transportation routes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Village of Abingdon is one of the first permanent urban areas in the county, laid out in 1779 by John Paca, and is significant for its location along the historic Old Post Road (Maryland Route 7).<sup>1</sup> The Village of Magnolia grew from a small, rural nineteenth century settlement into a significant stop along the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad. Settlement in the area was encouraged by George W. Brown, who leased his forty-nine acres of land to homeowners and tradesmen. The Village of Emmorton developed along a local thoroughfare connecting the county seat of Bel Air to southern Harford County. All three villages have been partially documented, in some capacity, with MIHP or National Register forms. However, none of the villages have been previously surveyed at the intensive level.

Survey boundaries include two historic villages and four individual properties within the Village of Emmorton. The Abingdon and Magnolia Historic District surveys encompass a historic context that includes the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. Given the date of

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Weeks, *An Architectural History of Harford County Maryland* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 91-92.



the resources for the four individual properties in Emmorton, the context for Emmorton focuses on twentieth century history, with some nineteenth century history as required for a complete understanding of the resources.

### **Description of Results of Field Investigations**

The survey was conducted within three distinct, but geographically proximate, villages. Sites within the boundaries of the survey were accessed from public roadways in a primarily residential setting. Interior access was denied for only one resource. The access and photographic documentation of most resources in the early spring did not result in limitation of views by extensive vegetation.

The villages of Abingdon and Magnolia were previously documented with MIHP forms for individual properties within the survey district, as well as a single National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the Nelson-Reardon-Kennard House in Abingdon (**See Tables 2 and 3**). The information from this 2024 survey and documentation effort provided new historical information and a more thorough analysis of the resources in the three villages. The survey included an updated architectural record for previously surveyed resources, as well as a new architectural record for resources that were not previously documented.

As part of MHT requirements, the survey report documents the results of the investigation. The report includes a list of resources that meet the criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places with recommendations for implementing necessary documentation and nominations.

### **Evaluating and Registering Resources**

Field survey recorded four individual buildings in Emmorton, as well as all buildings and sites within the survey boundaries of the villages of Abingdon and Magnolia. EHT Tracerics conducted the survey in accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland*. The architectural descriptions included a description of the property noting architectural style, materials, massing, features, and condition for all buildings within the survey districts and individual properties. For individual properties within Emmorton, the statement of significance included a chain of title. Both districts and all four properties were evaluated for integrity according to *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, with consultant recommendations. Supporting documentation for all recorded resources included current photographs and two USGS maps prepared at scales of 1:10,000 and 1:24,000 showing the location of surveyed buildings. Photographs were prepared in accordance with MHT Guidelines for Digital Images, including 5x7 prints and digital images. The 5x7 prints were labeled according to MHT guidelines and packaged in side-loading polypropylene

photo sleeves. Digital images were saved on a gold-type archival CD in both TIFF and jpeg formats. Photologs were prepared for each surveyed resource noting the number and nature of photographic views.

**Table 1: List of Individual Resources Surveyed in Emmorton**

Building Address	Village	MIHP	Property Size
101 E Wheel Rd	Emmorton	None	.755 acres
2215 Old Emmorton Rd	Emmorton	None	.675 acres
2231 Old Emmorton Rd	Emmorton	None	1 acre
2239 Old Emmorton Rd	Emmorton	None	.467 acres

**Table 2: List of Properties within Abingdon Survey District**

Building Address	Village	MIHP/NRHP	Name of Resource
1217 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1221 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1301 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1302 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1303 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1304 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1309 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1311 Abingdon Road	Abingdon	HA-2013	Abingdon Fire Station
1314 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1317 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1318 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1320 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1322 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1401 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1404 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1406 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1407 Abingdon Road	Abingdon		
1304 Cokesbury Road	Abingdon	HA-848	Cokesbury Memorial Methodist Church

1304 Cokesbury Road	Abingdon	HA-846	Cokesbury College Monument and Site
1317 Cokesbury Road	Abingdon	HA-847	Cokesbury College Historic Marker
2503 Cokesbury Road	Abingdon		
3409 Philadelphia Road	Abingdon		
3503 Cokesbury Road	Abingdon		
3504 Philadelphia Road	Abingdon		
3508 Philadelphia Road	Abingdon	HA-852	McComas-Cunningham House, site (Silk Hat Factory; demolished)
3604 Philadelphia Road	Abingdon	NR-91000001	Nelson-Reardon-Kennard House
3605 Philadelphia Road	Abingdon		
3608 Philadelphia Road	Abingdon		
3610 Philadelphia Road	Abingdon		

Table 3: List of Properties within Magnolia Survey District

Building Address	Village	MIHP/NRHP	Name of Resource
4 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
8 Fort Hoyle Rd)	Magnolia		
7 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
9 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
10 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
11 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia	HA-186	Arthur Powell House
16 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
18 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
21 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia	HA-187	Magnolia Methodist Church, site (demolished)
22 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
23 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
25 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
29 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia	HA-1570	Brown-Fletcher House
30 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
32 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia		
35 Fort Hoyle Rd		HA-188	Magnolia Store and Post Office, site (demolished)

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<b>41 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>	Magnolia	HA-1612	Rollins House
<b>43 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>	Magnolia		
<b>103 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>	Magnolia		
<b>105 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>	Magnolia		

## Historic Context

Harford County is in the northwest portion of Maryland, at the confluence of the Susquehanna River and the northern branch of the Chesapeake Bay. The county is bound to the north by Pennsylvania, and to the west and southwest by Baltimore County. Harford County has three municipalities: Aberdeen, Bel Air and Havre de Grace. Of these municipalities, Havre de Grace is the oldest, incorporated in 1785, followed by the county seat of Bel Air in 1874, and Aberdeen in 1892. The county was named for Henry Harford (1759-1834), the last Proprietary of Maryland. Prior to European contact, present day Harford County was largely inhabited by the Susquehannock people, a hunting tribe, who primarily lived near streams of fresh water. They claimed as their hunting ground a wide expanse, stretching from Pennsylvania southward through Maryland on both sides of the bay to the Patuxent River and the Choptank River. In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the Susquehannock tribe fell into decline because of war with neighboring tribes, conflict with settlers, and smallpox epidemics spread by Europeans.<sup>2</sup>

In 1608, Captain John Smith of the Virginia Colony recorded the first detailed description of the area while exploring the upper reaches of the Chesapeake Bay. Seventeen years after Smith's survey, the Virginia Company awarded the first English settler to Harford County, Edward Palmer, a land grant on the island in the mouth of the Susquehanna to establish a trading post. Although this venture was relatively short-lived, it marked the beginning of colonial growth within Harford County, and beginning in 1658, several land patents were devised to European settlers on the coastline of present-day Harford County.

### Agrarian Development of Harford County

The early development of Harford County was supported by agricultural cultivation that shaped the economy, culture, and landscape of the rural county. By the mid-seventeenth century, Harford County has been settled throughout, with the densest population on the east side of the present-day county, in the tidewater region.<sup>3</sup> The vast county landscape was overwhelmingly rural and agricultural, connected by local roads and supported by rural villages. During the seventeenth and eighteenth century, farmers managed large tobacco operations that depended on enslaved labor. In

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<sup>2</sup> Christopher Weeks, *An Architectural History of Harford County, Maryland*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) 9.

<sup>3</sup> Walter W. Preston, *History of Harford County, Maryland* (Baltimore, Maryland: Press of Sun Brook Office, 1901),30.



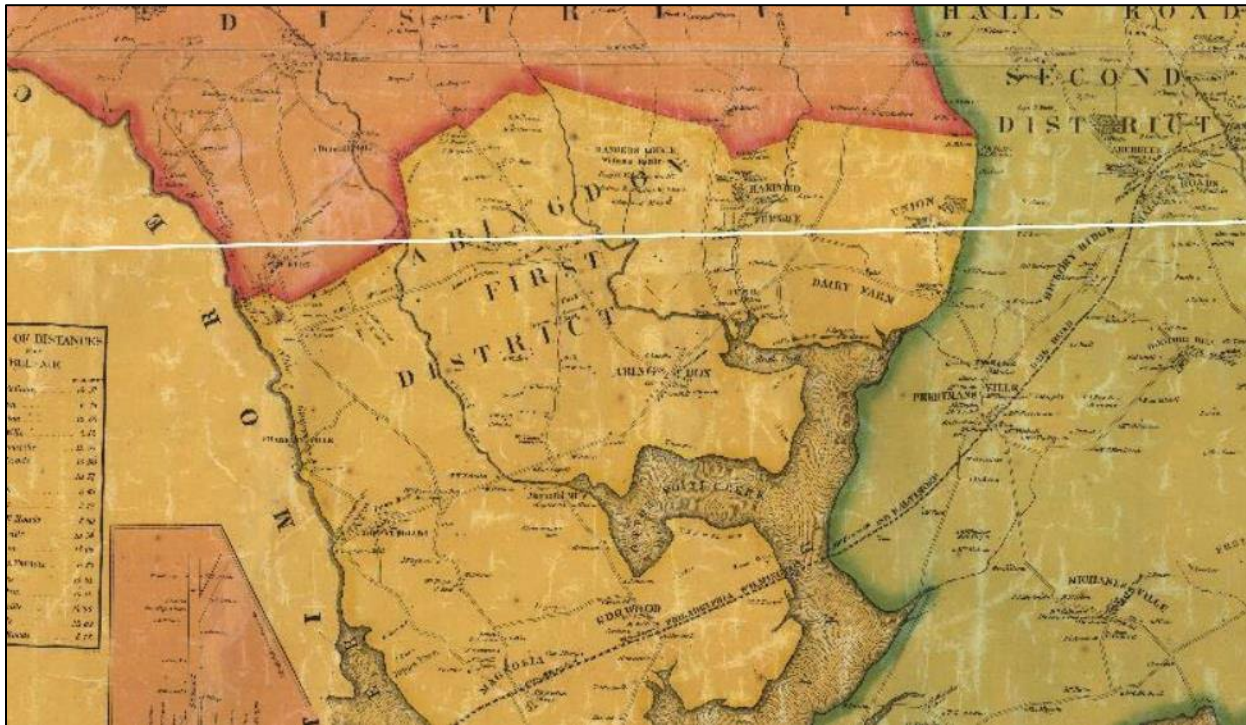


Figure 1: 1858 Map of Harford County. Library of Congress.

1790, enslaved persons made up roughly a quarter of the county's total population of 14,976 people.<sup>4</sup> Free Black communities formed in Harford County in eighteenth and nineteenth century, although the institution of slavery continued throughout the county until 1864.

By the eighteenth century, tobacco farming gave way to a more diversified agricultural landscape, and local farmers grew a variety of crops including corn and wheat, as well as raised cattle. Residents also capitalized on the county's abundant limonite and sodirite iron ore, forest, and water supply to produce iron. The colony encouraged this novel iron industry, granting one hundred acres of land to anyone who built an iron furnace or forge in the county.<sup>5</sup>

Harford County's development necessitated the construction of a system of roads throughout the county and to important cities. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the poor condition of the roads made inland travel through the county difficult and presented a major barrier for inland transit between northern and southern cities along the east coast. In the late seventeenth century, Harford County began the first major infrastructure project in the county: the Great Post Road,

<sup>4</sup> Black Marylanders 1790: African American Population by County, Status & Gender. Maryland Archives. <http://slavery.msa.maryland.gov/html/research/census1790.html>

<sup>5</sup> *History and Heritage of Harford County: Appendix A* (2010), 7.

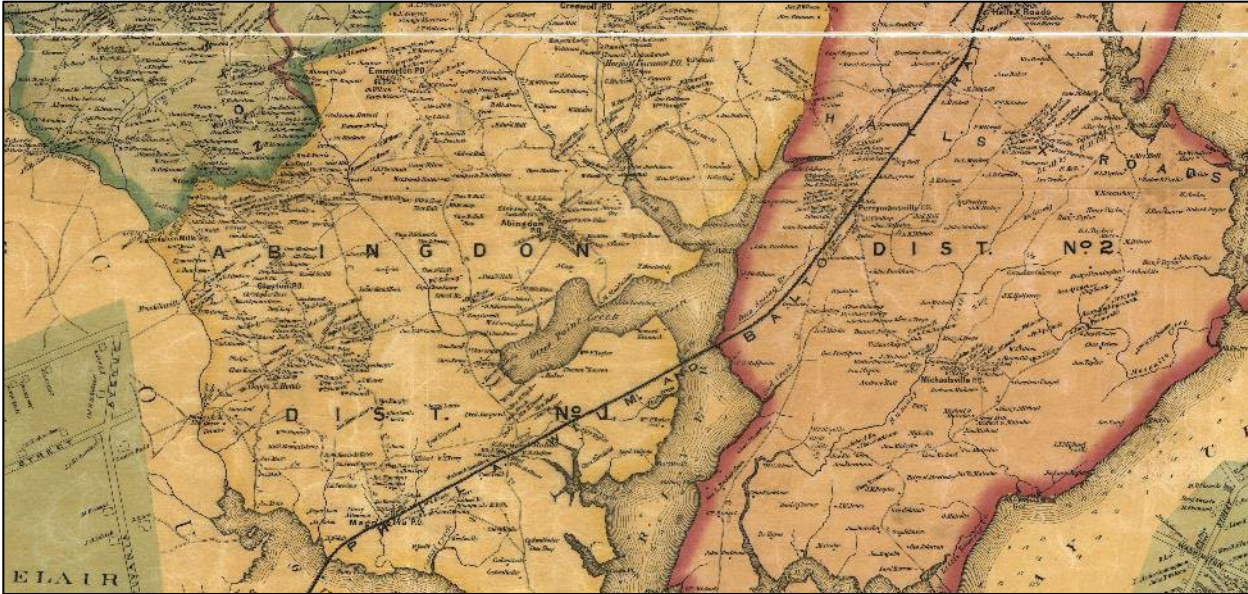


Figure 2: 1878 Map of Harford County. Library of Congress.

stretching from Alexandria, Virginia to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>6</sup> Completed by 1670, the route was quickly deemed too circuitous, and a new Post Road (known as the King's Road) was constructed to the north in 1687. During the late seventeenth and through the eighteenth centuries, the Post Road was the main artery through Harford County, as well as an importation national route connecting the northern and southern cities. Considered the grandest thoroughfare in the colonies, the well-used route hosted inns and taverns for travelers at intervals to accommodate distance travel.<sup>7</sup> More roads began to extend inland from Harford County, connecting the newly developed regions. In the nineteenth century, Harford County's roads were increasingly used by public stage and private horse-drawn vehicles. In response, many of these main roads were improved by stone and gravel for ease of transportation.

As the population of the county expanded during this period, rural villages formed to support the geographically dispersed farming communities. Many of these "crossroad villages" formed at the intersection of two roads, normally a main road intersected by a secondary road. These villages housed religious, social, educational and economic support services, and were critical to the surrounding region. In addition to public and community buildings, merchants, wealthy farms, and artisans often took up residence to benefit from the trade and opportunities within the village. One of the earliest of these villages to emerge was the Village of Abingdon, located at the intersection of the Post Road and a local east-west thoroughfare. In addition to providing churches and stores for the surrounding area, Abingdon also provided taverns and hotels for travelers along the Post Road, and residents erected the first Methodist College in the United States, Cokesbury College.

<sup>6</sup> *History and Heritage of Harford County: Appendix A* (2010), 5.

<sup>7</sup> *History and Heritage of Harford County: Appendix A* (2010), 5.



Spurred by the county's burgeoning iron industry, Abingdon also quickly became a center for silversmithing.

In the early seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, building styles throughout the county reflected the knowledge and experience of British and European construction, and residents built houses in familiar and recognizable folk architectural styles using available local materials. The two-room hall-and-parlor British Cabin style was particularly prevalent.<sup>8</sup> In addition to houses and agricultural structures, Countians erected religious buildings, including masonry churches and simple Quaker Meeting Houses. By 1798, most of the houses in the county were one-story vernacular frame structures, which were often surrounded by wood outbuildings and dwellings for the enslaved.<sup>9</sup> The wealthiest residents of the county lived in houses constructed of stone and brick, and by the eighteenth century, many of these houses were executed in the Georgian and Federal styles.

## The Railroad In Maryland

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Harford County were largely defined by transportation infrastructure improvements, that brought opportunities for expanding industrial and agricultural business. The first railroad tracks laid in the county were the direct result of trade rivalries between capitalists in Philadelphia and Baltimore, the two fastest-growing industrial cities on the Eastern seaboard. This rivalry led to a race for access to natural resources in the interior of Pennsylvania and trade in the midwestern states. The first company to lay tracks in Maryland was the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad (B&O) in 1827; the main line ran west from Baltimore and the Chesapeake, through Cumberland and into the midwestern states. In the 1830s, state legislatures initiated several separate railroad building projects, which were later merged to form the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad company (PW&B), the first railroad through Harford County.

The Pennsylvania State legislature sought to connect Philadelphia with southern destinations, and the Delaware and Maryland legislatures looked to connect Wilmington in Baltimore. By 1838, four separate companies had constructed railroad lines through the Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania region. The PW&B main line ran along the eastern edge of the county in the Tidewater region, connecting Harford County to Baltimore, the fastest-growing city in the county, as well as other nearby cities. The railroad brought with it economic opportunity, as new materials and technologies were made available for the first time, and the market for agricultural products extended as far as the rail-line. Harford Countians capitalized on this new infrastructure with development adjacent to railroad lines; the PB&W erected major stations in the pre-existing towns, such as the colonial villages of Havre de Grace.

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<sup>8</sup> Christopher Weeks, *An Architectural History of Harford County, Maryland*, 9.

<sup>9</sup> *History and Heritage of Harford County: Appendix A* (2010), 10.

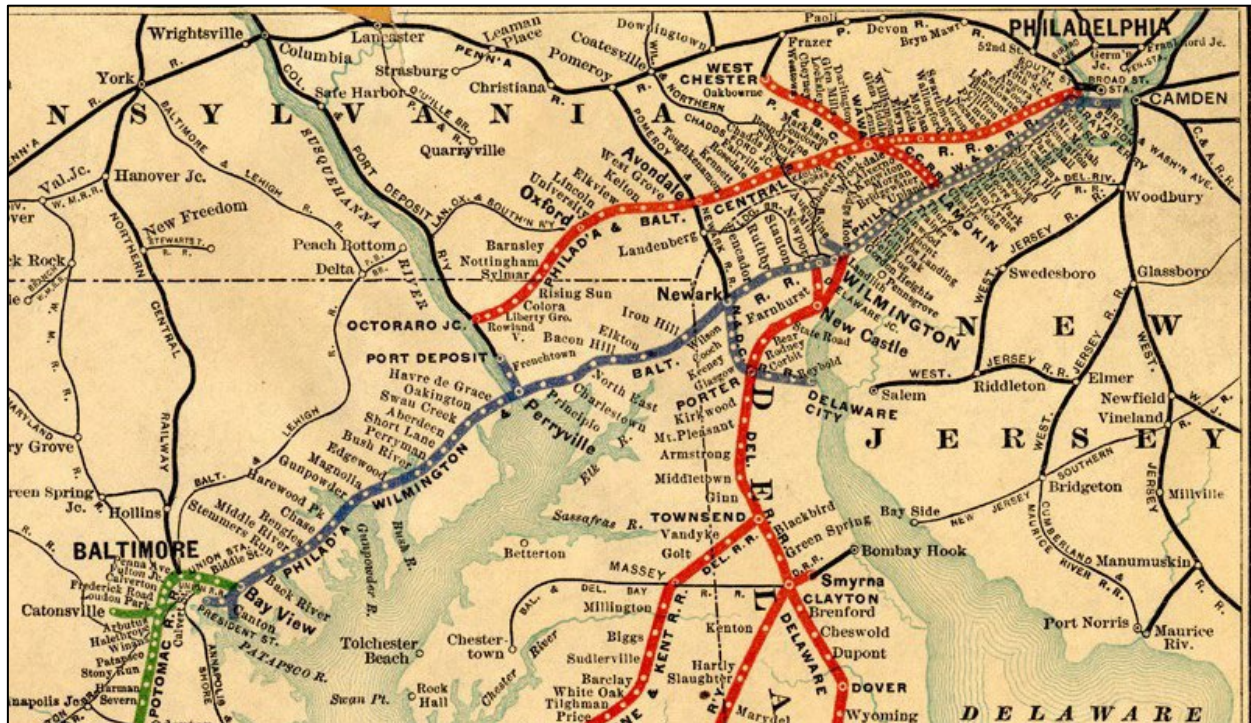


Figure 3: 1890 Map of PW&B Railroad Main Line. Delaware State Archive.

Other communities were formed in response to the economic opportunity that accompanied this infrastructure. These “railroad towns” continued the legacy of the earlier colonial crossroad villages. Stagecoach travel continued to be important throughout rural Harford County to bring passengers from interior towns to railroad stops in the Tidewater region. Stagecoach companies erected stops next to railroad stations, and villages grew at the intersection of these major and local transportation lines.

One of these new “railroad towns” along the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore line was the Village of Magnolia, which developed around Magnolia Station (c. 1840.) in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Stagecoach lines brought passengers and mail from the county seat of Bel Air to Magnolia several times a day, stopping at smaller villages along the route.<sup>11</sup> During the Civil

<sup>11</sup> “The Old Line of Stages,” *The Aegis*, November 5, 1869.

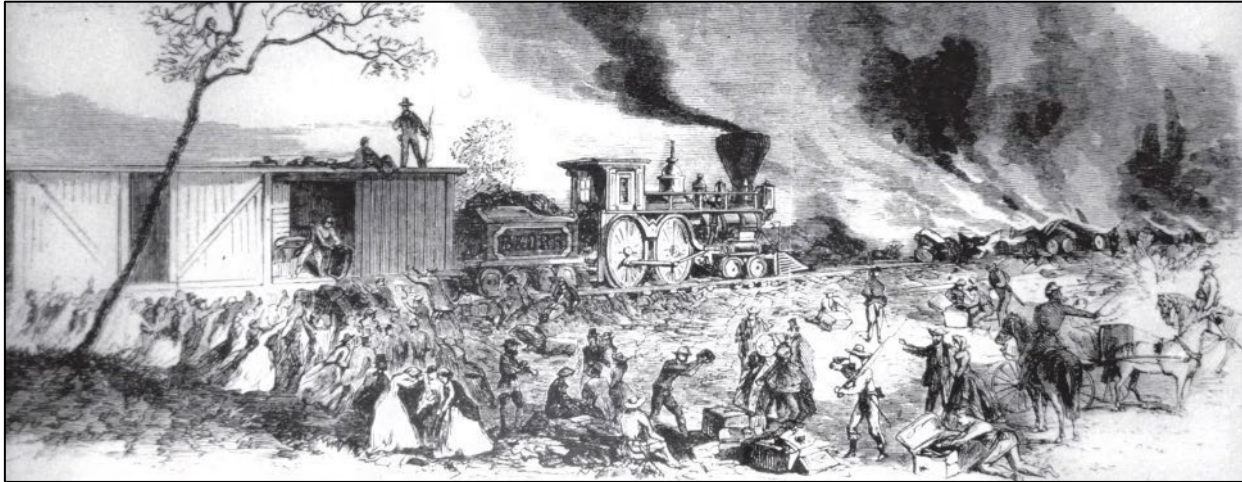


Figure 4: Illustration of Train Burning at Magnolia Station in 1864. [The Cecil Whig \(August 29, 2020\)](#).

War, Magnolia Station was burned down by Confederate troops, but was soon rebuilt. The Village of Magnolia was laid out along a forty-acre parcel purchased by George Brown, who went on to construct a hotel, store, and home, and sold off adjacent lots to new residents.

The advent of the railroad brought with it new technology, which profoundly affected the architecture of Harford County. Builders quickly abandoned heavy local materials in favor of cheap lumber that could be transported over long distances, resulting in a proliferation of buildings constructed with light balloon or braced framing and wood sheathing.<sup>12</sup> These new light framing techniques allowed for new architectural forms to emerge, most notably massed-produced house plans with rectangular footprints and side-gabled roofs. Another popular building form during this period was the I-house. Although this form was popularized nationally after the construction of the railroad, it was prevalent in tidewater Maryland prior.<sup>13</sup> Adapted from the popular British Cabin typology, it came to be associated with economic success in agricultural society. This form continued to be pervasive in the post-railroad era; during this later period, affluent Maryland residents often fitted it with stylistic detailing, porches, chimneys, and ell extensions.<sup>14</sup>

## The Industrial Era

In the nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries, Harford County experienced a wave of industrialization, fueled in large part by large infrastructure projects connecting the county to nearby industrial cities. Farmers and entrepreneurs used new technology to build upon Harford County's existing agricultural economy by establishing canning operations all through the county. These canning operations allowed farmers to preserve their bountiful produce and ship it off to faraway markets by way of the railroad. Canning operations quickly took over the county during

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<sup>12</sup> Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1984), 89.

<sup>13</sup> Weeks, 29.

<sup>14</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 96.



the nineteenth century; during its heyday, there were more than 200 canneries exporting local corn, tomatoes, and berries, amongst other products.<sup>15</sup> The canning industry attracted more laborers to Harford County, some of whom settled in existing or new communities.

The railroad continued to expand and was joined by other infrastructure developments such as the construction of the Conowingo Dam. In the early twentieth century, the Pennsylvania Railroad constructed stations in Edgewood and Aberdeen. During this period, the rise of pollution in industrial cities and Victorian ideals about clean air and health, led many urbanites to seek refuge in the pastoral landscapes of Harford County. For some, Harford County was a short vacation out of the city, but for wealthy city folk, Harford County was an enticing location to build a county estate. Local, vernacular styles continued to be prevalent throughout the county but were joined by more exotic styles imported by monied newcomers.<sup>16</sup>

### Wartime Changes

In 1917, Harford County, especially its southeastern tidewater region, underwent dramatic and rapid changes brought about by new wartime industries. In October of that year, the federal government condemned 35,211 acres of land in the Gunpowder and Bush River necks, an area that was locally referred to as the ‘Garden of Eden’ for its excellent soil. The landowners, workers, and tenants were effectively evicted as the government constructed two new army facilities: the Edgewood Chemical Center and the Aberdeen Proving Ground. These military installations employed thousands of people, both residents of Harford County and newcomers who moved into the county for jobs. The population of the county increased dramatically, and the influx of new residents led to a wave of residential development in the surrounding communities.

The sleepy rural villages of Harford County were soon invigorated with development and industry. In addition to the new residents, villages that were constructed along historic crossroads were inundated with new traffic, as workers commuted by car and rail for their new war-time jobs. Larger landowners sold off lots for new houses, constructed in styles that followed national trends of suburbanization, including the cape cod, craftsman, bungalow, prairie, and colonial revival styles.

Harford County continued to grow throughout the twentieth century; between 1910 and 1960, the population of the county tripled to 76,722 people.<sup>17</sup> During the first half of the century, this growth was the result of new industry and war-time production. In the 1930s, the Bata Shoe Company of Czechoslovakia bought 2,000 acres on Bush River for not only the construction of a shoe factory,

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<sup>15</sup> *History and Heritage of Harford County*: 16.

<sup>16</sup> Christopher Weeks, *An Architectural History of Harford County, Maryland*, (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) 143.

<sup>17</sup> *History and Heritage of Harford County*, 23.



Figure 5: Photo of the land for the Aberdeen Proving Ground. US. Army.

but also of an entire planned community. When the United States entered World War II, activity picked up dramatically at the Edgewood Chemical Center and the Aberdeen Proving Ground. New residents overwhelmed the neighboring small towns, such as Havre de Grace, Aberdeen, Abingdon, Edgewood, and Joppa, as well as others.<sup>18</sup>

For Harford County's crossroad communities, the modern period brought with it modern technology and architectural styles. New construction was increasingly mass-produced; stick-built, balloon-frame houses could be ordered from companies, such as Sears, Roebuck, and Co. These houses contrasted from the existing historic buildings, which were often rural variants on traditional housing forms.

By the mid-century, suburban development began to overtake much of the county's pastoral farmland, particularly in the well-travelled and developed southeast region. The loss of historic farmland was devastating for crossroad communities, which had served the dwindling nearby agricultural populations for generations. New highways routed traffic away from historic crossroad

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<sup>18</sup> KCI Technologies, Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology: 1-495/1-95 Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study (Maryland Department of Transportation, 1999)

communities. By the mid-century, many of the county’s rural villages had been made economically obsolete.

### Abingdon

The Village of Abingdon is in southern Harford County, to the north of Otter Point Creek. The Village of Abingdon was one of the most important colonial villages platted along the Post Road connecting New England to the Colony of Virginia. Prominent local landowner John Paca first platted the land in 1779, envisioning a sixty-six-acre village laid out on a grid around seven streets; the north-south Post Road was to be joined by High, Market, Harford, Johnson and Paca Streets, and intersected by the east-west routes of Prospect and Washington Streets. Paca acquired much of his wealth from agriculture on his nearby plantation, which was operated using enslaved labor. Although the full layout of the village was never realized, Abingdon was erected in accordance with the original grid system, and the village center fell at the intersection of Old Post Road (now Philadelphia Road) and Washington Street (now Abingdon Road). Washington Street is connected to the road leading to the town of Bel Air and was a locally important transportation route. Paca gave at least twenty-four of the half-acre lots in Abingdon to his children.<sup>19</sup>

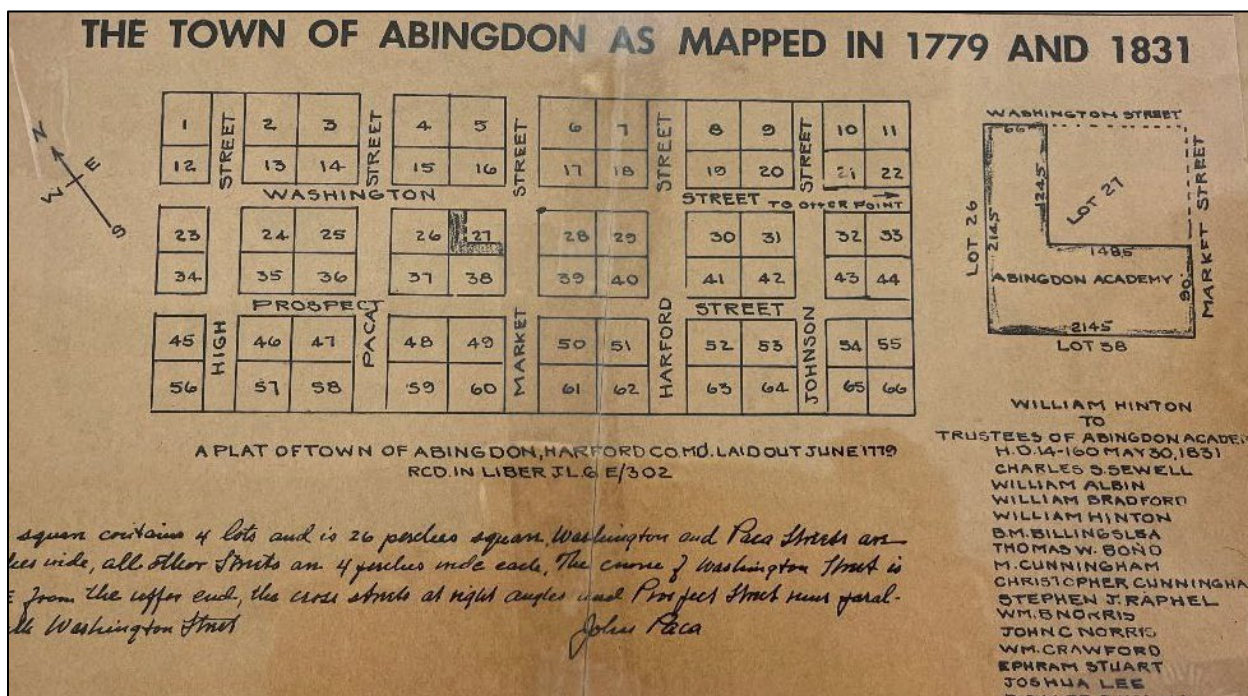


Figure 6: Drawing of the Historic Plat of Abingdon. (Harford County Historical Society)

<sup>19</sup> Edward C. Papenfuse, et al. A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789. Vol. II. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press:1985), 631-632.



Paca's endeavor was initially successful, as the new village attracted artisans, merchants, and educators. Local businessmen quickly constructed two hotels in the town, catering to through travelers along the Post Road. During the 1780s, local Methodists established the Abingdon Methodist Chapel and the first Methodist college in the county, called Cokesbury College. Abingdon was selected for the location of the college due to its position as a midway point in the county. Unfortunately, Cokesbury College was short lived and burned down in 1795.

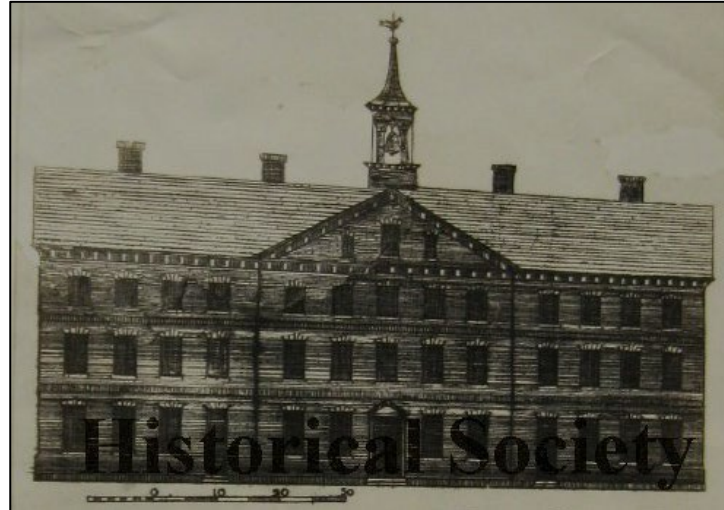


Figure 7: Drawing of Cokesbury College. Harford County Historical Society.

The chapel on the site remained for another century, until it was also destroyed by fire in 1895. By 1799, the Village of Abingdon boasted over fifty dwellings, a gun shop, a funeral parlor, eight stores, and several silversmithing enterprises.<sup>20</sup> Early residents included John Reardon, Peregrine Browning and Francis Crawford, all of whom constructed frame houses within the village by 1798.<sup>21</sup> Only the house constructed by the Reardon remains today (Nelson-Reardon-Kennard House; NR #91000001).

The Village of Abingdon continued to act as an important rural center into the early nineteenth century. During this period, Abingdon established several important community services and businesses, including a post office and tannery. In 1805, Daniel P. Ruff published the first edition of the weekly local paper, called the Abington Patriot, which was the first newspaper in the county. In 1810, James Billingsley served as the postmaster for the newly established Abingdon Post Office. In 1821, Charles Sewell opened the first silk hat factory in the United States, which exported products from the nearby dock at Otter Point. Abingdon Academy, a private school, opened in 1828 on Abingdon Road.

Like the rest of Harford County during the seventeenth century, much of this early prosperity was predicated on the institution of slavery. The Paca family used their large, enslaved workforce to generate substantial wealth, ultimately allowing John Paca to purchase the land for Abingdon. Early residents of the village, such as Francis Crawford, also owned enslaved persons.<sup>22</sup> Freedom seekers such as Jesse Brown, Ned Nowland, Thomas Billingslea, Edward Morgan, Henry Johnson,

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<sup>20</sup> National Register of Historic Places. Nelson-Reardon-Kennard House, Abingdon, Harford County, Maryland. National Register #91000001, Section 8 Page 3.

Stephen Butler, and Jum Butler escaped bondage on farms in and around Abingdon.<sup>23</sup> Enslaved persons may have resided in Abingdon with their owners, or immediately outside of Abingdon on larger plantation estates.

The expansion of the railroad through Harford County further impacted Abingdon's development in the mid-nineteenth century. Railroad infrastructure made long-distance travel much easier, and the Old Post Road lessened in importance as a main artery for national travel. Despite this, Abingdon continued to be an important local center. Stagecoaches connected Abingdon to the nearby Sewell Railway station on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, offering connections to nearby industrial cities.

Much of the economy outside immediately surrounding Abingdon was agricultural in character, and Abingdon continued to serve as a central support center. The 1878 Martinet Map gives a clear picture of Abingdon in the late nineteenth century. By this time, Washington Street (Abingdon Road) and Paca Street (Philadelphia Road) were lined with at least two dozen one and two-story houses, as well as two hotels, a schoolhouse, two churches, and a cabinet shop. The commercial center of the town was concentrated at the crossroad intersection. Census records data from this time show that during this period, Abingdon residents held a variety of occupations conducive to a thriving rural village such as physicians, blacksmith, clergy, teachers, shoemakers, wheelwrights, hotel staff, carpenters, and merchants. Robert Henry ran the Academy and William Pierce was a wealthy merchant and postmaster. Houses constructed during this time reflected rural building typologies and were generally two-story vernacular houses with gable roofs.

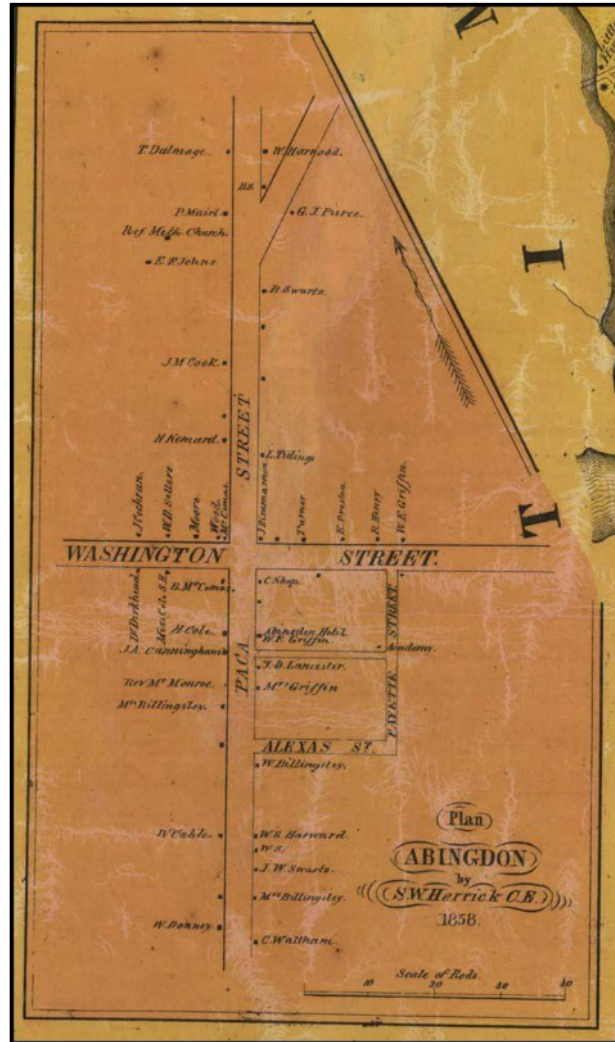


Figure 8: 1858 Map of Abingdon. Library of Congress.

<sup>23</sup> Advertisement placed by Thomas b. Shwartz, *The Baltimore Sun*, June 5, 1850; advertisement placed by Washington Slade, *The Baltimore Sun*, August 23, 1851; advertisement placed by Elizabeth Brown and Thomas Johnson, *The Baltimore Sun*, June 5, 1857.



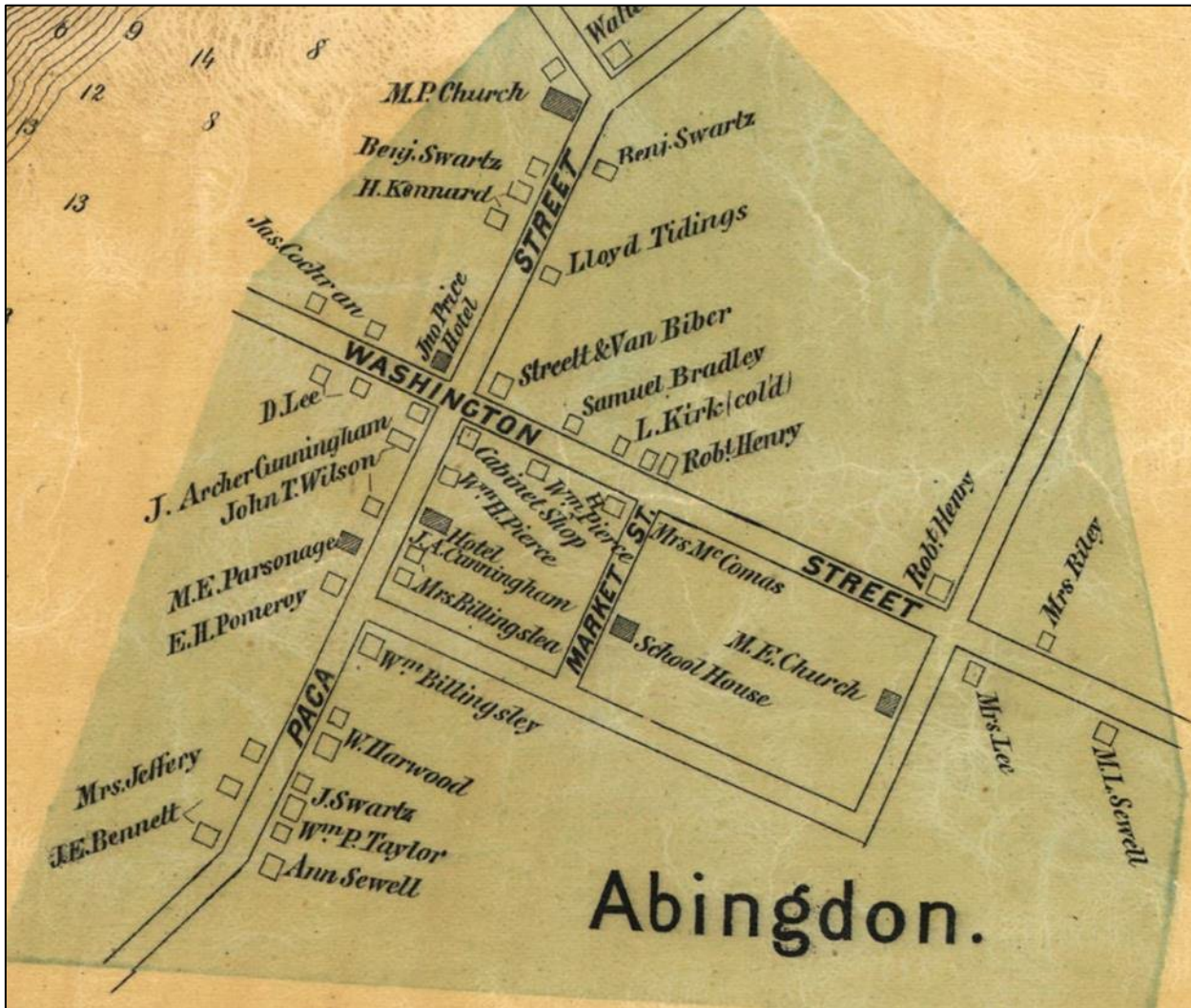


Figure 9: 1878 Map of Abingdon. Library of Congress.

Abingdon continued to transition into the industrial era along with the rest of the county. By the late nineteenth century, several canneries opened in Abingdon and the surrounding region. Local canners around the intersection of Philadelphia and Abingdon Road included Fred Morlok, George A. Kimble & Bro., Samuel Norris, and Raymond S.W. & Son. According to census records, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, many Abingdonians worked as farmers, laborers, grocers, or cannery employees. Abingdon's tomato canneries employed so many laborers that school attendance was impacted; in 1909, teachers at Abingdon Elementary school prepared to increase staffing to accommodate an influx of students during the winter session, when the end of the canning season allowed child laborers to return to school.

In the early twentieth century, many of the same families from the nineteenth century continued to reside in the village, including the McComas family that operated several businesses in town. These families were joined by new residents who had come to work at the nearby Aberdeen

Proving Ground, Edgewood Arsenal, or nearby industries such as the Bata Shoe Factory. Wartime production not only brought residential construction, but also an increase in traffic along Abingdon Road, which transported travelers from Baltimore via the nearby Pulaski Highway (Route 40) to the Aberdeen Proving Grounds.

During this period, Abingdon continued to retain its commercial center at the crossroads of the Abingdon and Philadelphia Roads. These businesses included a post office, general, store, bakery, and funeral home. Residents formed a fire department and constructed the firehouse in 1930 (HA-2013). Although the folk architectural styles persisted into the twentieth century, new one and two-story houses in a range of styles, such as Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Prairie, appeared along Abingdon and Philadelphia Road.



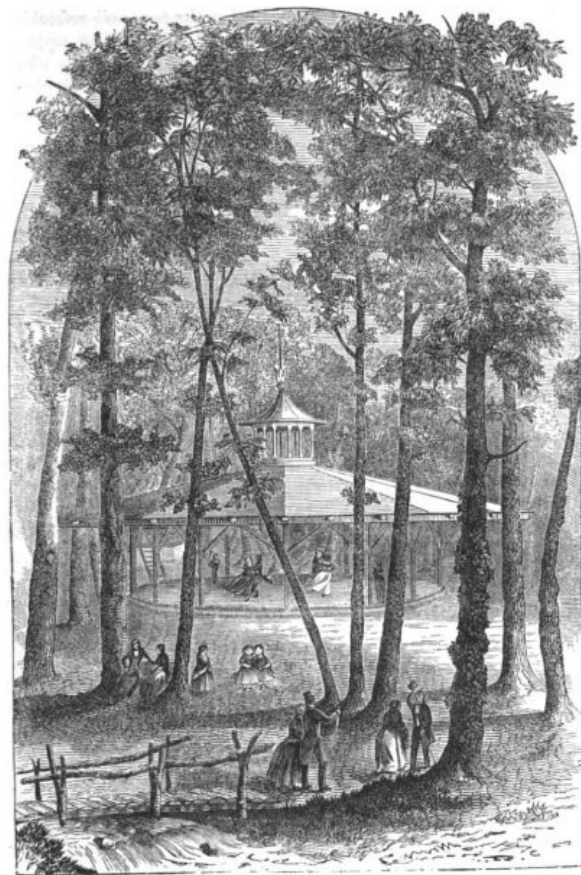
Figure 10: 1938 Aerial Map of Abingdon. Harford County GIS.



## Magnolia

The Village of Magnolia is in southern Harford County, to the south of Joppatowne. The village emerged along the PB&W railroad in the mid-nineteenth century, much to the credit of early village resident George Brown who purchased land adjacent to the newly built Magnolia Station and constructed a stone, residence and post office. Typical of a crossroad village, Magnolia serviced the surrounding agricultural community as well as travelers along the railroad.

Prior to the introduction of the railroad in Harford County, the area presently known as Magnolia was largely agrarian and was locally known as a picnic location for locals due to the abundance of Magnolia trees in the area. By 1840, the PW&B had constructed a rail line on the eastern edge of Harford County and a station in Magnolia that included a station house and freight depot. Presumably, the location was selected for the presence of existing, local transportation routes leading into the interior of the county. In 1854, the PW&B erected a circular pavilion adjacent to the station, which attracted travelers by rail to the serene Magnolia grove. Magnolia Station received national attention during the Civil War when it was burned to the ground by Confederate troops. After the war, PW&B rebuilt the station, which included a signal tower, waiting rooms, wagon station, and second-floor residence for the ticket agent. Shortly after the completion of the station, a line of stagecoaches connecting the nearby areas of Jerusalem Mills, Fallston, and Bel Air successfully petitioned the PW&B to construct covered waiting areas for the stagecoach line.<sup>24</sup> By this time, Magnolia Station had taken on an important role as the connection point between the surrounding regions of Harford County and industrial centers such as Baltimore.



PAVILION IN MAGNOLIA GROVE.

Figure 11: Illustration of the Magnolia Grove Pavilion. Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad Guide.

<sup>24</sup> "Correspondence – Magnolia," *The Aegis*, January 9, 1874.

Recognizing the potential for growth surrounding the bustling new station, businessman George W. Brown purchased an acre of land immediately adjacent to the station for the construction of a store and hotel (c. 1865) called Magnolia House. Brown went on to purchase an additional forty-acres of land on which he built his own farmhouse and sold half-acre lots. These initial half-acre lots were purchased by new residents, attracted to the economic opportunities of the new village. In 1872, residents constructed six new houses, a blacksmith shop, and a wheelwright shop along Magnolia Road (now Fort Hoyle Road). Construction of the town continued steadily to include more houses, a Methodist Church in 1888, and a public school. These commercial, educational, and religious buildings served not only the new residents of Magnolia, but the entire surrounding region.

Industry continued to thrive in Magnolia during the late-nineteenth and into the twentieth century with the addition of a lumber yard, coal yard, and cheese factory. George Brown, as well as several other local businessmen, capitalized on the fruitful surrounding farmland by establishing canning operations (c. 1881) right outside of town, sourcing fresh produce from local farmers. Magnolia was also known as one of the most important “milk stations” between the Susquehanna and Baltimore, suggesting that the surrounding region produced a significant amount of dairy for sale. Early residents included carpenter Frank Skillman and John H. Turner, who built houses for themselves along Fort Hoyle Road. Census records indicate that in 1900, residents of the village held a variety of occupations related to the railroad and the surrounding agricultural industry, as well as occupations typical of a crossroads village such as teachers, blacksmiths, postal workers, and merchants. In 1912, the two-room elementary school burned down, and classes were temporarily relocated to the church hall of the Magnolia Episcopal Church.

The Village of Magnolia was greatly impacted by wartime production during World War I. The construction of the nearby Aberdeen Proving Ground and Edgewood Arsenal resulted in increased railroad traffic through Magnolia as supplies traveled from Baltimore and Washington to the military installation via Magnolia Road. In 1922, the United States Army established an artillery range called Fort Hoyle on Gunpowder Neck and later Magnolia Road was renamed to Fort Hoyle Road when the two were connected. These new industries brought an influx of residents who purchased land in Magnolia for the construction of new homes, often purchasing undeveloped lots along Fort Hoyle Road from the Brown family

In the 1940s, activity at the Edgewood Arsenal and Aberdeen Proving Ground declined, with devastating effects for travel through Magnolia. Coupled with the loss of surrounding historic farmland and state highway projects, Magnolia Station could not sustain the loss of activity and was closed in 1943. By the 1950s, the station was demolished.

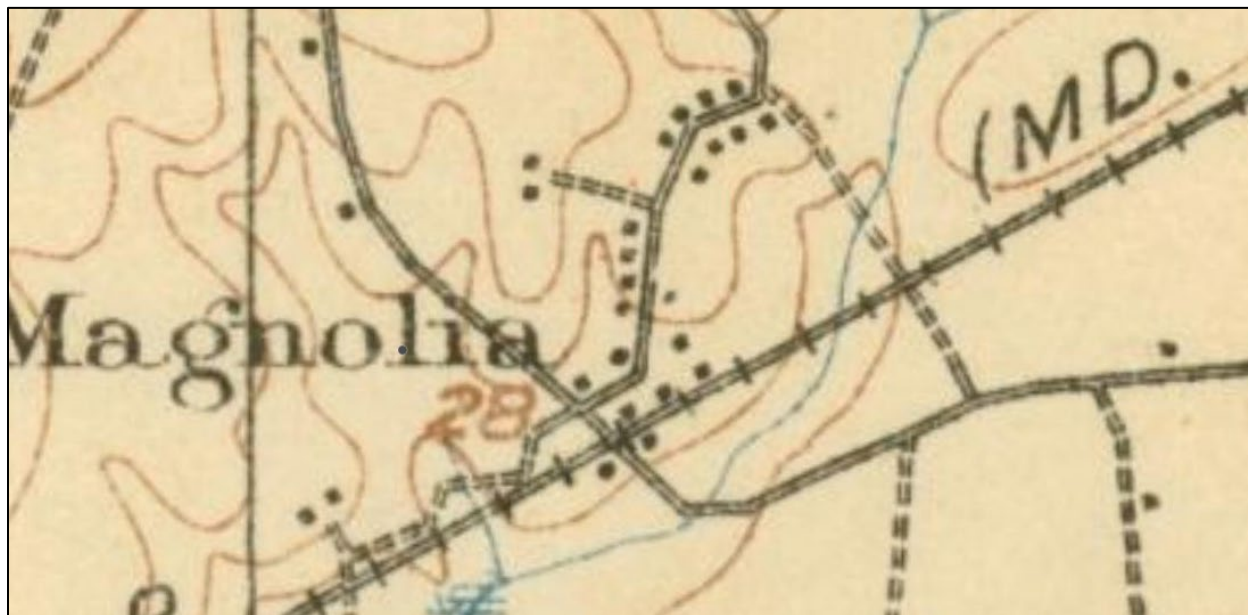


Figure 12: 1901 Map of Magnolia. USGS.

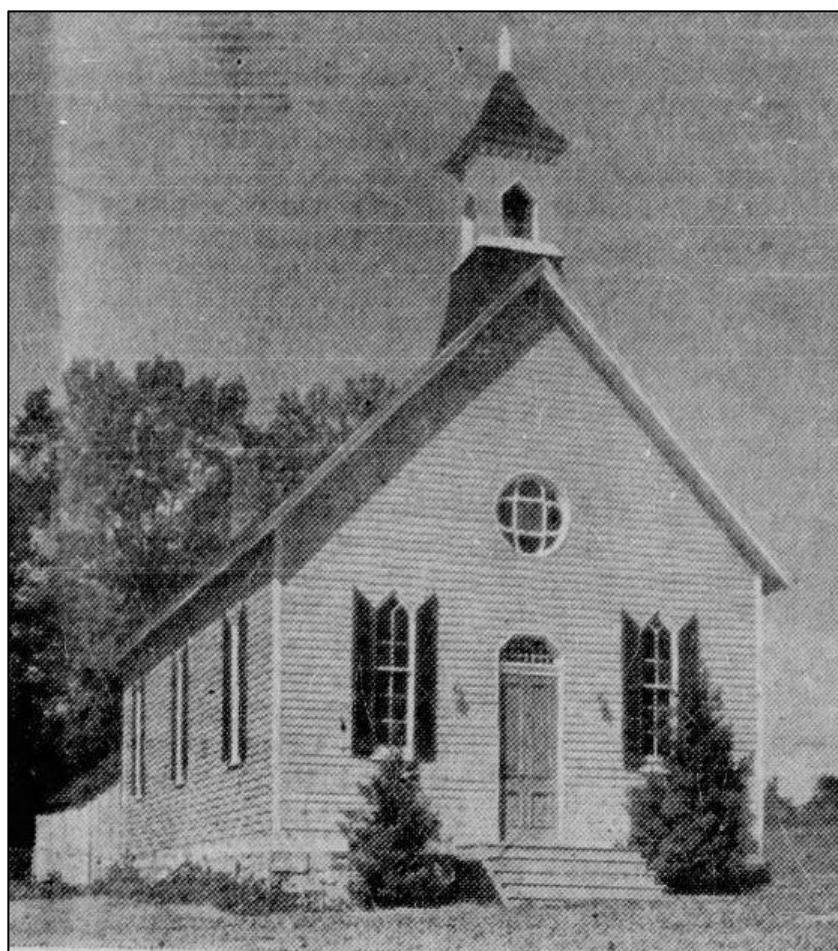


Figure 13: 1938 Photo of the Magnolia Methodist Church. The Aegis (1938).



## Emmorton

The early settlement of Emmorton was named for Emmor Morrison, who operated the first store and post office in the village in 1852. Emmorton prospered as a midway point on the road connecting Abingdon to Bel Air, catering to traffic along the north-south thoroughfare (now Old Emmorton Road). By the mid-nineteenth century, an east-west road known as McHenry Road connected to the nearby towns of Creswell and Harford Furnace intersected Old Emmorton Road. The early town of Wheel developed in the area surrounding the factory, which presumably served as the inspiration for the name “Wheel Road.”

Development in the town began in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1848, Reverend William Francis established the first church in Emmorton and erected Mary’s Episcopal Church. In 1865, local Methodists constructed a stone church called the Mt. Carmel Methodist Church at the intersection of the two main roads, on land donated to its trustees by Elijah and Frances Magness. The church served as the social center of the town, hosting activities for the surrounding region, such as concerts at the singing school, fairs, and festivals. A one-room stone schoolhouse was completed shortly after in 1868 along Wheel Road. By 1878, in addition to the two churches, Emmorton boasted a handful of private residences, a blacksmith shop, school, store, and post office. During this period, the small Village of Emmorton continued to be surrounded by pastoral farmland and remained an important center for farmers to trade their products.

Like many of the small rural villages in Harford County near the new military installations, development took off during the early twentieth century, leading to new construction in many of the county’s rural villages. During World War I enrollment at the Emmorton school rose to between eighty-five and ninety students. The growth of the student body necessitated a larger building, which was constructed in 1920 at the intersection of Old Emmorton Road and Wheel Road. The new two-room rural schoolhouse became an important social center for the village of Emmorton, and the basement level operated as a meeting space for community groups. Residential development continued during this time, and new houses were built along Old Emmorton Road.

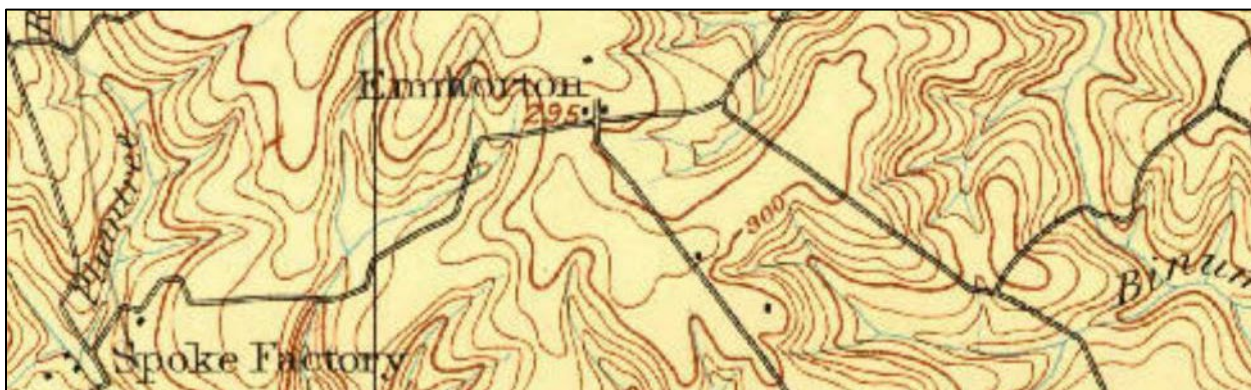


Figure 14: 1893 USGS Map of Emmorton. USGS Gunpowder Quadrangle.



Figure 15: Photo of the Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse. *The Aegis* (1976).

By the 1970s, the village of Emmorton, which had formerly included the school, a stone church, a store, and several homes, had largely vanished. After the completion of Route 24, in tandem with the closing of the school and store, Emmorton became a suburb of Bel Air, with residents using Abingdon and Bel Air as an address and voting precinct.



Figure 16: 1938 Aerial of Emmorton. Harford County GIS.

## Architectural Survey Results

The architectural survey involved the recordation and evaluation of four (4) individual resources located in Emmorton, Maryland and two (2) survey districts. All the resources documented represent buildings located within at-risk rural crossroad villages in Harford County, Maryland constructed during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. The oldest building surveyed in this study was the Nelson-Reardon-Kennard House (NR #9100000), an eighteenth-century frame dwelling located in Abingdon, Maryland. This resource is an anomaly amongst the surveyed resources, which predominantly date to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in both survey districts. In the Village of Emmorton Survey District, all four resources date from 1920 to 1946. Resources are a combination of masonry and frame construction and represent a variety of building techniques and styles that correspond to multiple periods of development.

Individual resources in Emmorton, Maryland were assessed separately based on their individual integrity and significance. The resources within the Village of Magnolia and the Village of Abingdon were assessed collectively as survey districts for their potential to contribute to multiple building districts. Traceries looked at the overall integrity and significance of the district area, using both field survey assessment and existing contexts for guidance. In particular, the following documents were used to assess the integrity of the rural crossroad village within the framework of Harford County during the eighteenth through early twentieth century:

- *Harford County Rural Villages Survey*, published by Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning in 2007, provided an overall framework for typical characteristics of three rural villages typologies in Harford County, including the “crossroad villages” type. This survey analyzed nine existing rural villages in Harford County and recorded common characteristics such as village layout, relationship to site, and building characteristics.
- *The Harford County Historic Context*, published by the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning in 2010, provided an overall context for the county’s history that highlighted major themes and architectural movements. This included themes relevant to this survey, including Harford County’s agricultural history, industrial transition, the impact of the railroad, and twentieth century transformations
- *Managing Maryland’s Growth: Modeling Future Development on the Design Characteristics of Maryland’s Traditional Settlements*, published by The Maryland Office of Planning in 1994, provided guidance the essential characteristics of Maryland’s traditional settlements, including hamlets, villages, and towns. This document highlighted the importance of distinctive settlement boundaries, “sense of place,” and mixed residential, commercial, and public building types.



Altogether, these documents provide a framework through which to evaluate the historic crossroad village survey districts. Rural crossroad villages are distinctive for emerging at the intersection of two routes, with construction concentrated along a main road, and the village center at the intersection of the two. Although each rural village is distinct, they share some general qualities, including their relationship to the road, building orientation, formal organization, and architectural language. These villages have discernible boundaries and emphasize a localized “sense of place.”<sup>25</sup> As a central hub for a far-reaching geographic community, rural villages boast a mix of residential, religious, social, educational, and commercial buildings. Due to the evolving nature of these communities, structures vary in terms of style and encompass several periods of construction. It is common to see a mix of older folk architecture constructed with local materials and knowledge adjacent to twentieth century buildings that reflected suburban expansion seen across the United States.

Harford County’s 2007 Rural Village Study is a useful document for characterizing the rural village typology. The survey investigated nine villages across Harford County outside of the Development Envelope, and found some similarities in town layout, building types, and overall design qualities. The villages surveyed are located throughout the County, although there are no examples in the Tidewater region. The survey found that residential buildings constructed prior to 1920 tend to be closer to the road than public buildings, which benefit from a gathering area in front of the building. Residential buildings in Harford County’s rural villages also often include porches, which act as transitional spaces between village life and the private sphere. Materials also vary, although many of the religious buildings are masonry construction to communicate their important status in the town, and residential structures tend to be a combination of masonry and frame construction. Popular building materials include horizontal and vertical siding, often made of wood, and brick and stone construction.

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<sup>25</sup> Maryland Office of Planning, *Managing Maryland’s Growth: Modeling Future Development on the Design Characteristics of Maryland’s Traditional Settlements*, (State of Maryland, 1994), 7.

**Village of Abingdon Survey District****M: HA-2305****Dates for Construction: c. 1785 – 1941****NRHP Eligibility: Not Eligible**

Figure 17: Photo of Cokesbury Methodist Church in Abingdon. EHT Tracerics (March 2024).

**Description:** The Village of Abingdon sits just north of Otter Point Creek, a tributary of Bush River, in southern Harford County. The town’s main road is Philadelphia Road (Route 7), formerly known as Old Post Road, which runs north-south through the town’s center. This road intersects with Abingdon Road, which runs east-west, forming a central junction where a commercial area developed. The survey district is comprised of a contiguous, irregularly shaped expanse of land bound on the south by the lots just south of Cokesbury Road; to the west by Cokesbury Church and the lots adjacent to the dwellings along Cogswell Court; to the north by the lots north of Philadelphia Road; and to the west by the lots just west of Abingdon Road, extending to meet the southern boundary just south of Cokesbury Road. The survey district contains mostly residential buildings and structures, with a few notable commercial and religious buildings. Additionally, two of the residential buildings were originally commercial buildings that have been modified for the use. The extant historic resources are in fair condition.

The survey district contains a varied collection of architecture located within the Village of Abingdon that illustrates the village's early development at the intersection of the Old Post Road and an important local thoroughfare. Resources within the district correspond to multiple periods of development from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century and reflect the evolving character of the county. There are six resources within the boundary of the survey district that were previously documented in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Places (MIHP) including the Cokesbury Memorial Methodist Church (HA-848), the Cokesbury College Monument and site (HA-846), the former Abingdon Fire Station (HA-2013), the McComas-Cunningham House site (HA-852), the Nelson-Reardon-Kinnard House (HA-854), and the Merritt Pumphouse (HA-855). The Nelson-Reardon-Kinnard House is also individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Two of the MIHP forms (Cokesbury College Monument and site and McComas-Cunningham House), document sites that were the location of former buildings. These buildings were demolished at the time of the inventory form. The architectural resources surveyed date from c. 1785 to 1983; they reflect the growth of a town that served as a crossroads on the important Old Post Road and Abingdon Road. The survey district encompasses the majority of Abingdon's nineteenth and early twentieth century residential development, along with several commercial buildings.

Building Address	Name	Type	Date <sup>26</sup>
1217 Abingdon Road		House	Early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.
1221 Abingdon Road		House	1864
1301 Abingdon Road		House	1930
1302 Abingdon Road		House	1935
1303 Abingdon Road		House	1920
1304 Abingdon Road		House	1957
1309 Abingdon Road		House	1965
1311 Abingdon Road	Abingdon Fire Station (HA-2013)	Commercial	1930
1314 Abingdon Road		House, former post office and general store	1920
1317 Abingdon Road		House	1915
1318 Abingdon Road		House	1942

<sup>26</sup> Construction dates are based on a combination of tax assessment research, deed research, and field survey. SDAT dates were used unless research or field survey contradicted those dates.



<b>1320 Abingdon Road</b>		House	1870-1880s
<b>1322 Abingdon Road</b>		House	c. 1900
<b>1401 Abingdon Road</b>		House	1914
<b>1404 Abingdon Road</b>		House	1942
<b>1406 Abingdon Road</b>		House	1942
<b>1407 Abingdon Road</b>		House	1960s-1970s
<b>1304 Cokesbury Road</b>	Cokesbury Memorial Methodist Church (HA-848)	Church	1896
<b>1304 Cokesbury Road</b>	Cokesbury College Monument and Site (HA-846)	Site and object	1787
<b>1317 Cokesbury Road</b>	Cokesbury College Historic Marker (HA-847)		
<b>3409 Philadelphia Road</b>		House	1937
<b>3503 Cokesbury Road</b>		House	1930
<b>3504 Philadelphia Road</b>		Apartments; former general store	1920
<b>3508 Philadelphia Road</b>	McComas-Cunningham House (HA-852)	Site; building demolished	
<b>3604 Philadelphia Road</b>	Nelson-Reardon-Kennard House (HA-854) and Merritt Milkhouse (MA-855)	House and outbuilding	c. 1785
<b>3605 Philadelphia Road</b>		House	1926
<b>3608 Philadelphia Road</b>		House	1920
<b>3610 Philadelphia Road</b>		House	1932

### Integrity:

The survey district continues to convey the early rural character of the crossroad village through its overall organization and collection of architectural styles that represent the town's continued development from the late eighteenth to early twentieth century. The survey district is associated

with Harford County's agricultural and transportation history that evolved over the course of a century and a half. During the eighteenth century, Abingdon was nationally important as a midway point between the north and the south along the Old Post Road that was popular with travelers. Even after the decline in national importance of the Old Post Road, Abingdon continued to act as an important local transportation hub, as stagecoach lines brought residents from nearby communities through Abingdon to the railroad station in Sewell. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Abingdon continued to serve as a locally important service center for the surrounding agricultural community, acting as a gathering place for trade, education, and religious practice.

The survey district contains a high degree of integrity of location, at the intersection of two historic roads: the Old Post Road (Philadelphia Road) and a local thoroughfare (Abingdon Road). Although the integrity of setting has been compromised by the loss of surrounding farmland that previously contextualized the village as a rural center, the survey district retains a moderate degree of integrity through the historic formal elements such as lot sizes, setback distances, and orientation towards the road that communicate the feeling of a rural village. Modern construction, demolition and pressing suburban development have diminished the integrity of design, materials, and workmanship within the survey district. Many of the houses in Abingdon have experienced material changes, including the application of synthetic siding and vinyl replacement windows and small additions, generally concentrated to the rear of buildings. Additionally, one previously documented resource, the Sonberg-Barker Apartment House (HA-851), has been demolished. Several of the historic resources, such as the Cokesbury Memorial Methodist Church (HA-848) and the Nelson-Reardon-Kennard House (HA-854) retain a higher degree of integrity of workmanship and design. Overall, the district retains its association with Harford County's rural heritage, and later industrial development, by its location, setting, feeling, and the presence of a handful of important and well-preserved resources.

#### **NRHP Evaluation:**

The Village of Magnolia Survey District does not hold sufficient integrity to warrant individual designation. Abingdon was nationally significant for its location along the Old Post Road connecting the north and the south, as well as the location of the first Methodist college (Criterion A). However, there are very few resources that date to this period, and both the college and early businesses have been lost. The remaining historic resources in the survey district communicate the history of the crossroad village and its local importance during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Criterion A). However, the extant resources within the district do not constitute a distinctive or well-preserved collection of architecture in their own right, nor do they reflect national trends that merit listing in the National Register of Historic Places (Criterion C). The founding of the survey district is associated with the Paca Family, but there are no resources directly associated with the family (Criterion B). The extant resources within the district do not

constitute a particularly distinctive or well-preserved collection of architecture (Criterion C). This resource was not evaluated under Criterion D.

**Village of Magnolia Survey District****M: HA-2306****Dates for Construction: c. 1866-1943****NRHP Eligibility: Not Eligible**

Figure 18: Photo of 7 Fort Hoyle Road. EHT Tracerics (April 2024).

**Description:**

The Village of Magnolia Survey District is comprised of a contiguous, irregular U-shaped expanse of land surrounding Fort Hoyle Road. The village of Magnolia, Maryland is in the southwest corner of Harford County, to the south of Joppatowne and to the east of Edgewood. The survey district is composed of mostly contiguous lots, centered around a roughly half-mile expanse of Fort Hoyle Road. It is bound to the northeast by Magnolia Road (MD 152), and the northwest by a mid-twentieth-century subdivision. In the nineteenth century, development of the rural village of Magnolia was spearheaded by local businessman Geroge Brown. Historically, the village boasted several commercial businesses and a church, concentrated around the historic Magnolia Railroad Station. The station, and the commercial resources are no longer standing, and the survey district contains mostly residential buildings and structures. The extant historic resources are in fair condition, retaining sufficient integrity of design; only a few are vacant and have deteriorated.



The survey district is distinctive for its collection of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century houses located along Fort Hoyle Road that illustrate the village's early development adjacent to the Magnolia Station, part of the PB&W. Five resources within the boundary of the survey district were previously documented in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Places including: Brown-Fletcher House (HA-1570), Rollins House (HA-1612), Magnolia Store and Post Office site (HA-188), Arthur Powell House (HA-186), and the Magnolia Methodist Church site (HA-187). Traceries was not able to survey the Magnolia Store and Post Office site (HA-188) from the public-right of way due to the dense vegetation.

Building Address	Name	Type	Date <sup>27</sup>
4 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	Late 19 <sup>th</sup>
8 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	Late 19 <sup>th</sup>
7 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	1900
9 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	1940
10 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	1920
11 Fort Hoyle Rd	Arthur Powell House (HA-186)	House	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> c.
16 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	1958
18 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	1958
21 Fort Hoyle Rd	Magnolia Methodist Church, site (HA-187)	Site and ruins	
22 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	1958
23 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	1929
25 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> c.
29 Fort Hoyle Rd	Brown-Fletcher House (HA-1570)	House	1870-1880
30 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	c. 1900
32 Fort Hoyle Rd		House	Early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.

<sup>27</sup> Construction dates are based on a combination of tax assessment research, deed research, and field survey. For the Village of Magnolia Survey District, SDAT lists many of the buildings with a 1920 construction date. USGS Maps, tax assessment records, and oral histories indicate that many of these properties are likely older, although exact dates have been difficult to locate with precision.

<b>35 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>	Magnolia Store and Post Office, site (HA-188)	Site; no access from right of way	
<b>41 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>	Rollins House (HA-1612)	House	c. 1918
<b>43 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>		House	1982
<b>103 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>		House	1957
<b>105 Fort Hoyle Rd</b>		House	1900

### **Integrity:**

The survey district contains a collection of residential resources dating from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, that are associated with a historic rural crossroad village, and the agricultural and transportation history that evolved over the course of a 150 years. During the mid-to-late nineteenth century, Magnolia developed along the PB&W railroad, and quickly became a transportation hub between Harford County and nearby industrial cities, especially Baltimore. During the twentieth century, Magnolia's location along a railroad line and proximity to new wartime production facilities continued to bring traffic and economic prosperity to the town.

The survey district retains a high degree of integrity of location along Fort Hoyle Road. Although the integrity of setting has been compromised by the loss of surrounding farmland that previously contextualized the village as a rural center, the survey district retains a moderate degree of integrity of the formal site elements such as lot sizes, setback distances, and orientation towards the road that communicate the feeling of a rural village. Unfortunately, many of the resources that most strongly communicate the village's association with the railroad and its overall self-sufficient character as a rural village have been demolished, including the railroad station, the post office and general store, the blacksmith shop, the Methodist church, the church hall, and the school. The remaining extant resources, which are all residential in character, retain a moderate degree of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship due to the modern alterations. Many of the houses in Magnolia have experienced superficial material changes, including the application of synthetic siding and vinyl replacement windows.

### **NRHP Evaluation:**

The Village of Magnolia Survey District does not hold sufficient integrity to warrant designation as a historic district. The Village of Magnolia emerged and prospered adjacent to the Magnolia Station Railway line and was locally significant for its early association with the railway and its important role connecting Harford County's farmers with larger cities to the north and south. The village also served as a major thoroughfare that provided access to the industrial and government

facilities that developed in the early twentieth century. (Criterion A). However, the loss of commercial and religious resources has significantly hampered the survey district's ability to convey its historic importance as a crossroads village that served as a connector between the local community and the greater service area beyond. The survey district is not known to be associated with any noteworthy individuals (Criterion B). The extant resources within the district do not constitute a particularly distinctive or well-preserved collection of architecture (Criterion C). The survey district has local significance for its association with Harford County's early agricultural history and for its association with nineteenth century railroad development but the loss of so many of the village's historic resources within the survey district that would have reflected the importance of the historic community negates its ability to reflect these aspects of historic and architectural significance. Consequently, the survey district lacks the architectural or historical significance for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This resource was not evaluated under Criterion D.

**Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse****M: HA-2304****Dates for Construction: 1920****NRHP Eligibility: Potentially Eligible**

Figure  
19: The

Emmorton Frame Schoolhouse (M: HA-2304), North and West Elevations, Looking South

**Description:**

The Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse is located on a 0.76-acre property to the southeast corner of the intersection of Old Emmorton Road and East Wheel Road. The building is in the west half of the parcel and is flanked on both sides by parking lots that run along the north and south sides of the parcel. A long shed with a side-gable roof sits in the southeast corner of the parcel. Two other smaller sheds are lined up behind the school building in the east half of the site.

The Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse is a one-story basement frame building that was converted into a commercial building. It has a rectangular footprint, augmented by a projected block that shelters the main entrance. Due to the sloping grade of the site, the basement is above-grade along the east and south elevations. Two small additions are attached to the building at the basement level on the east and south elevation. The steep hipped roof is clad in asphalt shingles with wide eaves. An interior brick chimney pierces the northwest corner of the building. The



building is supported by a raised concrete block foundation. All elevations are clad in aluminum siding. Typical windows are vinyl casement windows and one-over-one double hung vinyl replacement windows. Windows have applied faux muntins. A wide brick chimney pierces through the roof of the main block near its northwest corner. Two small additions are attached to the building at the basement level on the east and south elevation.

The five-bay façade (west elevation) of the building faces west towards Old Emmorton Road. A three-bay projecting block contains the main entrance with a contemporary paneled door and fanlight, that is accessed by four steps and a small landing made of poured concrete with metal railings. The entrance is flanked by three window openings on each side that hold vinyl casement windows. The roofline breaks above the entrance with a gable covered with asphalt shingles. On the north and south elevations of the three-back projecting block, there are single window openings on the first story and basement level that hold vinyl casement windows.

**Integrity:**

The Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse retains its integrity of location and setting retaining its prominent historic location at the intersection of East Wheel Road and Old Emmorton Road, the main junction within the rural village of Emmorton. The building has a low degree of material integrity; the historic clapboard siding has been replaced with vinyl siding, and the windows are all vinyl replacement. Despite the addition of new siding and additional secondary entrances, the building maintains integrity of design and workmanship through its characteristic hipped-roof and simple, decorative entrance, and overall form that communicate use as a two-room schoolhouse. It retains the overall feeling of an early twentieth century rural two-room schoolhouse and its association with Harford County's early twentieth-century educational structures and transition during a period of rapid expansion.

**NRHP Eligibility:**

The Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse is potentially eligible for individual designation, pending additional research to document extant two-room schoolhouses in Harford County. It is the only frame two-room schoolhouse in the rural Village of Emmorton and was an important meeting space for the community. It is associated with the twentieth-century development of the village of Emmorton (Criterion A) and is an important reflection of the growth of the community at a time of rapid industrial and governmental expansion in the area. The school is not known to be associated with any noteworthy individuals (Criterion B). The building is a typical two-room schoolhouse and does not exhibit unique or distinguished design nor is it the work of a master. Additionally, the loss of historic interior and exterior materials has compromised the historic design. (Criterion C). This resource was not evaluated under Criterion D.

**The Peery Stone House****M: HA-2301****Dates for Construction: 1928****NRHP Eligibility: Not Eligible**

Figure 20: The Peery Stone House (M: HA-2301), East and South Elevations, Looking North

**Description:**

The Peery Stone House is sited on a 0.68-acre property on the east side of Old Emmorton Road. The building was constructed in 1928 by John P. Peery, and would later be occupied by his son, John G. Peery. The building is on the west half of the tapered parcel; an asphalt parking lot fills the space between the façade and Old Emmorton Road and extends to the southwest corner of the site. The east half of the lot is filled with mature trees. It is an impressive two-story vernacular stone dwelling, with a one-story frame hyphen extending from the center of its rear (east) elevation to an additional one-and-a-half-story frame structure. The main block of the vernacular dwelling is constructed with rubble masonry and accented by simple classical details such as a pedimented portico in front of the main porch and a gabled roof clad in slate. The main block sits on a rubble stone foundation and features regular fenestration throughout. The frame hyphen and addition sit on a concrete foundation, are clad in the vinyl siding, and feature similarly regular fenestration. Presently, it is used as a commercial building.

**Integrity:**

The Peery Stone House retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its use as an early twentieth century single-family dwelling. The integrity of location and setting remain intact in its historical location along Old Emmorton Road, north of the crossroads, within the rural village. The building also retains good integrity of design, workmanship, and materials through its symmetrical façade, side-gable roof clads in historic slate tile, decorative chimney tops, and rubble stone face. Alterations to frame block in the rear of the building, such as the replacement of cladding and windows with contemporary materials, are minimal in comparison to the well-preserved main block of the building. Overall, it conveys the feeling of a twentieth century residence in a rural village and retains its historic association with the residential development in Harford County promulgated by nearby industry and wartime construction.

**NRHP:**

The Peery Stone House does not hold sufficient significance to warrant individual designation, as a residential structure associated with the early twentieth century development of the Village of Emmorton. (Criterion A). The house is not known to be associated with any noteworthy individuals (Criterion B). The building neither exhibits distinguished design nor is it the work of a master; instead, the Peery Stone House was designed in the vernacular style typical of the rural village. Although the use of rural stone masonry was unique for the time, there is another, old stone building constructed by the Peery family in Emmorton. (Criterion C). This resource was not evaluated under Criterion D.



**The James House****M: HA-2302****Dates for Construction: 1946****NRHP Eligibility: Not Eligible**

Figure 21: The James House at 2231 Old Emmorton Road (M: HA-2302), West Elevation, Looking East.

**Description:**

The James House at 2231 Old Emmorton Road is a one-story-with-basement Minimal Traditional building sited centrally on a one-acre square lot in Emmorton, Maryland. The building was converted to commercial use in 2001. It measured four by three bays wide. It is representative of mid- twentieth century minimal traditional design. Typical of the style, the house features a poured concrete foundation, square plan, extended boxed eaves, and an off-center primary entrance. It is clad with vinyl drop board and capped by a side-gabled roof clad in asphalt shingles. The building was constructed in 1946, following a fire that consumed the original residence on the lot.

**Integrity:**

The building is a typical example of a mid-century Minimal Traditional style building. Due to its construction in 1946, it is not associated with the early development of the Village of Emmorton



and does not retain any special historic significance related to the village's early historic context or historic architecture. The building was constructed during the mid-twentieth century, during a period of increased residential development with Emmorton.

**NRHP Eligibility:**

The commercial building at 2231 Old Emmorton Road does not hold sufficient significance to warrant individual designation. The house is not associated with the early twentieth century development of the Village of Emmorton. (Criterion A). The house is not known to be associated with any noteworthy individuals (Criterion B). The building neither exhibits distinguished design nor is it the work of a master; instead, the building was designed in the Minimal Traditional style typical of midcentury residential development. (Criterion C). This resource was not evaluated under Criterion D.

**The Preston and Carrie Magness House****M: HA-2303****Dates for Construction: 1930****NRHP Eligibility: Not Eligible**

Figure 22: the Preston and Carrie Magness House (M: HA-2303), South and West Elevations, Looking North.

**Description:**

The Preston and Carrie Magness House is at 2239 Old Emmorton Road in Emmorton, Maryland. It was built for the Magness family in 1930. The building sits on a rectilinear lot, facing west and is set thirty feet from Old Emmorton Road. The two-and-a-half story, two-by-two bay, frame building has a basement, and is a good example of an American Foursquare building. Typical of a Foursquare house from this period, it features a concrete block foundation, a hipped roof, overhanging eaves, centrally located dormers, and a prominent front porch. It is clad with vinyl siding. The original rectangular building footprint has a one-story block addition on the rear (east) elevation and a one-story porch that wraps around the west and partial south elevations. The building was constructed in 1930 as a single-family home but has been converted to a commercial office building.

**Integrity:**

The Magness House retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its use as an early twentieth century, single-family residential dwelling. The property's integrity of location and setting is intact, as the building remains in its historic location at the intersection of Old Emmorton Road and East Wheel Road, within the rural village of Emmorton. The original design of the American Foursquare dwelling remains largely intact, with a hipped roof and dormer, wrap around front porch, and a four-room interior plan. The house has been altered by material changes, somewhat diminishing its integrity of materials and workmanship. Vinyl siding has been added to the building, and the interior has been renovated to accommodate office space. All but one window throughout the building are vinyl replacements of the original wood windows. However, the building retains its overall massing, as well as some historic interior material.

**NRHP Eligibility:**

The Magness House at 2231 Old Emmorton Road does not hold sufficient significance to warrant individual designation. The house is associated with the early twentieth century development of the Village of Emmorton. (Criterion A). The house is not known to be associated with any noteworthy individuals (Criterion B). The house is a typical American Foursquare residence and does not exhibit distinguished design nor is it the work of a master; the American Foursquare style of 2231 Old Emmorton Road is typical of midcentury residential development and similar examples are found throughout the county. (Criterion C). This resource was not evaluated under Criterion D.

## Summary and Recommendations

This report documents the results of an architectural survey project of two survey districts (2) and four individual sites (4) within Harford County, Maryland. This study recommends that the Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse has the potential to meet NRHP criteria and be individually listed in the NRHP. Emmorton Two-Room Schoolhouse has the potential to meet Criterion A for its association with the early twentieth century development of Emmorton and under Criterion C is a good example of a rural two-room schoolhouse. A survey of extant two-room schoolhouses will need to be conducted prior to listing to provide an understanding of the rarity of the historic resource and a context of integrity of other existing resources.

The study recommends that the survey district for the Village of Abingdon and the Village of Magnolia do not meet the NRHP criteria for listing. Although both districts are associated with local patterns of development, including Harford County's early agricultural heritage and the later industrial transition phase, neither retains a high enough degree of integrity to represent local history at the national level. The architecture found in both districts is consistent with general building trends from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. The surveyed resources reflect common nineteenth century rural domestic types, such as the vernacular I-house form and early twentieth century types and styles including Colonial Revival, Prairie, and Bungalow designs. There are a few individual resources within the district, such as the Nelson-Readon-Kennard House, that stand out as particularly rare examples of frame houses, but collectively, they do not have architectural distinction in this context to warrant individual eligibility consideration under Criterion C.



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