

AA-1004

C. 1868-1873

**J. Parker Farm**  
**1250 Crain Highway, Glen Burnie**  
**Relay Quad**  
**Private Residence**

The J. Parker Farm is significant for its association with the truck farming industry in north Anne Arundel County and evokes the agricultural heritage of a rapidly developing portion of the county. The farm consists of a c. 1870 dwelling, a log smokehouse of similar date, a late 20<sup>th</sup> century summer kitchen, and a collapsed 20<sup>th</sup> century cart shed.

Truck farming is a type of agriculture that focuses on the production of fresh produce such as strawberries, tomatoes, beans and cantaloupe. Truck farming continued with great success in north Anne Arundel County from the 1860s to the 1930s, and the J. Parker Farm operated during most of that period .

North Anne Arundel County was especially suited to truck farming due to its proximity to Baltimore's, consumers, canneries, and immigrant labor force. The J. Parker Farm was one of approximately 1,000 truck farms operating in north Anne Arundel County in the early 1900s.

Named for John Parker, who purchased the farm in 1889 and whose family still owns the property, the farm is significant for representing regional trends in agriculture. The vernacular frame dwelling contained a District 3 store whose customers were principally eastern- European immigrant farm workers. As a result, the J. Parker Farm is also important for its commercial associations.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. AA-1004

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic  J. Parker Farm

and/or common

### 2. Location

street & number 1250 Crain Highway  not for publication

city, town Glen Burnie  vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Anne Arundel

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Paul N. & Mable C. Parker (In 1998 Mr. Parker was deceased and Mrs. Parker in a nursing home.)

address In care of C. Ayres, Jr. 30 Greenway Street, NW Suite 1

city, town Glen Burnie state and zip code: Maryland 21061

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse liber 670

street & number Franklin Street folio 263

city, town Annapolis state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No.

AA-1004

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move _____

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

The J. Parker Farm is located in north-central Anne Arundel County, on the west side of Crain Highway (Rt. 3), at the end of a long dirt drive. The J. Parker Farm complex, consisting of a 19th century dwelling, smokehouse, summer kitchen, and a 20th century cart shed, stand on a 7.971 acre parcel. The current owner is in a nursing home and permission to visit the property was not obtained. As a result, the following description is based upon a reconnaissance survey and the recollections of recent visitors.

The house is unoccupied and in fair condition. Immediate concerns are relatively minor. These include paint failure, porch deterioration, and severely overgrown vegetation. Reconnaissance survey indicates no apparent structural concerns at this time. An extremely low 1998 tax assessment for the property's buildings suggests that structural issues may be present. Outbuildings are in very deteriorated condition and extremely overgrown by weeds and vines. Mature, somewhat overgrown, trees and bushes surround the building complex. Represented tree species include oak, tulip poplar, cedar and holly. Gently sloping fallow fields spread out before and beside the house, bounded on the east by Crain Highway and on the north and south by the farm's property boundaries.

The dwelling is an east-facing, two-and-a-half story, five-bay, single-pile, center-hall plan frame building. Fenestration is evenly spaced and symmetrical on the main façade. The gable roof has slightly overhanging eaves and is pierced at the gable peak on either end by a decoratively corbelled interior stove chimney. Walls are sheathed with asbestos shingles and rest on a low brick foundation. A shed-roof porch, supported by turned posts ornamented with jig-sawn curb, extends the full length of the front façade, and continues around to embrace the entire width of the north gable end as well. The porch foundation employs poured concrete instead of brick, which indicates this porch is not original to the structure.

Six-over-six sash windows are used throughout the house. Pintals provide evidence of former shutters. With respect to entrances, the second and fourth bays of the front façade contain a wooden, four-panel door. According to tradition, the northern door provided access into a small farm store, while the southern opening gave entry into the living quarters. Ghosting on the east side of the north wall indicates the location of a former door or window.

A gable-roofed, one-story, one-room kitchen ell projects from the south side of the rear (west) façade. The north side of this ell is spanned by a shed-roof screen porch. A low brick interior stove chimney pierces the roof of the ell at the west end. The rear side of the building also provides basement access via brick bulkhead entrance that is roughly aligned with the north-most window opening.

A frame summer kitchen is located to the left (south) of, and arranged perpendicularly to, the main house. Walls are sheathed with board-and-batten siding, and its gable roof is punctuated by a small stove chimney at the west end. This building, which appears to date to the 3rd quarter of the 19th century is in poor condition due to moisture damaged exacerbated by overgrown vegetation.

Approximately 20' behind the dwelling sits a log smokehouse approximately measuring 10' x 12'. It is constructed of rough-hewn, v-notched logs chinked with daub. This structure is totally consumed by vegetation and is rapidly deteriorating. The Anne Arrundell County Historical Society has proposed relocating the smokehouse to its headquarters at the Benson-Hammond House (AA-118) in Linthicum, Maryland.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance---Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) (recreation)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect						
Check: Applicable Criteria:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D			
and/or Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> E	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> G
Level of Significance:	<input type="checkbox"/> national	<input type="checkbox"/> state	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local				

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Dating to the third quarter of the 19th century, the J. Parker Farm embodies significance for its associations with the truck farming industry in north Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The farm consists of a relatively intact c. 1870 dwelling house, log smokehouse of a similar date and a late 19th century summer kitchen. A nearly collapsed, 20th-century cart shed is also present. While the outbuildings are in deteriorated condition, the house retains much of its integrity, and its historic environment is preserved by the presence of seven acres of agricultural fields. The J. Parker Farm evokes the agricultural heritage of this rapidly developing portion of the county.

A precise date of construction for the J. Parker Farm buildings is not established, but the farm likely dates to the period between 1868 and 1873. In that year Charles Hawkins acquired 50 acres of the Partnership tract from Curtis Creek Mining and Manufacturing Company for \$800. In 1873 Hawkins defaulted on a mortgage to Ludwig Grieneisen and the property was sold at auction to satisfy Hawkins' debts. Rosina Hook of Baltimore City acquired the property for \$2,000. The \$1,200 difference between initial purchase and subsequent sale price suggests significant improvements taking place during Hawkins' brief ownership (1). In 1889 the farm is purchased by John Parker. He died in 1912, leaving the farm to his wife and four sons. Sons, Paul and Levin, buy out their siblings interest and jointly operate the farm until after World War II (2).

Typical of the region, the Parkers operated a truck farm, which is a type of agriculture that focuses on the production of crops such as strawberries, tomatoes, beans and cantaloupe. This agricultural system operated with great success in the north part of the County from the 1860s until the 1930s, and to a lesser degree, into the 1950s. As opposed to southern Anne Arundel County, where tobacco production dominated from early colonial times onward, north Anne Arundel County moved away from tobacco quite early, focusing instead on cereal crops, and later, truck produce (3).

Truck farming reached its zenith in the early 20th century, enabled by a confluence of physical and economic factors. First, north county soil was well suited to truck crops. Second, the consumers and canneries of near by Baltimore provided a large and ready market. Baltimore's immigrant population, especially eastern Europeans, provided the many thousands of "pickers" necessary to quickly harvest the highly perishable crops. Third, the region had a well established transportation system of roads and railroads that provided fast and efficient distribution to market. By the early 1900s, approximately 1,000 truck farms operated in the county (4).

From approximately May until the end of the growing season, a predominately eastern-European immigrant work force from Baltimore City picked fruits and vegetables the fields of north county. Individuals as well as entire families lived on the farms in crowded, cheaply built houses called shanties. Farmers exercised an extraordinary amount of economic hegemony over their seasonal laborers.



## 8. Significance (continued)

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Pickers did not pay their pickers with cash, but instead used metal tokens known as "pickers checks", which could later be exchanged for cash or, in some stores, spent directly as currency. Individual farms generally issued their own pickers checks. Checks were usually brass (later aluminum) embossed with the farmers initials and a number signifying the number of quarts or bushels picked. John Parker issued picker's checks, and his sons Paul and Levin, continued to use the tokens until the 1920s (5).

The Parkers also operated a district store for their employees and other area pickers. The store was operated out of the north end of the farm house and, like other Anne Arundel County district farm stores, did not directly accept pickers checks, but exchanged them for yet another script form known as "store checks" which could be used to purchase goods.

According to Emerson Lee Ray, a nephew of Levin and Paul Parker, the Parkers three main crops were tomatoes, cantaloupes and sweet potatoes. In addition, small quantities of cucumbers, eggplant and peppers were grown. The tomato and cantaloupe harvest began around July 4, followed by the sweet potato harvest later in the summer. After the harvest, seasonal workers were returned to Baltimore (6).

Truck farming, and its related canning industry, declined in Anne Arundel County after 1930 due to several factors. These include increased labor costs; competition created by the development of refrigerated trucks and railroad cars that allowed produce to be shipped in from greater distances; and the growth of the frozen food industry which seriously affected the demand for canned produce (7).

The J. Parker Farm represents important trends in Anne Arundel County agriculture in the period between 1860 and 1930. This part of Anne Arundel County is rapidly developing. The J. Parker Farm recalls the rapidly disappearing agricultural heritage of this area.

J. Parker Farm (AA-1004)  
Chain of Title

JHH 670/263  
March, 1952  
George Sachse, Trustee to Paul Parker & Mable Parker  
19.9 acres

JHH 396/466  
March, 1947  
Robert E. Kindred, Trustee to Levin R. Parker and Ida E. Parker, and Paul Parker and  
Mable L. Parker  
50 acres

JHH 212/188  
December, 1939  
Heirs of John R. Parker to Levin R. Parker and wife, and Paul Parker and wife  
50 acres

SH 34/481  
January, 1889  
Henry B. Meyers to John R. Parker  
(note: Meyers is Parker's father-in-law)  
\$2,800  
50 acres  
"The same land which was conveyed by Lutwig Grieneisen to Rosina Hook by deed dated  
February 26, 1873."

SH 7/337  
February, 1873  
Lutwig Grieneisen to Rosina Hook of Baltimore  
50 acres  
note: Grieneisen purchases it at auction after Charles Hawkins defaulted on a mortgage to  
Grieneisen.  
"the property conveyed by the Curtis Creek Mining Company and Joshua Stewart, to said  
Charles Hawkins in a deed dated January 18, 1868 for \$800

Anne Arundel County Commissioners Tax Assessment, District 3, 1880  
John R. Parker  
25 acres valued at \$10 an acre  
buildings valued at \$100  
furniture valued at \$150



AA-1004  
J. Parker Farm

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

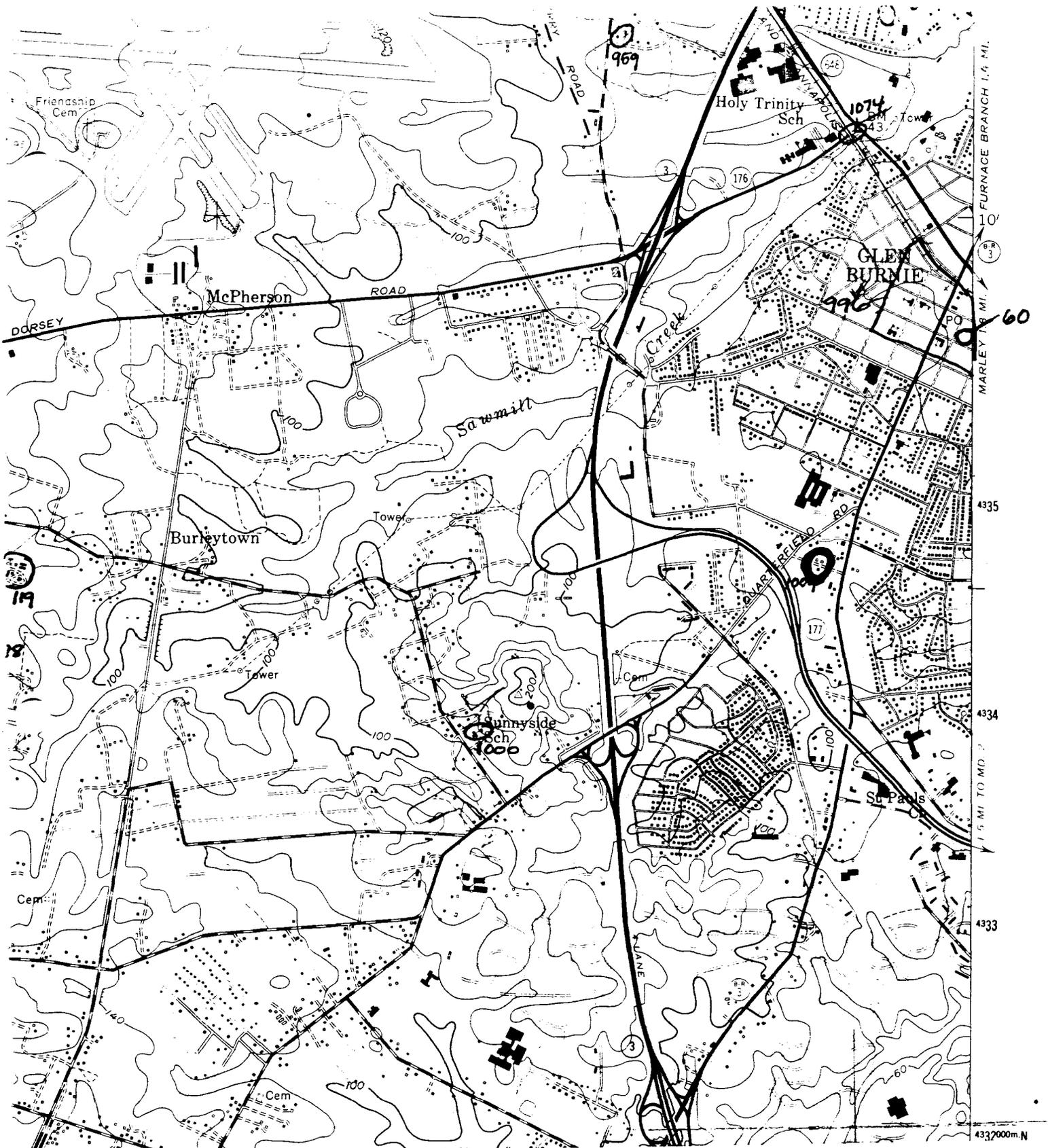
Chronological/Development Period(s): Agricultural-Industrial Transition (1815-1870)  
Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930)

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture; Agriculture; Economic

Resource Type:

Category: Building  
Historic Environment: Rural  
Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Farm House

Known Design Source: None



**RELAY**  
**USGS 7.5 minute series**  
**Scale: 1:24,000**  
**1957, photo revised 1966 and 1974**

**Site Number: AA-1004**  
**Site Name: J. Parker Farm**  
**Location: Crain Highway, Glen Burnie**



AA 1004

J. PARKER FARM  
ANNE ARUNDEL CO. MARYLAND  
Photo BY Sherri M. MARSH, Aug 1996

EAST ELEVATION  
NEG. at MARYLAND SHPO  
Photo 1 of 3



AA 1004

J. PARKER FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

Photo by Sherril M. Marsh, AUG 1996  
NEG. at MARYLAND SHPO

Photo 2 of 3

NE Perspective



AA 1004

J. PARKER FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

Photo BY Sherril M. Marsh, AUG. 1996

LOG MEAT HOUSE

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

Photo 3 of 3