CAPSULE SUMMARY
BA-3118
Big Falls African American Survey District
Baltimore County, MD
1867-1950s

The Big Falls African American Survey District is situated within the Seventh District of Baltimore County. Founded in the mid-18th century, Hereford became a thriving town during the 19th century. By 1881, Hereford had 300 residents and was the center of a wealthy agricultural and grazing region. The Baltimore County Historic Inventory states that St. Luke's United Methodist Church was constructed in 1867. This African-American congregation acquired land across from Shaw's Meeting House donated by Martin Conn, a local white resident. By 1877, the town had grown to include a post office, an Odd Fellows Lodge, jeweler, dentist, undertaker, butcher, barber, hotel, schoolhouse, a Methodist Church, and a newspaper. On the west side of Hereford Road was an African American schoolhouse with a cemetery north of the school. The colored school remained in use until it was absorbed by Blue Mount School in 1936.

The Big Falls African American Survey District is comprised of two sections separated by Monkton Road (Rt. 138). A total of 21 historic buildings stand within the Big Falls survey district. Much of the district constitutes residential buildings augmented with one church and one school (converted to a dwelling). One section of the Big Falls survey district is centered around St. Luke's Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church on Hereford Road. This area includes Cromwell Whye Court, a dead-end road, extending to the west from Hereford Road. Along Cromwell Whye Court are eleven residences, three of which are considered historic as of 2003. A total of six historic dwellings exist in this section with the addition of the African American school (BA-2063), St. Luke's M.E. Church (BA-2062), and 16820 Hereford Road. The second section is strung along Big Falls Road beginning at Monkton Road extending to the Salvation Army Camp and contains 12 historic dwellings.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-3118

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	Big Falls African American Survey District
other	

2. Location

street and number	Hereford Road, Cromwell Whye Road, Big Falls Road	___	not for publication
city, town	Hereford	___	vicinity
county	Baltimore County		

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

name	Multiple Ownership		
street and number		telephone	Not Available
city, town	state	zip code	

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Baltimore County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	tax map 22
city, town	Towson	liber n/a	folio n/a

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

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

6. Classification

Category
X district
___ building(s)
___ structure
___ site
___ object

Ownership
___ public
X private
___ both

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

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
21	29	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
21	29	Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
2

7. Description

Inventory No. BA-3118

Condition

___ excellent	___ deteriorated
X good	___ ruins
___ fair	___ altered

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

The Big Falls African American Survey District, comprised of two sections separated by Monkton Road (Rt. 138), is part of the village of Hereford. Hereford is located south of the large Gunpowder Falls State Park and consists of a cross roads of York and Monkton Roads. A total of 21 historic buildings stand within the Big Falls survey district. Much of the district constitutes residential buildings augmented with one church and one school (converted to a dwelling).

One section of the Big Falls survey district is centered around St. Luke's Methodist Episcopal (M.E.) Church on Hereford Road. This area includes Cromwell Whye Court, a dead-end road, extending to the west from Hereford Road. Along Cromwell Whye Court are eleven residences, three of which are considered historic as of 2003. A total of six historic dwellings exist in this section with the addition of the African American school (BA-2063), St. Luke's M.E. Church (BA-2062), and 16820 Hereford Road. For a description of the Pringle House, originally known as the African American school, refer to the MIHP form BA-2063. The second section is strung along Big Falls Road beginning at Monkton Road extending to the Salvation Army Camp and contains 12 historic dwellings.

St. Luke's M.E. Church, built 1867, has a wood-frame structural system resting on a random-rubble stone foundation. Rising two-stories in height, the church measures one bay wide and four bays deep. Capped with a front-gable roof, St. Luke's Church features two interior-side-brick chimney, 4/4 and 6/6 wood-sash windows, and a two-story shed-roof addition on the rear elevation. The original weatherboard siding on the church is covered with German vinyl siding. A large vestibule on the façade is covered with a saltbox roof. The front and west elevations of the vestibule are pierced with double-leaf doors for entrance into the first and second floors. The windows on the second story feature pointed-arch transoms. To the rear of the church is a three-stall privy, built in the second half of the 20th century, constructed of concrete blocks and capped with a shed roof.

To the rear of St. Luke's M.E. Church is a large cemetery containing approximately 100 headstone markers. The perimeter of the cemetery is surrounded by a chain-link fence, and it is on a slightly sloping grassy land flanked by Hereford Road on the east side. The cemetery appears to date from 1885 to the present. It is probable there are interments within the cemetery that are not marked. Both headstones and footstones are scattered throughout the cemetery with the majority of the stones located close to the church. The oldest stones are located close to the church or are closest to Hereford Road. The cemetery is organized in rows and by clusters of family members. Stones visible throughout include both marble and granite. Types of markers include upright rounded, flat, obelisk, and the newer short tilted markers. Family names at the cemetery include Whye, Glascoe, Stevenson, Jones, Cromwell, Holmes, Hall, Reister, Dorsey, Johnson, King, and Neal. Aquilla Wilson, the pastor of Isaiah Baptist Church, died in 1898 and is buried at St. Luke's cemetery.

Dwellings along Cromwell Whye Court are predominantly built from the last half of the 20th century. This street consists of one-story structures built of wood-frame and either clad with stucco, aluminum, or vinyl siding and are capped with side-gable roofs.

Fifteen historic dwellings stand along Big Falls Road within the African American survey district. Several of these dwellings are wood-frame I-houses such as 17349 Big Falls Road. This dwelling, sited atop a small hill, is two stories high and three bays wide. The building is clad with stucco and is capped with a side-gable roof. Covering the full-width of the façade is a half-hipped-roof screened porch. The 6/6 wood-sash windows are visually supported with rowlock sills. Other features include an interior-end concrete-block chimney and an asphalt-shingle roof. The foundation was not visible at the time of the survey. Other I-houses in the area are quite similar: two stories high, three bays wide with a central entrance. They have either been reclad with aluminum siding, vinyl siding, or asbestos shingles. Some of these I-houses have replacement windows.

There is one concrete-block house within the Big Falls survey district standing at 17320 Big Falls Road. This dwelling is one-story high and three bays wide featuring a single-leaf off-center entry. The door is flanked by 2/2 horizontal-pane wood-sash windows. Capped with a side-gable roof, this house features an interior concrete-block chimney and a shed-roof porch. The house at 17306

Big Falls Road has the same form however this building is wood-frame clad with vinyl siding. It also features an exterior-end brick chimney and 6/6 wood-sash windows.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-3118

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

Specific dates	1867-1950s	**Architect/Builder**	Unknown
Construction dates	1867-1950s		

Evaluation for:

__ National Register __ Maryland Register X not evaluated

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

The Big Falls African American Survey District is situated within the Seventh District of Baltimore County. The Seventh District is bounded on the north by Pennsylvania, south by the Eighth and Tenth Districts, east by Harford County, and west by the Fifth and Sixth Districts. In the latter part of the 19th century, the Seventh District was the largest and most populated region of the county. Approximately twenty-five miles north of Baltimore City, Big Falls is at the crossroads of Big Falls and Monkton Roads.

Founded in the mid-18th century, Hereford became a thriving town during the 19th century. The village was named by the prominent Merryman family who had emigrated from Herefordshire in England in the 19th century. The area historically consisted of rolling hills, traversed by major transportation corridors. It was supported by the cultivation of wheat, corn, oats, fruit, dairy, and the breeding of cattle. By 1881, Hereford had 300 residents and was the center of a wealthy agricultural and grazing region.(1)

According to the 1850 J. C. Sidney Map of Baltimore County, Hereford was home to a Baptist church, a tavern, and numerous residences along York Turnpike. On the east side of town on its outskirts, was Hereford Road and Monkton Road. Depicted along the east side of Hereford Road was Shaws Meeting House, a school house, and further south a residence associated with Wheeler.(2)

The Baltimore County Historic Inventory states that St. Luke's United Methodist Church was constructed in 1867. This African-American congregation acquired land across from Shaw's Meeting House donated by Martin Conn, a local white resident. Members met in the abandoned 1798 Meeting House until the completion of their own church.(3)

By 1877, the town had grown to include a post office, an Odd Fellows Lodge, jeweler, dentist, undertaker, butcher, barber, hotel, schoolhouse, a Methodist Church, and a newspaper. On the west side of Hereford Road was an African American schoolhouse with a cemetery north of the school.(4)

To encourage the establishment of African-American schools, the School Board of Baltimore County appropriated money to every 'colored school' in the county having twenty or more pupils enrolled. The colored school located on Hereford Road was constructed by way of private efforts before County School Commissioners began providing funding for black pupils. The school stood on property owned by St. Luke's Church until 1884 when School Commissioners took title. The trustees for St. Lukes M.E. Church in 1884 were Acquilla Wilson, Samuel Powell, George Nelson, Henry Gillage, and Nicholas Mays. In the December 31, 1884 deed between the trustees to the Board of County School Commissioners the congregation was called the "Foster Methodist Episcopal Church near Hereford." The Presiding Elder was Edward W.S. Peck, and the Preacher in Charge was Reverend Richard Henry Adams. In 1898, Reverend Carter proposed the remodeling of the church to expand it to two stories in height. The name St. Luke's M.E. Church was adopted in 1925 when the church was incorporated. The trustees at this time included John I. Wilson, William Watkins, Samuel W. Williams, George Young, Edward Hill, Calvin Chetman, Albert Bryant, George Gray, and William Johnson.(5)

The colored school remained in use until it was absorbed by Blue Mount School in 1936. In 1947, the Board of Education sold the building to George Alex Bull and Beulah B. Bull, who had also purchased the surplus white school in Hereford. The present owners took title in 1956 and extended the building one bay to the west. The structure, the present Pringle House, no longer resembles a schoolhouse.(6) Refer to MIHP form for BA-2063 for information on this African American schoolhouse on Hereford Road.

ENDNOTES

1. Thomas Scharf, History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men (Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA), p. 874.
2. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys, (Baltimore, MD: J.C. Sidney, 1850).
3. Baltimore County Historic Inventory, Office of Planning, Towson.
4. Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland (Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877).
5. Baltimore County Historic Inventory, Office of Planning, Towson.
6. S. B. Clemens and C. E. Clemens, From Marble Hill to Maryland Line, (np: C. E. Clemens and S. B. Clemens, 1976), p.21.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-3118

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	51 acres		
Acreage of historical setting	Unknown		
Quadrangle name	Hereford, MD	Quadrangle scale	1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Big Falls African American Survey District is located in the the Seventh District of Baltimore County. The properties within the survey district have historically been associated with tax map 22 since their construction.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Kristie Baynard, Architectural Historian		
organization	EHT Traceries, Inc.	date	6/20/03
street and number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state DC	zip code 20001

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

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

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Name Big Falls African American Survey District
Continuation Sheet
Number 9 Page 1

Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

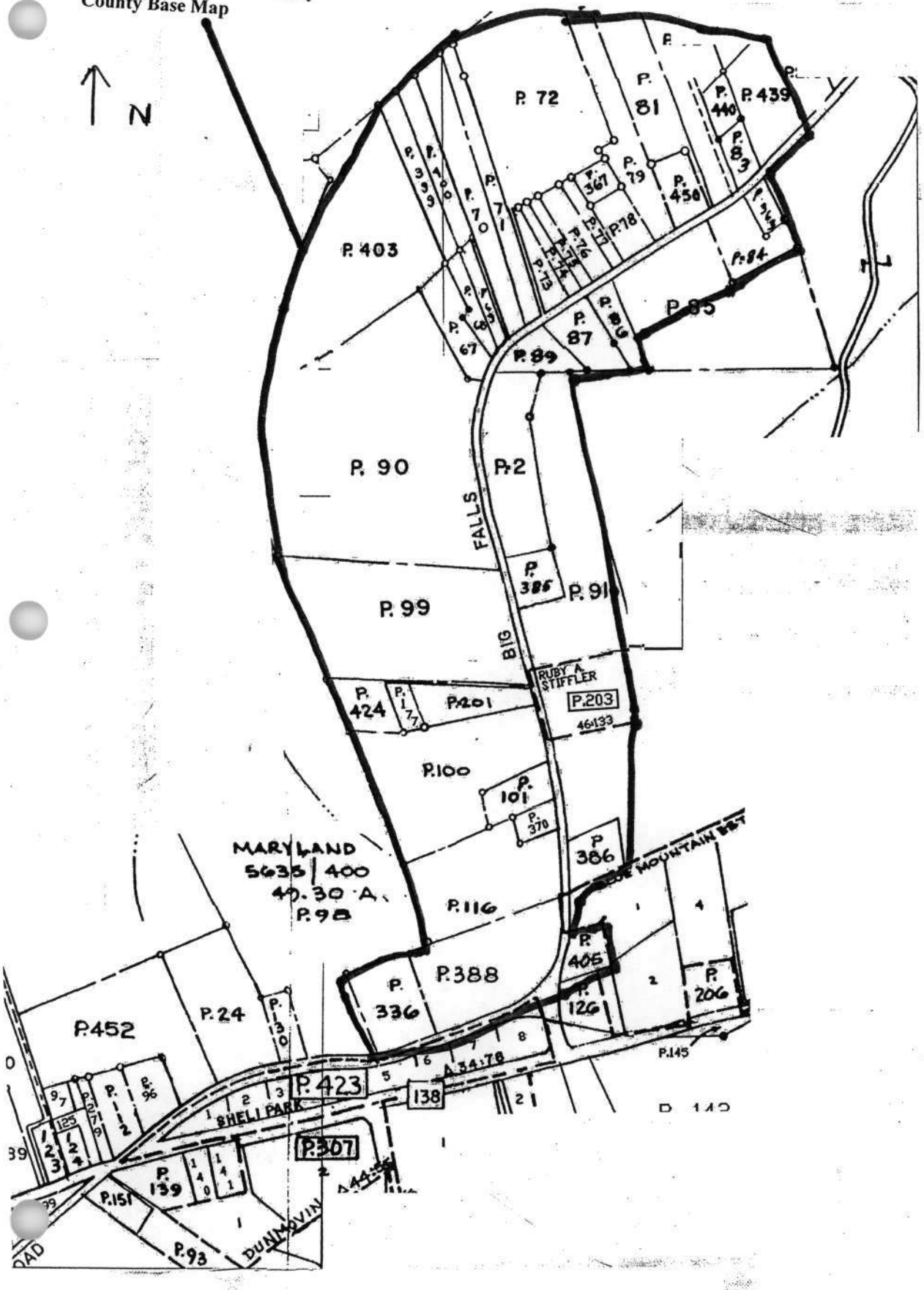
Clemens, S. B. and C. E. Clemens, From Marble Hill to Maryland Line, Not Pupblished: C. E. Clemens and S. B. Clemens, 1976.

Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

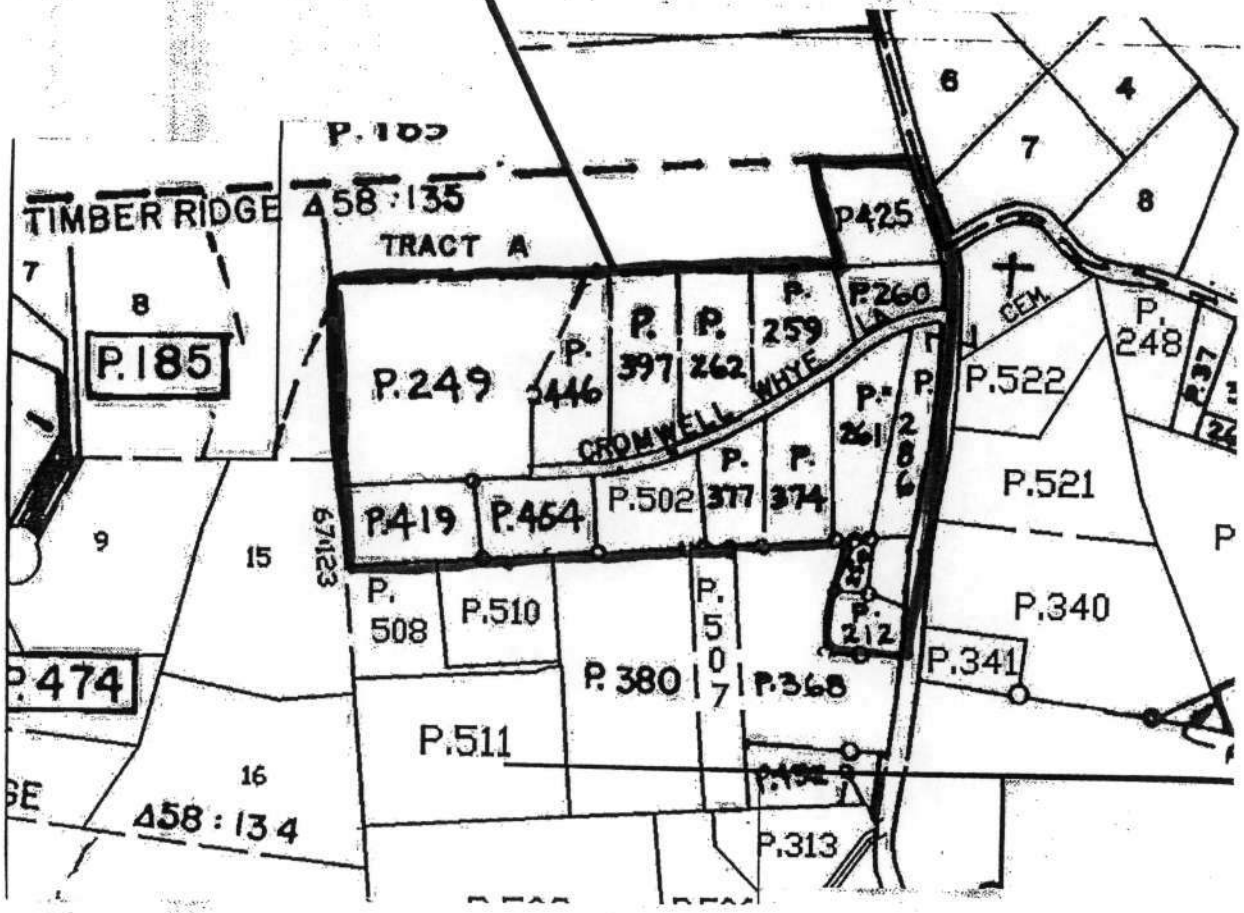
Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys. Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

BA-3118
Big Falls African American Survey District
Hereford, Baltimore County
County Base Map

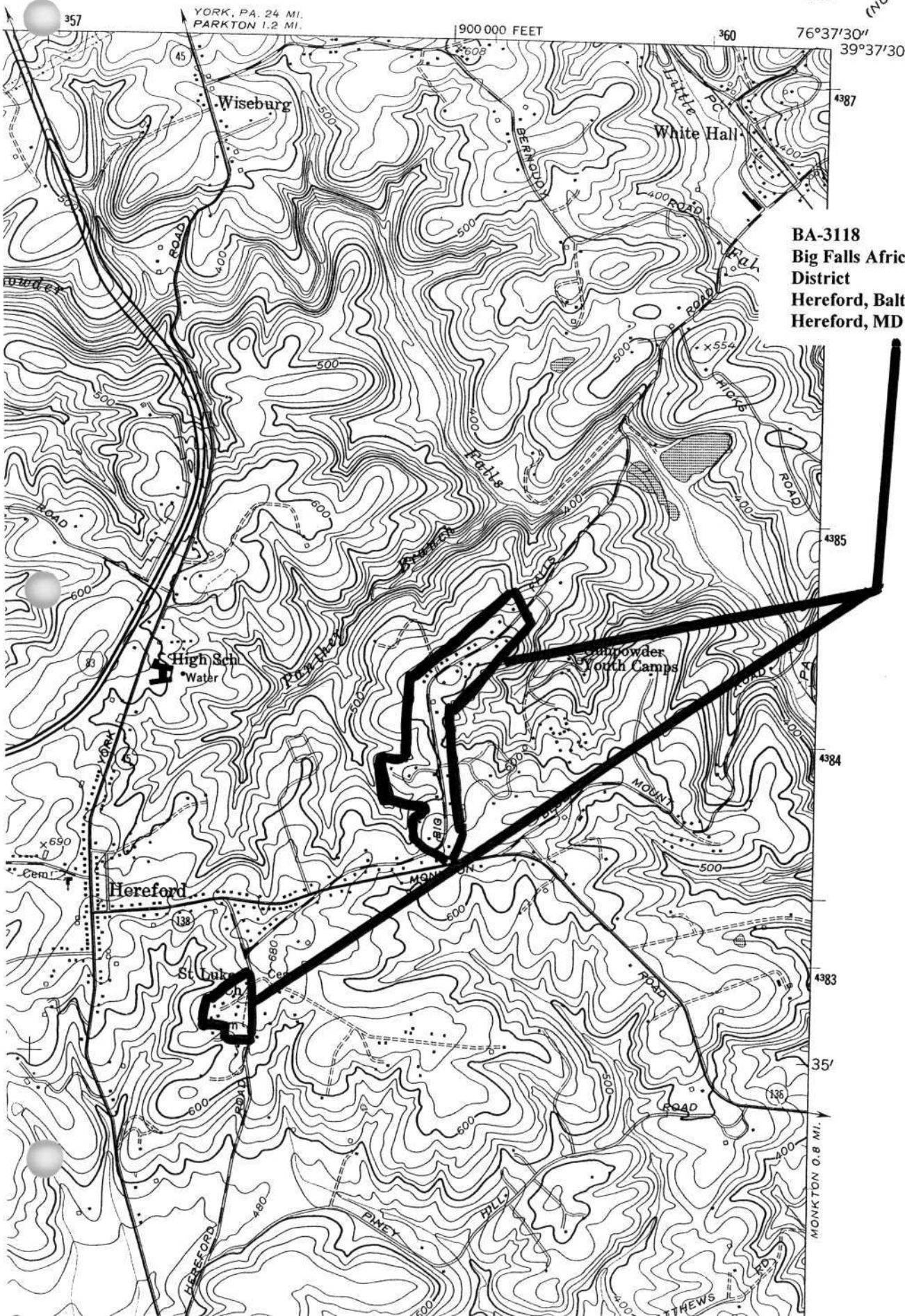


BA-3118
Big Falls African American Survey District
Hereford, Baltimore County
County Base Map



HEREFORD QUADRANGLE
MARYLAND–BALTIMORE CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5663 II NE (NORRISVILLE)



BA-3118
Big Falls African American Survey District
Hereford, Baltimore County
Hereford, MD USGS Map

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Big Falls African-American Survey District
Hereford
Baltimore County, MD
Tracerics
6/2003
MD SHPO
St. Luke's M.E. Church
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Big Falls African-American survey District
Hereford
Baltimore County, MD
Tracerics
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MD SHPO
St. Luke's M.E Church
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Hereford
Baltimore county, MD
Traceries
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MD SHPO
St Luke's ME Church
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St. Luke's ME. Church
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MD SHPO
St. Luke's M.E. Church Cemetery
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Big Falls African-American Survey District
Hereford
Baltimore County, MD
Traceries
6/2003
MD SHPO
Cromwell White Road, north side, view looking West

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CHAPMAN
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Big Falls African-American survey District
Hereford
Baltimore county, MD
Traceries
6/2003
MD SHPO
Cromwell Valley Road, south side, view looking west

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Big Falls African American survey District
Hereford
Baltimore County, MD
Traccrics
6/2003
MD SHPO
17008 Big Falls Road, south elevation
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Big Falls African-American survey District
Hereford
Baltimore county, MD
Traceries
6/2003
MD SHPO
BIG FALLS ROAD, VIEW LOOKING NW
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Big Falls African-American survey District
Hereford
Baltimore county, MD
Traceries
6/2003
MD SHPO

17320 BIG FALLS ROAD, VIEW LOOKING NW
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Big Falls African-American survey District
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Baltimore County, MD
Traceries
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MD SHPO
BIG FALLS ROAD, VIEW LOOKING NW
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Big Falls African-American survey District
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Baltimore county, MD
Traceries
6/2003
MD SHPO
17306 BIG FALLS ROAD, VIEW LOOKING NW
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Big Falls African-American survey District
Hereford
Baltimore County, MD
Traceries
6/2003
MD SHPO
17349 Big Falls Road, view looking south

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