

CAPSULE SUMMARY

BA-0375

Eli Matthews House

15112 York Road

Sparks, Baltimore County

1800 ca.

Private

The Eli Matthews House was constructed circa 1800 to the north of Philopolis and west of Sparks. The building is representative of vernacular stone construction throughout Baltimore County. The village of Philopolis Post Office, was already beginning to thrive by the mid-19th century. At that time, Eli Matthews occupied the property. Although the community continued to develop through the early 20th century, its growth slowed. By 1915, the village's name had fallen out of general use. As early as 1850, the village of Sparks and the road that connected it to Philopolis, were non-existent. The land that later became the community, lying east of the Gunpowder Falls, was traversed only by a few farms. By 1877, Sparks Road had been constructed from York Road in Philopolis to its terminus at Carroll Road. The village formed around the Sparks station along the Northern Central Railroad. Sparks now encompasses the neighboring community of Philopolis.

The Eli Matthews House is a two-and-a-half-story building of solid random rubble stone construction. The five-bay-wide, double-pile house has a side gable roof clad in asphalt shingles and two interior end chimneys of random rubble stone construction. The house fronts south on the west side of York Road, and the façade features a central sash-and-paneled single-leaf door and nine 6/6 windows. All façade openings have square-edged wood surrounds. Circa 1970, two gabled dormers clad in weatherboard were added to the front of the roof. Similarly, two identical dormers project from the north side of the roof. Each dormer is pierced by one 6/6 window. Contemporary with the dormers is the screened shed-roofed porch on the west elevation. Contemporary to the construction of the house is the one-story, two-bay-wide kitchen of solid random rubble stone construction with a side gable roof clad in asphalt shingles with an exterior gable end random rubble stone chimney with a reconstructed stretcher bond brick cap. A random rubble stone chimney that dates to the first half of the 19th century comprises the ruin located northeast of the house. East of the ruin is a one-story, three-bay-wide dairy of solid random ashlar stone construction with a side gable roof clad in asphalt shingles and a large interior gable end parged stone chimney. The chicken house, which dates to circa 1930, is a one-story building of brick construction with a shed roof and three flush-vertical-board double-leaf doors. The circa 1950 barn is a large, two-story structure with a gambrel roof clad in standing seam metal.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-0375

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Eli Matthews House (preferred)

other Merryman House

2. Location

street and number 15112 York Road __ not for publication

city, town Sparks __ vicinity

county Baltimore County

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

name Pitt McClane Merryman, et al

street and number 15112 York Road telephone Not Available

city, town Sparks state MD zip code 21152

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse liber 14313 folio 608

city, town Towson tax map 34 tax parcel 86 tax ID number 0813040650

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

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

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
				1

7. Description

Inventory No. BA-0375

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 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.

Constructed circa 1800, the Eli Matthews House is a two-and-a-half-story building of solid random rubble stone construction. The five-bay-wide, double-pile house has a side gable roof clad in asphalt shingles and two interior end chimneys of random rubble stone construction. The house fronts south on the west side of York Road, and the façade features a central sash-and-paneled single-leaf door and nine 6/6 windows. All façade openings have square-edged wood surrounds. Circa 1970, two gabled dormers clad in weatherboard were added to the front of the roof. Similarly, two identical dormers project from the north side of the roof. Each dormer is pierced by one 6/6 window. Contemporary with the dormers is the screened shed-roofed porch on the west elevation.

Contemporary to the construction of the house is the one-story, two-bay-wide kitchen of solid random rubble stone construction with a side gable roof clad in asphalt shingles with an exterior gable end random rubble stone chimney with a reconstructed stretcher bond brick cap. Circa 1970 a one-story shed-roofed addition of aluminum-sided wood frame construction was constructed on the opposite gable end, and entry into the building is through the sash-and-paneled single-leaf door on this addition. Two 6/6 windows with square-edged wood surrounds and stone lintels pierce the stone block. This building is located northwest of the house and in close proximity to it.

A random rubble stone chimney that dates to the first half of the 19th century comprises the ruin located northeast of the house.

East of the ruin is a one-story, three-bay-wide dairy of solid random ashlar stone construction with a side gable roof clad in asphalt shingles and a large interior gable end parged stone chimney. The building features a side entry with a single-leaf door and two window openings.

The chicken house, which dates to circa 1930, is a one-story building of brick construction with a shed roof and three flush-vertical-board double-leaf doors.

The circa 1950 barn is a large, two-story structure with a gambrel roof clad in standing seam metal. The first story features concrete block construction with a wood frame second story clad in flush vertical board siding in the gambrel ends. One flush vertical board sliding barn door covers the large entry. A one-story concrete block wing with a gable roof projects from the side of the building.

.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-0375

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

Specific dates	1800 ca.-present	Architect/Builder	Unknown
Construction dates	1800 ca., 1970 ca.		

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

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

The Eli Matthews House was constructed circa 1800 to the north of Philopolis and west of Sparks. The building is representative of vernacular stone construction throughout Baltimore County. The village of Philopolis Post Office, was already beginning to thrive by the mid-19th century. At that time, Eli Matthews occupied the property.¹ Although the community continued to develop through the early 20th century, its growth slowed. By 1915, the village's name had fallen out of general use.² Philopolis has become engulfed by the neighboring community of Sparks. As early as 1850, the village of Sparks and the road that connected it to Philopolis, were non-existent. The land that later became the community, lying east of the Gunpowder Falls, was traversed only by a few farms.³ By 1877, Sparks Road had been constructed from York Road in Philopolis to its terminus at Carroll Road. The village formed around the Sparks station along the Northern Central Railroad.⁴

Vernacular buildings tend to have little to no stylistic detailing and are typically constructed by local builders with locally available tools and materials. Vernacular architecture accounts for the majority of the built environment and reflects the traditions of society, rather than the whims of the architect.⁵ Throughout Baltimore County, there are a number of vernacular stone houses from this period. Stone was readily available in the county, with both marble and granite quarries located throughout the region. Commonly, these random rubble stone dwellings are two stories in height, single-pile with side gable roofs. This continuity of form is a result of folk architecture and the reliance on constructing forms that had been built by the previous generation.

¹ S. B. Clemens and C. E. Clemens, *From Marble Hill to Maryland Line: An Informal History of Northern Baltimore County* (np: C. E. Clemens and S. B. Clemens, 1976), p. 23.

² *Map of Baltimore County* (Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915).

³ J.C. Sidney, *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys* (Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850).

⁴ *Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland* (Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877).

⁵ Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach, editors, *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*, (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1986), pp. xv-xvi.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-0375

- 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.
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.
-

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property One Acre
Acreage of historical setting Unknown
Quadrangle name Hereford Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

Since its construction circa 1800, the Eli Matthews House has been associated with the 52.24 acres of land known as tax parcel 86 of map 34 located in the Baltimore County Tax Assessor's office.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	A. McDonald and A. Didden, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Tracerics, Incorporated	date	May 29, 2001
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

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 21032-2023
410-514-7600



BA 0375

15117 YORK ROAD, SPARKS

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

4/2001

MD SHPO

SE CORNER

1 of 4



BA-0375

15112 YORK ROAD, SPARKS

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

4/2001

MD SHPO

NE CORNER

2014



BA-0375

15112 YORK ROAD, SPARKS
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

4/2001

MDSHPO

OUTBUILDINGS

3 of 4



BA 0375

15112 YORK ROAD, SPARKS
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIFS

4/2001

MD SHPO

OUTBUILDINGS

4084

BA-375

MERRYMAN HOUSE - Before 1850 - West side of York Road, 0.1 mile south of Belfast Road, just north of Lower Glencoe Road. Stone house in vernacular style, 2-½ stories, gable-roofed, with dormers and end-chimneys. In this century, it was the dwelling of an important Guernsey farm and a barn and stables survive. In 1850 Sidney's map showed L. (Levi) Price's house. An outbuilding located on the York Road is a one-story stone structure with an enormous, disproportionate end-chimney. This was a dairy building and a collection point for milk cans and is now used as an antique shop. Owner (recorded title): Louis McL. Merryman.