

BA 894

LANIUS HOUSE  
301-303 Main Street  
Keisterstown, Maryland.

Private

301-303 Main Street is a large and important early Keisterstown structure, dating from the late eighteenth century and identified in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax records. It is thus one of the oldest structures in Keisterstown, the largest in that early group. Its size and subtle peculiarities of design indicate its original use as a double dwelling. Its interior dates from a massive remodeling about 1920.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Lanius House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

301-303 Main st.

6th

CITY, TOWN

Reisterstown

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore co.

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES RESTRICTED
- YES UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Miss Edna May Uhler

Telephone #: 833-0392

STREET & NUMBER

301-303 Main St.

Maryland 21136

CITY, TOWN

Reisterstown

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore Co.

Liber #: 1553

Folio #: 448

STREET & NUMBER

Towson

Maryland

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE McGrain, John

Industrial-Archaeological Survey of N.W. Transportation Corridor

DATE

1975

—FEDERAL —STATE  COUNTY —LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Baltimore Co. Office of Planning

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

## 301-303 MAIN STREET

301-303 MAIN STREET is a two storey gabled roof brick house five bays in length facing the street to the west. A one storey shed-roofed wing extends behind east end, the shed roofs being perpendicular to the main house. This house dates from the late eighteenth century, measuring approximately 24x 50, identified as "unfinished" in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax records. The rear wings are probably original and they measure approximately 12 by 13 1/2 (south) and 10 x 15 (north).

The principal or west front is laid in Flemish bond with queen closers at each corner and on at least one side of each masonry opening. End and rear walls are of common bond with every sixth course headers. A moulded ovolo watertable is across the west front, somewhat above the first floor line.

The spacing of masonry openings is unusual and the door arrangements suggest (inconclusively) that this was a structure intended to contain two dwellings or a business as well as a dwelling. The three middle openings are closer to each other than they are to the outer openings. In the first storey each of the three middle bays is or has been a doorway; presently the middle opening is a door as is the one immediately to its north. All masonry openings are of equal width and the pattern of closers suggests (inconclusively) that the middle bay may have been a window.

All openings have wide frames joined with pegged mortise and tenon and they have applied ovolo backbands. First storey windows are 2/2, the northerly second storey windows are 6/6 and the southerly second storey windows are 8/8. Masonry openings are uniform in size; the glass sizes differ. The doors have transoms above and they appear to be early nineteenth century six-panel doors with the top four panels cut out for a large piece of glass.

Stone or stuccoed jack arches are above openings, six courses high in the first storey, four courses high in the second.

A one-storey shed-roofed porch with turned columns extends across the west front. The columns date from ca. 1900 but the porch concept may be original or very early. A one storey frame shed-roofed addition extends the east facade, between the two original wings, replacing a porch which was there. Of the three windows in the second storey above this addition, the northerly one was a door, suggesting the former existence of a two storey porch across the east facade, not unexpected in this region.

Flush end chimneys rise above each gable end but the chimneys of the wings have been removed. The wide eave and rake cornice is an addition as are the two shingled dormers in the westerly roof slope. The south wing has corbeled brick cornice on its south side.

See sheet # 2

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 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 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE possible	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES                      1798                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT                      John Lanius

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

301-303 MAIN STREET

The Federal Direct Tax Record of 1798 describes this house: One brick dwelling house, two story, unfinished. 50 x 24. 40 Perches. \$400.00 Owner, John Lonas.

John Lanius, a miller, came to Reisterstown, probably from Pennsylvania in 1794. In this year he married Catherine Reister, the eldest daughter of John Reister, Jr. It is thought that he was a kinsman of Henry Weist, who also had married a Reister, Elizabeth (Daughter of John I) Catherine and John built this house on land belonging to her father. They were eventually deeded the land in 1811 (WG 114/406-07) John, however, had developed the urge to go west and he did leave Reisterstown for a year, possibly to see what prospects were there. (Marks op cit., p. 84) He returned for a brief time to Reisterstown, but in 1813 he sold this house to Nicholas Shaffer (BC Deeds WG 123/266) The cost was \$950.00 In the same year, John Reister, Jr. deeded Shaffer 2 lots, which adjoined this house. (WG 123/268-70)

John Lanius did move out west to Indiana. He became a prominent citizen in Rising Sun. He was that village's first Postmaster (1828) and he served in that capacity until 1840. He was reappointed after James Polk was elected President and held the post until his death. He established the Union Flour Mills and in 1844 he erected a distillery. He died in 1846 at the age of 73. (Marks op.cit.p84.)

Shaffer, meanwhile, now owned a fine brick house and over an acre of ground on the east side of the turnpike. Nothing is known of Mr. Shaffer. In 1819 he deeded the three lots to John Fisher, whose residence was noted as Frederick Co. The price was \$800.00. (WG 149/587-89) ( As early as the 1813 deeds to this property, mention was made of a road which went through the Property which was to be kept open as a public highway. This was later named Bond Avenue.)

John Fisher did not keep this property long. In 1819-1820 he conveyed the three lots to George Gore of Baltimore County for \$1000.00 (WG 154/648-50)

In 1826-1827 sold the parcels to Jacob Decker for \$900.00. The reduction in price could signify that the property had deteriorated in the time Gore held on to it.

In 1831 the heirs of Jacob Decker sold the property to William Frush. (WG 214/257) This deed mentions a two story brick house and lot of ground.. bounded by Main St. and an alley. John McGrain has this comment; Decker is known to have been a tavern keeper and had acquired the site in 1827 from George Gore.. shortly after leaving the 8 1/2 Mile House. (McGrain op. cit., p.LV-22) There is the possibility that this property was used as a tavern.

In 1843, the land was sold to John R.Cockey for \$500.00 (TK 332/370-71)  
In 1847 John R.Cockey and wife Deborah sold the land to Ann C. Bond

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1. Lillian B.Marks, Reisters Desire (Baltimore, 1975)
2. Land Records, Baltimore County Court House, Towson, Maryland
3. John McGrain, Industrial-Archaeological Survey of N.W. Transportation Corridor (baltimore Co. Office of Planning)
4. Balto. Co. Deeds, Hall of Records- Annapolis, Md.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY 5. Balto. Tax Assesements, Annapolis, Md.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .568 acres

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION****LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

James T.Wollon A.I.A.

Mrs. Lillian Marks, Volunteer Researcher  
Cornelia M.Ives, Project Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

DATE

9/78

Historic Reisterstown

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

430 Main St.833-3078 (M's Ives)

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

ReisterstownMaryland 21136

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

Within, nearly all details and finishes date from ca. 1920; a few doors and two mantels are early but they are reinstalled materials. No determination can be made of original partition locations, if different from the present, except for the brick wall which extends through the first storey immediately south of the center hall.

The central bay is a stair hall and the stair has a moulded rail supported by paneled newels and square balusters. Two rooms are to the south, the westerly with a fireplace having a mantel dating from ca. 1835, moulded pilasters supporting a plain frieze with paneled end blocks and a moulded shelf. Doors, generally, have five horizontal panels and doors and windows have plain jamb trim supporting a plain frieze and small cornice, all dating from the remodeling of ca. 1920. A back stair formerly rose in the southeast corner of the structure, probably beneath the existing one in the second storey giving access to the attic.

The spaces north of the hall are similar, though simpler and further remodeled as an apartment; there is no fireplace nor mantel.

Doors in the southerly wing, the kitchen, have original architrave surrounds with ovolo backbands; the six-panel door into the main house from the kitchen dates from the early nineteenth century and the ledge door leading outside to the south is very early if not original; the door leading to the east addition, formerly the east porch, is removed. The fireplace, formerly against the east wall, is removed in its entirety.

The second floor plan is somewhat similar to the first, as are all details; virtually the entire interior dates from the same early twentieth century date. The southwest room has a mantel similar to the one below but without the panels in the end blocks. The northwest room has a mantel having paneled pilasters, a plain frieze with reeded end blocks and a bedmoulding. Two original doors remain in use, out of context, having six fully-raised panels with integral ovolo surrounds; the door to the northeast room and the door to a closet in the middle west room, above the entrance hall.

The southerly end of the attic is plastered over circular sawn lath but the northerly portion is unfinished. The hewn rafters have pegged mortise and tenon joints at the ridge and much of the heavy shingle lath is fastened with wrought nails, visible within the later dormers. Much painted material supplements the original shingle lath, some with a beaded edge, perhaps original cornice material.

A cellar is beneath the northerly portion of this dwelling. First floor joists are logs and the original relieved flooring remains beneath the existing early twentieth century flooring.

for \$1,500.00 (AWB 379/422-23). Is this the Bond for whom Bond Avenue was named? She certainly retained the house the longest of any previous owner. When, in 1864, she conveyed the property to Thomas Bond (JHL 47/200) the deed mentions a school house as one boundary. Could this be the negro school down Bond Avenue which was the site of St. Luke Methodist Church? If so, the Bond property was extensive along Bond Avenue.

In 1865, Thomas Bond deeded the property & the house to Nancy Merryman(?)

Nancy Merryman conveyed the property to Caleb Merryman in 1878 (JB 108/460) Caleb died, and the widow, devised the property to the children Sarah Hale and George Merryman (WMI 141/315) in 1884.

In 1888, the children sold the estate to William Petzold (JWS 166/568)

In 1896, Petzold to Maria L. Vondersmith and her husband, Daniel.

In 1903, the house was conveyed by various Vondersmiths heirs to William F. Vondersmith (NBM 268/113) He sold it, in 1913 to Daniel Vondersmith. The 1918 Tax Ledger (F.435) charged Daniel Vondersmith with 3/8 acre at this corner, including a house 50 x 24 and tenant house 12 x 13 with an extension of the same dimensions. (McGrain, op. cit., p. IV-22)

Osbourne Yellott, the executor of Daniel Vondersmith's estate, sold the property to Arthur H. and Abbie H. Uhler in 1920. Heirs of the Uhlers have occupied the site since that time. (WPC 535/75 and JWB 1553/448)



BA 894

Lanius House

301-303 Main St - Reist. Hd.

Carol Pollack

4.77

West.