

CARR - 19

FIRST R.F.D. COUNTY-WIDE SYSTEM

1896-1899

Westminster and vicinity

Public

Carroll County has the distinction of being the first county in the United States to have had a county-wide Rural Free Delivery system in operation. A State Roads Historical Marker located in front of the Westminster Post Office states, "the first complete county Rural Free Delivery Service in the United States was inaugurated by the Post-Office Department on December 20, 1899, covering the whole of Carroll County and small parts of adjacent counties with Westminster as the central distributing point." On October 15, 1896, Carroll County joined an experimental program of the Post Office Department for rural mail carriers. The program's success in Carroll County led to the development of a U.S. Postal Wagon designed by Westminster resident Edwin W. Shriver. The first Postal Wagon trip was made on April 3, 1899, and followed a route from Westminster linking Spring Mills, Warfieldsburg, Baile, Demmings, Taylorsville, Winfield, Gist, Klee Mill, Bird Hill, Smallwood and Fenby. By the end of the year, three more wagons were added and rural carriers were hired to cover the entire county, making it the first full-scale system in the county.

Drawbacks in the use of the wagons led to their replacement after five years of service by additional rural carrier routes.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

225. N. Center Street
Westminster, Maryland 21157

WESTMINSTER PLANNING DISTRICT

FIELD SHEET--HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY

SURVEY NUMBER: CARR - 19

NEGATIVE FILE NUMBER:

UTM REFERENCES:
Zone/Easting/Northing

U.S.G.S. QUAD. MAP:

PRESENT FORMAL NAME:

ORIGINAL FORMAL NAME:

PRESENT USE:

ORIGINAL USE:

ARCHITECT/ENGINEER:

BUILDER/CONTRACTOR:

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE:
Excellent () Good ()
Fair () Poor ()

THEME:

STYLE:

DATE BUILT: 1896 - 1899

COUNTY: CARROLL

TOWN: Westminster and vicinity

LOCATION: numerous sites and routes surrounding Westminster

COMMON NAME: First R.F.D. County-wide System

FUNCTIONAL TYPE: Transportation corridor

OWNER: Public ownership of roads

ADDRESS:

ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC:
Yes () No () Restricted ()

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE:
Local () State () National ()

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: No structure associated with site.

Structural System

- Foundation: Stone () Brick () Concrete () Concrete Block ()
- Wall Structure
 - Wood: Log () Post and Beam () Balloon ()
 - Wood Bearing Masonry: Brick () Stone () Concrete () Concrete Block ()
 - Iron () D. Steel () E. Other
- Wall Covering: Weatherboard () German Siding () Board and Batten ()
Wood Shingle () Shiplap () Novelty () Stucco () Sheet Metal ()
Aluminum () Asphalt Shingle () Brick Veneer () Stone Veneer ()
Bonding Pattern: _____ Other: _____
- Roof Structure
 - Truss: Wood () Iron () Steel () Concrete ()
 - Other: _____
- Roof Covering: Slate () Wood Shingle () Asphalt Shingle () Sheet Metal ()
Built Up () Rolled () Tile () Other: _____
- Engineering Structure:
- Other: _____

Appendages: Porches () Towers () Cupolas () Dormers () Chimneys () Sheds ()
Ells () Wings () Other: _____

Roof Style: Gable () Hip () Shed () Flat () Mansard () Gambrel () Jerkinhead ()
Saw Tooth () With Monitor () With Bellcast () With Parapet ()
With False Front () Other: _____

Number of Stories: _____

Number of Bays: _____

Approximate Dimensions: _____

Entrance Location: _____

THREAT TO STRUCTURE:
No Threat () Zoning () Roads ()
Development () Deterioration ()
Alteration () Other: _____

LOCAL ATTITUDES:
Positive () Negative ()
Mixed () Other: _____

ADDITIONAL ARCHITECTURAL OR STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION:

RELATED STRUCTURES: (Describe)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

First county-wide Rural Free Delivery system in the nation
 Part of experimental program begun in 1896
 Development of U.S. Postal Wagon by Westminster resident Edwin W. Shriver

REFERENCES:

1862 Martenet's Map: —

1877 LG & S Atlas: —

Bulletin of the Historical Society of Carroll County, Maryland Nov. 1956 Vol. 3, No. 1

Knight, Howard Lawton "Early Days of R.F.D. in Carroll County"

Doane, Edith R. "Postal Markings of the 'Carroll County Plan' for Rural Free Delivery"

Klein, Frederic Shriver "R.F.D. Beginnings as Described in a Carroll County Diary of 1899"

"Notes on R.F.D. Beginnings from the Society's Files"

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:

Open Lane () Woodland () Scattered Buildings ()
 Moderately Built Up () Densely-Built Up ()
 Residential () Commercial ()
 Agricultural () Industrial ()
 Roadside Strip Development ()
 Other:

RECORDED BY:

Joe Getty

ORGANIZATION:

Carroll Co. Planning Dept

DATE RECORDED:

8/83

CARR-19

First Rural Free Delivery County-Wide Service
(Roadside Marker RM-324)

East Main Street & Longwell Avenue, Westminster

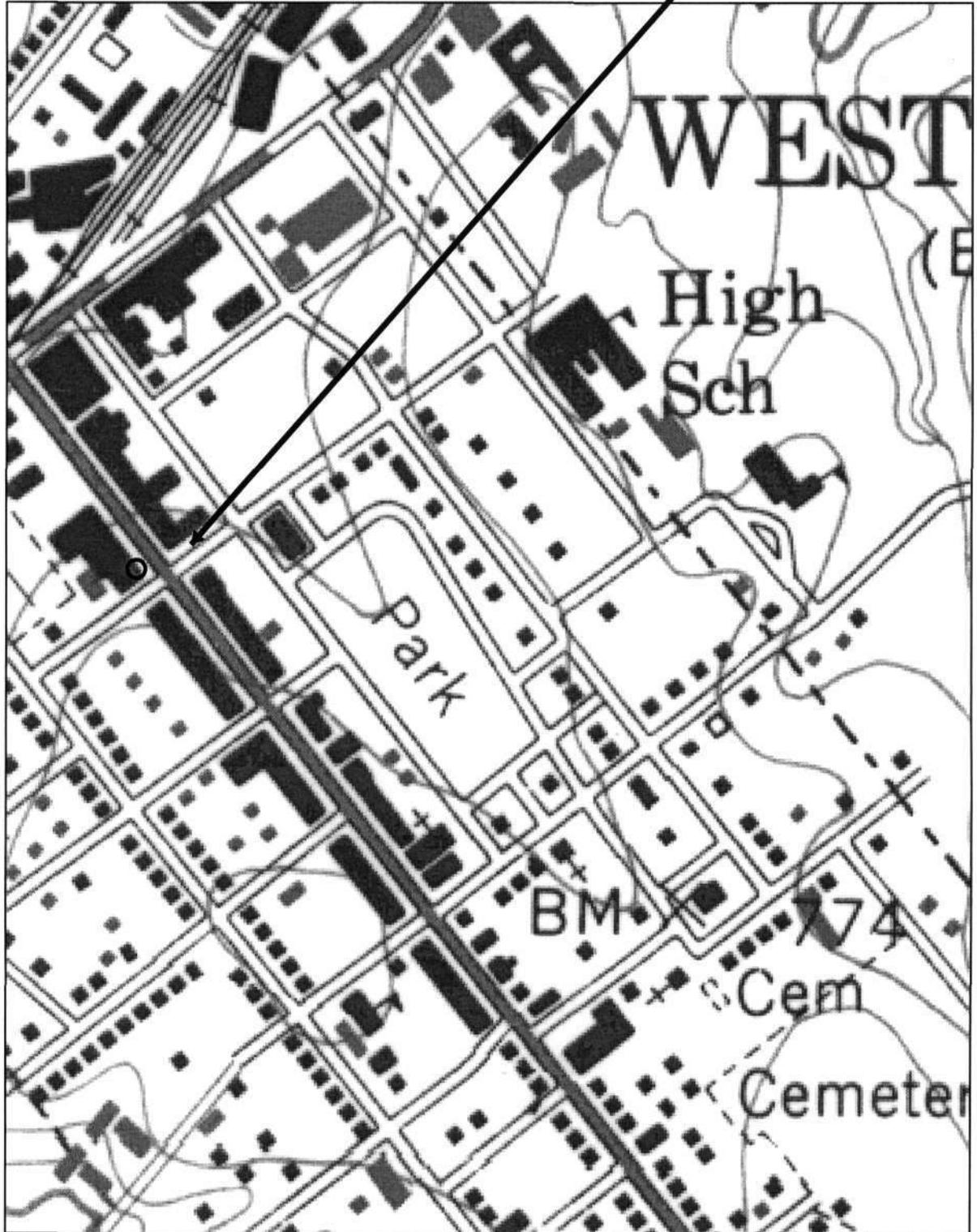
Jennifer K. Cosham, 12 April 2006, facing east



SHA intern, 1997, facing west



CARR-19
First RFD County-wide System
East Main Street (MD 32)
Westminster
Westminster Quad
Carroll County





**THE
FIRST COMPLETE COUNTY
RURAL FREE DELIVERY SERVICE**

**IN THE UNITED STATES WAS
INAUGURATED BY THE POST OFFICE
DEPARTMENT ON DECEMBER 20, 1899
COVERING THE WHOLE OF CARROLL
COUNTY AND SMALL PARTS OF ADJA-
CENT COUNTIES WITH WESTMINSTER
AS THE CENTRAL DISTRIBUTING
POINT.**

STATE ROADS COMMISSION

1. CARR-19 FIRST R.F.D. COUNTY-WIDE SYSTEM
2. Carroll County, Maryland
3. Joe Getty
4. August 1983
5. Md. Historical Trust, Annapolis, Md.
6. Historical marker in front of
Westminster Post Office
7. 1/1