CE-26

Mount Harmon, (Prize House)

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 04-05-2004
Mt. Harmon is an 18th century brick mansion built by Sidney George around 1788. The house was restored in the 1960s under the supervision of Albert Kruse, A.I.A., the architect of the State House restoration in New Castle, Delaware. The house measures 50' x 32', and the majority of the walls of the double pile structure are original. In the late 1920s a frame wing was built on the south gable. The five bay main facade, facing west, has a central door with a scrolled pediment and pineapple keystone supported by Ionic pilasters. Windows are 12/12 sash with splayed brick jack arches with stone keystones. A one-bay-wide pediment with a bullseye window and modillion raking cornice is centered on the hip roof, and is flanked by two gable-roofed dormers with round-arched windows and pilasters. A single dormer of the same style appears between paired interior chimneys on both the north and south ends of the house. The east facade of the roof holds a single dormer between two pediments with bullseye windows. The top of the hip roof features a widow's walk with a Chinese Chippendale balustrade. A dentiled and modillioned cornice surrounds the roof on all sides. The east facade of the house is three bays wide, the two outer bays holding a 12/12 window with the same arches as on the front, and the central bay holds a tall round-arched window above a recessed door with pedimented surround. The north gable end of the building holds a single 12/12 sash window in the second story. The south gable end is covered by a two-story frame wing
covered with beaded clapboard. This wing holds 6/6 sash windows. The interior of the house has been entirely reconstructed with a center hall containing a Chinese Chippendale stair leading to the third floor. The parlor on the north and the dining room on the south are fully paneled. Near the house stands a small one-story brick structure, formerly a kitchen for the farm. There are also stables and residences for the caretakers of the estate. West of the house stands the 18' x 24' hewn frame prize house mentioned in Sidney George Fisher's diary in the 1830s.

Mount Harmon is an important site because it was the home of several locally important citizens of lower Cecil County during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. It is also important because the walls of the present mansion are those built during the 18th century, and are an object lesson in the study of Georgian architecture in Maryland. On the property is also an early prize house, used prior to 1830 when tobacco was the chief crop of lower Cecil County.
**1. NAME**

**COMMON:**

Mount Harmon

**AND/OR HISTORIC:**


**2. LOCATION**

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

Grove Neck Road, 4 miles west of Cecilton

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Earleville

**STATE:**

Maryland

**COUNTY:**

Cecil

**CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:**

First

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

Cecil County Courthouse

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

Main Street

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Elkton

**STATE:**

Maryland

**CODE:**

24

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY (Check One)**

- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**OWNERSHIP**

- Public
- Private
- Both

**STATUS**

- Occupied
- Unoccupied
- In Process
- Being Considered
- Preservation work in progress

**ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC**

- Yes
- No
- Restricted
- Unrestricted

**PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)**

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Scientific
- Park
- Transportation
- Other (Specify)
- Comments

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

**OWNER'S NAME:**

Marguerite du P. Boden

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

Park Place

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Newark

**STATE:**

Delaware

**CODE:**

10

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Cecil County Courthouse

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

Main Street

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Elkton

**STATE:**

Maryland

**CODE:**

24

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

**TITLE OF SURVEY:**

Maryland Historical Trust

**DATE OF SURVEY:**

1968

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**

Maryland Historical Trust

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

2525 Riva Road

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Annapolis

**STATE:**

Maryland

**CODE:**

24
Mt. Harmon is located on Grove Neck four miles west of Cecilton, Cecil County and lies between the waters of Forman and McGill Creeks. It presently consists of 400 acres. Within the designated area of Mt. Harmon Site stands the eighteenth century walls of a large brick mansion built by Sidney George around 1788. The house has been restored under the supervision of Albert Kruse, A.I.A., architect of the State House restoration in New Castle, Delaware. Near the house stands a small one-story brick structure formerly a kitchen for the farm. There are also stables and residences for the caretakers of the estate. Near the Sassafras River stands the prize house mentioned in Sidney George Fisher's diary in the 1830's.

The house measures 50 feet by 32 feet and the majority of the walls of the "double pile" structure is original. In the late 1920's a frame wing was built on the south gable which contains a sitting room, den and porch on the first floor with bedrooms and bath above. The hypothetical restoration accomplished in the 1960's includes an ogee broken pediment above a doric architrave for the front entrance, a deck-on-hip roof with dormers having scrolled consoles, and the rear facade with double pedimented pavilions. Inside, one of the four original rooms was used as a kitchen and the corridor to the wing. The other three rooms have paneling and trim copied from examples in Delaware, Virginia and Maryland. The hall has a Chinese trellis stair ascending to the attic. Behind the house a sunken garden has been constructed with brick retaining walls and paths. Between the house and garden stand two huge yew trees, almost as large as those of Rose Hill closeby.

West of the house stands the prize house, a hewn frame structure measuring approximately 18 by 24 feet. The prizing machinery housed there came from St. Mary's County, Maryland and is illustrated in Edwin Tunis' Colonial Living.
Mount Harmon is an important site because it was the home of several locally important citizens of lower Cecil County during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is also important because the walls of the present mansion are those built during the eighteenth century, and are an object lesson in the study of Georgian architecture in Maryland. On the property is also an early prize house, used prior to 1830 when tobacco was the chief crop of lower Cecil County.

Mt. Harmon was laid out originally on January 4, 1658 for Godfrey Harmon. In 1675, it came into the possession of William Ward Sr. (d. c. 1721) who was appointed to the commission to lay out new towns in Cecil County in 1683. He was Justice of the County Court in 1688, 92, and was a member of the first vestry of North Sassafras Parish to which he donated a 300 acre farm still owned by the parish. Ward's children owned the farm and in 1737 sold it to James Paul Heath.

James Paul Heath (1712-45) also owned Worsell Manor and a tract called Warwick. In his will of 1745, he stipulated that a town be laid out on part of the latter tract by the name of Warwick, it being on the Main Road across the peninsula. (George Washington mentions Warwick in unflattering terms during one of his trips across the Eastern Shore). Heath married Rebecca, daughter of Daniel Dulany, prominent lawyer of Annapolis. At the time of his death, James Paul Heath was worth over £3500, and his inventory listed many and valuable belongings in the latest fashion.

In 1761, the land consisting of over 1000 acres was sold to James Louttit, (died 1765) wealthy planter and merchant. He had married Mary George, daughter of the most respected lawyer of Cecil County in that day. James Louttit's inventory was worth £2695 in 1765. The eulogy preached at his funeral by Rev. William Barroll was printed by Benjamin Franklin in the same year.

Mr. Harmon passed to his son who died shortly thereafter. It was then sold by Mrs. Louttit to her Nephew and son-in-law, Sidney George Jr., in 1788.

Sidney George Jr. (died 1817) studied law under Robert Goldsborough of Talbot County. He contributed to the founding of Washington College in 1782, and was Justice of the Peace for Cecil County in 1780-83. He was a member of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia. At his death, Mr. Harmon passed to his daughter.

(PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)
#8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

It was sold to Dr. John Thompson Veazey (1783-1839) in 1820, a physician well known and beloved in lower Cecil County. After eight years Dr. Veazey was unable to pay off the mortgage, and the property reverted to the ownership of Sidney George Fisher, grandson of Sidney George.

Sidney George Fisher (1809-1871), lawyer of Philadelphia, whose diary on Philadelphia life was published recently under the title: A Philadelphia Perspective, visited Mt. Harmon frequently and contributed to the establishment of the steam boat lines on the Sassafras River and was the first to introduce the latest farming techniques to the area. He wrote several books on law, politics, slavery and poetry. At his death, Mt. Harmon passed to his son Sydney George Fisher.

Sydney George Fisher (1856-1927), lawyer, is best known for writing histories of Pennsylvania and Delaware, biographies of Benjamin Franklin, William Penn and Daniel Webster, and the histories of the Constitution and the American Revolution. He was also a member of the Philosophical Society and the Athenaeum of Philadelphia. The Library Company of Philadelphia was the beneficiary of Fisher's estate in 1927, but they soon sold the farm.

In 1963 the house and farm was purchased by Mrs. Harry Clark Boden IV, direct descendant of James Louttit. Restoration of the house was undertaken by Mr. Albert Kruse A.I.A., the architect of the State House restoration, New Castle, Delaware.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mrs. Harry Clarke Boden IV, Interview, 1972.

Cecil County Land Records, Elkton; and Hall of Records, Annapolis.

Diary of Martha B. Forman, Cecil County Historical Society, Elkton.


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 430 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

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<th>STATE:</th>
<th>CODE COUNTY:</th>
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FORM PREPARED BY

Michael O. Bourne, Co-ordinator of Field Services

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust

STREET AND NUMBER:

2525 Riva Road

CITY OR TOWN:

Annapolis

STATE:

Maryland

21401

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National | State | Local |  

Name

Orlando Ridout, IV

Title

State Historic Preservation Office for Maryland

Date

January 17, 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register
Mount Harmon

2. LOCATION
STATE: Maryland
COUNTY: Cecil
TOWN: Earleville

3. PHOTO REFERENCE
Grove Neck Road, four miles west of Cecilton

PHOTO CREDIT
Danny Justice

DATE: Spring 1972

NEGATIVE FILED AT
Elkton, Maryland

4. IDENTIFICATION

Describe view, direction, etc.

North facade
**1. NAME**

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<th>AND/OR HISTORIC</th>
<th>NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)</th>
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**2. LOCATION**

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**3. MAP REFERENCE**

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**Property Map Form**

*Requirements: Property boundaries, where required, and north arrow.*
Mt. Harmon is a 2-1/2 story brick mansion overlooking Back Creek off the Sassafras River. The west facade is five bays long and has a central door with a scrolled pediment and pineapple finial. The flat brick arches above the windows have marble keystones. The dentil and modillion cornice encircles the hipped roof and there are three dormers. The east facade is three bays long with center door. The two flanking bays project from the block and at roof level, they are pedimented. There is a single dormer between the two pediments. The double chimneys are on each end of the building and there is a Captain's watch on the roof. To the south is a two-story frame wing with beaded clapboard painted dark red.

The interior has been entirely reconstructed with center hall containing a Chinese trellis stair leading to the third floor. The parlor on the north and the dining room on the south are both fully paneled. Behind the parlor is an office and behind the dining room is a cross hall and another small room.

On the property is a reconstructed kitchen and prizing shed.
CE-26
MOUNT HARMON
Cecil County
CE-26
MOUNT HARMON
GARDEN FACADE
Cecil County
Mount Harmon
Near Earleville
Elevation
MOB/1968
NEG - MD. Hist. Trust
Danny JUSTICE, Ellston
(Mt. Harmon)
CE-2 G