CE-308

Staworsky-Cropper House, (Old Post Office)

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: 02-04-2016
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Old Post Office or Cropper House
AND/OR COMMON
Old Post Office or Cropper House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
#19 Bohemia Avenue, west side, corner of Second Street

CITY, TOWN
Chesapeake City

STATE
Maryland

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

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

PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED

— OCCUPIED
— UNOCCUPIED
— WORK IN PROGRESS
— ACCESSIBLE
— YES: RESTRICTED
— YES: UNRESTRICTED
— NO

— AGRICULTURE
— COMMERCIAL
— EDUCATIONAL
— ENTERTAINMENT
— GOVERNMENT
— INDUSTRIAL
— MILITARY

— MUSEUM
— PARK
— PRIVATE RESIDENCE
— RELIGIOUS
— SCIENTIFIC
— TRANSPORTATION

— FEDERAL
— STATE
— COUNTY
— LOCAL

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Chesapeake City District Civic Asso.

STREET & NUMBER
c/o William Stubbs

CITY, TOWN
Chesapeake City

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21915

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE
Cecil

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER
Main Street

CITY, TOWN
Elkton

STATE
Maryland 21921

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE
On the northwest corner of Bohemia Avenue and First Street is the old Post Office, a four bay long, three story dwelling apparently built in the latter part of the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It is built upon a stone foundation, and partly over a cellar. The building is now in the process of being renovated.

Its facade is covered with beaded weatherboard (1975) and there are three windows and a door on the first floor, the windows having 6/9 sash (new). On the second story the windows have 6/6 sash and the third floor windows have 3/3 sash. From the front of the building the nearly flat roof can hardly be seen. It is covered with wood shingles.

The front portion of the structure is only one room deep. To the rear (west) is a two story addition, three bays long also covered with beaded weatherboard. Its windows have 6/6 sash throughout and there is a door adjoining the taller part of the house.

In the corner formed by the 'L' plan building is a two story leanto, also covered with beaded siding. Its roof has been altered during the remodeling to carry the water away from the neighboring property.

From the evidence inside, the building seems to have begun life as a one room structure with exposed ceiling structure. To it was added a room on the north, and the west wing. Probably at that time, the front was raised to three stories.

Its general form is the most important element of the structure.
### SIGNIFICANCE

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Cropper House is important as a major element in the first block of Bohemia Avenue. It represents an interesting growth from a single room building to a large typical mid-19th century residence.

Kendall Cropper moved into his new home on the corner of Bohemia Avenue and First Street in 1833. The town consisted of a few workers shacks for the laborers and the homes clustered near the old Bayard House. Lots for newcomers were not sold outright. Leases were granted by the Bayard family for 99 years renewable after that time. Ground rent was payable twice a year, the amount varying with the size and location of the land, $12.00 a year for this.

Over the years, the building that Mr. Kendall Cropper built has served many purposes. Originally the building was a home, then a tin smith's shop, a pool hall, and a post office. Rooms have been added in the back as they have to nearly all the buildings in town. As families grew, and resources increased, rooms were added.

Dr. Thomas Conrey was one of the early owners of this property. He bought from Samuel Harris in 1858, a prosperous Delaware merchant who owned quite a bit of property in Cecil County.

Ref-Chesapeake City History prepared by class of 1917 in Historical Society.

Kendall Cropper is referred to as Captain Cropper and he and his three brothers were instrumental in founding the town. Kendall bought land from Richard Bayard, 112 acres east of Bohemia Avenue, before his death. He did not finalize the deal before he died in 1848 but his heirs honored the agreement. When Kendall Cropper died he left eight children and his widow, Ann. His children were Absalom P. Cropper, Samuel P. Cropper, Margaret Tuffree, Haradah Marshall, Littleton Cropper, Sarah Schultz, Eliza Bryan and William P. Cropper. These family names are familiar in Chesapeake City's history.

In the May 17, 1851, issue of the Cecil Democrat, "Captain Cropper of Chesapeake City," ran an advertisement in which he "contemplates an excursion between this place and Port Deposit on the ensuing Fourth of July". Fourth of July excursions were big occasions and lasted from early morning until late at night, with feasts along the way, at the destination, and again at the home port. The town band usually went along and young and old alike looked forward to these annual outings.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY
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
HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION
APPLICATION — PART 1
(Pursuant to the Tax Reform Act of 1976)

PART 1 EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. NAME OF PROPERTY:
The Cropper House (The Old Post Office)
Address of property: 19 Bohemia Avenue, Chesapeake City, Maryland 21915
City: Chesapeake City
County: Cecil
Name of historic district in which property is located: Chesapeake City (South Chesapeake City)

2. DESCRIPTION OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:
See attached MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST Inventory Form for Building CE-308

3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:
Built in 1833 by Captain Kendall Cropper, one of the earlier substantial structures in the developing canal town of Chesapeake City. See attached sheet on CE-308 for a more complete discussion of historic and architectural significance.

4. NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS OF OWNER:
Mr. & Mrs. Edward L. Cairns
104 Jackson Hall Rd.
Elkton, Md. 21921
Capt. & Mrs. Herbert H. Ward
213 Oldfield Point Circle
Elkton, Md. 21921

Telephone Number (during day): Area Code 301/398-3273
301/398-2141

I hereby attest that the information I have provided is to the best of my knowledge correct and that I am owner of the property described above.

Signature: Date: Oct 13, 1981

For office use only

The structure described above is included within the boundaries of the National Register historic district and □ contributes □ does not contribute to the character of the district.

The structure □ appears □ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6) and □ will likely □ will not be nominated to the National Register in accordance with the Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60).

The structure is located in a district which □ appears □ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6), □ will likely □ will not be nominated to the National Register in accordance with Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60), and □ appears □ does not appear to contribute to the character of said district.

Signature: Date: 10-2-82

State Historic Preservation Officer

This property has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Department of the Interior (36 CFR 67) and, if subject to depreciation under section 167 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

□ hereby certified a historic structure.

□ does not contribute to the character of the historic district and does not merit certification as a historic structure. Reasons given on the attached sheet.

Signature: Date:
We acquired the Cropper House in 1981 from a group known as Historic Chesapeake City, Inc. They, in 1977, had done a restoration of the major portion of the house. They had hired a group of Amish from Pennsylvania to do this work. The restoration was done very carefully. Pictures of the interior of this portion of the house are attached.

When Historic Chesapeake City, Inc. made the apartment out of a portion of the house, about 65% of the house, they did so without much regard for development of the rest. Our development of the house was to use the rest of this space to make a second apartment. In this part of the structure there was nothing but bare studds and the backs of the walls from the first apartment, except that the previous group had constructed a fireplace in what was to become the livingroom of the second apartment (on the second floor).
From BACKROADING THROUGH CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND
Nancy C. Sawin and Esther R. Perkins

THE HARRIOTT HOTEL
This building is thought to be the oldest in Chesapeake City. It is better known, however, as the friendly watering spot, the hole in the wall.

FRANKLIN HALL
Now being restored houses the town library. It is the only early brick structure in the town and its architecture is a fine example of the Federal period.

THE C&O CANAL & CHESAPEAKE CITY
"THE DITCH"

THE CANAL HAS A REPUTATION OF BEING A DIVIDING LINE FOR PENINSULAR WEATHER. IF THE SUN IS SHINING SOUTH OF ITS BANKS, IT IS JUST AS APT TO BE RAINING OR SNOWING UP ELKTON WAY!

WORK ON THE CANAL BEGAN ON APRIL 16, 1824, AND WAS COMPLETED ON OCTOBER 17, 1829. IT WAS FINANCED BY GRANTS AND LOTTERIES. IT WAS A LOCK CANAL WITH TOW PATHS FOR MULES. THE LOCKS WERE 24' WIDE. IT JUST ACCOMODATED DELAWARE'S CONTRIBUTION TO EARLY SHIPPING, THE SCHOONER RAM BUILT ALONG THE BROAD CREEK IT MEASURED 23' 8" WIDE WITH VERTICAL SIDES.
MEMO

STATE OF MARYLAND
Department of Economic and Community Development
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Transmittal Slip

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REMARKS:

CE-308  CROPPER HOUSE

Now owned by
Edward and Sally Cairns
and
Herbert and Kathryn S. Ward
213 Oldfield Point Circle
Elkton, Md. 21921
phone 398-2273/2141
CE-308
Old Post Office or Cropper House
19 Bohemia Ave.
Chesapeake City
Elkton Quad.
Cecil County