

## INVENTORY CAPTION : SLAVE HOUSE, CRAIN FARMS

CH-36D  
Mt. Victoria  
Private

1830-50

This one story log house was probably built as a dwelling for slaves . In the 20th century additions have been built onto each gable end, but originally the structure consisted of only the one room log block with one room upstairs. It was representative of many of the houses occupied by rural black families in the 19th century in southern Maryland.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CP 100  
MAGI # 091036D5404

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**  
 HISTORIC SLAVE HOUSE, CRAIN FARMS  
 AND/OR COMMON "Mt. Victoria" or "Strawberry Vale"

**2 LOCATION**  
 STREET & NUMBER Crain Farms, South Side of Mt. Victoria Rd.  
 CITY, TOWN Mt. Victoria VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5  
 STATE Maryland COUNTY Charles

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>OWNERSHIP</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>PRESENT USE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**  
 NAME Bennett Crain Telephone #: 259-2406  
 STREET & NUMBER  
 CITY, TOWN Mt. Victoria VICINITY OF STATE, zip code Md. 29661

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**  
 COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Charles County Courthouse  
 STREET & NUMBER  
 CITY, TOWN La Plata STATE Md.  
 Map. 83, P. 38  
 Liber #: 163  
 Folio #: 711

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**  
 TITLE NONE  
 DATE  
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
 CITY, TOWN STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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**

This elongated house stands on the side of a hill near the top, looking out over the nearby fields to the south. About 100 yards S.W. of the house are barns, a blacksmith shop, and other work buildings associated with plantation life. According to Mrs. Bennett Crain, these are postbellum (investigation of them was not permitted).

The house consists of three sections, the middle one being the original log house to which two frame additions have been built at different times. The facade of the log block consists of two bays, a door and a small window. It is one bay in depth, and the back length contains only a door, located opposite the front one. The facade has no porch. Steep stairs lead up to the house, for the house is raised rather high above the ground on brick pilings. Corrugated tin insulates the space underneath the house. The log walls are sheathed with white weatherboards that are not original and that cover the corners, so that the notching used in the corners could not be seen. In the window is a double hung sash frame with 2x2 lights. Originally the roof was covered with wood shingles but now with tin, painted red. The eaves are not boxed; the rafters abutt onto a false plate and do not overhang the walls. The gable cornices are enclosed with plain, narrow planks. The structural system of the roof was masked by the ceiling in the upstairs. A large brick chimney supported by a stone foundation ascended the exterior of the west gable end, but has now been enclosed by the frame kitchen.

The interior consisted of one room whose walls were exposed logs painted white. The hewn joists were also exposed. A boxed stairway in the northeast corner of one flight of narrow steps led to the one room upstairs, that was unheated. That chamber served only as sleeping quarters, containing only beds. This lack of furnishings <sup>for</sup> personalized use of space probably indicates the appearance of the upstairs chambers of many tenant or small landowners' houses in earlier years. It was therefore photographed (See slides).

The kitchen addition is frame, with circular saw joists, tongue and groove siding on the walls, and attached by wire nails, and was possibly added in the late 19th century, though more likely in the first quarter of the 20th due to the 6x6 double hung sash windows. A wood stove has been let into the brick chimney, and is still used for cooking. The fireplace in the main block has been filled in, and a wood stove there serves as the source of heat.

On the opposite gable end of the log block has been added a bathroom and a small bedroom for the parents (the children sleeping upstairs above the sitting room and kitchen).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

CH-36D

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<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)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES 2nd Quarter 19th Century BUILDER/ARCHITECT BLACK HISTORY

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Mrs. Crain, the wife of the owner of the farm, this small log house was built as a slave house. No structural or oral evidence could be found to dispute this tradition. The presence of machine cut nails with finished, square heads in the jamb of the front door, which appears to be original to the structure, suggests that the house was built not earlier than the second quarter of the 19th century.

The original log house is representative of those occupied by most black families in the 19th century in southern Maryland. Its present condition and its furnishings reflect the life style of the rural poor in southern Maryland today.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

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

George W. McDaniel

Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Commission on Afro-American History &amp; Culture

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

20 Dean Street

TELEPHONE

269-2893

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis, Maryland

STATE

21401

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



CREDIT TO  
GEORGE W. McDANIEL

CH 36 D  
Slave house, Crain farms  
Mt. Victoria, Md.  
North elevation  
GWM  
2-77



CREDIT TO  
GEORGE W. McDANIEL

CH 36 D  
Slave house, Crain farms  
Mt. Victoria, Md.  
Facade, south view  
GWM  
2-77