

HA-1280

Blackburn House  
west side Calvary Road  
Churchville, Maryland 21028

This house was probably built soon after Daniel McGonnigal purchased part of "Paca's Enlargement" in 1843. A \$5500 jump in the selling price when he sold the property in 1867 to John Blackburn, a Philadelphia attorney, indicates substantial improvements to the property in the interim. A cannery was operated on the property during Blackburn's residence.

This area south of Churchville, along Cavalry Road and the roads radiating from it (Snake Lane, Grafton's Lane), was a prosperous and well-populated area when Daniel McGonnigal built this house. Judging from the remaining 19th century structures, McGonnigal's house must have been one of the largest and the most formal in the area. Its shape is familiar: two stories with a gable roof and center front gable, five bays wide and two bays deep; however the four chimneys, symmetrical facade, and ample proportions create a more imposing structure than most of its neighbors.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Blackburn House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

west side of Cavalry Rd. (Md. Rte. 136), south of Churchville Rd. (Md. Rte. 22)

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY  
Harford

**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

Charles & Marjorie Wirsing

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

7460 Donsep Ct.

CITY, TOWN

Manassas

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code  
Va. 22110

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

40 S. Main St.

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air,

STATE  
Maryland 21014

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**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 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	BUILDER/ARCHITECT
----------------	-------------------

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

This house was probably built by Daniel McGonnigal soon after 1843, when he purchased 80 acres of "Paca's Enlargement" for \$1000 from Thomas Lilly<sup>1</sup> and, the next year, 29 acres for \$550 from James Brook.<sup>2</sup> The 1858 Jennings & Herrick Map indicates a structure belonging to D. McGonigall ( ) on or near this site, and the jump in selling price to \$7000 when he sold the 80 acre lot in 1867 points to the erection of the house by McGonnigal.

John Blackburn, described in the deed as a Philadelphia attorney, purchased this lot in 1867.<sup>3</sup> In 1888, the property is described as including "canning house machinery and fixtures, kettles and cranes."

Charles and Lavinia J. Blackburn, son and daughter-in-law of John Blackburn, continued to own the property until 1926. There was a brief interlude between 1888 and 1890 when John C. Baker owned it, having purchased it for \$2000. Baker was a member of one of the premier canning families in Harford County, and probably owned several farms to supply his factory. This land reverted to the Blackburns when he could not pay the mortgage.

This area south of Churchville, along Cavalry Road and the roads radiating from it (Snake Lane, Grafton's Lane), was a prosperous and well-populated area when Daniel McGonnigal built his house here in the middle of the 19th century. Judging from the remaining 19th century structures, McGonnigal's house must have been one of the largest and most formal in the area. Its massing is familiar: two stories, gable-roofed, five bays wide and one room deep, with a center front gable. The four chimneys, the symmetrical facade with a central entrance, and ample proportions, create a more imposing structure than most, although others have the same features in different combinations or on a smaller scale.

Footnotes

1 HD 28/228  
 2 HD 30/64  
 3 WHD 19/353

## Blackburn House

## Title Search

HA- 1280

894/1055	March 30, 1972	Grantor: Zero, Inc. Grantee: Charles Edward Wirsing, Jr. & wife Marjorie E. M. Acreage: 109 Acres, 3 roods, 27 square perches
562/203	November 19, 1960	Grantor: Jane E. Lowell Grantee: Florence J. Wirsing & Chas. Edw. Wirsing Jr. (as joint tenants not Tenants in Common) Acreage: 109 Acres, 3 Roods, 27 square perches (same as property recorded on even date in reversed transaction)
DGW 201/363	December 20, 1926	Grantor: Lavinia J. Blackburn, Widow Grantee: Charles E. and Florence J. Wirsing Acreage: "Paca's Enlargement" "Stony Ridge", "Webster's Forest" 109 Acres, 3 Roods, 27 square perches
WSF 74/94	November 30, 1891	Grantor: Stevenson Williams, Trustee Grantee: Charles Oscar Blackburn of Philadelphia Circuit Court Decree, Jan. 23, 1890: Frederick M. Wells vs. John C. Baker (insolvent) Acreage: 109 Acres, 3 Roods, 27 square perches "Paca's Enlargement", "Stony Ridge" "Webster's Forest"
ALJ 61/382	January 24, 1888	Grantor: Charles Oscar Blackburn & wife Lavinia J. Grantee: John C. Baker Sum: \$2000 Acreage: 2 Parcels: Together 109 Acres, 3 Roods, 27 Square perches "together with the canning house machinery & fixtures, Kettles and Cranes"
WHD 19/353	December 5, 1867	Grantor: Daniel McGonigall and wife Avarilla J. Grantee: John Blackburn of Philadelphia, att. Sum: \$7000 Acreage: "Paca's Enlargement", 80 $\frac{1}{4}$ Acres
HD 30/64	July 18, 1844 - Ind.	Grantor: James & Sarah Ann Brook Grantee: Daniel M cGonigall Sum: \$550 Acreage: part of "Paca's Enlargement", "Stony Ridge", and "Webster's Forest" 29 Acres, 2 Roods, 12 Perches

## Blackburn House

Title Search (Cont'd.)

HA-1280

HD 28/224

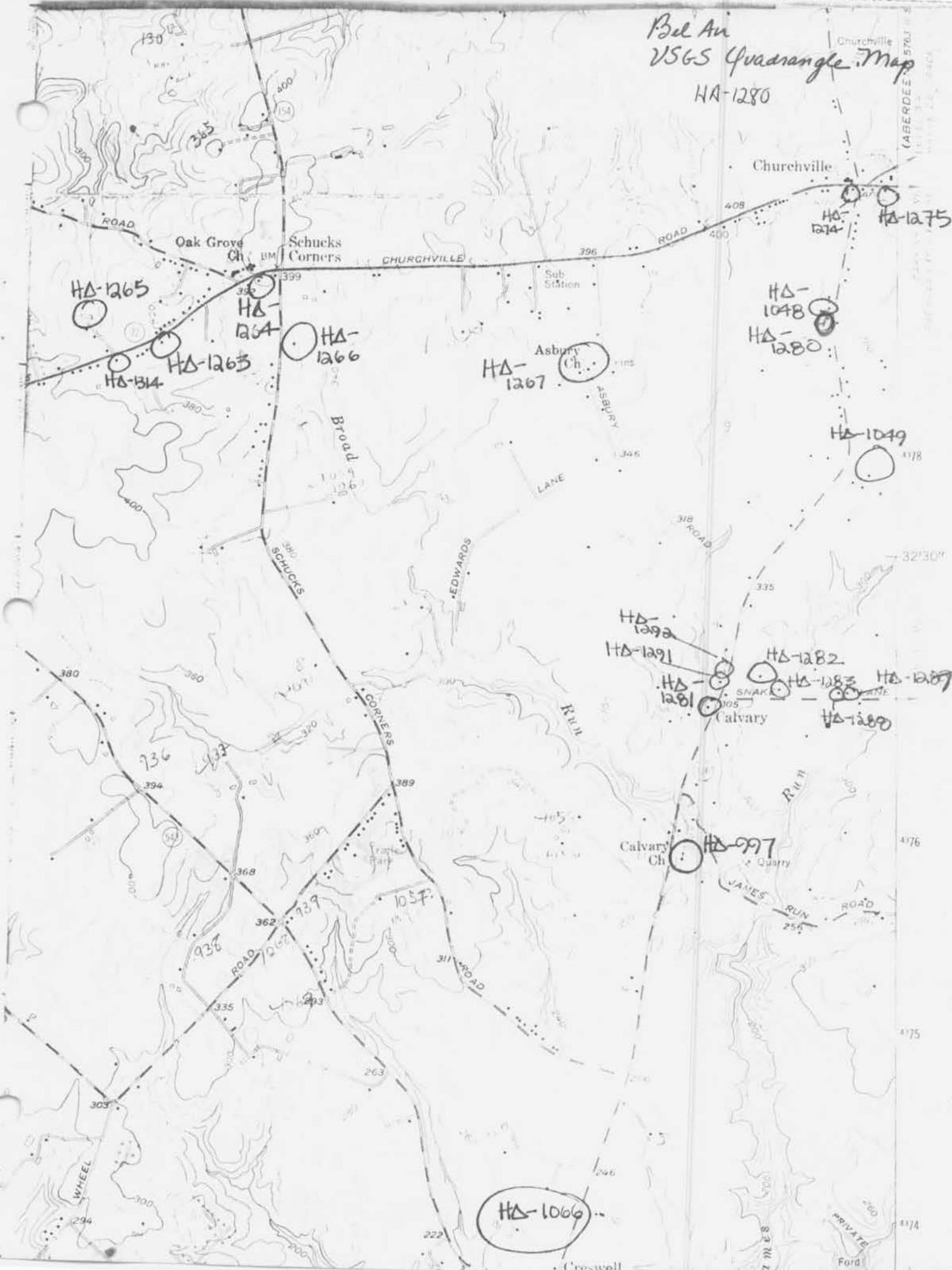
May 30, 1843

Grantor: Thomas & Juli Ann Lilly  
Grantee: Daniel McGonigall  
Sum: \$1000  
Acreage: Part of 'Paca's Enlargement'  
80 $\frac{1}{2}$  Acres

Bel Air  
USGS Quadrangle Map

HA-1280

1:62,500  
1964  
1:62,500



HA-1265

HA-1314

HA-1263

HA-1264

HA-1266

HA-1267

HA-1274

HA-1275

HA-1048  
HA-1280

HA-1049

HA-1292

HA-1291

HA-1281

HA-1282

HA-1283

HA-1287

HA-1289

HA-997

HA-1069

32°30'

4176

4175

4174



Blackburn House  
Churchville, MD  
Natalie Shivers  
June, 1979  
Southeast

HA- 1280  
21028



Blackburn House  
Churchville, MD 21028  
Natalie Shivers  
June, 1979  
Northwest

HA- 1280