

HA-1285

SUMMARY

Winfield Mitchell Tenant House #2
3006 Snake Lane
Churchville, Maryland 21014

This house consists of a 1-1/2 story log section and a 2 story frame section, thus combining the technology of two distinct approaches to house construction. A succession of owners held the land on which the house stands in the second half of the 19th century, including a black named Billingslea, who purchased it from the successful farmer Jarret Moore (see HA-1053) in 1869.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Winfield Mitchell Tenant house #2

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

South side of Snake Lane

CITY, TOWN

Churchville,

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland 21028

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
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John Winfield Mitchell

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

3006 Snake Lane

CITY, TOWN

Churchville,

--- VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21028

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: ALJ 47

Folio #: 184

STREET & NUMBER

40 South 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

NA-1285

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR

- DETERIORATED
- RUINS
- UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

CHECK ONE

- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This gable-roofed house set on a stone foundation and covered in asbestos shingles is part log and part frame, with a recent one-story addition on the back or south side. The oldest section is the 1½-story log structure on the west, which is two bays wide and one room deep. The two-story frame section, whose north and south sides are flush with those of the log part, has a brick chimney in the west end. This end is partly exposed, revealing the original board and batten siding. A one-story, four bay, shed-roofed porch stretches across the north facades of the log and frame sections.

The log section has 6/6 sash windows. In the south facade are an entrance in the east bay and a window in the west bay. In the west end, there is a window in the gable and an entrance to the basement. There is a blocked-up opening in the south facade.

The frame section has two 2/2 sash windows in each story of the north facade. The east end is blank except for a four-light gable window. The first story of the south facade is covered by the addition, and there is a 6/6 sash window in the second story.

OWNER OF PROPERTY

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1856, Richard Green and Henry D. Farnandis sold 50 acres to Jarvis Gilbert and Deborah James.¹ Three years later, in 1859, Richard and Charlotte Gawthrop sold 15 1/4 acres to Jarvis Gilbert and Deborah James.² Jarrett B. Moore then purchased all 65 1/4 acres in 1865,³ and, in 1869, sold six acres to Samuel Billingslea.⁴ It is said that Moore was forced to sell to Billingslea, a black man, because he needed the money, fully expecting, however, to buy it back once his finances improved. Billingslea managed to hold on to the property until 1883, when he sold it to Ernest Bonnett⁵, who owned the adjacent farm on the west. (Moore's farm was on the east side of this lot.) Winfield Mitchell recently purchased Bonnett's holdings on the south side of Snake Lane and is the current owner of this house.

Footnotes

- 1 7/107
- 2 11/10
- 3 13/9
- 4 22/279
- 5 ALJ 47/184

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land and Will Records of Harford County
Interview with J. Winfield Mitchell, 1979

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

Natalie Shivers, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Harford County Historic District Commission

DATE

May, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

45 South Main Street

TELEPHONE

838-6000 ext. 207

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air,

STATE

Maryland 21014

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

Although unimpressive singly, this cluster of houses in the Snake Lane vicinity represents a good cross-section of Harford County's small farmhouses built in the second half of the 19th century. Each is ordinary and, thus, together they represent the surprising variety of vernacular forms built at that time. None seems distinctive, but, on closer examination, no two are the same (although at least one house was a deliberate imitation of its neighbor).

There are certain common denominators among these buildings. They are all two story frame structures with gable roofs. Most are L or T shaped, with 6/6 sash windows and brick end chimneys (for stoves). They are of various construction: clapboard, shingle, board-and-batten, (However, most have been covered in asphalt shingles or aluminum siding, so the original materials are not apparent.) There is minimal exterior ornament: the shutters, gable returns, and carved porch brackets on the Winfield Mitchell house represent the height of fancy; the Wakeland-Gorrell house with its projecting vestibule and colored glass windows is an anomaly. Similarly, the interior plans are functional: one or two rooms in each story of the main section, one or two rooms in the el, with a staircase tucked in between. Or, if the staircase is in the center of the main section as in larger houses, it is not given undue prominence by being set apart in a hallway (again, except for the Wakeland-Gorrell house); it is against one wall of one of the rooms. Utilitarian, functional, with few conceits--these are the underlying themes of these houses.

Other motifs are subtler--the relationships between formal and informal elements, for instance. This dichotomy is represented in various ways: the symmetrical fenestration on the front facade versus the haphazard arrangement on the rear; the ambiguous relationship between the facade and the interior arrangement, wherein the former formalizes the latter. Perhaps the best way to discuss this cluster of seemingly non-descript buildings is to group them on this basis.

All houses have a front porch--less one for sitting than one to announce the entrance. It is the way visitors are introduced to the house and is often the one element that is decorated. The porches on these houses are of different shapes--their scale and ornament in direct proportion to the size and prosperity of the house: The George Jones house (HA-1053) is absolutely straightforward: three parts built side by side with an entrance in each. The formal entrance, in the west section, has a one bay wide, gable-roofed portico--and that is the only exterior element that could be considered extraneous. The Markline house and the Mitchell Tenant house #2 both having two parts, each two bays wide and two bays deep have undecorated shed-roofed porches spanning their front facades. The Markline house represents a slightly more formal arrangement than the other two--with its additions annexed to the rear, leaving the front facade symmetrical and singularly autonomous.

The Mitchell Tenant house #1, which is wider than the Markline house by one bay and has a central entrance, correspondingly has a more ornate porch with gable returns and collared posts. Likewise, instead of the stair being tucked between the front and rear sections as in the Markline house, the stair is in the center, against the east wall of the parlor.

The Winfield Mitchell house and the Mitchell-Magness house--both four bays wide, with entrances in the two center bays--illustrate well the formal-informal dichotomy that the other houses suggest. The symmetrical facades, the porches with carved brackets, collared or turned posts, and central flights of steps represent the public gestures; and the rear elevations, haphazardly arranged, are for residents' eyes only. The two entrances--one leading into the family parlor, the other into the formal parlor--manifest the duality.

The Bechtold-Lohr and Bonnett-Mitchell houses are both five bays wide--and the latter was copied deliberately from the former. The porch of the Bechtold-Lohr house with its

massive rock-faced concrete block piers, tapered columns, and hipped roof was constructed after the house was built but is appropriately-and symbolically-prepossessing for a house of this breadth. Its cousin, the Bonnett-Mitchell house, has a relatively scaled-down porch with square Doric posts covering the central three bays. Both houses have central entrances and central sets of porch steps-but no center hall on the interior. The formal symmetry of the exteriors bely the simply, functional interiors. Inside of both are two rooms, the room with the staircase (which is aligned with the entrance) larger than the other.

Finally-with the ultimate formal arrangement-the Gorrell house is three bays wide, with floor-length windows in the first story. Spanning the facade, the hipped-roofed porch with square posts shelters the projecting three-sided vestibule with a double-leafed door in the center, flanked by windows with colored glass borders. Inside, the house has a central hall plan. The principal facade of the Gorrell house has all three formal elements present in varying degrees in the other houses of this area: the extroverted porch, the inflected entrance, and relatively elaborate ornament.

Background Information on Mitchell properties in Snake Lane vicinity

On October 4, 1779, Amos Cord conveyed 150 acres of "Stony Ridge Enlargement" to John Mitchell for the sum of 500 pounds.¹ In a description of the boundaries of Mitchell's land, this property was referred to as part of "Stony Ridge" and "Paca's Enlargement".² Originally, this land had belonged to John Paca, who in 1775 conveyed it to John Blackburn,³ Blackburn then sold it to Thomas Perigrine Farsby who exchanged it with Amos Cord in 1776.⁴

Also, on December 17, 1783, John Stevenson sold 243 acres of "Stony Ridge" to John Mitchell for 486 pounds.⁵ And in 1800, Captain James Philips of Baltimore City conveyed 100 acres of Stony Ridge, which he had inherited from his father, to John Mitchell.⁶ This parcel had been confiscated from James Christie after the Revolution and sold by commissioners appointed to preserve confiscated British property to James Philips on October 1, 1782 for 100 pounds.

John Mitchell (b. 1737, d. 1801), has been described as "a respected and thrifty millwright." He married Mary Tidball in 1765 and had eight children. The property we are concerned with here-i.e. on the north side of Snake Lane-presumably passed to John Mitchell's son, Elijah, and then to Elijah's three sons William, Robert, and Elisha.⁷

It is said that in 1831 Elisha Mitchell possessed the land on which the Bechtold-Lohr house and the Mitchell-Lauterbach (HA-1288) house now stand.⁸ William's house burned. Robert owned the property where the Winfield Mitchell house (HA-1286), the Mitchell Tenant house #1, the Markline house, and the Mitchell-Magness house are now situated. Robert probably lived in the house now owned by William Craig, located behind the Mitchell-Magness house. However, that structure has been altered extensively, and the house as Robert Mitchell would have known it is unrecognizable.

Robert Mitchell married Averilla Hawkins and together they had seven children: Robert Louis, Mary Jane, Samuel, George, John Thomas, Catherine, and Margaret. In the last quarter of the 19th century, Robert Louis Mitchell built the Winfield Mitchell house⁹, Samuel built the Markline house (HA-1283)¹⁰ and eventually occupied his father's house; John Thomas built the Mitchell Tenant house #1,¹¹ and Margaret lived in the Mitchell-Magness house.

John Thomas Mitchell had two sons, George and Alonzo. George's house burned; Alonzo lived in what is called the Mitchell tenant house #1 and inherited Robert Louis Mitchell's house. John Winfield Mitchell, son of George Mitchell, then inherited the property of Alonzo Mitchell who had no children of his own.¹²

Thus, most of the Mitchell houses on Snake Lane were built during the last quarter of the 19th century by the children of Robert Mitchell.

Footnotes

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- 1 Liber JLGC, Folio 239
 - 2 Liber JLGD, Folio 16
 - 3 Ref. Liber JLGC, Folio 239
 - 4 Liber JLGA, Folio 257
 - 5 Liber JLGE, Folio 416
 - 6 Liber JLGP, Folio 430
 - 7 Mitchell family archives
 - 8 HD 14/87
 - 9 ALJ 32/190
 - 10 ALJ 32/464
 - 11 ALJ 36/186
 - 12 ALJ 64/373

TITLE SEARCH

Winfield Mitchell Tenant House #2

HA- 1285

			Grantor: Ernest W. Bonnett Grantee: J. Winfield Mitchell
ALJ	47/184	1883	Grantor: Samuel Billingslea Grantee: Ernest W. Bonnett
ALJ	22/279	1869	Grantor: Jarrett B. Moore Grantee: Samuel Billingslea Acreage: 6 Acres
	13/9	1865	Grantor: Jarvis Gilbert & Deborah James Grantee: Jarrett B. Moore Acreage: 65/4 Acres
	11/10	1859	Grantor: Richard & Charlotte Gawthrop Grantee: Jarvis Gilbert & Deborah James Acreage: 15.25 Acres
	7/107	1856	Grantor: Richard Green, Henry D. Farnandis Grantee: Jarvis Gilbert and Deborah James Acreage: 50 Acres



HA- 1285

Winfield Mitchell Tenant House #2

Churchville, MD 21028

N. Shivers

February, 1979

Northwest



HA- 1285

Winfield Mitchell Tenant House #2

Churchville, MD 21028

N. Shivers

February, 1979

Southeast