

SUMMARY

Wakeland-Gorrell House  
4014 Calvary Road  
Churchville, Maryland 21028

The Wakeland-Gorrell House was built in two sections, the east or front in 1879, with the rear added in the 1890's by George Gorrell. Although basically fitting the architectural mold of other late 19th century Harford County Farmhouses, this house is somewhat distinguished by the architectural treatment of the front facade. The projecting entrance with its delicate pilasters, and the full length  $2/4$  first story windows are features not generally found on house of this ilk, and they reflect the owner's desire to have a proper 'stylish' house.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Wakeland-Gorrell House

AND/OR COMMON  
Herbert M. Gorrell

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
4014 Calvary Rd.

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE  
Md.

COUNTY  
Harford

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<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>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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  
Herbert M. Gorrell

Telephone #: 734-7352

STREET & NUMBER  
4014 Calvary Rd.

CITY, TOWN

STATE, zip code  
Md.

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: ALJ 60/256

Folio #:

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

**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**

Two stories with a gable roof, this el-shaped frame house is set on a stone foundation and has brick chimneys in each end. The first story windows on the front (or east side) have 2/4 sash; all other windows have 6/6 sash. The house is covered in aluminum siding and the windows have metal shutters.

The east or front section built in 1879, is three bays wide and one room deep. Across the first story is a three bay, flat-roofed porch on brick piers with latticework between them. The porch has square posts. The projecting entrance in the center bay is flanked by a window on each side adorned with corner pilasters; the entrance has a double-leafed door with a stained glass window over one panel in each leaf. In both sides of the entrance are multi-paned sash windows set over panels.

The south and north ends are similar with one window in each story. In the north end, however, the windows are east of the interior chimney; in the south end, the windows are west of the exterior chimney.

The rear or west section covers the west side except for a first and second story window in the north bay.

The rear section built in the 1890's, is two bays long and one room deep. On the south side is a one story, shed-roofed addition, with a vestibule in the east bay.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

When George Gorrell purchased this property in 1888 from Frank Wakeland for \$2600<sup>1</sup>, the front four-room section was already built. He added the back section soon after he moved in, and the house has remained in the Gorrell family since then. Frank Wakeland had inherited the property from his father, Benjamin F. Wakeland, in 1879<sup>2</sup>, who had bought it from Ransom Carroll of Baltimore County.

Although a common late 19th century farmhouse for Harford County, this simple, standard house has several interesting features--typical of the way houses were "customized" for each customer. Indicative of that era's emphasis on visitors' first impressions, the flamboyant entrance is completely incongruous with the house's innate modesty. Also, the mantel in the south parlor with its <sup>over-</sup>scaled double row of dentils and large brackets is a grand gesture in an otherwise ordinary interior.

FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Liber ALJ 60, Folio 256.
- <sup>2</sup> Liber ALJ 40, Folio 33.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

### 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Land & Will Records of Harford County; Jennings & Herrick Map, 1858; Martenet's Map, 1878

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 Site 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

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

TITLE SEARCH

HA- 1291

Wakeland-Gorrell House

ALJ 60/256 April 6, 1888

Grantor: Benjamin F. Wakeland, Georgeanna Wakeland

Grantee: George D. Gorrell, Henry Gorrell

Acreage: 36-3/4 Acres

Sum: \$1200, with \$1400 mortgage

ALJ 40/33 July 14, 1879

Grantor: Benjamin Wakeland

Grantee: Benjamin F. Wakeland

Acreage: 36-3/4 Acres

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.<sup>1</sup> In a description of the boundaries of Mitchell's land, this property was referred to as part of "Stony Ridge" and "Paca's Enlargement".<sup>2</sup> Originally, this land had belonged to John Paca, who in 1775 conveyed it to John Blackburn,<sup>3</sup> Blackburn then sold it to Thomas Perigrine Farsby who exchanged it with Amos Cord in 1776.<sup>4</sup>

Also, on December 17, 1783, John Stevenson sold 243 acres of "Stony Ridge" to John Mitchell for 486 pounds.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup>

It is said that in 1831 Elisha Mitchell possessed the land on which the Bechtold-Lohr house and the Mitchell-Lauterbach (HA-028) house now stand.<sup>8</sup> William's house burned. Robert owned the property where the Winfield Mitchell house (HA-026), 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 house<sup>9</sup>, Samuel built the Markline house (HA-023)<sup>10</sup> and eventually occupied his father's house; John Thomas built the Mitchell Tenant house #1,<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup>

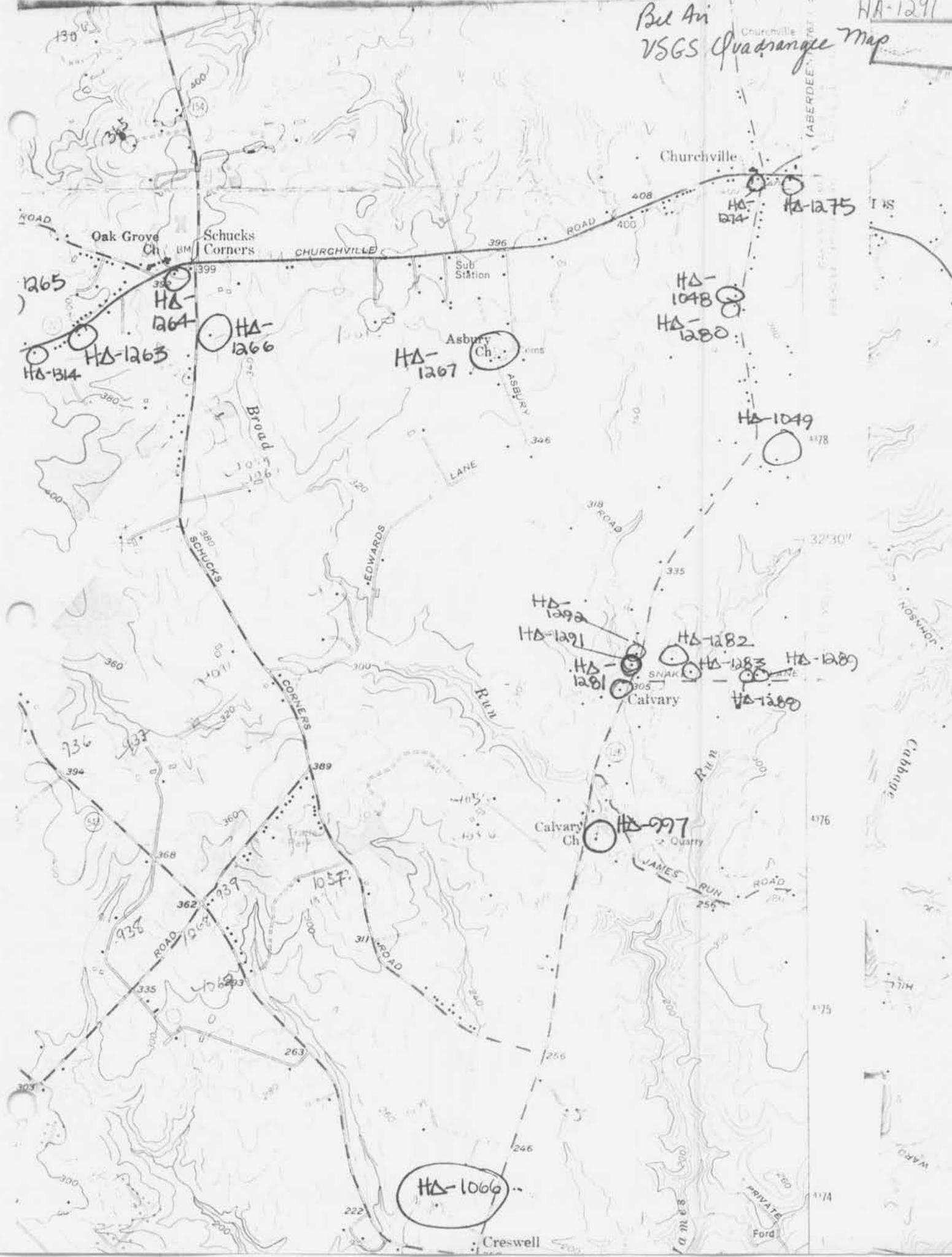
Thus, most of the Mitchell houses on Snake Lane were built during the last quarter of the 19th century by the children of Robert Mitchell.

Footnotes

- 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

Bel Air  
VSGS Quadrangle Map

HA-1291





HA- 1291

Wakeland-Gorrell house  
Churchville, MD 21028  
Natalie Shivers  
February, 1979  
Southeast elevation



Wakeland-Gorrell House HA- 1291  
Churchville, MD 21028  
Natalie Shivers  
February, 1979  
Northwest elevation