HO-33

Blandair

**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: 02-07-2013*
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

Property Name: Blandair
Inventory Number: HO-33

Address: 6651 Rt. 175 City: Columbia Zip Code: 21044
County: Howard USGS Topographic Map: Savage
Owner: Howard County Maryland

Is the property being evaluated a district? yes

Tax Parcel Number: 3 Tax Map Number: 36 Tax Account ID Number: 140 64 25 151
Project: Howard County Dept. of Recreation and Parks

Site visit by MHT Staff: no X yes Name: Thomas Reinhart Date: January 4, 2003

Is the property located within a historic district? yes x no

If the property is within a district

NR-listed district yes Eligible district yes District Name: 
Preparer’s Recommendation: Contributing resource yes no Non-contributing but eligible in another context

If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)

Preparer’s Recommendation: Eligible x yes no

Criteria: X A B C x D Considerations: _A B C D E F G None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination:  (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)

Blandair is a 300-acre farm with about 20 historic resources in varying conditions. The property has a five-bay two-story brick
dwelling house, built c. 1858, with an original two-story wing. Outbuildings are arranged in two groupings, a domestic group
near the dwelling house and an agricultural group. A smokehouse and slave quarter (both 1850’s) and a partially collapsed
garage (c. 1937) comprise the domestic group. The quarter is notable. It is a double-pen, sawn plank structure on a raised
stone foundation. The first story has two rooms that communicate around a central double fireplace. The second story has two
rooms accessed by separate stairs. The agricultural group is a conglomeration of buildings ranging in date from the mid-19th to
the mid-20th centuries, including: a granary, (c. 1844) a springhouse-dairy (c. 1850), two tenant houses (1850’s), a barn (c.
1930), a hog house (signed 1939), a hay barn (1942), and several tractor and equipment sheds (all c. 1950). The historic
landscape has been largely overgrown, but two unimproved lanes of early 19th-century date have survived. There is
documentary evidence of earlier farm structures (c. 1798) and the location of at least one archaeological site is known.

The property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, C and D. Blandair is the last undeveloped
agricultural parcel in Columbia, and retains a significant collection of 19th- and early 20th-century outbuildings. The dwelling
house is an outstanding example of antebellum plantation architecture, a type that would be made obsolete by emancipation of

MAryland Historical Trust Review
Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended
Criteria:  X A B C X D Considerations: _A B C D E F G None

Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

Reviewer, NR Program Date
the slaves. The interiors finishes of the house are well preserved, and its materials and design mark a transition from traditional handcrafts to more industrialized building trades. The slave cabin is an almost pristine example of the type having interior whitewash and second-floor board partition wall. The outbuildings chronicle significant trends in local and national agriculture from grain production in the early 19th century, to dairying in the late 19th century to the implementation of farm machinery and organic fertilizers. This physical history of agriculture can be extended back through the known archaeological resources on the property.
Blandair is a five bay wide, two bay deep, two and a half story brick (laid in English garden wall brick bond) gabled roof structure with twin chimneys centered into the roof line lying on each side of the central hall which connects identical north and south rectangular, double paneled entrances surmounted by five lite transoms.

An exceptionally fine corbeled brick cornice decorated with a row of header brick dentils is rather unique. A smaller kitchen east wing lies on the east wall of the main house. The interior of the house features random width Georgia pine floors, outstanding marble mantle pieces, and an exceptionally fine staircase which runs all the way to the attic with mahagany bannister and oak spindles.

Associated with John C. Weems who later became a member of congress and Mr. Theodoric Bland, Chancellor of Maryland Blandair is presently owned by Mrs. Henry Smith.
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM
for the
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

1. NAME
   COMMON: Blandair
   AND/OR HISTORIC: 

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: MD Route 175, Little Patuxent Parkway
   CITY OR TOWN: Columbia
   STATE: Maryland
   COUNTY: Howard

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY (Check One)
   District ☑ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐
   OWNERSHIP
   Public ☐ Private ☑ Public Acquisition:
   ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered
   ☑ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress
   STATUS
   ☑ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress
   ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
   ☑ Yes: Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☐ No
   PRESIDENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
   Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Park ☐ Transportation ☐ Comments
   ☑ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☑ Private Residence ☐ Other (Specify)
   ☐ Educational ☐ Military ☑ Religious ☐ ☐
   ☐ Entertainment ☐ Museum ☑ Scientific ☐ ☐

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   OWNER'S NAME: Mrs. Henry E. Smith
   STREET AND NUMBER: Blandair Route 175
   CITY OR TOWN: Columbia
   STATE: Maryland
   ZIP CODE: 21044

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
   Hall of Records
   STREET AND NUMBER: Howard County Courthouse
   CITY OR TOWN: Ellicott City
   STATE: Maryland
   ZIP CODE: 21043
   Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg, #): See Tax Map 36

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   156/256 p. 3
   TITLE OF SURVEY:
   Howard County Historic Sites Inventory
   DATE OF SURVEY: 1977
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
   Maryland Historical Trust
   STREET AND NUMBER: 21 State Circle
   CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis
   STATE: Maryland
   ZIP CODE: 21401
Blandair is composed of an east and west brick (laid in English garden wall brick bond) wing, the west wing of which is grander in scale, is five bays wide, two bays deep, two and a half stories high with gabled roof (running east-west) holding two central brick chimneys with corbeled edges. A central hall connects the central north and south rectangular double paneled entrance doors which are surmounted by five lite transoms and flanked by two square columns decorated with a single concave flute between which are held two vertical side lites. This entire door is separated from the five lite transom by a projecting wooden lintel. The north and south entrance doors are identical with the exception of the flat roofed portico over the north door which is held by two square posts and crowned by a cornice, above which is a bannister connected by an east and west post and pilaster. A central second floor French door opens on to this small balcony. Basement windows lie under the two east and two west bays of the north and south elevations.

The east wing holds four first and second floor windows on the north wall and a north bay rectangular entrance on the south wall. A rectangular gabled roof nine lite casement dormer window is placed in the center of the roof of the south elevation of the east wing, and decorated with a broken pediment. A square brick chimney lies west of the dormer. A central brick chimney is inset into the east wing flanked by third story six lite casement windows.

The west wing holds a north and south entrance approached by five wooden stairs and flanked by two north and south first floor windows respectively with five north and south second floor windows lying above. Its east and west walls hold two third floor windows in the A line of the gabled roof. Rectangular double-hung fenestration is vertically aligned and proportionally scaled, with six-over-six lites, decorated with flat arched stretcher brick lintels, projecting stone sills and black shutters. Exceptions are the four jib windows located on the second floor of the south facade which originally opened up to a second floor porch which no longer exists and are presently protected by a black wooden railing on the exterior of the house. The middle second floor window on the south elevation of the west wing holds four-over-four lites.

The building is characterized by exceptionally fine brick decoration. A brick water table runs along the entire perimeter of both wings, as well as a brick belt course shortly below the roof line which is terminated at the roof line by a cornice composed of two rows of corbeled bricks decorated with a row of header brick dentils. This unusual cornice which decorates both the east and west wing is quite unique and noteworthy architecturally.

Box wood gardens lie south-east of the house which is surrounded by a grove of mature trees and shrubbery.
Dependencies lie east of the property. A one story gabled roof (running north-south) simple log house was once used for a smoke house. A stone and frame barn lies south of it, both of which are very close to the east wall of the east wing.

North east of these two buildings lies a gabled roof (running north-south) one and a half story high log house with a central square brick chimney once used as a slave quarters. Its west wall holds two rectangular wooden entrances. The north and south elevations hold a single double-hung rectangular first floor window with six-over-six lites and a four lite second floor square casement window.

Further north-east and a distance from the house lie barns and two old houses with modern additions; 1) a stone house with recent frame addition and 2) a frame building with concrete block addition added some twenty-five years ago. Part of the frame structure was torn down when the addition was put on. The sizes of the lumber were random and put together with wooden pegs. A granary stands here too put together with logs.

The property has been surrounded by the new town of Columbia and divided by the new route 175. The house and land have been designated as a Critical Area of State Concern suitable for preservation. It is hoped this will prevent any further encroachment to the property.

The interior features original random width Georgia pine floors, open bible and cross paneled doors and notable marble mantles which feature curvilinear patterns. These mantles were supposedly a wedding gift.

An outstanding staircase runs all the way to the attic and features a black walnut kneewel post, oak spindles and mahogany bannister.
According to Celia Holland, local Howard County Historian, Blandair is located on a tract of land once a part of "Talbott's Resolution Manor" which was surveyed in 1714 by John and Elizabeth Talbott and comprised 1087 acres.

It was later acquired by Nicholas Gassaway, who in his will of 1757 bequeathed to "his three sons, Benjamin, Richard and Robert Gassaway, all my tract called "Talbott's Resolution Manor". Witnesses of this will were John Dorsey (of John) and Caleb Dorsey (of John). These witnesses locate the testator near the old Brick Church.

During the late 1700's Blandair was acquired by John C. Weems and known as LaGrange. He was a 1794 graduate of St. John's College in Annapolis who later became a member of Congress. It was he who sold the property to Theodoric Bland in 1828.

Theodoric Bland had been authorized to survey a canal route connecting Baltimore City with the Susquehana River. Later he became Chancellor for Maryland and also served as Consul to Brazil by his wife, Sarah Glen, widow of Major Jacob Davies of Baltimore. In 1835 Sarah Battaille Fitzhugh Bland, his daughter married Commodore Isaac Mayo, who distinguished himself in the Mexican War. In 1846 Theodorick Bland, Chancellor of Maryland died in his 70th year. The lovely marble fireplaces throughout the house were supposedly a wedding gift, perhaps to the Chancellor's daughter, Sarah.

Architecturally Blandair has some unusual and rather unique brick decoration for a Howard County mansion. A double decorative brick course forms a closing for the A on each side of the gabled roof which runs east-west. A corbeled brick cornice lies along the eaves of the roof on the north and south elevation decorated by a row of header brick dentils. Otherwise the entire house is laid in English garden wall brick bond as compared to Howard Lodge's entire use of Flemish brick bond.

Blandair is surrounded by many of its original dependencies and sits on a hill commanding a view of the surrounding town of Columbia. This area of some 300 acres has been split in half by Route 175 which passes through the middle of the property. It is the owner's earnest desire that this land be set aside for agricultural use and not development which is the present zoning recommendation. The area has been recommended for inclusion to the State Critical Areas Program and should be considered for inclusion into...
the National Register and any future local landmark legislation.

Local groups and individuals interested in farm preservation should also consider Blandair for inclusion into their program as a further aid in its preservation.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


Interview with Mrs. Henry Smith at Blandair, February 16, 1977.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreage Justification:

Please See Tax Map 36 p. 3
156/256 299.457 acres

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Cleora B. Thompson, Archivist

ORGANIZATION
Comprehensive Planning Section

STREET AND NUMBER:
3450 Courthouse Drive

CITY OR TOWN:
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:
National  State  Local

Signature
BLANDAIR Ho-33
Tax Map 36
MAP OF FLOOD-PRONE AREAS

Blandair Ho-33
U.S. Geological Survey
Map Savage, Md. Quad
HO 33

8130

from SouthWest

Blanchard

SE Apr '72
Flight

4139

11-33

1-16-12

34
9130

April 17

Blondair Frame
Farmers 450 #1
Blundair wagoned, cornerib.