

Maria Bracker House No. K-543
104 Cannon Street
Chestertown, Maryland Mid-18th century

This house was owned in the mid-19th century by Thomas Cuff, a free African-American and later by his daughter, Maria Bracker. It is a four-bay two-story frame house, with two windows on the second floor. On each gable are single windows on both floors. A lean-to porch with simple square posts runs across the front. The house presently is covered with asbestos shingles, covering wooden ship-lap siding. There is a trace of a central chimney, indicated by a plain mid-19th century style mantel on the inside wall of the second floor room on the right hand side. The chimney itself is gone. The staircase, enclosed behind vertical beaded-boards, rises along the rear wall of the first floor room on the right, and turns along the side wall of that room. After years of neglect and exposure this house is in near ruinous condition: porch floor rotten, windows broken out, and rear wing so damaged by fire as to be unsafe.

The Bracker House may be one of four houses bequeathed by Dr. William Murray to his four unmarried daughters in 1768. These included the "house on Cannon Street" where Samuel Dickey now lives." 49/ It is similar in size and style to the nearby Cuff house on Cannon Street and the Isaac Boyer House around the corner on Front Street, (S. Water Street), although lacking the traces of early interior woodwork found in those houses. In any case, the land on which it stands was purchased by Thomas Ringgold from the Murray Sisters in 1774, and remained in the Ringgolds' possession until sold in 1808 to Richard Snowden Thomas, who gave it to

his daughter, Deborah Wright along with the rest of Town Lot Number Five. This property was subsequently sold to Thomas Cuff, who bought over the years much of Scott's Point, including the river front. In the 1840's and 1850's Cuff's daughter, Maria Bracker lived there and conducted an ice cream shop, advertised in the Kent County News on June 6, 1857. "Maria Bracker is now prepared to accommodate ladies and gentlemen with ice cream, cake, and lemonade, prepared every day from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. Her saloon is on Cannon St., between Queen and Water. Families can be supplied by the quart or gallon, or molds, pound or sponge cake by the pound." 50/ On Cuff's death he left it to her, but in 1866, she sold it to William Cotton.

Cotton's daughter Mary married Jonas Haughton in 1888, and they were the parents of five sons. These brothers had a successful jazz band in the 1920's, playing in Baltimore, Atlantic City, etc. The Haughton family had some education, as indicated by their books and written records. When opened in 1991 after many years of being boarded up, the family books, some dating from the 1840s and 1850s, dresses from the 1890s, china, daguerreotypes, and old photographs were still undisturbed. Also there were financial records of a part of the house they rented out, musical instruments, hand written music, scrapbooks, etc. from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Unfortunately, the contents were disbursed after the house was opened. The significance of the Bracker House is in its 1850s documentation and in this record of an educated African-American family of the latter half of the 19th century. The widow of one of the brothers has been considered as the owner, but the title is in contest by other heirs.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

K-543

MARIA BRACKER HOUSE

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization

- 1) Eastern Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period

- 10) Agricultural-Industrial Transition

Historic Period Themes

- 2) Architecture
- 7) Social/Cultural

Resource Type

Category - Building, private, occupied, public acquisition - not applicable, not accessible,
present use - private residence unoccupied

Historic Environment - Village

Historic Functions and Uses - Dwelling

Unknown Design Source

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. *K-543*

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Maria Bracker House

and/or common Haughton House

2. Location

street & number 104 Cannon St. not for publication

city, town Chestertown vicinity of congressional district One

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mrs. Freddie Mae Haughton, c/o Chauncey Haughton

street & number 97 Charter Circle telephone no.: 414-941-3438

city, town Ossining state and zip code NY 10562-6004

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber JKH 5

street & number Cross Street folio 577

city, town Chestertown state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title NONE

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-543

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This four-bay, two-story frame house has two rooms on each floor. A central wall divides the house into two dwelling units. There are traces of a central chimney. The stair rises in the rear corner of the first story room on the right. The condition overall is ruinous.

The house is a four-bay, two-story frame house, with two windows on the second floor. On each gable are single windows on both floors. A lean-to porch with simple square posts runs across the front. The house presently is covered with asbestos shingles, covering wooden ship-lap siding. There is a trace of a central chimney, indicated by a plain mid-19th century style mantel on the inside wall of the second floor room on the right hand side. The chimney itself is gone. The staircase enclosed behind vertical beaded boards, rises along the rear wall of the first floor room on the right, and turns along the side wall of that room. After years of neglect and exposure this house is in near ruinous condition: porch floor rotten, windows broken out, and rear wing so damaged by fire as to be unsafe.

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 checked="" 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	1760-1770	Builder/Architect	Unknown
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check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Bracker House is possibly an 18th century structure, but certainly dates from the 1840's, when Maria Bracker operated an ice cream shop there. Bracker was the daughter of Thomas Cuff, a free African-American who owned substantial property in the Scott's Point section of Chestertown. The Cotton-Haughton Family, who have owned it since 1866, left in the house a remarkable collection of books, clothes, rent records, musical instruments, and furniture chronicling the life of an educated African-American family in the latter part of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Bracker House may be one of four houses bequeathed by Dr. William Murray to his four unmarried daughters in 1768. These included the "house on Cannon Street where Samuel Dickey now lives." It is similar in size and style to the nearby Cuff House on Cannon Street and the Boyer House around the corner on Front Street, (S. Water Street) although lacking the traces of early interior woodwork found in those houses. In any case, the land on which it stands was purchased by Thomas Ringgold from the Murray sisters in 1774, and remained in the Ringgolds' possession until sold in 1808 to Richard Snowden Thomas, who gave it to his daughter, Deborah Wright, along with the rest of Lot Number Five. This property was subsequently sold to Thomas Cuff, who bought over the years much of Scott's Point, including the river front. In the 1840's and 1850's Cuff's daughter, Maria Bracker lived there and conducted an ice cream shop, advertised in the Kent County News on June 6, 1857. "Maria Bracker is now prepared to accommodate ladies and gentlemen with ice cream, cake, and lemonade, prepared every day from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. Her saloon is on Cannon St., between Queen and Water. Families can be supplied by the quart or gallon, or molds, pound or sponge cake by the pound." On Cuff's death he left it to her, but in 1866, she sold it to William Cotton.

Cotton's daughter Mary married Jonas Haughton in 1888, and they were the parents of five sons. These brothers had a successful jazz band in the 1920's, playing in Baltimore, Atlantic City, etc. The Haughton family had some education, as indicated by their books and written records. When opened in 1991 after many years of being boarded up, the family books, some dating from the 1840s and 1850s, dresses from the 1890s, china, daguerreotypes, and old photographs were still undisturbed. Also there were financial records of a part of the house they rented out, musical instruments, hand written music, scrapbooks, etc. from the late 19th century and early 20th century. Unfortunately, the contents were disbursed after the house was opened. The significance of the Bracker House is in its 1850s documentation and in this record of an educated African-American family of the latter half of the 19th century. The widow of one of the brothers has been considered as the owner, but the title is in contest by other heirs.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-543

Kent County Land Records Wills KCW Liber 4 F352, Administrative Accounts and Inventories Kent County News, Chestertown, MD June 6, 1857

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davy H. McCall

organization Historical Society of Kent County date February 21, 1996

street & number Church Alley telephone 410-778-3499

city or town Chestertown state MD

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.

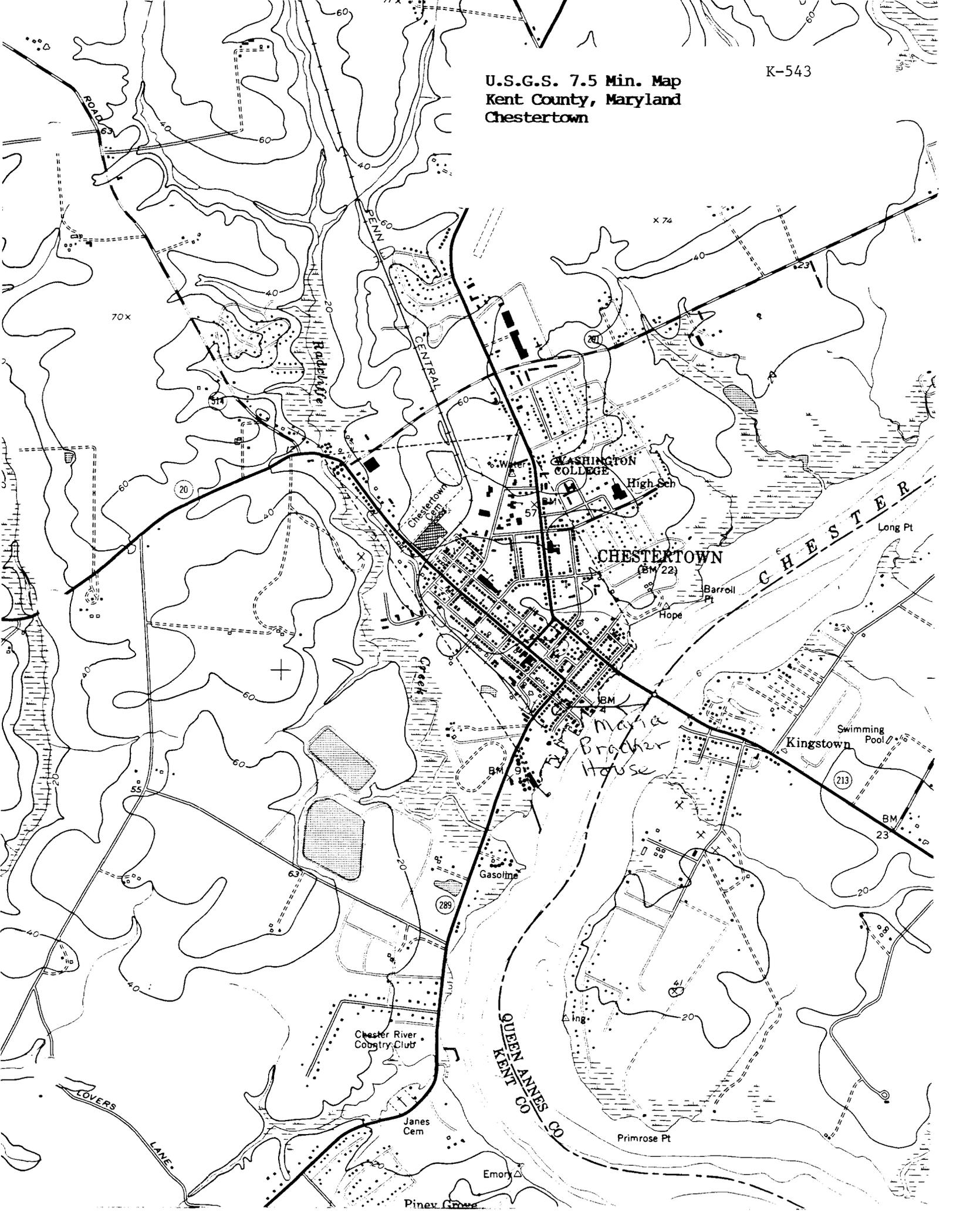
The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
 DNCR/DHOD
 100 COLLEGE PLACE
 CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
 410-326-7300

U.S.G.S. 7.5 Min. Map
Kent County, Maryland
Chestertown

K-543





Marvia Bracker House - K-543
102-104 Cannon Street
Chestertown

Northeast facade

M. Bowne

March 1996