

Site: M:26/15/4

Reuben Hill House

305 Lincoln Avenue

Built: 1880

Enlarged:ca.1917

Private

The Hill family was one of the earliest in the area that now comprises the black community of Lincoln Park: this house has been occupied by four generations of that family. The original two rooms and attic were enlarged (ca.1917) to nearly double its size, and modest decorative touches were added that reflected the relative prosperity of this pioneer black family.

DOE yes no
NR yes no**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form****1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Reuben Hill House

and/or common

2. Locationstreet & number 305 Lincoln Avenue not for publicationcity, town Rockville vicinity of congressional district 8

state Maryland county Montgomery (RV Planning Area 6)

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 Carlisle Blair Hill

street & number 305 Lincoln Avenue telephone no.: 762-2422

city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery Co. Land Records liber 5966

street & number Montgomery Co. Courthouse folio 788

city, town Rockville state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

te (Lincoln Park) 1975, 1979 state county local

depository for survey records Needwood Mansion, Needwood Road

city, town Derwood state Maryland

7. Description

Survey No. M:26/15/4

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

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

The subject house faces north on Lincoln Avenue. It sits on a narrow, deep lot. The secluded rear yard is screened by large shrubs. A rectangular shed-roofed building with narrow lap siding is in the rear yard, and another small frame shed-roofed building, perhaps a former privy, is off the southeast corner of the house on the lot line.

This simple 2-1/2 story frame three-bay by three-bay four room house is one room deep with an attached kitchen wing on the rear, typical of modest vernacular dwellings of the period. It has a composition shingled cross-gable roof and the original exterior sheathing has been covered with asphalt wood-grain shingles. The foundation is rough-coursed fieldstone parged with cement. There is an interior brick chimney with arched top at the center front and a plain brick chimney at the southwest corner of the rear. The original "L" shape of the structure has been infilled on the southeast side by a shed roofed addition, probably an open side porch with sleeping porch above. A cinder block rear porch has been added to the infill. The house probably incorporates part of an earlier, smaller dwelling as shown by the presence of a window in the wall between the two first story rooms.

Modestly built, this utilitarian house has little remaining ornamentation other than the stick work ladder trim underneath the front porch lintel. Its 2-1/2 story arrangement of front dwelling and rear kitchen wing identify it as predating its predominantly 20th century neighbors. Windows are 2/2 with plain surrounds, now flanked by PVC non-functional shutters, and the upper windows are shorter than the lower story ones.

The three-bay north (front) facade has regular fenestration, one window in each second story bay and one in the 1st and 3rd bays, first story. The center bay has a wood panel exterior door with 8 small lights at the top. The full width front porch is one step up from the front cement sidewalk and has a low hipped asphalt-shingled roof supported by four square posts connected by a plain stick and rail ladder lattice at the top. A balustrade of shaped and pierced slats jigsaw in a diamond format connects the end posts to the house.

Continued on attachment 7.1

M:26/15/4
305 Lincoln Avenue
Attachment 7.1

The three-bay east facade has one small square four light attic window in the front gable with one window in the second story front block and a row of three in the rear addition. The first story has one window in the front block, and one window in the rear addition. The infill addition has no south fenestration. An exterior square brick chimney is at the southeast corner of the addition. A small shed-roofed rear porch is cinderblock on the east and the west half asphalt shingles. A two light window is in the cinder block side and a wood panel exterior door with four lights is in asphalted side.

The south (rear) facade is composed of the gabled rear wing and the infill, previously described. One four light square window is in the gable. One window is on the second story, and one is on the first.

The three-bay east facade has an irregular fenestration and is formed of the one bay front and two bay rear wing. There is one small four light window in the gable and one window in each story in the gabled front section. One window is in the center bay, second story, of the wing, and a small square opening is in the center bay, first story. One window is in the south bay, first story.

8. Significance

Survey No. M:26/15/4

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1880, altered ca. 1917 **Builder/Architect**

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.

Significance

The home of Carlisle Blair Hill has been occupied by four generations of the Hill family, one of the pioneer families in the black community of Lincoln Park. The original three to four room vernacular dwelling house was constructed in 1880, with additions made ca. 1917.

History and Support

The 1879 Hopkins Atlas documents the presence of five black households in an area north of the Rockville town limits and just east of the B&O railroad tracks. 1/ Another home was built in this neighborhood in 1880 2/ when former Confederate soldier, Simeon Berry, purchased approximately one acre of land from Chandler Keys. Two days later, one half of this land was sold for \$50 to Reuben Thomas Hill. 3/ The remainder of this lot and the small Berry cottage thereon became the property of Reuben Hill, father of Reuben Thomas Hill, in December of 1880 by the last Will and Testament of Simeon Berry. The real and personal property devised to Mr. Hill consisted of "My house and lot of ground whereon I now dwell purchased of Chandler Keys...one horse and wagon, post machiene(sic), tools and house furniture". 4/ Among the items of house furniture were a looking glass, bedstead, table and chairs.

continued on attachment 8.1

M:26/15/4
305 Lincoln Avenue
Attachment 8.1

The elder Reuben Hill (1832-1916), a former slave of the Stonestreet family, was age 35 or 36 at the time of the 1867 Census of Former Slaves. His marriage to free black Rachel Martin was not legally recognized due to his status as a slave, but since Rachel was a free "mulatto", their children were also free. She was listed as Head of Household in the 1860 Census; listed in her household was a son Reuben, age 4 (Reuben Thomas Hill).

Reuben (Senior) and Rachel were legally married in 1871 and three years later purchased acreage on part of the original land grant "Burgundy". This land lay east of the present Horners Lane; the home they constructed there is one of the five shown on the 1879 Hopkins Atlas (Attachment 8.4).

The Assessment Records for 1881 list the Hill family's three houses:

Reuben Hill was assessed for an improved lot near Rockville with a value of \$300 ("Burgundy" or Horner's Lane property) and also one acre of "Valentine's Garden Enlarged", improved value \$150 (305 Lincoln).

Reuben Thomas Hill owned lot "bought of Berry" with improvement valued at \$200 (Unidentified Lincoln Park lot).

In 1891 Union veteran William Wallace Welsh, who owned the General Store near the depot, purchased eight acres of "Valentine's Garden Enlarged" and laid out two blocks (31 lots) intended as building sites for sale to blacks. He named the subdivision "Lincoln Park": the two blocks lay on either side of a street named Lincoln Avenue. The eastern boundary of this development was measured from the Reuben Hill property on "Burgundy". Land Record JA23/391 states that the subdivision begins "...at a stone in front of Reuben Hill's lot on the west side of Shaw's Lane". This first section of Lincoln Park measured 455.4 feet by 802 feet, as per Montgomery County Plat B-13. The western boundary is not mentioned in the deed, but is the subject site. The 305 Lincoln property is also the southern boundary of the one block "Addition to Lincoln Park" platted in 1892 as seen on the attached copy of Plat B-35 (Attachment 8.5).

The original dwelling house built by Simeon Berry and willed to Reuben Hill was frame and known to have been one room wide by two rooms deep. 5/ A staircase leads to the second floor from the rear room, but it is not known whether the house was one story with loft or had a second floor originally. Several of the earliest Lincoln Park houses still show a one room by two room configuration, and that this size is

M:26/15/4
305 Lincoln Avenue
Attachment 8.2

typical of the times is illustrated in an advertisement for a "two-story frame dwelling with four rooms" for sale in Lincoln Park, that appeared in the Montgomery County Sentinel of April 28, 1899.

Reuben Thomas Hill and his sister Sarah Hill Carlile (sic) purchased 305 Lincoln Avenue from their father in 1896 for \$200. 6/ Reuben Thomas Hill's wife Carrie Blair Hill owned a lot across the street but did not build upon it.

The additions made to the subject house are thought to date ca. 1917, a year after the death of the senior Reuben Hill. The Tax Records show a large increase in the value of the property, improved to a value of \$559 in 1918. Reuben Thomas Hill was a skilled carpenter, and therefore it is likely that the enlargement was his own work. The inventory of this estate in 1936 included an appraisal of his tools. Reuben Thomas Hill was also the long-time Sexton of Christ Episcopal Church; as such he would have been responsible for general maintenance and small repairs to the Church property.

The enlargement of the house included the addition of two rooms to the east side and the construction of a full width porch with a decorative cornice. Among the rooms added were a kitchen/pantry area opening off a back porch. The porch probably housed a pump since none of the Lincoln Park homes had running water, electricity or plumbing until close to mid-century. The house may have been increased to two full floors and attic at this time. At the time of Reuben Thomas Hill's death in 1936 the house and lot were valued at \$2,000. The acreage had been increased to its original size by the addition of the property on the west, sold to the Sedgewicks in 1890, but returned to the Hills in 1924.

During the early years of the Hill ownership of 305 Lincoln Avenue, most of the lots in Lincoln Park and Addition to Lincoln Park had been sold. By 1920, fewer than 30 houses had been constructed, of which seven were rental properties owned by Mr. Welsh. 7/ Residents of the area also remember that at least two log cabins remained for many years, reminders of the 19th century. Lincoln Park was not annexed to the City until 1950; four years later dusty Lincoln Avenue was paved.

The Hill House was bequeathed by Reuben Thomas Hill to his two daughters Edith Manley and Leola Williams and to his grandson Carlisle Blair Hill, whose father was deceased. 8/ Blair Hill was raised in the house by his two aunts and is now the owner and occupant of the house. Other branches of the Hill and allied families reside in

M:26/15/4
305 Lincoln Avenue
Attachment 8.3

Lincoln Park, and other examples of the early houses are interspersed among the newer dwellings built over the last 40 years. 9/.

Footnotes:

1. Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington Including The County of Montgomery: Philadelphia, G.M.Hopkins (1879) p.9. (attachment 8.4)
2. Montgomery County Sentinel of November 26, 1880, carried the brief obituary of Mr. Berry. He was a native of Alabama, who settled in the County after the Civil War. The house is dated to 1880 based on the absence of any other structure at the site in the 1879 Atlas, nor was any building belonging to Chandler Keys in the vicinity.
3. Montgomery County Land Records EBP22/385 and 387 (1880).
4. Montgomery County Will Records RWC6/262 - The Last Will and Testament of Simeon Berry. In the 1880 Census, Simeon Berry was listed as a white, 52-year-old fence builder. He was illiterate, as he signed his name with an "X". His relationship to Reuben Hill is unknown, but Hill was to receive all monies due the Berry estate and pay all funeral expenses, so it is likely that Berry had no family.
5. The contractor for the present rehabilitation described the presence of a window in what is now the wall between the two front rooms. The extant central chimney was used for fireplaces (now bricked up) but the parlor mantelpiece is still extant.
6. Land Records JA17/94 (1896). A marriage license was granted to Reuben Hill and Carrie Blair in 1879. Cemetery Records at the Montgomery County Historical Society list Carrie E. Hill (1861-1923).
7. Development and history of Lincoln Park is contained in several references including the Afro-American Institute for Historic Preservation and Community Development, Part III, History of Lincoln Park, p.45, et seq. Additional information provided by Ethel Shelton and Sharyn Duffin.
8. Carlisle L. Hill b. 1895, d. 1925 was buried at Lincoln Park Cemetery.
9. 302 Lincoln was built by Fannie Hill Cook and her husband George, who were married in 1886. It was the home of the Senior Reuben Hill after the 1902 sale of the "Burgundy" property. (See Survey Site M:26/15/2.) Descendants of Vernon Hill (another son of Reuben, Senior) currently occupy homes on Douglass and Lincoln Avenues.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. M:26/15/4

Montgomery County Land, Will, and Tax Records. Interviews and histories of Lincoln Park with residents and members of the Hill family. Montgomery County Historical Society collection of maps, plats, records of 1867 ex-slave census, and cemetery records.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .19 acre

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
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Anne Cissel	Judy Christensen, Arch. Description
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organization	Peerless Rockville	date	May, 1986
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street & number	P.O. Box 4262	telephone	762-0096
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city or town	Rockville	state	Maryland 20850
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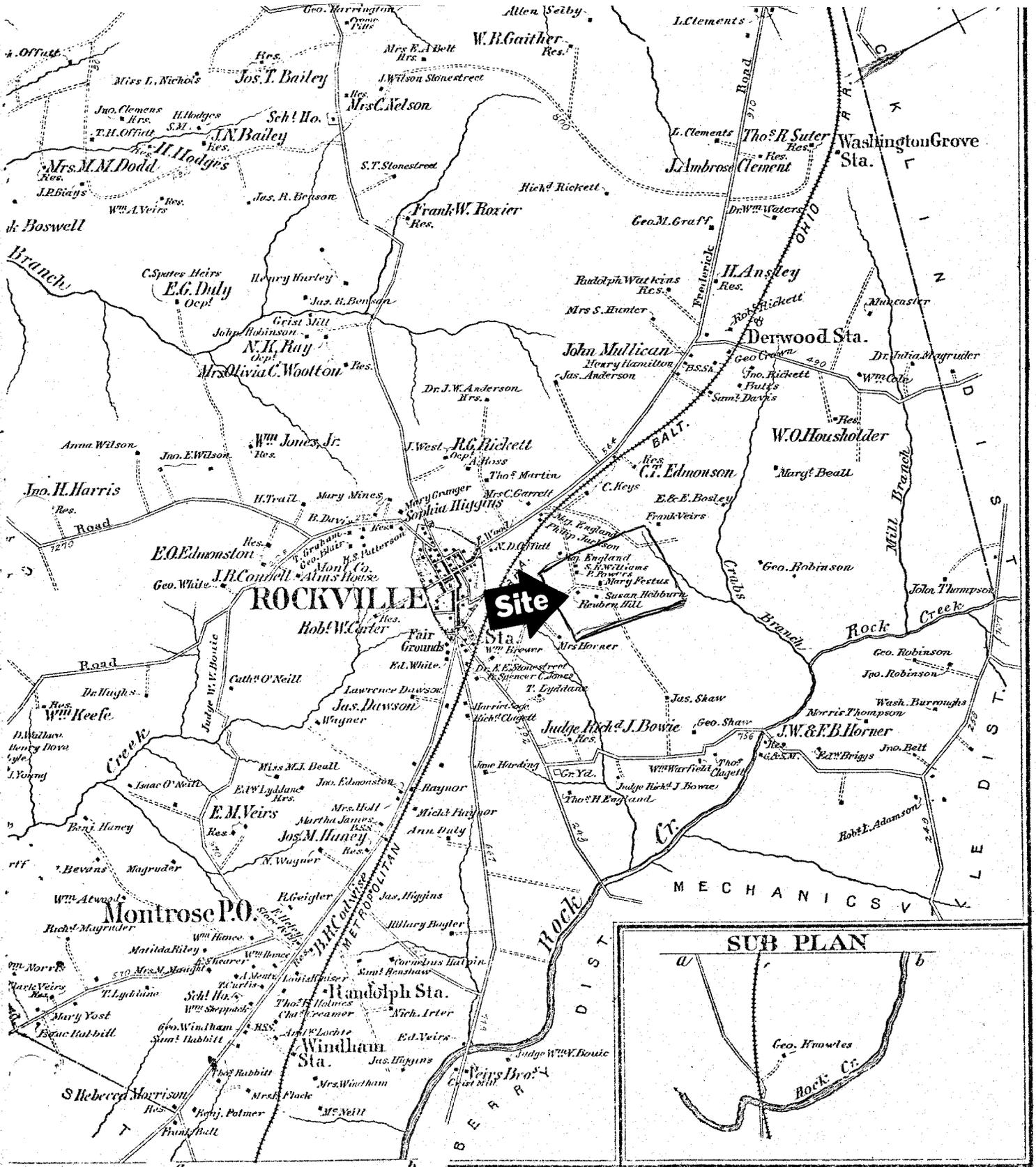
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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

M:26/15/4
305 Lincoln Avenue
Attachment 8.4

Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington Including The County of Montgomery
Philadelphia, G.M.Hopkins (1879) p.9.



1879 HOPKINS



RICHARD H. ANDREWS
424-8282
1608 FARRAGUT AVE.
ROCKVILLE, MD 20851

m: 26/15/4

Reuben Hill House

305 Lincoln

Rockville

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