

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. M: 35-77

1. Name of Property (Indicate preferred name)

historic Frank Simpson House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 3807 Williams Lane ___ not for publication

city, town Chevy Chase ___ vicinity of

state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district)	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Francis X. & I.S. Emmet

street & number 3807 Williams Lane telephone no:

city, town Chevy Chase state and zip code Maryland 20815

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse Tax Map and Parcel HN342; P413

city, town Rockville state Maryland Liber and Folio 00953/0162

6. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Individually Listed in the National Register
- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- HSR or Research report at MHT
- Other:

7. Description

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Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

Resource Count:

See attached

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/77 Frank Simpson House (1898)
3807 Williams Lane
Section 7:2

The Frank Simpson House, built in 1898, is located on the north side of Williams Lane, in the Village of Chevy Chase, Section 5. The house is a 2-1/2-story, L-shaped, vernacular Queen Anne house characterized by its projecting front gable and its wrap-around porch. The frame structure has weatherboard walls and is covered with a cross gable roof clad with decoratively shaped asphalt shingles.

The south and principal elevation of the house faces Williams Lane and consists of the two-bay end wall of the main wing of the ell. The first story consists of a side entry door and a single four-light, double-hung window, while the second story has two 1/1 windows. Corner boards frame the corners of the wall and support a plain frieze board which separates the second story from the projecting gable and attic level. The gable is steeply pitched and clad with wood shingles and articulated by a projecting raking cornice and cornice returns. The gable presents a central tri-partite window which features a single 1/1 sash flanked by lower undivided and fixed sidelights. A one-story porch with a hipped roof supported by wood columns with scroll-sawn knee brackets wraps around from the front to the east side of the house. The front porch is three bays wide and raised above ground level. It is reached by a set of stairs leading to the front entry door which is located to the side. The ceiling has narrow beaded boards.

On the east side of the front wing, the porch, which historically extended three bays to meet the cross wing of the house, has been enclosed with glass at its two end bays. A second-story sleeping porch sits atop the enclosed first-story section.

There is a one-story enclosed addition on the west side of the house at the intersection of the projecting main wing and the rear wing. It has weatherboard walls and a half-hipped roof clad with asphalt shingles.

The rear wing of the house projects one bay to the west side of the main wing. This bay is defined by the one-story addition on the first story and by a single 1/1 window on the second story.

The north (rear) elevation of the house was not accessible.

8. Significance

Survey No.

M:35-77

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1898 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or
Applicable Exceptions: A B C D E F

Level of Significance: national state local

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture and Community Planning

Resource Type: Individual

Category: Residential

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Residential

Known Design Source:

CONTINUATION SHEET

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The Frank Simpson House represents the beginning of the Williams Station community that grew along Williams Lane, providing newcomers with access to the Chevy Chase Land Company streetcar stop located on Connecticut Avenue. It also represents the earliest Williams Lane house built by a person outside the Williams family on land that was once part of the Williams Farm. The house was built in 1898 by Frank Simpson, a prominent local builder whose extended family lived and worked in Chevy Chase in various branches of the construction business.

In January 1898, John M. C. "Clayton" Williams sold a 1/5 acre lot to Frank Simpson for \$500. This low price indicates that no house was yet constructed on this site. Simpson built a house within the next few months as it was assessed the same year with improvements of \$1,200.¹

Frank Simpson was a carpenter-builder whose family had previously settled on Jones Mill Road, near Small's Nursery. He lived here with his wife, Grace, and family. Frank and Grace Simpson were founding members and leaders of the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church which they helped organize in 1912, and Frank was elected to the first Board of Trustees. They were active members of the Section 5 Citizens Association, and Frank Simpson served as building inspector for many years. In 1920, other family members living at their residence included their 7-year-old daughter, Grace's mother, Flora, and three nieces.²

Williams Lane was originally a private access road. Clayton Williams had established a farm in the vicinity in 1883, with no house at 3807 Williams Lane.³ By 1905, seven years after Simpson had built his house, the road was 20 feet wide. In 1911, the Simpson address was listed as "Williams Station." The road is first shown on a 1910 map by which time five residences had

¹Deed TD 2:255. Judgement Record JLB 3:125-6. Lot size was 8,788 square feet. Tax Assessment Records.

²Caldwell Directory, 1911 and 1915. Offutt, *History of Bethesda*, 156. Fava Naeff map, 1890. Homer Smith, "75th Anniversary: Chevy Chase United Methodist Church," 1987. Minutes, Chevy Chase Citizens Association, Section 5, 1916-1937.

³Hattie Blum's 1972 article, "Brookville Road and Williams Lane," contains a fictional account of Williams Lane which incorrectly states that 3807 Williams Lane was built for Bettie Williams c.1868. Bettie Williams did not marry until 1879. Janet Manuel. Marriage Licenses. Nellie Offutt Chesley. The Offutt Family Book (4:312), MCHS.

CONTINUATION SHEET

M:35/77: Frank Simpson House (1898)
3807 Williams Lane
Section 8:3

been built.⁴

Frank and Grace Simpson bought and sold property on both sides of Williams Lane during their residency. They purchased the Laura Williams House from her estate in 1910 and later sold it to realtor Edward H. Jones. The Simpsons also acquired from the Williams heirs the 1.2 acre parcel immediately east of their house.⁵

By 1923, Frank Simpson moved to 7315 Brookville Road where his brother had built a house. In 1925 the house on Williams Lane was advertised for sale for \$15,000:

This fine property within half a square of Connecticut Avenue, facing south on a paved street, probably represents the maximum it is possible to secure in a real home in this desirable community. The house is splendidly built and has just been thoroughly renovated. There are eight rooms...large screened sleeping porch; bath and extra toilet and lavatory; oak floors throughout...There are several outbuildings which provide ample housing facilities for ponies or horses, as well as space for several automobiles. Many shade trees."⁶

Throughout much of the remaining 20th century, the house has been preserved under the stewardship of Francis X. and Ilene Emmet.

⁴1911 Caldwell Directory. "Chevy Chase in 1910" map, Roselle George thesis, p. 108 (original at Chevy Chase Historical Society). 1915 Caldwell map. Simpson deed cited in Equity Case 2172, Judgement Record JLB 3:114. See MHT form for Resource #35/13-3, the John H. C. "Clayton" Williams House, 3707 Williams Lane, for more on this property.

⁵Plat of Subdivision of the Estate of J.M.C. Williams (1913), Plat Book 2:159. Plat of Williams Lane (1923), Plat Book 3:226. See also MHT Inventory Form: 35/76 Laura Williams House, 3806 Williams Lane (1998).

⁶Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form, #35/72: Simpson Family House, 7315 Brookville Road (January 1998). *Evening Star*, April 11, 1925: Real Estate, 21. Frank Simpson residing at the Brookville Road house by 1923, according to Minutes of March 5, 1923, Chevy Chase Citizens Association, Section 5.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. M:35/77

See attached

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 12,828 Sq. Ft.

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

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

1. Form Prepared By

name/title	Clare Lise Cavicchi, Historic Preservation Planner		
organization	Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission	date	November 1998
street & number	8787 Georgia Avenue	telephone	301-563-3400
city or town	Silver Spring	state	Maryland 20910-3760

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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M:35/77: Frank Simpson House (1898)
3807 Williams Lane
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Directories:

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Martenet and Bond, *Map of Montgomery County, Maryland*, 1865.

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Secondary Sources:

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Cavicchi, Clare Lise. *Maryland Historical Trust Inventory Form. 35/76: Laura Williams House, 3806 Williams Lane.* January 1998.

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M:35/77: Frank Simpson House (1898)
3807 Williams Lane





MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FORM
LOCATIONAL MAP

SURVEY NO.: M:35-77
PROPERTY NAME: Frank Simpson House
TOWN: Chevy Chase
COUNTY: MONTGOMERY