NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name

other names/site number Finney Houses Historic District HA-1751

2. Location

street & number Glenville Road ☐ not for publication

city, town Churchville ☒ vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Harford code 025 zip code 21028

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
☒ private	☐ building(s)	8	2 buildings
☐ public-local	☒ district		sites
☐ public-State	☐ site		structures
☐ public-Federal	☐ structure		objects
	☐ object	8	2 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official — Date 5-11-89

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling
Domestic/Secondary Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling
Domestic/Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Federal
Gothic
Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls Stone
Wood
roof Slate
other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The Finney Houses Historic District stretches along both sides of Glenville Road just north of the unincorporated village of Churchville in central Harford County, Maryland. The district takes in four houses and their outbuildings erected by members of the locally important Finney family between 1821 and 1906. To include all the widely-spaced buildings, the district perforce comprises roughly 200 acres. The land is flat and open, given to fields and pasture. Major vegetation exists only around the four "homesteads." This results in four sequestered residences, with sweeping vistas from house to house available from the road, from the edges of the gardens, or from the fields. The four main structures represent a small history of Harford County architecture and reflect the evolution of taste over three generations of a prosperous, educated, professional family. The earliest house is the elegant Federal stone Oak Farm (1821), then followed Greenwood (1841) and the Finney-Marks House (1865), both rather simple frame cross-gable houses, and finally the frame Little Greenwood (1906), designed by the prestigious Baltimore architectural firm of Parker and Thomas and probably Harford county's best example of what has come to be called "the comfortable house."[1] Each of the houses, moreover, is set off by attractive landscaping, generally original in the case of Little Greenwood, and is accompanied by one or more domestic outbuildings, all of which combine to give a cogent sense of place and time and family. The district's boundaries are clearly defined by its neighbors, for it can be easily distinguished visually and functionally from the village of Churchville which borders it to the south, from the sprawling dairy farms which border it to the west and north, and from the mid-to-late-20th century suburban housing to the east.

[X] See continuation sheet 7/1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Finney Houses Historic District takes in approximately 200 acres along both sides of Glenville Road (a two-lane, low-volume, country road) just north of the unincorporated village of Churchville in central Harford County, Maryland. The area, rural until the 1960s and now becoming suburban, is generally flat and open, given to fields for cattle and horse grazing and easy to plow for corn and wheat.. There are four main buildings in the District, all widely separated; all were built by members of the locally important Finney family between 1821 and 1906; each house has a retinue of outbuildings such as barns and stables and ice houses--the sort of buildings usually associated with 19th-century rural domestic architecture but, like the main houses, of an especially high quality. The houses have been lived in continuously by skilled gardeners and each of the four groupings of buildings is set off by elaborate plantings. These landscaping efforts generally prohibit vistas from house to house; instead, it is possible to view one planted "oasis" from another across the fields or down the road and this gives visual unity to the District. The District derives further unity through its history: not only have all four homesteads been associated with the Finney family, but originally the entire District was a part of William Finney's Oak Hill farm; that Finney, the local progenitor of the family, built three of the houses, gradually selling off the large lots to his children and grandchildren. A chronological description of each house (and its outbuildings) follows:

OAK FARM (HA-149); 517 Glenville Road; 1821. This elegant Federal two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed fieldstone structure with stone quoins was constructed in two parts: The three-bay main section, built first, has a side-hall/double parlor plan and faces south; there are brick interior chimneys at each end; the rear section, also of stone, two bays long and almost as wide as the main part, forms a large ell to the north. Most windows have six-over-six sash, panelled shutters, and flat brick arches which create a pleasant color and textural contrast with the walls' grayish stone and white mortar. The roof has a box cornice and bed molding; two dormers pierce the south flank of the roof in the main section.

See Continuation Sheet 7/2

The principal (south) facade has the main entrance at the east ground floor bay, reached by an elevated terrace (which replaces a 19th-century wooden porch). The two ground floor and three second floor windows are regularly spaced. A projecting stone beltcourse - a rare refinement in Harford County - visually separates the stories. The entrance has a round-arched wooden door frame of exceptionally high style for the time and place. It is marked by flanking tapered pilasters and delicately panelled jambs and soffitt all crowned by a fanlight. All woodwork and trim is original. The west side of the main section further indicates the builder's concern for high style design. The massive chimney is flanked by six-over-six windows similar to those on the main facade; the chimney itself is marked on the ground and second stories by blind, shuttered windows whose round arches reflect the lines of the three-part attic window. This reliance on blind windows for decorative effect is not known to exist to this extent elsewhere in the county. The interior continues the high quality design and workmanship seen on the exterior. The three-run main staircase, placed against the east wall, has delicate square balusters and scalloped step ends. The two parlors have fireplaces on their west wall: the mantle in the south parlor has a curved shelf set on a cavetto and ovolo cornice and beaded architrave all supported by fluted pilasters; that in the north parlor is similar; mantles and eight-panel interior doors are original. During the 1970s the original wide-board floor was replaced by narrow pine boards, but the present owners - who have painstakingly restored the entire building - found old and uniform wide-width cedar planks and laid them in the house; this at least suggests what might have been there originally.[2]

Many other details throughout the house - doors, hardware, trim, etc. - are original including a marble date plaque inscribed

William Margaret
Finney
1821
Tempus Fugit Irreparabile

The interior of the rear ell was altered during the 1950s; it has subsequently been remodeled several times and now houses a modern kitchen. An elaborate indoor pool and poolhouse is off the east of the ell; it is built low and of carefully laid fieldstone similar to that in the main house and is surprisingly compatible to the 1820s dwelling. There is also a modern barn/stable and garage, none of which detracts from the integrity of the superb main house.

See Continuation Sheet 7/3

GREENWOOD (HA-1279); 331 Glenville Road; 1841. In 1841, William Finney built Greenwood on a southern portion of the Oak Hill tract and also on the east side of Glenville Road; he persuaded a friend to buy the older house and he, his wife, and their six children moved in here. It is a two-and-one-half-story, frame, cross-gable house. Set on a raised fieldstone foundation and covered in cream colored clapboard, the five-bay by two-bay structure sits on a slight rise facing south; the ell is three bays deep and one room wide. All windows are regularly placed, have six-over-six sash, narrow beaded trim, and louvered shutters. The cornice is boxed. The main entrance is in the center of the south facade's ground story; the door (original) has two full-length vertical panels, an eight-light transom, and four-light sidelights. A one-story, hip-roofed porch has always spanned the entire facade; similarly, the exposed portion of the north facade of the main section has always been sheltered by a two-story porch with square railings. The east facade of the ell has been remodeled (when the modern kitchen was added in the 1960s), but every other facade remains as it was when built. The interior of the main section has a broad center stairhall which houses the original two-flight stair; doorways have corner bulls'-eye blocks; mantels in the parlor and dining room are also simple and original. The ell's plan has been rearranged several times.

Immediately east of the ell is a two-story stone spring- and smoke house. The ground story contains the smoke room and a barrel-vaulted room for the water storage tank with a passage leading from it to the well; the second story was used for hanging cured meats. The spring house was at least partially built to incorporate flagstones from the original (c. 1759) St. George's Church, roughly seven miles away in Perryman. That old building was demolished in 1851 when a new church (HA-250; National Register) was erected; Finney salvaged the flagstones, brought them to Greenwood, and they now form the floor of this outbuilding. About 50 yards north of the house is a small mid-19th century frame and stone bank barn, with a large frame barn 50 yards north of it.

See Continuation Sheet 7/4

FINNEY-MARKS HOUSE (HA-1278); 426 Glenville Road; c. 1867. In 1867, William Finney (his wife had died and he had retired)[3] built this frame house for himself and his bachelor oldest son, John Miller Finney (1823-1896). It is a two-and-one-half-story hip-roofed structure that might be interpreted as a slightly smaller scale version of Greenwood and suitable to the needs of two single men. Both houses have a cross-gable configuration; the main section here is three bays wide (five at Greenwood) and two deep. Like the older house, this dwelling has the main door in the center of the principal facade; the porch is conspicuously marked by a "Gothic" peak at its center, above the door. Windows are six-over-six with narrow beaded trim and louvered shutters. There is also a porch sheltering the back door (the east bay of ell's north side), and a two-story porch has been added across the south of the ell. A one-room addition is off the south end of the main section; John M. Finney was a doctor and may have used the room as an office.

There is a large frame barn/stable about 20 yards west of the house; it seems to be of the same period as the house.

LITTLE GREENWOOD (HA-1277); Glenville Road; 1906. Beginning in 1858, William Finney and his wife began selling parcels of their large land holdings to their youngest son, George (1830-1906), a farmer, who, in the last year of his life, deed 20 acres on the west side of Glenville Road to his newly-married son, William, and new daughter-in-law, nee' Elizabeth McCormick.[4] The young couple then hired the prestigious Baltimore architectural firm of Parker and Thomas to design what they called Little Greenwood, the last of the Finney houses to be built. As originally constructed, Little Greenwood was two-and-one-half stories tall beneath a soaring and widely-flared hipped roof. Two shed-roof dormers came from the roof's east slope to light the attic. The house was three bays wide and two deep, with a deep hipped roof porch completely across the north and east facades; the porch is supported by its original and distinctively designed square posts which are clustered to give a vaguely Oriental appearance; windows received distinctive treatment, too, for while of normal six-over-six size, they were divided in half by a large muntin and the resulting

See Continuation Sheet 7/5

halves each had four-over-four sash. In plan, the house had a through center hall, with one large room to the south and two to the north. That original house remains largely intact in plan and massing, and in details such as dormers and porch posts even though the Finneys added a two-story section to the north in 1915; it is smaller in scale than the original section, and its roof, siding, and window treatment are similar to those of the 1906 main section; in 1935 they added an expanded service wing to the west of the 1915 addition; it is small in scale and does not detract form the older sections. The present owners added a new music room in 1980, designed by James Wollon; it, too, is fully sympathetic to Parker and Thomas's fine work.[5] Mrs. Finney was a keen gardener and the grounds of Little Greenwood, now at full maturity, are dotted with 105 different species of trees, 50 species of shrubs, beds of herbaceous perennials, and vast drifts of bulbs.

See Continuation Sheet 7/6

8. Statement of Significance

HA-1751

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1821-1906

Significant Dates
1821
1841
1868
1906

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Parker & Thomas, Architects

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The four houses that comprise the Finney Houses Historic District derive their significance both from their architectural character. The houses, which date from 1821 to 1906, are of note for their own excellence of design and craftsmanship: for example Oak Farm (1821) clearly stands as one of Harford County's best Federal era structures, with perhaps its only equal being its near twin in time and form Woodside (1823; National Register) just as Little Greenwood (1906) is a worthy example of the work of the prominent Baltimore architectural firm of Parker and Thomas. As a group the houses offer a course in the county's architectural history and evolution of taste from the Federal Oak Farm to the "country vernacular" of Greenwood (1841) and the Finney-Marks house (1868) to the sought-for sophistication of Little Greenwood. This sequence parallels the history of building throughout the county: up until the late 19th century, Harford countians, basically a rural, self-contained people, relied on local artisans - carpenters, masons, and so on - and very occasionally a gentleman-amateur with a patternbook to design their buildings. Only towards the end of the century did countians begin to employ trained architects, beginning with a local man, George Archer, and eventually looking beyond the county to Baltimore, where William Finney found Parker and Thomas in an obviously deliberate move towards architectural fashionability.

☒ See continuation sheet for Historic Context & Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: District

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) or Uses(s):

Domestic/Single Dwelling
Domestic/Secondary Structure

Known Design Source: Parker & Thomas, Architects

See Continuation Sheet 8/2

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

The local progenitor of this illustrious family was the Reverend William Finney (1788-1873). He was born in Chester County, Pennsylvania where his ancestors had been established since Robert Finney emigrated there from Belfast in 1720.[7] As William's grandson Dr. John M.T. Finney wrote in his autobiography, A Surgeon's Life, William Finney "was graduated from Princeton College in the class of 1809. Afterward, since he wished to study the ministry and there were no theological seminaries, for three years he took theological training under Reverend Dr. Samuel Martin of York, Pennsylvania. In 1812, William accepted a call to Deer Creek Church, Harford County, Maryland."[8]

That congregation, the oldest established congregation of any sect in Harford County, dates to 1738. The first worshipers met first in a log structure near Deer Creek in the northern section of the county, then moved to a more central (and permanent) site in 1759. By 1812 the congregation was languishing, the number of communicants was declining, and they were without a minister. So two elders, having heard of young Finney, travelled to Pennsylvania to "audition" him, were impressed, and invited him to come down to Maryland and preach a trial service. The parishioners liked what they heard and asked him to move to Harford County, which he did in November of 1813.[9] Finney immediately reversed the history of the church "building up a strong congregation and erecting a substantial brick church edifice."[10] That building (HA-441) is individually listed in the National Register. Moreover, until Finney's arrival, the community around the church had been known rather prosaically as Herbert's Crossroads; but after the church was built and proved (thanks to Finney) to be a success, "at his suggestion the name of the village which had sprung up was changed to Churchville, by which it is now known."[11] So it is not going too far to say that the Finney family is responsible for the existence of their community.

See Continuation Sheet 8/3

Dr. Finney continued the history: "Tradition states that my grandfather ... on his way to take charge of the church, arrived in Maryland on a very hot day. He stopped to eat his lunch under the shade of a beautiful spreading oak tree not far distant from his destination. While resting there, he was so pleased by the beauty of the surrounding country that he decided then and there to settle down and build a house on that spot. This he did after purchasing a large tract of land. The stone house erected there by him still stands"[12] and is known as Oak Farm. The house, built in 1821 as a marble datestone attests, is important for its association with William Finney and also for its own innate elegance and high style (see description). In an area where side hall plans and double parlors were relatively rare, Oak Farm stands out. In addition, its arched blind windows, excellent stone work (and beltcourse), and delicately carved Federal style entranceway and interior trim bespeak a familiarity with more cosmopolitan buildings than Harford County, generally speaking, had to offer at that time. Oak Hill closely resembles another Federal style stone house, Woodside (HA-693, National Register), built two years later by Dr. Joshua Wilson. Finney was well known in his lifetime for his writings and "his fugitive pieces in poetry and prose exhibited great readiness with the pen."[13] One obituary noted that he "was a fine scholar, a man of learning and rare accomplishments, acquainted with the best English authors and classical writers."[14] It is not surprising, then, that in a rural part of the state it would have been two educated men, a minister and a doctor, who would have built houses of relatively cosmopolitan nature. Finney also built and lived in two of the other three houses which make up the District, as will be discussed below.

Finney served as pastor of the Churchville church for over 40 years, until October 4, 1854. During much of that time he had divided his activities between Churchville and a chapel of ease built in 1837 to serve Presbyterians near Darlington - the Deer Creek Harmony Church (HA-165) replaced the chapel and is a designated Harford County Landmark and is a contributing part of the Silver Houses National Register Historic District.

See Continuation Sheet 8/4

After Finney died, the Churchville congregation took up a collection and erected an obelisk in the churchyard to memorialize the man who had done so much for their benefit. When the monument was dedicated in 1874, the then-minister spoke of his predecessor:

> Here he was known and loved by fathers and sons, mothers and daughters during 60 years. Mr. Finney belongs to Harford County particularly. His memory is a trust confided to her people ... Mr. Finney lived for Harford County, for his people here, for the welfare of this community in temporal, moral, spiritual, and intellectual concerns ...
>
> His monument is here, deep in the hearts of all who knew and loved him; and we erect that marble shaft to simply testify to the love we bear his memory and to perpetuate to our children the name and memory of one who loved and lived for their fathers and mothers.[15]

While Finney was widely regarded as "the great pioneer of Presbyterianism in Harford County" he was also respected in other fields for he "encouraged all improvements, did much to advance Harford County in agriculture and the useful arts, and to elevate the tastes and habits of the people."[16]

John M.T. Finney wrote that his grandfather enjoyed "God-fearing, well-educated, and public-spirited"[17] ancestors and much the same can be said of his descendants. William Finney and his wife (nee' Margaret Irvine Miller) had six children: Susan (1822-1894), John Miller (1823-1896), Ebenezer Dickey (1825-1904), William (1827-1862), Charles (1829-1897), and George Junkin (1830-1906); all were born at Oak Farm and many have associations with the other Finney houses here.

E.D. Finney drew praise from the compilers of the 1897 Portrait and Biographical Record of Harford and Cecil Counties: "There is nothing in the world that presents a more inspiring spectacle than a man who devotes his life to the good of others, is ready to succor the needy and distressed, and upon whom the cries of the orphaned and the sorrows of the widowed are not lost. Such a man is Reverend E.D. Finney, who has devoted the greater part of his life to the saving of souls and who has made the world better for having lived in it."[18]

See Continuation Sheet 8/5

E.D. Finney spent his youth at Oak Farm, then entered "Lafayette College, largely because his uncle, George Junkin, was at that time its president," according to E.D.'s son, John M.T. Finney. After E.D.'s junior year, however, "Dr. Junkin resigned ... and went south to become President of Washington College at Lexington, Virginia"[19]; E.D. Finney went with him and was graduated from what is now Washington and Lee University in 1849.[20]

From Washington (and Lee), E.D. Finney entered Princeton Theological Seminary, and got his degree there in 1852. For uncertain reasons[21] he moved to Mississippi where he became "pastor of the Greenwood Presbyterian Church, located near Natchez, and principal of a school for boys, attended by the sons of the planters in the neighborhood." Finney was said to have "been proud of the fact that a number of his boys subsequently made excellent records in both civilian and military life."[22]

The Civil War broke out and "played havoc"[23] with the church and school, and shortly after Appomattox Finney returned to Churchville and moved back into the William Finney "household ... {which} consisted of himself, ... two bachelors ... and a maiden aunt."[24] E.D. Finney "for twenty-five years thereafter was pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Bel Air, during which time he did noble work in the interests of the Christian cause."

E.D. Finney also preached in Fallston[25] and in the Grove Presbyterian Church in Aberdeen and appears to have continuously moved in and out of William Finney's centrally located house - "such is the peripatetic existence of the average clergyman. He finally settled for good in Bel Air in 1871"[26] at the Presbyterian Church rectory. In 1881 E.D. Finney - continuing his family's tradition of building - hired architect George Archer to design a new church for the Bel Air congregation,[27] which had grown too numerous for their 1850s Greek Revival structure. The new church - which burned and was rebuilt in 1936 - is in the then-fashionable Gothic style and has been called "at once elegant and cozy, a reverent expression of faith."[28] E.D. Finney also continued the family's love of learning; when he died in 1904, his material goods were appraised at a scant $193 (he also had $445 in cash and $200 worth of bonds); of that $193, the largest percentage was in book-related things - $50 for "books" and $75 for "Library Furniture."[29]

See Continuation Sheet 8/6

While E.D. Finney was in Mississippi, he and his wife had two sons, William and, in 1863, John Miller Turpin. After moving to Harford County with his father after the Civil War, young John M.T. attended the Bel Air Academy; he was then graduated from Princeton in 1884 and from the Harvard Medical School in 1888. Immediately after Harvard, Dr. Finney returned to Maryland to become one of the founding surgeons of the newly-opened Johns Hopkins Hospital and one of the most distinguished men of science in the country.

He was a member of the teaching staff at Hopkins from its opening until his retirement, helped organize the Clinical Surgical Society and the American College of Surgeons, whose members elected him their first president in 1913. In 1912 he was asked to become President of Princeton University, but he declined.[30] He was also instrumental in founding the Union Memorial Hospital and oversaw the transformation of the old Union Protestant Infirmary into a hospital for Baltimore's then-largely uncared for black population.[31] When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, Finney volunteered and was made a Major in the Medical Corps; he eventually was appointed Surgeon-General. He again volunteered for service during World War I, and was made Chief Consultant in Surgery for the American Expeditionary Force.[32]

Dr. Finney's brilliance was quickly recognized by presidents; he wrote "my first professional experience in the White House was when Theodore Roosevelt was president" and he cured Roosevelt's daughter Alice of "an acute attack of appendicitis."[33] He became personal physician for Roosevelt, a position he also held, in non-partisan manner, for presidents Wilson, Harding, and Coolidge; he seems to have been particularly close to Wilson "having served on the Board of Trustees with him when he was President of Princeton."[34]

Maryland Governor Ritchie appointed Finney to serve on the state Board of Education; Finney also was Chairman of the Board of both Gilman Country School and McDonough School and Governor Goldsborough asked him to help with the "Vice Commission" charged with cleaning up Baltimore. (Finney did so, although he wrote later that "very little came of it" since "under our democratic form of government politics and vice conditions invariably go hand in hand and reforms are

See Continuation Sheet 8/7

difficult to accomplish.")[35] He was honored with honorary LlD degrees from Tulane (1935), Harvard (1937), and Loyola College in Baltimore (1940). Nor was he a stranger to honors from abroad for he was "chosen an honorary member of the Medical Society of London, the Hunterian Society, the Royal College of Surgeons of England, the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland, and the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh" and received "the Commandeur de l'Ordre de la Couronne from Belgium and the Officier de la Legion d'Honneur from France."[36] Keenly interested in the fine arts as well as in the sciences, he was a great friend of the sculptor Jacob Epstein, who executed a bronze bust of Finney on the occasion of the doctor's 75th birthday. Finney died in 1942 and is buried, along with his ancestors, in the Churchville Presbyterian Church cemetery.

The William Finney "household" Dr. John M.T. Finney remembered growing up in was not then based in Oak Farm. In 1841, the Reverend Finney sold that house and 200 acres to a friend;[37] but he still owned several hundred acres and, on a part of that tract, built and moved into the house known as Greenwood the same year. Greenwood is interesting because it reflects the minister's evolution of taste in the 20 years after he built Oak Farm. Harford County is well known for having few early high style buildings and the frame, cross-gable Greenwood (see description) is far more typical of the sort of house a prosperous countian would build for himself than the elegant Oak Farm was. Was Finney slightly embarrassed by Oak Farm's stylishness? Did he, a man of the cloth, perhaps feel it more seemly to live in Greenwood and practice the form of inconspicuous consumption more usual among Harford countians?

In 1858 the senior Finneys sold Greenwood to their youngest son, George, but continued to live on in the house. (Charles and William had moved to California in the Gold Rush.) George Finney was an agriculturist and ran Greenwood, as Dr. J.M.T. Finney wrote, as "a beautiful farm ... Here as boys, my brother and I spent many delightful days hunting and fishing."[38] Moreover, as the 1897 Record noted, "the enterprising manner in which George J. Finney has conducted his affairs, combined with ability and strict probity, has but tended to enhance the respect with which the name of Finney is regarded in this county." In addition to his farming pursuits, George Finney played an active role in community institutions, serving for 30 years as a

See Continuation Sheet 8/8

trustee and Treasurer of the Churchville Presbyterian Church; George Finney was called "quite active in political matters, a staunch Democrat in his views"[39] and these interests led to his being elected as county commissioner, clerk of the board of county commissioners, and chief judge of the orphan's court.

The Reverend William Finney's household was shrinking, and after his wife died in 1865, he decided to move out of Greenwood across Glenville Road where he built the third Finney house, now called the Finney-Marks House (HA-1278). Here he moved in 1868 with his bachelor son, John Miller Finney. John Miller (to distinguish him from John M.T.) earned his M.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1847 and returned to spend his life practicing medicine "at Churchville for half a century"; he died there in "1896, after a long life spent in the interests of suffering humanity."[40] He seems to have been practicing up until the end, for his Estate Inventory notes two cases of medicine and several other related items. He must have augmented his income with farming, possibly in partnership with his brother, George, for the inventory also includes a "yoke of oxen", three cows, two hogs, several score bushels each of corn, oats, "old wheat", and "one-half interest" in "3/4 acres of Tomatoes." (The last was valued at $50.)"[41] Dr. John Finney may have been less well known in medical circles than his famous nephew, Dr. John M.T. Finney, was, but he was well enough known to draw the attention of the Boston-based monthly, New England Magazine. In 1899, two years after John Finney had died, the magazine ran an article on Harford County and in it singled out Dr. John Finney as the country's leading physician, "a man of most noble heart and life ... the 'Dr. MacLure' of his county." The writer went on to note that after John Finney's death "the public of the neighborhood erected by voluntary subscription, and dedicated by public ceremonies, a rugged granite monument above his grave" Continuing the theme,

> He loved his county and state passionately. His apothegms and stories have become part of the wisdom of the neighborhood. He was a well read man, a skillful physician, with the instinct of his profession, a genius in his way, and one of the most noted characters of that part of the world. His friends and patients showed their appreciation by the erection of his monument and the Baltimore dailies commented editorially upon the career of this kindly and noble man, whose life was spent upon horseback on lonely country roads, looking after the sick of all classes to whom he never presented bills. He was a fine specimen of the marked individualities and strong characters that grow up and develop in the retired parts of our land.[42]

See Continuation Sheet 8/9

It was in the Finney-Marks House that the Reverend William Finney died. The building is interesting as a small-scale version of Greenwood (see description), the sort of building a widower and his bachelor doctor son would have needed. The house, with its abundance of porches and "Gothic" gable is very much a product of its time, thereby continuing the progression of architectural styles begun at Oak Farm and carried on through Greenwood.

This progression ends at Little Greenwood (HA-1277), the last of the Finney houses built and a fitting conclusion to the series. In 1906, George J. Finney's son, William W. Finney and William's bride, Elizabeth McCormick Finney, built Little Greenwood on a 20-acre tract across Glenville Road from Greenwood. It is said that George Finney gave the young couple the land and the McCormicks built the house as a wedding present.[43] William Finney was a food wholesaler with business throughout the country and his wife's family were of reaper fame, so the young Finneys' outlook may well have extended beyond Harford County. It certainly extended as far as Baltimore, for they went to that city to choose architects for the new house and settled on the firm of Parker and Thomas, then among the leading firms in Maryland. Parker and Thomas' better known Baltimore commissions include the Alex Brown Building (1900), the Belvedere Hotel (1903), Gilman Hall at the Johns Hopkins University (1904), the headquarters building for the B&O Railroad (1906), the Hansa Haus (1907), the Savings Bank of Baltimore (1907), and the Baltimore Gas and Electric Building (1916).[44] All those structures are crucial to the city's present appearance and all are officially listed with Baltimore's Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation.

Little Greenwood with its flared hip roof, large number of windows, and spacious porch (see description) is a fine example of the sort of country house a prosperous and sophisticated couple would have built in 1906 and remains a quintessential suburban villa - it only had 20 acres originally not enough land to farm profitably but ample certainly for expansive gardens, tennis courts and other similar pursuits. (Little Greenwood is even today remembered by countians for having "the first tennis court in Harford County.")[45] Mrs. Finney is said to have been an enthusiastic gardener and early photographs of the house show it embowered in vines and hollyhocks and other "period" perennials and the garden plans, still preserved at the house, show very elaborate plantings including 105 species of trees and 50 species of shrubs.

See Continuation Sheet 8/10

Further, this looking out to Baltimore for architects was very much in vogue at the time in Harford County. For example, J.M.T. Finney's colleague at Hopkins, Dr. Howard A. Kelly, had hired the Baltimore firm of Wyatt and Nolting to design his country retreat near Bel Air, Liriodendron (HA-230), in 1897. Some went even farther afield, the most extreme example was when Stanford White was brought down from New York to remodel the house on the Oakington tract near Havre de Grace around 1905.

The construction of Little Greenwood marks the end of the District's period of historic significance, for even though members of the family continued to live in various of the houses until 1970 (when Dr. James McCormick Finney, son of William and Elizabeth, died at Greenwood) Little Greenwood completes the architectural cycle begun at Oak Farm in 1821. Then the Reverend Finney brought high Federal style into a Harford County that may not have been ready for it; he seems to have recognized that in so doing he may have acted rashly for his next two houses, Greenwood and the Finney-Marks House, are more conservative. But by 1906, times had changed and his namesake and grandson seems to have been quite comfortable with up-to-date trends in house design.

All four Finney houses are in remarkably good and original condition; what changes have been made have been respectful to the houses' original fabric and seem to have been made not on whim, but merely to make the houses more equipped to suit modern living.

See Continuation Sheet 8/11

FOOTNOTES

SECTION 7

[1]Alan Gowans, The Comfortable House, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987).

[2]Conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Harold Graul, owners of Oak Farm, November 23, 1988.

[3]Conversation with Mary Finney Barada, January 12, 1989; Mrs. Barada is a great-granddaughter of William Finney.

[4]Harford County Deed Book WSF 113, page 67.

[5]Drawings in possession of Dr. and Mrs. Wilfred Hathaway, owners of Little Greenwood.

SECTION 8

[6]Portrait and Biographical Record of Harford and Cecil Counties, (New York and Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1987), p. 484.

[7]Dr. John M.T. Finney, A Surgeon's Life, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1940), pp. 3-4.

[8]Finney, Life, p. 6.

[9]Churchville Presbyterian Church, nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

[10]Finney, Life, p. 6.

[11]Finney, Life, p. 6.

[12]Finney, Life, p. 8.

[13]The Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and the District of Columbia, (Baltimore: National Biographical Publishing Company, 1879), p. 564.

[14]Cyclopedia, p. 564.

[15]Churchville Church nomination

See Continuation Sheet 8/12

[16]Cyclopedia, p. 563.

[17]Finney, Life, p. 11.

[18]Portrait and Biographical, p. 188.

[19]Finney, Life, p. 9.

[20]"It is of some interest that 'Stonewall' Jackson, at that time a member of the faculty of the neighboring Virginia Military Institute, later married as his first wife a daughter of President Junkin, Elinor, a first cousin of my father's" wrote Dr. Finney in his autobiography.

[21]Conversation with Mary Barada, January 30, 1989; Finney, Life, p. 9.

[22]Finney, Life, p. 12.

[23]Finney, Life, p. 13.

[24]Finney, Life, p. 24.

[25]Portrait and Biographical, p. 189.

[26]Finney, Life, p. 32.

[27]Finney, Life, p. 26.

[28]Marilynn M. Larew, Bel Air: The Town Through Its Buildings, (Bel Air: Town of Bel Air and Maryland Historical Trust, 1981), p. 136.

[29]Harford County Probate Record #6384.

[30]Finney, Life, p. 278.

[31]Judge Frederick Lee Coburn, Robert H. Archer, and Brodnax Cameron, A Short Biography of Those Whose Portraits Adorn the Walls of the Court House, Bel Air, (Bel Air: Circuit Court of Harford County, 1940), p. 20.

[32]Coburn et al., Portraits, p. 21; see also, Who Was Who, Vol 2, (Chicago: The A.N. Marquis Co., 1950), p. 187.

See Continuation Sheet 8/13

[33]Finney, Life, p. 258.

[34]Finney, Life, p. 193.

[35]Finney, Life, p. 245.

[36]Finney, Life, p. 251.

[37]Deed book HD 25, page 142.

[38]Finney, Life, p. 8.

[39]Portrait and Biographical, p. 484.

[40]Portrait and Biographical, p. 188.

[41]Probate #4236.

[42]Calvin Dill Wilson, "Through an Old Southern County," in New England Magazine, Vol. 20, 1899, pp. 164-165.

[43]Conversation with Mary Barada, January 29, 1989.

[44]John Dorsey and James Dilts, A Guide to Baltimore Architecture, (Cambridge, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1981), p. 140.

[45]Conversation with Mrs. Brodnax Cameron, Sr., January 30, 1989.

9. Major Bibliographical References

HA-1751

☒ See continuation sheet No. 9.1

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Specify repository:
county planning and zoning office

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property roughly 200 acres
USGS quad: Aberdeen, MD

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	394500	4381370
B	18	393900	4380280
C	18	393080	4379870
D	18	392960	4381460

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

☒ See continuation sheet 10.1

Boundary Justification

Boundaries were drawn to include those portions of Reverend William Finney's original property not divided; boundaries are intended to include the four Finney houses and outbuildings, the landscape, and gardens. The district's boundaries are clearly defined by its neighbors, for it can be easily distinguished visually and functionally from the village of Churchville which borders it to the south, from the sprawling dairy farms which border it to the west ☐ See continuation sheet and north, and from the mid-to-late 20th century suburban housing to the east.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christopher Weeks, Preservation Planner
organization Harford County Planning & Zoning Dept. date February 1989
street & number 220 South Main Street telephone (301) 879-2000 ext. 207
city or town Bel Air state Maryland zip code 21014

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Land and probate records of Harford County, Maryland

Alan Gowans, The Comfortable House, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987).

Portrait and Biographical Record of Harford and Cecil Counties, (New York and Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1897).

Dr. John M.T. Finney, A Surgeon's Life, (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1940).

Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and the District of Columbia, (Baltimore: National Biographical Publishing Company, 1879).

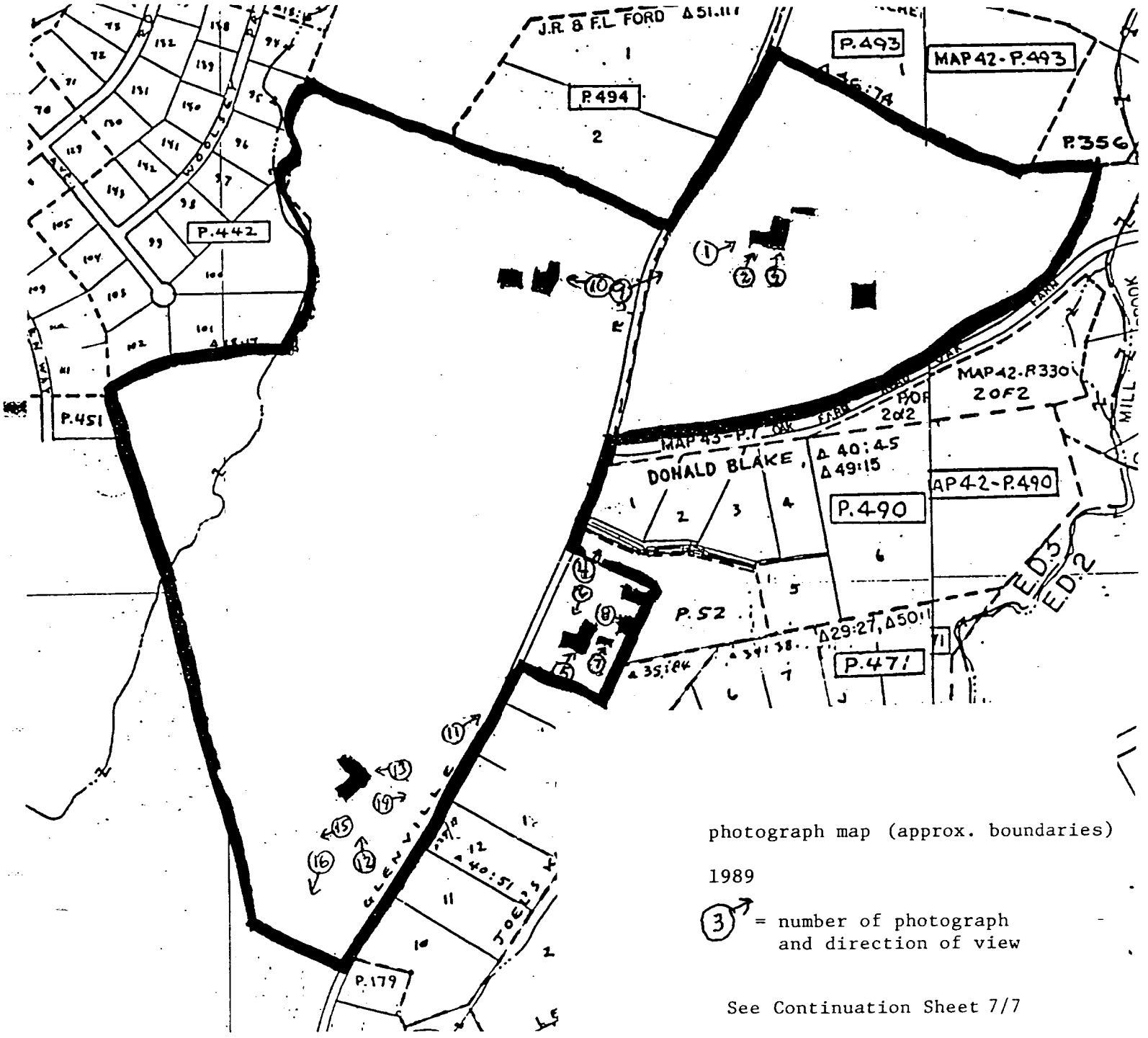
Judge Frederick Lee Coburn et al., A Short Biography of Those Whose Portraits Adorn the Walls of the Court House, Bel Air, (Bel Air: Circuit Court of Harford County, 1940).

Calvin Dill Wilson, "Through An Old Southern County," in New England Magazine, Vol. 20, 1899.

John Dorsey and James Dilts, A Guide to Baltimore Architecture, (Cambridge, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1981).

Newspaper clippings and related material in the possession of Mary Finney Barada, in Baltimore; Mrs. Barada is a daughter of William W. and Elizabeth McCormick Finney.

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties: Harford County. Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, Maryland.

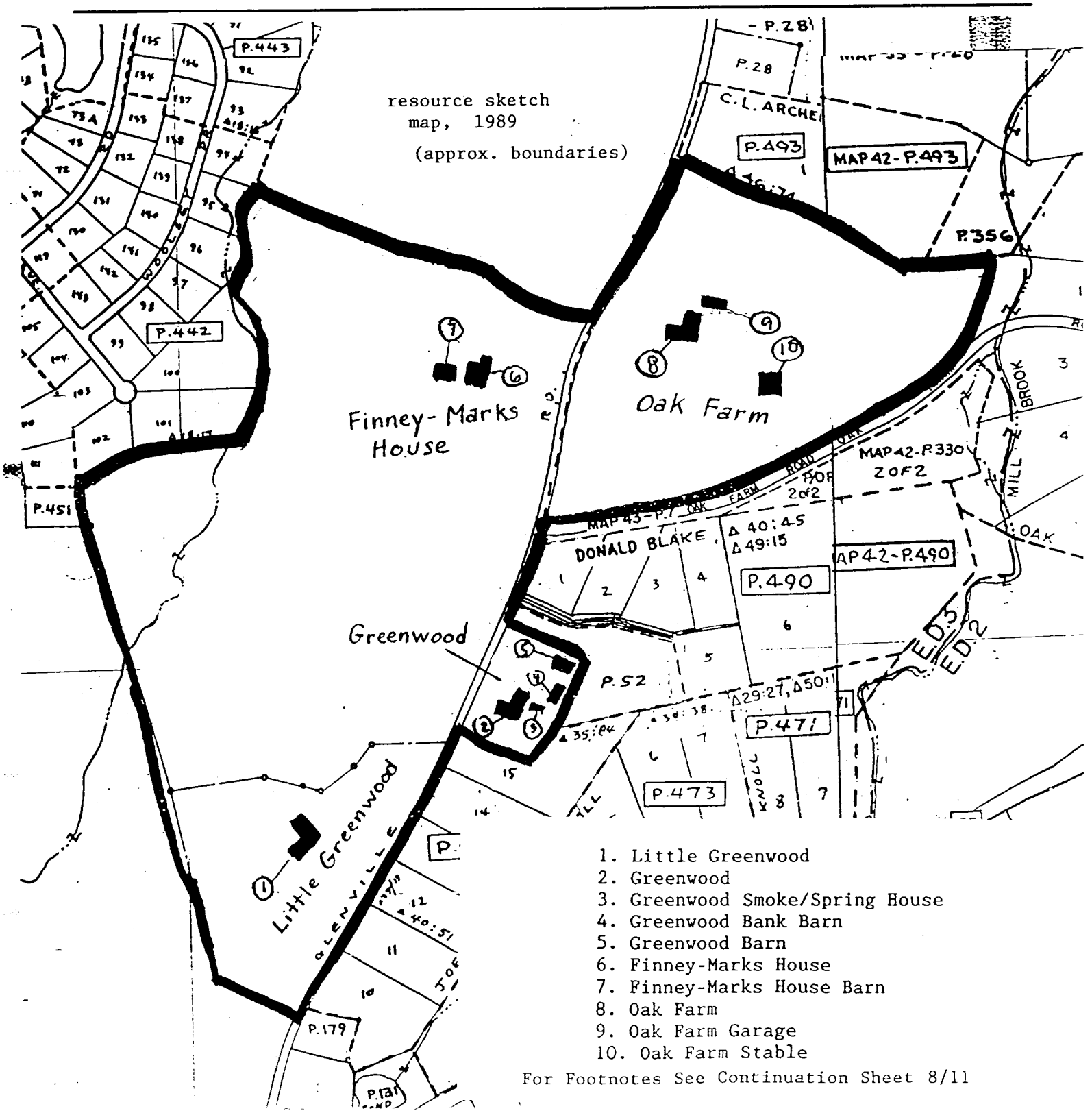


photograph map (approx. boundaries)

1989

(3) = number of photograph and direction of view

See Continuation Sheet 7/7



1. Little Greenwood
2. Greenwood
3. Greenwood Smoke/Spring House
4. Greenwood Bank Barn
5. Greenwood Barn
6. Finney-Marks House
7. Finney-Marks House Barn
8. Oak Farm
9. Oak Farm Garage
10. Oak Farm Stable

For Footnotes See Continuation Sheet 8/11

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

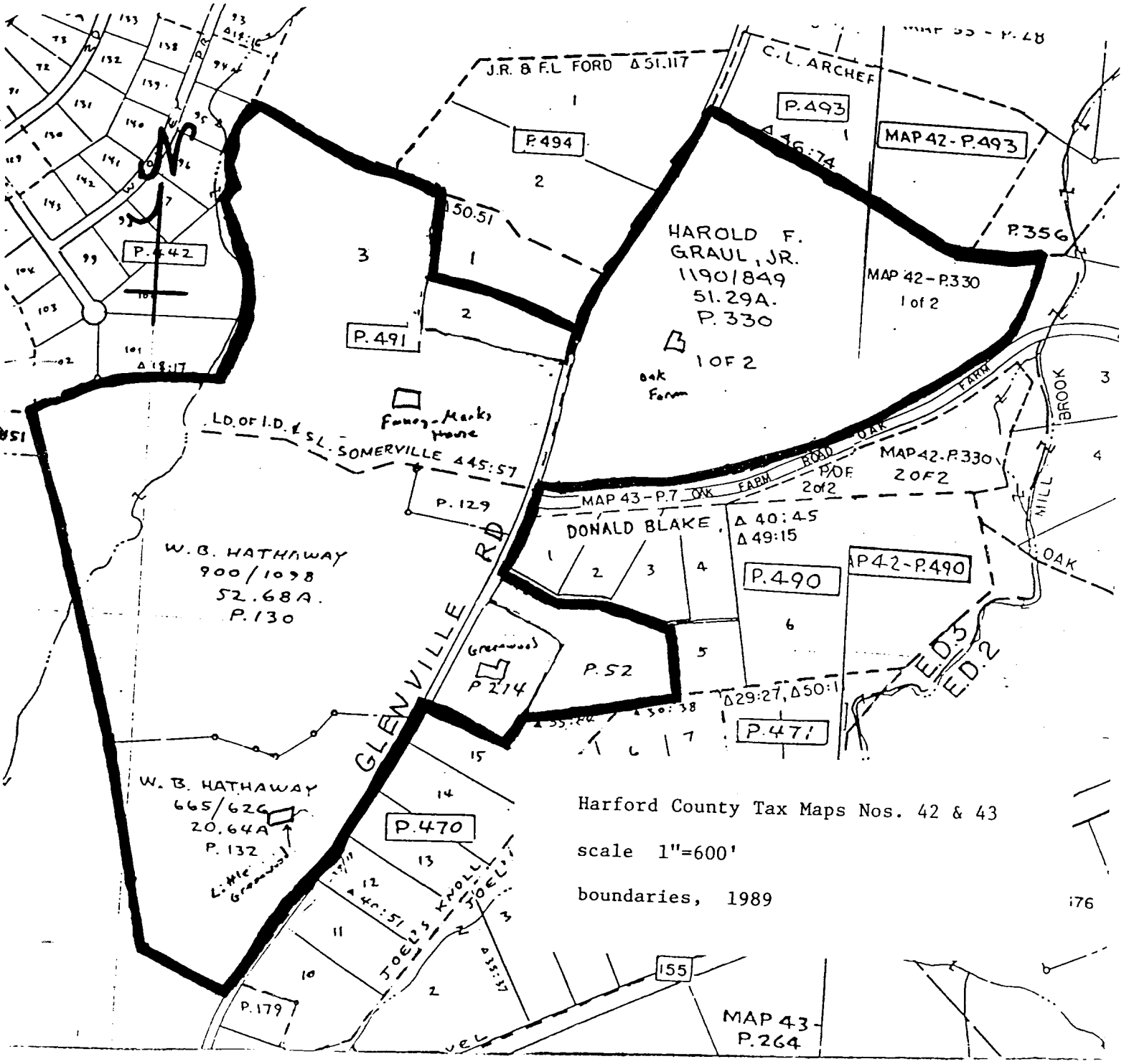
OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Finney Houses Historic District HA-1751
Harford County
Maryland

Section number 10 Page 1



Harford County Tax Maps Nos. 42 & 43

scale 1"=600'

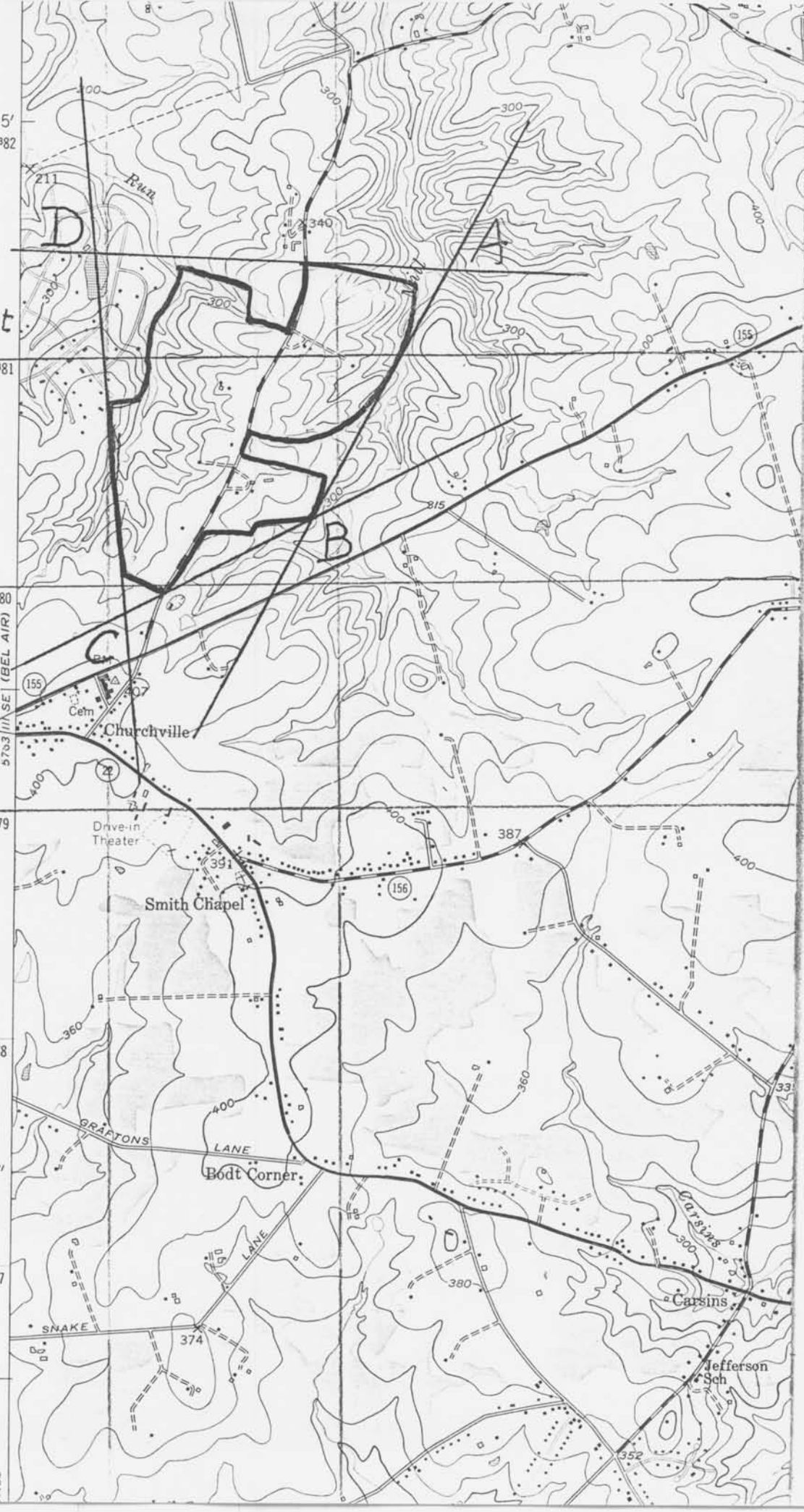
boundaries, 1989

Finney Houses
Historic District

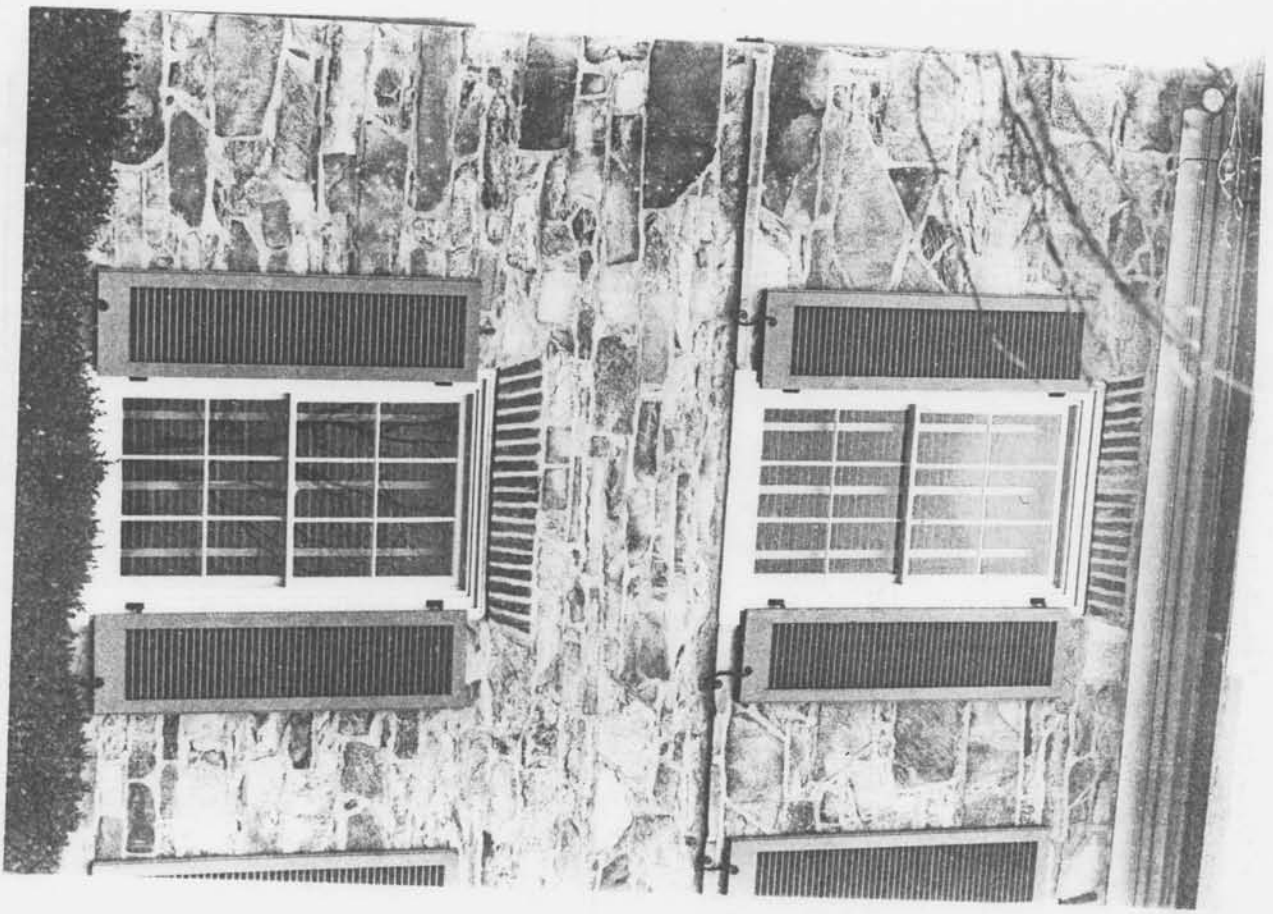
HA-1751

Harford Co.
Maryland

A 18/394500/4381370
B 18/393900/4380280
C 18/393080/4379870
D [illegible]/392960/4381460



NA-1751



HA-1751

Finney Houses Historic District
Hanford Co., MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Hanford Co. Dept. of Planning + Zoning
Oak Farm, SW facades

1/10

Finney Houses Historic District
Hanford Co., MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Hanford Co. Dept. of Planning, Zoning
Oak Farm - Detail windows + belt course on S Facade

2/14

HA-1751

Finney Homes Historic District
Harford Co., MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co. Dept. of Planning & Zoning
View northerly from Greenwood
to Oak Farm

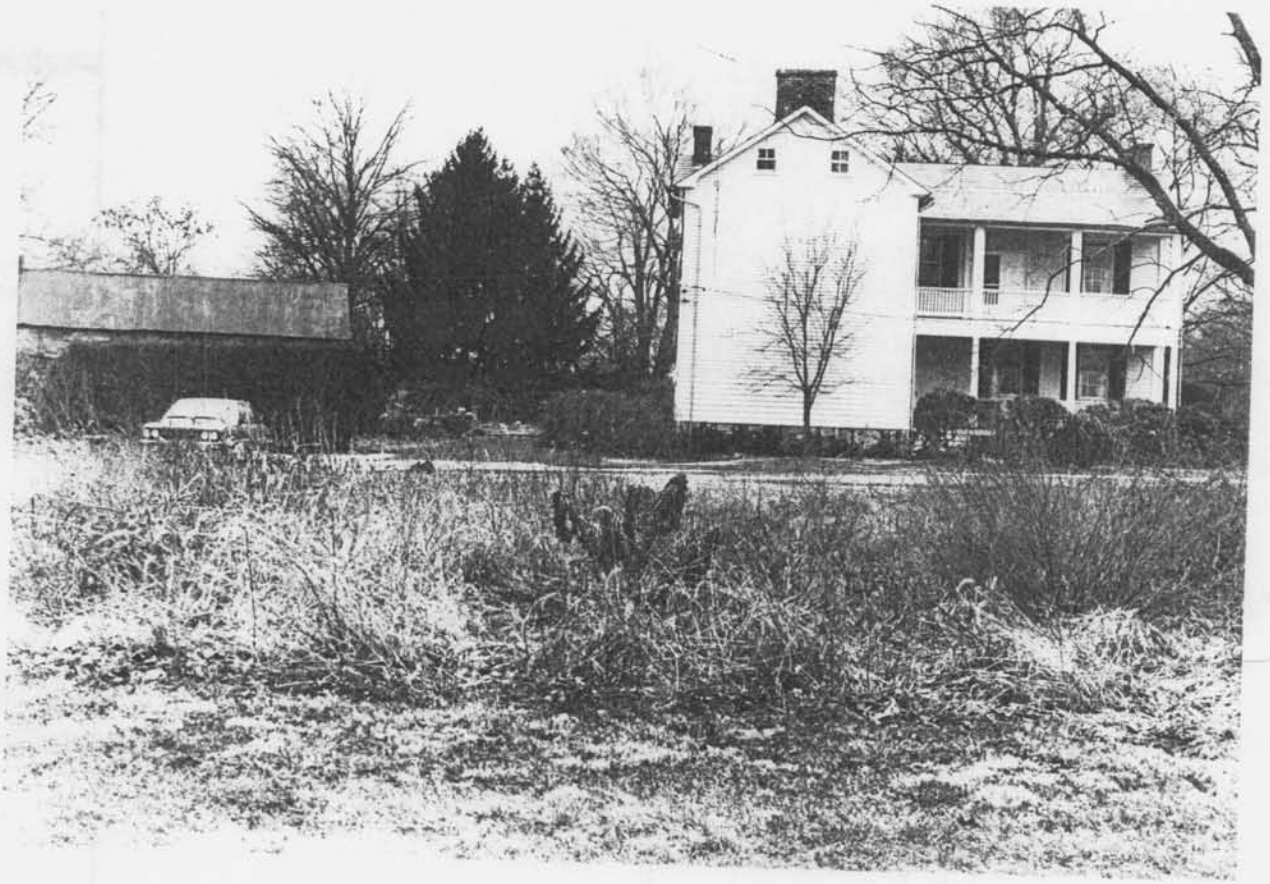
1/10

Finney Homes Historic District
Harford Co., MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co. Dept. of Planning & Zoning
Oak Farm - main door (S. Facade)

3/16

HA-1751

HA-1751



Finney Houses Historic District HA-1751
Harford Co, MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept of Planning & Zoning
Greenwood Main (S) Facade

5/16

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co, MD
C Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept. of Planning & Zoning
Greenwood N facade

6/16

NA-1751

HA-1751

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co, MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept. of Planning + Zoning
Greenwood: Smoke/spring House SW facades

7/16

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co, MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept. of Planning + Zoning
Greenwood Bank barn

8/16

HA-1751

HA-1751

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co, MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept of Planning & Zoning
Views from Finney - Marks House to Oak Farm

9/10

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co, MD
C Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept. of Planning & Zoning
Finney - Marks House, main (east) facade

10/10

HA-1751

Finney Houses Historic District HA-1751
Harford Co., MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co. Dept. of Planning & Zoning

View easterly from Little Greenwood to Greenwood

11/50

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co., MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co. Dept. of Planning & Zoning
Little Greenwood scl facades

12/50

HA-1751

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co, MD

HA-1751

C. Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept of Planning + Zoning
Lith Greenwood SE facades

13/16

Finney Houses Historic District
Harford Co, MD
C Weeks
1/89
Harford Co Dept. of Planning + Zoning
Lith Greenwood - Driveway/Gardens
looking easterly to road

14/16

HA-1751

Finney Homes Historic District HA-1761
Hanford Co., MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Hanford Co Dept. of Planning & Zoning
Little Greenwood - c 1906 boxwood garden

15/16

Finney Homes Historic District
Hanford Co, MD
C. Weeks
1/89
Hanford Co Dept. of Planning & Zoning
Little Greenwood - landscape looking
southerly towards Churchville

16/16