

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 30/6

MAGI#

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC **The Riley House**

AND/OR COMMON  
**Uncle Tom's Cabin**

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
**11420 Old Georgetown Road**

CITY, TOWN **Rockville** VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT **8**

STATE **Maryland** COUNTY **Montgomery**

**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 type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" 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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME **Mr. & Mrs. Marcel Mallet-Prevost** Telephone #: **881-7570**

STREET & NUMBER  
**11420 Old Georgetown Road**

CITY, TOWN **Rockville** VICINITY OF STATE, zip code **Maryland 20852**

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
**Montgomery County Courthouse**

Liber #: **3096**  
Folio #: **135**

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
**M-NCPPC Inventory of Historical Sites**

DATE **1976**  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS **Park Historian's Office**

CITY, TOWN **Rockville** STATE **Maryland 20855**

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This farmhouse was built in several stages and includes a small log cabin which is said to be that lived in by the man after whom Marriret Beecher Stowe modeled her novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin.

The main section of the farmhouse is frame, four bays across and two bays deep and faces southeast. Built on stone foundations, it has clapboarded exterior walls which have been painted beige. There are two brick interior end chimneys with corbelled tops. On the southeast (front) elevation there are flagstone steps leading to the front door. The door has an exterior wooden louvered shutter door in addition to the six paneled door. This is surmounted by a four light transom and flanked by applied plasters. There are six over six double hung windows flanked by brown louvered shutters.

Adjoining the farmhouse to the northeast is a one and a half story log cabin. This building is considerably smaller than the main farmhouse. It is constructed of exposed squared and V-notched logs with poured concrete chinking. There is an enormous fieldstone exterior end chimney at the northeast elevation of the cabin. The cabin has a board and batten door on the southeast elevation. The chimney stack is flanked by four light casement windows.

At the northwest of the farmhouse is a recent addition. This contains the kitchen. The house has three gable roofs: one over the main house, one over the log cabin, and a gable roof over the kitchen addition, which is perpendicular to the gable roof of the original frame house. The roofs are covered by wooden shingles.

The interior of the house is simple and in keeping with the farming function of the house. Entering the house on the southeast one comes into a living room which extends the full width of the house centered on the southwest wall is a fireplace. A single run open string staircase with square balusters rises from southeast to northwest.

To the northeast of the front door there is a partition and doorway leading into a study. At the north corner is a diagonally placed fireplace. Northwest of the study is the dining room. A diagonal fireplace backs up to that in the study. A doorway on the northeast wall leads to the cabin. The cabin is four steps lower than the rest of the house. The loft has been removed and the room has vertical siding.

The floors are random width wood supported by rough hewn oak beams. There are narrow floorboards in the new addition. The floor is not visible in the cabin. Walls and ceilings are plaster over lath; in some cases the walls have been papered. There are simple paneled doors throughout the house. The fireplace surrounds are simple with denticulated moldings. In the cabin the fieldstone stack is exposed.

Lorenzo Winslow did the restoration of this house for Mrs. Bolton during the 1930s. A rear wing was added, and the porches removed. On the log portion, the logs forming the walls were cut to a section so that the upper wedged surface of one log roughly fits into the inverted V-groove of the overlying log. The upper section of the stone chimney has been replaced with brick.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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)		Black History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES Late 18th century BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The local, state, and national significance of the property upon which Josiah Henson resided for 30 years as a slave is important in the annals of both black history and general ante-bellum history, for Josiah Henson was "Uncle Tom", the slave whose memoirs gave Harriet Beecher Stowe the ideas for her characters in Uncle Tom's Cabin.

In his first autobiography, published in 1849, Henson mentions Montgomery County residents he had known by their Christian names and surname initials. However, in his second and third set of memoirs, he gives their full surnames so that they are traceable through county records: marriage, census, wills, and land records.

Henson stated that he was born in 1789, and came to Montgomery County about 1795. Isaac Riley was his master, after purchasing him from a man named Robb, who was a tavern-keeper near the Montgomery Court House.<sup>1</sup> Land records<sup>2</sup> show a formal deed of conveyance to Isaac Riley in 1849 of "Dann" and "Colyer's Resurvey". Isaac Riley's will<sup>3</sup>, dated 1850, conveys the land and "the farm upon which I now reside, containing about 500 acres" to his wife Matilda. In 1864, the Riley land was divided<sup>4</sup>, and Matilda retained Lot #1 described as being parts of "Dann" and "Colyer's Resurvey". This portion bounds directly on the western edge of Old Georgetown Road, and the plat shows that the house is located in the same position as present day. The 1865 and 1879 cadastral maps show Matilda Riley as owner of the house. In 1890, Matilda Riley willed the house and land to her daughter, Frances Ruben Riley Mace.<sup>5</sup> In 1926, the land was sold out of the family.<sup>6</sup> After several transfers,<sup>7</sup> in 1936, Lot 10, Block A, containing 3.089 acres was sold to Levina and William Bolten.<sup>8</sup> The Boltens sold to Harriet and William Coburn in 1950,<sup>9</sup> who in turn conveyed the property to Marcel and Hildegard Mallet-Prevost in 1963,<sup>10</sup> who own it today.

Henson lived in Montgomery County for about 30 years. His descriptions of slave life here are vivid and true to the era when the County was in an agricultural decline, before the 1844 discovery of the proper fertilizer for the tobacco-worn soil. Henson even describes the Riley kitchen, which is the extant log portion of the house:

After putting my horse in the stable I retired to the kitchen, where my master told me I was to sleep for the night...

(See Attachment Sheet A)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

that crowded room, with its earth floor, its filth and stench---The negroes present were **strangers** to me. Full of gloomy reflections at my loneliness, and the poverty-stricken aspect of the whole farm, I sat down---thinking how I could escape from the accursed spot.

The details of Henson leaving Montgomery County are also described in his autobiographies. They are important because, again, there was a connection with the Montgomery County area. Isaac Riley was in financial trouble and was losing his slaves. In 1825 he sent Henson to Daviess County, Kentucky, for safe-keeping with his brother, Amos Riley. Henson escaped from Kentucky, after making a return trip to Montgomery County in 1828, and being tricked by Isaac Riley about his manumission papers. Henson made his way to Canada, where he established a colony for fugitive slaves and where he made his home base until he died.

In 1948, because so many pilgrimages were made to Henson's grave and home, the Ontario Historic Sites Board converted Henson's "cabin" into a museum. In 1970 the Kentucky Historical Society erected a highway marker on the Amos Riley property where Henson had resided for three years.

Henson was also prominent in the Abolitionist movement. His name appears on a paper entitled "A Public Discussion of Insurrection, 1858", at a state convention of Massachusetts Negroes. Henson's first memoirs were published in Boston by the abolitionists, and it was there that Harriet Beecher Stowe first became interested in his life as a slave. Henson said that Mrs. Stowe's "Simon Legree", "Cassy", and other characters in Uncle Tom's Cabin were taken from his own descriptions of people he had known in Montgomery County.

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. Scharf, J. T., History of Western Maryland, p. 676, lists Adam Robb as a licensed tavern-keeper in Rockville, in 1800.
2. Montgomery County Land Records, JCH 6, 573.
3. Will Records of Montgomery County, HH #3, 182.
4. Montgomery County Land Records, Equity 50, 330.
5. Will Record of Montgomery County, RWC 15, 326.
6. Land Records, Deed 394, 471.
7. Land Records, Deed 412, 387 (1926; 448/206 (1927); 568/140 (1934).
8. Land Records, Deed 648, 37.
9. Land Records, Deed 1388, 9.
10. Land Records, Deed 3096, 135.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

(See Attachment Sheet B)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 1 acre**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Bounded on the front by Old Georgetown Road. On the right of the property is a church and Tilden Lane. To the left is a modern home.

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE

COUNTY

Candy Reed - Architectural Description

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Mayvis Fitzsimons and Mark Walston Candy Reed - Architectural Description

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

May 23, 1978

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland 20753

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  
The Shaw House, 2 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 241-1438~~

SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS  
Box 87, Stronghold  
Dickerson, Md. 20753  
(301) 926-4510

Attachment Sheet B

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland.

Henson, Josiah, The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave, (Ed. by Samuel A. Elliot, Boston, A.D. Phelps, 1849).

---Truth Stranger than Fiction: Father Henson's Story of His Own Life, (Boston, J.P. Jewett & Co., 1858).

---Uncle Tom's Story of His Life, (ed. by John Lobb, London, Christian Age Office, 1877).

Potter, Hugh O., A History of Owensboro & Daviess County, Kentucky (Daviess County Historical Society, 1975).

Scharf, J. Thomas, History of Western Maryland, (Baltimore: Regional Publishing co., 1968, originally published in Phila., 1882).

Josiah Henson Cabin M.



M:30-6

Riley House

"Uncle Tom's Cabin"



NAME UNCLE TOM'S CABIN / RILEY HOUSE

M: #30-6

LOCATION OLD GEORGETOWN Rd ROCKVILLE Md

FACADE E

PHOTO TAKEN 5/14/75 MDWYER



NAME UNCLE TOM'S CABIN / RILEY HOUSE

LOCATION: OLD GEORGETOWN RD., ROCKVILLE,  
MD

FACADE N

PHOTO TAKEN 5/14/75  
M. DWYER

IN# 30-6



Josiah Henson Cabin m:30-6