FHR-8-300 (11-78)

CE-229

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic: Nathan and Susannah Harris House (preferred)

and or common: Borland House

2. Location

street & number: 541 Rising Sun Road (NW corner of Rts. 273 & 276) na not for publication

city, town: Harrisville ___ vicinity of congressional district: First

state: Maryland code: 24 county: Cecil code: 015

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name: Dr. R. Michael Borland

street & number: 695 Colora Road

city, town: Colora n/a vicinity of state: Maryland 21917

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: Recorder's Office

street & number: Cecil County Courthouse, Main Street

city, town: Elkton state: Maryland 21921

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title: Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined elegible? ___ yes X no

date: August 30, 1968 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records: Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town: Annapolis state: Maryland 21401

7. Description

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Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
X good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date n/a
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Number of Resources Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	2	structures
0	0	objects
1	2	Total

Number of previously listed National Register properties included in this nomination: 0

Original and historical functions and uses: residential

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The Harris House is a large stone dwelling constructed in 1798 near Rising Sun in Cecil County, Maryland. Its construction date is documented by two datestones incorporated into the coursed rubble masonry of the principal (south) facade. The building is two stories high, four bays wide by two rooms deep, with a very steeply pitched gable roof. There are two front doors, located in the inner bays of the facade; the outer bays hold windows. The interior presents an unusual variation of the traditional Anglo-American three-room, cross-passage plan, with the insertion of a formal hallway between the west kitchen and the two east rooms. The house retains many significant construction features, including principal-rafter-and-purlin roof framing, a large kitchen fireplace with oven opening, and four fireplaces with diagonal hearths (a characteristic of Anglo-American vernacular architecture in the region). Most of its original interior trim is intact, including baseboard, chair rail, and architrave moldings; mantels and fireplace surrounds; beaded vertical board partitions; paneled doors (two of which have original Suffolk latches); stair and balustrade; and beaded ceiling joists.

For General Description, see Continuation Sheet No. 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Harris House is a large stone dwelling constructed in 1798 by Robert Harris for Nathan Harris and his wife Susannah. The house is two stories high, four bays wide by two bays deep, and has a very steeply pitched gable roof; it stands facing south on the northwest corner of the intersection of Maryland Routes 273 and 276 in Harrisville, just west of Rising Sun in Cecil County, Maryland. It is constructed of coursed rubble and features two datestones: a large rectangular block located between two second-story windows on the south facade, inscribed with the name HARRIS above the date and initials 17 N S 98, with a heart between the N and S and a line with chevron design beneath, and a cornerstone on the east side of the south facade inscribed R H 1798. The two inner bays of the south facade both hold entrances, flanked by windows in each of the outer bays; the second story is pierced only by three windows, aligned over the first, third, and fourth bays (reading from west to east) of the first story. The masonry of the principal (south) facade is generally more refined than that of the other walls, employing larger, squarer stones laid in more regular courses. Large rectangular blocks suggest quoining at the corners. The east gable end has two windows on each story, with two smaller ones lighting the attic; the west gable has one window on each floor, offset to the left, and two attic windows as on the east end. Many of the windows retain their original surrounds, but all but two hold replacement 2/2 sash. Two windows on the north (rear) elevation retain original 6/6 sash. Stone jack arches appear above first-floor windows on the south and west facades. The south end has a basement entrance and window, both with stone jack arches. Each gable has an interior end chimney of brick. A small one-story gable roofed frame ell, constructed in the early 20th century, extends to the rear.

The interior presents an uncommon variation of the three-room, cross-passage plan. This plan appears in the domestic architecture of northern Cecil County from the early 18th through mid 19th century, and has well-established British antecedents. It was described by William Penn in a flyer of 1684 as ". . . an House . . . with a partition neer the middle, and an other to divide one end of the House into two small Rooms . . ." The Harris House modifies this typical plan by the insertion of a vertical beaded board partition to create a formal hallway, dividing the west kitchen (which runs the full depth of the house and corresponds with the traditional cross-passage) from the two east rooms. This modification is expressed on the exterior by a second entrance, ordering the first story facade in four symmetrical bays. The left-hand door opens directly into the kitchen, while the right one opens into the formal hall.

See Continuation Sheet No. 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

A two-run open string stair rises at the rear of the entrance hall. The slender turned newel and balustrade (three balusters per step) support a walnut handrail. Two six-panel doors open off each side of the hall. Original baseboard, chair rail, and architrave trim remains.

The west room is the original kitchen, and features a large stone cooking fireplace with a stone hearth and the opening of a beehive oven in its back wall. A tight winder stair occupies the corner to the left of the fireplace; three steps rise to a six-panel door with a Suffolk latch enclosing the stair. A narrow paneled closet door is located between the stair and the fireplace. Ceiling joists are exposed, and have beaded edges. The partition separating the kitchen from the formal hallway is constructed of vertical planks with beaded edges, and features an original row of "Shaker" pegs.

Off the east side of the hallway are two equal-sized 14'6" by 13' rooms, each with a corner fireplace sharing a common stack. These rooms have elaborate mantels, brick hearths, and retain original baseboard and architrave trim. Ceilings are finished. Here and elsewhere on the first floor, the original random-width oak flooring remains in place.

An early 20th century frame addition to the rear of the building houses a modern kitchen.

A woodshed and the foundation of a small barn are located to the west of the house; these structures do not contribute to the significance of the resource.

On the second story, five rooms radiate around the central hallway. Two equal sized 14'8" by 13'5" rooms lie to the east; like their counterparts below, they are heated by corner fireplaces. These fireplaces have simple molded surrounds; plain mantel shelves supported by metal brackets are Victorian additions. A small 9'2" by 9'11" south room corresponds to the central bay of the south facade. The remaining two rooms take up the west end of the house. The northwest room was partitioned early in the 20th century to create a bathroom; recent repartitioning has reused the narrow wainscoting. A door opens from this room into the southwest room - the only one of the upstairs rooms which does not communicate directly with the central hallway - where the winder stair rises from the kitchen. All the second-floor rooms retain original yellow poplar flooring, baseboards, doors, and architrave trim. In addition, chair rails survive in the southwest room. Vertical beaded board partitions separate the two south rooms from each other and from the hall.

See Continuation Sheet No. 3

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

A paneled door with Suffolk latch gives access to the attic stair from the second-floor hallway. The roof framing employs a complex system of principal rafters, with butt purlins tenoned through them and secured with long pegs. Between each set of common rafters are three staggered interrupted common rafters, notched over the purlins. Queen downbraces tie the principal rafters to the summer beam. The roof retains narrow nailing strips, presumably for original shingles, beneath its current galvanized metal covering.

The house had undergone relatively few alterations when it was acquired by the present owners, who have since carried out a careful and sensitive rehabilitation. Original and early features were disturbed as little as possible in these efforts. Restoration work included the reopening of the fireplace in the west room, and the repointing of its stonework and the brick arch opening of the oven. The ceiling in this room had been covered with narrow board wainscoting, probably early in the 20th century; this finish was removed, to expose the original beaded joists. To the right of the fireplace, the flue for the newly-installed central heating plant and the plumbing stack for the second-story bathroom were boxed with drywall. The original vertical-board partition separating the west room from the central hall was retained; the hall side of this partition was furred out and drywalled to conceal electrical wiring, with the original chair rail reinstalled in its proper position. The bathroom on the second story, an early 20th century addition, was remodeled and the existing early-20th century wainscoting was reused in paneling a new partition. Other work included the removal of wainscoting which covered the ceiling of the second-floor northwest room, installation of baseboard heat, and the replacement of collapsed plaster ceilings with drywall in the east rooms on both stories. An early 20th century gabled entrance porch was removed, and a frame wing of similar date was rehabilitated to house a modern kitchen. The two front doors, which were not original to the house, were in deteriorated condition and have been replaced. The recent rehabilitation and restoration efforts concentrated on the removal of insignificant late-19th/early-20th century alterations. Because a great deal of original fabric remained in the house and was available for re-use, few replacement materials were employed.

8. Significance

CE-229

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion	
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science	
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	_X_ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
_X_ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater	
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation	
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)	
		___ invention			

Specific dates 1798 **Builder/Architect** Robert Harris

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A, C
Criteria Exceptions: n/a
Level of Significance: local

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Harris House is significant for its architecture. It incorporates two datestones documenting its construction in 1798, and embodies the distinctive characteristics of vernacular dwellings of the period in Quaker-settled areas of northeastern Maryland and adjacent Pennsylvania. Characteristic features include squarish proportions, stone construction, principal-rafter-and-purlin roof framing, and diagonal hearths. The house presents a noteworthy original variation on the traditional three-room, cross-passage plan by the insertion of a formal center hallway; this modification is expressed on the exterior by a second entrance, ordering the first story facade in four symmetrical bays. This plan variation reflects the incorporation of an element selected from the current architectural fashion of the late 18th century into a long-established traditional British form. The house retains an unusually high degree of integrity; most of its original interior features and detailing remain intact, including baseboard, chair rail, and architrave moldings; stair and balustrade; vertical beaded board partitions, beaded ceiling joists; paneled doors (two of which have original Suffolk latches), mantels and fireplace surrounds; and a large cooking fireplace with an oven opening. Through this unique combination of high integrity, unusual variation on a traditional plan, and firmly documented construction date, the Harris House contributes importantly to an understanding of the architectural history of northeastern Maryland. The house derives additional significance from its association with the expansion during the 18th century of the Quaker community called the Nottingham Lots, established by William Penn in 1701. When Penn laid out the community, it was located in disputed territory, claimed by both Pennsylvania and Maryland. Penn hoped that the settlement would help him retain his claim to the land as part of Chester County, Pennsylvania. In 1767, however, the Mason and Dixon line settled the dispute and gave most of the area of the Nottingham Lots to Cecil County, Maryland. The Harris House is located on Lot #1, at the west end of the Nottingham Lots.

For History and Supporting Documentation, see Continuation Sheet No. 4

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

Little specific biographical information is available on Nathan Harris, the first occupant of the Harris House. The records of the Nottingham Monthly Meeting indicate that he was formally disowned by the Society of Friends in 1780 for a number of offenses, including failure to attend meetings, distilling spirits, paying taxes in support of war, and having a Presbyterian minister officiate at his wedding. In addition, local tradition holds that Harris was George Washington's tailor.

John Harris, Nathan Harris' father, owned a large plantation of 226 acres by the name of Hampton in the area which is now called Harrisville. As recorded in Deed JS No. 4, Folio 50, John Harris died intestate leaving a widow and said Nathan and a brother John and several other unnamed children. Nathan bought the shares and proportions of all the other children.

Nathan acquired a large number of acres surrounding the land he inherited from his father. In June, 1787, he purchased 137 acres from Stephen Rich of West Nottingham. This land included the tract called the Pentagon and is described in Deed Vol. 16, Folio 143. On March 13, 1788, Nathan acquired another 137 acre tract of land from Archibold Job Esquire, Sheriff of Cecil County, in a sheriff's sale of the land owned by Joseph Rich in order to settle a debt with William Porter (Deed Vol. 16, Folio 329). On September 13, 1802, Nathan purchased all the parcel of land called the Lovely Lott from James Love (approx. 38 acres and seven perches; Deed JB No. 7, Vol. 23, Folio 453). Nathan conveyed 45 acres of land to his brother, John Harris, on February 3, 1808 (Deed JS No. 4, Folio 50). These acres were located on the Nottingham Lot No. 1 and were close to Nottingham Lots Nos. 5 and 19, originally deed to Henry Reynolds.

The estate of Nathan Harris was divided amongst his heirs. On April 9, 1820, Nathan's son Charles acquired the Harris House and 60 acres of land from his brothers, John Jeremiah, David, Isaac and Elijah, who were all heirs to the Nathan Harris estate. This 60 acres included a part of the Tract called Hampton, a part of the Tract called Pentagon, and the whole Tract called Bethleham (see Deed JS No. 18, Folio 344).

Charles Harris and Lydia, his wife, sold the Harris House and surrounding 60 acres to Stephen Reynolds on April 8, 1840 (Deed JS No. 46, Folio 18). Stephen Reynolds left the property and house to John T. Reynolds in his last will and testament (June 9, 1868; recorded in the Register of Wills for Cecil County).

See Continuation Sheet No. 5

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

John T. Reynolds and his wife, Anna M., of Media, Pennsylvania, sold the property to Ida M. Briscoe, wife of Henry J. Briscoe, Jr. (Deed JAD No. 18, Folio 552). In 1894 Marshall Haines was named Trustee of the property by the Court (Case being No. 1821 on the Docket). The property was sold at auction to Alexander B. Kay of Cecil County (Deed JTG No. 5, Folio 299). Upon Alexander's death, the property was conveyed to Elizabeth Kay by Lewis D. Kay and Robert H. Kay, executors of the last will of Alexander Kay (Deed M.D. No. 4, Folio 265). Elizabeth sold the property (Harris House and 60 acres) to John M. Jones in 1906. John Kay, son of Alexander Kay, was a naval officer who went down with "The Maine" during the Spanish American War.

John M. Jones and his wife Eva sold the house and land shortly after acquiring it to Wilmer Kurtz Bird Esq. (Deed M.D. 6, Folio 196). Wilmer owned the property from 1906 till his death in 1936. Wilmer ran a well known dairy during these years, called the Meadow Rock Dairy. He was responsible for several of the prominent additionals/alterations in the house including the front stoop, the frame addition on the north facade that was a kitchen, and the indoor bathroom on the second floor.

Wilmer also acquired some land from William S. Evans in 1918 (Deed WGP No. 1, Folio 72). Wilmer Bird left the estate to Malva Bird Weir (Will Record T. No. 27, Folio 534). Malva and her husband, Harry Edward Weir, sold most of the land (approximately 60 acres) to James and Ira Teague in 1943 (Deed RRC 3, Folio 236). The Harris House on 0.62 acres was sold by Harry Weir's children to liquidate the estate upon Harry's death in 1979 to the Borland family, the current owners.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property, 0.62 acre, includes the single town lot upon which the resource stands, described as follows: beginning at a stone set at the northern edge of Maryland Route 273, 288 feet west of the intersection of Maryland Routes 273 and 276, thence north 2 degrees west 136 feet to a stake; thence north 34 degrees east 176 feet to the western edge of Route 276; thence following said highway rights-of-way south and west to the beginning point.

9. Major Bibliographical References

CE-229

Cecil County 1608-1850 Collected by G.E. Gifford, Jr.
Published by the George E. Gifford Memorial Committee, Calvert School, Rising Sun, MD., 1974.
Cecil County, Vol. 2, No. 1 County Directories of MD., Inc., Baltimore, 1956.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.62 acre

Quadrangle name Rising Sun, Maryland **Quadrangle scale** 1:24,000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	402172	4391436
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet No. 5

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

state n/a	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	1. Peter E. Kurtze (architectural description & significance summary) 2. R. Michael Borland, M.D. (history and support material)		
organization	1. Maryland Historical Trust 2. Owner	date	June 1983
street & number	1. 21 State Circle 2. 695 Colora Road	telephone	1. 301-269-2438 2. 301-658-3767
city or town	1. Annapolis 2. Colora	state	1. Maryland 21401 2. Maryland 21917

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [signature] 2-21-84

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

GPO 938 835

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Primary sources:

Cecil County Land and Probate Records, Courthouse, Elkton, Maryland
Wills B#9/19; D#11/439
Deeds JB#3/474; JB#20/176; JS#32/32
Inventories, 1808-1820

West Nottingham Friends Meeting House plans

Map of Old Nottingham Lots, 1901

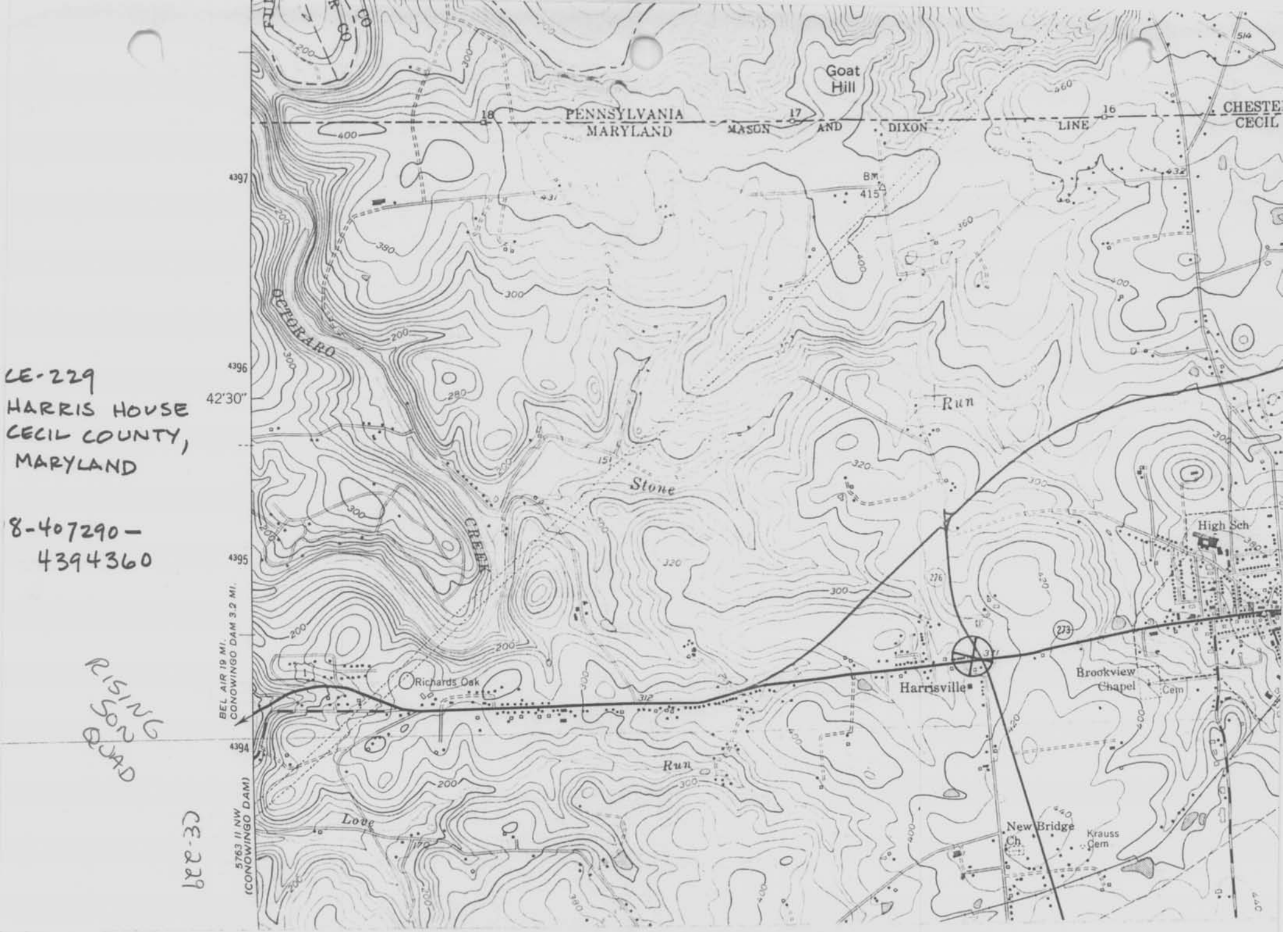
Secondary sources:

Gifford, G.E., Jr. Cecil County, Maryland, 1608-1850, As Seen By Some Visitors. Rising Sun, Maryland, 1974. p. 225.

Johnson, George. History of Cecil County, Maryland. Elkton, 1881. pp. 351, 397, 402.

Miller, Alice. Cecil County, A Study in Local History. Port Deposit, 1949. pp. 122, 140.

Richards, Joseph Thomas. Richards Genealogy, ms.



CE-229
HARRIS HOUSE
CECIL COUNTY,
MARYLAND

8-407290-
4394360

RISING
SUN
QUAD

CE-231

N.+ S. Harris House
Rts 276 and 273
Harrisville, Md..

R.M.Borland
7/28/83
Neg at MHT

Attic wall showing pegged construction

CE # 229

CE-229

Nathan and Susannah
Harris House
Rts. 273 + 276
Harrisville, Cecil County,
Maryland
R. Michael Borland, M.D.
NEG. AT M.H.T., ANNAPOLIS

Date June 20, 1983
Neg. at MHT, Annapolis, Md.

Attic
Camera is facing East.

[redacted]

N.+ S. Harris House
Rts 276 and 273
Harrisville, Md.

R.M.Borland
7/28/83
neg at MHT

North elevation of house

CE #229
[redacted]

N. +. S. Harris House
Rts 276 and 273
Harrisville, Md.

R.M.Borland
7/28/83
Neg at MHT

Outside wall. East
Elevation.

CE#229

[redacted]

CE-229
HARRIS HOUSE
HARRISVILLE
KITCHEN PANELING
2/80 PBT
NEG./MD. HIST TRUST

N. +. S. Harris House
Rts 276 and 273
Harrisville, Md.

R.M. Borland
7/28/83
Neg at MHT

SW corner of house.
West elevation.
CE # 229
[redacted]

N.+S. Harris House
Rts 276 and 273
Harrisville, Md.

R.M.Borland
7/28/83
neg at MHT

West elevation of house.

CE # 229
[redacted]

CE-229
HARRIS HOUSE
NE EL POST
2) PBT
NE 1 MD. HIST. TRUST

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE CE-229

ATTIC FRAMING

HARRISVILLE, MD. CECIL

2/80 PBT NEG MNT

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE CE-229

SOUTHEAST PARLOR MANTEL DETAIL

HARRISVILLE, MD CECIL

2/50 PST NEG / MHT

CE-229

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE

& NORTHEAST ROOM MANTEL DETAIL

HARRISVILLE, MD. CECIL

2/80 PBT NEG. MHT

CE-229
HARRIS HOUSE
HARRISVILLE
KITCHEN PANELING
2/80 PBT
NEG./MD. HIST TRUST

N. + S. Harris House
Rts 276 and 273
Harrisville, Md.

R.M.Borland
7/28/83
Neg at MHT

Staircase, looking through doorway in main cooking area. Camera looks East.

CE #229
[redacted]

CE-229 Nathan & Susannah Harris hse. PJB 3/95

N.+ S. Harris House
Rts 276 and 273
Harrisville, Md.

R.M. Borland
7/28/83
neg at MHT

Attic rafters. Shows
pegged construction
CE #229

CE-229

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE

CEILING IN KITCHEN

HARRISVILLE MD

2/90 PBT

NEG/MD. HIST TRUST

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE CE-229

WEST ELEVATION

HARRISVILLE, MD. CECIL

2180 PIBT NEG. MHT

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE CF. 229

SOUTH ELEVATION

DETAIL OF STONEWORK

HARRISVILLE, MD.

2/80 PBT NEG. MHT

CE-229

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE

2ND FLOOR HEARTH SUPPORT
SOUTHEAST PARLOR CEILING

HARRISVILLE, MD. CECIL

2/80 FIBT NEG. MHT

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE CE-229

EXPOSED BEAMS ON KITCHEN CEILING

HARRISVILLE, MD. CECIL

2/80 PIST NEG. MHT

NATHAN HARRIS HOUSE

CF. 229

2ND FLOOR HANDRAIL

HARRISVILLE, MD. CECIL

2/80 PBT NEG. MMT

#24

CE-~~172~~ 229 N & S Harris Use. PBT ~~3/79~~ 12/80