

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M:20-42

1. Name of Property

(indicate preferred name)

historic The Sarah Posey House

other 9631 Wightman Road

2. Location

street and number 9631 Wightman Road ☐ not for publication

city, town Gaithersburg ☐ vicinity

county Montgomery

3. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Brent R. Berisford

street and number 9631 Wrightman Road

telephone

city, town Gaithersburg

state MD

zip code 20879-1254

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Judicial Center, 50 Courthouse Square

tax map and parcel FV51, P970

city, town Rockville, MD

liber 21188 folio 714

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	3
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	3
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resource
previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

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Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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

RESOURCE TYPE: Pre-1930 vernacular farmhouse

ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

The subject house faces south on Wightman Road, an improved original two-lane rural road. The house has a deep front lawn and an extensive rear yard. The property is in residential use.

DESCRIPTION:

The Sarah Posey house at 9631 Wightman Road is a rectangular side-gabled three-bay, two-story frame structure with a rear two-story kitchen wing and latticed porch. A shallow-hipped-roof (may be the original roof) supported by six square wooden posts covers a full width one-story front porch. The porch is enclosed by a plain spindle balustrade. The porch is supported by brick piers and enclosed by latticework. It is elevated about a half story due to the declining grade and accessed by a central flight of stairs. The roof is clad with patterned tin shingles. The windows are 2/2 double sash windows with plain surrounds. The house is clad with "asbestos" type cementitious shingles in a wood grained texture. The foundation is random coursed fieldstone parged with concrete. A brick chimney is located on the rear slope of the roof. The house is older than other houses in this area, which are a mix of mid-twentieth century residences. Remains of two outbuildings are present on the property. One of the buildings is a carriage house that belonged to the Prather family and the other building belonged to the National Guard and was used for repairing equipment during World War I. A tank and a jeep are buried on the property.



The subject house faces south on Wightman Road. Large shrubs screen the secluded rear yard. A rectangular side-gabled building with narrow lap siding is in the rear yard, which was used by the National Guard in World War I. Another small log side-gabled building is also in the rear. It was used primarily as a carriage house.

This simple 2-1/2-story frame three-bay by three-bay four-room house is one room deep with an attached kitchen wing on the rear. It is typical vernacular rural or farm dwelling of the period.

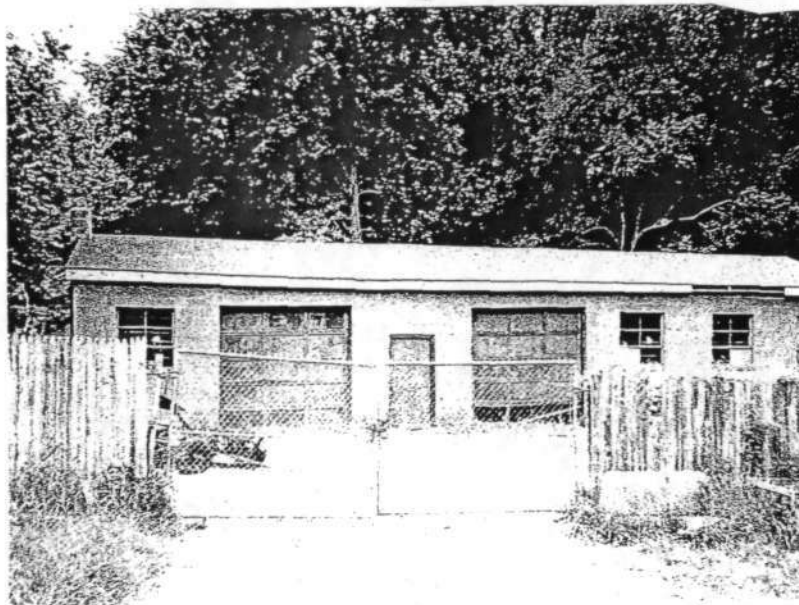
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Outbuildings in the rear yard of the Posey Home, 9631 Wightman Road.



National Guard equipment repair facility that was in operation during World War I.



Carriage House that was owned by the Prather family.

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

The three-bay north (front) façade has regular fenestration, one window in each second story bay and one in the first and third bays on the first story. The center bay has the exterior door.

The three-bay east facade has a small square four light attic window in the gable and one central window on each story of the main block. The rear addition has a string of three windows on the second story and one window in the first story of the rear wing. The infill addition has no south fenestration.

An exterior square brick chimney is at the southeast corner of the wing. A small shed-roofed rear cinderblock porch is on the east and the west half is sided with asphalt shingles. A two light window is in the cinder block side and a wood panel exterior door with four lights is in the asphalt side.

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

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

The house has two stories with two bedrooms. One of the bedrooms was reduced in size in order to install a bathroom. The kitchen is very large in relation to the overall size of the house. The house still maintains much of its original interior, which may include the hardwood floors, fireplace, stairs, wall decorations, and lighting fixtures.

See Photographs, Attachment 7.1 and 7.2

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/
		<input type="checkbox"/> conservation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other local history	

Significance dates 1910 Architect Unknown

Specific dates 1910 Builder Unknown

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☐ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sarah Posey House was built on a tract of land called Dorsey's Meadows in Goshen. This portion was part of the large land holdings owned by the James E. Benson family. The Sarah Posey House was built around 1910 for farm workers by John Wightman and his wife. In 1916, the house and over one acre of land was sold to an African American woman, Sarah J. Posey, and remained in the Posey family for about 68 years. Although Sarah's Heritage is not known, she joined a landowning minority in a period where African American ownership of property was restricted in areas and often not open to African Americans elsewhere. With property ownership, this family became self-sufficient.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

This property is part of the holdings of James E. Benson and his family. The land was owned by William Thompson after the Benson ownership. Mr. Thompson was born November 21, 1799 and died on July 16, 1888. His wife, Ann Thompson was born April 12, 1822 and died September 27, 1881.¹ They had one daughter, Mary Velinda Thompson. After the death of William Thompson, the land was left in trust and conveyed 63 acres of land to John and Mary Wightman in 1899.² John Wightman was born October 2, 1889.

¹ Memorial stones for William and Ann Thompson in the Goshen Methodist Church Cemetery, Goshen Road, Laytonsville, MD.

² Montgomery County Land Record Liber/folio J.A. 15/305.

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1873, and Mary Wightman was born February 11, 1874. She died January 21, 1959.³ The family, whose main residence was at 9821 Wightman Road, contributed its name to Wightman Road, a road that connects Montgomery Village Avenue to Goshen Road.

The property where the house is located was sold to Sarah J. Posey in 1916 for the sum of 103 dollars. The deed referred to as part of a tract of land called Dorsey's Meadows. The lot land was said to begin at a stone, heretofore, planted in the first line of the conveyance to John and Mary Wightman. The land is described in the deeds as a division of J.E. Benson land, with first line due north 10:85 perches to a point in the center of the country road also in to the first line, thence with center of said road S.87 degrees W. 31.5 perches to intersect the division line of J.E. Benson's in the center of the fork of the Rockville Road, containing one acre and 5 square perches more or less.⁴

According to Angelina Carpenter who now lives in the Sarah Posey House, the Wightman family built the house in 1910 for a family to work on their farm. In the book, "Proposal to Designate the 'Warfield Lane' Segment of Warfield Road As An Exceptional Rural/Rustic Road," by the Warfield Lane Preservation Committee, 1991, the house is referred to as one of four houses in the area that still retains its original structure. John Posey operated a sawmill on the lot next to the house. Local people brought their logs by horse and wagon to the Posey Mill to be processed. Sarah was a midwife who delivered babies for the residents of Prathertown.⁵ She died in 1924 as a widow.

Sarah's property was left intestate to her 13 children and children and heirs of William Posey, who died in 1927.⁶ Sarah's children were Thomas E. Posey, Adele Posey, Mae Ruth Posey, Ralph Posey, John W. Posey, Agnes Posey, Wesley Posey, Jr., Maude Posey Cooper, Roxie Posey Coombs, Matthew Posey, Gasery Posey, Jane Posey Lovelace, and Harry C. Posey. William Posey died in the District of Columbia survived by his wife and Thomas E. Posey, Margaret Wilson, Rosie Posey, Frank Posey, and William Posey, Jr.

Wesley Posey lived in the house after his parents were deceased. He married Agnes Moore of Damascus. They had 12 children. According to Sharon Prater, Agnes gave piano lessons to the children in Prathertown.⁷ Wesley and Agnes's daughter LaVerne Posey Stansbury now lives in Baltimore. She left Montgomery County in 1955 to attend college and did not remember many things about growing up in the Posey House.⁸

³ Memorial Stones for John and Mary Wightman in Goshen Methodist Church Cemetery, Goshen Road, Laytonsville, MD.

⁴ Montgomery County Land Record Liber/folio 178/470 and Montgomery County Land Record Liber/folio 258/418.

⁵ Proposal to Designate the "Warfield Lane" Segment of Warfield Road as an Exceptional Rural/Rustic Road, The Warfield Lane Preservation Committee, May 27, 1991

⁶ Montgomery County Land Record 4154/780 (9/30/71) Posey to Ralph Stephen Hall.

⁷ Interview with Sharon Prather by Joanne Atay, October 2001.

⁸ Telephone interview with LaVerne Posey Stansbury by Joanne Atay, March 2002.

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The Posey House is graceful, elegant, and one of the loveliest homes in the Goshen area. Goshen has a long history going back to the 1600s. Goshen was the center for one of the first polling places in Montgomery County in the late 1700s. Below the Wightman and Posey homes are "Wightman's Meadows" where people would come from all over the county for picnics and swimming in the Great Seneca Creek. The picnic area was in the walnut grove which provided shade and seclusion for family outings. Although different in style, both the Wightman and the Posey homes share similarities. Both have blue facades which are unique in the area and both have white porches and white trim. It is obvious that these two houses are connected.

Most important, the Posey House is one of the last remaining late 19th and early 20th century homes of Prathertown, a community in the Goshen/Gaithersburg area. Prathertown was established in 1883 and is one of the oldest African American communities in Montgomery County. The descendants of the founders of Prathertown are still living on Wightman and Prathertown Roads which makes Prathertown a living historical community. The people in Prathertown are one of the last remaining African American communities that have maintained their identity and have resisted encroaching high density development that has absorbed other African American communities.

The Posey House is featured in the attached brochure and booklet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Montgomery County Land, Plat, and will records; Gaithersburg: The Heart of Montgomery County; 1949 Sanborn Map and 1965 U.S. Geological Survey Map; Personal interviews with Sharon Prather, Phyllis Prather, and LaVerne Stansbury.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of project area 27,007 square feet
Acreage surveyed _____
Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

Verbal boundary description and justification

Part of Dorsey's Meadow. Tax Map FV51, parcel 970.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title Name Goshen Historic Preservation Society & consultant Judy Christensen August, 2002

organization Goshen Historic Preservation Society

street & number 21109 Kaul Lane

city or town Germantown, Maryland, 20874

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
410-514-7600

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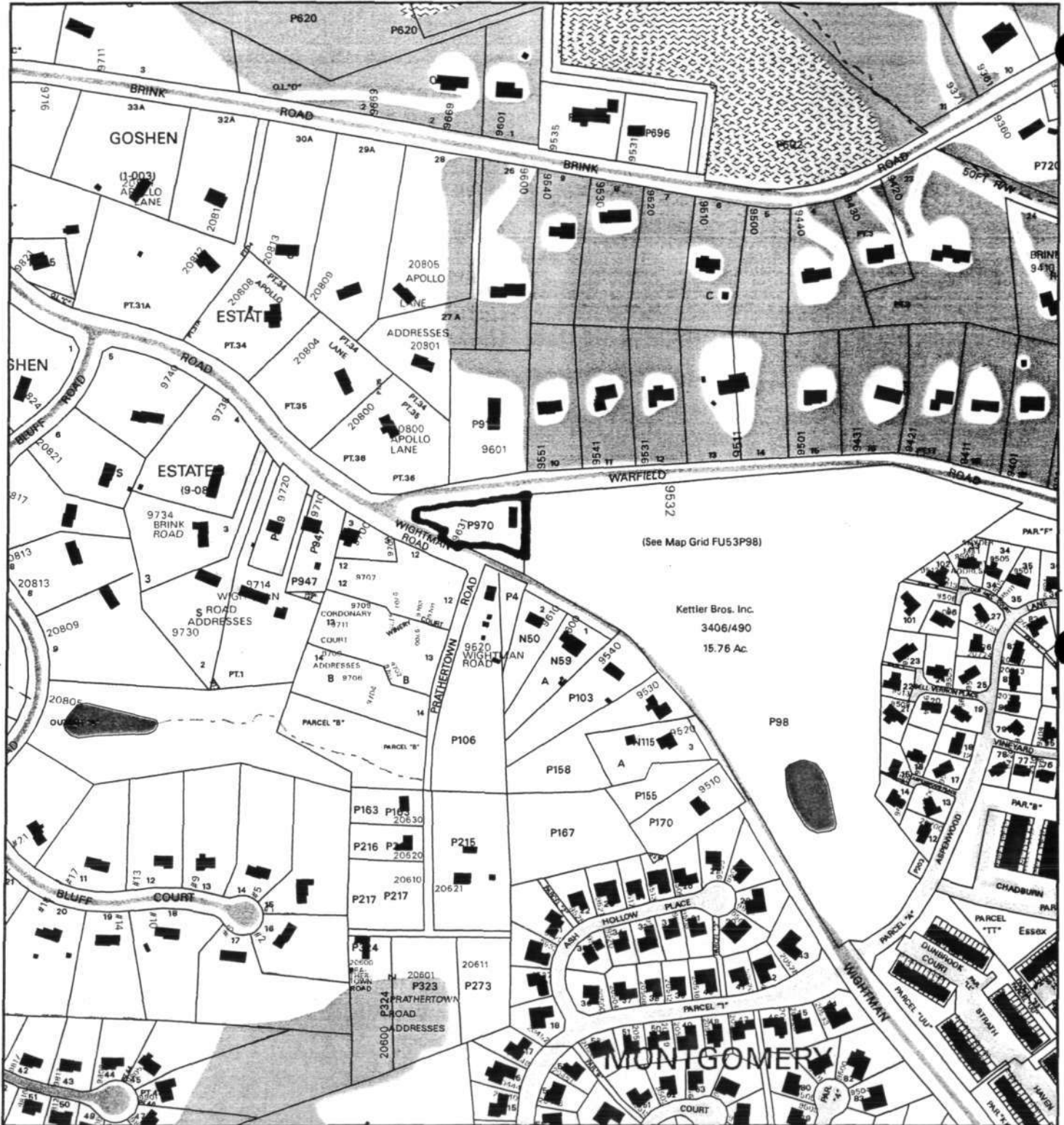
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References

1. Atay, Joanne and Bell, Bonnie, A History of Prathertown, 2002.
2. Atay, Joanne E., Goshen and the Bridge Over Great Seneca Creek, The Montgomery Story, Editor, Eleanor M.V. Cook, Vol. 46, No. 1, February 2003. (Draft)
3. Boggs, Ardith Gunderman, Goshen, Maryland, Its History and People, 1994.
4. Cavicchi, Clare, Places from the Past: The Tradition of Gardez Bien in Montgomery County, Maryland, 2001.
5. Great Seneca Creek Bridge, A landmark in history, brochure, Greater Goshen Civic Association.
6. Interview with Sharon Prather by Joanne Atay, October 2001.
7. Memorial Stones for John and Mary Wightman in Goshen Methodist Church Cemetery, Brink Road, Laytonsville, MD
8. Mitchell, Sarah May, My Upper Montgomery County, 2001
9. Montgomery County Land Record Liber/folio J.A. 15/305.
10. Montgomery County Land Record Liber/folio 178/470.
11. Montgomery County Land Record Liber/folio 258/418.
12. Montgomery County Land Record Liber/folio 4154/780 (9/30/71) Posey to Ralph Stephen Hall.
13. Telephone interview with LaVerne Posey Stansbury by Joanne Atay, March 2002.
14. The Warfield Lane Preservation Committee, Proposal to Designate the "Warfield Lane" Segment of Warfield Road as an Exceptional Rural/Rustic Road. May 27, 1991.

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SARAH POSEY HOUSE (20-42)



Map compiled on August 06, 2004 at 11:23 AM | Site located on base sheet no - 229NW09

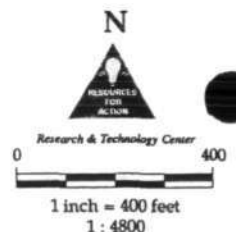
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THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue - Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760



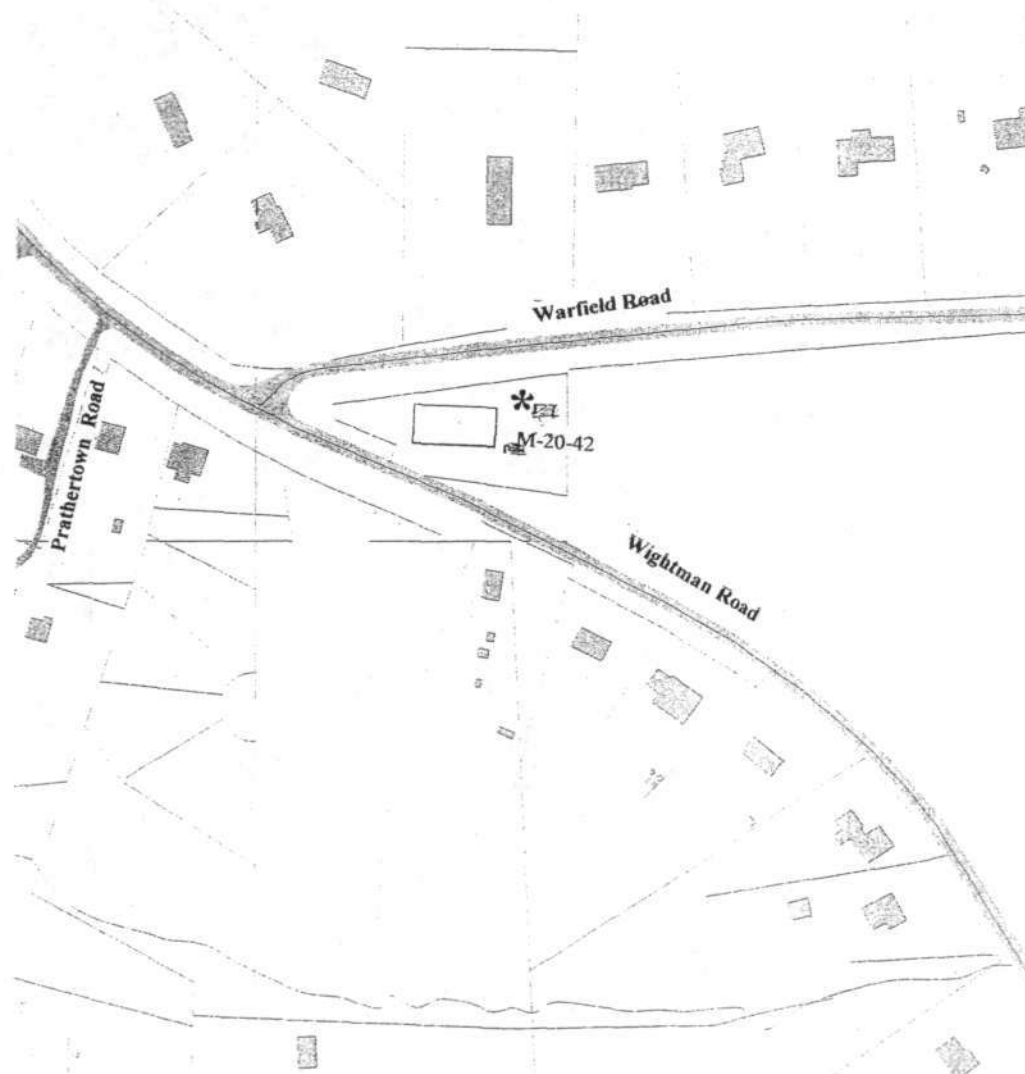
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M: 20-42 POSEY HOUSE



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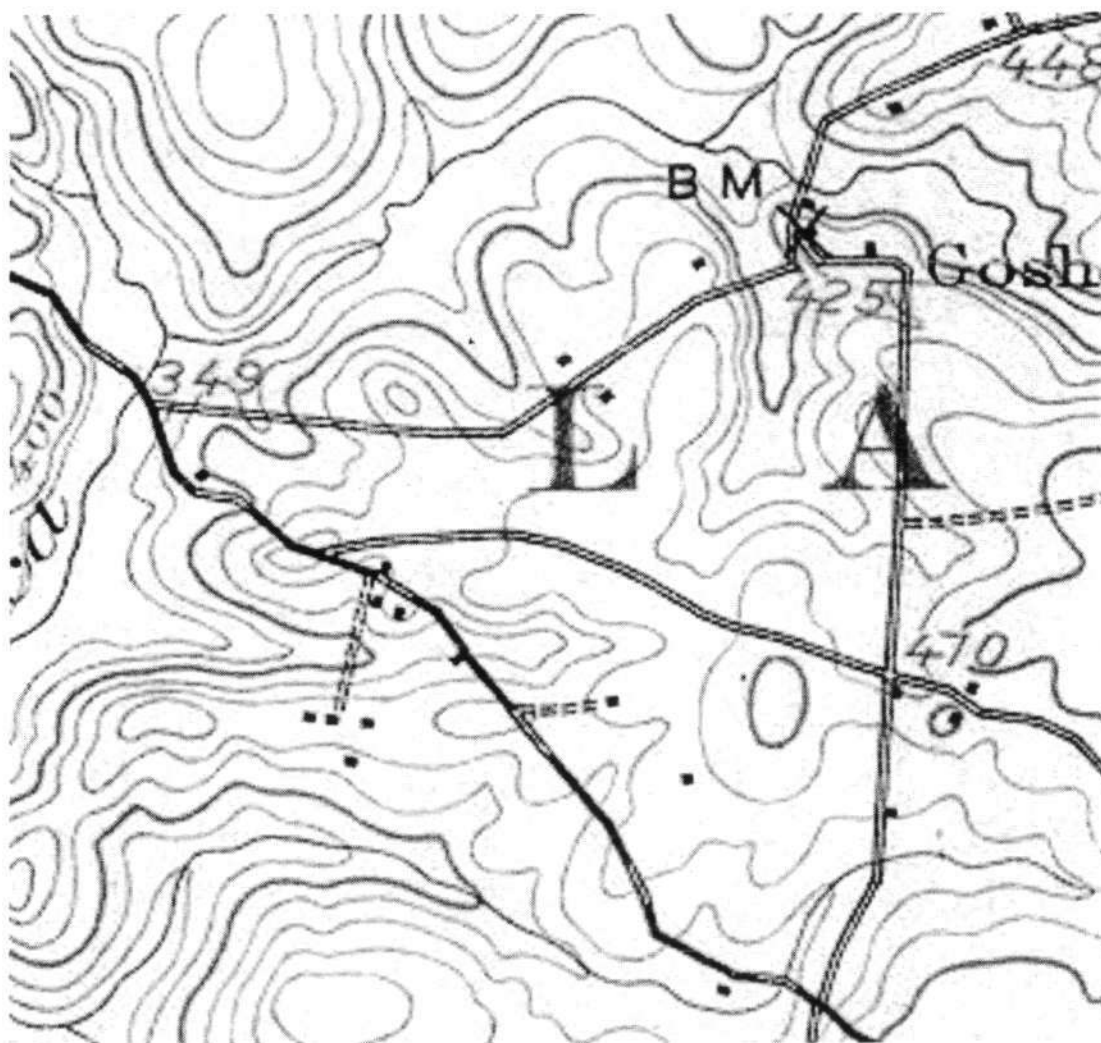
Scale: 1" = 200'

Legend

- Boundary
- Easement
- Filling Area
- Road
- Water
- Wetland
- Wooded Area
- Other

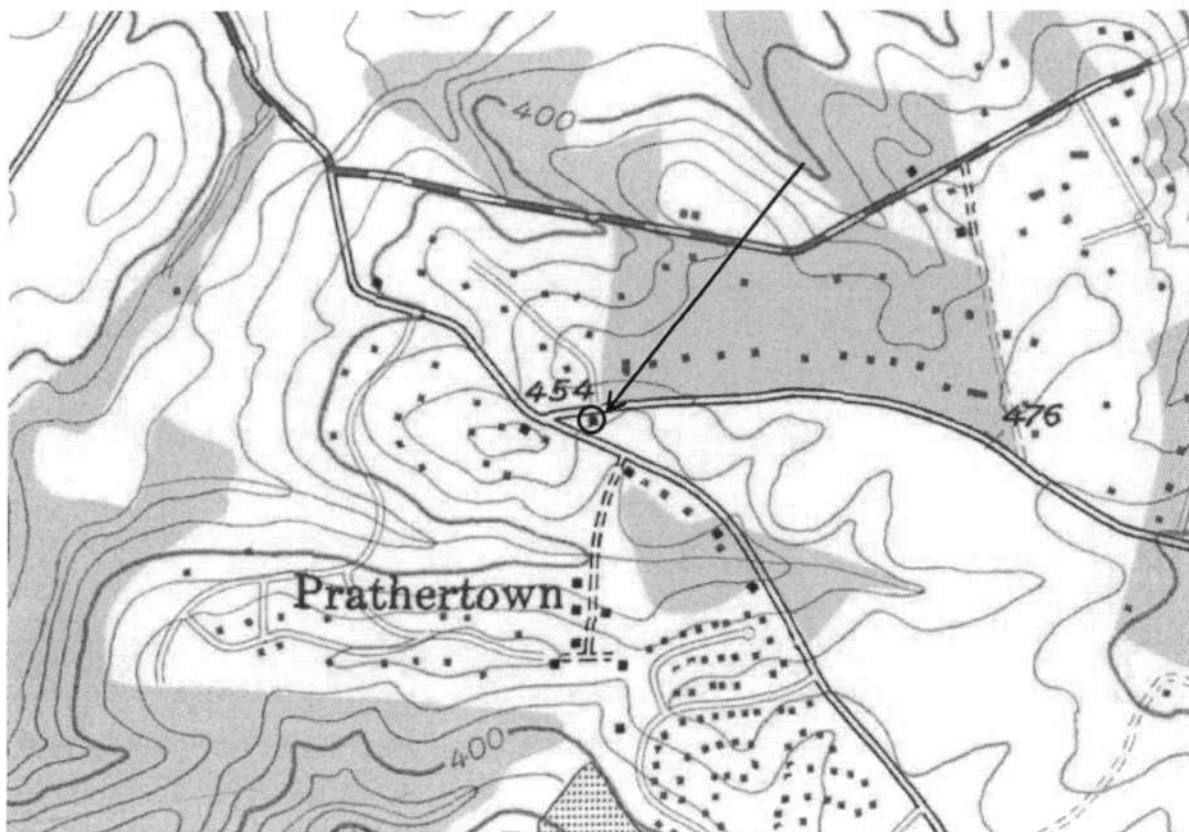
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1908 USGS Map



Source: Joanne Atay and Bonnie Bell
History of Prathertown, Powerpoint, 2004

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Posey House
9631 Wightman Road
Gaithersburg
Gaithersburg Quad



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