#### CAPSULE SUMMARY

#### FOR

#### TOBYTOWN CEMETERY

#### REAR OF 12649 TOBYTOWN DRIVE, TRAVILAH

Montgomery County Survey Prefix & Site Number: M-25/14

Approximate Building Date: late 19th century/20th century

Town or Vicinity in which Resource is Located: Travilah

Access: Private

This cemetery is located at the rear of a group of houses on Tobytown Drive. Approximately rectangular in form, the cemetery is surrounded by a chain link fence and contains about two dozen scattered reddish sandstones, which may be headstones or footstones. The Tobytown Cemetery is the only historical resource remaining connected with the early black kinship community of Tobytown. All other structures associated with Tobytown were demolished in the early 1970s and replaced with a townhouse community - in which descendants of many of Tobytown's original families still live. The cemetery contains the remains of former slaves and their descendants.



			·	
1. Nar	ne (indicate	preferred name)		
historic	Tobytown	Cemetery		
and/or commor	1			
2. Loc	ation			
street & numbe	er Rear of 1	2649 Tobytown Driv	7e	not for publication
city, town	Tobytown	vicinity of	congressional district	
state	MD	county	Montgomery	
3. Clas	ssification		,	
Category  district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered not_applicable	Status  occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other: ⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨⟨
<u>4. Owi</u>	ner of Propo	erty (give names a	and mailing addresses	
name	Housing Or	pportunities Commi	ssion of Montgome	ry Cty., MD
street & number	, 8580 Secon	nd Avenue	telephone no	.: (703)495-2340
city, town	Silver Spr	ring state	and zip code	MD 20910
5. Loc	ation of Leg	gal Descripti	on	
	istry of deeds, etc.	Montgomery County	Courthouse	liber 03007
street & number	•	51 Monroe Street		folio 0028
city, town		Rockville	state	MD
6. Rep	resentation	in Existing	Historical Surve	ys
itle	Montgomery Count	y Locational Atlas	s of Historic Site	S
date	1976		federal state	county local
pository for si	urvey records M-NCP	PPC		
city, town	Silver Spring		state	MD

Condition excellent good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	Check one unaltered altered	Check one original site moved date of move	

Survey No.

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

7. Description

The Tobytown Cemetery is located at the rear (north) of a group of houses on Tobytown Drive, with the eastern end of the cemetery located behind 12649 Tobytown Drive. River Road is adjacent and parallel to the north boundary of the cemetery.

Approximately rectangular in form, and running east-west, the cemetery is surrounded by a chain link fence, with entrance through a gate at the southwest corner. At the time of the site visit (12/93), the cemetery was clear of underbrush and what appeared to be gravestones were clearly visible.

There are about two dozen scattered red sandstones which may be headstones or footstones. The stones are generally small, irregular in shape, and without inscription. The only stone with recognizable markings is a small stone leaning against the base of a tree, which reads, "Marrishh, b. --- 27, 1888, d. --- 2, 1890." Another notable stone is large and rectangular, lying flat on the ground, with no visible inscription.

A number of stones are grouped near a tree with a triple trunk located near the fence on the north side of the cemetery. Other smaller trees are scattered throughout the site.

8. Sig	nificance		Survey No.	M:25-14
Period	9 archeology-historic 9 agriculture 9 architecture 9 art		landscape architecture law literature military music t philosophy politics/government	e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific date	es c.1875	Builder/Architect XXX	Unknown	Contend
	olicable Criteria: XA and/or olicable Exception:A		EFG	
Le	vel of Significance:	nationalstate	local	
Prepare bot support.	th a summary paragraph o	of significance and a	a general statement o	of history and

Summary: The Tobytown Cemetery is the only historical resource left connected with this black community which is still active, though small. The cemetery contains the remains of former slaves and their descendants.

The community known as Tobytown was established by William Davis, Ailsie Martin, and Emory Genus. Davis was given four acres of land by John and Susan Rouzee (for consideration of \$8.00) in 1875. According to a grandson, Davis was a Tennessee native who was an emancipated slave working on a Seneca vicinity farm at the time of purchase. Martin and Genus bought a five-acre parcel from the Rouzees for \$100. The land was part of a tract known as Brackenridge. 1

Pennyfield Lock Road, which runs from River Road to the C&O Canal, was known at this time as Warehouse Road, Muddy Branch Warehouse Road or DuFief Warehouse Road. John L. DuFief operated a warehouse along the canal by 1865.

The cemetery is located on the parcel which was owned by Ailsie Martin. By 1878, Tobias Martin had a residence in this vicinity. Emory Genus lived on the opposite side of Pennyfield Lock Road (southeast). Two story house shown in aerial photo. William Davis lived west on River Road, near Muddy Branch. Supplies were available at the store located approximately three-quarters of a mile down the road, at the canal lock. 3

In 1887, Ailsie Martin dedicated a small parcel of land "for the purpose of erecting a meeting house or place of worship for the colored Baptist congregation worshiping in the neighborhood of Travillah." The original church burned by 1917. A later church, probably on the same lot, was located directly west of the intersec-

(Continued)

# Continuation Sheet M: 25-14 - Tobytown Cemetery Section 8: SIGNIFICANCE Page 8.1

tion of River and Pennyfield Lock Roads.<sup>4</sup> This was one of the few black Baptist churches in the upper county. The church and lot were claimed by the Department of Public Works when River Road was widened in 1956.<sup>5</sup> Methodist residents of Tobytown attended Union Wesley Methodist Church, which was located at the corner of Piney Meetinghouse Road and Piney Glen Lane.<sup>6</sup>

Among those believed to be buried in cemetery:
Charles Davis (d1914), father of Henson Davis (born c1893)<sup>7</sup>
Grandfather of Henson's wife<sup>8</sup>
Henson's [older?] brother (William Davis Jr?)
Henson's son
Most graves were unmarked.

Tobytown was a small kinship community. Many of the residents still related today. Unlike most other black communities, Tobytown residents, for the most part, did not form ties with other communities. The closest black communities were Berryville, Seneca, and The Pines (near Piney Meetinghouse and Glen Roads). Little physical evidence is left of these other communities.

School classes were held in the first church. The community requested its own school in 1917, after the church burned, but it was never built. After construction of the second church, it undoubtedly was also used for classes. By the early 20th century, most other black communities had their own school building, however inadequate, and many, unlike Tobytown, had a post office. 9

Through the late 19th and early 20th centuries, residents worked on surrounding farms as laborers, domestics, cooks, and gardeners. In the second quarter of the 20th century, the community began to suffer. The Potomac area underwent a transformation from working farms to exclusive estates. The demand for rural labor dropped off significantly and residents were unable to acquire the skills needed for a changing job market.

Over the next 25 years, the standard of living dropped and living conditions declined. In 1965, the community was empoverished. The majority of the seventy-five residents lived without benefit of electricity, indoor plumbing, or garbage collection. meals were prepared on wood stoves, drinking and cooking water came from a single well, and sanitary facilities consisted of one outdoor privy. 10

(Continued)

Continuation Sheet
M: 25-14 Tobytown Cemetery
Section 8: SIGNIFICANCE
Page 8.2

The original Tobytown houses were smaller than most other post-Civil War era black settlements where tow story houses with two floors per level as the norm. Only one two story house stood in Tobytown. The other fourteen houses were single story structures of one, tow and three rooms each. In these houses lived 21 families consisting of 38 adults and 33 children living in 15 houses.

In 1967, the Montgomery County Council designated Tobytown an urban renewal area. Tobytown Development Corporation appointed, consisting of residents, interested citizens, and government staff. Housing polan approved by HUD in 1972.

Today, Tobytown is a community of approximately 125 people living on 16.34 acres of land. Twenty six brick and wood Shed Style townhouses, ranging in size from one bedroom to six bedrooms, were constructed in 1972, replacing the original houses. 12

## **Major Bibliographical References**

Survey No. 1.25-14

See Attached Sheet

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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 MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Shaw House 21 State Circle

DHCP/DHCD 100 COMMUNITY PLACE Annapolis, Maryland 21401 CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023

(301) 269-2438

514-7600

## Continuation Sheet M: 25-14 Tobytown Cemetery

#### Preservation Planning Data

- a. Geographic Organization: Piedmont
- b. Chronological/Developmental Period: Industrial/Urban Dominance - A.D. 1870-1930
- c. Historic Period Themes:
   Agriculture
   Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
   Religion
   Social/Education/Cultural
- e. Resource Type:
  Category: Site
  Historic Environment: Rural
  Historic Function: Cemetery
  Use: Residential, Religious

#### Endnotes

1 Rouzee may have been Davis' former master, since he gave him the land while selling the other parcel to Davis and Genus. Henson Davis recalled that Tobytown land was formerly "part of the Riley Farm." Ann Harris, **History of Potomac**, 77. The only known Riley farm in the remote vicinity was the Isaac Riley Farm, where Josiah "Uncle Tom" Henson was a slave, located south of Rockville, 11420 Old Georgetown Road (#30/6). Deeds EBP 13:245 & 246 (3-29-1875). List of Patrons in Hopkins 1879 Atlas includes R. Rouzell in Darnestown District, 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Reinterment program, 1991.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Hopkins Atlas, 1879. Data entered 1878. Darnestown District #6. Hopkins spells Genus name "Germs."

 $<sup>^4</sup>$  Deed JA 6:122 (12-27-1887). Plats: 56:4505; 92:10038. The parcel was 13 square perches or 3539.25 square feet (less than 1/8 acre).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Plat Book 56: 4505. Nina Clarke, History of black public Schools, 27. By the early 20th century, the church was known as Refuge Church of Lord Jesus Christ. The building was a two bay wide, one story masonry structure with stepped ziggurat style gable which places it in the second quarter of the 20th century. **History of Potomac**, Potomac Almanac (1970), n.p. Photo in 1991 reinterment program shows "shell of Elder Settle's church."

## Continuation Sheet M: 25-14 Tobytown Cemetery

- 6 Nina Clarke, History of the Nineteenth-Century Black Churches in Maryland and Washington, D.C. (1983), 226.
- $^7$  "Summary of Tobytown Land Acquisitions and Commitments," 3-14-90, HOC Tobytown file.
- <sup>8</sup> Linda Belotti, "Tobytowners turn out to Clean Up Graveyard," in **Montgomery Journal**, 8-21-1975.
- 9 Nina H. Clarke and Lillian B. Brown, History of the Black Public Schools of Montgomery County, Maryland, 1872-1961, 27.
- 10 Tobytown "Historical Overview," HOC file, c. 1977.
- 11 A discussion of post Emancipation black communities is found in George W. McDaniel, **Black Historical Resources in Upper Western Montgomery County** (1979), 19-31 This was probably the five room dwelling described as housing 14 residents. Montgomery County Office of Community Development, Plan for the Redevelopment of Tobytown. c1967. HOC file.
- 12 Matt Hamblen, "Driving Back to the Future," Montgomery Journal, cAugust 1990; HOC information pamphlet. HOC Tobytown File

#### Continuation Sheet

M: 25-14 Tobytown Cemetery

Section 9: MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES Page 9.1

#### Unpublished Sources

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Continuation Sheet

M: 25-14 Tobytown Cemetery

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Page 9.2

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
VATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY FORM

LOCATIONAL MAP

**SURVEY NO.: M25/14** 

PROPERTY NAME: Tobytown Cemetery

TOWN: Potomac/Seneca

COUNTY: MONTGOMERY

QUADRANGLE: Seneca, MD-VA



M-25/14 TOBYTOWN, NEAR PENNY FIELD LOCK + RIVER RDS. (N. OF TOBYTOWN POTOMAC, MD DR, AT REAR L. SNYDERMAN EAST Of 12649 TOBYTOWN NEG: MO SHPO 16/7 9297-18

TOBY TOWN CEMETERY



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TOBY TOWN CEMETERY

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TOBY TOWN CEMETERY (GEN'L VIEW)

M-25/14



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### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

#### NOMINATION FORM for the NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

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This was reportedly a slave graveyard over 100 years

ago. This is apparently one of the older Negro communities in the County. Maps indicate free blacks had established a settlement here between 1865 and 1878. At that latter date, several families had erected homes here, including members of the Martin and Davis families.

(See articles with photos in  $\underline{\text{HISTORY}}$   $\underline{\text{OF}}$   $\underline{\text{POTOMAC}}$  and  $\underline{\text{MONT}}$ .  $\underline{\text{JOURNAL}}$  newspaper.)

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