

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Mt. Airy

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

18120 New Hampshire Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Ashton

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Christie

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

18120 New Hampshire Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Ashton

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Rockville

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

M:28-3

CONDITION
 EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

 DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED
CHECK ONE
 UNALTERED
 ALTERED
CHECK ONE
 ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is a large, Colonial style, brick building that was rebuilt about 1845, after fire destroyed the original (brick) dwelling. It is covered with pebbledash that has been painted yellow. The house faces east on New Hampshire Ave., and has three bays with a central door on this facade. The door has transom and side-lights. The windows have large, 6/6 sash. There are three, evenly-spaced dormers on the roof here. The dormers have hood-type, projecting roofs, and round-headed, 6/6 sash. A heavy, Greek-style, open-porch spans the east and north sides of the first story.

Reportedly, there is an 18th Century graveyard nearby on this property. (See Farquhar.)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

M:28-3

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" 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"/> 80-1499	<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 type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This is one of the Quaker area homes, that was the center of many varied and interesting events. One of the most celebrated owners was Bernard Gilpin, who was a hat-maker. This was just about the only operation of its type in this county. Another owner, Benjamin Miller, was an Indian Inspector in the Western United States during the late 19th Century. The Present owner is the son of Dr. Christie (who lived at "Llewellyn Fields" for years.)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1) Farquhar, R.B. OLD HOMES & HISTORY OF MONT. CO. (1962)
pp. 223-224.
- 2) Farquhar, W.B. ANNALS OF SANDY SPRING, (1884).
- 3) Various house-town descriptions.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

STATE _____ COUNTY _____

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael F. Dwyer, Senior Park Historian

ORGANIZATION

M-NCPPC

DATE

8/14/75

STREET & NUMBER

8787 Georgia Ave.

TELEPHONE

589-1480

CITY OR TOWN

Silver Spring

STATE

Maryland

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, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

after its purchase. He married Amanda Sallie Griffith of Retirement in 1872. She was a daughter of Ulysses and Julia Riggs Griffith. Their son George Burnap Bartlett, born 1877, married Virginia S. Riggs in 1906. His widow still lives at the old home with her daughter in 1951, where she has remained all these years.

George Washington Burnap Bartlett lived for over thirty years at the farm, and died at the age of 96 in 1939. He bequeathed the farm, which in 1950 contains 170 acres, to his granddaughter Dorothy Riggs Bartlett, who in 1939 married George Francis Viault of Rhode Island. The Viaults have a son George Bartlett Viault and a daughter, Sally Riggs Viault.

The house was of a pattern and size which an aristocrat of southern Maryland would build as a manor house. It is fifty feet square and has a front hall eight feet wide from front to rear. The ceiling on the first floor is eleven feet high,

foundation walls of brick are twenty-four inches thick, and the interior brick partitions are twelve inches thick. There are fireplaces and fine wooden mantels with hand carvings in the rooms. There are five fireplaces on the first floor and three on the second. On the right-hand side of the front hall is a handsome dining room with fireplace, behind which is a modern kitchen with a huge fireplace and crane. This room was the original detached kitchen with breezeway, but a second story with two rooms has been added.

On the second floor there are three bedrooms on each side of the wide hall, and two modern baths are now installed. Heavy oak beams, hewed on top, are visible in the cellar with bark still in place on many of them. The outside of the main house has been covered with pebble dash in recent times. The frame construction of the part to the rear of the side porch, including the bay window, is a recent addition.

Mount Airy

ONE-half mile north of Ashton and twenty miles from Washington, on one of the highest points in the Sandy Spring community stands Mt. Airy, a substantial brick house on a farm of 140 acres of productive land.

In 1793 one Bernard Gilpin married Sarah Thomas, daughter of Richard Thomas of Cherry Grove, in the Sandy Spring meetinghouse. By 1799, with four children, Bernard and Sarah may have felt the pinch of a housing shortage, for Sarah's father, after they had lived with him at Cherry Grove for six years, built Mr. Airy for his daughter and son-in-law. They chose a name appropriate to the sweeping views westward. On clear days one can glimpse part of Carroll County twenty miles away.

This homesite is on part of the original land grant of "Addition to Charley Forest" made to John Bradford on September 16, 1720. There was undoubtedly a house on the place before the present house was built, for in 1777 a road supervisor was appointed by the overseers to maintain the road, "From Snell's Bridge to the fork of the road below Samuel Richardson's late dwelling, and from there to the Hawlings

River."¹ (There is a deed on the records of Frederick County, dated August 20, 1751, by which Richard Snowden conveys to his son-in-law, James Brooke of Charley Forest, land which runs "to the line of the land formerly laid out to Samuel Richardson, now the right of the heirs of William Richardson, deceased." This identifies the Richardsons as owners of Mt. Airy.)²



NO. 60 D-10 RICHARD THOMAS 1799 BRICK
PEBBLE DASH BURNED 1845 AND REBUILT

¹ Scharf's History of Western Maryland, Vol. I.

² Liber B, Folio 432-433, Land Records Frederick County.

Samuel Richardson's grave in the field west of the present house is marked by a large tombstone: "Here lies the body of Mr. Samuel Richardson who departed this life 18 February 1764, aged 58 years," and beside it is another stating that "Maria Richardson departed this life 24 June, 1767, aged 57 years." Just where the house stood is not known.

Bernard Gilpin was a hatmaker. His products were hard, stiff, broadbrimmed affairs with flat tops of rabbit fur and wool. Gilpin's craftsmen stood around a hot water boiler enclosed by a sloping table, and rubbed the wool and fur with their hands to cause it to "felt." Water oozing out of the fabric ran back into the tank. Riding a black pony, Gilpin peddled his wares about the community. Hats in profusion dangled from a string tied around his waist. He came to be known as Uncle Bernard, perhaps because he was so hospitable. Legend says, he sat when business was slow under a huge chestnut tree at the Ashton crossroads swapping yarns with Edward Porter, who operated a cooper's shop there, and hoping to waylay a traveler to take up to Mt. Airy for a visit. Legend, however, fails to say how welcome these travelers may have been to Sarah, his wife, for she sometimes had to churn butter as late as nine o'clock at night so that the guests might have butter for breakfast next day.

Mt. Airy burned to the ground about 1845, but was immediately rebuilt. At the time of the fire one of the residents of Sandy Spring, a mile away, came running past Bloomfield, a farm nearby to the west, and paused just long enough to rebuke Caleb Bentley, its owner: "Thee should be ashamed of thyself to sit there quietly reading while thy neighbor's house burns down!"

After Bernard Gilpin's death the place was occupied by his son, Joshua, and his wife Letitia (Canby) Gilpin, and following the death of Joshua, the farm was purchased in 1865 by Benjamin H. Miller, of Alexandria, Virginia. Three years earlier, on September 18, 1862, he had married Sarah Thomas of Clifton. Their wedding was described as a "quiet affair," but it occurred at a very anxious time. The bloody battle of Antietam was fought the day before the wedding, and the sound of cannon persisted all that day. The bride and groom lived for three years in a small house on the Clifton farm before they moved to Mt. Airy.

Benjamin Miller was a life-long Republican. In 1889 he was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Chicago. Shortly afterward he was appointed Indian Inspector in which capacity he spent many months in the West. He was all his life an ardent worker in the cause of temperance, and believer in prohibition.

Rebecca Miller, the oldest daughter of Benjamin and Sarah Miller, remained with her parents at Mt. Airy all her life. For many years she was one of the most clever and acceptable historians of the neighborhood. Another daughter, Elizabeth Porter Miller, married William Taylor Thom of Washington. She was a brilliant student, and for a number of years a beloved principal of Sherwood School. A son of this latter couple is a distinguished geologist and member of the faculty of Princeton University.

Some of the sayings of the long-departed Negro residents have been recorded by Mt. Airy historians. One old man said, "Ah keeps ma color but ma beauty's gone." An old "Aunty" was no better off. She remarked: "I'se daid all to my eyes bein' sht." A younger woman remarked to her mistress: "Miss Sally, without bein' envious or connivin' I would like to have that dress." A cook had asked for a day off to attend a funeral. Her mistress asked, "Do you know the person?" and was silenced by the reply: "Now, Miss, wouldn't you rather go to the funeral of somebody you don't know?"

The house was rebuilt of brick after the fire, and covered with pebble dash. To the right of the entrance hall is a large parlor with a fireplace, from which the northwest views are a delight. To the left of the hall are a sitting room, dining room and kitchen, with a glass-enclosed conservatory exposed to the east and south. On the second floor are five bedrooms and a bath, and three bedrooms on the third floor.

Sarah T. Miller died in April, 1924, and Benjamin in 1928. In 1934 the heirs of Benjamin Miller sold the house with twenty acres of land to F. W. McReynolds, prominent Washington attorney, who a few years later resold to Floyd E. Huntley, a business man from the west. Mr. Floyd Huntley passed away in February 1960, and his widow in 1961 sold the home, with a small acreage to Mr. Robert Christie, an attorney at law, of Silver Spring.

M: 28-03
Mt. Airy
18120 New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650), Ashton
Jennifer K. Cosham
April 21, 2004
Digital color photo on file at MHT





NAME *MT. AIRY* *M:28-3*

LOCATION *N.H. AVE ASHTON, Md*

FACADE *E*

PHOTO TAKEN *8/14/75 MOWVER*