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SOPHIA'S DAIRY (Residence)
Belcamp, Harford County,
Maryland.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Building Survey
John H. Scarff, District Officer
1012 Keyser Building, Baltimore, Md.

SOPHIA'S DAIRY (Residence)
Belcamp, Harford County
Maryland

13-1311A

OWNER: Bata Shoe Company of Czecho-
slovakia,
330 West 34th Street,
New York, N.Y.

DATE OF ERECTION: 1768.

ARCHITECT: Unknown.

BUILDER: Unknown.

PRESENT CONDITION: Fast deteriorating by reason of
neglect. Much of the glazing
is gone and the house exposed
to the elements. It is still,
however, in fair condition and
uninhabited.

NUMBER OF STORIES: Basement, two stories, and attic.

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION: Stone foundations, brick walls,
wood interior and roof construction.
Later addition to the east of stone.

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS: "The Chesapeake Bay Country" (pp.
245-246) Swepson Earle 1934.

Memorial Book issued by the White
family in Philadelphia at the time
of the moving of Col. Thomas White's
remains from Sophia's Dairy to St.
Georges Churchyard at Perryman.

"Early Manor and Plantation Houses
of Maryland" (p.128) Henry Chand-
lee Forman.

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HISTORICAL DATA:

Sophia's Dairy is part of the original tracts of land known as Hall's Plains and Simmon's Neglect. It was left by Captain John Hall of Cranberry in 1737 to his daughter, Sophia, for whom the place was named.

Sophia Hall married Colonel Thomas White, who was born in London in 1704 and came to Maryland in 1720. He was a lawyer and Deputy Surveyor of the State of Maryland, and owned in 1777 over 7700 acres of land in this section.

Col. Thomas White lived in a house located between the present Sophia's Dairy mansion and Bush River, the foundations of which were still traceable in 1901.

The estate passed from Col. Thomas White to his daughter, Sophia, who married her cousin, Aquila Hall. Aquila Hall built the "Dairy House" in 1768. He was a very prominent citizen of Harford County and his name is the first on the famous Bush Declaration of Independence dated March 22, 1775.

Robert Morris, of Philadelphia, also married a daughter of Col. Thomas White, and Mrs. Morris and her children retired here when the Continental Congress moved to Baltimore when Philadelphia was threatened by the British during the Revolution. Robert Morris and others stopped at Sophia's Dairy at various times on the trip back and forth from Philadelphia to Baltimore.

Col. Thomas White was buried at Sophia's Dairy and on June 7, 1877 his remains were removed and reinterred at St. George's Parish Church - "Spesutia" - Perryman, Maryland.

Aquila Hall died in 1779 and his wife, Sophia, six years later. Their son, Thomas Hall, inherited Sophia's Dairy. At Thomas' death the claims of his son, William White Hall, were upheld after some litigation. The latter sold the place to Captain John Adams Webster in February 1818 for \$25,000,

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HISTORICAL DATA:

The estate then being 900 acres. Captain Webster distinguished himself at the Battle of North Point in 1814, and married Miss Rachel Biays in 1816, and they lived at the Dairy Farm while Mount Adams, near Creswall, was being built for them.

The Dairy Farm was then acquired by Henry Nichols. The Davidge family, whose tomb still stands, inherited the place in 1831 and sold it to General Charles Egerton, the estate at this time being 950 acres. General Egerton sold it for \$25,000 to Henry H. Wainwright in 1858. From that time until 1888 there was one mortgage foreclosure after another and the Dairy Farm shifted hands five times. It then came into the hands of James Walsh, who sold it to Mr. Longley, and the last transfer was to the Bata Shoe Company of Czeche-Slavakia, the present owner. (This information was compiled by Mr. Alex. Shaw of Bel Air and was given the writer by Mr. J. Alexis Shriver of Olney Harford County.)

The house is the largest of the old brick residences in the county. It has been said with some likelihood that the present name of the estate is a corruption of "Sophia's Dowry". Old stone foundations of great extent and the remains of a cistern can still be seen in the pasture to the southeast of the house. The writer stepped off two foundations, measuring approximately 60 feet by 400 feet each. Legend has said that the branch of the Bush River flowing through the estate was once navigable to sail boats carrying cargo. Today it is no more than a little brook. The long vista across the abandoned garden down the reaches of the Bush River to the Eastern Shore of Maryland is now cut by the main line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The wind blows through the empty house and rooms are filled with the rush and roar of frequent trains.

The burial ground contains only the one tombstone of the Davidge family, a photograph of which is shown.

John H. Shaw

Nov. 20, 1936

Information supplied by
Miss E. Carolyn Nicholson
4334 Roland Court
Roland Park
Baltimore, Maryland.

Sophia's Dairy

Home of the Davidge family for many years. Even though Mrs. Davidge did not inherit the place from her uncle, Henry Nicols, until 1831 the Davidges must have lived there sometime before that, probably with Mr. Nicols, and the Davidges must have continued to live there until 1850 or after.

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ADDENDUM TO:
SOPHIA'S DAIRY
(Hall's Plains)
(Simmon's Neglect)
Pulaski Highway vicinity
Belcamp
Harford County
Maryland

HABS MD-8
HABS MD,BELCA,1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001