

Blendon Estate, Tenant House
11747 Park Heights Avenue
Owings Mills Vicinity
Baltimore County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-994-A

HABS
MD,
3-OWMIV,
3-A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BLENDON ESTATE, TENANT HOUSE

HABS No. MD- 994-A

HABS
MD
3-OWM1.V
3-A-11

Location: 11747 Park Heights Avenue, vicinity of Owings Mills,
Baltimore County, Maryland

USGS Cockeysville Quadrangle, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 18.351000.4365860

Present Owner: Caves Valley Golf Club, Inc.
c/o Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, Inc.
Hampton Plaza, 300 East Joppa Road, Towson
Baltimore, Maryland 21204-3048

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Blendon Estate tenant house has been cited by the registration form for the Caves Valley National Register Historic District as "a contributing resource with a high level of integrity and historic and architectural significance to the nomination."¹ Apparently built as a dwelling for tenant farmers working on the northeast portion of "The Caves" estate of the Carroll family, the original, south section of the tenant house was constructed in the 19th century, possibly before 1850. The tenant house was associated with the nearby vernacular bank barn from the time that the barn was constructed in the middle to late 19th century. The tenants of the house were responsible for the livestock and hay-raising operations of John Henry Carroll, and his son, John Nicholas Carroll, on the northeast section of their estate. Although substantially rebuilt and remodeled in the 20th century, the dwelling continued with a similar function after the 1930's, serving as a home for employees of the families who lived in the Breed-Krongard House on the hill above.

¹Janet L. Davis, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for "The Caves Valley Historic District," April, 1988 (copy in files of Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD), Item 7, p. 26.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The first and second stories of the south wing of the tenant house (see Figure 3) may date to before 1850; the notched log joists visible in the cellar suggest construction before the arrival of sawmills in the area during the early 19th century. The north wing, with its field stone foundation and box stairway with winders appears to date also to the mid-19th century. The intervening connecting section (Figure 3) rests on a field stone foundation, but its interior rooms do not seem to be integrated into either the south or north wings, suggesting that the connecting portion was built after the other two sections. The northeast addition, which is now a utility room, rests on a poured concrete foundation and is covered with tongue and groove boards, pointing to a date in the early 20th century.
2. Architect: It is unlikely that an architect was involved in the design or construction of any portion of the tenant house.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following are selected conveyances in the chain of title involving the Blendon tenant house. The information on ownership is derived from the Land Records and Will records of Baltimore County, Towson, Maryland.

1852 Will of John Henry Carroll, September 20, 1852, recorded in Will Book 1, pp. 286-87, Register of Wills office, Baltimore County.

1900 Deed, July 25, 1900, recorded in Liber NBM 245, pp. 142-45. Ferdinand C. Latrobe, Attorney, to Celeste M. W. Hutton.

1900 Deed, summer, 1900, unrecorded. Celeste M. W. Hutton to James H. Preston.

1900 Deed, September 22, 1900, recorded in Liber NBM 247, pp. 535-36. James H. Preston and wife to the Caves Valley Farms Company.

1903 Deed, October 20, 1903, recorded in Liber WPC 273, pp. 29-32. Caves Valley Farms Company and Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland to George J. Garrett.

1919 Deed, December 31, 1919, recorded in Liber APC 522, pp. 60-62. George J. Garrett and wife to Charles Vincenti.

1925 Deed, July 25, 1925, recorded in Liber WPC 617, pp. 586-89. Charles Vincenti to Katherine LeMoyne Fisher.

- 1935 Deed, December 21, 1935, recorded in Liber 966, pp. 560-62. Janon Fisher and wife to Richard E. Breed, 3rd and Mary Moore R. Breed, his wife.
- 1946 Deed, January 7, 1946, recorded in Liber RJS 1411, p. 452. Richard E. Breed, 3rd, unmarried, and Mary Moore R. Breed to Jerome Hill and Adelaide McAlpin Hill.
- 1949 Deed, September 2, 1949, recorded in Liber TBS 1771, p. 501. Adelaide McAlpin Hill, widow, to Richard C. Riggs.
- 1969 Deed, March 31, 1969, recorded in Liber 4977, p. 113. Richard C. Riggs and Eleanor R. Riggs to Alvin B. Krongard and Patricia L. Krongard.
4. Builders, suppliers: The builder of the Blendon tenant house is not known. The field stone foundations probably came from the Caves estate. The log joists and any logs in the walls also were undoubtedly cut near the site. The source of the shingles currently applied to the exterior is not known.
5. Original plans and construction: No original architectural drawings or plans have been found. Only a single historical view has been found of the tenant house (see Figure 4), and it reveals almost nothing of the house's original appearance. No historical photographs have been located. It appears that the south wing is the oldest section of the house, followed possibly by the north wing and connecting section (see Figure 3). Originally, the south wing probably consisted of a single room on each floor, covered with a low gable roof.
6. Alterations and additions: It appears that substantial alterations were made to the tenant house in the early 20th century. The attic interior is composed of dimensioned lumber of a type in use after the turn of the century, suggesting that the attic half-story was added to the south wing and connecting section in the present century. Possibly at that time, the second story of the connecting section was added, containing a bedroom, hall, and bathroom (Figure 3). The rebuilt section of the house was covered with yellow clapboards. Probably at the time that Richard E. Breed erected the Breed-Krongard House on the hill above, he remodeled the tenant house further, adding the wooden shingles that are currently on the exterior of the main section. The northeast addition, which provided a utility and furnace room, appears to have been constructed in the 1930's or 1940's.

B. Historical Context:

The south wing of the current Blendon Estate Tenant House was probably constructed before 1850 by either Nicholas Charles Carroll or his son John Henry Carroll (c. 1803-56), owners of a 2600-acre estate known as

"The Caves," near Owings Mills, Maryland. The Caves was a grain and livestock farm, consisting of multiple fields extending on both sides of what is now Park Heights Avenue and Caves Road.² On the sloping land surrounding the site of the tenant house and nearby bank barn, livestock production seems to have been paramount. The tenants of the Carrolls resided in the dwelling and raised the livestock and hay needed for feed in their portion of the estate. The Caves mansion house and main cluster of outbuildings stood over a mile to the southwest, across what is now Park Heights Avenue.

In 1897, the son of John Henry Carroll, John Nicholas Carroll (1847-1926) defaulted on a mortgage he had taken on the Caves estate, and the tract was sold at auction. The portion containing the tenant house and barn passed in 1925 to Janon Fisher, a retired engineer who resided in the Caves mansion to the south of the parcel containing the barn. In 1935, Fisher and his wife sold the 110 acres surrounding the barn and tenant house immediately to the south to Richard E. Breed, 3rd, President of the General Penn Refining Company of Baltimore. It was probably Breed who erected the Breed-Krongard House, the large, Neo-Georgian residence that now stands on the top of the hill above the barn (see Figure 1). Breed, who lived on the property until selling it in 1946, apparently also remodeled the tenant house and enlarged it. Since 1946 the estate has been known as "Blendon," a name that Breed may have given it. Three other families have owned Blendon and resided there during the period since World War II.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Blendon Estate Tenant House exhibits several characteristics of 19th century vernacular houses of interest in the Caves Valley area. The log joists and field stone foundation in the cellar recall the early dwellings erected by landowners for slaves or tenants in pre-Civil War Maryland. These buildings were frequently constructed from logs and rested on field stone foundations. In plan, they consisted of a single room on each level, with a fireplace at one end. The south wing of the tenant house fits this type, although it can not be determined whether the walls contains logs. The wooden shingles applied to the exterior of the main sections, probably in the 1930's, illustrate an effort by the new owners of the Blendon estate to give the tenant house a more distinctive architectural character.

²Ibid., Section 8, p. 3.

2. Condition of the fabric: The tenant house is generally in good condition. No assessment of its structural condition was undertaken. Some wooden shingles have been removed from the east elevation.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The tenant house as currently configured is roughly ell-shaped and 2 1/2 stories in the main, southern section. The rear, north wing is two stories, and the northeast addition one story (see Photographs MD-994-A-1 through MD-994-A-6). The west elevation is approximately 36 feet long, the north elevation is 29.5 feet wide, and the south elevation is 20 feet wide (see Figure 3). There are three bays across the first floor of the south elevation, which forms the facade of the tenant house, and two bays above in the second story. On the first floor, two windows flank the south entrance symmetrically; on the second story, two windows are symmetrically arranged.

On the east elevation, there are two bays corresponding to the south wing and connecting section inside, and two bays in the east side of the northeast addition. Above, in the east elevation of the main section are two bays in the second story, above those of the first floor, and an attic window in the gable. In the east side of the north wing, are small rectangular bays, located immediately below the eaves of the second story. On the north elevation, there are single bays in both the first and second floors of the north wing and a single bay in the northeast addition. Finally, in the west elevation, there is one bay corresponding to the connecting section on the first floor, two bays on the second floor, and a single attic bay. One of the second floor bays is blocked from the interior. In the west side of the north wing, there is a single bay on the first story, and two bays above, beneath the eaves.

2. Foundations: The foundations of all sections of the tenant house, except the northeast addition, are composed of field stone laid in random courses. A mud-based mortar was used originally and has been patched in the 20th century with Portland cement (Photograph MD-994-A-11). The foundation walls are approximately one foot thick. The foundation rises less than a foot above grade on the east and south elevations; on the west and north elevations, it is barely visible. The foundation of the northeast addition appears to be poured concrete.
3. Walls: The exterior of the south wing, connecting section, and north wing were covered in the 19th century with clapboards painted yellow. The clapboards were covered over with the current wooden shingles, probably in the 1930's, and painted white. The exterior covering for the northeast addition are tongue and groove boards, laid horizontally.

4. Structural systems, framing: The eastern two-thirds of the south wing (Figure 3) rests on the field stone foundation walls of the cellar. A second stone foundation supports the rest of the south wall and the west wall of the south wing. In the cellar are exposed log joists with notched ends (Photograph MD-994-A-11) that run north and south and rest on the stone walls. The joists support in turn the dimensioned floor boards of the first story. The walls of the south wing and perhaps the north wing (Figure 3) may be of log construction similar to that used with the log joists exposed in the cellar, but this could not be verified. If the north wing and connecting section were built after 1860, they may be of balloon frame construction. The northeast addition is clearly balloon frame in nature.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: There is a post-World War II wooden porch supported by posts on a concrete foundation along the south elevation of the south wing. A recent extension of the south porch continues around to the east (Photographs MD-994-A-1 and MD-994-A-3). A post-World War II bulkhead constructed of field stone leads from the east elevation of the south wing down into the cellar (Figure 3).
6. Chimneys: There is a post-1900 brick chimney that rises through the the south slope of the south wing. A second 20th century chimney is found against the north wall of the northeast addition.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There is one doorway at the center of the south elevation of the south wing (Photograph MD-994-A-1). Within the doorway is a four-paneled door with glass lights inserted in the upper panels. A second entrance is found in the east elevation of the northeast addition.
 - b. Windows: All original fenestration has been recently replaced with aluminum architraves and six over six sashes.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The roof of the main southern section of the tenant house is gable, running east and west. The roof on the north wing is also gable, running perpendicular to that of the southern section (see Photographs MD-994-A-3 and MD-994-A-5). The roof on the northeast addition is shed. The roof covering on all sections is composition shingle.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: There is no decorative cornice on the house. The eaves of the main section project about a foot beyond the exterior walls. Purlins are exposed beneath the eaves of the north gable in the north wing. A 20th century galvanized metal

gutter is attached to the fascis of the south elevation of the south wing, with attached drain pipe.

c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: There are none.

D. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The cellar below the east end of the south wing is entered from a bulkhead located on the east side of the wing (see Figure 3). There is a single room, now a living room, in the first floor of the south wing. Beyond the living room is an east-west room in the connecting section, followed by the present kitchen in the north wing. To the east of the north wing is the utility room in the northeast addition. In the second story, above the living room is a bedroom, followed to the north by a north-south corridor flanked by a bathroom to the east and bedroom to the west. In the north wing is a third bedroom. There is a 20th century attic above the south wing and connecting section.
2. Stairways, vertical circulation: There is a 20th century bulkhead stairway leading from the outside down into the cellar. In both the south wing and north wing are nearly identical box stairways with winders (Photographs MD-994-A-7 and MD-994-A-8 and Figure 3) that provide vertical circulation between the two stories. The vernacular American character and worn appearance of the steps suggest a date of mid-19th century for the stairways. The attic is reached via a ladder in a closet of the south wing bedroom.
3. Flooring: The cellar now has a 20th century concrete floor. The original flooring in the living room of the south wing was probably replaced in the late 19th century with the current four-inch thick hardwood boards. What may be the original, six-inch wide floor boards still exist in the south wing bedroom, secured with square-headed, cut nails (Photograph MD-994-A-10). The remaining floors are either clearly 20th century or are covered with synthetic tiles.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Within the last 20 years, nearly all the wall and ceiling surfaces within the tenant house have been covered with dry wall.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Possibly in the 1930's, all interior doors were replaced with new doors with identical designs: vertical boards with interior battens (Photographs MD-994-A-7 and MD-994-A-10). All interior trim is composed of simple board frames.
 - b. Windows: All windows have been recently replaced.

6. Decorative features and trim: No decorative details or trim were noted in the interior.
7. Hardware: The door hardware in the interior, installed at the same time as the board and batten doors, are all the same: cast-iron rim locks and knobs and iron hinges.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating, ventilation: In the original, south wing, a fireplace at the west end of the first floor room and a stove directly above in the second story room provided heat. The fireplace has been completely rebuilt with brick since World War II and the stove opening on the second story has been closed. There is a post-World War II furnace in the utility room. Recently-installed base board heaters are in most of the other rooms.
 - b. Lighting: No unusual lighting fixtures were noted.
 - c. Plumbing: There is a circa 1930's sink in the current kitchen in the north wing. No unusual plumbing fixtures were noted.
9. Original furnishings: No original furnishings were found.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The tenant house stands on a dramatic site, on a slope that extends more than a mile to the south (see Figure 1). The location offers a sweeping view of the Caves Valley that until the 1890's was all part of the Caves estate of the Carroll family. The building runs east and west and the main elevation faces south. The fields surrounding the house originally were devoted to livestock grazing; in the 20th century, horses have been grazed in the field.
2. Outbuildings: The Blendon Estate Barn stands several hundred feet to the north of the tenant house and functioned as a farm outbuilding to the dwelling during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There are no other outbuildings near the tenant house.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: There are no known original architectural drawings in existence, and none were probably used for construction of the tenant house.
- B. Historic views: No historical photographs of the tenant house have been located. An 1881 bird's eye view from the main "Caves" cluster of buildings to the south (see Figure 4) shows the barn and tenant house in the distance, slightly left of center in the vista. A cupola is

barely visible on the barn. Figures 5, 6, and 7 are reproductions of historical maps that appear to show that the tenant house was in existence definitely by 1877. Figure 5, from G. M. Hopkins's map of Baltimore County of 1877 shows a dwelling (circled) due north of the Caves mansion house and farm buildings. Figure 6, from George W. and Walter D. Bromley's 1898 atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland, shows a dwelling belonging to John Carroll southeast of the tenant house site, but none at the true location. The dwelling shown may be a mistake, or Bromley may simply not have depicted the current tenant house. Figure 7, from Bromley's 1915 atlas, shows the tenant house at its proper location.

C. Interviews: No interviews were conducted.

D.. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Baltimore City Directories, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.

Bromley, George W. and Walter D. Bromley. Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia: G. W. Bromley and Co., 1898.

_____. Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia: G. W. Bromley & Co., 1915.

Deed books, Land Records Office, Baltimore County, Towson, Maryland.

Hopkins, G. M. Atlas of Baltimore County. Baltimore(?), 1877.

Will records, Register of Wills, Baltimore County, Towson, Maryland.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Davis, Janet L. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for "The Caves Valley Historic District." April, 1988. [Copy in files of Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD.]

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County. Baltimore(?), 1881.

Thomas, Dawn F. The Green Spring Valley: Its History and Heritage. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1978.

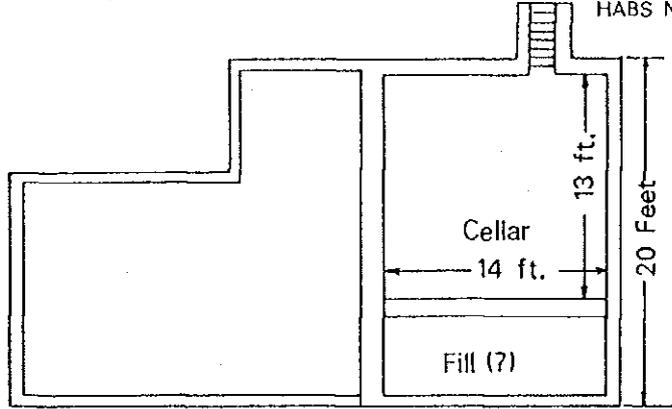
E. Likely sources not yet investigated: More precise dating for the construction of the tenant house might be possible if the estate administration file for John Henry Carroll (d. 1863) were checked at the Register of Wills office, Baltimore County, Towson, Maryland.

There also may be information in the files of the Baltimore County Historical Society Library, Cockeysville, Maryland, regarding the barn or on the Carrolls, owners of "The Caves" mansion and estate, the Janon Fisher family, or on Richard E. Breed, 3rd.

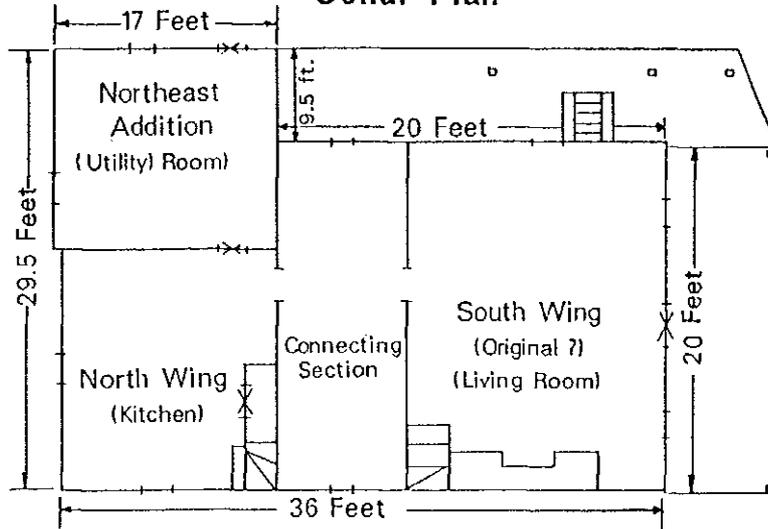
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation of the Blendon Estate Tenant House has been prepared as a mitigation measure for the possible demolition of the house and the Blendon barn in connection with the construction of a golf course on the Blendon estate. Mitigation is necessary because a Section 404 permit from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers may be required for the development of the Blendon property. The documentation includes an outline format report, large format photographs of the tenant house according to HABS standards, sketch floor plans, and a narrative format summary of the overall Blendon property. The documentation records were prepared during December, 1989.

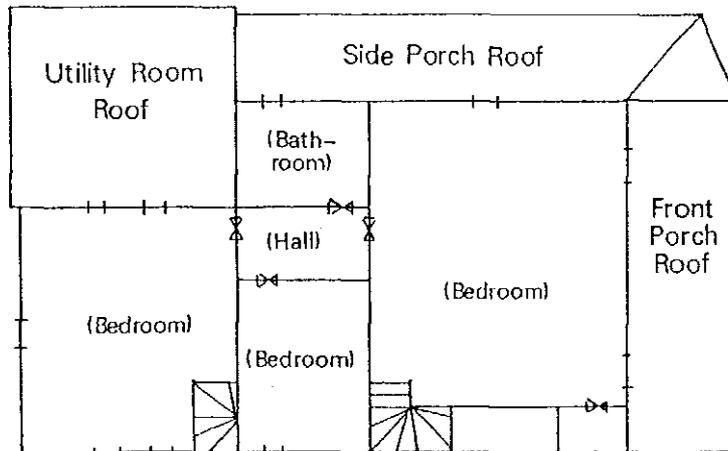
Prepared by: James A. Glass, Ph.D.
Title: Project Manager,
Historic Preservation
Affiliation: Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc.
Date: December 21, 1989



Cellar Plan



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

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NOT TO SCALE

FIGURE 3-BLENDON ESTATE TENANT HOUSE SKETCH PLANS

December 1989