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N-5243

Property Name: Choptank-Upon-The-Hill (R. Clayton, 1868)

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

Choptank-Upon-The-Hill is located on the west side of route 435, .50 miles south of its intersection with route 432. The nominated parcel includes the house and 50 feet around it on all four elevations. There are no associated outbuildings.

Owner: Margaret Ernest

R.D. 1

Cecilton, Maryland

Description:

Choptank-Upon-The-Hill is a two-and-a-half story, five-bay brick structure with a two-and-a-half story brick ell. The ell composes the original block of the house and dates to ca. 1800. The south elevation is laid in flemish bond with the random use of glazed headers. The secondary elevations are laid in seven course common bond; and the cornice is finished with three courses of corbelled brick laid to suggest the use of modillion blocks. The east elevation of the addition, which now serves as the main block of the dwelling, is laid in mechanical bond with machine molded pressed brick mortared with butter joints. The secondary walls are laid in a seven course common bond of coarser textured brick. A vertically boarded frame addition has been added to the rear of the period 1 house and is presently used as a garage.

The roofs of both the original block and the addition are gabled with interior gable end chimney piles. The three dormers symmetrically placed across the east face of the period 2 house are finished with flattened segmentally arched roofs and fitted with 6 over 6 light sash windows. The front elevation of the period 2 building is further finished with a balanced five-bay facade containing 4 over 4 light sash windows in joined timber frame architraves. The

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Palladian-like window over the first floor entry appears to be the product of later remodelings. The primary entry into the house below this window is through a single leaf paneled door with a three-light transom and flanking sidelights. The front porch stands on a brick foundation and carries a hipped roof. A second porch, on the south side of the rear wing, is one-story in elevation and has been enclosed as leanto wing.

Historical Background and Significance:

In 1880, Colonel Joshua Clayton occupied Choptank-Upon-The-Hill with three family members and seven tenants including an Irish male laborer and six blacks. Beer's atlas at 1868 lists Colonel J. Clayton's name and the title Choptank-Upon-The-Hill. At the time of the 1850 census, the farm is statistically below average in both cash value and acreage, and mostly involved in the production of Indian corn and butter, with a significant number of livestock. By the time of the 1860 census the farm has more than doubled in cash value, not uncommon in the census data at this period, but also reports an increase in acreage from 90 to 200 acres, plus ten acres unimproved land. Indian corn and butter remain with wheat, oats, Irish potatoes, and sweet potatoes now showing up as important components of the farm's economy. By the time of the 1870 census, orchard products have also shown up, reflecting the trend of the post Civil War period.

This farm, first built around 1800, with mid-century remodellings gives us a strong representation of the changes in the nineteenth century agricultural life and the economic changes of the period.

Nomination by Trish Bensinger



CHOPTAWK - OPPOW -
THE HILL
N-5243