

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

AA-94 & 94a

For HCRS use only

received AUG 14 1984
date entered SEP 13 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Grassland

and/or common Grassland

2. Location

street & number ~~East side of Rt. 32 (Annapolis Junction Road)~~
1/4 mile north of intersection with B-W Pkwy. n/a— not for publication

city, town Annapolis Junction vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Maryland code 24 county Anne Arundel code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name John Bowie, Jr.

street & number 5600 Durbin Road

city, town Bethesda n/a vicinity of state Maryland 20814

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse

street & number Church Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust
Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

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Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>n/a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Number of Resources

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>5</u>	<u>3</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>7</u>	<u>3</u> Total

Number of previously listed
National Register properties
included in this nomination: 0

Original and historic functions
and uses: agricultural, residential

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Grassland, a mid-19th century plantation consisting of a brick main house, a frame slave house, a stone smokehouse, a frame storage shed, harness shed and corncrib, and ruins of other outbuildings, is located near Annapolis Junction in northwest Anne Arundel County. The house stands approximately 400 feet east of Maryland Route 32 and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile northwest of its intersection with the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. Maryland Route 32, which is in the process of being widened, will come within 200 feet of the house and 50 feet of the corncrib when completed. The main house, built in 1853, is a three-part brick structure constructed in a telescoping manner, with the axis running northwest to southeast. It is laid in common bond and has a corbeled brick cornice. It rests on a stone foundation with no water table. There are three sections, each covered with a gable roof with asphalt shingles. The larger two-story 4 bay by 2 bay section is located at the southeast end and is marked by two flush gable end chimneys. The main entrance to the house is located in the southeast gable end of this section. A slightly lower, two-story central section, measuring 2 bays by 1 bay, abuts the northwest gable end of the larger section. A larger flush gable end chimney rises from the northwest wall of the central section where it abuts the small, $1\frac{1}{2}$ story, 2 bay by 1 bay kitchen at the northwest end of the entire structure. A one-story shed board and batten addition (c. 1950) almost completely covers the northeast elevation of the house. Other structures associated with the property are the one-story frame slave house with brick-nogged walls to the northeast of the main house, a small stone smokehouse and the remains of a summer kitchen to the north, and a frame harness shed, storage shed, and ruins of a bank barn to the south.

For General Description, see Continuation Sheet No. 1

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input 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"/> 1400-1499	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) black history
Specific dates	1852-1854	Builder/Architect	unknown	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: C, D
 Applicable Exceptions: none
 Significance Evaluated : local

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Grassland is significant for its architecture, and for its association with black history. Architecturally, the house and outbuildings present a well-preserved example of the type of plantation complex which typified rural Anne Arundel County in the mid-19th century, nearly all of which have vanished in the face of intensive development pressure in the present century. Grassland is especially noteworthy for the variety of mid-19th century agricultural outbuildings which remain associated with the site, including a smokehouse, corncrib, harness shed, storage shed, and the ruins of a bank barn; such structures generally fall victim to obsolescence, and the survival of such a diverse grouping is highly unusual. Also highly significant is the brick nogged frame slave cabin, one of perhaps fewer than a half dozen which survive in the county. Grassland derives additional significance from its association with black history: the journal of a former owner, William Anderson, now in the possession of the Maryland Historical Society, documents the construction of each structure by the plantation's slaves in 1852-4. The plantation thus represents a monument to the building craft and skill of black slaves in Southern Maryland.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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See footnotes on Continuation Sheet No. 5

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 14.7 acres

Quadrangle name Laurel, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	8	3	4	6	3	2	0	4	3	3	1	2	1	1	0
Zone			Easting					Northing							

B

1	8	3	4	6	1	4	0	4	3	3	1	0	0	0	0
Zone			Easting					Northing							

C

1	8	3	4	6	0	4	0	4	3	3	1	2	4	0	
Zone			Easting					Northing							

D

1	8	3	4	6	1	8	0	4	3	3	1	4	0	0	
Zone			Easting					Northing							

E

Zone			Easting					Northing							

F

Zone			Easting					Northing							

G

Zone			Easting					Northing							

H

Zone			Easting					Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification Boundaries are depicted on the attached map; the nominated property, approximately 14.7 acres, encompasses all elements of the resource within their immediate setting, excluding broad expanses of open space on the NW, NE, and SW and Maryland Route 32 on the SW.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Donna Ware, Historic Sites Surveyor

Anne Arundel County

organization Office of Community Development date February 1984

street & number Arundel Center telephone (301) 224-1210

city or town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature  8-10-84

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 9-13-84

 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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National Park Service

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Grassland

Continuation sheet Anne Arundel County, MD

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Grassland is situated on some of the highest ground in the immediate area (approximately 200 feet above sea level) and is surrounded by 170 acres of mixed wooded and open land. Surrounding the house are a variety of trees, some of which are over 150 years old. There are holly, black walnut, almond, horse chestnut, linden, oak, and sycamore trees, to name only some of the species. One lone, stately "incense cedar" tree is all that remains of several that once graced the front yard before they were scarified for the expansion of Route 32.

All of the buildings at Grassland were erected by slaves in the early 1850s, as recorded in the diary of William Anderson, the plantation owner and great-grandfather of the present owner, John Bowie, Jr.

The main house, built in 1853, is a three-part brick structure constructed in a telescoping manner, with the axis running northwest by southeast. It consists of a large two-story, 4 bay by 2 bay section with flush gable end chimneys at the southeast and northwest ends. The slightly lower two-story central section abuts the northwest gable end of the large section. It is narrower, measuring 2 bays by 1 bay; however, a two-story frame porch across the southwest elevation makes it of equal depth as the larger section. A larger flush gable end chimney marks the northwest wall of the central section where it abuts the small 1½ story, 2 bay by 1 bay kitchen at the northwest end of the entire structure.

The house is laid in common bond and has a corbeled brick cornice. It rests on a stone foundation with no water table. There are no seams in the brickwork between the sections, supporting the theory that it was built all at one time. Each section is covered with a gable roof with asphalt shingles.

A one-story shed board and batten addition (c. 1950) almost completely covers the northeast elevation of the house. It rests on a poured concrete foundation and has a standing seam metal roof. There is an entrance to the cellar through this addition.

The principal entrance to the house, located at the southeast gable end, is covered by a frame one-story open shed porch supported by 4 Doric columns. It is located at the northeast end of this elevation; a window fills the bay to the southeast. This entrance, according to the present owner, John Bowie, Jr., great-grandson of the builder, was always used as the main entrance. Another entrance is located on the southwest elevation of the central section under the frame porch. It is located in the southeast bay and may have served as a formal entrance as well. Examination of the fenestration along the southwest elevation of the larger section does not indicate that an entrance had been cut through in the past. Both entrances have a paneled door with a transom and sidelights.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

Windows are predominantly 6/6 sash with single course flat jack arches. The two small windows on the southwest elevation at the half-story level of the kitchen wing are 6 panes each. There are two small 6-pane attic windows located at both gable ends of the large section. A single 6/6 sash window pierces the northeast elevation of the large section at the northwest bay, indicating that the main staircase runs along this wall.

The two-story frame porch covering the southwest elevation of the central section was an open porch until c. 1950 when the second floor was enclosed and the first floor screened-in. The second floor is covered with asbestos shingles.

The house is currently rented as two separate units - the large section as one, and the central section and kitchen as the second unit.

The interior of the large section is in a side passage double-parlor plan. The southeast entrance leads into the stair passage. The majority of interior trim remains intact in this section, including door and window architraves of symmetrical molding with plain corner blocks, a turned newel and balustrade, and simple mantels.

The other principal entrance located under the porch covering the southeast elevation of the central section leads into a single room. A stair runs along the northeast wall to the second floor. A doorway, now blocked, is located on the southeast wall just southwest of the stair. This presumably led into the stair passage of the large section. A fireplace with the original plain mid-19th century mantel is located on the northwest wall. The original plain architrave trim in the room survives. An opening in the northeast wall leads into the board and batten addition. This is furnished as a modern kitchen. A few steps along the northeast wall lead down to a door to the outside at the northwest elevation. A door to the kitchen is located on the northeast wall within the stair passage.

A large fieldstone chimney, all that remains of a summer kitchen, stands just northeast of the kitchen wing. According to John Bowie, an open porch ran from the summer kitchen to the rear door (NE elevation) of the kitchen wing.

A small, low, stone smokehouse with a corrugated metal gable roof stands just north of the house. (This is just a few feet northwest of where the summer kitchen once stood.) A door pierces the southeast elevation.

Of special note is the frame slave house to the northeast of the main house (approximately 25 yards). It is the only extant slave house of six that once stood on the property.¹ It is a one-story rectangular (19' 6" x 13' 4") structure with a gable roof covered with corrugated metal. The house faces southwest toward the main house. The entrance and a window are located on

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

this elevation. There is one window at the rear, northwest elevation. A scar on the southeast gable end marks where a chimney once stood. Fieldwork conducted by George McDaniel in 1978 indicates that the chimney was still standing at that time.

The walls are brick-nogged, but extend only part of the way up from the sills. The northeast wall has been filled the most (approximately 6' in height).

The interior is a single room. The walls were originally lath and plaster. At first a ladder was used to gain access to the loft space, replaced later by stairs. Neither survives and the entrance to the loft (in the north corner) has been blocked.²

The other outbuildings, a harness shed, storage shed and corncrib, stand south of the house across a dirt lane which leads from Route 32 to the main house. The massive stone foundation and debris of a bank barn are situated southwest of these outbuildings, toward Route 32. A tobacco barn once stood just southeast of the harness and storage sheds.

According to John and Henry Bowie, the trace of a road which runs in a northeast direction from the location of the harness and storage sheds, led to a log house which was occupied by their great-grandfather, William Anderson, when he first acquired the property. John Bowie remembers that it was standing until 1915.

Both John and Henry Bowie also remember the locations of the brick and lime kilns, to the east of the main house.

Footnotes

¹ Interview with John and Henry Bowie, February 10, 1984.

² Fieldwork conducted by George W. McDaniel for the Maryland Historical Trust, 1978.

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

Grassland, an ante-bellum plantation, consisting of a brick, three-part main house, a frame slave house, a stone smokehouse, a frame storage shed, harness shed and corncrib and the ruins of a bank barn, is located west of Fort Meade in northwest Anne Arundel County. The farm buildings are known to have been erected between 1852 and 1854 by the plantation slaves, making this site significant in black history and Maryland history, as well. A farm journal, which records the construction of each structure and other information on daily plantation life, was kept by the plantation owner, William Anderson. Anderson's great-grandson, John Bowie, Jr., recently gave the journal to the Maryland Historical Society. In Hearth and Home, George McDaniel described Grassland as an important site - due to the existence of the buildings in combination with the surviving documentation - for studying the building craft and skill of black slaves in Southern Maryland.

In 1852, William Anderson purchased from James Worthington approximately 700 acres of what was known as "Worthington's Fancy." At first he occupied a log house, which stood northeast of the main house.¹ With slave labor, Anderson constructed the several plantation buildings. The bricks for the main house were made and fired on the property by the slaves. The walls of the frame slave houses were partially filled with brick nogging, using leftover bricks. According to George McDaniel in Hearth and Home, this method of brick nogging, as insulation, in slave houses is very rare in the southern United States.²

As documented in Anderson's journal, the slaves dug the ice pond and constructed a dam and icehouse. Split rails were also crafted by the slaves for fences. A frame bank barn, now in ruins and threatened by the expansion of Route 32, was raised by Anderson, Elias Gardner (a hired free black) and the slaves on August 29-30, 1853. One hundred wagonloads of stone from nearby outcroppings were hauled to the site for the massive foundation walls. Thirty and forty-foot timbers were hewn for the framing which was mortise and tenoned together and secured with large pegs. The large corn crib, which is still standing, was erected in 1854 by the slaves and "finished" by a relative's "servant" who was borrowed or hired.³

In 1870, William and Sarah Hall Anderson's daughter, Susannah, married Thomas John Bowie. By 1878 he was the owner of "Grassland," presumably acquired after the death of William Anderson in 1877. T. John and Susannah's first son, John, lived at "Grassland" until his death in 1953. He served several terms as sheriff in Anne Arundel County. His marriage in 1900 to Ethel Frances Cook resulted in four children, all of whom are still living: John Jr., (b.1902), Susannah Frances Baldwin (b. 1904), Henry Anderson (b. 1908), and Robert Monroe (b. 1911). One of the present owners. John Jr. recalls watching the great Baltimore fire of 1904 from the second story window on the northeast elevation. He also observed Halley's Comet in 1908 from the same window.⁴

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

The Andersons and Bowies more than likely benefited from the close proximity to the Annapolis & Elkridge Railroad, a branch of the B & O Railroad, which ran from the B & O main line in Elkridge to Washington, D. C. In 1840 a spur line to Annapolis was constructed from the Annapolis & Elkridge line at Annapolis Junction. This junction became an important shipping point for the neighboring farmers and merchants.⁵

The great variety of trees found on Grassland (mentioned in #7) were planted by William Anderson, in 1854 as noted by his diary.

Footnotes

¹Interview with John and Henry Bowie, February 10, 1984.

²George McDaniel, *Hearth & Home: Preserving a People's Culture*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), p. 91.

³McDaniel, pp. 49-50.

⁴Interview with John Bowie, Jr., February 10, 1984 and March 16, 1984.

⁵James C. Bradford, ed., *Anne Arundel County, Maryland: A Bicentennial History, 1649-1977*, (Annapolis: Anne Arundel County and Annapolis Bicentennial Committee, 1977), p. 36