

PH0282499

**DATA SHEET**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

RECEIVED SEP 25 1975

DATE ENTERED JAN 11 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC VICTORIAN CORN CRIBS

AND/OR COMMON  
Victorian Corn Cribs

**LOCATION**

On the north side of Maryland Route 33 at the end  
of a .6 mile road, 6.8 miles east of  
St. Michaels Md. 33

CITY, TOWN St. Michaels VICINITY OF First  
STATE Maryland CODE 24 COUNTY Talbot CODE 041

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: under restoration

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mr. and Mrs. Coleman duPont

STREET & NUMBER RFD 5

CITY, TOWN Easton VICINITY OF Maryland STATE 21601

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Talbot County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Easton STATE Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>6/75</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

On the north side of Maryland Route 33 at the end of a .6 mile road 6.8 miles east of St. Michaels are located a pair of corn cribs. The interesting feature about these buildings is the elaborate tracery along the eaves and barge boards. The two cribs are connected by a low, rough shed. In the front end of each structure are two doors, one directly above the other, each with large, iron strap hinges. The buildings are constructed of vertical boards with horizontal boards in the gables. At the corners of the eaves are turned pendants. At the peak of the front and rear gables of both buildings is a wooden finial supported by carved brackets.

The corn cribs were moved from their original site on the north side of U.S. Route 13, about two miles east of Westover, in Somerset County, to their present Talbot County site in June 1975. The tracery on the cribs is reflective of that on the Victorian-style house which stood on the Somerset County property.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 checked="" 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/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

These nineteenth century corn cribs are architecturally significant for two reasons. First, they represent a type of outbuilding which is becoming exceedingly rare, and second, they illustrate by the tracery along the eaves and barge boards the strong influence of the Gothic style of architecture during the Victorian era.

American enthusiasm for the Gothic style in the mid-1800's was an outgrowth of the Gothic revival in England earlier in the century, a revival encouraged by a new appreciation of the art and architecture of the Middle Ages, the popularity of the romantic novels of Sir Walter Scott, and "the Victorian enchantment with European ruins of castles and abbies."<sup>1</sup> English builders of this period made extensive use of such Gothic features as pointed arches, pinnacles, battlements, window tracery and towers and turrets.

Skilled English craftsmen executed these designs in stone, but in America the costly Gothic style was often translated from stone into wood. Thousands of "carpenter Gothic" houses were erected and Gothic stone-tracery was copied in wood or iron. This was explained by John Maass in his 1957 book, The Gingerbread Age:

These characteristic Americana have steep gables and pointed windows; sometimes they were sheathed with vertical boarding instead of the familiar horizontal clapboard . . . when Gothic was translated into carpenter Gothic the stone tracery became wooden 'gingerbread.'<sup>2</sup>

The wooden tracery was cut out with a scroll saw which was worked by a foot treadle or driven by steam. Local carpenters planned their own designs, employing a great variety of geometric or freeflowing

<sup>1</sup>John Maass, The Gingerbread Age (New York: Bramhall House, 1957), p. 63.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 64. From the Medieval French "gingimbrat," meaning preserved ginger. The last syllable was mistranslated into English as "bread." English gingerbread was a sort of cake . . . cut into fancy shapes. The word was then applied to the carved and gilded decoration of a sailing ship and finally to gaudy architectural ornament. It was first used in this sense in the eighteenth century.



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figured, or copied from books which illustrate the most widely used designs. For these reasons, tracery patterns are difficult to date or classify. Their place in the architecture of the time is described as follows by Maass:

. . . whether original or copied, these patterns were part of the universal design language of the nineteenth century; the very same scrolls and curlicues are found in Victorian ironwork in the pattern for Victorian needlework and dress-making, in the Victorian printers' fancy typography and ornament, in the Victorian "Spencerian" handwriting and flourishes.<sup>3</sup>

The barge board (or verge board) originally served a functional purpose, covering and protecting the roof framing which projected out beyond the barge wall in early English construction. Traditionally it was a solid board with decorative relief carving and little or no pierced work. If the roof framing did not project, such weatherboarding had no purpose; but it might be added in order to give the gable roof a more substantial appearance. The fretted barge boards would usually meet at the apex, where a king post, with a finial at the top and a drop at the bottom, completed the decoration.<sup>4</sup>

In his book, The Gingerbread Age, John Maass characterizes the age which produced these decorative corn cribs:

The 18 year old Princess Victoria became Queen in 1837. The year happens to coincide with the gradual advent of a new kind of architecture; it was the architecture of the first industrial age and we call it Victorian. [Its] buildings are perfect symbols of an era which was not given to understatement. They are in complete harmony with the heavy meals, strong drink, elaborate clothes, ornate furnishings, flamboyant art . . . of mid-nineteenth century America.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>4</sup>John I. Rempel, Building With Wood (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, reprinted 1972), p. 159.

<sup>5</sup>Maass, pp. 7, 14.

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Significance, Continued # 8 Addendum

The building date and builder of the Victorian Corn Cribs are not known. A title search has not been completed on the farm where the corn cribs originally stood.

The corn cribs were moved because the Somerset County owner, a Virginia real estate developer, planned to tear them down. Mr. and Mrs. du Pont purchased them and moved them to Talbot County as the only means of preserving them.

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privately in Scottsville, New York, 1971.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture since 1780. Cambridge:  
M.I.T. Press, 1969.