

HA-1741

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **MAR 31 1997**

date entered

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

**RECEIVED**  
JUL 1 1997

**1. Name**

JUN 1 1987

historic Slate Ridge School

and or common Slate Ridge School

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL  
TRUST**

**2. Location**

street & number Del a Road or Old Pylesville Road N/A not for publication

city, town Whiteford N/A vicinity of

state Maryland code 24 county Harford code 025

**3. 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 checked="" 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

**4. Owner of Property**

name Leonard McGrady

street & number 468 Hillcrest

city, town Aberdeen \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Maryland 21001

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Land Records Office, Harford County Court House

street & number 20 West Courtland

city, town Bel Air state MD 21014

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Maryland Historical Trust  
Historic Sites Inventory

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1986  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

# 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<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>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total	

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

Original and historic functions and uses: educational

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:

The Slate Ridge School stands on the west side of old Pylesville Road in the village of Whiteford in northern Harford County, Maryland. The school faces west, overlooking the road from a slight rise that ascends to the ridge where slate was once quarried. The rectangular front section or main block of the building is of brick laid in common bond on a stone foundation. This section is two stories high and has a slate hip roof with a small wooden cupola in the center. A narrow hyphen containing a stairwell and corridor connects the main block to a similar two story rectangular block behind it. At the extreme rear is a one story wing containing a stage and gymnasium that can be converted to an auditorium. The main section of the school, built in 1912, was designed by the Baltimore architect Otto Simonson. The one-story section at the rear was probably built just after World War II. Although the school was updated from time to time so that it could be used until about 1980. The floor plan remains relatively unchanged and the interior still retains much of its original detail. A central corridor runs through the two-story section of the building, with large classrooms on either side. Most of the classrooms have double hung windows with wooden sash, glass transoms above the doors, and vertical beaded board wainscoats.

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Harford County, Maryland Item number 7

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Slate Ridge School takes its name from the geological formation on which it stands - a ridge from which slate, reputed to be the best in the world, was once quarried. The front of the school faces Old Pylesville Road, the main street in the village of Whiteford, Harford County, Maryland. The school stands above the road on a small plateau just below an extinct slate quarry. The school's former playground, a large open area, surrounds the building. The building and its lot cover approximately four and one half acres. A wooded area in back of the school contains piles of waste slate left behind when the quarry ceased to operate. A large paved parking lot is on the south side of the building.

The entire building has four sections. The front three sections are two rectangular blocks connected by a narrow hyphen; all are two stories high. The rear section is a one story rectangular shaped addition that contains a gymnasium with a stage at one end. All sections are of brick, and all but the gymnasium have a stone foundation.

The main block of the school is the design of the Baltimore architect Otto Simonson and dates from 1912. The building incorporates some elements of the Colonial Revival style, but the restrained design seems to reflect the constraints of economy and the requirements of the Board of Education. The main entrance to the building faces the road and is in the center of the seven-bay-wide facade. Cement steps with plain iron handrails rise from the sidewalk to the building where a short flight of stone steps within brick handrails leads to the main entrance. A round-arched transom containing fifteen square lights tops the door opening. Modern doors now replace what were probably originally double wooden doors. Moulded brick with a stone keystone forms the door frame and is surrounded by a frontispiece entrance of plain and moulded brick. This frontispiece is neo-classical in form, and its variant of a gabled pediment has a flattened peak. Modern replacement one-over-one windows fill the openings, which have stone lintels.

The brick in this section of the building is laid in common bond. Bricks form a raised panel below all second-floor windows, and a brick belt course runs below the first-floor windows. Rock-faced coursed stone in shades of rose and grey forms a raised basement that contains small windows. The south and north sides of this section of the building are each six bays wide and contain wooden double-hung sash windows with four-over-four lights in each bay. An exterior brick chimney also rises on each side of the building. At the rear of this block, the three central bays are attached to the wing that connects it to the next block.

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Continuation sheet Slate Ridge School Harford County, Maryland Item number 7 Page 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

A hip roof of slate with overhanging eaves tops the main block. Two rows of "snow-birds" or snow catchers line the roof above the eaves. A small octagonal belfry with peaked octagonal roof rises from the center of the main roof.

A three-bay-deep, two-story-high hyphen with gable roof extends from the three central bays of the rear of the main block to connect it to the rear block. The south side of this section contains six-over-six double-hung wooden sash windows and an entrance door on the first floor level; the north side contains a row of three four-over-four double-hung wooden sash windows on each floor. The brick in this section, like that in the rear block, is laid in common bond, with every tenth row being alternating headers and stretchers.

The rear two story block of the building is rectangular, and like the main block has a slate hip roof and stone raised basement. This section is slightly smaller than the main block and has a row of five double hung wooden sash windows with six over six lights on both first and second floors of the north and south sides. This section of the building was a later addition, although it has a stone foundation, slate window sills, and other features that match the original section. The Board of Education took bids for the construction in 1940, and evidently built this section about that time.

The newest section of the building is the gymnasium/auditorium wing at the rear. According to the records available from the Board of education this wing also probably dates from the 1940s. It is one story high with a flat roof and brick laid in the same pattern as the adjoining section. Large windows of glass block separated by plain brick pilasters line the back of the building. The main entrance to the gymnasium is through an enclosed entry porch at the south side. Incised Streamlined Modern letters on the frieze of a stone or cast-concrete door surround declare this to be "Slate Ridge School." Two sets of steel entrance doors are recessed within the door frame.

The Slate Ridge School operated for nearly seventy years, and, despite periodic updating, retained much of its original interior throughout the entire period. The main entrance on the first floor leads to a vestibule and a three-run stairway with open well. The stairway, which is just south of the main entrance door and within the vestibule, rises from the basement to the second floor. A wooden handrail with plain balusters runs along the outer edge of the steel staircase. A pair of wooden doors with six lights in the upper half leads to a central corridor that extends from the front of the building to the gymnasium.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

A wainscoat of vertical beaded boards extends through the corridor and around the classrooms in the main block. There are two large, square classrooms on the north side of the corridor in the main block; on the south is one large classroom and a small group of rooms that made up the principal's office. There are shelves and interior windows within this office space.

Behind the main block the corridor continues through a smaller section of the building that contains a second staircase on the south side and the girls' lavatory on the north side. At this point the corridor is lined with lockers and tile and leads to the rear two-story section of the building, which has one large classroom on each side of the corridor.

The entrance to the gymnasium is at the east end of the corridor. the hardwood floor of the gymnasium is laid out as a basketball court with baskets and backboards at each end of the room. The windows are of glass block. A stage with proscenium arch at the north end of the room contains the usual stage curtains. This room doubled as an auditorium as well as a gymnasium.

The walls throughout the building are of plaster, and acoustical tile now covers most of the plaster ceilings. Most of the baseboards throughout the building are about eight inches high with a moulded cap, and a plain wooden trim surrounds most of the window and door openings. Many blackboards remain in the building.

The room arrangement and finish on the second floor is nearly identical to that on the first floor, except that it does not have a gymnasium. The basement room arrangement is similar to that on the second floor, but it does include some space below the gymnasium, and the front rooms of the basement now contain a cafeteria and utilities.

# 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1912 **Builder/Architect** D. J. Shanahan/Otto G. Simonson

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Applicable Criteria: A, C  
 Applicable Exceptions: none  
 Level of Significance: local

**SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:**

The Slate Ridge School in Whiteford, Maryland, was built in 1912 to accommodate the expanding school population of the towns of Cardiff and Whiteford. These two towns, with the adjoining town of Delta, Pennsylvania, are on Slate Ridge, the source of Peach Bottom Slate. This slate formation, about ten miles long and a half mile wide, runs from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, across the Susquehanna River, through Peach Bottom and into Harford County, Maryland. For many years, slate provided the economic base for Whiteford, Cardiff, and Delta, which, except for the political accident of being on different sides of the Mason-Dixon Line, were essentially one community. The years between 1890 and World War I constituted the boom years for the slate industry in this area. During that time the population grew, and the new Slate Ridge School helped to satisfy its educational needs. Therefore, the Slate Ridge School is significant under Criterion A because of its association with the growth and development of the towns of Cardiff and Whiteford and the slate industry. The School is also significant under Criterion C because it is the design of Otto G. Simonson, one of Maryland's best known early twentieth century architects. Simonson designed the Slate Ridge School in 1911, when he had already designed a number of public and private buildings in Baltimore. Among his extant works in the city are the Maryland Casualty Building, the Eastern Female High School, the Empire Theatre, the American Building, the United States Fidelity and Guarantee Building, and the Southern Hotel. The Slate Ridge School is an unusual example of Simonson's talents applied to the design of a smaller building in a rural setting. Although two other early 20th century school buildings survive in northern Harford County, neither is associated with the slate industry in the Delta/Cardiff Whiteford community, and neither approaches the architectural character of Slate Ridge School.

See Continuation Sheet No. 4

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

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See Continuation Sheet No. 12

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 3.45 acres

Quadrangle name Delta, MD-PA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	3	8	5	1	2	0	4	3	9	6	5	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet No. 10

### 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 Priscilla M. Thompson/Susan J. Eggert

organization The History Store date September 29, 1986

street & number 827 Tatnal St. (P.O. Box 207) telephone (302) 654-1727

city or town Wilmington state Delaware 19899

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

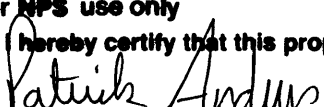
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature  date 3-27-87

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

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

 date 7/16/87  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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## HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

The Slate Ridge School in Whiteford, Harford County, Maryland, is the design of Otto G. Simonson, one of Baltimore's best-known early twentieth century architects. Whiteford, like the adjoining slate-producing towns, was enjoying an economic boom when its two-room school, #20-5, burned on December 31, 1910. After providing temporary quarters for the school, the Board of Education wrestled with the matter of building a new and larger school. In July 1911, the board arranged with Otto G. Simonson to provide drawings for the school for \$100, "with the understanding that Simonson would receive an additional \$10 for each visit of inspection."<sup>1</sup> Although it might seem unusual for such a small community to seek the services of a widely known architect, the town's economy was flourishing and it had resources, and perhaps optimism, necessary to engage a well-known individual.

Whiteford and Cardiff, first known as South Delta, cling to the edge of Slate Ridge, a slate formation that runs in a southwesterly direction from Lancaster County in Pennsylvania to northern Harford County in Maryland. The slate quarries there produce Peach Bottom slate, named for the Pennsylvania township through which the ridge runs. The ridge also crosses the Mason-Dixon Line, the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland that Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon laid out to settle the boundary dispute between William Penn's heirs and Lord Baltimore. Although the 29th milestone of the line stands on the boundary between the town of Delta and Cardiff, no political boundary could separate the fate of these small towns whose livelihoods depended upon the slate quarried from the ridge they shared.

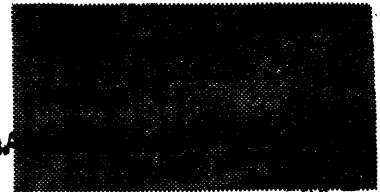
Among the early 18th century European settlers arriving in the area then known as the York Barrens were two Welshmen, William and James Reese. They arrived in about 1725, nearly three decades before establishment of the Mason-Dixon Line. The Reese brothers discovered slate that could easily be split to use as roof shingles.<sup>2</sup> Scotch-Irish and Welsh slate quarrymen began to move into the area in the late 18th century; the first commercial slate was marketed in 1785, and the industry expanded throughout the 19th century, attracting more and more immigrants from the slate regions of the British Isles. Peach Bottom Slate was declared the best in the world at the Crystal Palace Exposition in London in 1850.<sup>3</sup>

The Welsh who settled in the Slate Ridge region brought slate quarrying technology from northwest Wales.



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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Black powder and hand augers released large slabs of slate that skilled workmen then split into thin pieces for shingles, blackboards, tombstones, and other items.

As the slate industry expanded, more efficient transportation than that provided by the canal along the Susquehanna or by horse-drawn wagons became necessary to ship the product out of the geographically isolated and hilly terrain where it was quarried. That need coincided with an expansion of railroad routes in the late nineteenth century. A rail connection between Baltimore and Philadelphia had existed even before the Civil War, but a number of investors saw the need for another route between those two cities. The Pennsylvania coal fields were also the proposed destination for numerous rail lines. While the goals of adding a connecting route between Philadelphia and Baltimore, and serving the coal fields were among the original aims of the railroads that came to serve Slate Ridge, the shipment of slate eventually offered sufficient business to sustain them.

The Peach Bottom Railway started operation from York, Pennsylvania, and reached Slate Ridge in 1876. The Baltimore and Delta Railroad proposed to operate from Baltimore to the slate area. Reorganized as the Maryland Central, this actually began providing service between Baltimore and the slate quarries on January 21, 1884.<sup>5</sup> In 1901, the two railroads that had approached the slate area from different directions joined to become the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad, familiarly known as the "Ma & Pa." The existence of the Ma & Pa depended upon the products of the Delta switching district, the towns on Slate Ridge.<sup>6</sup> Thus by the turn of the 20th century the area had become an important quarrying center, with regular rail service and the institutions common to a growing community.

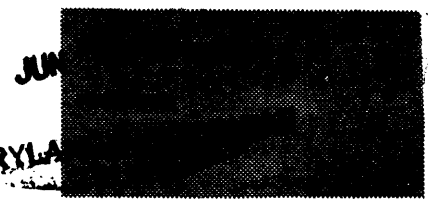
In 1888, three slate quarries operated to the immediate southeast of the small villages of Whiteford and Cardiff: the York and Peach Bottom Slate Manufacturing Company, Eureka Slate Company, and Peerless Slate Company. The last was located directly behind the present site of the Slate Ridge School. Schools existed in the Slate Ridge towns as early as the 1830s, and apparently there was some exchange of students across the Mason-Dixon Line.<sup>8</sup> It remains uncertain, however, when the first school was built within the present towns of Cardiff and Whiteford. As the years passed, education in those two towns came under Maryland laws, while the Delta schools were governed by Pennsylvania.

See Continuation Sheet No. 6

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

The original School #20-5 burned in December, 1910, and it is obvious that by then the school population had outgrown its two rooms. As the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Education indicate, local citizens disagreed as to whether the new school should be located on the old lot or in a different location. Despite such controversy, general sentiment for improvement of schools obviously existed; for by June the board had decided to consolidate two local schools in one new building at a new location.

In July 1911, a Mr. Worthington, a trustee of the old school, reported to the Board of Education that he had arranged with Otto G. Simonson, an architect, to furnish drawings and specifications for the new schoolhouse at Slate Ridge. Simonson's fee was to be \$100, plus \$10 for each visit he made to the site. Within ten days the board had purchased the present school lot from Tillie and Abraham Reamer for \$850, and the board accepted bids for its construction. There were two bids, but the board accepted Denis Shanahan's bid of \$14,990 with \$150 additional for blue stone trimming.<sup>10</sup> The board soon designated the Slate Ridge School as #2-5, which would replace the school that had burned in Cardiff and the old school in Whiteford.<sup>11</sup>

How or why Worthington arranged for Otto G. Simonson to be the school architect is uncertain. Simonson, of Baltimore, was a busy and prominent architect who had designed private homes and at least one school. Although he was best known for his designs for large commercial buildings. The board's choice probably simply indicates the prosperity that slate had brought to Cardiff in the early twentieth century.

Otto G. Simonson was born in Germany in 1863. At the age of 21 he immigrated to the United States and soon became superintendent of public buildings for the United States government. In 1902 he came to Baltimore to oversee the construction of the United States Custom House, decided to move to that city, and went into business as an architect. Simonson designed so many buildings after the fire of 1904 that his obituary could note: "So many are the beautiful buildings for which Mr. Simonson was architect that the skyline of Baltimore might be said to be part of his own creation."<sup>12</sup>

Among the well-known extant buildings that Simonson designed are the American Building and United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company buildings; the Southern Hotel, designated a Baltimore City Landmark; The Eastern Female High School on Asquith Street in Baltimore which is a City Landmark and is also listed in the National Register; the

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Empire Theatre; the Tower Building, where Simonson had his offices; the Maryland Casualty Company buildings built in 1921 at Fortieth Street and Elm Avenue, now the Rotunda Mall; and the Sonneborn Building (listed in the National Register).<sup>13</sup> Simonson died suddenly in 1922 at the age of 61. His architectural legacy is an important one.

According to the minutes of the Harford County Board of Education meetings, Simonson visited the Slate Ridge School during its construction and sent his reports to the board. The construction appears to have run only slightly behind schedule, for the school opened on October 1, 1912, rather than in September as the Board had hoped. Denis Shanahan, builder of the school, apparently made some construction decisions, because he submitted a bill for an extra \$50 for the use of quarried stone on the outside of the building. That was undoubtedly the colorful coursed, rock-faced stone that forms the raised basement.<sup>14</sup> It is interesting to note that when the school opened, the board decided to admit children from outside Harford County for \$5 per year. This decision suggests that some students from other towns, presumably from nearby Pennsylvania, wished to attend the new school.

The school opened to serve children from first grade through high school. It was staffed by a principal, John M. Dooley, whose annual salary was \$1,000, and four teachers who were paid \$400. The main block of the school, which faces the town's main street, remains largely unchanged. The exterior retains nearly all its original design elements: only the facade windows are replacements. The interior of this block also retains its original floor plan and much of its trim, including wooden doors with transoms and a wainscoat of vertical beaded boards.

By the time the Slate Ridge School opened, the nearby quarries were at the peak of their slate production. Their main product was 10" x 12" or 12" x 20" pieces of roofing slate, sold by the square, a unit that provided enough roofing to cover 100 square feet. Each individual quarry could produce 3,000 to 3,500 squares of roofing slate per year plus slate for tombstones, burial vaults, and other items.<sup>15</sup> In addition to slate, there was also a green marble quarry in Cardiff. Accidentally discovered by workmen blasting a road, green marble proved to be very popular for commercial buildings.<sup>16</sup>

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

The Slate Ridge area continued to grow and prosper in the early twentieth century. Sources differ on the date that the slate industry began to decline, but it probably started in the 1920s. Other regions began to supply a cheaper grade of slate, and new roofing materials became available. By 1930 nearly all the quarries had closed. The Ma & Pa Railroad, however, continued to operate, carrying green marble and granulated slate for use in synthetic roofing, fertilizer, paint, linoleum, and rubber.

The school population did not immediately decline. During the 1920s the Slate Ridge School successfully requested listing in the First Group of Approved High Schools, a designation that would permit them additional teachers and equipment. In 1931 the nearby Vernon school was closed and its students transferred to Slate Ridge. In 1940 the Board of Education took bids for an addition to the school. The central and rear sections of the school, a design of the architect John B. Hamme, were added in that year. Although the two sections are quite different in style and appearance, the records show that both were built at the same time.

The central section provided additional classrooms for an increasing student body. Its style and finish is nearly identical to the Simonson-designed main block; the raised basement is finished with colorful dressed stone and it has slate window sills. The gymnasium/auditorium with its Art Deco entrance is in a contrasting style. This large room created a space for some indoor athletics, but more important, it created space for student gatherings and special events. Prior to the time of the addition the local fire hall had been the only large space available. A bond issue financed the major part of the addition, but students and townspeople held bake sales and a variety of special events to raise money to contribute to the gymnasium expense.

John Bentz Hamme (1862-1954), architect of the 1940 expansion, was based in York, Pennsylvania. Born in Manchester Township, PA in 1862, he was educated at the York County Academy and graduated from Cornell University in 1888. In 1890 he began his architectural practice in Seattle, Washington, in partnership with John Parkinson. He returned to York in 1901, practicing in partnership with Edward Leber until 1912, when Hamme formed his own firm; he was later joined by his son, J. Alfred Hamme.

Hamme's work in Harford County includes the Bel Air Armory (1914), the remodeling of the Harford Mutual Fire Insurance Building (1930),

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## HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

also in Bel Air, and the 1936 Art Deco-influenced Darlington Elementary School. Elsewhere in Maryland, Hamme is responsible for the Frederick YMCA (1907), the Frederick Armory of 1913, and various buildings on the campus of Hood College. He designed several churches and public buildings in central Pennsylvania.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the depression of the 1930s and the lowered production of slate locally, the expansion of the Slate Ridge School was not an unusual event for its time. In addition to the transfer to Slate Ridge of the Vernon school students, progressive legislation under Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal increased school populations. Attempts to regulate child labor started in earnest in the United States in 1916, but was successfully challenged in court as late as 1922. A series of acts in the 1930s including the Walsh-Healy Act of 1936 which prohibited child labor in government project contracts and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 forbidding labor by children under age sixteen ultimately served to keep children in school. The children in mining towns like Whiteford and Cardiff undoubtedly benefitted as much as those in other areas.

The public school enrollment in the state of Maryland increased gradually through the thirties and early forties even though it did not soar until the end of World War II. As George H. Callcott wrote in Maryland and America, 1940 to 1980 "from 1915 to 1940 the percentage of five to fifteen year olds attending school rose from 73% to 97%" and "education was the only major public service to grow during the war years."<sup>20</sup> The Slate Ridge School seems to fit into this state-wide trend.

The local quarry economy, however, had not reached its lowest point either. A few slate quarries, in a state of decline in comparison to earlier years, and the green marble quarry continued production through World War II. The Ma & Pa Railroad also operated, carrying green marble and granulated slate for use in synthetic roofing, fertilizer, paint, linoleum, and rubber.

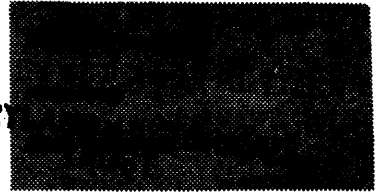
World War II and post war prosperity brought some radical changes in American education. Centralized or consolidated schools took the place of more numerous small local schools, a phenomenon that did not miss Slate Ridge School. In 1949 Slate Ridge graduated its last high-school class and became an elementary school. The slate industry had all but disappeared, and in 1958 the Federal Communications Commission permitted the Ma & Pa Railroad to close down its line between the Slate Ridge towns and Baltimore. In 1959 the railroad

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MARY



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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

filed with the FCC to abandon the rest of its service to the area, but it was still carrying green marble. By 1971 the Green Marble Quarry shipped only three or four cars of terrazzo chips per month. The railroad finally ceased all operations in 1980.

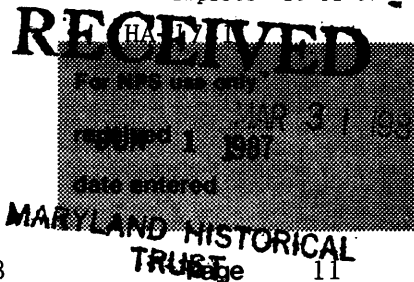
Whiteford, Cardiff, and Delta, the towns along Slate Ridge, no longer had the industry for which they had existed for over a century. Even the elementary students left for a new school when the Slate Ridge School closed on November 23, 1983. The Slate Ridge School represents the most prosperous era in the development of the towns of Cardiff and Whiteford as well as the period when the towns had their own elementary and high school. Although two other brick schools of the early twentieth century are still standing in northern Harford County, neither are on late ridge nor are of the architectural quality of Slate Ridge School. The Slate Ridge School is also an example of a small public building in a rural setting designed by Otto G. Simonson, who was best known for large urban buildings. The school is of important local significance because of its association with the rise and decline of the slate industry and because it is one of the area's rare examples of a building designed by a prominent architect.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Verbal Boundary description and justification: The nominated property, approximately 3.45 acres, comprises the parcel historically associated with the resource, which contributes to its integrity of setting. Boundaries are indicated on the attached survey plat, and described in Liber 1229, folio 319 of the Land Records of Harford County, Maryland.

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Continuation sheet Slate Ridge School  
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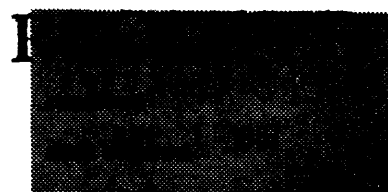
HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Footnotes

1. Harford County Board of Education Minutes, July 5, 1911
2. Delta Borough Centennial Committee. Delta, Pennsylvania, A Centennial Community (Delta, 1980) p. 15.
3. State Historic Marker in Delta, Pennsylvania
4. York County Planning Commission and Historic York, Inc. "Delta-Coulsontown: An Architectural Perspective" Pamphlet, 1981. p. 2
5. George Woodman Hilton. The Ma & Pa (La Jolla, 1980) p. 23.
6. Hilton. The Ma & Pa p. 72
7. T.M. Fowler. View of Delta, Pennsylvania in 1888. Map with inset of South Delta, owned by Old Line Historical Society in Delta, Pennsylvania
8. Delta, Pennsylvania, A Centennial Community p. 13
9. Harford County Board of Education Minutes April 18, 1911 and June 6, 1911
10. Harford County Board of Education Minutes July 5 and 14, 1911.
11. Harford County Board of Education minutes August 1, 1911.
12. Information about Simonson is in Felix Agnus, Ed. The Book of Maryland (Baltimore, 1920) p. 137); Obituaries in Evening Sun and News June 24, 1922
13. List of buildings taken from obituaries, and from the CHAP office in Baltimore
14. Harford County Board of Education minutes Oct. 2 and December 4, 1912.
15. Undated Study of potential for Cardiff, by Leader Realty Company, Baltimore, MD - copy at Old Line Museum in Delta, PA.
16. Delta, Pennsylvania, A Centennial Community p. 16
17. Conversation with Robert Gillette, Harford County Board of Education Facilities Department, and Aegis February 23, 1940
18. Conversation with Linda O'Neill and her mother, Florence Ross, who graduated from Slate Ridge in 1939.
19. York (Pa.) Dispatch, obituary of John Bentz Hamme, 19 October 1954.
20. George H. Callcott. Maryland and America, 1940 to 1980. (Baltimore, 1985) p. 239.

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Continuation sheet Slate Ridge School  
Harford County, Maryland Item number 9

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

SLATE RIDGE SCHOOL

Harford County, Maryland

National Register Boundaries

Scale: 1"=100'  
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