

PH0121495

DATA SHEET

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland
COUNTY: Talbot
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE APR 24 1975

1. NAME

COMMON:
Troth's Fortune

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Acton; Troth Farm

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 3 1/4 mi E of Easton on MD 331
~~Unpaved drive on left of Maryland Route 331~~

CITY OR TOWN: 3 1/4 miles east of Easton vic CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24 COUNTY: Talbot CODE: 041

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mrs. Charles Platt, Jr. (the former Mrs. Frederic Thomas)

STREET AND NUMBER:
Troth's Fortune, Dover Road

CITY OR TOWN: Easton STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Talbot County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Easton STATE: Maryland CODE: 24

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

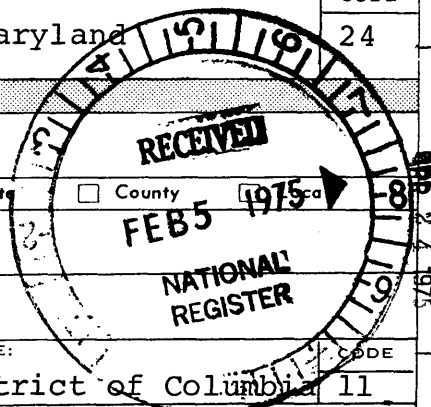
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 Federal State County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland

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FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Troth's Fortune is one of the notable small dwellings of Talbot County, Maryland. Like many of Maryland's early farm houses, it has a gambrel roof, but it differs from others in that it has a stair tower and a richly detailed interior. It is situated about 1/2 mile north of the location of Dover Ferry, now the Route 331 bridge over the Choptank River.

It is a 3-bay-long brick structure measuring approximately 20 by 32 feet (plus tower) with two frame wings on the north-east. (The latter are 20th century additions and will not be discussed herein). Its principal facade, facing southeast to the Choptank River, is brightened by the glazed headers used in its Flemish bond brickwork. It is further detailed by a chamfered watertable with English bond beneath and two segmentally arched basement windows. Both windows of the facade have 12/12 sash, and the six-panel door has paneled jambs and trim on the outside of the brick. Three shed-roof dormer windows have 6/6 sash. The chimney on the southwest is contained within the gable while that on the opposite gable is partly within--partly without the gable; both chimneys have caps with plaster bands.

The southwest gable possessed 4 small windows extended to light the closets within. Those on the southeast side retain their original frames and have internal shutters only; the other two have had their frames removed and the gaps filled with brick. English bond is seen both above and below the watertable.

Common bond, with 3 rows of stretchers to 1 row of headers is employed in the northwest facade and northeast gable, as well as in the tower. A watertable brick is lacking on the northeast gable, and in place of the chamfered brick, the other two sides are a simple stepped brick. A door and window are located west of the stairtower on the northwest side of the house; the frame of the window appearing original. One window is located northeast of the tower and one in the gable roof tower itself. One dormer is located on each side of the assymetrically-placed tower.

The interior consists of two rooms, generally classified as the "hall and parlor" plan. The stairtower opens directly into the "hall." Raised paneling is original to the fireplace wall and the wainscoting of the remaining three walls. Above the 3-centered-arch fireplace are 3 tiers of horizontal panels; the lower consisting of a pair of panels conforming to the curve of the arch, and the other two being single horizontal panels. Flanking the fireplace are fluted pilasters on recessed panel pedestals with 6 flutes in each, the top and bottom terminating in a thumb nail stop. (This same feature is employed in the window reveals with the use of seven flutes). On each side of the fireplace are closets with 2-panel doors thereto. Series of 5 raised panels surrounds the doors. The bolection chairrail continues across the paneling and doors in typical early

(See continuation sheet No. 1)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian; | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **circa 1686-1730**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Troth's Fortune, probably built between the years 1686 and 1710 (according to the documentary evidence), is a well-preserved example of late 17th century Maryland vernacular architecture. William (I) Troth bought a tract of 300 acres called Acton in 1686 on which he built the house today known (erroneously)¹ as Troth's Fortune. Its gambrel roof, 1 1/2-story height, and two-room width make this house typical of the 1680's and 1690's in tidewater Maryland. Although it may seem small by today's standards, its two good-sized rooms on the first floor and three small rooms upstairs, made it twice the size of the numerous less wealthy planters' houses. The unusual feature of the medieval-style stairtower on the rear facade and the detailed circa 1720's woodwork of the interior give Troth's Fortune an individuality which adds much to the interest of the house.

In addition to its architectural importance, Troth's Fortune provides a clear view of two aspects of the economic and religious life of colonial Talbot County. William (I) Troth, the builder of the house, was a member of that small class of colonial planters who combined agriculture with business and trade to make a living considerably above that of the average planter. He was also a member of the Society of Friends, a religious group which became particularly large and well established in Talbot County.

¹Troth patented 400 acres as Troth's Fortune in 1676. He may have built a house on this tract, but it is not the one known today as Troth's Fortune as this house now stands on the tract called Acton. This confusion may be attributed to H. Chandlee Forman's record of the house in his book, Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland (1934). He calls the house Troth's Fortune, although it is called "Acton or the Troth Farm" in the property deeds for both 1932 and 1936. This error was picked up and repeated by many people who later wrote about the house and Troth's Fortune has now become its common name.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

PRIMARY SOURCES, Hall of Records, Annapolis
 Federal Direct Tax Assessment of 1798, Talbot County.
 Land Records, Talbot County.
 Probate Records, Talbot County.
 Tax Assessment of 1783, Talbot County.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Carroll, Kenneth. Quakerism on the Eastern Shore. Baltimore:
 Maryland Historical Society, 1970.

(see continuation sheet)

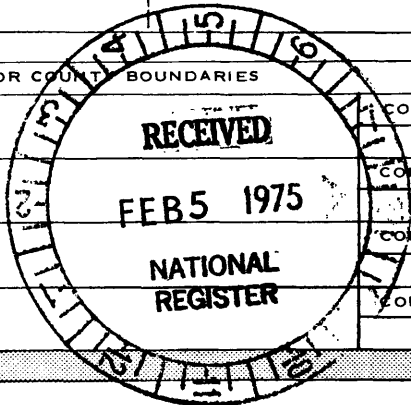
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NW	38°	45'	58"	76°	00'	02"		
NE	38°	45'	04"	75°	59'	54"		
SE	38°	45'	44"	75°	59'	29"		
SW	38°	45'	39"	75°	59'	38"		

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **33 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Michael Bourne; Pamela James, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION: **Maryland Historical Trust** DATE: **August 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:
2525 Riva Road

CITY OR TOWN: **Annapolis** STATE: **Maryland** CODE: **24**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Arthur C. Townsend
Arthur C. Townsend

Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: January 30, 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

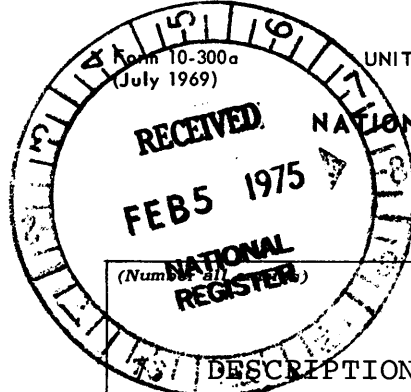
A. B. Mortensen
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/24/75

ATTEST:
W. M. [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: **APR 23 1975**

NW 18/413 660
 4291670
 NE 18/413 240/4291270
 SE 18/413 860/4290660
 SW 18/413 610/4290470
 SEE INSTRUCTIONS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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(Continuation Sheet) #1

Troth's Fortune

DESCRIPTION, continued

Georgian style. It also caps the dado and jogs downward where the window sill is lower and where it meets the door to the "parlor". The details of the paneling in the "hall" are very similar to those of "Boston Cliff" (1729), White Marsh (1735) and Hampden (c. 1720), all of which are in Talbot County. All evidence points to the fact that the paneling was installed when the house was constructed. It then seems logical that "Troth's Fortune" dates from around the same period of the aforementioned dwellings. Stylistically in rural Maryland, this type of woodwork dates between 1720 and 1760. The alterations (mentioned later) which occurred during the life of the house support this supposition.

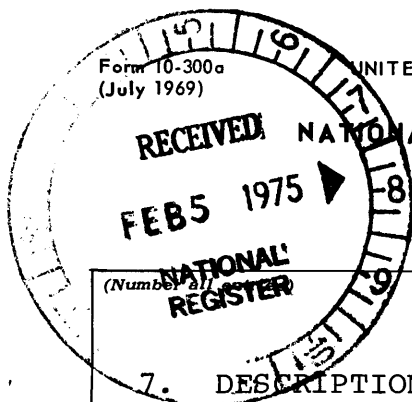
Raised paneling on the protruding fireplace wall in the "parlor" boasts a large bolection molding around the fireplace and two panels of cupboard doors above flanked by a single panel and crowned by a single narrow horizontal panel. It lacks a cornice which the "hall" paneling possesses. In the west corner of the room is a tiny two panel door leading to the closet beneath the stair. A simple chair rail and baseboard are the period trim of the "parlor."

In the stair tower is a winder stair, with closet beneath. The closet wall consists of feather edge vertical boards bearing the same profile as the raised paneling in the "hall" and "parlor." A narrow 2-panel door opens into the closet. The stair itself has two treads leading to the winder treads, which number eight around the newel, and four leading to the second floor hall. A balustrade is located along the four upper steps, and from these in a right angle to the wall.

Originally, the second floor plan consisted of a hall, with one room on each side and a smaller room between. When the wing was added, the "parlor chamber" was converted into a bath, corridor and dressing room.

The "hall chamber" possesses a small fireplace with walls of raised paneling housing two closets, as below. A plaster wall separates the "hall chamber" from the other rooms, but other walls on the second floor are of vertical beaded boards. Flooring on the second story is original.

Changes which have occurred during the life of Troth's Fortune consist of several minor alterations, both outside and inside. Beginning on the river facade (southeast facade), the arches of the door and two windows were apparently removed. In addition, the brickwork flanking the windows was altered to accomodate narrower window frames. The cornice of the southeast facade apparently retains its original box, yet the crown and bed moldings are replacements.



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(July 1969)

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(Continuation Sheet) #2

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Troth's Fortune

7. DESCRIPTION, continued

On the southwest gable, some addition must have been built and later removed since the two small windows on its northwest side were lengthened, then entirely filled with brick.

For apparently little gain, the northwest entrance door was moved approximately 18 inches closer to the tower as there is a seam in the brickwork as well as in the paneled dado within. Portions of the cornice on the northwest side have been replaced. Its window frame, however, appears original. Brickwork on the northeast side of the tower was altered during this century after a leanto had been removed which had had doors cut into both the "parlor" and the stair closet.

Inside, the alterations consist of new flooring on the first floor, installation of book cases in the "parlor" and the second floor room arrangement, mentioned above. Minor, and earlier, changes are evident in the exterior doors and trim in the "hall" and the probable replacement of the stair balustrade, which occurred around 1800.

Troth's Fortune is a very well-preserved house which has retained the best features of its early period as well as evidences of change. It is located on a one hundred acre farm and possesses a well planned and maintained yard as well as miscellaneous contemporary outbuildings.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #4

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

In 1679 Troth patented two parcels of land, 400 acres of Troth's Fortune and 100 acres known as Troth's Addition. Seven years later he purchased 300 acres of a tract called Acton from John Acton, son of the original patentee. By his death in 1710, he possessed 1,216 acres in Talbot County, 500 in Dorchester, and an undetermined amount (but exceeding 240 acres) in Queen Anne's, a total of 2,000 acres or more. This huge amount of land is one indication of the great wealth William Troth accumulated through his business success.

The inventories of his estate further illustrate Troth's economic success, as well as showing the reason for it. The total value of the goods evaluated in the 1711 inventory is £929.18.3 1/2. The larger part of this inventory, which included his household goods, consisted of goods listed "in the store." An additional inventory returned in 1712 is for £276.6.2 3/4 of which £216 was "Cash in bank in ye hands of Jonath. Searth & Thos. Bond - merchts in London as per Acct.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) #3

Troth's Fortune

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

current."² These two amounts combined give Troth a net worth in goods of approximately £1,206. This was a very large amount for the early 18th century, considering that only 0.7 percent of Maryland's planters wereworth over £1,000 in 1710.³

Troth achieved this wealth through his mercantile activities rather than his agricultural ones. Although most larger tobacco planters traded directly with England, the smaller ones usually sold their crops to other planters in the colonies.⁴ They received less money this way, but the risk of transportation across the ocean and debt to English merchants was eliminated. As for the larger planters, their advantages in this system are explained by A. P. Middleton in his book Tobacco Coast:

[They] competed with the factors [employed by the London merchants] in buying tobacco from the smaller planters, and shipped it along with their own to England on consignment. In order to enter the purchasing market they were obliged to import large quantities of European and West India goods and to keep a store.... In return for tobacco sent to Great Britain on consignment, they imported goods for their stores as well as for their own use, and marked them up in price and extended credit, much as factors did, in order to obtain control of the smaller planters. Thus emerged a group of powerful merchant-planters, peculiar to the tobacco colonies, who engaged in all the mercantile pursuits yet considered themselves primarily planters.⁵

Middelton also mentions that this system was more prevalent in the 18th century than in the 17th,⁶ which makes William Troth one of the first to participate in and profit from it.

²Inventory of the estate of William Troth, Probate Records, Talbot County, Maryland. Liber 33B/42. Hall of Records, Annapolis.

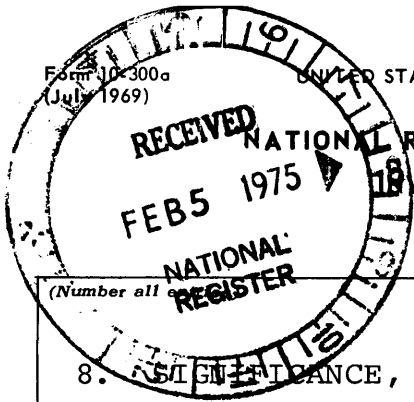
³Aubrey C. Land, "The Colonial Planters of Maryland," Maryland Historical Magazine, LXVII (Spring, 1972), 116.

⁴Margaret S. Morris, Colonial Trade of Maryland, 1689-1715 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1914), p. 103.

⁵Arthur Pierce Middleton, Tobacco Coast, A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era (Newport News, Virginia: The Mariners' Museum, 1953) p. 108.

⁶Middleton, p. 107.

(See continuation sheet No. 4)



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Troth's Fortune

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

To see Troth in comparison to the other planters on the Eastern Shore in the late 17th century, one need only substitute his name for William Worgan's in the following paragraph from Aubrey C. Land's article, "The Planters of Colonial Maryland":

As for planting, William Worgan did little more than his poorer neighbors. He owned no slaves; almost no one in Maryland did in 1677. His total labor force consisted of five indentured servants,Even so he could count himself well off by comparison with planters in his parish or in the county. The overwhelming number of these-if 80 percent is overwhelming-had neither servants nor slaves, lived in one-room houses, enjoyed net incomes of about £8 to £15 sterling a year from two or three hogsheads of tobacco raised with their own hands, and counted their entire visible estates at something less than £100. These planters were Worgan's customers, the milieu in which he lived, and his stature as economic man was greater than his neighbors by the height of mercantile business. Without them Worgan would not have been possible; without him their lot would have been sorry indeed. In economic terms Worgan must be accounted a success. And his fortune-for £800 was a fortune in Maryland of the 1670's-derived from his mercantile pursuits, not from his planting.⁷

Although Worgan lived on the Eastern Shore a generation before Troth, the latter's fortune of £1,200 was enough to make up for any difference in the value of the pound from 1677 until 1710.

⁷Land, p. 114.

Addenda to #7 Architectural Description

- ¹It is known locally that there was a still kept in the cellar of Troth's Fortune during Prohibition which blew up.
- ²According to Mrs. Platt, this door was not moved, but its size was altered. It was originally six inches wider and six shorter.
- ³According to Mrs. Platt, these doors were originally windows, although one may have been a "death door."

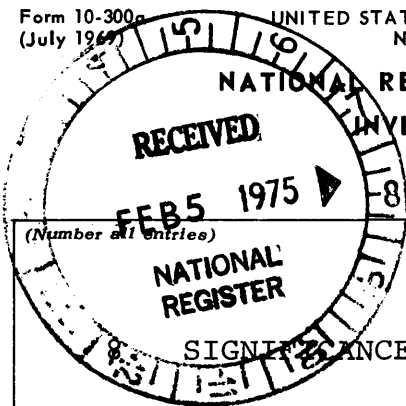
(See continuation sheet No. 5)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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8 (Continuation Sheet) #5



(Number all entries)

Troth's Fortune

SIGNIFICANCE, continued

William Troth's properties in Talbot County were located on the north side of the Choptank, and the house and store on Acton were only a mile or two up the river from the small town of Dover. The shops carrying his tobacco to and bringing his supplies from England probably came into this port which thrived until the late 18th century but has now completely disappeared.⁸

Stores such as Troth's, according to P. A. Bruce in his Economic History of Virginia, were "found in great numbers on every navigable stream" in colonial Virginia, "the store (being) one of the principal institutions... whether the property of a foreign or a native merchant."⁹ Margaret Shore Morris suggests that this was also true in Maryland in her book, Colonial Trade in Maryland, 1689-1715.

The housing for these stores is also considered by Bruce, who says that they were sometimes kept in a room of the dwelling house, but were more often housed in a separate building. This, he suggests, would have been a "boarded house with a loft and with a shed."¹⁰ That Troth's store was probably in a separate building can be determined by comparing the rooms listed in the 1711 inventory with those in the house today. The hall and parlor of 1711 are the two rooms downstairs and the other chamber and another unnamed room in the inventory are the two larger rooms which were upstairs before the 20th century alterations. This leaves no space in the house itself for a store and thus it was probably kept in another building.

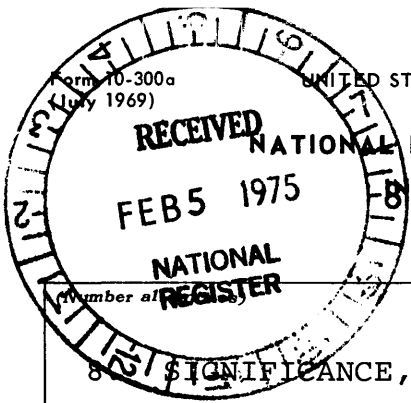
A very wide variety of wares was sold in these stores as they were almost the only source of manufactured goods available to the colonists. William Troth stocked everything from tin

⁸Writers' Program, Works Progress Administration, Maryland, A Guide to the Old Line State (Reprint of 1940 ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

⁹Philip Alexander Bruce, Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century, Vol. II (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1896), p. 380.

¹⁰Bruce, p. 381.

(See continuation sheet NO. 6)



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Troth's Fortune

8 SIGNIFICANCE, continued

pans and needles for the housewife to powder and shot for the planters. A large part of his inventory was taken up by many bolts of cloth, including calico, damask, crape, serge, linsey, and lining (linen), some of which was imported from Ireland. Another largely stocked item was shoes, fifty-two pairs for men and twenty-two for women. Leather, window glass, iron, paper, nails, carpenters' tools, hoes, two old guns, and two old chafing dishes are a further sampling of the goods he offered for sale.¹¹

William Troth died in 1710, leaving both the Troth's Fortune and the Acton properties to his son Henry. He also left the prosperous mercantile business outlined above, but when Henry Troth died only nineteen years later in 1729, there was no trace of this once important business in the records. He still had contact with England as shown by a payment of £14 to John Hanburg, London merchant, included in a 1742 account of his estate, but there is no mention of a store in the inventory taken in 1729. The value of his possessions as shown in this inventory came to £840, still a considerable sum but not as great as that left by his father, perhaps a further indication that the store was no longer operated on the property today known as Troth's Fortune.

Quakerism arrived in Talbot County in the 1650's spreading there from Annapolis and Kent Island where it first appeared as a strong movement in Maryland. Widespread and violent persecution of members of the Society of Friends was limited to the 1660's. In the following decade the sect flourished in Talbot County as its religion became more widely accepted in the colony. Visits by three well-known traveling Friends at this time also encouraged men with more education to become leaders in the meetings.¹² Thus, by the time William Troth first appears in the records of the county in 1679, Talbot had become a strong center of Quakerism on the Eastern Shore.

The Quakers had always been opposed to the taking of human life whether in war or in peace, and they continued this tradition in the colonies. In 1694, William (I) Troth was appointed a press master for Bolingbroke Hundred in Talbot County. This position was formed by an Act of Assembly which required that "honest and substantial men of their counties" be selected for the duty.¹³

¹¹Inventory of the estate of William Troth, Probate Records, Talbot County, Maryland. Liber 33C/69. Hall of Records, Annapolis

¹²Kenneth Carroll, Quakerism on the Eastern Shore (Baltimore Maryland Historical Society, 1970), Chapter 2.

¹³Oswald Tilghman, History of Talbot County, Maryland, 1661-1861 (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Company, 1915) p.38.

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Troth's Fortune

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

These men were essentially to make sure that goods were not illegally taken from the people of the county to support the local and colony troops, making it a post not inconsistent with Troth's Quaker views.

Troth's grandson William (II), who inherited Acton and its dwelling house from his father Henry when he was only three years old, was apparently an active member of Third Haven Meeting. In 1750 he was one of four men selected to collect contributions for the repairs of the meeting house. He was appointed the "keeper of the Register for Births, marriages, and Buryalls" in 1758, a post he held for five years. In 1763 he is said to have been "removed from hence," meaning Third Haven vicinity, but he was apparently back again in 1768 when he freed two slaves. The following year he had a mare forcibly taken from him for his refusal to pay the tithe to the Church of England.¹⁴

Slavery was not early regarded as inconsistent with the tenets of Quakerism.¹⁵ William (I) Troth owned thirteen slaves when he died in 1710 and Henry Troth had twenty-four at his death in 1729. Occasional denunciations of slaveholding were made before 1750, but it was not until mid-century that concern over this became more widespread, and not until 1777 did the possession of slaves become an offense for which one could be disowned by the meeting.

The records of William (II) Troth's manumission of his slaves follows closely the stands taken against slavery by the Eastern Shore Quakers. He freed two slaves within a decade of their first expression of anti-slavery sentiments in 1759. After the visit of John Woolman, a well-known Quaker opponent of Negro slavery, to Talbot in 1766, there was a rash of manumissions in the county. It was at this time that Troth freed the rest of his slaves.

The Society of Friends on the Eastern Shore remained strong throughout the 18th century, but suffered a decline during the 19th century due to a number of factors, including migration from the area and a stiffened moral code.¹⁶ That this decline extended to the Troth family is shown by a

¹⁴Carroll, pp. 111, 62, 135, 71.

¹⁵Carroll, p. 129.

¹⁶Carroll, p. 158.

(See continuation sheet No. 8)

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	Maryland	
COUNTY	Talbot	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE
		APR 24 1975

(Continuation Sheet) #8

(Number all entries)

Troth's Fortune

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

comment from the records of Third Haven Meeting in 1817 that William (IV) Troth had "so far deviated from the principles of Truth, humanity and Justice as to offer to sell a Coloured Boy entitled to freedom to residents of the State of Georgia."¹⁷

William (IV) Troth inherited the property from his father William (III) in 1814. When he died in 1852, the property passed to his sister, Ann Birchhead (Troth) Brown, who sold it two years later to Daniel Cowgill of Delaware. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Frederic C. Thomas, bought the house in 1946 and subsequently built two additions on the northeast gable end.

¹⁷Carroll, p. 160.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES, continued

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