

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90001021

Date Listed: 7/16/90

Whitaker's Mill Historic District
Property Name

Harford
County

MD
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

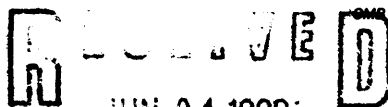
7/16/90
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

The nomination form for this historic district incorrectly classifies this property as "buildings"; it should be classified as a district. Also, the district is nominated under National Register Criterion C, but no Area of Significance is provided to reflect the district's importance. Architecture is the appropriate Area of Significance. These points have been clarified by Ron Andrews of the MD SHPO. The form is now officially amended to include this information.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Whitaker's Mill Historic District
other names/site number HA-1756

2. Location

street & number 1210, 1212, and 1213 Whitaker Mill Road N/A not for publication
city, town Joppa N/A vicinity
state Maryland code MD county Harford code 025 zip code 21085

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official [Signature] Date 5/29/90
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. [Signature] 7/16/90
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

HA-1756

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwellingINDUSTRIAL/manufacturing facilityTRANSPORTATION/road related (vehicular)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwellingTRANSPORTATION/road related (vehicular)**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

FederalGreek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone, brickwalls stonewoodroof slate, asbestosother wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The Whitaker's Mill Historic District is a recognizable and discreet entity in the rapidly developing area southwest of Bel Air in Harford County, Maryland. The district includes three early-to-mid-nineteenth century buildings: the 1851, 2-1/2-story rubble stone Whitaker's Mill, the 1-1/2-story miller's house (probably built at the same time as the mill and also of rubble stone), and the log and frame Magness House, begun c. 1800 as the miller's house for the first mill on the site and added to in the mid-nineteenth century. The district also includes an iron truss bridge. Constructed in 1878, the bridge is the oldest such span in the county. The district's boundaries are defined by tree lines and hilltops which effectively screen out surrounding mid-20th century subdivisions. Landscaping is natural, as befits industrial buildings in a picturesque site. Winters Run, which furnished water power for the mill and courses through the district, is lined with vine-covered trees and the yards around the buildings are -- and in all likelihood always have been -- planted in an informal manner with a few trees and clumps of American boxwood and other native shrubs. In all the district has remained visually virtually unchanged from its c. 1890 appearance, when it was a thriving and important industrial center.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Whitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 7 Page 7.1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

NOTE: Numerals in parentheses refer to Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties catalogue numbers.

The Whitaker's Mill Historic District is a discreet and distinctively rural-feeling enclave at the intersection of Winter's Run and Whitaker Mill Road in the rapidly developing suburbia southwest of Bel Air in Harford County, Maryland. Virtually unchanged since c. 1900 and effectively defined by hilltops and tree lines, the district continues to be a rare and undisturbed island of serenity--"picturesque", according to the compilers of MARYLAND: A New Guide to the Old Line State¹ -- amidst dense modern residential development.

WHITAKER'S MILL; (HA-1117); 1212 Whitaker Mill Road; 1851 (datestone). This 2 1/2-story, rubble stone structure is the successor to the Gibbons (or Gibson) Mill shown on Dennis Griffith's 1795 map of Maryland. That earlier mill passed through several owners until Franklin and Rachel Whitaker acquired the site in 1846 when Rachel inherited it from the estate of her late father, Caleb Pue, who himself had bought it at a Sheriff's Sale in

1

Edward C. Papenfuse et al., Maryland: A New Guide to the Old Line State, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p.13.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 7 Page 7.2

²
1836. Whitaker, presumably dissatisfied with the by-then old mill, replaced it in 1851 with the present "magnificent stone structure"³, as the datestone attests. The rubble stone mill measures 40' by 60' and stands 2 1/2 stories above grade on the north (road) side and 3 1/2 stories tall on the south. It is four bays wide with a gable roof. Whitaker must have been something of an innovator, for he gave the mill an undershot wheel, one of the "few in Harford County"⁴. There was also a turbine of 12 horsepower, driven, according to Maryland mill scholar John McGrain, by the "14-foot fall on Winter's Run." The mill survived several floods but Whitaker's death in 1895 and general economic conditions forced the cessation of milling operations in the early 20th century. It was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hicks in 1954 and adapted to residential use in 1961-'62. The adaption left the exterior intact and such changes as were necessary to the interior were done sympathetically to the old fabric. In fact, the original structural system determined the contemporary floor plan, designed

²
Harford County Deed Book HD 19, Page 253.

³
C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage, (Bel air, Maryland: Privately printed, 1967), p. 184.

⁴
Wright, Harford, p. 184.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 7 Page 7.3

by Addison Worthington, AIA, of Baltimore. The central of the three structural bays became a large entrance hall with an open staircase rising to the second floor; the western bay includes a narrow hall leading to the original west door; this is flanked by a library and office; the entire eastern bay is the living room. Interior finishes recall the character of the original--partitions are of vertical boards, and the posts, girders, and floor joists are made of recycled aged planks and beams and are left exposed wherever practicable. Windows, all in their original locations, have replacement framing but retain their original unusually massive stone lintels. The entire transformation was so sympathetic that the Baltimore Sun was able to opine in a headline that "Mill Becomes a Home Yet Stays a Mill."⁵

MILLER'S HOUSE; 1214 Whitaker Mill Road; c. 1851 (or earlier?). This rubble stone structure is 1 1/2 stories tall beneath a north-south gable roof. The building is two bays long and its end walls have flush, centrally placed brick chimneys. The original entrance to the house is the northern bay on the west facade otherwise the gable end walls are blind; all windows are

5

Baltimore Sunday Sun Magazine, April 1, 1962.

See Continuation Sheet No. 7.4

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 7 Page 7.4

six-over-six sash windows and there seems to be much original framing. Similarly, the floorplan--two rooms per floor with a center stair between--is largely intact. Two dormers, each with six-over-six sash, have always lighted the attic story. A frame wing was added towards the west in 1975. Designed by restoration architect James Wollon, AIA, it is similar in size and shape to the old section and complements it nicely. The sections were intentionally kept visually separate and are linked together only by an almost invisible frame and glass entrance hyphen.

MAGNESS HOUSE; (HA-1089); 1213 Whitaker Mill Road; c. 1800, c. 1851. Built of log, the original section of this two-bay house is 1 1/2 stories tall with a gable roof. This section is two equal-sized rooms deep, a plan which is an oddity among Harford County's log houses. All rooms have plain plastered walls with no trim and a corner fireplace at the western wall; the enclosed stair extends partially into each cell at the east end of the dividing wall. The main entrance door, porch, and the exterior weatherboarding seem to date from a later remodelling (possibly when the larger, later section was built around 1851) but the stair and most of the simple interior doors seem to be earlier. In the middle of the 19th century, Franklin and Rachel Whitaker acquired the property and added a larger scale frame section to the west of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 7 Page 7.5

the log house. The Whitakers, owners of the mill, lived here and hired a miller to operate the mill; he lived across the road in the old miller's house. The Whitakers' house (now popularly called the Magness House after its 20th-century owners) is 2 1/2 stories tall, three bays wide with a one-story porch with restrained square Greek Revival posts across the front; the house has a gable roof while the porch's roof is flat. The entire section is covered in simple weatherboards with wide corner boards. Two gable-roofed dormers pierce both slopes of the gable roof. The 6/6 windows have narrow beaded frames and louvered shutters with operable lower panels. The main entrance door (the southeast bay) has sidelights and a transom. Within is a sidehall/double parlor plan and the entire section boasts much original trim. Both parlors have fireplaces, but the norther room's is the more elaborate; it is recognizably Greek for its plain pilasters have echinus capitals supporting a frieze with a bold ogee shaped soffit and a carved anthemion at its peak. The stair, with its walnut balusters and rail, is entirely original.

HARFORD COUNTY BRIDGE NO. 51; (HA-1237); Whitaker Mill Road over Winter's Run; 1878. The Harford County Circuit Court records show that this single span, bowstring truss bridge was built by Ramsay & Co. in 1878, thereby making it the oldest documented iron bridge in

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 7 Page 7.6

the county.⁶ According to a structural report, on file in the county's public works department, "the bridge is a single span bowstring truss consisting of six equal panels. The deck consists of a five inch open steel grate tack welded to the stringers. The deck is supported by two exterior stringers and seven interior stringers. The stringers are supported by two piggy-back wrought iron floor beams at the first interior panels and...steel floor beams at the remaining panel points. The superstructure is supported by rubble stone masonry abutments and wingalls. The underclearance from the bottom of the flange is approximately 13 feet."⁷ The bridge is 72 feet long and 13 feet wide; its original wooden deck was replaced by the steel grating in 1965.

⁶Road Book Number 1, in the archives of the Circuit Court for Harford County, Maryland, Bel Air.

⁷"Whitaker Mill Bridge" structural report prepared for the Harford County Department of Public Works, Bel Air.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

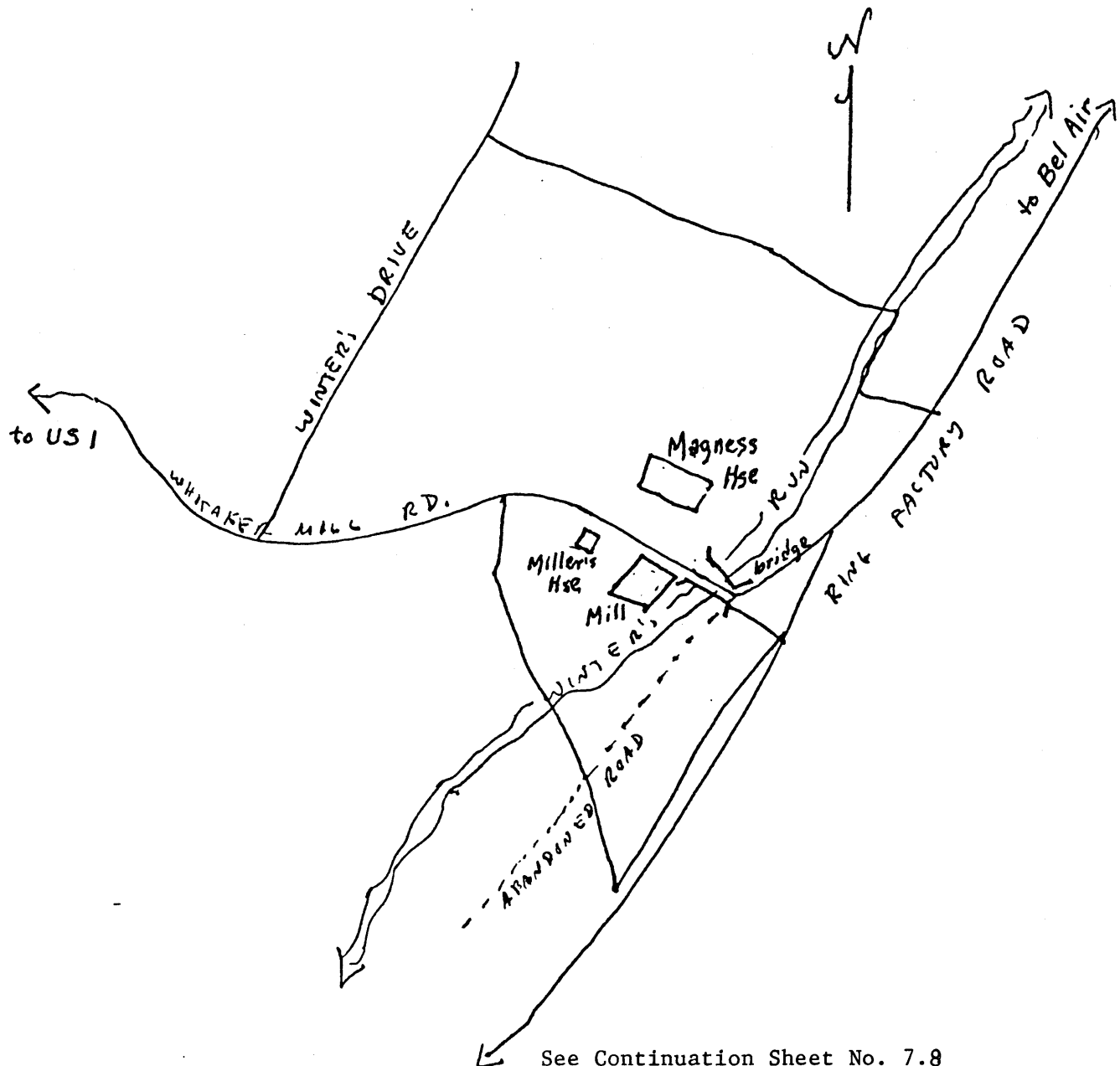
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Whitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County
Maryland
HA-1756

Section number 7 Page 7.7

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

1989



See Continuation Sheet No. 7.8

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

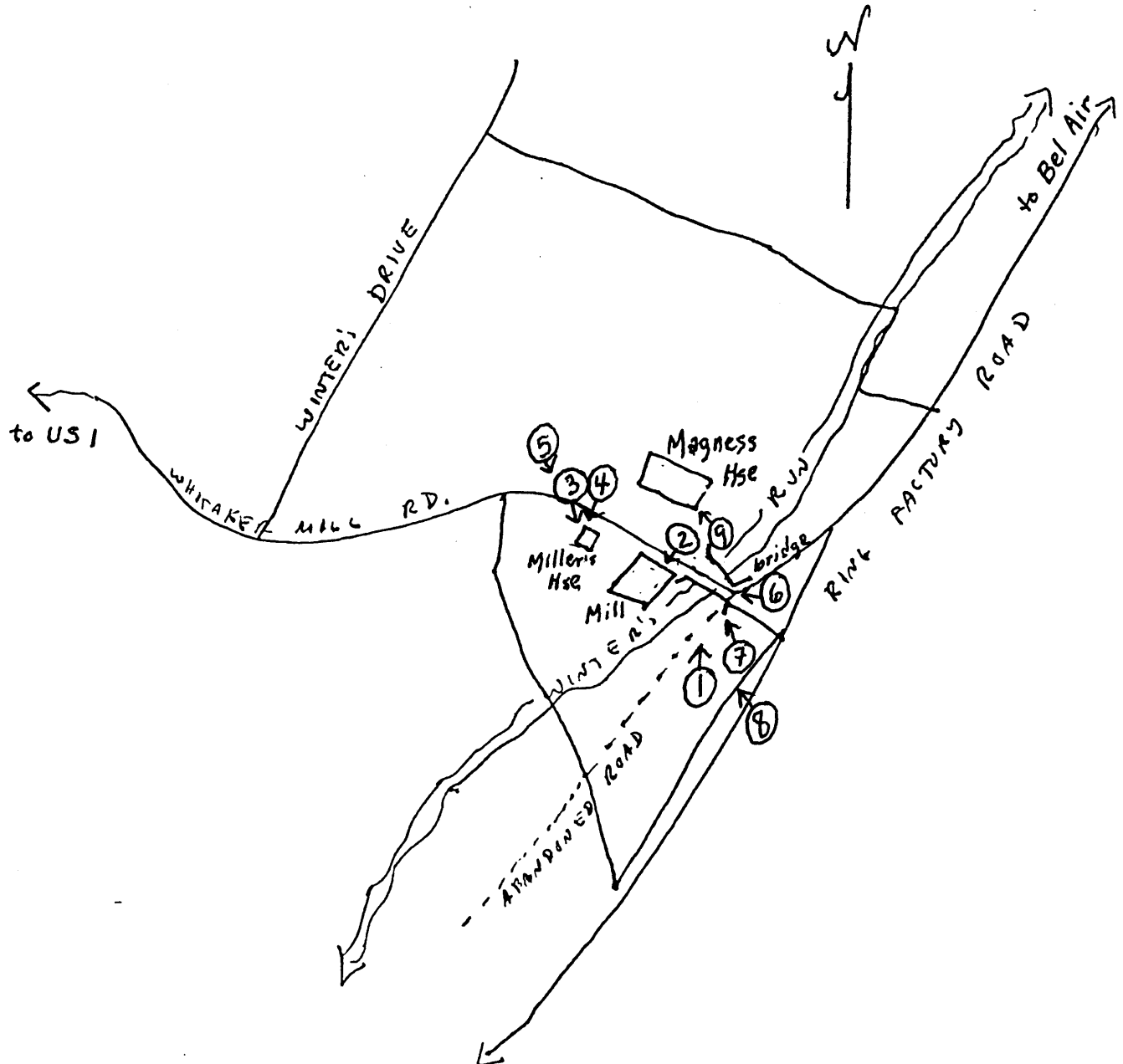
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Whitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County
Maryland

Section number 7 Page 7.8

HA-1756

PHOTOGRAPH MAP



8. Statement of Significance

HA-1756

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Industry

Period of Significance
c. 1851-c. 1900

Significant Dates
1851
1878

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Whitaker Mill Historic District is primarily significant because it offers a relatively rare opportunity to see the sort of industrial complex which once formed the basis of the Harford County economy. For two centuries, from roughly 1725 until 1920, grist mills were among the most dominant structures on the Harford landscape. Scholarly estimates of the number of mills range from 100 to roughly 400. The larger number includes flint mills and related activities as well. Of these once numerous structures only 10 remain and two of these are rapidly deteriorating. Moreover, Whitaker's Mill was the most productive of all the county's mills, at least in terms of value of goods. The present mill was built about 1851 and closed grist milling operations about 1900. The district gains further significance as an example of mid-nineteenth-century capitalism because it contains not only the mill, but also the mill owner's house as well as the house of the man hired to run the mill. Finally, the district contains Harford County Bridge No. 51, the oldest documented iron bridge in the county, and deemed to be individually National Register-eligible. The entire complex -- mill, miller's house, mill owner's house, and bridge -- has managed to retain its picturesque, late-nineteenth-century rural identity in an area that is now characterized by suburban tract housing.

See continuation sheet 8.1 for
HISTORIC CONTEXT and MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN data.

9. Major Bibliographical References

HA-1756

John McGrain, The Molinography of Harford County, unpublished typescript on file in the Harford County Planning Department, Bel Air, MD.

C. Milton Wright, Our Harford Heritage, (Bel Air; Privately printed, 1967).

Land, Probate, and Equity Records in the Harford County Courthouse, Bel Air.

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties: Harford County, Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, MD.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property approximately 13 acres
USGS quad: Edgewood, MD

UTM References

A

1	8
---	---

3	8	3	7	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	3	7	2	7	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

C

1	8
---	---

3	8	3	4	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	3	7	2	8	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B

1	8
---	---

3	8	3	4	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	3	7	2	3	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Zone Easting Northing

D

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The district consists of parcels 30 and 46 as shown on the Harford County Assessment Map No. 56.

See continuation sheet No. 10.1

Boundary Justification

Being all the land associated with the historic resources during their period of significance and necessary to maintain their historic integrity. The district is generally surrounded by unrelated resources such as mid-twentieth century houses.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christopher Weeks, Preservation Planner
 organization Harford County Government date November/December 1989
 street & number 220 South Main Street telephone 301-879-2000, ext. 207
 city or town Bel Air state Maryland zip code 21014

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Whitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 8 Page 8.1

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Periods:

Rural Agrarian Intensification	A.D. 1680-1815
Agricultural-Industrial Transition	A.D. 1815-1870
Industrial/Urban Dominance	A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Themes:

Architecture, landscape architecture and
Community Planning

Economic (Commercial and Industrial)

Resource Type:

Category: district

Historic Environment: rural

Historic Functions and Uses:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
INDUSTRIAL/manufacturing facility
TRANSPORTATION/road related (vehicular)

Known Design Source: none

See Continuation Sheet No. 8.2

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 8 Page 8.2HISTORIC CONTEXT:

NOTE: Footnotes 8 through 24 will be found at the end of Section 8.

Grist mills were among the most dominant components of the Harford County economy for roughly 200 years and estimates on the number of mills in the county range from 100⁸ and 400.⁹ Although the earliest known mill dated to the late 17th century,¹⁰ the milling industry in the county did not really take off until the middle of the 18th century. This must be at least partially explainable by the growth of the port of Baltimore after John Stevenson sent a shipment of flour down the Patapsco to Ireland in 1750.¹¹ Baltimore quickly became America's leading exporter of flour and mills appeared throughout the rural counties in the region, including Harford.

The Oldest standing mill in the county is Jerusalem Mill (1772, National Register). The first mill on the Whitaker Mill site must have been built about that time. It is known to have existed in the 1790s because an advertisement in the Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser on May 22, 1792, notes that this tract of 20 acres "improved by a stone mill-house and a dwelling house" was for sale. Joshua Gibson bought the tract in 1793;¹² that transaction makes no mention of a mill, yet Dennis Griffith's 1795 map of Maryland shows "Gibbon's Mill" on the site.

In 1819 one Howell Mitchell, called "yeoman" in the deed, bought the tract and many early 19th-century deeds for property in the vicinity refer to "the road to Mitchell's Mill."¹³ This is now called Whitaker Mill Road. Mitchell ran into financial difficulty, however, and in 1836 the property was sold at a Sheriff's Sale to pay his debts.¹⁴ The purchaser was Caleb Pue, a small scale

See Continuation Sheet No. 8.3

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 8 Page 8.3

entrepreneur. Pue already owned five lots in the then-thriving town of Abingdon, three lots in Baltimore City, and three farms in the Gunpowder Neck. He was in the process of negotiating the sale of the Neck farms to the Philadelphian General George Cadwalader and may have been looking for places to invest the proceeds.¹⁵ In any event, Pue died in February 1841 and Michael, Mary, and Rebecca Pue, his heirs, unable to effect the division of his lands, had to go to equity court.¹⁶ The court decreed that Rebecca would get, among other properties, the 83-acre tract "known as Mitchell's Mill, purchased by the said Caleb Pue from Preston McComas, Sheriff." Two years later, Rebecca married Franklin Whitaker.

The old mill, after at least a generation of service, must have been "old" indeed and the Whitakers replaced it with the present massive building in 1851, as a datestone attests. The mill they built, measuring 40' by 60' and soaring 3 1/2 stories tall (on the south side; it is 2 1/2 on the north due to the slope of the land) is the largest mill standing in the county. Its lapidary construction makes it all the more impressive and imposing. C. Milton Wright, in his definitive history of the county calls it "a magnificent structure of stone."¹⁷ Whitaker's Mill was given further distinction by its undershot wheel, "one of the few in Harford County."¹⁸ It is generally believed that the Whitakers built the stone miller's house at the same time, although the dwelling could be the one mentioned in the 1792 real estate ad; its simple design and straightforward construction make it literally "timeless" and in both design and construction it resembles the c. 1775 rubble stone "Gun Factory" (HA-434) at Jerusalem Mill as well as the c. 1830 rubble stone mill (HA-93) at Mill Green.

Whitaker, elected to the Maryland General Assembly, chose not to run the mill himself but to employ a miller. Therefore, while

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 8 Page 8.4

the miller lived next door to the mill, Whitaker and his wife made their home across the road. They did this by remodelling an older log house, known as the Magness House, and by building a larger 2 1/2-story restrained Greek Revival wing onto it. The result was grand enough to be referred to in at least one legal proceeding as the "frame mansion house."¹⁹

Whitaker prospered. The 1880 census lists Franklin Whitaker with a mill worth \$7,000 and three employees. The 14-foot fall of Winter's Run drove a 12-horsepower turbine at 50 rpm as well as the mill wheel ("20 hp, 10 rpm"). Output was "1400 bbl flour, 75 tons meal, 84 tons feed, 1 ton hominy, and 2000 tons buckwheat" worth \$11,430. This was one of the most successful, perhaps the most successful, milling operations in the country as an examination of 1880 figures for existing mills indicates: Noble's Mill produced \$8,000 worth of goods; Wilson's Mill \$3,000; Rock Run \$9,084; Amos \$7,000; Mill Green \$3,100; the very well known Jerusalem Mill produced \$10,200. Thus Whitaker's Mill Historic District is important not only as a rare survivor of a once-important industry, but it is a survivor of the industry at its most flourishing state, a splendid example of mid-Victorian rural capitalism.

Another product of the mid-Victorian era was the metal truss bridge. Although developed in the 18th century, these bridges seem more a quintessential part of the 19th century. Indeed, according to one National Park Service authority, "they represent some of the finest achievements of American engineering and construction technology. The metal truss bridge is uniquely indigenous to America; no other country experimented with the truss concept as we did during the 19th century." Moreover, the same author argues that "the more modest [of these] spans maintain a sense of scale with the rural landscape not duplicated in the concrete girders that replace them."²⁰ The modest pony truss, bowstring iron bridge over Winter's

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 8 Page 8.5

Run at Whitaker's Mill is an undeniably integral part of the rural landscape and of the mill community. Constructed in 1878, it is the oldest such metal bridge in Harford County and was determined to be individually National Register-eligible in 1985.²¹

This industrial complex survived flood after flood. According to an 1885 account in The Aegis, on August 6, 1885, high waters hit Winter's Run and, "when the flood reached Whitaker's Mill it carried away the dam and race, causing a loss to Mr. Whitaker of \$2,000." The same account reported that "the iron bridge at Whitaker's Mill" was "lifted up at one end but dropped back."²² The complex couldn't, however, survive changes in the regional economy. Milling in Maryland grew less and less important as the Midwest's vast grain fields were developed. Thus, Whitaker's Mill, a part of the large economic picture, was, like most of the county's mills, abandoned in the early 29th century. Whitaker himself had died in 1895 (Rebecca had predeceased him by a year) and, as the Harford County Orphans' Court records show, none of the Whitaker heirs wanted to continue milling operations. Thus 1895 marks the end of the district's period of significance, and at an 1897 Trustees' Sale, the tract was divided into the smaller parcels present today. (An equity case among Whitaker's heirs led to the sale and the transcript of the trial is of some interest. In the course of his deposition, local farmer John S. Dallam described the property as being "2 1/2 mile from Bel Air; it has a stone mill on it, a good frame mansion house, and the necessary outbuildings....The land is hilly, broken by Winter's Run."²³

There are larger groupings of mill-associated buildings in Harford County, note the Jerusalem Mill Village Historic District and the community of Mill Green. These can be distinguished from Whitaker's Mill based on geography. Both Jerusalem and Mill Green

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetWhitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 8 Page 8.6

were begun in the 18th century and were far from any town. There were no nearby stores, no post office. Franklin Whitaker and his mill were but two miles from the county seat, Bel Air, which by the 1850s was a sizeable village with 65 buildings (33 dwellings) and a population of 280.²⁴ There was no need for Whitaker to worry about where to shop for shoes or where to pick up his mail. Similarly, the village-less Wilson's Mill (HA-11) and Noble's Mill (HA-335) were conveniently close to the village of Darlington.

The entire Whitaker's Mill Historic District has managed to remain a recognizable and discreet entity amidst the rampant suburban growth of this part of Harford County. Ringed by wooded hills and with Winter's Run gurgling through, the district is a superb and "picturesque" survivor of the county's once-vital grain-based economy.

⁸Wright, Harford, p. 166.

⁹John McGrain, The Molinography of Harford County, unpublished typescript on file in the Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning.

¹⁰Wright, Harford, p. 166.

¹¹Papenfuse et al., New Guide, p. 352.

¹²McGrain, Molinography.

¹³Deed HD3/497.

¹⁴Deed HD19/253.

¹⁵Research on the Gunpowder Neck in possession of Gen. Cadwalader's great-grandneice, Mary Helen Cadwalader, Joppa, MD.

¹⁶Harford County Equity Case No. 4807.

¹⁷Wright, Harford, p. 184.

¹⁸Wright, Harford, p. 184.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Whitaker's Mill Historic District
Harford County, Maryland

HA-1756

Section number 8 Page 8.7

¹⁹Equity Case No. 4807.

²⁰Quoted in "Criteria for Preservation and Adaptive Use of Historic Highway Bridges." Virginia Highway & Transportation Research Council, Charlottesville, 1978, p. 8.

²¹Letter from George Andreve, Maryland Historical Trust, to Harold Hamilton, Harford County Department of Public Works, dated February 21, 1985.

²²The Aegis, August 6, 1985.

²³Equity Case No. 4807.

²⁴Marilynn M. Larew, Bel Air: The Town Through its Buildings, (Bel Air, Maryland: Town of Bel Air, 1981), p. 20.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Whitaker's Mill Historic District HA-1756
Harford County
Maryland

Section number 10 Page 10.1

The district consists of parcels 30 and 46. source: Harford County Assessment
Map No. 56

