

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



839

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hard Bargain Farm

Other names/site number: Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Center

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 2001 Bryan Point Road

City or town: Accokeek State: MD County: Prince George's

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

	<u>8-14-14</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>MD SHPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

*For Edison H. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

*10-8-14*  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object



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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>25</u>	<u>4</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>47</u>	<u>5</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding
- AGRICULTURE/storage
- AGRICULTURE/animal facility
- LANDSCAPE/garden
- LANDSCAPE/natural feature

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- EDUCATION/education-related
- RECREATION/outdoor recreation
- AGRICULTURE/storage
- AGRICULTURE/animal facility
- LANDSCAPE/garden
- LANDSCAPE/natural feature

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: \_ wood, concrete, glass \_\_\_\_\_

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary Paragraph

Hard Bargain Farm (PG: 83-2), located in Accokeek, Maryland, was purchased in 1922 by Alice L.L. Ferguson as a country retreat. In 1961, her husband, Henry G. ("Fergie") Ferguson, began the process of deeding the property to the Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF), which utilizes the property today as an environmental and cultural education center. Accessed via Bryan Point Road, HBF is comprised of 52.62 acres situated about 15 miles south of Washington, D.C.<sup>1</sup> The property is distinguished by its diversity of terrain, which includes steeply rolling hills, heavy forest growth, agricultural fields, and landscaped gardens. Further, overlooking the confluence of the Potomac River and Piscataway Creek, HBF has an unparalleled viewshed that includes Virginia's Mount Vernon Estate, Alexandria, Virginia, and downtown Washington, D.C. Alice Ferguson transformed the land through its renovation into a working farm, as well as through her integrated architecture and landscape designs, which incorporated aspects of the Country Place era of landscape architecture. In 1924, Alice Ferguson constructed a main farmhouse at the hilltop, which overlooks the viewshed and gardens. Through the 1930s, a number of agricultural and domestic outbuildings were constructed to support farm activities. Ferguson also constructed a number of elements reflecting the

<sup>1</sup> The Alice Ferguson Foundation currently owns 116.8 total acres, consisting of two main parcels, one 52.62 acre parcel located north and east of Bryan Point Road, and a 64.17 acre parcel located south and west of Bryan Point Road. The 52.62 acre parcel, encompassing the hilltop area, barnyard area, and lodge area, is that associated with Alice and Henry Ferguson's ownership, use, and design.



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influence of the Country Place era of landscape design, including a serpentine road to the hilltop farmhouse and a planned garden complex. Originally consisting of over 300 acres during the Ferguson's time, HBF's acreage has been reduced due to transfer of land along the Potomac River by the AFF to the National Park Service (NPS) in 1968, for the formation of Piscataway National Park. Through an agreement with NPS, the AFF continues to utilize this land for agricultural and educational purposes. HBF has integrity of materials, workmanship, and design, with extant buildings and landscape features designed and constructed by Alice Ferguson. Further, the property has strong integrity of setting and location, partially as a result of the covenants and ownership agreements made with NPS, which have helped to preserve the natural surroundings and viewshed. As a result, Hard Bargain Farm has exceptional integrity of association and feeling to Alice and Henry Ferguson's period of residence.

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## Narrative Description

### *Site*

Hard Bargain Farm (HBF) is a 52.62 acre property located at 2001 Bryan Point Road in Accokeek, Maryland. Located in the southwest corner of Prince George's County, Accokeek's boundaries are generally Charles County to the south and west and Piscataway Creek and the Potomac River forming the northern border. The historically rural community grew to include farms and small crossroad settlements with modest single family dwellings by the early twentieth century. From the closing decades of the twentieth century to the present, the community has been in a gradual transition towards a more suburban character. While the newer residential areas are concentrated in subdivisions located along Route 210, the older residential areas are located west of Route 210 and include the Moyaone Reserve area and scattered housing along Livingston Road and Bryan Point Road.<sup>2</sup> The traditional center of the community is the intersection of Route 210 and Livingston Road, located approximately 2.5 miles east of Hard Bargain Farm.

Sited approximately 15 miles south of Washington, D.C., Hard Bargain Farm is distinguished by its unique location. The main farmhouse, constructed in 1923 and 1924 as the home of Alice and Henry ("Fergie") Ferguson and today serving as the headquarters building of the Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF), is located at the property's highest point on a hill 150 feet above the Potomac River. This location provides the property with an unparalleled view of the Potomac River where it converges with Piscataway Creek. The viewshed includes not only the natural beauty of the river and the rolling, grassy landscape, but also provides a clear view of one of the nation's most significant national landmarks, George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate to the northwest. Additionally, Fort Washington is visible across Piscataway Creek to the northeast, and in the distance, Washington D.C.'s Washington Monument and the U.S. Capitol Building are visible to the north.

Primary access to the site is via Bryan Point Road, which travels along the property's west and south sides in a generally northwest to southeast direction. HBF has essentially three main areas: the hilltop area associated with the main farmhouse; a barnyard area centered at the main hay barn; and a lodge area, where the AFF's educational activities are focused.<sup>3</sup> The hilltop area is located at the highest point of the property to the northeast, and includes the Fergusons' farmhouse, a garage, and several outbuildings. The barnyard area is located west of the hilltop, and the areas are separated by a steep downward slope. As the center of farming operations at HBF, the barnyard has a large collection of buildings including the main hay barn, a milking parlor, a granary, and a corn crib. The lodge area is located near the northwest corner of the AFF property, north of the barnyard area and separated by mature tree growth. This area is the center of the AFF's

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<sup>2</sup> Located within the scenic easement area of Piscataway Park.

<sup>3</sup> As described in *Land Use Plan: Hard Bargain Farm*, prepared by Rhodeside & Harwell, Incorporated; Coastal Resources, Inc.; and Richard Westmacott, for Alice Ferguson Foundation, December 2005.

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educational programs, and includes a lodge building and gazebo. A scattering of other structures, including a secondary dwelling and outbuildings, is located on the periphery of these defined areas.

HBF is home to a remarkable variety in topography and land features. The highest point of the property is the hilltop area. Here, the farmhouse sits on a small, plateaued site with a grassy, open field immediately to its south. The terrain drops off to the north of the farmhouse, where a terrace of landscaped lawn and gardens softens the descent to a lowlands area belonging to the National Park Service that borders the Potomac River. The property is heavily wooded in most areas outside of clearings for structures, but the expanse between the rear (north) elevation of the farmhouse and the Potomac River is generally cleared to take advantage of the spectacular viewshed across the river. Only low-profile plantings, shrubbery, and groupings of mature trees accent the view. The property also slopes down to the west of the hilltop area to reach the barnyard and lodge areas. Here, the terrain is moderately sloped. To the south of the hilltop and its small field area, the land descends sharply into a deep ravine. Aside from the main access road that curves up and around the ravine, this area is heavily forested; mature tree growth also surrounds the barnyard and lodge areas. This access road was created by Alice Ferguson circa 1930, as part of her landscape design for the property.

Also of note is an area of National Park Service-owned land occupying the lowland areas to the north of the hilltop and bordering the Potomac River. Gifted to the National Park Service (NPS) by the AFF in 1968, the area is now outside of the boundaries of Hard Bargain Farm, yet remains significant to the mission of AFF and the natural setting of the Ferguson's property. Owned by the Fergusons from 1922 until it was deeded to the AFF in 1961, this land was used for farming and was also the site of significant archaeological excavations. Today, through an agreement with NPS, the land continues to be used by the AFF for farming and environmental education activities. On NPS-owned land, agricultural fields are located to the northeast and marshy wetlands are located to the northwest, currently used for habitat interpretation and education programs.

Water features are an important component of the site, for both their visual effect and their influence on the property's setting. In addition to the Potomac River and Piscataway Creek, which form an important part of the viewshed where they converge to the north of the property, Accokeek Creek flows from southeast to northwest across Hard Bargain Farm to meet the Potomac River on the NPS-owned property. The creek has a multitude of tributaries that branch from its primary course, and forested wetlands along its length transition to tidal wetlands as it approaches the river.

#### *Property Features*

#### Circulation and Parking

The property includes access and circulation routes, including primary access roads, trails, pedestrian pathways, and parking areas. With the exception of modern parking areas associated with AFF activities, the main roads and pathways were cleared and constructed under the design and direction of Alice Ferguson in the 1920s and 1930s by local workers. The primary entrance to Hard Bargain Farm is located at the southeast corner of the property, accessed via Bryan Point Road through a set of original concrete masonry entry posts. The long, winding unpaved driveway curves around a deep ravine leading to the main farmhouse. This road continues west to access the barnyard area and the lodge area. A second entrance enters the property to the west from Bryan Point Road, leading directly to the lodge area. That dirt road branches east to reach the hilltop area, bypassing the route around the ravine. Several secondary roads connect the two entrances, and a number of narrow, unpaved roads connect to the agricultural fields and the Potomac River. Pedestrian-oriented paths and trails connect the hilltop area with the barnyard and lodge areas and the fields. A parking area is located immediately to the west of the primary entrance, near the amphitheater. A second parking area

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is located within a grassy area immediately to the northeast of the farmhouse. The barnyard and lodge areas also have designated unpaved parking areas.

### Gardens and Art Features

Landscape and garden features are a significant component of Hard Bargain Farm. Conceived and implemented by Alice Ferguson in the 1920s and 1930s, the designed landscape features begin with the entrance road around the ravine and continue with a concentration north of the farmhouse, on the downward sloping lawn and terrace between the hilltop and the Potomac River. Alice's landscape and garden work was designed to take advantage of the spectacular viewshed provided by the rolling hills and river beyond, complementing the property's natural features while also bringing a sense of order to the landscape. In this way, the gardens represent the influence of the Country Place era (circa 1890 – circa 1940) of American landscape architecture. Although some plant types have been replaced over time, the significant characteristics of Alice's landscape design remain intact, including the relationship between Hard Bargain Farm's buildings and their setting, the entrance road around the ravine, garden layout, general plant species and profile, and garden features such as arbors and sculptures. The gardens exhibit the relatively informal, romantic nature of the Picturesque, as well as areas of more formal design.

Alice Ferguson's first landscape and gardening projects involved simple improvements that could be undertaken simultaneously with building construction and renovations on the property. These included draping the farmhouse with rose arbors and wisteria vines, and formalizing the entrances with bordering boxwood plantings. By 1929, the garden paths were laid out with concrete curbs. An oval perennial garden is located northeast of the farmhouse, and includes plantings such as peonies and primroses. One of the most significant features in the gardens is the low, concrete balustrade, which runs parallel to the rear elevation of the farmhouse. Designed and constructed under Alice's direction circa 1931, the balustrade softens the steep downward slope of the north lawn and frames the view of the Potomac River. A set of concrete steps enters through the center of the balustrade, accessing the rear entrance to the farmhouse. Other hardscape features include an armillary (circa 1927), a large concrete water feature (circa 1929), a metal grape arbor (circa 1931), and a concrete faun head (date unknown). Later additions include grave stones for Alice and Henry Ferguson, with a concrete bench placed nearby.

The gardens also feature the work of the Fergusons' friend, Lenore Thomas (Straus), a local New Deal artist in the 1930s. Her contributions include a glazed blue, fired brick sculpture of a rhinoceros (circa 1935) that is located near the southeast corner of the farmhouse at the edge of the hilltop's south field. Additionally, she created stone sculptures at the front gate, dated circa 1938, that depict Alice and Fergie. The east figure shows Alice holding a skull, and the west figure has Fergie holding a volley ball, references to their archeological and recreational pastimes during the 1930s and 1940s at HBF.

### *Built Resources*

HBF includes a number of built resources, including the main farmhouse, hay barn, and various domestic and farm outbuildings. An inventory of the property includes 45 resources; five are considered non-contributing resources due to their date of construction or significant alteration.

### Hilltop Area

The hilltop area focuses on the main farmhouse, which is located at the highest point of the property overlooking the agricultural fields and the Potomac River beyond. Today, the house serves as the administrative offices and limited display area for the cultural collections and archives of the AFF. Located immediately to the east of the main farmhouse is a cluster of outbuildings, including Fergie's office,

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constructed in 1937. A five-car garage (circa 1930) is situated slightly southeast of the other outbuildings, with a shop (circa 1930) located immediately adjacent to its rear (east) elevation. Several additional outbuildings are located on the periphery of this hilltop nucleus. A farm manager's house (circa 1926) is set slightly southwest of the farmhouse, downhill in a cleared area adjacent to a forested area to the south. The house has its own set of outbuildings, including a garage. Located downhill north of the farm manager's house is a shed (circa 1930, moved in 1995) currently utilized for a photographic exhibit. A pump house (circa 1930) is located at the edge of the forested land bordering the open field to the south of the farmhouse.

*Hilltop Area: Farmhouse*

The farmhouse at HBF is located at the highest point of the property, situated on the footprint of the property's earlier farmhouse. The current farmhouse was constructed in 1924 under the design and direction of Alice Ferguson, and served as the Fergusons' dwelling at HBF throughout their years there. Today, it serves as a center for conferences, offices, and cultural collections of the AFF.

The farmhouse is a two-story, five-bay wide, three-bay deep, wood-frame dwelling that is a vernacular interpretation of the Colonial Revival style. The U-shaped dwelling consists of the central, rectangular main block, framed to each side by a one-story, one-bay-wide, four-bay-deep wing. The U-shape is created as each wing is set beyond the plane of the main block's façade (south elevation). Set on a poured concrete foundation, the dwelling is clad in German wood siding that is painted white. A shallow-pitched, side-gabled roof of asphalt shingles is accented with overhanging eaves, raking wood boards, and cornice returns. Each wing is topped by an asymmetrically pitched, side-gabled roof. Exterior brick chimneys frame the main block at its side (east and west) elevations. A matching exterior brick chimney rises at the west side of the façade, and each wing is pierced by a central interior brick chimney. The dwelling is fenestrated with elongated, paired eight-light, wood-casement windows, set within narrow, square-edged wood surrounds.

Centrally located at the south façade is the primary entrance to the farmhouse. The single-leaf entrance is marked by a paneled wood door with eight lights. The entrance is accentuated with a simple, Colonial Revival-style surround, composed of a one-story, one-bay entry porch, with a front-gabled roof with triangular soffit. Square wood columns support the entry porch. The entrance is flanked to each side by a paired casement window. These three openings are grouped at the center of the elevation, and three paired windows are placed symmetrically above at the second story. The outer bays of the first and second stories are also marked by paired casement windows. The north facade faces the hilltop's gardens and the Potomac River viewshed, and also functions as a primary elevation. A single-leaf entrance is centered on the elevation, and its paneled wood door with eight lights matches that at the south façade. It is sheltered beneath a prominent, front-gabled entry porch with triangular soffit and square wood column supports. Two windows are grouped to each side of the center bay at the first story and five windows are symmetrically arranged across the second story.

The side (east and west) elevations are dominated by the one-story, four-bay-deep wings. Both wings were included on Alice Ferguson's original plans for the dwelling, but the east wing was not completed until circa 1927. This wing replaced an open, one-story, full-depth porch originally constructed at the elevation. Each wing has elongated window openings, and the east wing is also marked by a ribbon of six-light wood casement windows at the rear elevation. Both wing structures incorporate a screened porch, located at the southwest corner of the west wing and at the southeast corner of the east wing. A small, enclosed, wood-frame porch topped by a shed roof extends from the rear elevation of the east wing. It is fenestrated with ribbons of full-length casement windows. The second story of the main block at both the east and west elevations are fenestrated with elongated window openings; small, lunette windows flank each side of the chimney stack at the upper gable end.



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The interior of the farmhouse is currently used as office and conference space for the Alice Ferguson Foundation, but it maintains the original floorplan that existed during the Fergusons' occupancy. Much of the Fergusons' original furniture, art and ornaments are displayed throughout the first floor. Few updates have been made, and are limited to spaces such as bathrooms, where fixtures and tiling have been updated and replaced when necessary. There is little interior ornamentation, and finishes are limited to wood plank flooring, plastered walls and ceiling, and simple wood trim and baseboards consistent with the period during which the house was constructed. The primary entrance at the south elevation opens to a foyer and stair hall at the first floor. A living room and dining room is located immediately to the north, overlooking the landscaped gardens and Potomac River. Office space is contained in the west wing and the kitchen is located in the east wing. Secondary spaces include a full bathroom, pantry, and a laundry room. The second floor is reached by way of a wooden dogleg stair located at the west side of the foyer. It holds three bedrooms (now used as office space), two full bathrooms, and a large closet that opens into the stair hall.

#### *Hilltop Area: Farmhouse Outbuildings*

Clustered to the east of the farmhouse are five small one-room outbuildings. Each complements the architecture of the farmhouse in its form and materials. This grouping of outbuildings includes Henry Ferguson's office and four sheds. Today, the office functions as a meeting space and the sheds continue to serve as storage areas. Constructed in 1937, Fergie's office is a modest, one-story, wood-frame building. Set on a brick pier foundation, the structure is clad in German wood siding that is painted white, and is capped by a side-gabled roof of asphalt shingles. The roofline is accented with overhanging eaves and has exposed wood rafter beams. An exterior-end brick chimney rises at the north elevation. Entrance is centered at the façade (west elevation), and is marked by a single-leaf paneled wood door that is sheltered by a one-story, one-bay pedimented front entry with square wood columns. Window openings hold single and paired 6/6, double-hung, wood-sash windows. The interior has wood strip floors and plastered walls and ceiling with no trim.

Constructed circa 1930, the shed buildings are located immediately south of Henry Ferguson's office. Each wood-frame structure is clad in German wood siding that is painted white, and is capped by a gabled roof of asphalt shingles that has overhanging eaves and exposed rafter beams. All of the outbuildings on the property typically have minimal fenestration including single-leaf entries either left open or marked by paneled wood doors, and a variety of window openings including single and paired double-hung, wood-sash windows, and wood fixed, casement, and awning windows.

Located southeast of this cluster of outbuildings is a one-story, five-bay garage, constructed circa 1930. Originally the garage for the farmhouse, the building is today used for storage and maintenance. The one-story building is composed of three parts: a raised, three-bay wide central section flanked to each side by a short, one-bay wide wing. The central section is topped by a steeply pitched side-gabled roof, and the wings are capped by shallow-pitched, side-gabled roofs. The roof is covered in asphalt shingles and completed with overhanging eaves and exposed rafter ends. The original folk art weather vane is centered on the roof ridge. The building is set on a solid, concrete slab foundation, and the wood-frame structure is clad in German wood siding that is painted white. Five large, sliding vertical wood board doors with paired, eight-light fixed wood windows mark the façade (west elevation).

Set immediately to the rear of the garage is a one-story, two-bay, rectangular shop building that was constructed circa 1930. It is clad in board-and-batten wood siding and is topped by a front-gabled roof of standing-seam metal.



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*Hilltop Area: Farm Manager's House and Outbuildings*

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Constructed circa 1926 for Hard Bargain Farm's farm manager, the dwelling continues to function as a permanent residence. The one-story, L-shaped, wood-frame building was designed by Alice Ferguson, and complements the main farmhouse with its vernacular interpretation of the Colonial Revival style. The building consists of a one-story, rectangular, side-gabled main block, augmented by a one-story, front-gabled projecting bay at the north end of its façade (east elevation). Set on a concrete foundation, the wood-frame structure is clad in German wood siding that is painted white. The roofline is covered in asphalt shingles and is accented with overhanging eaves, raking wood boards, and returns. Two center interior brick chimneys rise from the main block, and an exterior brick chimney is located at the façade of the front-gabled ell. Centered at the façade is the primary entrance, framed within a Colonial Revival-style surround with decorative pediment. It is sheltered beneath a front-gabled entry porch with square wood column supports. Fenestration includes 1/1 and 6/6, double-hung, wood-sash and wood casement windows. The dwelling includes an enclosed porch and a screened porch, which extends from the south (side) elevation of the main block. The interior of the farm manager's house has the same simple detailing as the main farmhouse, with plastered walls and ceilings, narrow wood plank floors, and simple wood trim. It contains a kitchen, dining room, living room, three bedrooms, a bath, and a full basement.

Constructed circa 1926, several outbuildings are associated with the farm manager's house, each of which echoes the form and material treatment of the outbuildings associated with the farmhouse. For example, a one-story, one-bay garage located slightly southeast of the dwelling is clad in German wood siding and is capped by a front-gabled roof of asphalt shingles. A single-leaf, vertical board wood door pierces its façade (east elevation). Other associated outbuildings include four, one-room outbuildings located west of the farm manager's house. Each is clad in wood siding and topped by gable or shed roofs of asphalt shingles or standing-seam metal.

#### Barnyard Area

The barnyard area is located southwest of the hilltop and farmhouse, and includes a large hay barn, a milking house, and a series of smaller barns and supporting structures. Today, the buildings continue to be used for the Alice Ferguson Foundation's agricultural operations.

The barnyard complex centers on the hay barn, constructed circa 1925. The two-story, wood-frame structure is set on a concrete block foundation, and the wood-frame structure is clad in German wood siding and has a gambrel roof covered in asphalt shingles. The roofline is completed with overhanging eaves and exposed rafter ends, and a centered, front-gabled cupola. Fenestration includes wood Dutch doors and four- and six-light wood windows set within square-edged wood surrounds. Adjacent to the hay barn to the northwest is a large milking parlor and office, each constructed circa 1925. Set on a solid concrete foundation, the wood-frame milking parlor is clad in wood weatherboard siding and is capped by a gabled roof of asphalt shingles with overhanging eaves. The milking house office is a one-story, concrete block structure with a wood-frame, gabled-roof that is covered in standing-seam metal.

Located slightly to the northeast of the hay barn are a tool museum, root cellar, corn crib, and granary. Located to the southwest is a loafing shed and pig pen. A cluster of buildings is situated to the northwest of the milking parlor and office and includes a bull pen, blacksmith shop, tractor shed, sawmill, equipment shed, and pole barn. Situated midway between the hilltop farm manager's house and the barnyard complex is another cluster of agricultural outbuildings, including a smokehouse, rabbit hutch, chicken house, storage shed, feed shed. With the exception of the pole barn (constructed in 2000), and the tool museum (constructed circa 1930 as a sweet potato shed, but enlarged in 2001 to house a collection of antique tools for the Alice Ferguson Foundation's educational program), all of these outbuildings were constructed between

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circa 1925 and circa 1930. Functioning agricultural buildings through to the present, the unadorned, simple buildings are typically of either wood-frame or concrete block construction, topped by gable or shed roofs clad in either asphalt shingles or standing-seam metal. A variety of fenestration includes double-hung, wood-sash windows, and fixed wood-sash, awning, and casement windows.

### Lodge Area

The lodge area is located northwest of the hilltop area at the bottom of the hill, and includes a lodge at the northwest corner of the property with a gazebo situated to its southeast. Constructed in 1975, the large, two-story lodge holds environmental and ecological education classes for school children. Set on a poured concrete foundation, the structure is clad in wood shingles and is capped by a gabled roof of asphalt shingles. Fenestration includes single and paired 1/1, synthetic windows. The wooden gazebo, also constructed circa 1975, has a large, attached wood deck, and is used as outdoor classroom space.

### Miscellaneous Structures

#### *Log Cabin*

The log cabin is located downhill north of the farm manager's house. Constructed circa 1923, the building served as a temporary residence for Alice and Henry Ferguson before the completion of the farmhouse in 1924. Later, it was remodeled by Alice to serve as her studio space. It is located on the site of a slave cabin, which collapsed during restoration efforts by the Fergusons. The one-story, three-bay log cabin has a one-story addition at its west (side) elevation, constructed in 1970. Set on a solid concrete foundation, the cabin is timber frame and log construction. It has a side-gabled roof of asphalt shingles with overhanging eaves and wood shingles at the upper gable ends. A brick chimney with a wide base rises from the east elevation. Centered at the façade (south elevation), the single-leaf entrance is marked by a wood vertical board door. The entrance is flanked to each side by paired, eight-light wood casement windows. The rear (north) elevation is identical to the façade. The interior of the cabin features exposed wood beams and wood plank flooring.

#### *Cottage*

Constructed circa 1945, this one-story, three-bay cottage is located immediately north of the west entrance to Hard Bargain Farm. The building originally served as a tenant house, and was later used as a nursery school in the early 1950s. The wood-frame structure is clad in wood weatherboard siding and is topped by a side-gabled roof of asphalt shingles, with overhanging eaves and exposed rafter ends. A central interior brick chimney pierces the roofline. Centered on the façade (south elevation), the single-leaf primary entrance holds a paneled wood door. Additional fenestration includes single and paired, double-hung, wood-sash windows. A wood-frame, screened porch topped by a side-gable roof extends from the east (side) elevation.

#### *Amphitheater*

Constructed circa 1930, the amphitheater is located in a ravine immediately south of the northeast entrance to the property. It is accessed via a short gravel road from the entry road. Used by the Fergusons for amateur plays among their friends, the amphitheater continues its use for musical and theatrical productions sponsored by the Alice Ferguson Foundation. Constructed from an abandoned gravel pit, extensive landscaping has cleared the wooded area immediately surrounding the modest amphitheater. The structure has a wood plank stage and wood deck covering.

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The pump house, constructed circa 1930, is set into the side of a hill located south of the farmhouse across the grassy field. The one-story concrete block structure has been parged and is capped by a gabled roof that is covered in asphalt shingles and has exposed rafter ends. Wood siding clads the upper gable ends. Fenestration includes a centered, paneled wood door at the façade, and large, two-light, fixed wood windows.

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**Inventory**

	Building	Location	Date*	C/NC
1.	Hard Bargain Farm (Site and Landscape)		1922	C
2.	Hard Bargain Farmhouse	Hilltop	1924, addition 1927	C
3.	Fuel Tank Shed	Hilltop	rebuilt 2001	NC
4.	Shed	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
5.	Storage Shed 1	Hilltop	1935	C
6.	Fergie's Office	Hilltop	1937	C
7.	Garden Shed	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
8.	Five-Car Garage	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
9.	Shop	Hilltop	circa 1930, addition 1999	C
10.	Storage Shed 2	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
11.	Pump House	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
12.	Photo Exhibit Shed	Hilltop	circa 1930, moved circa 1995	NC
13.	Log Cabin	Hilltop	circa 1925, addition 1970, restored 1983	C
14.	Farm Manager's House	Hilltop	circa 1926, addition 1930	C
15.	Farm Manager's Garage	Hilltop	circa 1926	C
16.	Farm Manager's Shed	Hilltop	circa 1926	C
17.	Storage Shed 3	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
18.	Feed House	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
19.	Storage Shed 4	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
20.	Chicken House 1	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
21.	Rabbit Hutch	Hilltop	1996	NC
22.	Chicken House 2	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
23.	Art Piece – Blue Rhinoceros	Hilltop	circa 1935	C
24.	Garden Feature – Front Gate Sculptures	Hilltop	circa 1938	C
25.	Garden Feature – Balustrade	Hilltop	circa 1931	C
26.	Garden Feature – Armillary	Hilltop	circa 1927	C
27.	Garden Feature – Concrete Water Feature	Hilltop	circa 1929	C
28.	Garden Feature – Metal Grape Arbor	Hilltop	circa 1931	C
29.	Garden Feature – Concrete Faun Head	Hilltop	circa 1930	C
30.	Tool Museum	Barnyard	circa 1930, addition 2001	C
31.	Root Cellar	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
32.	Granary	Barnyard	circa 1925	C

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33.	Hammermill/Corn Crib	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
34.	Barn	Barnyard	circa 1925	C
35.	Milking House	Barnyard	circa 1925	C
36.	Milking House Office	Barnyard	circa 1925	C
37.	Shelling Room	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
38.	Pig House	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
39.	Small Animal Shelter	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
40.	Bull Pen	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
41.	Farm Shop	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
42.	Spring House	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
43.	Machine Shed 1	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
44.	Machine Shed 2	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
45.	Sawmill Shed	Barnyard	circa 1930	C
46.	Pole Building	Barnyard	2000	NC
47.	Lodge	Lower Gate Area	circa 1975, addition 1985	NC
48.	Gazebo	Lower Gate Area	circa 1975	
49.	Cottage	Lower Gate Area	circa 1945	C
50.	Cottage Shed	Lower Gate Area	circa 1945	C
51.	Entry Gate	Main Entrance	circa 1930	C
52.	Amphitheater	Main Entrance	circa 1930	C





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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- ART
- ARCHITECTURE
- ARCHEOLOGY
- CONSERVATION
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- SOCIAL HISTORY
- SCIENCE
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1922-1961  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1922  
1954  
1961

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Alice L.L. Ferguson; Henry G. Ferguson  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Alice L.L. Ferguson (designer)  
Jack Pierce (builder)

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Hard Bargain Farm is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria B and C, and is locally significant as the country retreat of Alice L.L. and Henry G. Ferguson. The property represents the Fergusons' progressive influence and creativity in the areas of Social History, Art, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Archaeology, and Science. The period of significance extends from 1922 to 1961, encompassing Alice Ferguson's purchase of Hard Bargain Farm to its stewardship by the Alice Ferguson Foundation. Alice Ferguson was an acclaimed early-twentieth-century artist and amateur archaeologist, who conceived and implemented the building and landscape designs at Hard Bargain Farm in the Country Place style. She led excavations on the Potomac River shoreline of her property that significantly advanced scholarly understanding of local prehistory and history, work that resulted in the landmark designation of Accokeek Creek Archaeological Site. Henry Ferguson, known as Fergie, was a prominent geologist with the United States Geological Survey, recognized for his pioneering study of mineral deposits in Nevada and for his contributions to the Military Geology Unit during World War II. The Fergusons supported the local community of Accokeek, establishing Hard Bargain Farm as a working farm that provided food and jobs for local residents during the devastating years of the Great Depression and World War II. Their dedication to Accokeek prompted the couple to undertake a series of real estate ventures that served as the basis and inspiration for community conservation activities focused on the Maryland side of the Potomac River. These philanthropic activities have ensured the protection of the riverfront and its significant viewshed. In 1954, Fergie helped to establish the Alice Ferguson Foundation, a non-profit organization chartered to benefit local educational programs. Today, the Alice Ferguson Foundation continues to honor the Fergusons' legacy, educating and advocating Hard Bargain Farm's unique environmental and cultural importance to Accokeek and Prince George's County. The Fergusons were associated with this property during the most productive years of their lives, contributing significantly to social history, the arts, archaeology, science, and conservation that had local and national influences.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Introductory History to Alice L.L. and Henry G. Ferguson and Hard Bargain Farm*

In the early part of the twentieth century, Henry and Alice Ferguson were a young, progressive couple living in Washington, D.C. Alice, an artist, and Fergie, a geologist with the United States Geological Survey (USGS), had met and married in 1914. Following a year-long honeymoon in South America, the couple settled into a newly constructed house at 2330 California Street, N.W. The fashionable Washington, D.C. house was designed by local architect, Merrill T. Vaughn.<sup>4</sup> In the early 1920s, the Fergusons began a search for a property outside D.C. to serve as a weekend country retreat. Both Alice and Fergie had a love for the outdoors and recreation, which took them on excursions into the undeveloped areas surrounding the city.<sup>5</sup> The result of

<sup>4</sup> The three-story brick dwelling sat on two lots, and the property was demolished circa 1976 according to DC building permits, replaced by larger new building.

<sup>5</sup> Alice was a member of the Powhatan Club, an athletic club located near the Great Falls on the Potomac River. Fergie was a member of a similar group for men, the Midriver Club.

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their jaunts was the discovery of Hard Bargain Farm in Accokeek, Maryland, which Alice purchased on January 5, 1922, from Harry K. and Beatrice L. Bliss.<sup>6</sup> The 138.39-acre tract can be traced to a deed from Charles Calvert to James Neale in 1707, and has been referenced as "Hard Bargain" in deed records as early as 1822. The most recent transaction before the Fergusons' purchase was from Albert M. and Cora D. Clagett to Harry Bliss in April 1919 after several generations in the Clagett family. At the time of Fergusons' purchase, the property included a one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame farmhouse and several agricultural outbuildings, including a barn, slave cabin, and tobacco barn.<sup>7</sup>

Alice Ferguson immediately began to restore the deteriorated property, beginning with improvements to make it habitable, and later transforming it back into a working farm. When the original slave cabin and farmhouse collapsed at the start of repair work, Alice designed a new cabin and farmhouse, and hired local builder Jack Pierce, to construct the new buildings.<sup>8</sup> Alice, Fergie, and their two foster sons, Peter and Howard Fowler, lived in the newly constructed cabin while the farmhouse was built to her specifications. In 1927, Henry Xander, Sr., was hired as farm manager, and several outbuildings including a hay barn, granary, and corn crib were constructed. Xander taught Alice "the most obvious things about farming," and remained at Hard Bargain Farm throughout his life, residing at the newly constructed farm manager's cottage.<sup>9</sup>

With the property restored and the farm in working order, the couple began to enjoy both the unexpected challenges and the pleasures of country life. In addition to becoming a full-time project for Alice, Hard Bargain Farm was a gathering place for the Fergusons' large group of friends and their neighbors from the local Accokeek community. Alice and Fergie called their weekend visitors "The Gang." The gang gathered on weekends, drawn by the beautiful scenery, recreational activities, including what became their traditional Sunday volleyball game, and Fergie's infamous punch. The group's adventures were fondly recalled in later writings by Alice and Fergie. She noted that "The thing that makes the gang different is that none of them are invited; they all just come.... They all know each other very well by now, but very few have any idea of the last names of their fellow guests or know what they do during the week."<sup>10</sup> The couple's casual recollections of these weekends with their friends have made it difficult to ascertain the identities of the full cast of characters, but the group is known to have included mainly Fergie's geological colleagues and the couple's local neighbors in addition to a circulating group of artists, professors, and social activists.

The most fascinating insights into daily life at the farm and the weekend excitement with the gang are found in the writings of the Fergusons themselves, which reveal the central importance of HBF to their lives. In addition to an assortment of missives related to her various pursuits, Alice wrote prolifically to her sister-in-law, Eleanor, and to Fergie when his work took him away from the farm. Hundreds of their letters remain archived at the AFF offices at the farmhouse, and they range in topic from daily struggles of running the farm to updates on their latest projects. In a letter to Eleanor dated July 10, 1946, for example, Alice relayed that Fergie had returned to Nevada and that "I am up to my neck at the farm building a house, mopping up the loose ends of the real estate business, riding a bulldozer through the new roads and trying to salvage the timber the bulldozer knocked into the ravines."<sup>11</sup> Alice shared some of her most memorable recollections of HBF in her book, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, published in 1941. In 1966, Fergie recorded his own memories of their adventures, titled *Hard Bargain Adventures*. These publications provide valuable insight into

<sup>6</sup> C.C. Magruder, *Chain of Title, Hard Bargain Farm*, April 23, 1936.

<sup>7</sup> Rhodeside & Harwell, Incorporated, Coastal Resources, Inc., and Richard Westmacott, *Land Use Plan: Hard Bargain Farm* (prepared for Alice Ferguson Foundation, December 2005), 9.

<sup>8</sup> As Alice expanded the property with farming activities and designed the necessary associated outbuildings, Pierce performed all future construction work.

<sup>9</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland: 1922-1940* (1941, reprint, Accokeek, MD: Alice Ferguson Foundation, 1957), 27.

<sup>10</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 54.

<sup>11</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: letter from Alice to Eleanor, dated July 10, 1946.

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the Fergusons' experiences at Hard Bargain Farm, including their discovery and renovation of the property; the many activities undertaken while they lived there, including farming, landscaping, and archaeology projects; and their memories of varied members of the Accokeek community who contributed their own stories and personalities to HBF.

Alice died on June 6, 1951. Displaying her deep connection to the community, her private funeral services were held in Accokeek, and she was buried in the gardens at HBF. Fergie died at age 84 on November 29, 1966, and following his services at Christ Episcopal Church in Accokeek, he was buried next to Alice at HBF.

### *The Creative Life of Alice L.L. Ferguson*

Alice Leczinska Lowe (1880-1951) was born on December 23, 1880, to Josephine Maria Leczinska Dyer Lowe (1843-1939) and Admiral John T. Lowe (1838-1930), a United States Navy Engineer based primarily in Washington, D.C. Alice had an older sister, Edith (1875-1966), with whom she remained close throughout their lives. The details of Alice's earliest life remain unclear, but it is known that she received arts training in Hartford, Connecticut, and also studied at the prestigious Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. In the second decade of the twentieth century, a drawing she submitted to the school's annual student *concours* was selected for exhibition. Newspaper articles from the first and second decades of the twentieth century indicate that she was a member of several local arts clubs, including the Society of Washington Artists, Washington Handicraft Guild and the Arts Club of Washington, the last of which she served as an officer including president.<sup>12</sup> Well before her purchase of Hard Bargain Farm, Alice displayed a lifelong interest in athletics and the outdoors, and was a member of the Powhatan Club, an athletic club located near the Great Falls on the Potomac River.<sup>13</sup> Society pages note Alice and her sister attending dances and other events, indicating that she was an active member of Washington society.

Alice pursued her varied interests with remarkable energy, and the purchase of HBF in 1922 inspired a new phase of intellectual, physical and artistic pursuit in her life. When the Fergusons began to spend their weekends in Maryland, the United States was experiencing a period of significant social change. Beginning in the late nineteenth century with the growth of industry and concurrent urbanization, and accelerated in the aftermath of World War I, the country was changing politically, socially, and intellectually. Women's lives in particular were transformed with new equalities and ideals giving them the freedom to pursue their own interests outside of the traditional domestic role. The life of Fergie and Alice and their experiences at Hard Bargain Farm are in many ways a microcosm of greater world events at that time, and Alice in particular represents the varied accomplishments of the modern woman in the first and second quarters of the twentieth century. She was very much a product of her time, and her accomplishments in areas as varied as art, architecture, archaeology, and historic preservation, speak to the social, creative, and intellectual movements of the period. Alice led the management of Hard Bargain Farm during her time there, and the property was transformed under her direction into a working farm and community, while also inspiring a new phase of artistic and intellectual pursuit in her life.

### Social History: Alice Ferguson and the Accokeek Community

<sup>12</sup> On March 11, 1917, a column titled "Notes of Art and Artists" noted that "At the Arts Club of Washington, 2027 I Street, there is now an exhibition of handicrafts composed exclusively of work by Washington craftsmen...Alice L.L. Ferguson and S.S. Cannon both show vases attractively tinted in well chosen iridescent colors" ("Notes of Art and Artists," *The Sunday Star*, March 11, 1917). An edition of "Notes of Arts and Artists" from 1921 named Alice as executive secretary of the Washington Handicraft Guild, which the article noted "was formed this autumn with object of encouraging and promoting professional handicraft and stimulating interest in and appreciation of such work" ("Notes of Arts and Artists," *The Sunday Star*, December 4, 1921, pg. 44).

<sup>13</sup> Fergie was member of a similar group for men, the Midriver Club.



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Through their decades at HBF, the Fergusons experienced the changing world of the twentieth century, from the Roaring Twenties to the Great Depression and through the Second World War. During each period, the couple responded to the changes in the world and within their community, and Alice in particular utilized the farm to benefit the greater community. She undertook a number of projects that involved the surrounding community in the work of the farm and, in turn, aided neighbors in times of need. Her first such project came as the result of a serious drought in 1930, which left many citizens of Accokeek with no food or work. Alice noted that "Our farm, like all farms, is a sponge that can absorb unlimited labor. This seemed a time when we should do all the fancy work we could think of and I brushed off my dreams and decided to make them realities."<sup>14</sup> After securing a bank loan, Alice advertised the need for steady workers throughout the winter. She was shocked by the overwhelming response, stating that "the need was even more real than we had realized... It was pathetically little but it was the best we could do."<sup>15</sup> The first project undertaken was the construction of a new entrance road from Bryan Point Road, twisting up through the wooded land and around the deep gully that sits between the road and the main house. Another group of men was hired to work with the farm manager to dig ditches and perform other rough labor work, and a third group worked to build a new wing to the farmhouse.<sup>16</sup>

Accokeek's citizens again found support at HBF during the early years of the Great Depression, when federal programs were not yet offered to help those affected. The federal government believed that emergency relief was a state and local responsibility, but local organizations did not have the resources to adequately serve the needy population. This situation was not remedied until the institution of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policies beginning in 1933. The success of Alice's labor relief program following the drought encouraged her to continue her projects throughout the Depression. Her projects in Accokeek included clearing forested land and improving roads, damming a brook at the bottom of the gully to form a swimming hole they nicknamed the "Frog Pond," and transforming an abandoned gravel pit in the woods into an amphitheater.<sup>17</sup>

Alice later wrote that "Everything built by our W.P.A. was permanent, everything was something that we really wanted and that we have enjoyed ever since. When the New Deal began to take shape we abandoned our amateur relief work. But we frequently chuckle and say that the W.P.A. was started right down here in our little corner of Maryland."<sup>18</sup> Launched in 1935, the W.P.A. program did in fact operate much like Hard Bargain Farm's relief program, employing mostly unskilled men to carry out public works projects such as building and road construction. The W.P.A. would go on to become one of the most successful New Deal programs, employing millions of citizens and leaving its mark on the American landscape with innumerable bridges, roads, public buildings, and parks. At Hard Bargain Farm, the physical products of the community's labor remain today as reminders of Alice's contribution to relief work in her local community.

Outside events continued to intrude on the Fergusons' retreat at HBF. Fergie later recalled how the news of Pearl Harbor interrupted a sunny Sunday afternoon for the gang, who were "out in full force" to enjoy a game of volleyball on an unusually nice December day in 1941.<sup>19</sup> Alice, who had stayed inside to listen to the radio, interrupted the game to announce the news of the Japanese attack that brought the United States into World War II. The gang finished their game then went inside to listen. Fergie wrote that "There was nothing more except a bunch of fill-in stuff, but everyone knew it was the end of the life we had been living."<sup>20</sup> Sadly,

<sup>14</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 75.

<sup>15</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 76.

<sup>16</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 77.

<sup>17</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 79.

<sup>18</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 81.

<sup>19</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, *Hard Bargain Adventures* (Accokeek, MD: Alice Ferguson Foundation, Inc., 1966), 9.

<sup>20</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, *Hard Bargain Adventures*, 9.

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this essentially marked the end of the gang, many of whom went into service, or among Fergie's USGS colleagues, were kept busy with strategic work to assist the military.

Alice's regular letters to Eleanor give fascinating insight into her daily struggles throughout the war effort, as she discusses the impact of crop failures and food rations at HBF. One such example is a letter dated May 5, 1942, where Alice writes "I have never realized before that we are in war. An army of 6 million and sugar rationing has brought it home with a crash."<sup>21</sup> In July, she described the effects of the war on HBF, writing:

The farm is the noisiest place I know. Every day except Sunday sounds like an old fashioned 4th of July. The big guns...[sic]and rested at Dalgren (spelled Dahlgren) at midnight...[sic] planes are up all the time and all night there are usually about 8 searchlights on each plane. About 7 the machine gun and anti aircraft guns start to practice and they keep it up all day plus the big guns from time to time. A thunder storm came up Saturday and it was a long time before we distinguished the thunder. Our sleepy river has turned into a marvelous target.<sup>22</sup>

Alice again resolved to utilize HBF as a community center, providing food surpluses and labor opportunities to Accokeek residents. She was particularly "determined that the farm, which had been to a large extent a pleasant playground, should really make a substantial contribution to the food supply of the nation. During the war years she devoted all her time and more than her strength to the task."<sup>23</sup> In addition to farming, Alice kept a large fruit and vegetable garden adjacent to the kitchen side of the farmhouse as a Victory Garden. To help with the enormous amount of hard work that these efforts required, she also "took everything in the way of labor that could be called labor and paid tremendous wages."<sup>24</sup>

#### Art and Architecture: Alice's Career in Painting

Trained at the famed Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C., Alice found varied outlets for her creative energies throughout her life. She was an active member of the D.C. arts scene, and inspiration for her paintings came from both her travels and her daily life, especially after the purchase of HBF in 1922. She set up a studio in the living room of the farmhouse, and later, remodeled the property's log cabin into a studio. Some of Alice's best known paintings depict her life at Hard Bargain Farm, many inspired by photographs she took there.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps Alice's most well-regarded painting is *A Day at the Farm*, which was selected for inclusion in the Corcoran Gallery of Art's 1932-33 Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting. The work depicts members of "The Gang" enjoying their time outdoors at Hard Bargain Farm, the scene overlooking the Potomac River in the distance. In the foreground, a member of the gang sleeps on the balustrade Alice designed for the north lawn, while behind him, others are seen playing sports including polo and deck tennis. Another well-known work is her self-portrait *Tired*, which was exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Exhibition of the Society of Washington Artists in 1934. The painting portrays Alice lounging on the farmhouse's living room sofa, wearing a white outfit and turquoise sandals, with her dog Caligula resting next to her on the floor.<sup>26</sup> Other works from the period include *The Frog Pond* (ca. 1935) depicting members

<sup>21</sup> letter May 5, 1942 Alice to Eleanor

<sup>22</sup> July 19, 1942, Alice to Eleanor

<sup>23</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, Foreword to *Adventures in Southern Maryland: 1922-1940*, by Alice L.L. Ferguson (reprint, Accokeek, MD: Alice Ferguson Foundation, 1957).

<sup>24</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, *Hard Bargain Adventures*, 11.

<sup>25</sup> Hundreds of the Fergusons' photographs from HBF remain archives at the AFF offices in the farmhouse.

<sup>26</sup> This painting is on exhibit today in the living room of the farmhouse.

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of the gang swimming at Hard Bargain Farm's dammed swimming hole, and *The Student* (circa 1935), a portrait of a bare-chested Fergie.

Another major subject of Alice's work was the southwest landscape she discovered on trips with Fergie during his geological fieldwork seasons. Representative works include paintings *Western Landscape: Mountains and Sun* (privately owned); *Saguaros*; *Western Mountains*; *Colorado Stream and Mountain*; and *The Mission* (privately owned). Knowledge of this period of Alice's work is continuously growing, as several paintings have been discovered in recent years. *Western Landscape: Mountains and Sun*, owned by a descendent of Fergie, was discovered in 2008, and *Saguaros* was purchased by AFF in 2011.<sup>27</sup> Labels on the back of *Saguaros* indicate that the painting had been submitted to exhibitions in New Orleans, Louisiana, and Palm Beach, Florida, in addition to the 40<sup>th</sup> Exhibition of the Society of Washington Artists in 1931. Writing in June 2008, Linda Crocker Simmons, Curator Emeritus at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and Curatorial Consultant for Art Collection at Hard Bargain Farm, noted of *Western Landscape: Mountains and Sun* that "This composition, the dynamics of its parts, and the luminous palette are all elements which distinguish Alice Ferguson's best work. This palette ranging from silver to slate blues as well as her signature purple, lilac, and tan earth tones is seen in other works but not often in such a lovely orchestration of tonalities."<sup>28</sup> This painting, and others of her oeuvre, represent the modernist approach of the era, and relate Alice's work to artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe.

Alice painted throughout her life, continuing to place her works in competitions and exhibitions, and remaining active in Washington, D.C.'s arts society. Representing the early modernist era of the twentieth century, Alice was a remarkable artist, as evidenced by her prestigious inclusion in the 1932-33 Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The continuing discovery of her work in recent years demonstrates that there is still much to learn about her life as an artist. It is hoped that additional works will be discovered in the future, furthering our understanding and appreciation of her work and the breadth of her talents. Possibly, her work will achieve wider recognition than it did in her own time, when most women artists worked in relative obscurity. In the 1960s, Alice's remaining artworks at the Fergusons' California Street house were brought to HBF, where they remain on display in the farmhouse, as contributions to the legacy of Alice and Fergie that the AFF preserves within their home.

### Architecture and Landscape: Alice's Transformation of Hard Bargain Farm

Just as her experiences at Hard Bargain Farm served as the inspiration for many of Alice's artistic works, the farm itself was an outlet for her creative energies. Beginning with the purchase of the property in 1922, and continuing through the 1930s, she designed and oversaw construction of the main house and a number of complementary outbuildings. She also undertook a series of landscape improvements that enhanced the natural beauty of the site. Alice's architectural and landscape design are part of her creative and artistic legacy, and HBF is an excellent local example of an artist-designed estate and farm of the Country Place era in the United States.

<sup>27</sup> Many of Fergie's geological friends and colleagues from his southwestern expeditions spent time at HBF during their off seasons in Washington, D.C. The men assisted Alice with her farming and archaeological projects, and it is likely she made gifts of her paintings in return. In 2011, the AFF purchased the ca.1931 painting *Saguaros* from the descendants of Thomas Nolan, director of the USGS from 1956-1965. The *Mission* was purchased by a private collector through an online seller, and had originally belonged to Parker Davies Trask, another USGS colleague of Fergie's who had helped Alice with her archaeological excavations.

<sup>28</sup> Linda Crocker Simmons, "The Art of Alice L.L. Ferguson: The Discoveries Continue," *Hard Bargain News: Newsletter of the Alice Ferguson Foundation*, Vol. XXXI, No. 5 (December 2011): accessed May 2013, [http://fergusonfoundation.org/affnews\\_archives/dec11\\_news.shtml](http://fergusonfoundation.org/affnews_archives/dec11_news.shtml).

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The Country Place (circa 1890-circa 1940) era evolved from a growing nostalgia for rural living in the United States that began in the late nineteenth century, occurring concurrently with rapid urbanization. This simultaneously inspired the growth of the professional landscape architecture field and interest among amateur practitioners and gardeners. In the early years of the landscape architecture profession, pioneers like Calvert Vaux and Frederick Law Olmsted emphasized allowing nature and the site itself to guide the design. In 1892, Samuel Parsons, Jr., Vaux's partner at Vaux and Company, published an article entitled "Small Country Places," in which he articulated this concept. Parsons explained: "...the importance of selecting properly the site, not only that the architect may exhibit his house to advantage, but that the house may be duly coordinated with the distinctively interesting and artistically important features of the place...every plot or territory of ground has characteristics peculiar to itself, and to no other plot of ground."<sup>29</sup> Landscape architects at this time were concerned less with specific plantings, and more with emphasizing the best features and views of the natural setting, a concept wholly embraced by Alice Ferguson at HBF.

By the turn of the twentieth century other landscape architects began to favor a more formal approach to garden design. From the beginning of the twentieth century until mid-century, landscape architects increasingly emphasized geometric and symmetrical plans, specified plantings, clipped hedges and artificial features such as water features or statues. Landscape architecture historian Robin Karson speaks to the reconciliation of these two landscape approaches in the Country Place era, stating:

Landscape practitioners became adept at integrating clearly defined outdoor spaces with the fundamental precepts of the Olmstedian Picturesque, finding ingenious means to combine outdoor rooms with borrowed views and other strongly articulated responses to the genius loci – a principle expressed by one of the era's great landscape architects, Beatrix Farrand, as "keeping step with the great stride of Nature."<sup>30</sup>

As the concept of country living became fashionable among wealthier citizens, the ideals of the landscape profession were disseminated through a number of mass-circulation publications. Such publications included two influential magazines devoted to country life, each launched in 1902: *House and Garden* and *Country Life in America*. These magazines brought the ideals of the landscape architect to the public and educated urbanites in the art of gardening and landscaping. Magazines and books illustrated the popular design elements of this period, including a long drive, a terrace or veranda to view the gardens, a walled enclosure, a wooded landscape in the distance, a rock garden or a pond, separate gardens organized by species and often fountains or garden sculpture.

Designed by Alice Ferguson, HBF reflects the preferred aesthetics for country estates of this period, utilizing many features of residential landscape architecture popularized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While changes to the landscape at HBF have occurred over time, the property retains the primary characteristics of the original Alice Ferguson design, including elements of both formalism and the more romantic Picturesque. The beauty of HBF resonated with Alice from her first viewing of the property. Her description of her first glimpse of the farm wonderfully describes its natural beauty, and its immediate appeal to her:

One Christmas eve an agent took me over a dreadful road that wandered down to a farm of 130 acres. A tumble-down house and barn perched on the edge of a hill that fell away sharply to the flat fields along the Potomac. The view was breath taking. Upstream the

<sup>29</sup> Samuel Parsons, Jr., "Small Country Places," *Scribner's Magazine*, Volume 11 (1892): accessed May 2013, books.google.com.

<sup>30</sup> Robin S. Karson, *A Genius for Place: American Landscapes of the Country Place Era* (University of Massachusetts Press: 2007), 131.



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distant white city glimmered in the mist. From the city the river swept down past Fort Hunt and Fort Washington, was joined by Piscataway Creek, bent a little, swept on past Mount Vernon and on down into the mist again with the distant waters of Quantico just showing in the distance. Across the river the terraced hills of Virginia wave back and up toward the Blue Ridge. Over all was uninterrupted sky. It was not the place we had pictured, but it was a place where one could stretch and breathe.<sup>31</sup>

Alice's artist's eye recognized the magnificence of the site, and she was inspired to enhance its natural beauty through a series of architecture and landscape improvements. The improvements to the property progressed naturally, and as needed, but always it was Alice's vision and designs that drove the process and the gradual development of HBF.

In her 1941 book, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, Alice described the evolution of the property. As noted previously, the first and most necessary improvements to the site included construction of adequate living quarters and improved accessibility to the property. She simultaneously undertook the construction of a cabin to serve as temporary living quarters and the surveying of a new road up the hill to the property. At the time of purchase, the property included a slave cabin that Alice intended to repair for use as living quarters while the main house was also under restoration. Local builder Jack Pierce, was hired to perform the work. Unfortunately, as Alice put it, his "first exploring poke brought the whole thing down."<sup>32</sup> A new log cabin was built at the same location, using trees that had been cut down to clear the new road. Pieces of the old cabin were re-used in the new structure, including a fireplace built of bricks from the collapsed chimney, mantelpiece, and wooden latches.<sup>33</sup>

Alice next turned her attention to the renovation of the main farmhouse. Unfortunately, the repairs to the farmhouse ended no better than those to the old slave cabin. Looking back on the incident in *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, Alice wrote, "Unfortunately he started with more energy than discretion and one afternoon telephoned that the whole house had tumbled down, except one chimney."<sup>34</sup> All that was left of the farm as they had purchased it were "the tobacco barn down on the flats and the scenery."<sup>35</sup> While this series of events was unfortunate, it afforded Alice the opportunity to design the property in her own vision.

Alice located the new farmhouse on the site of the historic house, taking advantage of the hilltop's natural vista towards the Potomac River, and centering the rest of the property at this focal point. This spoke to the continued influence of Picturesque ideals within landscape architecture, which advocated the importance of site selection in order to exhibit the house itself and complement the site's natural features. Alice wasted no time in designing the new farmhouse. She stated that after ordering Pierce to tear down the chimney and clean up the mess from the old house, "I spent most of the night over the drawing board. The next morning I arrived at the farm with the plans of the present house. It was planned as a nucleus for outdoor life. When it was finished it had a central section with two wings and twelve outside doors."<sup>36</sup> Alice's own description of her design, then, speaks to the purposeful integration of architecture with the setting at HBF.

The house was completed in 1924 to Alice's specifications, excepting the west wing, which was constructed in 1927. While specifically designed for its site, the farmhouse also reflects the broader architectural trends of its period. The completed building is an excellent example of a modest, Colonial Revival-influenced dwelling. Coupled with the longing for the nation's rural past that contributed to the rise of the Country Place era was

<sup>31</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 13.

<sup>32</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 16.

<sup>33</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 17.

<sup>34</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 18.

<sup>35</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 18.

<sup>36</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 19.



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a trend towards nostalgia for early colonial architecture. As a result, the Colonial Revival style rose in popularity through the first half of the twentieth century. Because it was a working farm, Alice also had to account for a number of agricultural and domestic outbuildings, and each structure, including a farm manager's house, a garage, and sheds, complement the architecture of the farmhouse in form, material, and location.

With living quarters and other necessities attended to, Alice could turn her attention to improving the landscape. Much of the landscaping work at HBF unfolded organically, benefitted by Alice's artistic eye and her awareness of the primary design elements popularized during the Country Place era. Copies of *Country Life in America* are found in the Fergusons' library at the farmhouse, and Alice was certainly aware of landscape trends, which she incorporated into her design. These include a long drive (which at HBF provides the first view of the Potomac River viewshed at the rise of the hilltop), a terrace overlooking the gardens, a distant wooded landscape, formal gardens organized by species, and artfully placed water features and garden sculptures. The construction of the entry drive occurred circa 1930 under Alice's direction and performed by local laborers, and twisted up through the wooded land between Bryan Point Road and the farmhouse. The design of the drive reflected the influence of the Country Place era, its serpentine curves leading visitors along an awe inspiring route from the darkness surrounding the ravine to the light and open hilltop with farmhouse and gardens. The interrelationship of these features created an aesthetic experience that was influenced by Picturesque ideals.

Alice began the process with small improvements, as she attended to more pressing issues such as shelter and road access. These projects included planting a climbing rose to each side of the main entrance to soften the starkness of the newly painted white house, and constructing a brick walkway to approach the entry from the front gate.<sup>37</sup> More significant landscaping projects were concentrated at the north lawn (or front terrace) approaching the Potomac River. After a memorable summer storm ripped out the lawn's locust trees, Alice noted that "The white house looked as though it had been accidentally dropped on the hill top and it had nothing to do with the surrounding landscape.... It occurred to me a terrace on the river side with a balustrade might soften the baseline of the house and help to tie it down."<sup>38</sup> This involved replacing an old fence that Alice said "staggered conspicuously through the foreground, an intolerable eyesore."<sup>39</sup> She replaced it with a new fence set below the ridge of the hill, where it did not obstruct the view. Next she had a balustrade installed overlooking the front terrace. Alice constructed the concrete balustrade herself with the help of local labor. The placement of the balustrade frames the view and benefits the natural contours of the land; conversely, it frames the oval gardens and acts as a stage for the house.

The next significant project was to contour the soil of the front terrace in order to further soften its appearance. Alice wrote that "On the river side the yard slopes gently down from the crest of the hill on a long shoulder and both sides of the shoulder drop away rather sharply. I decided to leave the gentle slope in the middle with nothing to distract from the view and building a series of little intimate gardens on both side slopes."<sup>40</sup> To this end, she installed small cement boundaries between the grass and areas where flower beds were to be planted. Where the grade looked too steep, the walls were broken up with small paved steps. Large bushes were planted next, and Alice said that eventually "the little gardens assumed the air of intimacy that had been planned."<sup>41</sup> She further accented the landscape with a water feature and several garden features and sculptures placed throughout the front terrace gardens. In 1927, an armillary sphere set on a concrete pedestal was centrally located in the gardens. In 1929, a concrete water feature, with steps and a fish motif,

<sup>37</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 58.

<sup>38</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 59.

<sup>39</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 59.

<sup>40</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 61.

<sup>41</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 62.

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was set northeast of the balustrade. Each of these elements, including the formal flower gardens, concrete steps, garden features, and artful groupings of shrubbery and trees, remains today.

Alice's friend and neighbor, Lenore Thomas (Straus) (1909-1988) added several pieces to the garden in the 1930s. A sculptor who had studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, Straus later became a prolific artist supported by the New Deal projects of the Roosevelt administration, under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program.<sup>42</sup> The Federal Art Project, begun in 1935, put thousands of artists to work across the country. Straus was commissioned to create sculptures for nearby Greenbelt, Maryland and Langston Terrace in Washington, D.C. where she designed one of a series of animal sculptures for the playground area. Her works at Greenbelt, Maryland included bas reliefs for the community's school and a monumental sculpture for the central public square. One of these sculptures, a rhinoceros, was not installed at Greenbelt. Instead, Straus, who lived on the neighboring Longview estate (owned by Alice), brought the sculpture in numbered parts to HBF. Photographs from the AFF archives show Lenore and a group of friends erecting the piece, where it remains today near the primary south elevation of the farmhouse. Glazed a bright blue, the ceramic sculpture is a playful, memorable piece of art from the New Deal period and emblematic of the joyful spirit of the Farm and the activities of The Gang. In addition to the *Blue Rhinoceros*, Straus is also the creator of the sculptures of Fergie and Alice that rest atop the farmhouse's brick entry gateposts. Fergie holds a volley ball and Alice holds a skull, a reference to her archaeological excavations.

Although the hilltop was artfully designed under identifiable principles of the Country Place era of landscape architecture, HBF was not merely a country retreat. Rather, it was also working farm, used by both the Fergusons and their community of neighbors and friends. As such, HBF was continuously changing throughout the Fergusons' tenure. Under the design and care of Alice Ferguson, HBF became the distinctive country place that today continues to display a picturesque interplay of built resources and both designed and natural landscapes. The property's buildings and landscape, all designed and constructed under Alice's direction, are intricately tied to their setting. Although Alice left her distinctive mark on the property, she also respected its natural beauty. Hard Bargain Farm undoubtedly represents the Country Place movement's aspiration to celebrate a place's natural beauty, by illuminating its genius loci, or "spirit of place." At the same time, it also reflects the spirit of its occupants, and their use of the farm, and as a result HBF is a true reflection of the fun, relaxed retreat the Fergusons intended it to be.

### Archaeology and Historic Preservation: Alice's Contribution to Local and Regional History

#### *Archaeology: Discovery of the Accokeek Creek Archaeological Site*

One of Alice's accomplishments during her time at HBF came as a surprise, when what began as a recreational pursuit became one of the most important archaeological findings in Mid-Atlantic history at the time. During the Fergusons' period of ownership the lowland area bordering the Potomac River was still included within the boundaries of their property; it was later deeded to the National Park Service. Alice later recalled that the river was their favorite place to spend time when at the farm, and she wrote in *Adventures in Southern Maryland* that "Almost as soon as we had the farm we knew that archaeology was there. We never went down to the river without coming home with arrow heads and little fragments of pottery."<sup>43</sup> The Fergusons frequently welcomed visitors who were eager to explore the riverfront for "those countless arrow heads."<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> The Government Services Administration (GSA) is responsible for art works created as part of the New Deal, and such art remains the property of the federal government.

<sup>43</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 157.

<sup>44</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 158.

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Although they initially regarded the finds as a fun by-product of their location on the Potomac River, the Fergusons slowly realized the wealth of archaeological material on their hands. Alice approached several professional archaeologists, but was surprised to learn that no one was interested, as archaeological study at that time was primarily focused on sites in the Southwest region and in Florida. She was spurred to greater action following an incident in which a group of local high school boys dug a deep trench in the farm's alfalfa field and "found a magnificent lot of stuff."<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, the boys also vandalized community property while out on their adventure, and the Fergusons immediately banished all arrowhead collectors from the farm. Alice began to more seriously explore the area, and called it "sheer luck" that their first attempt at digging plunged right into a large refuse pit that was rich with artifacts. The couple and intrigued members of their gang of friends spent that spring and summer digging in the pit, and found everything from pottery to animal bones. Alice recalled that the more the group uncovered, the "more convinced I was that the site was really important and not a proper plaything for anybody."<sup>46</sup> She later wrote that she felt a responsibility to do the best she could with the site, and determined to, at a minimum, record what was found and where.<sup>47</sup> Before Fergie and his geologist friends left mid-summer to return to their field work out west, Alice recruited Dr. Parker Trask and Dr. Thomas Nolan to lay out a grid to help organize the survey and mapping. A team of workmen were hired and excavation began.

The archaeological excavations commenced in 1930 and serious excavation continued through 1935, with Alice continuing her studies through the early 1940s. Interest in the site exploded in the third season of excavation, when Alice discovered what became known as Ossuary #1. Of the find, she says: "The second year we excavated I used to wander around saying: 'If I could only find a burial.' Early the third season we found the first ossuary with 250 burials piled into one pit. ... From then on we found so many burials that when we found a new one we simply groaned."<sup>48</sup> During the many years of excavation, Alice uncovered several prehistoric and American Indian sites, which are today collectively known as the Accokeek Creek Archaeological Site.<sup>49</sup> The approximately 60-acre site is located south of Mockley Point between Piscataway Creek and Accokeek Creek on the south bank of the Potomac River on what is now National Park Service-owned property.<sup>50</sup>

One of Alice's earlier discoveries was a site that she identified as the Moyaone Village, as it had been identified on a map drawn by John Smith in 1612. Today, there remains some disagreement among scholars if this was the correct interpretation of the site. Dr. Richard Dent, an anthropologist with the University of Maryland, has been one such critic of that interpretation, although he does not feel this devalues Alice's findings in any way. With the benefit of much ethno-history research that was not available to Alice at the time, Dent and others believe that John Smith's labeling of the map was a mistake.<sup>51</sup> Scholars generally agree that the site dates to around the early-to-mid-sixteenth century, and was occupied by the Piscataway Indians.<sup>52</sup> The mislabeling of the site does not diminish the value of the find or the information Alice's archaeological

<sup>45</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 160.

<sup>46</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 162.

<sup>47</sup> AFF archives: Abstract of ALLF.

<sup>48</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 164.

<sup>49</sup> (Listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1966, reference number 66000909. MIHP #: PG-83-11.

<sup>50</sup> The Accokeek Creek Archaeological Site is composed of four smaller primary sites: a late prehistoric stockade village identified as the 'Moyaone' village from Captain John Smith's map; a smaller stockade village located just to the south, dated to ca. AD 800-1000; a third site at Mockley Point dating from the Archaic period (4,000-5,000 years ago) through the Woodland period (from 3,000 years ago to about 1,600 AD, at the time of European exploration); and finally, the site of the Susquehannock Fort, located at Clagett's Cove on the south side of Piscataway Creek, and established in 1674 by the Susquehannock Indians [G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community* (Accokeek, Maryland: Accokeek Press, 2007), 128-129; Francis P. McManamon, general editor, *Archaeology in America: An Encyclopedia* (Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2009), 106].

<sup>51</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 12.

<sup>52</sup> Richard J. Dent, Jr., *Chesapeake Prehistory: Old Traditions, New Directions* (New York, NY: Plenum Press, 1995), 46.



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work uncovered, and Dent states that she "quite literally rediscovered the Piscataway Indians," revealing their unique way of life.<sup>53</sup> The discovery of the Susquehannock Fort was another major find from Alice's excavation. The fort was excavated between 1938-40 with the assistance of Professor Thomas J. Wertenbaker of Princeton University who first located the structure on a historic map.<sup>54</sup> Established in 1674, the fort was placed under siege by the Maryland and Virginia militias in 1675. The site is historically significant as this siege is considered to be the spark of Bacon's Rebellion.<sup>55</sup>

The Accokeek Creek site included numerous pits, post molds of dwellings and stockade walls, ossuaries, and a variety of artifacts, including pottery and animal bones. Her extensive excavation yielded an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 pot sherds and 9,000 points.<sup>56</sup> As a whole, the site has artifacts dating from the Late Archaic period through European colonization, but it is best known for the most intensive period of its occupation during the late Woodland period and the early period of European colonization in the Mid-Atlantic region. This record provided evidence that the area had been occupied by Native Americans for over 10,000 years as well as valuable information concerning the cultural prehistory of the Mid-Atlantic coastal region. The National Historic Landmark nomination for the Accokeek Creek Archaeological Site stated that "not only has the Accokeek Creek Site provided valuable chronological information needed for comparisons with other sites on the east coast, but it has also given insight into the in-situ cultural development of the Piscataways during the Late Woodland period, into the lifestyle of the Indians at contact times, and into their interaction with the earliest colonial settlers."<sup>57</sup>

Alice's excavations continued until about 1940-41, at which time she turned her attention to farming in order to support the war effort. She resumed research in 1945, intending to publish more of her work, but following a number of years of illness died in 1951, before its completion. Fergie donated the artifact collection to the University of Michigan in 1957, saving a small collection he gave to the Accokeek Public Library and another small collection that was kept at the farmhouse. Robert L. Stephenson, a graduate student at the university, undertook the classification of the overwhelming collection of more than 75,000 artifacts resulting from Alice's excavations.<sup>58</sup> The preliminary results of his work were published in his paper, "The Prehistoric People of Accokeek Creek," in 1959. Using Alice's findings, *The Piscataway Indians of Southern Maryland* was published by the Alice Ferguson Foundation in 1960, with a foreword by Fergie.<sup>59</sup>

True to her personality, in later writings, Alice downplayed the seriousness of her archaeological excavation and research, but her tireless efforts in excavation, research, and publication, reveal her commitment to the project. Further, the archives of the AFF include hundreds of letters between Alice and experts in the field as she worked to bring attention to what she knew was a significant site, and requested their advice as to how to properly proceed. The archives also contain a number of Alice's notebooks, wherein she painstakingly traced, measured, and described hundreds of pottery, arrowhead, and bone shards. Multiple handwritten drafts of her publications reveal the same level of commitment. It is also likely that Alice was not as naïve to the field

<sup>53</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 131.

<sup>54</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, "The Susquehannock Fort on Piscataway Creek," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 36, March 1941 (reprint, Alice Ferguson Foundation, 1984), pg. 5 and 9; Alice L.L. Ferguson and Henry G. Ferguson, *The Piscataway Indians of Southern Maryland* (Accokeek, MD: Alice Ferguson Foundation, 1960), 6.

<sup>55</sup> "DC Woman Finds Site," *Wash Post*; and G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 128-29.

<sup>56</sup> National Register of Historic Places, *Accokeek Creek Site*, National Historic Landmarks (Prince George's County, Maryland, 1966).

<sup>57</sup> National Register of Historic Places, *Accokeek Creek Site*, National Historic Landmarks (Prince George's County, Maryland, 1966).

<sup>58</sup> Her work has continued to inspire further research and analysis, including the work of Mel Thurman of the University of Maryland in 1971-72, who re-excavated the site and was able to perform a more detailed post mold study.

<sup>59</sup> *Feast of the Dead: Aboriginal Ossuaries in Maryland* by Dennis C. Curry (Maryland Historical Trust Press: 1999), publishes a complete list of Alice Ferguson's archaeological excavations.



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of archaeology as she later presented herself to be. Her characteristic glibness in reference to her own work may belie the fact that she had at least some knowledge of archaeological fieldwork. She later wrote that "I had been in New Mexico with Dr. Hewett while he was excavating the Puye and had seen many of the excavations in South America and Spain but it never occurred to me that I could do any digging myself."<sup>60</sup> Alice and Fergie had spent their year-long honeymoon in 1914-15 traveling through South America, and it is possible, though not yet proven, that they visited Machu Picchu in Peru, which was being excavated at that time by explorer Hiram Bingham. Alice's attendance at the field school at Puye is of particular note, as this is considered to be Dr. Edgar L. Hewett's most significant work. Hewett, in fact, is known for encouraging women to study in his program at the University of New Mexico, and particularly to attend his field schools.<sup>61</sup> In the United States, female archaeologists were first encouraged professionally at national park sites in the southwest in the 1920s. During her time in the southwest and with Hewett particularly, she surely learned the basic precepts of the archaeological profession.

Whatever her actual experience was, with the knowledge she had, Alice organized a comprehensive dig that included a number of collaborative efforts with many individuals and organizations with professional archaeological knowledge and expertise. Alice's communications from those years and her later acknowledgements reveal the efforts she undertook to bring expertise to the project, and to get the necessary guidance and advice to complete the archaeological fieldwork properly. She later credited her many advisers, writing that "The work was an education and it was especially so in the opportunity it gave to observe how scientists work. They were all absorbed in their own jobs but when they were asked questions there was no end to their patience and their generosity with both their time and knowledge." Particularly notable visitors to the site included Dr. Henry B. Collins, anthropologist and archaeologist at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution; and Dr. Ales Hrdlicka and his successor, Thomas Dale Stewart, of the U.S. National Museum (now the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution). Both men are remembered as tremendous contributors to the field of physical anthropology, and Hrdlicka is generally known as the father of the field.<sup>62</sup>

Alice Ferguson was one of a number of women who became involved in the evolving fields of anthropology and archaeology in the early part of the twentieth century. Although women continued to face obstacles within the field, growing numbers found positions as research assistants and similar positions and made significant contributions.<sup>63</sup> Many continued to undertake their work as part of the "amateur community," as Alice did. In areas such as the Mid-Atlantic region, which was ignored by professional academics at that time, it was in fact so-called amateur archaeologists who sustained local archaeological efforts.<sup>64</sup> Alice has received praise of her work from her contemporaries and scholars today. Writing in March 1941, Professor Wertenbaker, who assisted in the Susquehannock excavation, congratulated Alice "on the excellent work you have done. I think that you have written an important chapter in the seventeenth century history of Virginia and Maryland."<sup>65</sup> Dr. Richard Dent from American University, notes that "If Alice was an amateur

<sup>60</sup> From Alice Notes as Mentioned above (PDF 0669\_001.pdf)

<sup>61</sup> Edgar L. Hewett (1865-1946) was an archaeologist and anthropologist who primarily focused his studies on the southwestern region of the United States, in New Mexico particularly. Hewett was the founder of the Museum of New Mexico, as well as the first president of the New Mexico Normal School (today the New Mexico Highlands University). He is credited with creating the Antiquities Act, which was signed into law by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, and has since played a significant role in the nation's preservation of cultural resources.

<sup>62</sup> Other academics who aided Alice in her fieldwork and research were Dr. Donald A. Cadzow, executive director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Dr. William Ritchie, state archaeologist of New York; Dr. James B. Griffin, director of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of Michigan; and Mr. John T. Hack, an instructor of geology at Harvard University [Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Photographs, Letters, and Ephemera belonging to Henry and Alice Ferguson.]

<sup>63</sup> Cheryl Claassen, editor, *Women in Archaeology* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 39.

<sup>64</sup> Richard J. Dent, Jr., *Chesapeake Prehistory: Old Traditions, New Directions*, 46.

<sup>65</sup> AFF archives: letter dated March 31, 1941.

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archaeologist, it was certainly in the original sense of the word – somebody who does something well, but more importantly, does something for the love of it rather than for some type of material gain.”<sup>66</sup> Further, she is admired as “an excellent role model” in publishing her work and making her findings available to academics and the public, therefore stimulating further interest and research in an area of history that was previously overlooked, even by regional academics.<sup>67</sup>

*Historic Preservation: Alice's Restoration of the Old Chimney House*

Alice's intensive research into Maryland's pre-history and history in relation to her archaeological work sparked a passion for the state's history and cultural heritage that she believed was sadly overlooked. In addition to research and written history, she became increasingly interested in historic preservation, a developing field at that time that received heightened attention due to the recent restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, beginning in 1927. A letter from Alice to Eleanor dated October 28, 1939, reveals that a recent trip to Williamsburg inspired her to take action in her own community:

My trip to Williamsburg impressed me very deeply that Virginia had found a new major industry. They not only made history come alive but they furnished work for innumerable small people, care takers, carpenters, brick layers, gardeners to say nothing of the tourist homes and lunch rooms. Maryland has far finer stuff but it is completely unknown and is mostly falling to pieces. I want to start a society for the preservation of Maryland antiquities...The house where you wanted to buy antiques at Marlboro is the old governors house and you know what that looks like. Something should be done and I feel like doing it.<sup>68</sup>

Just several months later, Alice began the restoration of the historically significant “Old Chimney House” (MIHP CH-14), located in the village of Port Tobacco in Charles County, Maryland. Port Tobacco was an important Colonial port village that served as the county seat from 1727 to 1895. The two-story, wood-frame house was constructed in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, and is noted for its impressive double chimney, and is considered a significant example of local eighteenth-century architecture. The building served various uses through the nineteenth century, including as a tavern, lawyer's offices, and the local courthouse.

By the time Alice discovered the property, it had fallen into an advanced state of disrepair. She purchased it at a Sheriff's Sale for \$500.00, receiving the deed from Henry Hawkins on December 21, 1939.<sup>69</sup> She immediately set to work restoring the building, doing her best to follow the standards of the historic preservation field, which were still evolving at that time. In 1940, J. Alexis Shriver, a devoted historian of Colonial Maryland history, wrote to Alice that, “You are certainly energetic in restoring the Big Chimney House, and I am very anxious to know and see just what you are doing there.”<sup>70</sup> One community member wrote, “Everyone I have talked with has commended the fine work you have done in restoring the ‘Old Chimney House’ and believe that the Charles County people appreciate the efforts you have made to keep this building from being lost as a Charles County landmark.”<sup>71</sup> Alice's restoration of the Old Chimney House is considered the first restoration project to be undertaken in historic Port Tobacco, and one of the first in

<sup>66</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 131.

<sup>67</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 131.

<sup>68</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Photographs, Letters, and Ephemera belonging to Henry and Alice Ferguson: Letter from Alice to Eleanor, dated October 28, 1939.

<sup>69</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Photographs, Letters, and Ephemera belonging to Henry and Alice Ferguson.

<sup>70</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Photographs, Letters, and Ephemera belonging to Henry and Alice Ferguson: Letter dated Sept 10, 1940.

<sup>71</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Photographs, Letters, and Ephemera belonging to Henry and Alice Ferguson: Letter from Mrs. P.D. Brown to Alice, dated August 5, 1941.

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Charles County. Perhaps inspired by Alice's early work, the Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco was established in 1948. Today, the Old Chimney House, a private dwelling, is a contributing resource within the Port Tobacco National Register Historic District.

#### Community and Conservation: Alice's Real Estate Ventures

From Alice's first experience with HBF, she was impressed by the property's distinctive beauty, particularly its location on the historic Potomac River. It played an important role in the Fergusons' life at the property, and Alice later wrote, "From the beginning we loved the river more than any one thing about the farm."<sup>72</sup> The couple enjoyed recreational and athletic pursuits on the property and at the river from the start, and Alice's time there saw an increased physical interaction with the land through her landscaping, farming, and archaeological activities. The combination of Alice's intimate knowledge of the land, her appreciation of its history, and her devotion to her community, eventually realized itself in conservation efforts to protect the natural setting of HBF and its adjacent properties. During her time at HBF, she undertook several real estate ventures that both contributed to the fabric of the local community and shaped its future growth. She is credited with planting the seed for later conservation efforts in Accokeek in the 1950s and 1960s, which resulted in the creation of the Piscataway National Park and the protection of the Potomac River shoreline and its viewshed.

In 1925, Alice acquired a neighboring property, Longview (1511 Bryan Point Road), which contained approximately 100 acres of land. At the time, she was frustrated with the lack of attention given to Accokeek's small, rural community, and felt that with even just one "neighboring gentleman farmer with my point of view we could get some of the most urgent needs of the community cared for."<sup>73</sup> Alice designed a new farmhouse for the property, which is today considered an excellent local example of the Neoclassical style, and Jack Pierce was hired as the builder. The property shares Hard Bargain Farm's impressive setting above the Potomac River. In the 1930s the property was "rented to people who have become such friends that we are now terrified for fear the farm may sell...our neighbors over at Long View also have a 'gang' like ours, but their guests are more artistic and more sure that they are intellectual."<sup>74</sup> The artistic gang at Longview included Lenore Thomas (Straus), who installed several of her art works at Hard Bargain Farm, her husband, Robert "Bobby" Ware Straus, Sally Ringe Goldmark and John E. Goldmark, Charles Kramer, and Charles Wagner, an architect who designed many houses in Accokeek. Members of the gang at Longview, Robert Straus in particular, were instrumental in the eventual creation of the Piscataway National Park.

Alice's real estate work continued after World War II with the purchase of a large, 800-acre tract of land called "Bond's Retreat," located across Bryan Point Road.<sup>75</sup> World War II had brought significant expansion of government and activities south of D.C., stimulating suburban growth that threatened Alice and Fergie's isolated rural community. In Fergie's foreword to *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, he wrote of changes in the area that were "greatly stimulated by the war. As building restrictions were lifted and materials became available, cheap suburban developments began to intrude on our neighborhood. This was inevitable, and right and proper along the highway, but we resented it when it began to encroach on our isolated area."<sup>76</sup> Already provoked by these changes, Alice was aided in her desire to protect the area by Bobby Straus, who brought her attention to "Bonds Retreat." This property bordered HBF and Straus' own house. She purchased the land in 1946, and her new venture as a real estate operator began.

<sup>72</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern Maryland*, 89.

<sup>73</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 25.

<sup>74</sup> Alice L.L. Ferguson, *Adventures in Southern MD*, 31. The property became owner-occupied when Alice sold it to William and Nora Breese in 1943.

<sup>75</sup> Named after the site she had believed to be an Indian village called "Moyaone."

<sup>76</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, Foreword to *Adventures in Southern Maryland: 1922-1940*.

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Utilizing his mapping skills, Fergie was put to work creating a topographic map and plotting the boundary and lot lines.<sup>77</sup> The Bonds Retreat development was divided into large tracts of five or more acres for single dwellings, thereby protecting the natural setting.<sup>78</sup> When the long process of laying out the lots and building roads was completed, the sales began. In the earliest stages, Alice relied on word-of-mouth rather than advertising, beginning with several old friends from the Longview gang. The majority of the landowners, cultivated by Alice and Fergie, were attracted to the community due to the natural, secluded setting. The new landowners shared the Fergusons' views on land development and protection of the area's scenic beauty, and Alice's venture proved immediately successful, with the first house built in Bond's Retreat in 1947 and most of the available lots sold by 1952.<sup>79</sup>

With the success of Bond's Retreat, Alice began another real estate venture in 1949 named Cactus Hill. The 120-acre tract of land was located directly opposite from Mount Vernon on the Potomac River and was separated from Bond's Retreat by only a small strip of land, forming the major part of the old Bryan Farm.<sup>80</sup> It was connected to Bond's Retreat via Colonial Road and the communities were further united by the application of the same covenants.<sup>81</sup> Alice lived to see the beginning stages of the project including the completion of roads and several lot sales.

<sup>77</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, *Hard Bargain Adventures*, 21.

<sup>78</sup> *Land Use Plan: Hard Bargain Farm*, 7.

<sup>79</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 29.

<sup>80</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, *Hard Bargain Adventures*, 35.

<sup>81</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 33.





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*Henry G. Ferguson: Geologist and Philanthropist*

Henry Gardiner Ferguson was born on June 21, 1882, in San Rafael, California, to Emma Jane Gardiner Ferguson (1847-1930) and Reverend Henry Ferguson (1848-?).<sup>82</sup> He had several siblings, a younger brother, Charles, and an older sister, Eleanor, with whom Alice became close friends and corresponded with regularly throughout her life. His father was an Episcopalian minister and educator, and the family returned east when Rev. Ferguson took a position as chaplain at St. Paul's School in New Hampshire. Fergie attended St. Paul's before entering Harvard, where he received an A.B. degree in 1904, a B.S. degree in 1905, and an A.M. degree in 1906. During his years in school, Fergie completed fieldwork in locations as varied as Texas, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and an exploration in Western Iceland.<sup>83</sup> Upon graduation, Fergie took his first job with the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company in Michigan, serving as an assistant geologist. He then worked as an economic geologist with the Philippine Bureau of Science from 1907 until he resigned in March 1911.<sup>84</sup> Fergie returned to the United States to begin graduate work in geology at Yale University and to simultaneously enter service with the United States Geological Survey (USGS).<sup>85</sup> He was appointed a Junior Geologist with the USGS in May 1911 and was permanently appointed to the Survey the following year.

Throughout his life, Fergie remained devoted to both his geological studies and his community of colleagues, friends, and neighbors. Fergie has been remembered as a leader within the USGS, not only as a "top-notch geologist" but for his gift for mentoring younger colleagues and creating a sense of community within the agency. Many members of the geological survey were also familiar with Hard Bargain Farm, which in its earlier years, regularly hosted members at Sunday social events and recruited them for gardening and archaeological work. With the construction of an office for Fergie at HBF in 1937, it is also clear that he completed much of his work at the property, likely including his many publications for the USGS. Upon his retirement from the service, Fergie increasingly turned his attention to the Accokeek community, and is today remembered for his numerous philanthropic activities and contributions to local conservation efforts, as well as for his part in the creation of the Alice Ferguson Foundation in 1954, which remains a center for the community. His colleague, Thomas Nolan, later wrote that "To those of us who knew him, Fergie will be remembered not only as a most accomplished, if far too modest, geologist, but also as an individual who greatly endeared himself to his friends and colleagues, and who above all was motivated by a deep sense of responsibility to them and to the community. He would have liked to have been remembered that way."<sup>86</sup>

### Science: Henry Ferguson's Career in Geology

Beginning with his first job as an assistant geologist with the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company, Fergie devoted the entire length of his career to geological fieldwork and research. He entered service with the USGS in 1912, and remained with the agency until his retirement in 1952. Throughout his career, he was active in the geological community, maintaining membership in a number of national organizations, including the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, and the Society of Economic Geologists, of which he served as president for many years (1941-1958). Fergie was known primarily as a field geologist, but he also authored an impressive number of publications, including maps and papers for the USGS. He also

<sup>82</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Henry Ferguson Legal Papers, Birth Certificate, Graduation Certificate, etc.

<sup>83</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Henry G. Ferguson, Summary of qualifications for work in Mining Geology.

<sup>84</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Letter from McIntyre (?), Colonel, U.S. Army, Assistant to Chief of Bureau to ??, dated April 20, 1911.

<sup>85</sup> Fergie completed all necessary requirements for his Ph.D. degree by 1912, but was not granted the degree until 1924. At that time, he underwent an informal oral examination wherein his USGS Bulletin on the Manhattan District in Nevada was accepted as his dissertation. [Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Geological Survey, Geological Society of America Proceedings, 1966).]

<sup>86</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

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had a long association with the *Economic Geology Journal* and the Economic Geology Publishing Company, of which he served as director from 1922 to 1960.<sup>87</sup>

Fergie's earliest assignments took him to the gold districts of Northern California.<sup>88</sup> He spent brief periods in other locations, such as his review of tin deposits at Irish Creek, Virginia, and of gold-bearing veins at Great Falls near Washington, D.C. during World War II, but the major focus of his career centered on the Basin and Range region of the western United States. The region covers much of the western half of the country, and extends to northwestern Mexico, and while it has a variety of ecoregions, the area is mostly characterized by desert. Fergie published a number of reports on mining districts, including Mogollon, New Mexico; Manhattan, Tybo, and Gilbert, Nevada; and Allegheny, California, among others.<sup>89</sup> His later work focused on the stratigraphy and structure of the region, which at that time, was relatively unknown geologically.<sup>90</sup>

Fergie's efforts in Nevada began prior to the United States' entry into World War I, as he worked toward the eventual publication of a USGS paper on ore deposits that would be similar to earlier papers published for New Mexico and Utah. As he continued his fieldwork in the early 1920s, he came to recognize the complex geology of the area. He and a handful of other young geologists, including his colleague D. Foster Hewett, found that mapping smaller areas than the traditional regional surveys allowed them to study the rock units and the structures that deformed the rocks in greater detail.<sup>91</sup> As a result, he decided to prepare maps of two belts across Nevada, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the Great Basin structure.<sup>92</sup> Fergie's colleague, Thomas Nolan, later described his impressive achievement in performing this work, as he completed the mapping of a 12,000 square foot area with "relatively little assistance."<sup>93</sup> In his mapping of the Manhattan district in 1924, and in the resulting Manhattan bulletin, he was the first to recognize Paleozoic deformation in Nevada, "a historic interpretation for which he deserves full credit."<sup>94</sup> The high point of Fergie's career is considered to be his publication, "The Mining Districts of Nevada," first published in *Economic Geology* in 1929, and later reprinted by the Nevada State Bureau of Mines in 1944. Nolan states that, "It remains the bible of Nevada mining geologists, and its conclusions, with only minor modifications, remain sound."<sup>95</sup>

Fergie continued his fieldwork through the 1930s and 1940s, returning often "to his beloved Nevada."<sup>96</sup> He began the study of Hawthorne-Tonopah quadrangles in the mid-1930s, before undertaking the Sonoma Range quadrangle in 1939.<sup>97</sup> He partnered with Si Muller, who studied the Mesozoic rocks, and focused his own study on the Paleozoic details. Again, Fergie found that recording the study area on one map would not allow for the level of detail necessary to truly represent the complexities of the geology. As a result, he divided the quadrangle into four parts to be presented on four maps, which he named the Winemucca, Golconda, Mount Moses, and Mount Tobin quadrangles.<sup>98</sup> The maps, completed in 1951 and 1952, were authored by several geologists working under Fergie's leadership. Writing in 2002, author and mentee, Ralph J. Roberts, stated that just completing the fieldwork and maps for this project was "a great accomplishment, but

<sup>87</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>88</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>89</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography* (University of Nevada Press, 2002), 201.

<sup>90</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>91</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 82; Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>92</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>93</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>94</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 201.

<sup>95</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>96</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: letter from Alice to Eleanor, July 10, 1946.

<sup>97</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 37.

<sup>98</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 36.

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more than that Fergie was largely responsible for setting up the geologic framework as we know it today – a notable contribution.”<sup>99</sup> The four Sonoma Range maps, for which he is named “the principal architect,” outlined this framework.<sup>100</sup>

Fergie also worked with the newly organized Military Geology Unit of the USGS during World War II. The unit was established in 1942, organized to prepare intelligence reports on natural resources and conditions as they would affect military engineer operations in war locations.<sup>101</sup> The unit came to be considered an authority on all matters related to ground conditions such as water supply, mineral and fuel resources and construction materials and problems.<sup>102</sup> While he later recalled his time with the unit with his typical nonchalance, calling it “for the most part very interesting work,” the group’s reports, of which Fergie was a primary author, were recognized as the final authority on these issues by the War and Navy Department agencies.<sup>103</sup> The Military Geology Unit drew key personnel from existing USGS staff, and its staff of scientists, engineers, geologists, and supporting personnel grew larger and more diverse as the war continued. Fergie, who was on call 24 hours a day, is said to have served as the unit’s “elder statesman and counselor.”<sup>104</sup>

Fergie remained with the USGS until his mandatory retirement in 1952 at age 70, although he unofficially continued fieldwork in Nevada. In 1957, he was forced to halt work, after a field accident in which the shattering of the steel head of a geologic pick led to the eventual loss of one eye.<sup>105</sup> At home, he collaborated with Ralph Roberts, Preston Holtz and James Gilluly on a paper published in 1958, “Paleozoic Rocks in North-Central Nevada.” Roberts called the paper the “culmination of his career,” extending his earlier work on the Manhattan district.<sup>106</sup>

Ferguson has been awarded a number of national honors for his service, including the naming of Mount Ferguson in Nevada in his honor. In 1953 he received the Department of the Interior’s highest honor, a “Distinguished Service Award,” in recognition of his 44 years of government service. The department stated that as:

An authority on the geology and mineral resources of the Great Basin, he made notable contributions to our understanding of the ore deposits of the Southwest. His extensive knowledge of foreign geology and mineral resources was invaluable to the work of the Military Geology Unit of the Survey during World War II, and his services in organizing and guiding this work deserve special mention. Dr. Ferguson’s work with the Geological Survey is nationally known, and he was recently elected President of the Society of Economic Geologists, the leading professional organization of its kind in the world. His publications and original contributions to science are numerous and are evidence of an eminent career

<sup>99</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 201.

<sup>100</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 201.

<sup>101</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Letter, dated March 8, 1946, to Secretary of the Interior, from War Department.

<sup>102</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Letter, dated March 8, 1946, to Secretary of the Interior, from War Department.

<sup>103</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, *Hard Bargain Adventures*, 10; Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Letter, dated March 8, 1946, to Secretary of the Interior, from War Department.

<sup>104</sup> C.M. Nelson and E.P.F. Rose, “The US Geological Survey’s Military Geology Unit in World War II: ‘the Army’s pet prophets.’” *Quarterly Journal of Engineering Geology and Hydrogeology*. 45: 349-367; quoting C.B. Hunt, “History of the Military Geology Unit in World War II,” *Geologic Division Retirees Newsletter*, 8, pg. 13.

<sup>105</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 201.

<sup>106</sup> Ralph J. Roberts, *A Passion for Gold: An Autobiography*, 202.

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spent in the economic and military application of geology of both present and future significance.<sup>107</sup>

Throughout his career, Fergie served as a friend and mentor to colleagues and younger members of the USGS, many of whom remembered him for his warm, welcoming personality, and respected him for his contributions to the field of economic geology in particular. As such, the words of his geological colleagues perhaps best express his importance to the field and its community. Thomas Nolan remarked that Fergie's "fundamental studies on the structure and stratigraphy of west-central Nevada, though, constitute a major contribution to geology; in retrospect, it is clear that the significance and magnitude of this phase of Fergie's work have never been given the recognition they deserve."<sup>108</sup> His eminent work is recognized by inclusion in the exclusive Hall of Fame at the *National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum* in Leadville, Colorado. Recent years have witnessed increasing recognition of his significant contributions to the field of geology, and HBF remains the best place to commemorate Henry Gardiner Ferguson and his illustrious career.

#### Community and Conservation: Fergie's Contributions to Accokeek

Alice's death in 1951 coincided with the closing phase of Fergie's geological career, and he took a more active role in HBF and in the Accokeek community in the final years of his life. He undertook a number of philanthropic endeavors including providing the funds for Prince George's County Memorial Library to purchase a four-acre site for a new library branch and assisting in the establishment of a local fire department and a local medical clinic.<sup>109</sup> His contributions to the community were recognized in 1963, when the Prince George's County Board of Education named a new elementary school in Accokeek after him. Today, the Henry G. Ferguson Elementary School is located at 14600 Berry Road in Accokeek.

Fergie's most enduring contribution to the community was his support of the creation of the Alice Ferguson Foundation in 1954, thus establishing an educational and community organization and center that continue to play a central role in the community. The AFF grew out of a nursery school that Fergie allowed to operate out of the cottage at HBF. In 1954, he indicated that he planned to will HBF and the nursery school to the adjacent Moyaone Association, the community association that stemmed from Alice's adjacent real estate projects. The community acted quickly, and in July appointed a committee to organize the formation of a non-profit corporation for educational purposes. The AFF was chartered in Alice's memory in 1954. The first meeting was held on November 9, 1954, and 59 people were members.<sup>110</sup>

Both Fergie and the AFF would play important roles in the emerging conservation activities focused on the Potomac River shoreline beginning in the early 1950s. Following Alice's death in June 1951, a new chapter in the area's conservation history unfolded, initiated by Fergie, who wished to carry on her legacy, and continued by members of the neighboring subdivisions which the couple had created, as well as community groups including the AFF. The process began when Fergie gave the unsold land, mortgages, and notes on sold land from the Bonds Retreat and Cactus Hill subdivisions to the community, deeding it to the Bonds Retreat Water

<sup>107</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Certificate from Department of the Interior for "Distinguished Service" given to Henry on May 26, 1953. With the certificate, a letter from Secretary of the Interior, "Citation for Distinguished Service; Henry G. Ferguson."

<sup>108</sup> Thomas B. Nolan, *Memorial to Henry Gardiner Ferguson (1882-1966)*.

<sup>109</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Release from the Prince George's County Memorial Library in Bladensburg, dated 1963: "Prince George's County Memorial Library recently purchased a four-acre site for a new branch library with funds given the library by Dr. Henry G. Ferguson." "Dr. Ferguson, 80-year-old retired Accokeek benefactor and philanthropist, is well known in the community;" (Letter from Paul Chen, Wilson Memorial Clinic, Accokeek, Maryland, to Henry, dated May 5, 1959: "We are so grateful for your assistance to us in establishing this office and also your patience in waiting for repayment of your loan.")

<sup>110</sup> *Land Use Plan: Hard Bargain Farm*, 9-10.



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Company, the community's only official organization.<sup>111</sup> A planning committee formed, and from the start it was clear that they hoped to maintain the community ideals put into place by Alice, including land covenants that would minimize development. Their guiding goal was that the area should continue to develop as it had been, and as the Fergusons had planned, "a community of residents living on five or more acres of land."<sup>112</sup> One of the committee's first resolutions therefore established a condition for community membership that required ownership of a minimum five-acre lot in the community.<sup>113</sup>

When it became clear that the scope of the group's activities exceeded the Water Company's charter, the landowners of the two subdivisions formed a corporation consisting of 2/3 of the landowners in the communities.<sup>114</sup> Uniting the two subdivisions of the Moyaone Reserve, the new organization was called the Moyaone Company (later renamed the Moyaone Association). Its first meeting was held on February 21, 1953. Its articles of incorporation specified that the purpose of the group was to engage in community development in Bond's Retreat, Cactus Hill, and neighboring Accokeek areas.<sup>115</sup> Max North, an early resident of Bond's Retreat, drafted the community's first set of formal covenants in 1954 which upheld Alice's original restrictions "with the result that the kind of community she desired became firmly established."<sup>116</sup> These covenants would go on to form the basis for the scenic easements enacted in the Piscataway National Park.

Alice had accurately predicted the further development of the Accokeek community and the Maryland banks of the Potomac River. Concurrent with the formation of the Moyaone Reserve, the area faced the first of several serious threats to the integrity of its natural setting, beginning in 1955 when a large tract of land located directly opposite Virginia's historic Mount Vernon was offered for sale to the Esso Corporation, which planned to construct oil storage tanks on the riverfront property. Recognizing that such an action would permanently destroy Mount Vernon's historic viewshed, Frances Payne Bolton, Republican Congresswoman from Ohio, and Vice Regent of the association, purchased the nearly 500 acres of land making up Bliss Farm. This effectively stopped the commercial construction and protected the integrity of the viewshed.

Bolton's admirable course of action attracted the attention of members of the adjacent Moyaone Reservation, who were also intent on protecting the riverfront area from development. The community united with Bolton to protect a six-mile stretch of riverfront between Piscataway Bay and Marshall Hall from undesirable development. One of the first steps in the group's strategy to protect the natural and cultural resources within the defined viewshed was the formation of a non-profit organization dedicated to that effort. In 1957, the Accokeek Foundation was incorporated by Bolton and local community leaders, Henry Ferguson, Robert Straus, and Charles Wagner.<sup>117</sup> The Foundation's charter outlined its purpose to "preserve, protect, foster, for scientific, education or charitable use and study, historic sites and relics, trees, plants, wildlife located along Maryland shore of the Potomac."<sup>118</sup> The first meeting of the board was held on April 18, 1957 at Fergie's California Street house.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>111</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 35.

<sup>112</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 36.

<sup>113</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 36.

<sup>114</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 37.

<sup>115</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 37.

<sup>116</sup> Henry G. Ferguson, Foreword to *Adventures in Southern Maryland: 1922-1940*.

<sup>117</sup> Charles Wagner (1909-1998) was a well-known local architect, whose main body of work is found within the Moyaone Reserve. Wagner designed Modern Movement-influenced houses for himself, and about fifteen of his neighbors. Born in Atlanta, Wagner graduated from Georgia Tech with a degree in architecture. Wagner retired in 1980, following a career focused on designing hospitals and public facilities for the Office of Health, Education, and Welfare (information available from: <https://moyaone.org>).

<sup>118</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 153.

<sup>119</sup> Robert Ware Straus, *The Possible Dream: Saving George Washington's View* (Accokeek, Maryland: Accokeek Foundation, Inc., 1988), 24.

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The Accokeek Foundation immediately began a series of efforts to protect the riverfront, beginning with “Innumerable meetings and conversations regarding the desirability of keeping the lands within the ‘viewshed’ of Mt. Vernon under an open space, limited ownership control were held.”<sup>120</sup> The group was spurred to more immediate action when a new threat arose in 1960. That year, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission determined to employ the power of eminent domain in order to build a water treatment plant on the Maryland side of the river. In response, the Accokeek Foundation, including Fergie, developed a plan to create a national park that would include the approximately six-mile stretch of land visible from Mount Vernon. President John F. Kennedy signed a bill authorizing the creation of the Piscataway National Park on October 4, 1961. The following years would be devoted to acquiring the property necessary to form the park.

The land opposite Mount Vernon included a number of private properties such as HBF and those in the Moyaone Reserve. As a result, community leaders created an entirely new type of national park, one that includes private land and pioneered the use of what has become known as the scenic easement. Private landowners continued the already existing covenants on their property, while also allowing the federal government to acquire scenic easements. The easements crafted for Piscataway Park were generally consistent with the existing covenants. In 1961, Fergie had begun the process of deeding the HBF property to the AFF with the stipulation that he would retain a partial life interest. His conveyance specified “that the land be used only in a manner which will tend to maintain the present pastoral, open and wooded condition of the land” and that “the land and premises may be used by a charitable organization or governmental body for charitable, educational or scientific purposes... [and] the general benefit of the surrounding community for social, recreational, or educational purposes.”<sup>121</sup> The conveyance further prohibited commercial or industrial uses.

In January 1963 the first easements were donated by the Accokeek Foundation and the AFF to the federal government. Each would be allowed to continue their existing missions that included agricultural, historical, and environmental education programs for the benefit of the public. The AFF continued to serve its founding mission following Fergie’s passing in 1966. The foundation continued with local conservation activities, as begun under Fergie’s direction. As such, in 1968 the AFF donated 85 acres of land between the current boundaries of the HBF property and the Potomac River to the National Park Service, subject to the 1961 covenants in Fergie’s deed. This transfer and that of other adjacent land owners enabled the establishment of the Piscataway National Park. The transfer was made upon the condition that the AFF retained the right to continue use of the land for activities consistent with its educational mission. That educational mission has grown, from support of the local educational system through teaching scholarships for example, to a focus on environmental education using the farm and its associated river and nature trails. Its mission also extends to include the protection and preservation of the character of HBF, as well as cultural heritage advocacy. This includes continuing to celebrate and promote the memory of Alice and Henry Ferguson and their life at Hard Bargain Farm.

<sup>120</sup> G.L. Hanssen, *The Moyaone Reserve: The History of a Unique, Environmentally Conscious Community*, 43.

<sup>121</sup> Archives, Alice Ferguson Foundation: Deed Records, Deed Book 2687, April 27, 1961, pg. 3 and 4.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_



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**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 52.62

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <del>Latitude: 38°41'10.61"</del> | <del>Longitude: 77°2'30.96"</del> |
| 2. <del>Latitude: 38°41'19.99"</del> | <del>Longitude: 77°3'1.23"</del>  |
| 3. <del>Latitude: 38°41'22.41"</del> | <del>Longitude: 77°2'47.44"</del> |
| 4. <del>Latitude: 38°41'17.07"</del> | <del>Longitude: 77°2'38.05"</del> |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983



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- |          |    |          |        |           |         |
|----------|----|----------|--------|-----------|---------|
| 1. Zone: | 18 | Easting: | 322481 | Northing: | 4283929 |
| 2. Zone: | 18 | Easting: | 321624 | Northing: | 4284315 |
| 3. Zone: | 18 | Easting: | 322042 | Northing: | 4284473 |
| 4. Zone: | 18 | Easting: | 322195 | Northing: | 4284218 |

Mount Vernon, VA-MD USGS Quad

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Hard Bargain Farm is comprised of 52.62 acres located approximately 15 miles south of Washington, D.C. at 2001 Bryan Point Road in Accokeek, Prince George's County, Maryland. The irregularly shaped parcel is bound by Bryan Point Road to the south and west, by a neighboring agricultural property to the east, and by National Park Service-owned fields and wetlands to the north. The main entrance is located at 2001 Bryan Point Road at the southeast point of the property.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

At the time of the Fergusons' purchase in 1922, HBF consisted of 330 acres. This purchase included approximately 138 acres located east of Accokeek Creek and encompassing the area extending from the hill bordering Bryan Point Road to the Potomac River. The Alice Ferguson Foundation currently owns 116.8 total acres, consisting of two main parcels, one 52.62 acre parcel located north and east of Bryan Point Road, and a 64.17 acre parcel located south and west of Bryan Point Road.<sup>122</sup> The 52.62 acre parcel, encompassing the hilltop area, barnyard area, and lodge area, is that associated with Alice and Henry Ferguson's ownership, design, and use. During their period of ownership, the property also extended north to include lowlands areas bordering the Potomac River; the current boundaries are essentially the result of a series of land conveyance and covenant agreements made between Henry Ferguson and the AFF in the early 1960s, and the AFF and the federal government in the late 1960s. In 1961, Henry Ferguson began the process of deeding the HBF property to the Alice Ferguson Foundation, and he retained a partial life interest until his death in 1966. In 1965, the AFF donated its first scenic easements to the National Park Service for its creation of the Piscataway National Park, which serves to preserve and protect the viewshed from Mount Vernon. This process was completed in 1968, when the AFF transferred approximately 85 acres located between current boundaries of Hard Bargain Farm and the Potomac River to the federal government. This forms the central portion of Piscataway National Park. Under that agreement, the Foundation retained its right of use and occupancy, allowing it to continue educational and community activities on National Park Service land. The current acreage and boundaries were finalized in 1971 when the AFF acquired an adjoining, approximately 33.5 acres along Accokeek Creek.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Land Use Plan: Hard Bargain Farm, 13.

<sup>123</sup> Land Use Plan: Hard Bargain Farm, 12.



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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kate Ritson  
organization: EHT Traceries  
street & number: 1121 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20001  
e-mail: eht@traceries.com  
telephone: (202) 393-1199  
date: January 2014

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Hard Bargain Farm  
City or Vicinity: Accokeek  
County: Prince George's State: MD  
Photographer: Kate Ritson  
Date Photographed: October 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0001)  
South façade and outbuildings, looking NE.  
1 of 20.

Photo #2 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0002)  
Farmhouse, south façade, looking N  
2 of 20.

Photo #3 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0003)  
Farmhouse, detail south façade, looking N  
3 of 20.

Photo #4 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0004)  
Farmhouse, detail west wing, looking NW  
4 of 20.

Photo #5 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0005)  
Farmhouse, detail east wing, looking NE  
5 of 20.

Photo #6 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0006)  
Farmhouse, north façade, looking S  
6 of 20.

Photo #7 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0007)  
Farmhouse, interior, first floor hallway, looking SW  
7 of 20.

Photo #8 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0008)  
Farmhouse, interior, second floor hallway, looking W  
8 of 20.

Photo #9 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0009)  
Farmhouse, interior, first floor living room, looking E  
9 of 20.

Photo #10 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0010)  
Farmhouse, interior, first floor living room, looking SW  
10 of 20.





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Photo #11 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0011)  
Farmhouse, interior, first floor kitchen, looking SE  
11 of 20.

Photo #12 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0012)  
Entry gates, looking NW  
12 of 20.

Photo #13 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0013)  
Entry road at ravine, looking NW  
13 of 20.

Photo #14 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0014)  
Hilltop north lawn, looking N  
14 of 20.

Photo #15 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0015)  
Hilltop outbuildings, looking NE  
15 of 20.

Photo #16 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0016)  
Hilltop garage, looking E  
16 of 20.

Photo #17 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0017)  
Hilltop cabin, looking NW  
17 of 20.

Photo #18 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0018)  
Hilltop, farm manager's cottage, looking NE  
18 of 20.

Photo #19 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0019)  
Barnyard, barn and outbuildings, looking SE  
19 of 20.

Photo #20 (MD\_Prince George's County\_Hard Bargain Farm\_0020)  
Barnyard, outbuildings, looking SE  
20 of 20.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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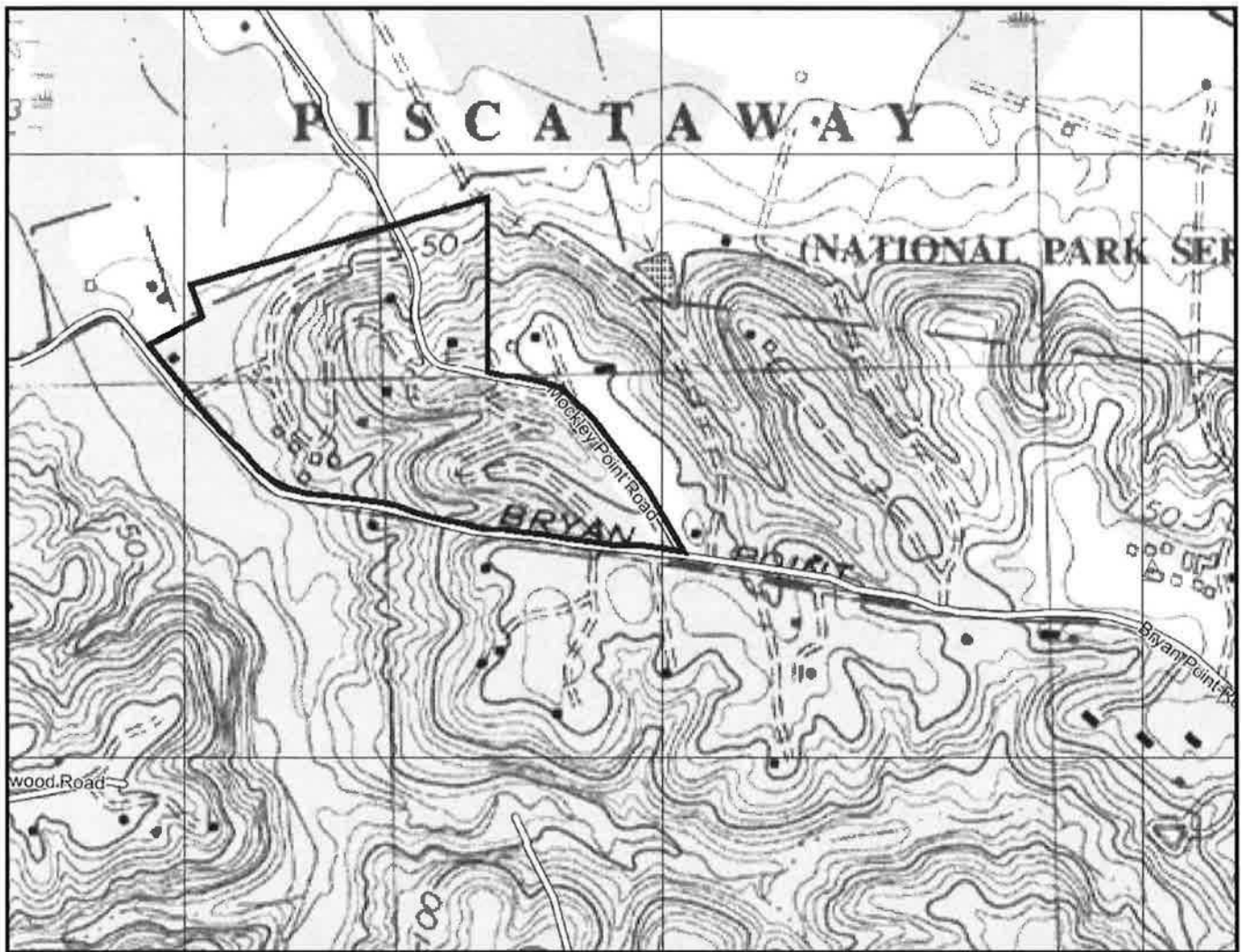
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Accokeek, Prince George's County, MD

Mount Vernon Quad, USGS Topographic Map, 1953, Revised 1974

EHT Tracerics, Inc., October 2013



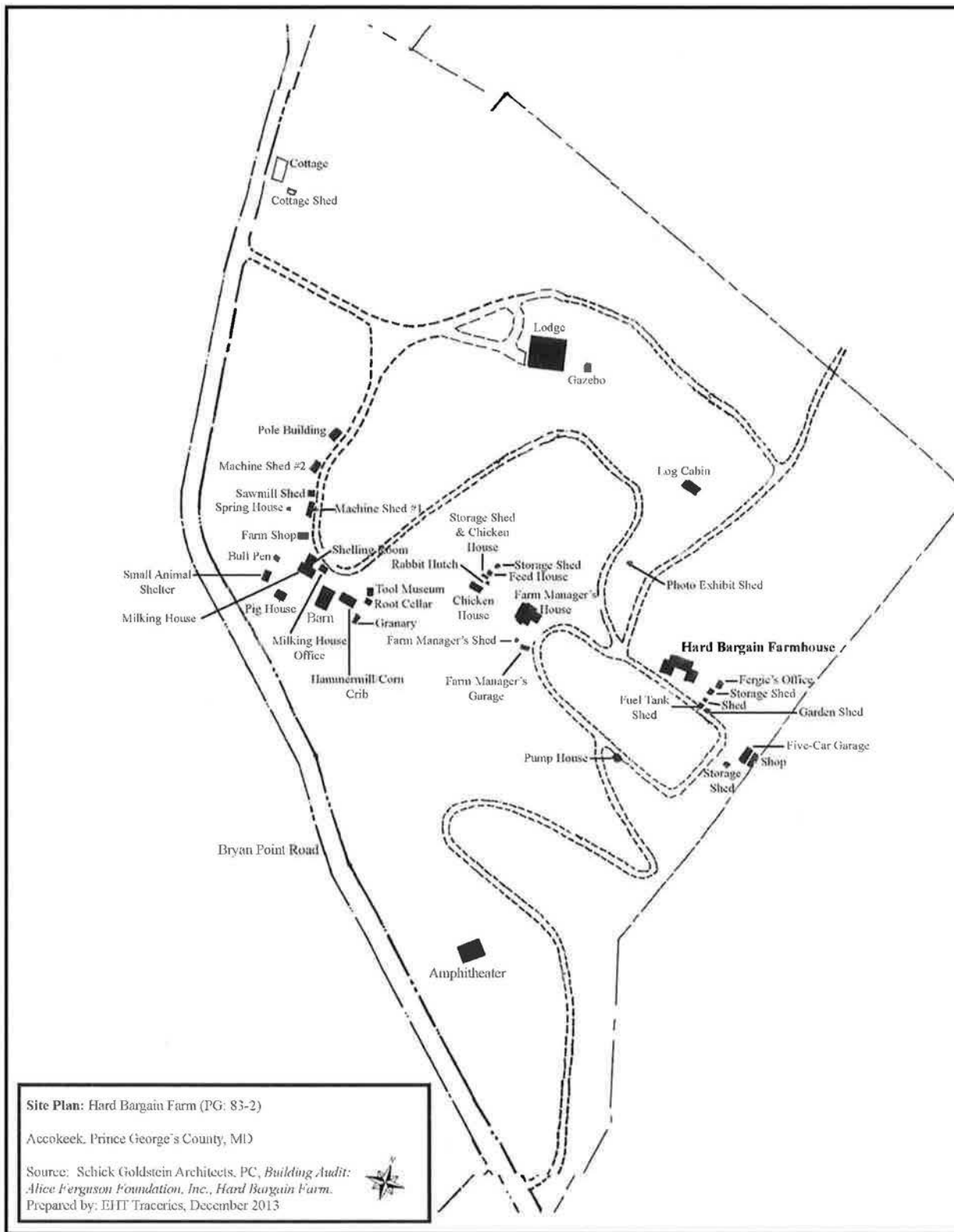
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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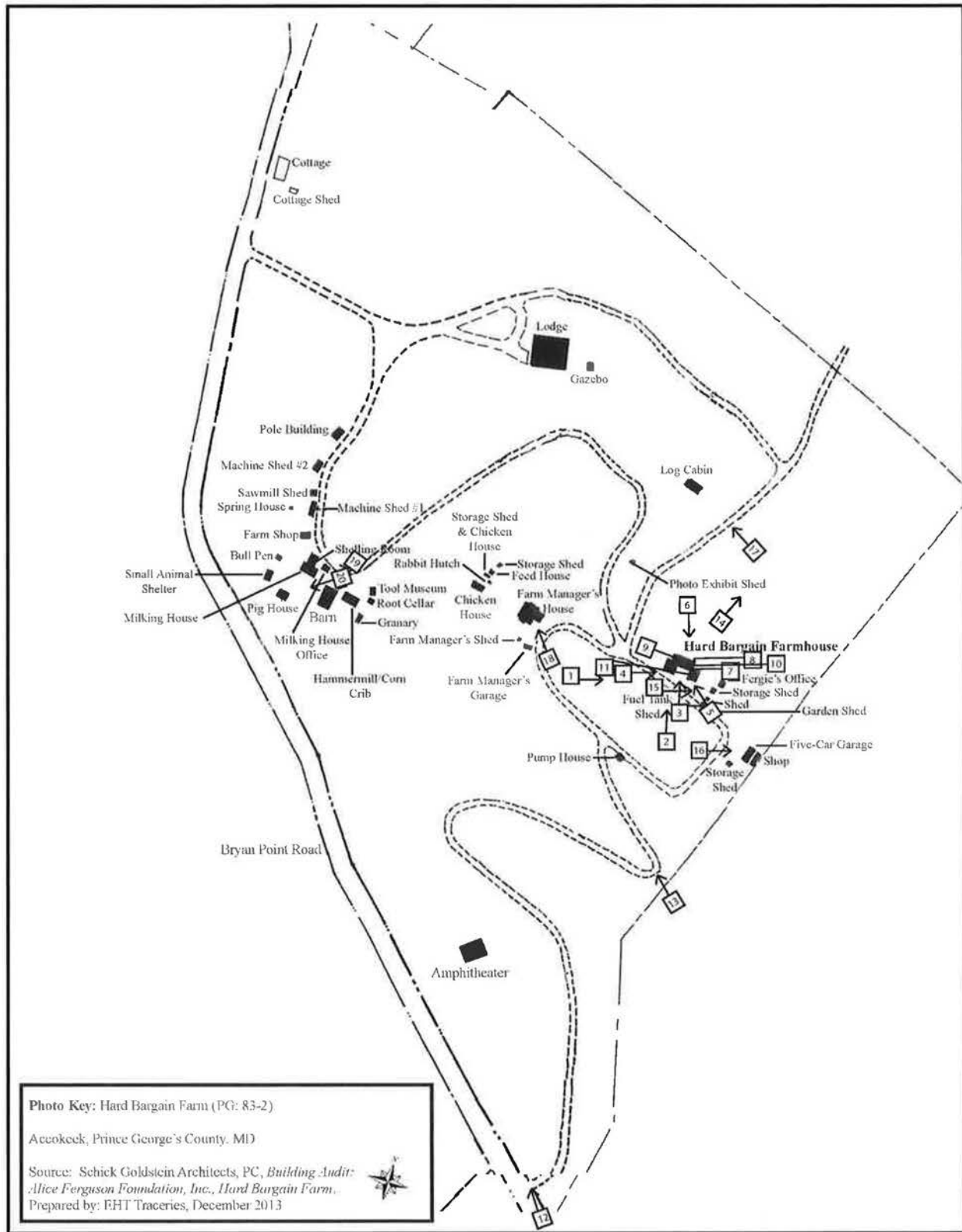
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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**Photo Key:** Hard Bargain Farm (PG: 83-2)  
 Accokeek, Prince George's County, MD  
 Source: Schick Goldstein Architects, PC, *Building Audit*:  
 Alice Ferguson Foundation, Inc., *Hard Bargain Farm*.  
 Prepared by: EHT Traceries, December 2013





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***Inventory of Alice Ferguson Paintings (known)***

*Pines of the Sierras* (1924–1925)

*Sledding* (circa 1930)

*Saguaros* (circa 1931)

*A Day at the Farm* (1931–1932)

*Tired* [self-portrait] (1933–1934)

*The Frog Pond* (circa 1935)

*The Student or A Hot Day* (circa 1935)

*View of the Potomac From the Ferguson Farmhouse* (circa 1935)

*Garden Party* (date unknown)

*Potomac Shoreline* (date unknown)

*Western Landscape: Mountains and Sun* (date unknown)

*Colorado Stream and Mountain* (date unknown)

*Blue Mountains* (date unknown)

*The Mission* (date unknown)

*The Pool / Autumn View of Potomac Shore with Trees* [two-sided painting] (date unknown)

*Spring View of Potomac River Shore with Trees / California Coast with Joshua Tree* [two-sided painting] (date unknown)

*Trees and Summer Sky* (date unknown)

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1940 *American Antiquity* Vol. 6, No. 1 (Jul., 1940), pg. 4-18. Published by: Society for American Archaeology.

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1916 "The Golden Arrow, Clifford, and Ellendale districts, Nye Co., Nevada." *U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin*, 640, pg. 113-123.

1917 "Placer deposits of the Manhattan district, Nevada." *U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin*, 640, pg. 163-193; *Wash. Acad. Sci. Jour.* V. 7, pg. 266 (Abstract).

1917 "Graphite in 1916, 1917." *U.S. Geol. Survey Min. Res.* 1916, pt. 1, pg. 43-59; 1917, pt. 2, pg. 97-119.

1918 "Tin deposits near Irish Creek, Va." *Va. Geol. Survey Bull*, XV-A, 19 p.; *Science*, v. 47, pg. 529 (Abstract).

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1919 "Graphite in 1918." *U.S. Geol. Survey Min. Res.* 1918, pt. 2, pg. 223-265.

1921 "The limestone ores of Manhattan, Nevada." *Economic Geology*, v. 16, pg. 1-36.

1921 "The Mogollon district, New Mexico." *U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin*, 715, pg. 171-204.

1921 "The Round Mountain district, Nevada." *U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin*, 715, pg. 171-204.

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1938 "Memorial to Hiram Dwyer (Dryer) McCaskey (1871-1936)." *Geol. Soc. America Proc.* 1937, pg. 183-189.

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1939 "Nickel deposits in Cottonwood Canyon, Churchill County, Nev." *Nevada Univ. Bull., Geol. and Mining ser.* 32, v. 33, 21 p.

1944 "The mining districts of Nevada." *Nev. Univ. Bull., Geol. and Min. ser.* 40, v. 38, pg. 77-108.

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1952. "Paleozoic of western Nevada." *Wash. Acad. Sci. Jour.*, v. 42, no. 3, pg. 72-75.

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1954 (and Muller, Siemon W., and Cathcart, Stanley H.) "Geology of the Mina quadrangle, Nevada." *U.S. Geol. Survey Geol. Quadrangle Map (GQ 45)*, scale 1: 125,000.

1958 (with Roberts, Ralph J., and others) "Paleozoic rocks of north-central Nevada." *Am. Assoc. Petroleum Geologists Bull.*, v. 42, no. 12, pg. 2813-2857.

1960 (with Alice Ferguson) *The Piscataway Indians of Southern Maryland*. Acokeek, MD: Alice Ferguson Foundation, 1960.



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Harv. Bargain Farm	PG: 83-2
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*Alice Ferguson ca. 1930. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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Henry Ferguson, ca. 1930. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.

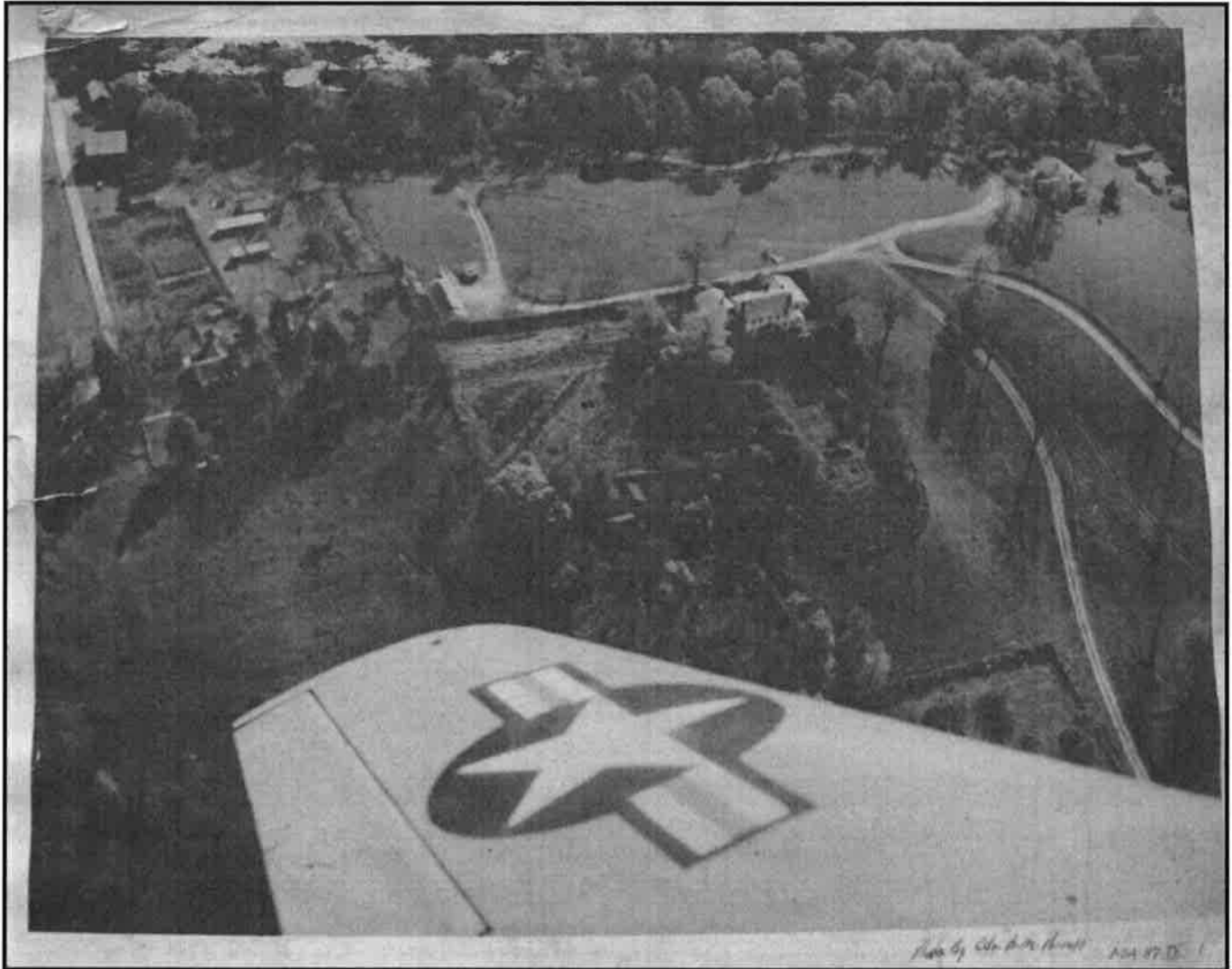
**United States Department of the Interior**  
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*Aerial photo, ca. 1932. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

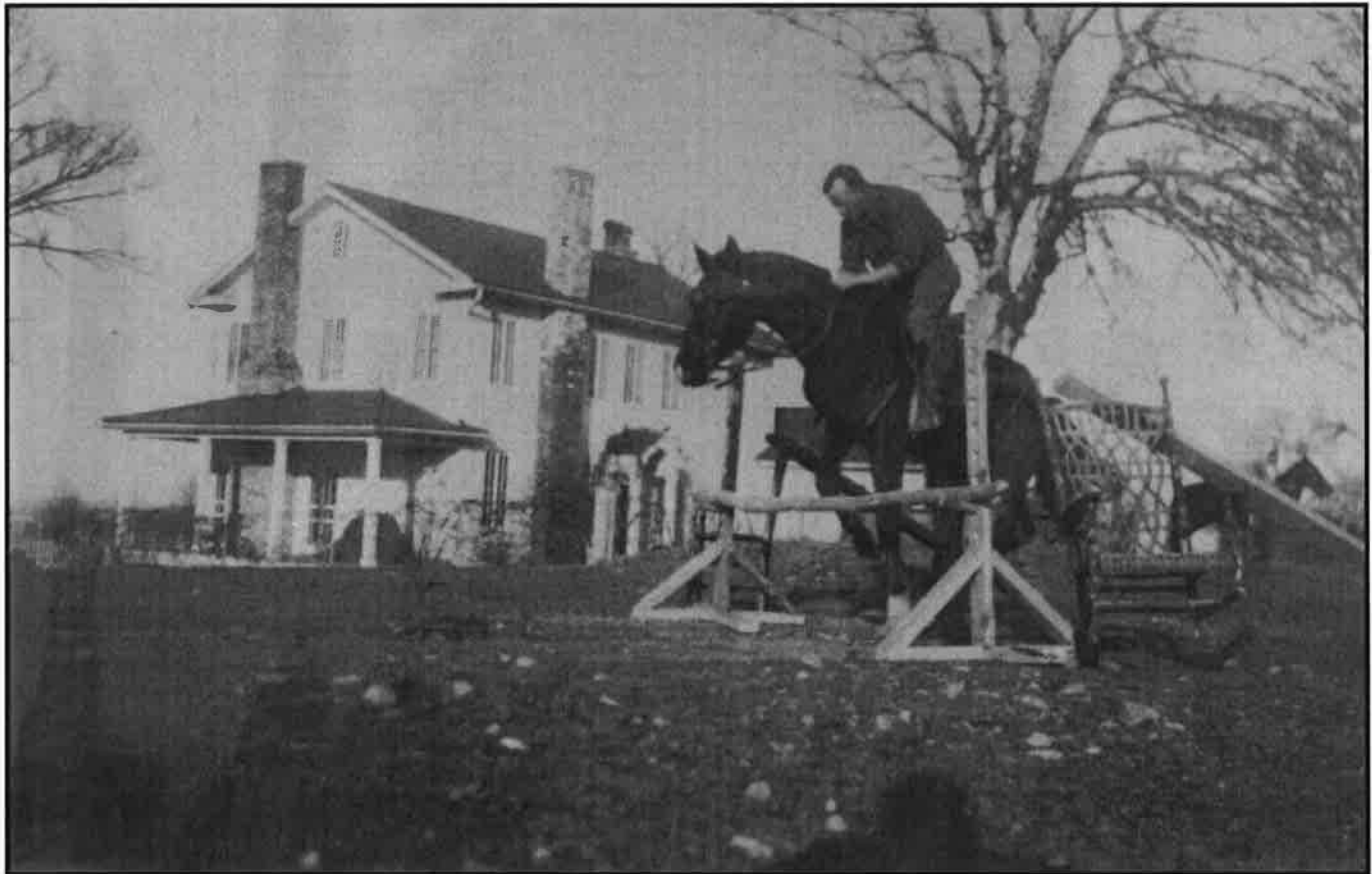
**United States Department of the Interior  
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<b>Haro Bargain Farm</b>	<i>PG: 83-2</i>
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*Farmhouse, looking northeast, dating pre-1927, showing the original one-story, full-depth porch at the west elevation. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*



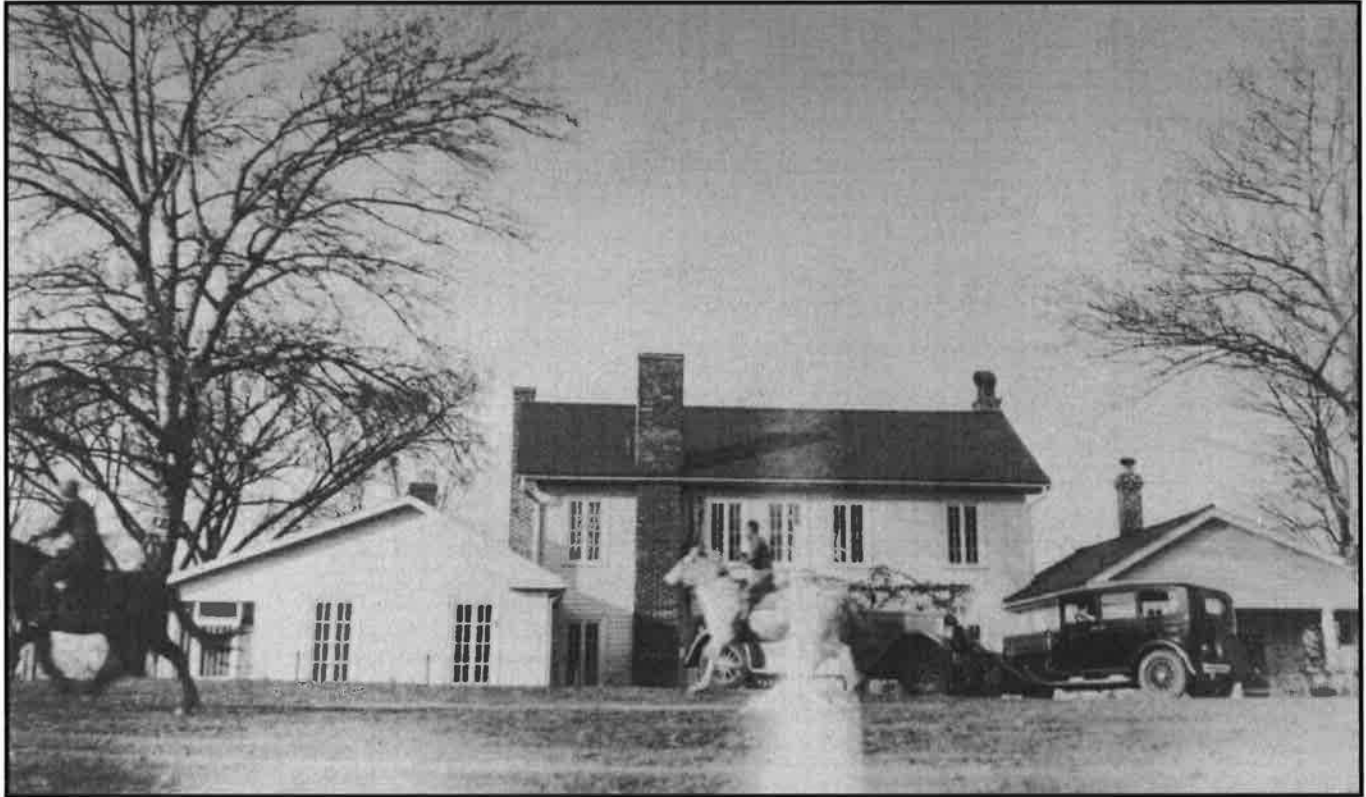
United States Department of the Interior  
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*Façade of Farmhouse, looking north, 1931. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Farmhouse, northeast, 1934. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

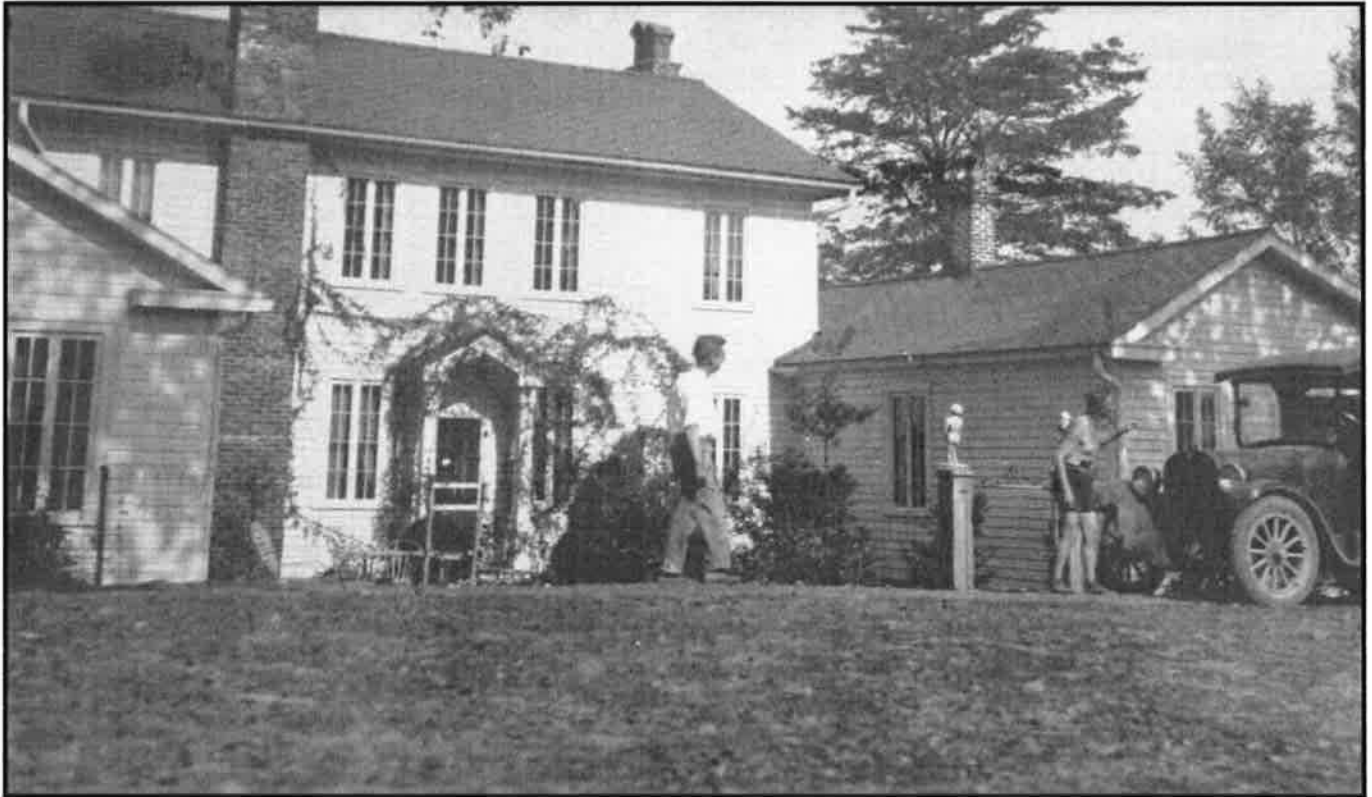
United States Department of the Interior  
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*Farmhouse, looking northeast, 1931. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

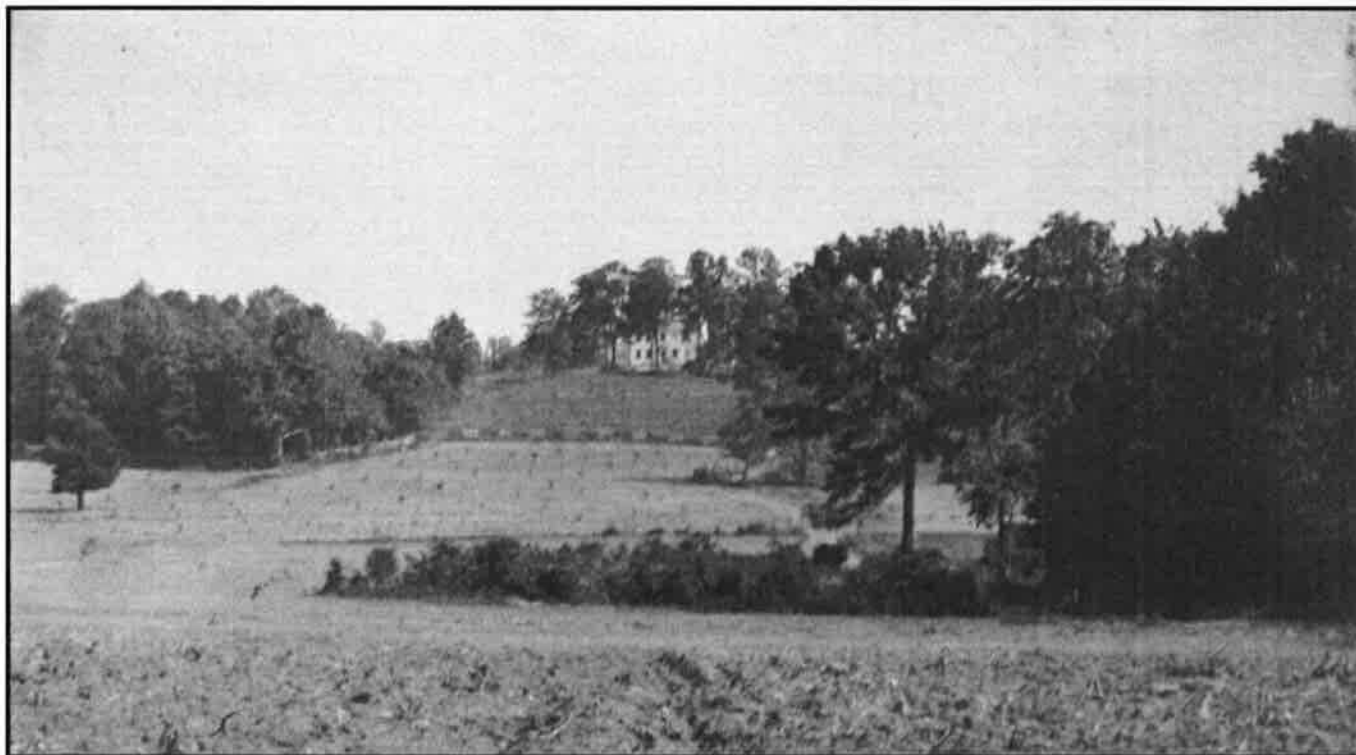
United States Department of the Interior  
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*Rear Farmhouse and Gardens, looking south, 1931. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Rear Elevation Farmhouse, looking south, 1934. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*



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*Hilltop outbuildings, 1931. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Garden Party at Farmhouse, ca. 1931. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Garden Party at Farmhouse, ca. 1931. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Garage and Outbuildings, ca. 1931. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Volleyball at Hard Bargain Farm, ca. 1934. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*



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*Archaeological Dig, ca. 1934. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Swimming in the Frog Pond, ca. 1930. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Construction of the Blue Rhinoceros, ca. 1935. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Alice Ferguson, A Day at the Farm. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Alice Ferguson, Colorado Stream and Mountain. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*



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**National Park Service**

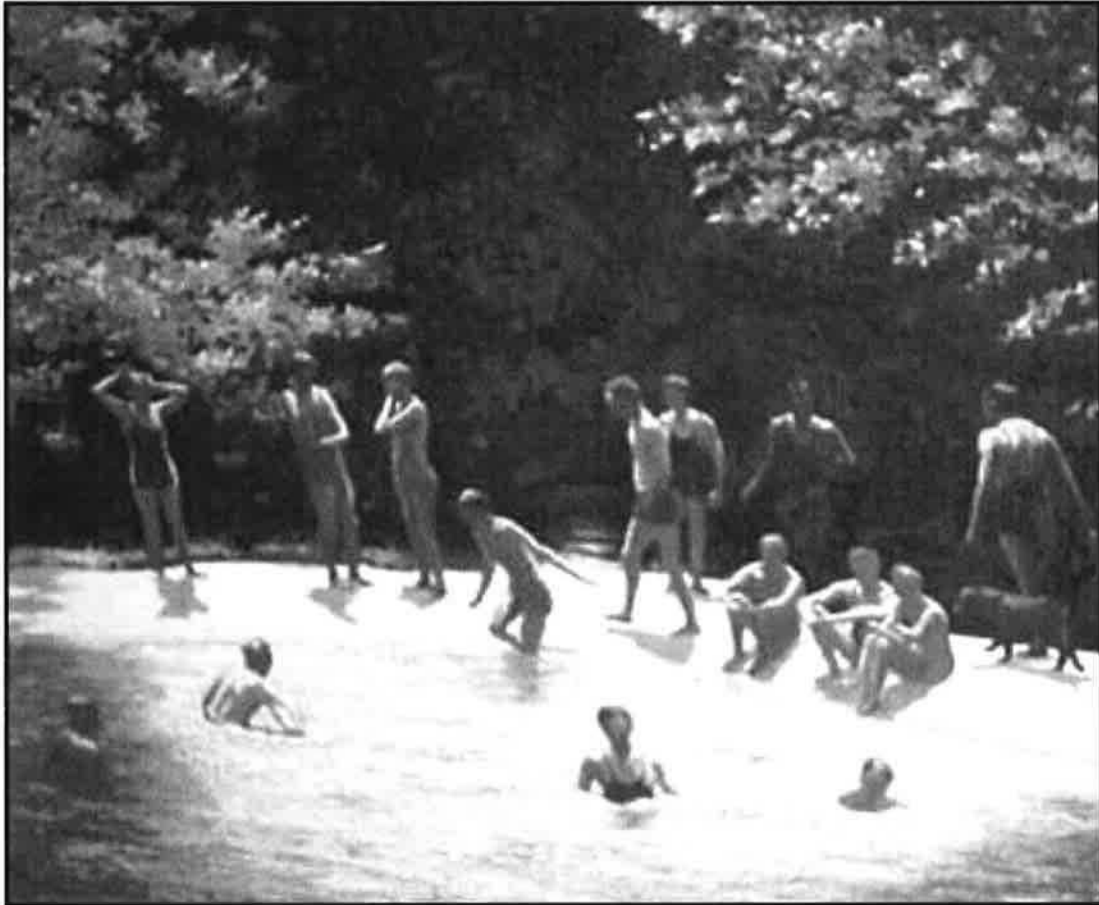


Hard Bargain Farm	PG: 83-2
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*Alice Ferguson, Frog Pond. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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*Alice Ferguson, Saguaros. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*



United States Department of the Interior  
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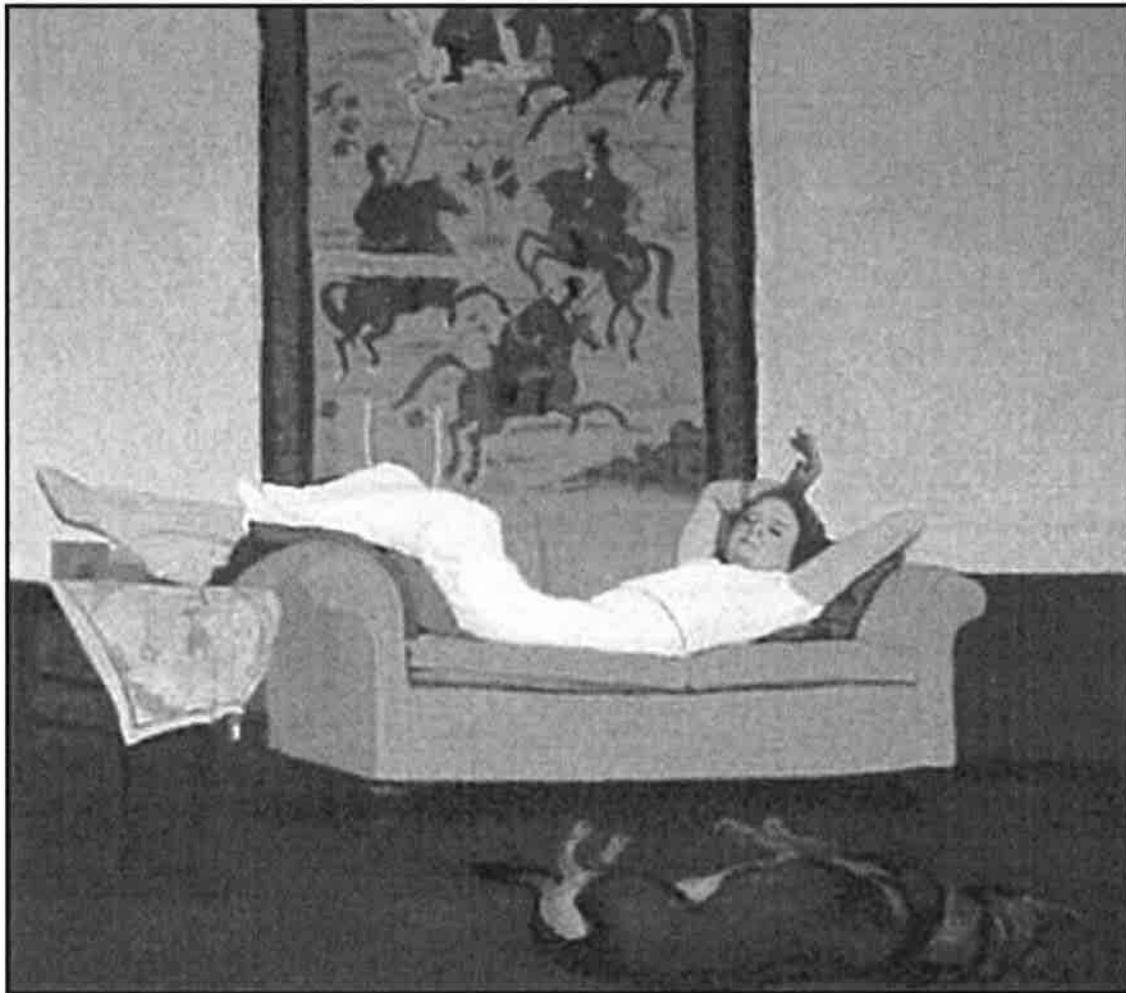


Hard Bargain Farm	PG; 83-2
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*Alice Ferguson, Self Portrait. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

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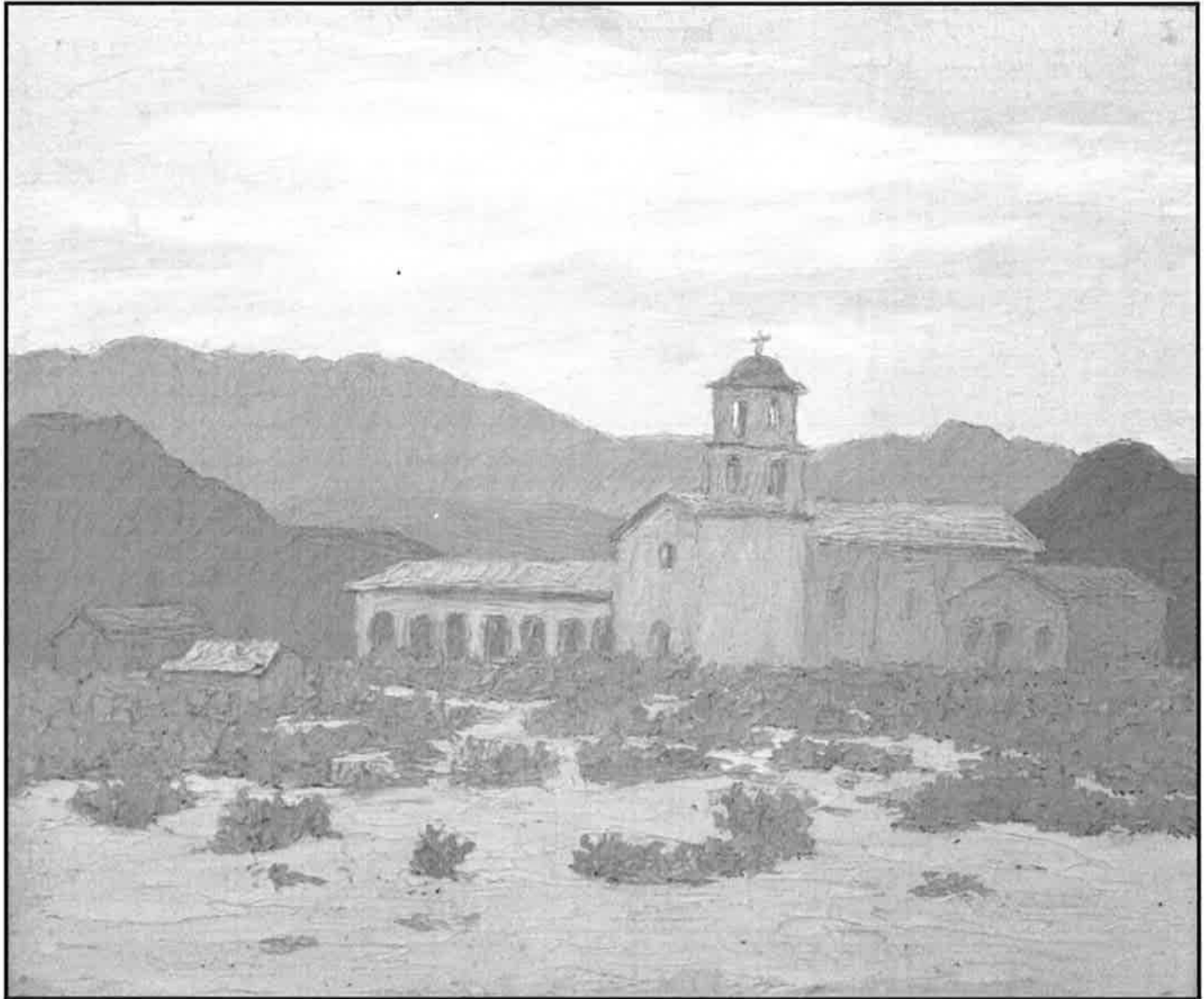
Hard Bargain Farm PG:83-2

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*Alice Ferguson, The Mission. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*

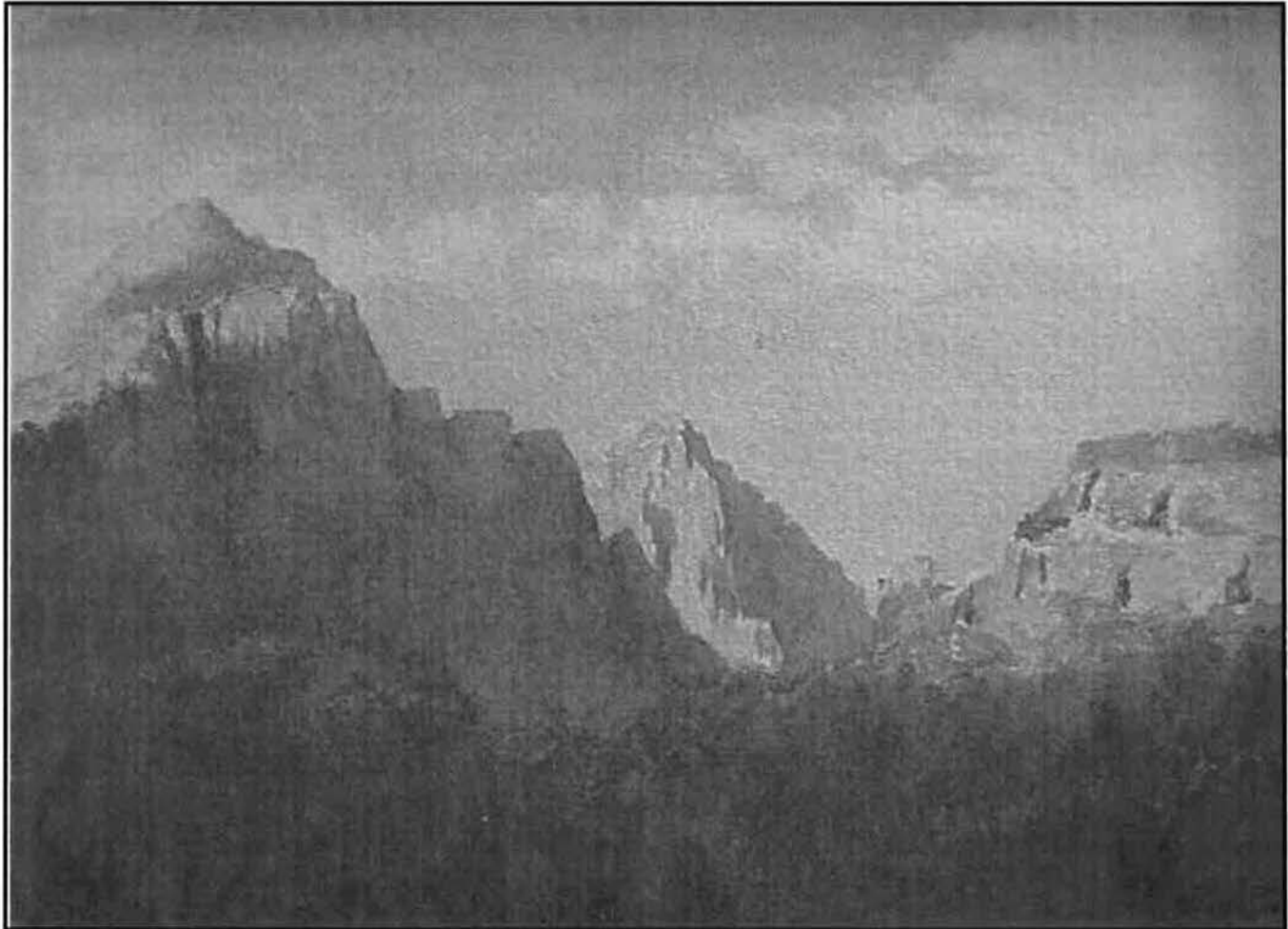
**United States Department of the Interior**  
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Hard Bargain Farm	PG:83-2
Name of Property	
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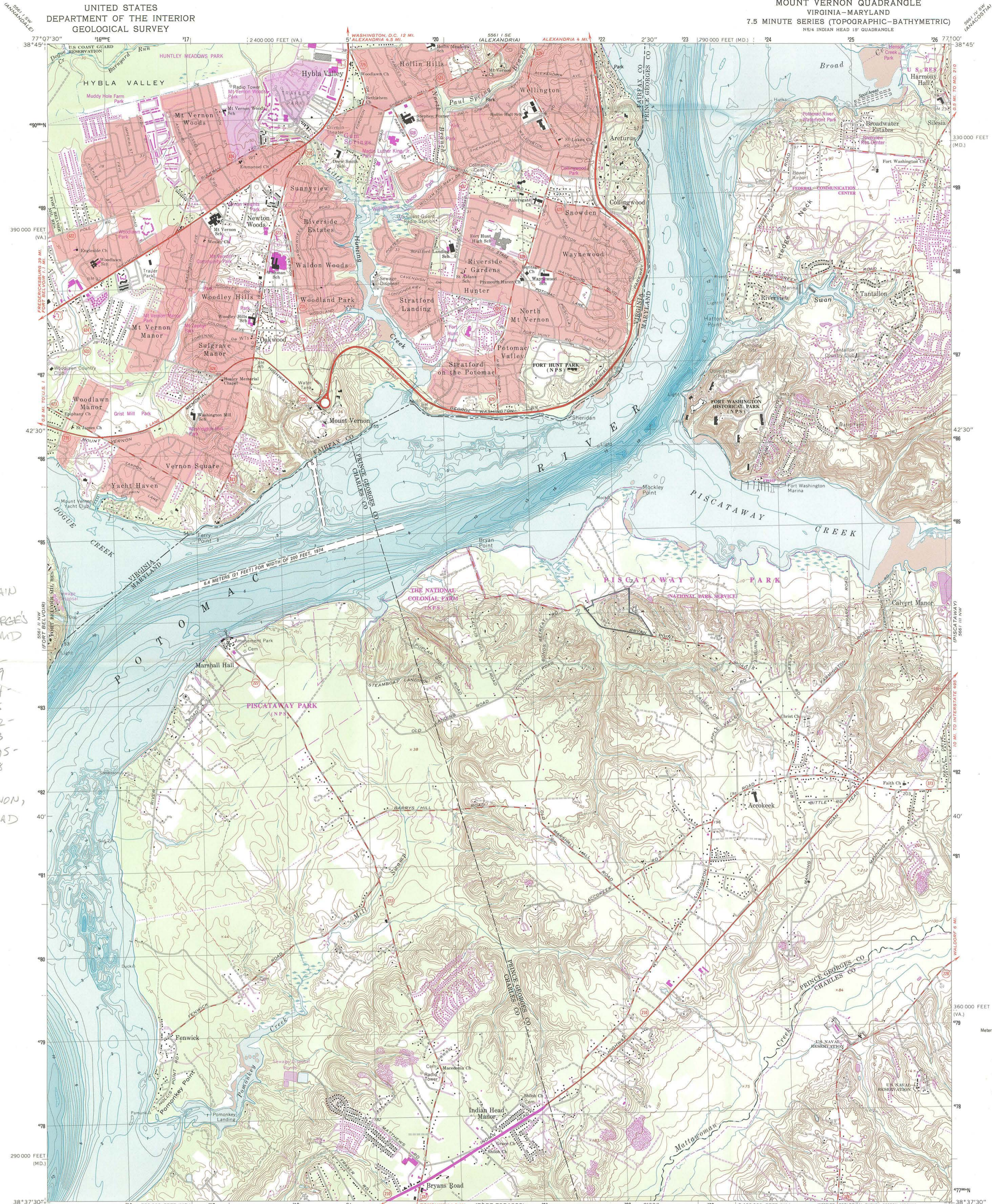
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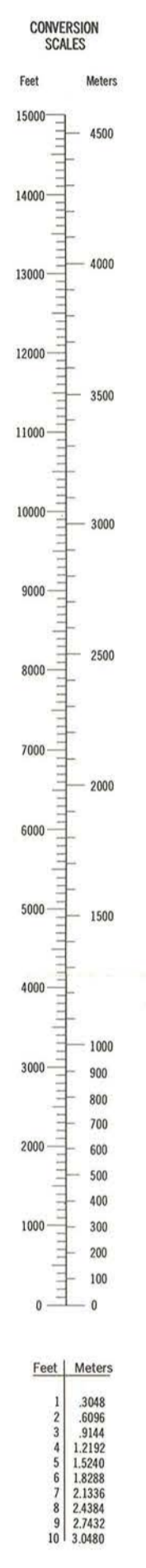
*Alice Ferguson, Western Mountains. Courtesy of the Archives of the Alice Ferguson Foundation.*





PG:83.2  
HARD BARBAIN  
FARM  
PRINCE GEORGES  
COUNTY, MD  
1:18-32248-  
4283929  
2:18-321624-  
4284315  
3:18-322042-  
4284473  
4:18-322195-  
4284218

MOUNT VERNON,  
VA-MD QUAD



Mapped by the Defense Mapping Agency  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
and the National Ocean Service in cooperation  
with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies  
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken  
1950. Field checked 1951. Revised by the Geological Survey from aerial  
photographs taken 1963-64. Field checked 1965

Bathymetry compiled by the National Ocean Service from tide-coordinated  
hydrographic surveys. This information is not intended for navigational  
purposes

Mean low water (dotted) line and mean high water (heavy solid) line  
compiled by NOS from tide-coordinated aerial photographs

Apparent shoreline (outer edge of vegetation) shown by light solid line

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Maryland coordinate  
system, and Virginia coordinate system, north zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18  
1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the  
projection lines 9 meters south and 26 meters west as shown by dashed  
corner ticks

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National  
or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple and woodcut compiled by the Geological  
Survey in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from  
aerial photographs taken 1980 and other sources. This information not  
field checked. Map scaled 1983

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE  
HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY INDEX

Survey Number	Survey Date	Survey Scale	Survey Line Spacing (Nautical Miles)
H-9349	1973	1:10,000	01-05
H-9479	1974	1:10,000	02-06

SCALE 1:24,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
BATHYMETRIC CONTOUR INTERVAL 1 METER  
WITH SUPPLEMENTARY 0.5 METER CONTOURS  
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE  
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 0.7 METER

BASE MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
BATHYMETRIC SURVEY DATA COMPLIES WITH INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC  
ORGANIZATION (IHO) SPECIAL PUBLICATION 44 ACCURACY STANDARDS  
AND/OR STANDARDS USED AT THE DATE OF THE SURVEY

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092,  
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852,  
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903

A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty
- Medium-duty
- Light-duty
- Unimproved dirt
- U.S. Route
- State Route

MOUNT VERNON, VA.-MD.  
NE/4 INDIAN HEAD 15' QUADRANGLE  
38077-F1-TB-024

1966  
PHOTOREVISED 1983  
BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982  
DMA 5561 II NE-SERIES 8833

UTM GRID AND 1983 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



















































Alice  
Ferguson  
Foundation

Hard  
Bargain  
Farm

2001

↑  
School  
Groups



































National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Hard Bargain Farm  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MARYLAND, Prince George's

DATE RECEIVED: 8/22/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/08/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000839

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 10.8.14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





Maryland Department of Planning

Sustainable \_\_\_\_\_ Attainable

January 15, 2014

Mr. J. Rodney Little  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Maryland Historical Trust  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW PROCESS**

**State Application Identifier:** MD20140115-0028  
**Reply Due Date:** 02/24/2014  
**Project Description:** HISTORIC NOMINATION - Hard Bargain Farm  
**Project Address:** 2001 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607  
**Project Location:** County(ies) of Prince George's  
**Clearinghouse Contact:** Myra Barnes

Dear Mr. Little:

Thank you for submitting your project for intergovernmental review. Your participation in the Maryland Intergovernmental Review and Coordination (MIRC) process helps to ensure that your project will be consistent with the plans, programs, and objectives of State agencies and local governments.

We have forwarded your project to the following agencies and/or jurisdictions for their review and comments: the Maryland Department(s) of Transportation, Natural Resources; the County(ies) of Prince George's; and the Maryland Department of Planning. A composite review and recommendation letter will be sent to you by the reply due date. Your project has been assigned a unique State Application Identifier that you should use on all documents and correspondence.

Please be assured that we will expeditiously process your project. The issues resolved through the MIRC process enhance the opportunities for project funding and minimize delays during project implementation.

If you need assistance or have questions, contact the State Clearinghouse staff noted above at 410-767-4490 or through e-mail at [myra.barnes@maryland.gov](mailto:myra.barnes@maryland.gov). Thank you for your cooperation with the MIRC process.

Sincerely,  
  
Linda C. Janey, J.D., Assistant Secretary

**P.S. Great News!!** Your project may be eligible to be "FastTracked" through the State permitting processes. For more information, go to: <http://easy.maryland.gov/wordpress/fasttrack/>.

LCJ:MB

14-0028\_NRR.NEW.doc

Martin O'Malley, Governor  
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

Richard Eberhart Hall, AICP, Secretary  
Amanda Stakem Conn, Esq., Deputy Secretary





Maryland Department of Planning  
Maryland Historical Trust

Sustainable \_\_\_\_\_ Attainable

January 31, 2014

The Alice Ferguson Foundation  
Director, Lori Arguelles  
2001 Bryan Point Road  
Accokeek, Maryland 20607

RE: HARD BARGAIN FARM  
Prince George's County, Maryland

Dear Director Arguelles:

Hard Bargain Farm will be considered by the Governor's Consulting Committee for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on Tuesday, March 4, 2014. The National Register is the official list of historic properties recognized by the Federal Government as worthy of preservation for their significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. In Maryland, the nomination process is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. Enclosed you will find a copy of the criteria under which properties are evaluated for listing. The meeting will be held at the People's Resource Center, 100 Community Place, Crownsville, Maryland, beginning at 10:00 a.m. You are welcome to attend this meeting.

Listing in the National Register results in the following for historic properties.

1. Consideration in planning for Federal, federally or state funded, licensed and assisted projects. Federal and state legislation requires that Federal agencies allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and state agencies, including the Maryland Historical Trust, opportunity to comment on all projects affecting historic properties listed in the National Register. For further information please refer to Section 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800 and Annotated Code of Maryland, State Finance and Procurement Article, Section 5A-323 et seq. or call the Office of Preservation Services of the Maryland Historical Trust at (410) 514-7630.
2. Eligibility for Federal tax provisions. If a property is listed in the National Register, certain Federal tax provisions may apply. The Tax Reform Act of 1986 revises the historic preservation tax incentives authorized by Congress in the Tax Reform Act of 1976, the Revenue Act of 1978, the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980, the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, and the Tax Reform Act of 1984, and as of January 1, 1987, provides for a 20 percent investment tax credit with a full adjustment to basis for rehabilitating historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings. The former 15 percent and 20 percent Investment Tax Credits (ITCs) for rehabilitation of older commercial buildings are combined into a single 10 percent ITC for commercial or industrial buildings built before 1936.

Martin O'Malley, Governor  
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

Richard Eberhart Hall, AICP, Secretary  
Amanda Stakem Conn, Esq., Deputy Secretary



Tax The Treatment Extension Act of 1980 provides Federal tax deductions for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures. Whether these provisions are advantageous to a property owner is dependent upon the particular circumstances of the property and the owner. Because tax aspects outlined above are complex, individuals should consult legal counsel or the appropriate local Internal Revenue Service office for assistance in determining the tax consequences of the above provisions. For further information on certification requirements, please refer to 36 CFR 67 or the Office of Preservation Services of the Maryland Historical Trust at (410) 514-7630.

3. Eligibility for a Maryland income tax benefit for the rehabilitation of historic property.

For further information on the Heritage Preservation Tax Credit, contact the Office of Preservation Services of the Maryland Historical Trust at (410) 514-7628.

4. Consideration of historic values in the decision to issue a surface coal mining permit where coal is located. In accord with the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, there must be consideration of historic values in the decision to issue a surface coal mining permit where coal is located. For further information, please refer to 30 CFR 700 et seq.

5. Eligibility to apply for federal and state grants and state low interest loans for historic preservation projects. To determine the present status of such grants and loans, contact the Office of Preservation Services of the Maryland Historical Trust at (410) 514-7632.

Owners of private properties nominated to the National Register have an opportunity to concur in or object to listing in accord with the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 60. Any owner or partial owner of private property who chooses to object to listing may submit to the State Historic Preservation Officer a notarized statement certifying that the party is the sole or partial owner of the private property and objects to the listing. Each owner or partial owner of private property has one vote regardless of what portion of the property that party owns. If a majority of private property owners object, a property will not be listed; however, the State Historic Preservation Officer shall submit the nomination to the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places for a determination of eligibility of the property for listing in the National Register. If the property is determined to be eligible for listing, although not formally listed, Federal agencies will be required to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and state agencies, including the Maryland Historical Trust, an opportunity to comment before the agency may fund, license, or assist a project which will affect the property. If you choose to object to the listing of your property, the notarized objection must be submitted to J. Rodney Little, State Historic Preservation Officer, ATTN: Peter Kurtze, Maryland Historical Trust, 100 Community Place, Crownsville, Maryland 21032-2023 by the date of the meeting given above.

Listing in the National Register does NOT mean that the Federal Government or the State of Maryland wants to acquire the property, place restrictions on the property, or dictate the color or materials used on individual buildings. Local ordinances or laws establishing restrictive zoning, special design review committees, or review of exterior alterations are not a part of the National Register program. Listing also does NOT require the owner to preserve or maintain the property or seek approval of the Federal Government or the State of Maryland to alter the property. Unless the owner applies for and accepts special Federal or state tax, licensing, or funding benefits, the owner can do anything with his property he wishes so long as it is permitted by state or local law.



Page 3

If you wish to comment on whether the property should be nominated to the National Register, please send your comments to J. Rodney Little, State Historic Preservation Officer, ATTN: Peter E. Kurtze, before the Governor's Consulting Committee considers the nomination. Copies of the nomination, regulations and information on the National Register and Federal and State tax provisions are available from the Trust. If you have questions about this nomination, please contact Peter E. Kurtze, Administrator of Evaluation and Registration, Maryland Historical Trust at (410) 514-7649.

Sincerely,



J. Rodney Little  
Director-State Historic  
Preservation Officer

JRL/jmg

cc: Hon. Rushern L. Baker III  
Hon. Andrea Harrison  
Mr. W. Dickerson Charlton  
Mr. Samuel J. Parker, Jr.  
Mr. Frederick Stachura  
EHT Tracerics



7

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT/ NATIONAL REGISTER  
RECOMMENDATION FORM

Property Name Hard Bargain Farm PG: 83-002

Location 2100 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20706  
County Prince George's County

CLG Name Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

**Nomination recommended**       **Nomination not recommended**

Please check the applicable National Register criteria and/or considerations (exceptions) used in decision:

Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

**Justification of decision: (use continuation sheet if necessary)**

Hard Bargain Farm (PG: 83-002), located in Accokeek, Maryland, was purchased in 1922 by Alice L.L. Ferguson as a country retreat. In 1961, her husband, Henry G. Ferguson, began the process of deeding the property to the Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF), which utilizes the property today as an environmental and cultural education center. Accessed via Bryan Point Road, HBF is comprised of 52.62 acres situated about 15 miles south of Washington, D.C.

The property contains a diversity of terrain including steeply rolling hills, heavy forest growth, agricultural fields, and landscaped gardens. Overlooking the confluence of the Potomac River and Piscataway Creek, the HBF viewshed includes Virginia's Mount Vernon Estate, Alexandria, Virginia, and downtown Washington, D.C. Alice Ferguson transformed the land through its renovation into a working farm, as well as through her integrated architecture and landscape designs, which incorporated aspects of the Country Place era of landscape architecture. In 1924, Alice Ferguson constructed a main farmhouse at the hilltop, which overlooks the viewshed and gardens. Through the 1930s, a number of agricultural and domestic outbuildings were constructed to support farm activities. Ferguson also constructed a number of elements reflecting the influence of the Country Place era of landscape design, including a serpentine road to the hilltop farmhouse and a planned garden complex. Originally consisting of over 300 acres during the Ferguson's time, HBF's acreage has been reduced due to transfer of land along the Potomac River by the AFF to the National Park Service (NPS) in 1968, for the formation of Piscataway National Park. Through an agreement with NPS, the AFF continues to utilize this land for agricultural and educational purposes. HBF has integrity of materials, workmanship, and design, with extant buildings and landscape features designed and constructed by Alice Ferguson. Further, the property has strong integrity of setting and location, partially as a result of the covenants and ownership agreements made with NPS, which have helped to preserve the natural surroundings and viewshed. As a result, Hard Bargain Farm has exceptional integrity of association and feeling to Alice and Henry Ferguson's period of residence.

The proposed listing of Hard Bargain Farm in the National Register is supported by the property owner, the Alice Ferguson Foundation, Inc. Plans call for the Farm and adjoining property to expand their current use as an educational center focusing on agricultural history and environmental education. On February 18, 2014, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) determined that Hard Bargain Farm meets criterion "B" and "C" of the National Register Criteria, with a period of significance 1922-1961. This determination included a recommendation for concurrence by the County Executive based on the documentation of the property and public testimony received at the February 18, 2014 HPC meeting.



John Peter Thompson  
Signature of commission chairman

02/18/14  
Date

Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission  
Name of commission

**CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL RECOMMENDATION**

I concur with the opinion of the historic preservation review commission.  
 I do not concur with the opinion of the historic preservation review commission.  
(Please justify disagreement on a separate sheet.)

Russell

March 10, 2014

Signature of chief elected official

Date

County Executive



DATE: February 5, 2014

TO: Historic Preservation Commission

VIA: Howard S. Berger, Supervisor  
Frederick Stachura, HPC Liaison  
Historic Preservation Section  
Countywide Planning Division

FROM: Robert Krause, Planner Coordinator  
Historic Preservation Section  
Countywide Planning Division

RE: **Staff Recommendations on the Hard Bargain Farm (83-002) National Register Nomination**

**Findings:**

Hard Bargain Farm (HBF, PG: 83-002), located in Accokeek, Maryland, was purchased in 1922 by Alice L.L. Ferguson as a country retreat. In 1961, her husband, Henry G. ("Fergie") Ferguson, began the process of conveying the property to the Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF), which utilizes the property today as an environmental and cultural education center. Accessed via Bryan Point Road, HBF is comprised of 52.62 acres situated about 15 miles south of Washington, D.C. The National Register nomination for this property was initiated by the current owner, as Hard Bargain Farm is not presently designated a Prince George's County Historic Site or Resource.

The property contains a diversity of terrain including steeply rolling hills, heavy forest growth, agricultural fields, and landscaped gardens. In overlooking the confluence of the Potomac River and Piscataway Creek, the HBF viewshed includes George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, Alexandria, Virginia, and downtown Washington, D.C. Alice Ferguson transformed the land through its transition into a working farm, as well as through her integrated architecture and landscape designs, which incorporated aspects of the Country Place era (1880-1940) of landscape architecture wherein affluent Americans commissioned extensive gardens inspired by European and Asian precedents. In 1924, Alice Ferguson constructed a main farmhouse at the hilltop, which overlooks the viewshed and gardens. Through the 1930s, a number of agricultural and domestic outbuildings were constructed to support farm activities. Ferguson also constructed a number of elements reflecting the influence of the Country Place era of landscape design, including a serpentine road to the hilltop farmhouse and a planned garden complex.

Originally consisting of over 300 acres during the Ferguson's time, HBF's acreage has been reduced due to transfer of land along the Potomac River by the AFF to the National Park Service (NPS) in 1968, for the formation of Piscataway National Park. Through an agreement with NPS, the AFF continues to utilize this land for agricultural and educational purposes.

HBF has integrity of materials, workmanship, and design, with extant buildings and landscape features designed and constructed by Alice Ferguson. Further, the property has strong integrity of setting and location, partially as a result of the covenants and ownership agreements made with NPS, which have helped to preserve the natural surroundings and viewshed. As a result, Hard Bargain Farm has exceptional integrity of association and feeling to Alice and Henry Ferguson's period of residence.



Hard Bargain Farm meets criterion "B" and "C" of the National Register Criteria, with a period of significance c. 1922-1961.

**Conclusions and Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) find that Hard Bargain Farm meets criteria "B" and "C" for designation in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on the documentation of the property and testimony received at the public hearing, the HPC should forward a recommendation of approval to the County Executive for concurrence.

**Next Steps in the Process:**

Pursuant to the Certified Local Government (CLG) procedures, the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendation will be forwarded to the County Executive seeking his concurrence with the proposed National Register nomination. Following concurrence by the County Executive, this nomination will be reviewed by the Governor's Consulting Committee (GCC) on March 4, 2014, and then forwarded to the National Park Service for final action. Formal listing in the National Register is expected by mid-2014.

*Attachments:*

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (83-002)

*Please refer to:*

HPC Handbook, National Register Section  
National Register Review Process  
Effects of Listing Maryland Properties

c: Hard Bargain Farm National Register File (PG 83-002)

*Owner*

Alice Ferguson Foundation, Inc.  
2100 Bryan Point Road  
Accokeek, MD 20706

*Prince George's County Council:*

The Honorable Mel Franklin, District 9  
Prince George's County Council

*Interested Parties:*

John Petro, President  
Prince George's County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 14  
Riverdale Park MD 20737

Doug McElrath, Chair  
Prince George's Heritage, Inc.  
4901 Ravenswood Road  
Riverdale Park MD 20737

Alfonso Narvaez, Chair  
Prince George's Historical & Cultural Trust, Inc.  
3704 Chandler Drive  
Fort Washington MD 20744





Maryland Department of Planning  
Maryland Historical Trust

Sustainable Attainable

August 14, 2014



Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 I (eye) St., NW  
Mail Stop 2280  
Washington, DC 20005

RE: HARD BARGAIN FARM  
Prince George's County, Maryland

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed is documentation for nominating the Hard Bargain Farm, Prince George's County, Maryland to the National Register of Historic Places. The state review board and the owners concur in my recommendation for listing. Should you have questions in this matter, please contact Peter Kurtze at (410) 514-7649.

Sincerely,

J. Rodney Little  
Director-State Historic  
Preservation Officer

JRL/jmg

cc: State Clearinghouse #MD20140115-0028  
Enclosures: NR form and 71 continuation sheets  
1 USGS map  
20 - 5x7 b/w prints  
1 DVD

Correspondence: letter, Janey to Little, 15 January 2014  
letter, Little to Arguelles, 31 January 2014  
CLG recommendation, 10 March 2014

Martin O'Malley, Governor  
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

Richard Eberhart Hall, AICP, Secretary  
Amanda Stakem Conn, Esq., Deputy Secretary