This log outbuilding at Falling Green, possibly a corn house, was photographed in 1936. When the property was surveyed for a historic sites inventory in 1979, the structure was no longer standing.
SECONDARY STRUCTURES, ALSO KNOWN AS OUTBUILDINGS OR dependencies, are among the most fragile of historic resources. These buildings have not been as well studied as main houses and other primary structures. Once they no longer serve their original purpose, which is the case for most agricultural and domestic dependencies, the outbuildings are subject to neglect and demolition. In Montgomery County, building permits are not required for changes or demolition to outbuildings.

One reason for the persistence of some Montgomery County outbuildings, despite generations of neglect, has been their durable construction. In the Seneca-Poolesville area, many service buildings were built of Seneca sandstone. The Darnall Place of late 1700s has an outstanding complex of stone buildings including stone kitchen, slave quarter, smokehouse-dairy, and a small barn.
Outbuildings generally fall into two categories. Domestic structures, related to food preservation and preparation and cleaning, include detached kitchens, springhouses, smokehouses, wash houses, and slave quarters. Agricultural buildings are related to farming activities, such as bank barns, corncribs, tobacco barns, and dairy barns. Outbuildings document the evolution of farming and domestic practices. Meat houses, springhouses, and ice houses preserved food in an era before refrigeration. Slave quarters and tobacco houses represent the tobacco culture. In most cases, the exact date of construction for outbuildings is unknown. Rarely are the structures inscribed with construction dates. As a point of reference, the following discussion mentions either the date a farm was established or when the main house was constructed.

Many farmsteads retain only one or two of their original cluster of outbuildings. Few properties maintain an intact collection of buildings. A farmstead with one of the finest collection of outbuildings is Inverness, in the Monocacy watershed. The main house, built in 1818, is a three-part brick residence with a kitchen wing. The complex includes a log and stone slave quarter, stone end wall bank barn, log smokehouse, stone spring house, log blacksmith shop and timber frame corn crib. Nearby East Oaks has an impressive collection of substantial outbuildings supplementing its three-part brick house (1829). The complex includes a brick smokehouse, sandstone slave quarter, stone bank barn, stone milk house, and tenant house. A topic for further research is the arrangement of outbuildings in the farmstead. Anglo-American plantations tended to have a formal geometric arrangement of buildings, while Germanic farmsteads in the Mid-Atlantic tended to be arranged in a row along the top of a low ridge.1

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DOMESTIC OUTBUILDINGS

Kitchens

Among the oldest outbuildings in the county are kitchens, many of which were built before the main house and other secondary structures. Also known as summer kitchens, detached kitchens kept the heat, smell, and danger of open-fire cooking out of the main dwelling. Detached kitchens were especially popular from the late-1700s until the mid-1800s. After tobacco barns, kitchens were the most prevalent outbuilding type in the county in 1783 when these structures were found on 193 farms. The popularity of the detached kitchen coincided with the incidence of black slaves replacing white indentured servants. The separate building segregated the slaves from the planter's family. Some kitchen buildings undoubtedly were built after the main house, to provide more and better facilities than that found in the original kitchen.2

The most common type of kitchen building was a one-room structure with fireplace and chimney at one end. A loft provided storage area or housed slaves. A well-preserved example is found at the White-Carlin Farm, established c1793. The 1½-story frame building is two-bays by one-bay wide with a massive stone chimney. The side-gable structure faces south. Less common were two-room kitchen buildings, such as one found at Dowden's Luck (c1824-40). One room may have been used as slave quarters.3

On some plantations, kitchen buildings were attached to the main house by a covered walkway or hyphen.4 A brick kitchen was attached to the main house at Hanover, built c1801-4. The brick on the front facade of both sections is laid in Flemish bond. In the post-Civil War era, the owners enlarged and updated the house, enclosing the breezeway with a two story polygonal bay addition, and converting the kitchen into a dining room.

Several houses grew to incorporate kitchens that were originally detached. A stone kitchen at the Darnall Place (late 1700s) is attached to the main house by a frame addition, as is a log kitchen at Valhalla (1835). A log outbuilding covered with siding at the A. J. Cashell Farm may be a summer kitchen or a wash house. The structure has a large rear brick chimney, and a projecting wood shingle roof with brackets.

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4Vlach, p.45.
Springhouses and Dairies

Used for storing milk products, springhouses were built over or near springs, and hence were often located far from the dwelling house. Most springhouses are gable-front structures constructed of stone, often banked into a hillside. Louvered vents aided in keeping milk and butter cool. Farmers not blessed with a nearby spring constructed a dairy, which served the same function as a springhouse and was outfitted with a trough in a sunken floor. Cool water and perhaps ice was used to preserve milk. The 12’ x 15’ stone outbuilding at Dowden’s Luck, near Poolesville, was described as a dairy in an 1842 inventory. In research conducted in the late 20th century on Montgomery County outbuildings used to store milk products, the majority have been described as springhouses. Site inspections are needed to determine which are truly built on a spring and which are actually dairies.5

Several early springhouses have supported extended gable roofs, often twice the length of the building itself. A fine example is a stone springhouse at Friends Advice, near Boyds, inscribed with the date of 1806. Square posts support a wood shingle roof, and steps lead down to the front door. A frame springhouse at the White-Carlin Farm, Boyds, (c1793) has a front-gable roof supported on end by stripped sapling trunks. The structure is built into a hillside with the front door down hill. At Locust Hill (1868) a stone springhouse has louvered windows on its side elevations.

Springhouses with unsupported cantilevered roofs are found on farms established in the second quarter of 1800s, as at Valhalla and Bowman’s Store. The Conley Farm (1830s) and Willow Grove (c1850) have stone

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springhouses with a projecting clapboard gable end, and steps lead down
to the door and sunken floor.

By the third quarter of the 1800s, farmers tended to build spring-
houses with roofs that did not project over the entrance. Stone spring-
houses with front gable roofs that do not project are found at the Brewer 
Farm (1861), Locust Hill (1868), North Potomac’s Harriss Farm 
(by 1878), and Rocklands (1870). An early example is found on a stone 
springhouse at Inverness, an 1830 farmstead.

In addition to the dairy at Dowden’s Luck, one of the few positively identified 
dairies is a log dairy at the James Pearré Farm, established in 1857, in Dickerson. Another is a 
stone dairy at East Oaks, which probably dates from the second quarter of the 1800s. The 
structure has a projecting gable roof and, on the interior, a deep trough in its floor.

Smokehouses
Smokehouses provided a smoking chamber for 
preservation of a family’s meat supply. Most 
smokehouses were square in plan with gable 
front roof and no windows. Smoke came from 
an open fire in the middle of the floor and was 
often vented through holes under the eaves, or 
less commonly a chimney. About half of the 
existing Montgomery County smokehouses are 
of log construction. One third are built of stone 
and about one fifth of brick. In Maryland, 
smokehouses were often called meat houses.6

Log smokehouses survive along the Patuxent and Potomac watersheds and in the 
northern region. Most have front gable roofs and weatherboard siding in 
the gable end. Logs were typically chinked with stone. A typical log 
smokehouse, built at Old Chiswell Place, Poolesville, was built by 1803. 
Pleasant View (1868-71) has an unusually large gable-front log building 
that may have been a smokehouse. Side-gable smokehouses are at 
Retirement (1842), in the Olney area, and the James Pearré Farm 
(c1857-60), in Dickerson, which has the uncommon feature of a chimney.

Nearly all the brick smokehouses are gable front buildings. Typical is 
the 12’ x 15’ structure at Dowden’s Luck, near Poolesville, built by 1842. 
The gable end is pierced with holes to vent smoke. In the eastern region, 
the O’Hare House (c1825) has an especially fine brick smokehouse with 
a high stone foundation and a diamond pattern of vents in the gable.

Stone smokehouses are found mainly along the Patuxent watershed. 
Among the earliest is likely the smokehouse of uncoursed stone at Henry 
Gaither’s Pleasant Fields (c1775-99). Milton’s smoke house has Greek Revival influence in its cubical form, hip roof, and cupola vent. 

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6A few frame smokehouses are found in the county, dating from the second half of the 19th century.
Holland family’s Landgate farm (established by 1865) has a 12’ x 12’ brick smokehouse. The smokehouse at Della Brooke (1817) has an unusual roof projection on the eaves side over a central door. Such projections, more typical on gable ends, are thought to have been used for suspending animal carcasses.

Frame smokehouses appear to date mainly from the third quarter of the 1800s. At least two examples have bells mounted on gable ends, probably used to call workers in from the field. These are found at Mendelsohn Terrace and the Byrne-Warfield House, both located in the northern region. The smoke house at Locust Hill, a farm established in 1868, has board and batten siding and a projecting gable roof.

**Dual Use Outbuildings**

In most cases, domestic outbuildings served a single main purpose. Less common were dual purpose outbuildings. Several Montgomery County farmsteads have two-part outbuildings that combine functions of smokehouse and springhouse or kitchen and icehouse.

Several surviving examples of these domestic outbuildings were two-story structures typically banked into a hillside. The two-story outbuilding at Woodlawn, has an exterior staircase leading to a second level entrance on the eaves side of the structure. This early 19th-century building had a springhouse on the first level and smokehouse on the second. A summer kitchen and springhouse are combined in a two-story building at Mount Ephraim, near Dickerson, which dates from 1868. The structure is built into a bank so that the upper kitchen level, built of brick, is accessed on the

Below left: This two level outbuilding stands next to the Needwood mansion. The projecting roof gable protects an exterior staircase. The lower level was probably either a dairy or icehouse. The original use of the upper room, measuring 18’ x 12’, is unknown. The brick chimney, which is not original to the structure, was connected to a stove that heated the space for farm workers in the early 20th century. William George Robertson built the main dwelling in 1856 on land he inherited from his father in 1842.

Opposite: Banked into a hillside, this stone outbuilding at Elton consists of an upper level smokehouse and a lower level springhouse. Elton was owned in the late 1700s by Henry Griffith, and then by George Gaither from 1822.
uphill side and lower springhouse, built of stone, from the downhill side.

Another group of two-story, dual-use outbuildings have gable-end roof projections that shelter second-level doorways. At Needwood, established 1856, a two-story outbuilding is said to have had a dairy or icehouse on the first level. The second level housed workers in later years, but its original use is unknown. A similar structure is found at Oatland, established 1875. Both buildings have louvered windows on the eaves side of the first story. The Waters Farm of 1790 had a similar dual use outbuilding with second story landing and balustrade. At the Hilary Pyles Farm (mid-1800s), a two-story frame springhouse, covered with board and batten siding, has a loft room accessed from the gable end.

Other dual use outbuildings were one-story structures, used as a combination springhouse and smokehouse. At Elton, near Brookeville, the c1783 farmstead includes such a stone dual-use outbuilding built into a hillside. Attached to the downhill side of the gable-front smokehouse is a springhouse. At the Darnall Place, of c1808, and Harewood, of the late 1700s, one-story, side-gable structures serve as springhouse and smokehouse.
Wash Houses

The wash house, a building used for laundry activities, usually contained a fireplace for heating water and large wash tubs. Wash houses are similar in form to spring houses, having a front gable, projecting roof. Unlike spring houses, wash houses typically have a chimney at the rear gable. While spring houses usually only have louvered vents, wash houses frequently are lit with glass pane windows. The Martin Fisher Farm, near Poolesville, has a stone wash house with side windows and a rear chimney. At the Sellman Farm, near Dickerson, a stone wash house has a rear chimney and nearby stands a pump. Andrew J. Cashell established his farm about 1868. The Cashell Farm includes a log wash house with bracketed projecting roof and large brick chimney.7

Slave Quarters

Tangible reminders of the practice of slavery are found in houses inhabited by slaves, known as slave quarters. Plantations further south typically had small villages of geometrically arranged slave cabins placed far from the main dwelling house. In contrast, local plantations, with a smaller slave population, were located in close proximity to the main house. Because the form of a slave quarter so closely resembles a kitchen house or other outbuilding, their identification has not always been definitive. One characteristic difference between the two types of structures appears to be their construction material. The majority of extant examples are built of stone. Stone quarters are typical of Mid-Atlantic plantations.8

Most slave quarters appear to have been duplexes, designed to house more than one family. At Dowden’s Luck a two-room stone slave quarter, described in an 1842 inventory as measuring 16’ x 24’, has an end chimney. The structure is built of rubblestone with cut stone quoining. Similar quarters are found at East Oaks. A log quarter at Inverness was expanded into a two-room structure with a stone addition. One of the largest quarters still standing in Montgomery County is located behind the Overseer’s House for the Montevideo estate, on River Road. Built in 1835, the stone ell-shaped structure has a kitchen at one end and a dormitory at the other. The building is constructed around a courtyard behind the main dwelling.

1Lounsbury, pp.208, 398.
2Vlach, Back of the Big House, pp.154-8, 185.
At the Far View estate, the slave quarter, like the main dwelling and bank barn, is built of stone. Believed to date from early 1800s, the Far View quarter has substantial quoining blocks. The quarter has four rooms and a large fireplace with a cellar lit by an iron barred window.

Several slave quarters were more than one story tall. The Richard White Farm, c1846, near Poolesville, contains a two-story sandstone house said to have been used as a slave quarter, probably dating from c1846 when the main house was built. The upper level of a two-story stone quarter at the Darnall Farm (late 1700s) is accessed only through a gable end door—the building has no interior stair. Mount Carmel’s 1½-story stone slave quarter has stone and brick chimneys at each gable end and is inscribed with the date 1833. Other stone buildings possibly used as slave quarters stand are found at Annington (1813), Stoney Castle (mid-1800s), and the Brewer House (c1857-61).

Below: At Mount Carmel, near Dickerson, a 1½-story stone slave quarter was built in 1833. The quarter, which measures 36’ x 16’, appears to have been built to house more than one family, since each end of the structure has its own fireplace and exterior door. The construction date is incised in one chimney. In 1860 nine slaves worked the Mount Carmel plantation.
Ice Houses

Farmers used ice houses to store blocks of ice and preserve dairy and meat supplies. The structures were frequently excavated ten to twenty feet below ground to provide the greatest degree of insulation. The ice was cut from ponds or other waterways and packed in grass or sawdust, with drains provided for inevitable warm weather melting.9

A resident of the Great Falls Tavern recalled ice harvesting on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, about 1902. “You hired men by the day for this, and they’d cut pieces a foot and a half to two feet thick—and they could be thicker, depending on the winter.” The ice, cut for the next summer, was stored at an ice house near the tavern.10 At their estate known as Silver Spring, the Blair family preserved oysters in the ice house during the Civil War.11 Excavated gable roof ice houses still stand at Montevideo, near Seneca, and the Edward Chiswell Farm, near Poolesville. A vaulted stone ice house at Gittings Ha Ha was converted into a bomb shelter in the 1940s. The estate was established in the mid to late 1700s. The ice house at Friends Advice was built about 1880. At the Germantown Pleasant Fields, an ice house once stood a few yards northwest of the main dwelling. The ice house and an ice pond had been constructed about 1900. Other properties that once had ice houses include the Overseer’s House of Montevideo, Rockville’s Beall-Dawson House, East Oaks, and the Sellman Farm, Mouth of Monocacy Road. The Washington Grove Camp Meeting Association built an ice house on the lot now occupied by the Washington Grove Post Office. An ice pond yielded over 300 tons of ice in its first season, in 1910.12

AGRICULTURAL OUTBUILDINGS

Bank Barns
By the early 1800s, the Pennsylvania bank barn was widely adopted throughout central and upper Montgomery County. These large barns were built into a hillside with the lower stable located downhill and upper loft area on the uphill area. A central ramp enabled farmers to drive wagons into the loft to unload hay. Approximately 130 bank barns have been identified in Montgomery County, dating from the 1820s to the 1890s.

Bank barns first appeared in southeastern Pennsylvania in the late 1600s and are based on Swiss German prototypes. As people migrated south from Pennsylvania, they brought building traditions with them. Cultural geographers have identified a Pennsylvania bank barn domain, an area with dense and continuous distribution of bank barns that extends into the Shenandoah Valley. Montgomery County is the southernmost limit of the bank barn domain in Maryland. The multi-purpose structures could hold a

variety of livestock in the basement stable, and, on the upper level, farmers could process and store grains, hay, and straw. A defining feature of the bank barn is the extension of the upper level over the lower level stable doors, creating a cantilever known as a forebay (p. 85). Some barns in the county were built in natural banks, while others were built up with mounded earth to create the wagon ramp to the loft.

Early bank barns in the county, dating from the 1830s, were known as Switzer barns, in reference to their origins. Bank barns prototypes have been identified in the southeastern alpine region of Switzerland.14 An 1842 inventory describes an outbuilding at Dowden's Luck as a “brick switzer barn 22' x 48' (no longer standing). An 1832 advertisement for Mount Nebo refers to a “new switzer barn” (no longer standing).

Most bank barns were frame with stone foundations. Many had horizontal siding with louvered windows for ventilation. In the mid-1800s, cupolas were built for increased air circulation. The barn at the Hilary Pyles Farm has louvered windows with pedimented heads, three metal ventilators and horizontal weatherboard siding. On the lower stable level of the Pyles barn, ventilating slats take the place of windows found on many Montgomery County barns.15 Some barn builders installed vertical board siding with gaps to allow sufficient ventilation, eliminating the need for louvered windows. To compensate esthetically for their loss, farmers painted imitation windows on the exterior of barns. Louvered windows didn’t completely lose favor as farmers continued to use them as late as 1898, as seen at the Bussard Farm. One of the largest bank barns in the county is at the White-Carlin Farm. The structure is 140' x 45', aired with

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14Ensminger, pp.1-37.
15Barns with such a system of ventilating slats have been identified in other areas with Pennsylvania German influence, including Adams County, Illinois. Ensminger, pp.167-8.
The Woodlawn bank barn (1832) is a double decker barn with a two-level loft and stone-arched forebay. Dr. William Palmer, a medical doctor, moved to Montgomery County from Pennsylvania in 1815 and later purchased the Woodlawn estate near Sandy Spring. Palmer engaged master stonemason Isaac Holland to build a magnificent stone bank barn in 1832. The exceptional three-story structure has large round-arched openings on the basement level.

The bank barn at the Hilary Pyles Farm, Dawsonville, has horizontal drop siding, yet is well ventilated with pedimented louvered windows, cupolas, and basement level slatted openings. Typical of Montgomery County barns, it has a closed forebay, meaning that the end walls of the stable level extend the full depth of the forebay. The Pyles family owned and operated the farm from 1837 until 1939.

Several Montgomery County bank barns were constructed of stone. A magnificent stone bank barn at the Trundle Farm has stone outsheds flanking the wagon ramp. Examples of this type of barn have been identified from Lancaster County to northern Maryland. The extensions hold granary rooms, making more room on the main interior for hay and straw storage. Sandstone quoins, sills and lintels highlight the stonework. Walls are vented with louvered windows. On the downhill side, the cantilevered forebay is of wood construction. Stone bank barns at East Oaks and Inverness, probably built about 1818-1830, have slotted openings in the stonework to provide ventilation.

Another way to increase hay and straw storage was to provide an additional loft level. The double-decker barn consists of a two-level loft and basement stable. The Woodlawn barn, near Sandy Spring, is similar five wooden roof ventilators and housing at one time 87 cows and 12 horses (p. 85). The Woodlawn bank barn (1832) is a double decker barn with a two-level loft and stone-arched forebay. Dr. William Palmer, a medical doctor, moved to Montgomery County from Pennsylvania in 1815 and later purchased the Woodlawn estate near Sandy Spring. Palmer engaged master stonemason Isaac Holland to build a magnificent stone bank barn in 1832. The exceptional three-story structure has large round-arched openings on the basement level.

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to other stone double deckers associated with English Quakers in Chester County, Pennsylvania, right down to the stone-arched forebay. Master stonemason Isaac Holland built the exceptional stone bank barn in 1832. Like Woodlawn, the nearby Far View stone bank barn has a hayloft door on the stable façade. A gable end carving records the construction date of 1836. English-influenced features on the Far View barn are quoin doors and absence of a forebay. Bank barns continued to be built in the early 1900s. At Mendelsohn Terrace a very late bank barn, built in the 1920s, has corrugated metal siding and a rusticated concrete block foundation.

Corncribs

The earliest corncribs were typically single-crib log structures. Rare surviving examples of these early structures are found at Chiswell Place, near Poolesville, and the James Magruder Farm, near Laytonsville. Most corncribs are of the double-crib, drive-through variety typical of the Mid-Atlantic region, such as the one found at Rocklands. This common or double corncrib has a center section large enough to allow a wagon to pass through for unloading. Lofts overhead stored surplus corn or drying seed corn.

17 Ensminger, pp.102-3, 133-5.
18 Ensminger, p.113.
The James Pearré Farm, a farmstead established near Dickerson about 1860, has a log double crib. Several single cribs in the county have shed roof covered drives on both sides. Whether original or later additions, the covered areas could shelter the farm machinery that had become widespread by the late 1800s. Such corncribs are found at the Poolesville farms of East Oaks and Chiswell Place. Generally, corncribs are free standing, though some were attached to bank barns. The term "cornhouse" was in use in the county in the mid-1800s. A sales notice of 1856 for Greenwood, near Poolesville, listed a cornhouse among outbuildings on the 300-acre farmstead.

Dairy Barns

Significant advances were made in farming practices in the period between the two world wars, including technological innovations of pasteurization, sanitation, refrigeration, and the establishment of cooperatives for the distribution of milk. Maple Spring Farm was a model dairy farm, described in 1957 as the best-equipped farm in Maryland. In contrast to earlier general-purpose bank barns of post and beam construction, the modern dairy barn was constructed specifically for housing cattle and their feed and reflected new sanitation regulations. Concrete floors and walls were more easily cleaned and disinfected and ceilings with tight-fitting boards kept debris from falling below. Hopper windows and steel cupolas ventilated both levels. The arched roof with its self-supporting truss, or braced rafter frame, sheltered an unobstructed hayloft for increased storage capacity. The dairy barns were equipped with first level cow stanchions, airy second story hayloft, silo, and attached milk house. Maple Spring Farm had the first milking parlor in the county, established about 1943. The first bulk milk tank in the Virginia-Maryland Coop region was installed in the early 1950s at Kingstead Farm.

The Lawrence White Farm, on Martinsburg Road, includes a rare example of a Gothic roof dairy barn built by Walter Matthews. Matthews bought the traditional general farm in 1932 and converted it into a dairy operation, delivering milk as far as Washington, D.C.