

COMMENTARY ON THE DRANE HOUSE

1 The view of Accident was taken from Bowser Hill on the east across the valley to the west. Hickory Ridge can be seen in the background. The village is located at the foot of the ridge on parts of two military lots. The Drane House is located to the east of Accident.

2 This is the oldest known picture of the Drane House, taken sometime in the 1920's by Leo Beachy, a well-known photographer from Mt. Nebo near Grantsville, MD. It is not known when or by whom the ship siding was placed on the log structure. Except for the small windows, all others were six over six. 70

3 This picture was taken before 1948. The lady standing on the porch is Mariah Drane, daughter of Marien Drane and grand-daughter of James Drane who managed the tobacco plantation. Mariah was very fond of the homestead and visited it as much as possible. She once said, "I think this is the loveliest spot in the valley". It is possible that she was quite right. Mariah was a founding member of the Garrett County Historical Society and gave some artifacts to the society's museum. She died in 1948. 50

4 Log cabin chimneys have different styles and most people locally believed that the Drane House chimney was first constructed as you see it. However, when the house was disassembled, positive evidence was discovered that it was constructed flush against the

structure. Through the course of years the chimney began slowly sinking, especially on the west side until it gradually pulled away from the house. It toppled in February 1971. The picture was taken in 1958.

5 James Drane lived on his Accident plantation from 1803 until his death June 27, 1828. The field stone marker shows the location of his grave. The hand engraved inscription reads June 27, 1828 J D. The family burial plot was set aside just north of the house and in time was grown over with brush. It is very likely that his wife Priscilla lies beside her husband in an unmarked grave. A German Lutheran congregation bought (1850) one-quarter acre of land from Elizabeth Stouffer which included the Drane burial plot. A church was erected and the remainder of land was used as a cemetery. Today the cemetery belongs to Zion Lutheran Church.

A marble marker was provided by the Federal Government by efforts of the Garrett County Historical Society in 1943.

The tall monument marks the grave of Singleton Townshend, a tobacco farmer at Hoyes. James and Singleton were good friends and enjoyed friendly arguments. A story is told of a request made by the two men. The request required that they be buried, feet adjacent, so that on the day of resurrection they would arise and begin their discussion where they had left off. The picture was taken in 1958.

6 This picture was taken in 1959. The spring which supplied water for the Drane House was located south of the house. No steps were ever built down the slope, making it difficult to carry water.

William Drane told the following story: One afternoon all the men were working in the fields when a bear came out of the woods near the Drane spring while Marien was getting water. Mrs. Drane shot the bear and wounded it. One of the Negro women finished it in the head with an axe. (Nancy Strauss is the young girl.)

7 This picture was taken in 1969. The house is still in good condition. It was vacant since 1952.

8 The picture was taken in the 1960's. The little girl in front is Donna Shoemaker who found an old clay pipe while a fourth grade group was touring the house. Mr. Richter, the owner of the house, is at the left and Mary Strauss, teacher, at the right. She welcomed Mr. Richter's hospitality while her pupils visited the Drane House each spring.

9 The picture was taken in 1981. Orlando Ridout of MHT came in 1983 to evaluate the house. He recommended it as a possible building to be considered as a historical preservation. Nothing more was done until ACHS was organized in 1987 to attempt to preserve the oldest family home in Accident.

10 The picture was taken in 1981. The stone chimney which
toppled in February, 1971, can easily be seen as the stone heap
on the ground. The structure looks like a ghost house or the
"ragged beggar sleeping".

11 The picture was taken in the latter part of the 1980's.
Deterioration can easily be seen, especially where the porch
is located.

12 Some of the insul covering has been removed above the outside
door. Notice the shadow mark where a stoop once existed. Mr.
Richter said that it was latticed on each side with two benches
along the lattice. A boot scraper was located by the entrance
to clean the mud from shoes before entering the house.

13 The picture was taken in 1988, showing the north facade
of the house. Deterioration is beginning to take its toll.

14 The picture was taken in 1988, showing the south facade of
the structure. The insul covering and ships siding have partly
been removed to determine the condition of the logs. Note the
upright supports. Douglas Reed, a log house expert, was unable
to explain exactly why the logs had been removed from the
original crib.

15 Trees needed to be cut from around the house so Ernest Metz, project forester, marked those that needed to be felled. MHT approved the marked ones and the trees were cut during the fall of 1988 by Ernest Beitzel's workmen. Ernest took the logs for "pay". In February of 1989 some firewood was cut from the limbs and the remainder was burned with the help of the town workers.

16 This picture was taken in early spring of 1989 when Louis Tice and George Pinkham came to check the condition of the house. Both are experienced with log house construction. Pinkham helped to reconstruct Old Salem Village in WV.

17 Charles Strauss was given permission to cut locust posts from the State forest. The town boys helped with the work. In April of 1989 Charles Strauss, Fred Kahl and Raymond Georg debarked the posts and the town boys helped to plant them.

18 The County Commissioners contributed toward the project by having the county roads group improve the access roads to the Drane site and construct a parking lot.

19 By the end of May 1989 the access roads and parking lot were completed. The road workers did excellent work.

20 The picture was taken in December, 1989. MHT required the roof to be covered to prevent further rain and snow from falling inside the house. Fred Kahl and the town boys did the covering.

21 Goodwin and Associates were paid by the state to do the archeological digs at the Drane site. The first digs were done during January of 1990. The digs were done around the house to determine evidence of the east fireplace, a possible outside door on the south side, the condition of the base where the west fireplace once existed and the possibility of an early porch by the front door on the north. No outside evidence was found for an east fireplace, an outside door on the south side or early porch on the north side. The base of the west fireplace was uncovered and a stone patio was uncovered in front of the outside door on the north side.

22 This picture was taken in 1991, showing the town boys taking the cover off the roof. A. J. Wiley had been contracted to do the work on the Drane House.

23 By October 1991 Wiley's men began the job of disassembling the structure. David Hetrick and a workman can be seen removing the shingles.

24 The 42' log at the top of the square is being readied to let it slide down the ladders to the ground. It landed safely

at the bottom but the ladder on the far end was bent badly.

25 The picture was taken in November, 1991, showing a part
of the east wall of the west crib. It is the only original
part of the house left intact.

26 The last major job done in 1991 was the erection of the
stone pillars.

27 Cleaning the logs to disinfect and apply waterproofing was
begun in 1992. The best ones were retained for use in the house.

28 Reconstructing the house with original and new material
was required by MHT. No material was used from any other
buildings. Thus, all material remains unique to the Drane House.

29 The rafters are an interesting part of the house. To use
as much of the original material as possible, old and new rafters
were alternated. These are referred to as "sister rafters".
The new rafters are the major support for the roof.

30 The shingles are being nailed to the slats on the north
side. When this was completed, phase I was also completed. By
June 30, 1992, Wiley had met his contract.