

SHERMAN-FISHER-SHELLMAN HOUSE



A Piedmont Maryland House Museum

The Restoration Project

Planning for the restoration of the Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House began in 1983 when the Historical Society retained architect Michael F. Trostel, F.A.I.A. to prepare a long-range plan for the organization's properties. Mr. Trostel's initial report was completed in 1984 and job specifications and measured drawings were requested in 1987. During the planning phase, the Society secured a state grant (\$50,000) and mounted a successful capital campaign (\$186,000) to fund the restoration. Mr. Trostel's plan included returning the floor plan to its 1807 configuration, restoring selected architectural details,

installing modern mechanical systems and repainting interior and exterior woodwork with period colors.

The restoration work began in the fall of 1988 with removal of the porch, windows and french doors on the west facade. Contracts for restoration carpentry, heating and air conditioning, electrical systems and repainting were awarded in January 1989. These contracts were substantially completed in September 1990.

The Historical Society has adopted a phased interpretation plan for the site that encompasses architectural history, occupants, furnishings and interior design, domestic activities and landscape history. A predominant theme will be distinctive characteristics of Pennsylvania German culture. Furnished rooms, restored grounds and outbuildings, temporary exhibits, publications and video programs will be the primary interpretive elements.

The initial phase will focus on the house as an artifact and its restoration. Eventually, all first and second-floor rooms will be accurately furnished. At least one room will be furnished to represent each of the three families who resided in the house. The final phase will deal with the historic landscape. Archaeological excavations should provide sufficient evidence to allow selected restoration of missing outbuildings, fences and the gardens.

The Residents

Jacob Sherman, Innkeeper

Jacob Sherman (1756-1822) is thought to have built this house when he retired from innkeeping c.1807. He was the son of George Jacob Sherman (1724-1812) and Eva Kunigunda Grieschbaum (1726-1784). The elder Sherman was born at Niederhochstadt in the German Palatinate. He immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1749 settling near relatives living in western Berks County. Sometime after 1759 he moved to the area of Sherman's Church, located on the Carlisle-Hanover-Baltimore road between Hanover, Pennsylvania, and Manchester, Maryland, where he operated a tavern. By 1778, he had moved to Littlestown, Pennsylvania, where he also operated a tavern.

George Jacob Sherman purchased an improved lot (now 205 East Main Street) in the New London section of Westminster in 1775 and established Jacob as an innkeeper. Operating a tavern in the eighteenth century was a relatively easy and lucrative occupation, especially in a growing community such as Westminster.

Four years after coming to Maryland, Jacob married Maria Elizabeth Wagner (1758-1842), a daughter of Michael (1723-1795) and Maria Elizabeth Schuee Wagner (1725-1789). The Wagners had been born in Michelfeld, Schwaben, Wurtemberg, married in Riebersdorf in 1744, immigrated to Philadelphia in 1749 and moved to Frederick County, Maryland, by 1753. The Shermans probably lived in the tavern. Records of Krider's Evangelical Lutheran Church near Westminster show that Elizabeth Sherman communed periodically from July 1785 until 1836 and that Jacob was Reformed.

Sherman purchased his first land, a sixty-acre part of "Timber Ridge" and a twelve-acre part of "Bedford Resurveyed" from his father-in-law in 1787. The "Timber Ridge" property, located at the west end of Westminster, had been divided into lots by Captain John White in 1765. Sherman acquired some unsold lots and the valuable annual ground rents due on lots which had been sold in leasehold.

George Jacob Sherman began disposing of his properties in 1787. Jacob received the Westminster tavern property and two adjacent lots and his older brother George (1748-1822) of Littlestown, Pennsylvania, received a tavern in that town.

Over the next two decades, Jacob Sherman acquired additional land holdings near Westminster. In 1794, he patented a 136 1/2 acre tract he called "Discovery" located near Bachman's Valley. Four years later he was assessed for parts of "Brown's Plague," "Hard Grubbing," "Neglect" and "Timber Ridge," a 143-acre parcel near Westminster. "Timber Ridge" was improved with a log house and barn. Sherman patented his Westminster area properties as "Sherman's Retreat" in 1799. Sherman was also assessed for two and one-quarter lots in Westminster and was due annual ground rents from fifty-two lots. Most of these lots had been surveyed off of "Timber Ridge." Sherman's lots stretched from present day Court Street westward to Longwell Avenue.

Jacob Sherman purchased a small addition to his lot opposite his tavern in May 1806 from William Winchester, Jr. (1750-1812), a son of the founder of Westminster. Construction of his new residence probably began almost immediately and was substantially completed a year later when Sherman sold the property for a token fee of five shillings to his son-in-law David Shriver, Jr., (1769-1852).

Earlier writers have noted an oral tradition that Jacob Sherman built the house as a belated wedding present for his only daughter Eve (d.1854) and her husband David Shriver, Jr. It is far more likely that Sherman, who was at the typical retirement age of fifty, was building a new residence in order to retire from innkeeping. In this period it was not uncommon for a successful man of his age to share a large residence with a child's family. In most cases, the property passed to the child's family at the death of the parents.

The Sherman-Shriver Household, 1807-1812

The Shrivens were already living in the house in May 1807 when Jacob Sherman deeded the property to David. David was born at Little Pipe Creek, near Westminster, the second son of David Shriver, Sr., (1735-1826) and his wife Rebecca Ferree Shriver (1742-1812). The younger David constructed the grist mill and tannery complex at Union Mills, Maryland, in 1797 in partnership with his older brother Andrew (1762-1847). David relinquished his interest in the mill in 1803 to accept an appointment to superintend the construction of the Baltimore-Reisterstown turnpike. In the same year he married Eve, the only child of Jacob and Elizabeth Sherman. Their marriage united two of the most prominent local Pennsylvania German families.

David Shriver, Jr., became active in public service during his residency. He was elected in 1807 to represent Frederick County in the Maryland Assembly and was also commissioned in 1808 as Paymaster of the 20th Regiment, Maryland Militia. Shriver had previously served as the rifle company captain and major in this regiment from 1794-1799.

The Federal Census of 1810 provides evidence that the Shermans lived with the Shriver household. Jacob Sherman does not appear as a head of a household which suggests that he was living with another family. The Shriver household included David and Eve, their two sons Jacob Sherman Shriver (1805-1876) and William Wagoner Shriver (1808-1880), their daughter Elizabeth Sherman Shriver (b. 1806), two adults over forty-five who were undoubtedly the Shermans, a white man and a woman, both aged sixteen to twenty-six, and six black slaves.

Several letters written by David Shriver, Jr. to his brother Andrew reveal the probable identity and occupation of the young woman. On 2 February 1808 he wrote, ". . . I cannot now leave home Betsey Maxfield is on a visit to her mothers - Eve has had a bad spell and is not yet over it." Betsey may not have remained with the Shrivens since a letter dated 26 October 1810 mentions another woman. "Polly Day the girl that lives with us has the bilious collick and is dangerously ill I do not now expect her to get over it in Consequence Eve and the Child are Sick the house is constantly full of nurses." Both women were probably nannies for the Shriver children.

David Shriver, Jr. completed his work on the Reisterstown turnpike in 1810 and soon became a somewhat reluctant candidate to superintendent the proposed extension of the National Road from Cumberland, Maryland to Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia). Shriver felt that he was being poorly treated and, therefore, hesitated to seek the position. In a 16 February 1811 letter to his brother Andrew, who was in Washington, D.C., pushing David's candidacy, David stated that he would "be d---d if he would beg for" the position.

In the same letter, David Shriver reported a family tragedy, "while at Frederick, Eve was taken sick while alone, fell against the stove and lay in that way until she came to, with her face immediately against the plate. She has burned herself in a shocking manner. The roasted part is not yet separated from the sound. It is impossible to say how bad the wound will be as yet, but at best is shocking in the extreme. She will in a day or two be taken with her disorder again with the wound I fear will be attended with bad consequences [sic]." Eve Sherman, who may have suffered from epilepsy, was permanently scarred.

Despite his reservations, David Shriver accepted the appointment to superintend construction of the National Road from Cumberland. His decision required the family's removal to Cumberland. Shriver sold the house to his father-in-law, Jacob Sherman, for \$3,250 on 4 August 1812. The Shriver's departure appears to have caused or widened a rift with the Shermans.

Jacob and Elizabeth Sherman Household 1812-1822

Little is known about the last decade of Jacob Sherman's life beyond his periodic land transactions. Presumably, he and Elizabeth continued to live much as they had when the Shriver's shared the house. The Federal Census of 1820 lists ten persons in the household, the Shermans, and eight black slaves. Four of the slaves were involved in agricultural work, most likely growing food for the household or flax for the production of woven linen cloth.

Jacob Sherman was taken ill in the spring of 1822. He was attended by Dr. William Willis (1800-1841) who lived two doors to the east of the Shermans. Dr. Willis made daily visits from 31 May to 6 July. His account book shows that he usually prescribed Adit et Curat Vulnus; a typical visit cost \$1.50. On separate occasions Willis treated Sherman with Emplast Adhesive, Sal Epsom, Adit et Carb Ammonia and "Tonic Ingredients." Jacob Sherman died on 7 July 1822 and was buried in the Westminster Cemetery. His tombstone made by David Johnson is inscribed with a common nineteenth century epitaph:

Remember man as you pass by,
As you are now so once was I
As I am now you soon shall be
Prepare for death and follow me.

Jacob Sherman's will and estate papers provide some details about the property, daily life, and family conflict. Sherman bequeathed to his "Beloved wife Elizabeth" livestock, household and kitchen furniture, "all the Manufactured Cloth" and the "raw materials. . . Not Manufactured," and six black slaves. Mrs. Sherman also received all the rents and profits due on his real estate until 1829 when Sherman's grandson William Wagoner Shriver reached age twenty-one. William also inherited Sherman's "plantation" or farm near Westminster. The widow was also allowed to live in the house until her death and received the ground rents due on the Westminster lots and \$1,000 in cash to dispose of as she thought proper. The will also provided that at her death the house and other properties adjoining Westminster would pass to Jacob Sherman Shriver. The remaining property was divided equally between the three Shriver children. Eve Shriver received a small bequest of \$500.



Jacob Sherman Shriver

David and Eve Shriver contested the will by questioning Sherman's sanity since the will was executed shortly before his death. The Orphan's Court of Frederick County rejected their motion and directed the Shrivvers to pay court costs of over \$550. A Maryland Court of Appeals decree required the estate of Jacob Sherman to pay slightly less than one-half of the court costs. These divisive cases between family members were the culmination of differences between Jacob Sherman and the Shrivvers.

Jacob Sherman manumitted six of his eight slaves through his will, a fairly common practice by Pennsylvania Germans in this period. Three men, Joshua Juniper (born c. 1794), Basil Gibson (born c. 1796) and Amos (born c. 1797), were to be free one year after Sherman's death. Each also received a generous legacy of \$150 "as compensation for their services rendered." Freedom certificates recorded at the Frederick County Court House provide a physical description, age and other information about these men. Joshua was five feet, six and three-quarters inches high and had a scar on "his little finger of the left Hand occasioned by the cut of a sickle and the nail cut off the third finger on the farm Hand and has lost his fore teeth." Basil was five feet four and one-quarter inches high was scarred on his face, breast, arms, hands and left leg. The clerk also noted that Basil had "very rough hands." Amos was five feet six inches high and had several scars on his fingers. All three men had been raised in the vicinity of Westminster and each probably worked primarily as farm laborers, as evidenced by their many scars.

The will also stated that Mary Key (1812-1892) was to be free on her twenty-first birthday 23 August 1833. Elizabeth Sherman apparently did not require Mary's services and sold her in 1823 to Jacob Reese (1798-1872), a Westminster merchant. Mary's sister Eliza (b. 1815) was also to be free on her twenty-first birthday 12 March 1836. Sally Key (c. 1771-1855) and Lucy Behoe (1802-1851) were to serve until the death of Elizabeth Sherman. Jacob Sherman purchased Sally from William Pepple on 8 December 1784 for "the Sum of fifty eight pounds 10 shillings." Pepple had purchased her from Thomas Willson of Little Pipe Creek. Sally and Lucy each received legacies of \$150.

Two other slaves, Matilda and Patience, apparently were not considered close to family members and were not devised to the widow. Matilda was sold at public auction to Jacob Hull; it is not clear what became of Patience.

The inventory of Jacob Sherman's personal property provides considerable details about room usage, household furnishings, diet and the relative wealth of the household. Jacob Sherman's personal property was appraised at \$2,120.75, which amounted to perhaps one-tenth of his estate.

Sherman's inventory lists traditional Pennsylvania German items among an extensive list of Anglo-American items. The Pennsylvania German possessions were a clock and case, large German Bible, painted chest, feather beds, sauerkraut cutter and "crou tub." Among the Anglo-American items were a sideboard, corner cupboard, mahogany table, bureau, two silver watches, silver flatware and tea wares. Clearly, the Shermans had furnished their house much like their fashionable neighbors of English descent. They did, however, retain some traditional Pennsylvania German ways.

Like many of his well-to-do contemporaries, a significant portion of Sherman's wealth was in the form of promissory notes, bonds and book debts. The inventory of nearly one hundred debts due his estate totaled \$13,716.55. However, the executors considered more than one-third to be uncollectable. Sherman had a sizable sum of cash (\$1568) in his possession at his death.

Regrettably, there are no known portraits of Jacob or Elizabeth Sherman. His inventory, however, provides a few details about his appearance. The appraised value of his wearing apparel (\$90), and his ownership of two silver watches, reveals that he was well dressed. The presence of razors and a shaving box (\$.75) is evidence that he was at least partially clean shaven. Although a later resident wrote that both Shermans "spoke Dutch," [German] both almost certainly learned English.

In many ways Jacob Sherman was representative of the first generation of native-born Pennsylvania Germans who became successful in Maryland. Provided with a lucrative tavern by his generous father, Sherman easily assimilated into the local English community. He wisely invested heavily in land which provided him with dependable income and allowed for his early retirement. Business pursuits apparently satisfied his social aspirations because he did not hold public, militia or church office. Sherman's many successes, however, were tempered by family problems. His marriage produced no sons with whom to share the tavern business. His daughter suffered from a serious and little understood disease. A good relationship with his son-in-law and daughter, which resulted in the construction of a fine house for their joint residence, soured when the Shivers departed for Cumberland. The break was permanent.

Elizabeth Sherman Household 1822-1842

The provisions of Jacob Sherman's will provided his widow with a furnished home, livestock, agricultural tools, firewood, slaves and a dependable annual income from ground and other rents due on real estate. For this reason, Mrs. Sherman's lifestyle probably did not change greatly at the death of her husband.

The Federal Census of 1830 shows seven persons living in the house: Mrs. Sherman, an unidentified free white male between twenty and thirty years of age, and five black slaves. The slaves would have been Lucy Behoe, her son William Henry Behoe (b. 1828), Sally Key, Eliza Key, and her daughter Sarah Brown (b.1829). Presumably Sally and Eliza served as house servants; Lucy Behoe was probably a weaver.

On 6 September 1833 Jacob Sherman Shriver sold his interest in the house and other Westminster properties to Jacob Reese for \$5,900. One week, later Reese sold his interest to his brother-in-law John Fisher (1780-1863), cashier of the Bank of Westminster. The purchase of future rights to a property where a widow had life estate was common in this period. Presumably, the sale to John Fisher had no impact on Mrs. Sherman's living arrangements in the 1830s.

The Federal Census of 1840 shows some changes since 1830. The household included Mrs. Sherman, who was blind, an unidentified white male between thirty and forty years of age, three slaves and seven free blacks. Eliza Key had been manumitted in 1836 and her daughter Sarah Brown, although still a slave, was counted as free. Lucy Behoe and her children Frances Anna (born c.1837) and William

Henry appear to have been joined by the children's father Samuel Behoe. Samuel had been living in Baltimore in January 1838 when Mrs. Shellman sold the two children to their father for a token fee of six dollars. Six years earlier, Mrs. Sherman had manumitted William Henry and Mary Ann Behoe (b.1831). Two free boys under age ten were probably sons of Eliza Key. The three male slaves, a boy and two men, probably belonged to the unidentified white man.

Elizabeth Sherman manumitted at least one other slave before her death. On 23 April 1842 she recorded a document stating that twelve-year old Sarah Brown would be free at age 16 on 10 October 1845. On the same day she sold Sarah for a token fee to Beale Behoe (born c.1799) who likely was Lucy's brother-in-law. Sarah probably continued to live with her mother in the Sherman house.

Elizabeth Sherman died at her residence on 28 June 1842. Although she died intestate, her administrator Isaac Shriver (1777-1856) fulfilled wishes she "expressed in her life time" for bequests of personal property to Lucy Behoe, Eliza Key and Sarah Brown. Lucy received a large bequest including livestock, household furnishings and a "Weaver's Loom" all appraised at \$241.55. The latter item suggests that Lucy had been trained as a weaver. Eliza and Sarah received household goods appraised at \$50.10 and \$30.00 respectively. Lucy and Eliza, and probably Sarah, were living in the house at the time of Mrs. Sherman's death and the bequests are most likely the objects in their rooms.

John Fisher Household, 1842-1863

John Fisher (1780-1863) purchased the future rights to the house in 1833 from his brother-in-law Jacob Reese who, in turn, had purchased them from Jacob Sherman Shriver. John Fisher was the eldest son of David Fisher (1752-1813) and his wife Catherine Beckley (1750-1793). The younger Fisher was a founding director of the Bank of Westminster established in 1816. Elected cashier of this institution in 1829, he held a prestigious position in the community until his death.

The house underwent a significant renovation prior to Fisher's occupancy. The present front door and casing and the parlor mantel piece, both in the Greek Revival taste, date from this work. Fisher installed a fashionable scenic French wallpaper, entitled "Views of Brazil," in the stair hall. He also enlarged the first-floor kitchen by reducing the size of the pantry and the passage. The house was repainted and some rooms were probably wallpapered.



John Fisher

The Federal Census of 1850 shows that the household was comprised of John Fisher, then a bachelor, a brother Jacob (1783-1865), a widowed sister Elizabeth Shafer (c.1776-1853), a niece Catherine (c.1813-1892), a child Henrietta Shafer (born c.1846), a nephew John C. Frizzel (1848-1923) and Henry Mathews (born c.1800), a black servant.

John Fisher married Anna E. Morthland (c.1820-1908) on 13 November 1856. Their marriage apparently changed living arrangements for the members of the Fisher family. The Federal Census of 1860 shows John, his wife Anna, and two black servants Hannah (born c. 1830) and Lewis (born c.1839). John's brother Jacob headed a nearby household containing most of the relatives who had lived with John in 1850.

John Fisher died on 11 April 1863 and was buried in the Westminster Cemetery. At his death he possessed a large estate worth nearly \$100,000. He bequeathed the bulk of his estate – his dwelling house, two town lots opposite the Opera House, a tract of land known as “Sherman’s Meadows,” personal property and 800 shares of stock in The Bank of Westminster – to his wife in lieu of her dower right. An unmarried niece Catherine Shafer and her widowed sister Elizabeth Roop (c.1819-1906) received a house and lot “occupied by Mrs. Shelman [sic]” and fifty shares each of bank stock. Other relatives received bequests of bank stock and partial shares in real and personal property.

Shortly after John Fisher’s death, Westminster was the scene of a skirmish on 29 June 1863 between a detachment of Union Cavalry and Confederate horsemen led by Maj. Gen. J. E. B. Stuart (1833-1864). Philip Fisher (1792-1872), the deceased’s youngest brother, was visiting Anna E. Fisher in regard to settling John’s estate. Philip witnessed the charge and repulse of the Union troopers and described the engagement in a lengthy letter to his wife Sarah. Following the skirmish, Fisher wrote that a number of Confederates stopped at the City Hotel and “crossed to our pavement to receive the smiles and congratulations of their friends.” Pursuing Union cavalymen led by Maj. Gen. Alfred Pleasanton (1824-1897) arrived on June 30 and Westminster was again occupied by Union troops.

Fisher’s description of the occupation provides details about the rear lot: “The teamsters’ aides and the stragglers are the very dregs of the army. One went to sister Anna and demanded the key of her stable, took her fine horse, Stonewall Jackson. The match, Jeff Davis, was fortunately out of reach and is safe. Her fine meadow [now the site of the American Legion, Carroll Post 31], only separated by an alley from her garden, unmowed, had one hundred horses on it.”

Anna E. Fisher and John C. Frizzel, co-executors for John Fisher, sold the house in March 1864. The purchaser, George B. Jones (1812-1881) of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, was the brother of Catherine Jones Shellman (1815-1898) and trustee for the estate of her late husband, Col. James Meriwether Shellman (1801-1851).

Catherine Jones Shellman Household, 1864-1898

According to John Fisher’s 1858 will, Mrs. Shellman was then living in a house he owned at 224 East Main Street in Westminster. Mrs. Shellman began a school in that house perhaps as early as 1851 at the death of her husband. She continued teaching at her new residence.

The Shellmans were a prominent local family. Col. James M. Shellman had been an attorney, the first burgess of Westminster, a member of the Maryland Legislature, and a Maryland Militia officer. His wife Catherine was the daughter of Philip Jones (1780-1835), a Westminster merchant, and his wife Mary Beam (c.1786-1841). To the Shellmans were born Fanny Cheston Schley Shellman (1842-1909), Harry Jones Shellman (1843-1894), Mary Bostwick Shellman (1849-1938) and James Meriwether Shellman, Jr. (1851-1922).



Catherine Jones Shellman



James M. Shellman, Jr.

Confederate forces returned to Westminster shortly after the Shellmans occupied the house. Mary B. Shellman later wrote that Confederate Maj. Gen. Bradley T. Johnson (1829-1903) briefly occupied the Shellman's house for his headquarters from 6:00 p.m. to midnight on 9 July 1864.

An 1866 composition book kept by Mary while a student at the Female Collegiate Institute of Westminster notes the creation of the adjacent Sycamore Street. A letter to Nelly Fisher of Columbus, Ohio, stated "... I have not said any-thing about our Sycamore tree. It has been cut down too. They intend opening a street across to Green Street, and they thought it would be in the way."

The Federal Census of 1870 shows Catherine and her children as residents. Fanny listed her occupation as a music teacher and James worked as a printer. Ten years later the household included the same persons, except for Harry J. who had moved to Indianapolis, Indiana, where he co-founded *The Indianapolis People* newspaper. New to the household were Fanny's husband Isaac Everett Pearson, Jr., (1844-1891) an attorney; Dr. James W. Reese (1838-1917), a professor at Western Maryland College; his wife Mary Pauline Perry (1840-1890); their son Paul (1877-1944); and two black servants Mary Key (1812-1892) and Elizabeth Tyson (born c.1855).



Portrait of Mary Pauline Perry, Isaac Pearson, Jr., Mary B. Shellman, Fanny C.S. Shellman, Harry J. Shellman and Samuel D. Webster, 1867.

Isaac E. Pearson, Jr., Esq. became acquainted with the household before 1868 when he and his father (1811-1877) opened a law office in the house. On 1 August 1874 the younger Pearson advertised a new law partnership with William Whitney of Baltimore. Isaac and Fanny were married on 8 December 1874. The Pearsons divided the large parlor with an unusual partition that bisected the mantelpiece. A doorway was inserted at the easternmost

front window location to provide access to Pearson's office from the street. The 1887 Westminster city directory shows that the Pearsons also resided at 208 East Main Street which suggests that they slept in the room behind the law office.

The Reese family was well acquainted with the Shellmans and their house. Dr. Reese was a nephew of John Fisher, and Mrs. Reese's mother Elizabeth (1817-1862) was a younger sister of Catherine Jones Shellman. Dr. Reese became professor of Ancient Languages at Western Maryland College in 1870.

Dr. Reese was a graduate of Princeton University (1859) and the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York (1860). He was rector of Westminster's Ascension P. E. Church from 1864 until 1870 when ill health prompted him to accept the professorship at Western Maryland College. His appointment was opposed by some trustees on the grounds that Reese was not a Methodist Protestant but an Episcopalian. Mrs. Reese was born in Bangor, Maine, and was educated at Thorndale Academy near Taneytown, Maryland, and at Female College in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. The Reeses were living with the Shellmans before 1877 because Paul Reese later wrote that he had been born in the bedroom above the parlor.



Dr. James W. Reese and his son, Paul.

Mary Key was a house servant and mammy for the Reeses. Paul Reese recalled that his grandfather Jacob Reese bought Mary about 1823 "from the Shermans" and that she later died in the same room where she had been born. Mary was buried at Ascension P. E. Church near the Reeses and the Shellmans. Her tombstone carries the inscription: "A faithful servant in the family of Jacob Reese and of his son James W. Reese." "Lizzie" Tyson was a cook who probably worked for the entire household. Paul Reese wrote of her, "There was also Lizzie Tyson, Dictator, Tyrant, and Cook. Lizzie loved me with the true devotion of the Negro for the white children of the family, but she was the only friend of my early childhood of whom I really stood in awe. The clearest memory I have of her is, 'Git outen my kitchen.'"

The Shellman household included another boarder from c.1873 to c.1880. In May 1873, James Edwin Taylor paid the Westminster Gas Light Co. (fl. 1869-1910) for the installation of gas light service. Taylor was the president of the Taylor Manufacturing Co. of Westminster which constructed steam engines and boilers at its Court Street factory. Taylor's gas bills sharply decreased at the time of his marriage to Josephine Amanda Parke on 31 March 1879 and ceased in September 1880. Most likely the newlyweds were living elsewhere. Taylor moved his factory to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, shortly thereafter and was bankrupt in 1891.

Although the Federal Census of 1890 does not survive, it is possible to determine most, if not all, of the residents from other sources. The 1887 Westminster city directory shows Mrs. Shellman, her unmarried children Mary and James, the Reeses, and the Pearsons living in the house. The household also included servant Mary Key and perhaps Elizabeth Tyson who had married Henry Johnson in 1881. Another

boarder Miss Clementine Kimmel (d.1902) joined the household at about this time. Miss Kimmel had lived at "Walnut Grove," the Jones family home in Baltimore County before joining the Shellman household. Paul Reese wrote of her, "In her youth she was a noted beauty and belle rivaling her friend Betsy Patterson. I have heard her tell of dining with Lafayette at a ball in his home in Baltimore when he visited America after the War."

Isaac Pearson, Jr., Esq. died suddenly on 23 January 1891. His modest estate included 200 books, a large desk, office table, coal stove and pipe, large rocker and six chairs, bookcase, case of drawers, and a map of Maryland.

Mrs. Catherine Shellman died at her home on 5 December 1898. Her obituary stated that Westminster lost "one of the purest and noblest characters with which it was ever graced, and a host of friends and relatives feel her death as a personal loss." Funeral services were held at the Ascension Church in Westminster where Mrs. Shellman had been an original parishioner.

Mrs. Shellman did not leave a will and no estate papers were filed for her. For this reason it is difficult to determine her household furnishings and the living arrangements of the various residents at the time of her death. Some evidence, however, can be found in surviving family photographs of the interior of the house. A turn-of-the-century photograph labeled "Library" shows how the Shellmans were using the front room of the partitioned parlor that was once the law office of the late Isaac Pearson, Jr. Several photographs of the stairhall taken in 1907 show the French wallpaper, a panoply of military arms hanging from a gas light fixture and household furnishings.

Catherine Shellman's heirs found it difficult to settle her estate, perhaps because of ambiguities in the 1864 deed to George Jones, trustee for his sister Catherine. Catherine's daughters Fanny Pearson and Mary Shellman sued the children of their late brother Harry in equity court. The court decreed that the property be sold and that the heirs receive proportional shares of the proceeds. Fanny Pearson purchased the house on 9 June 1899, for \$2,200, from trustee Dr. James W. Reese. Although there are no records regarding personal property, Mary seems to have received most of these items, which included family heirlooms from the Jones family of Baltimore County and the Shellmans from Maryland and Georgia.

Fanny Pearson Household, 1899-1909

Sisters Fanny Pearson and Mary Shellman probably shared the living expenses of the household for a decade. Fanny apparently supplemented her rental income from the Reeses by teaching music. She and Mary collaborated on a number of published songs including "Brave Cuba Shall Be Free" (1898) written during the Spanish-American War and "Gold is the Standard to Win" (1900) a campaign song of the William F. McKinley presidential campaign.

The Federal Census of 1900 shows sisters Fanny and Mary, Dr. Reese and his son Paul. Mary assumed the Westminster Gas Light Co. account from Dr. Reese on 17 July 1901. The Reeses departed at this time for unknown reasons. It is not clear why Clementine Kimmel does not appear as a member of the household since she lived until 1902. James M. Shellman III (1888-1951), an orphaned nephew of Fanny and Mary, joined the household following his mother's death in 1902. He attended Westminster High School and Western Maryland College.

Fanny Pearson died on 24 May 1909 and was buried at the Ascension Church. Her obituary written by her neighbor Mrs. Samuel K. (Emily Anne Gorsuch) Herr (1845-1928) read, in part, "Her life was devoted to those who made her fireside; she was untiring in loving temperament, the world did not know her, but her friends did, and to them she was a gem of purest ray serene. Gifted in the arts of painting and music, she might have drifted into renown, but she shrunk from such a cause." Fanny bequeathed the home and her personal possessions to her sister Mary. The brief inventory of personal possessions

listed a walnut bedroom set (\$20), cherry wardrobe (\$2), upright piano (\$25), cane rocking chair (\$.50), and a sofa (\$1).



"The Library," c. 1900. Formerly Isaac Pearson's law office.



Denton Gehr, Mary Shellman and Georgia Buckingham in costume for the play "Cuba Libre."

Mary Bostwick Shellman Household, 1909-1932

The Federal Census of 1910 shows three residents, Mary B. Shellman, and boarders Dr. James W. Reese and his son Paul who had returned after Fanny's death. Dr. Reese was still a professor of ancient languages at Western Maryland College and Paul was an architect. The works of this academically-trained architect included the Farmers and Mechanics Bank office at 195 East Main Street (1900), Westminster Theological Seminary (1920) and the U. S. Marine Corps. Barrack at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

By the time Mary Shellman acquired the property in 1909, she was well known for her leadership in local and national reform movements. She organized the first Memorial Day observances for Carroll County in 1868 and led the annual procession for another sixty years. Her work on behalf of Civil War veterans led to honorary membership in Grand Army of the Republic posts and others veterans' associations. Beginning in the 1870s she led efforts to provide better care for residents of the county Alms House. She joined the American Red Cross at the time of the Johnstown, Pennsylvania, flood in 1889 and received a member pin from founder Clara Barton (1821-1912). Her involvement in political reform can be traced to her memberships in the Civic League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Just Government League and the League of Republican Women of Maryland.



Mary Shellman leading the Westminster Memorial Day parade, 1915. Miss Shellman began Westminster's observance of Memorial Day on May 30, 1868 when she organized local schoolchildren

to place flowers on the graves of Westminster's Civil War dead.

Mary Shellman's participation in local affairs may have helped her secure in 1885 the first managership of the Westminster Division, Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company. Her duties included the financial oversight and work as an operator. A small gold-plated and jet pin fashioned after a wall telephone was among Miss Shellman's prized possessions. According to her, the pin was a gift from Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) sent following a visit to her office.

Mary Shellman described her occupation in 1900 as "Literature." In that year she wrote the Memorial Hymn for Arlington National Cemetery. Earlier works included the Memorial Day poem for Antietam Battlefield (1888), and the rally song of the William F. McKinley campaign "Gold is the Standard to Win" (1900). Miss Shellman also published numerous poems and sketches of local historical events and briefly edited a humorous newspaper *Amphions Journal* in 1875.

There was no change in the household until the late teens. Dr. James W. Reese died on 30 March 1917 and was buried at the Ascension Episcopal Church where he had been rector from 1864 to 1870. Paul Reese married Emma Witt Harris Scott on 12 June 1918 and left the household.

Mary Shellman continued to live in the house until 1932. Her home was burglarized in 1931 when she was spending the winter months in Washington, D.C. Paul Reese, who had been ordained a minister in the Protestant Episcopal Church, invited Mary Shellman to join his household in Sapulpa, Oklahoma. Rev. Reese served briefly in Rockport, Texas, in 1933 but retired from the ministry due to failing health. Mary Shellman returned to Westminster in 1937 as an honored guest at the Carroll County Centennial. She led her final Memorial Day procession to the Westminster Cemetery. One year later she instituted Memorial Day in Rockport, Texas. She died at the Reese home on 4 October 1938.

Following the death of Mary Shellman, her executor, John H. Cunningham (1867-1966), proposed to sell the property to settle her estate. There was speculation that the house would be demolished for the construction of a commercial building. Next-door neighbor Mrs. Harry M. (Mary Test) Kimmey (1879-1961) suggested that the house be purchased for use as a historical and community center. Mrs. Charles O. Clemson proposed the formation of a historical society to acquire and administer the property. The Historical Society of Carroll County was organized on 11 March 1939 with state Senator J. David Baile (1878-1944) as President.

The property was sold at public auction on 12 August 1939 and the Historical Society was the high bidder. The first act of the new owners was the demolition of the "flimsy partition" erected by the Pearsons in c.1874. By 1941 cosmetic repairs, new electrical wiring and a furnace made it possible to hold meetings year-round in the house. Fuel shortages during World War II curtailed use. Following the war the house was the site of civic meetings, card parties and wedding receptions. A tea room operated by Mrs. Helen Harbaugh provided operating income. The building also housed a growing collection of historical artifacts. Additional architectural work included the remodeling of the first-floor kitchen in 1950, porch repairs and the installation of "powder room." The Carroll Garden Club sponsored the creation of a decorative garden at the rear of the house in 1955. Designed by John Donofrio, the garden featured flowering plants with a boxwood border and an herb garden.

The acquisition and subsequent renovation of the adjacent Kimmey House in 1966 provided much needed space for exhibits, public programs and social events. This allowed for the installation of additional furnished rooms in the Shellman House in the 1970s. In anticipation of the Society's fiftieth anniversary in 1989, the Board of Trustees embarked on a new research project in 1983. Project architect Michael F. Trostel, F.A.I.A. prepared a restoration plan which included structural repairs, the replication of missing architectural details and the installation of unobtrusive modern mechanical systems. A successful capital campaign raised funds from individuals, businesses and state and local

government. The two-year restoration was begun in November 1988.

Architectural Overview

When the Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House was constructed in 1807 it was the most impressive structure along Westminster's Main Street. It featured refined and innovative architectural details, but basic elements of the house were deeply rooted in the regional style and cultural traditions of the Pennsylvania Germans.

Sherman used a design and plan that were closely related to the traditional farmhouse style that was popular in Carroll County throughout the nineteenth century. The house has an L-shaped plan that typically contained a residential main block with a service wing in the ell. Other representative characteristics that comprise the regional style are the symmetrical main facade, two-and-one-half story height, gable roof with interior-end chimneys, and an inset, double-tiered porch on the inner side of the ell.

The house is distinguished from others by its scale and refinement of architectural details. This is immediately striking in the large size and proportions of the main facade with its over-sized windows and molded serpentine brick cornice. The architecture incorporates a number of innovations, including the counter-balanced windows, built-in cupboards, and kitchen waste water drain of quarried stone.

David Shriver, Jr., probably had a significant role in designing the house. The lead sash weights, which are embossed with his name and the date 1807, suggest that he was responsible for the selection of counter-balanced windows. A built-in clothes cupboard was installed in the front west bed chamber where the Shriver's are believed to have slept. Both features were unusual for this region in 1807 and point towards the well-traveled Shriver who was familiar with trends in architecture.

In spite of these innovations and refinements, the house retains some conservative ethnic traditions of the Pennsylvania German culture. The floor plan of the main block includes a small unheated room that traditionally was the main bedroom, or "kammer," in Pennsylvania German architecture. Jacob Sherman's inventory indicates the room was used as a bedroom and furnished in the traditional Pennsylvania German manner.

One area of architectural design that we are just beginning to learn about in Carroll County is historic paint colors. As part of the research for the restoration project, consultant Frank S. Welsh analyzed the original colors of woodwork throughout the house. The extensive use of grained and marbled woodwork is another refinement that represented the affluence of the owners. However, paint analysis has indicated that the finish paints were not applied until about 1809. This fact poses research questions about why there was a delay in the interior painting. It may relate to the economic crisis that occurred with the trade embargo of 1807 to 1809.

The following section provides greater details about the architecture and rooms uses in the house. An underlying theme is the historical assimilation of Anglo-American design features in the context of a Pennsylvania German household. Clearly Sherman and Shriver sought to build a home which conveyed their high social standing and their knowledge of the latest architectural styles.

The First Floor

The Sherman family lived and entertained in the two front rooms in the main block. In keeping with Pennsylvania German tradition, they slept in a small unheated room adjacent to the service wing. The wing contained the kitchen and a large pantry. Later residents used the first-floor rooms in much the same way, except for sleeping, but made a number of architectural changes to the floorplan of the service wing to meet changing tastes and needs.

The Shermans' Stairhall, 1809-1842

The stairhall admitted family and guests to the home and provided access to the first floor rooms. The room is distinguished by an open staircase leading to the second-floor and the main attic. The decorative scheme emphasized grained doors, chair rail and hand rail to simulate expensive mahogany and veined baseboards to simulate marble. The remainder of the woodwork was painted pale green. The inventory of personal property prepared after Sherman's death lists a "carpet in Entry & on stairs" (\$2). There do not appear to have been any other hall furnishings. The faux-painted woodwork and carpeting was a sophisticated treatment which was in keeping with Baltimore taste.



John Fisher remodeled the hall in c.1842 by installing the present front doorway and a block-printed wallpaper entitled "Views of Brazil" made by Jean Zuber of Rixheim, France. The woodwork was painted cream. Fisher's 1863 inventory of personal property lists "18 Stair Rods and Carpet" (\$2.75).

Photographs of the hall taken in 1907 when the Shellmans occupied the house show the wallpaper and decorative arts. A gaslight fixture on the west wall supported a panoply of military arms. Perched on the top of the library door jamb was a carved American eagle. Other furnishings included antique furniture and prints. Mary Shellman removed the Zuber wallpaper for safekeeping in 1931 and later sold it to Baltimore antique dealer Francis Null (1871-1949).

Zuber wallpaper in the stairhall as viewed around the doorway leading to the former Sherman dining room.

The Parlor

John Fisher updated the parlor as part of his c.1842 renovation. The neoclassical mantelpiece was replaced with the present Greek Revival example. The mantelpiece and baseboard were painted grayish-black; the remainder of the woodwork was painted yellowish-white. Fisher probably added wallpaper and wooden venetian blinds at this time. John Fisher's 1863 inventory of personal property included the following parlor furnishings: 12 parlor chairs (\$.50 each), 1 gilt looking glass (\$3.50), 5 venetian blinds (\$4 each), 2 side tables (\$5 each), and 1 rug (\$1).

Fisher's renovations were in keeping with a national style in architecture and the decorative arts that had emerged due, in part, to the wide distribution of style books, mass production and greatly improved transportation systems. The painted mantelpiece provided a striking base for the large "gilt looking glass." Somewhat surprising is the absence of any artificial lighting, such as a pair of Argand lamps which were often placed on the mantelpiece in this period. Other traditional parlor furnishings found elsewhere on the inventory, such as a heating stove (\$5), a settee (\$2.50) and an oil painting (\$10), the latter item curiously listed among farm machinery, may have been used in this room.



The Shermans' Dining Room

The designation of a room for dining was a relatively recent concept in 1807. The presence of floor-to-ceiling cupboards, with shelves made with plate grooves, flanking the fireplace suggest that this room was intended for dining.

The original paint scheme featured mahogany graining on the room and cupboard doors, chair rail cap and the mantelpiece shelf, the baseboard was veined to simulate marble and the walls were whitewashed. Jacob Sherman's 1823 inventory of personal property reveals the expensive furnishings of the dining room: "Side board glasses & contents" (\$40), clock and case (\$45), "pair of tables mahogany" (\$7.50), "dining table walnut" (\$5), "ditto ditto" (\$7), 12 chairs (\$6), Franklin stove and irons (\$15), looking glass and waiter (\$3), crockery ware and tea ware (\$10), carpet and window curtains (\$5), and a picture (\$.50). The presence of the sideboard, dining

tables and expensive ceramics is further evidence that the Shermans intended the room primarily for dining although they probably ate most of their meals in the sitting room.

Mrs. Sherman's 1842 inventory of personal property shows that she made few changes to the room. The inventory of items sold at the auction to settle her estate provides details about some of the furnishings listed on Jacob Sherman's inventory twenty years earlier. One of the most intriguing items is a "large painting" (\$1), probably the "picture" listed in 1822. Jacob Sherman's niece Susanna Zacharias (1786-1852) purchased the painting at the sale of Mrs. Sherman's personal property. When Susanna died in 1852 her estate included "1 large portrait" listed with a fireboard (\$0.25). The consistently low value assigned to the portrait strongly suggests that it was of a family member, since family portraits were of little or no monetary value to anyone but relatives. Although the sitter is not identified, it was probably Jacob Sherman.



The dining room chairs are described as being "green windsor[s]." The inventory provides probable listings for the contents of the built-in cupboards: 2 books (\$0.25), "1 do" (\$0.10), "3 Ditto" (\$0.15), "1 sett plated castors" (\$1.75), "1 sett cups and saucers" (\$0.12), "1/2 doz. plates" (\$0.40), "1/2 doz. ditto cups and saucers" (\$0.40), "1/2 doz. ditto" (\$0.38), "1 set china ware" (\$2.35), "1 lot glass and other ware" (\$1.90).

The Shermans' Bedroom

Pennsylvania German settlers brought a continental tradition of sleeping in an unheated first-floor room. This practice provided quick egress in the case of a house or barn fire. By 1800 many residents of German descent had begun to abandon traditional customs in favor of Anglo-American ones. Except for the carpet and curtains, the bedroom furnishings of Jacob Sherman's 1823 inventory of personal possessions provide clear evidence that the Shermans were still living as Pennsylvania Germans: "large Bible (German)" (\$5), 2 feather beds, curtains and bed

clothes (\$50), carpet and window curtains (\$2.75), candle stand (\$1), “poplar chest, painted” (\$3.50), looking glass, table and wash bowl (\$1.25). Elsewhere in the inventory are listings of Jacob Sherman’s personal items which were not devised to his widow. The following were probably in his bedroom: gun (\$5), old sword, holster and pistols (\$5), 3 pocket pistols (\$4.50), “raisers shaving box” (\$.75), 2 silver watches (\$10), and “2 raizors and pocket book” (\$1).

Items that were distinctively Pennsylvania German included the German Bible, the feather beds and the simple painted chest which almost certainly contained Elizabeth Sherman’s dower goods. In keeping with tradition, most, if not all, of these items had comprised the Shermans’ bedroom furnishings at the time of their marriage in 1779. The doors were grained, the trim was painted pale orange-yellow and the walls were whitewashed. Elizabeth Sherman appears to have made few changes to the room before her death in 1842.



The Shermans’ Passageway

The large passageway provided access to the kitchen from the front of the house and from the porch. The area in front of the window provided a well-lit workspace with easy access to the adjacent pantry. The woodwork was painted gray and the walls were whitewashed. The room remained essentially unchanged at Mrs. Sherman’s death in 1842.

The Shermans’ Pantry

The large pantry provided a storage room for foodstuffs and kitchen furniture and utensils. Small utensils and containers were stored on floor-to-ceiling shelves. Unfortunately, Jacob Sherman’s 1823 inventory of personal property does not detail the items in this room. Mrs. Sherman’s 1842 inventory contains a number of items typically found in the pantry, including a dough tray, earthenware storage crocks and jars, demijohns and baskets. The pantry

and kitchen were painted the same colors as the passage.



The pantry.

The Shermans' Kitchen

The kitchen was the domain of the woman of the house. Mrs. Sherman and her daughter Eve probably shared these domestic duties with at least one black slave servant. Because of the relatively small size of the kitchen, only the lighter cooking tasks were carried out in this room.

The brick hearth was the center of the kitchen activities. The wrought iron crane provided a place to hang pots and kettles over small beds of wooden coals. Other cooking utensils such as a skillet, dutch oven, and toaster were placed on the hearth. Because the slowing burning embers did not provide sufficient heat for the entire room, the kitchen was heated with a wood burning cast iron stove. When not in use the stove was moved out of the way to provide more workspace. The cupboard provided storage for foodstuffs and kitchen utensils. A recess above the fireplace, discovered during the restoration, provided additional storage. A large stone floor drain discovered during the restoration exited through the south wall to carry waste water out of the kitchen. Although closely related to the Germanic stone window sill drains, this innovative feature has not been observed in any other local house. Jacob Sherman's 1823 inventory did not itemize the furnishings of this room but listed only "kitchen furniture" (\$42.50).





The Shellman House kitchen after restoration.

The Shermans' Cellar Kitchen

The large kitchen in the basement of the ell provided relief from the excessive heat in the summer and also a place for other domestic jobs throughout the year. The larger fireplace provided room for dirtier jobs such as food preservation tasks, apple butter cooking, soap making, candlemaking and laundering. The absence of a free standing wash house on the rear lot suggests that the cellar kitchen served all of these domestic functions. Jacob Sherman's 1823 inventory provides a probable list of the items kept in the cellar rooms: 22 cider barrels and hogshead (\$10), "some potatoes in cellar" (\$3), "2 crout tubs and meat tub" (\$2), 2 demijohns (\$1.50), sausage bench, choppers and

clevis (\$3), and a pair small steelyards and lumber (\$1).

The Second Floor

The second-floor rooms were primarily used as bed chambers. Unfortunately, the inventories of personal property for the early owners do not provide sufficient details to determine exactly who occupied each room. There is evidence that blacks did sleep in the house with the Shermans, presumably towards the rear of the house. However, blacks probably occupied the loom house, the garret, and rooms previously occupied by whites given the changing composition of the household between 1807-1842.

Catherine J. Shellman Bed Chamber, c. 1875-1898

Catherine J. Shellman probably occupied this room throughout her residence. Since no inventory of personal property was taken at her death in 1898, it is not possible to determine her bed chamber furnishings. She probably furnished the room with a mixture of old and new pieces. The doors, casings, windows, and chair rail were painted pale green. The baseboard and mantelpiece were painted gray; the latter was veined to simulate marble. Mrs. Shellman probably added new wallpaper. The cast-iron corner waste water drain may also have been installed at this time. Two ceiling gas light fixtures were installed in 1873.

The Shermans' Storage Room, c. 1809-1842

The presence of peg rails suggests that the Shermans hung clothing here. The room may also have served as a convenient place to hang family clothing and to store some of the numerous bed linens listed on Jacob Sherman's inventory: "4 Cover lids" (\$16), 2 bed quilts and 2 blankets (\$6), 4 sheets (\$8), "5 Cover lids" (\$15), 3 blankets (\$4), 30 sheets (\$48), "4 Counter pins" (\$10), 6 bed cases (\$6), 7 bolster cases (\$1.50), 21 pillow cases (\$3). The decorative scheme was light gray trim, grained door and whitewashed walls.

The Shrivens' Bed Chamber, c. 1809-1812

Architectural evidence suggests that David and Eve Shriver occupied this bed chamber during their brief residence from 1807-1812. The presence of the innovative built-in clothes cupboard suggests that the room was intended for year round use. The location of the room in the more fashionable front of the house was away from the servants' quarters and also provided a view of Main Street. The relatively modest room size meant that the room was easy to heat.

The paint scheme is in keeping with other rooms in the house. Both room and cupboard doors, chair rail cap and mantel shelf were grained to simulate mahogany. The baseboards were painted gray and the rest of the trim was painted brownish-pink. The walls were whitewashed; there is no evidence that the room was originally wallpapered.

Since David and Eve moved out of the house long before their deaths, no estate papers are available to determine how they furnished their bed chamber. It is possible, however, to develop a furnishing plan by examining the inventories of their contemporaries. Their bed chamber may have contained a bed and bedstead, trundle bed for the children, bureau for Eve, desk for David, wash stand, looking glass, ten-plate stove, hearth rug and window curtains. Given Eve's debilitating illness, the Shrivens may also have owned a stylish upholstered easy chair fitted with a chamber pot.

Servant's Bed Chamber, c. 1809-1812

Located adjacent to the Shriver's bed chamber, this room was probably intended for a white nanny or house servant. Letters written by David Shriver, Jr., in 1808 and 1810 mention a Betsey Maxfield and a Polly Day respectively. Each woman probably occupied this room when employed by the Shrivens. It is also likely that the Shrivens' young children slept here during the frequent periods when Eve Shriver was incapacitated by illness. The

servants were probably provided with simple furnishings owned by the Shrivvers. The paint scheme, gray baseboard, grained room and cupboard doors, and light greenish-blue trim is in keeping with the better chambers.

The Keys' Bed Chamber, c. 1836-1842

Jacob Sherman's will provided that his slave Eliza Key (b.1815) would be manumitted on her twenty-first birthday 12 March 1836. Eliza remained with Mrs. Sherman probably working for room, board and wages. She was probably considered a close family member because she was a free black. For this reason, she may have occupied a bed chamber in the house. Located above the kitchen in the service wing, this room was the least fashionable of the second-floor bed chambers. Mrs. Sherman made a modest bequest to Eliza valued at \$50.10: 1 coverlet (\$4), 4 quilts (\$2 each), 6 table cloths (\$.75 each), 6 towels (\$.10 each), 4 blankets (\$1.50 each), 1 bedstead and bedding (\$8), 1 chest and contents (\$4), 1 table (\$.50), 1 lot pewter ware (\$2.50), 1 cupboard and contents (\$5), and 1 heifer (\$7).

Eliza's daughter Sarah Brown (b. 1829) likely also slept in this room, probably in the same bed with her mother. Sarah also received a bequest of personal property from Mrs. Sherman. The items are similar to those often given to a young girl as a dowry: 1 bed, bedstead and bedding (\$8), 1 stand (\$1.50), 1 coverlet (\$3), 4 quilts and 2 spreads (\$8), 4 table cloths (\$.75 each), 6 towels (\$.10 each), 3 blankets (\$1.50 each), and 1 iron pot and tub (\$1.40). Sally Key probably slept here as well. The paint scheme, light yellowish-pink trim and grained room and cupboard doors, was very sophisticated for a service wing bed chamber.

The Key's Work Room, c. 1812-1842

The presence of a fireplace in this room suggests that it was intended for year-round use. It is possible that the Keys used the room for cooking their meals and for sewing. The small built-in cupboard may have been used by the Keys to store foodstuffs which were prepared in the fireplace or in the downstairs kitchen. Separate staircases provided access to the kitchen below and to the garret above. The light gray trim and grained room and cupboard doors were in keeping with the adjacent bed chamber.

The Garrets

There are full garrets above the main block and the service wing. Each is accessible by a separate staircase. Both garrets are finished, having plastered walls and ceilings and a baseboard. Dormer windows provided light and ventilation. Originally, the main garret served as storage space. The garret above the service wing probably served as sleeping quarters for the house slaves. Following the removal of the Shrivvers in 1812 and the death of Jacob Sherman in 1822, slaves may have occupied second-floor chambers.

Jacob Sherman's 1823 inventory provides a probable list of furnishings used by his eight slaves: "Bed & Bedstead - for Blacks" (\$10), "ditto & ditto for ditto" (\$7.50), small table (\$.50), flour chest (\$3), 2 chairs (\$.50), "Bed & Bedstead (for Blacks)" (\$4), "ditto & ditto for ditto" (\$3), and 2 baskets with bedclothes (\$1.50).

Grounds and Outbuildings

Throughout the nineteenth century, the rear lot was essential to domestic work of the household. Located at the rear of the service wing was a one-and-one-half story, log loom house. Jacob Sherman's inventory lists nearly 900 yards of linen and cotton cloth which had been woven by at least one black slave. The loom house was also probably intended for a slave quarters and used as a summer kitchen in the late 19th century. It was demolished between 1904 and 1908. The privy was demolished between 1897 and 1904. A brick dairy stood along the side street until about 1930.



The yard behind the Shellman House, showing the log loom house, c.1900.

A vegetable garden was located beyond the outbuildings and adjacent to the rear alley. A log barn was constructed across the alley. The Shermans kept livestock, feed, lumber, agricultural implements and wagons in their barn. John Fisher used the barn to store similar items and also his rockaway and harness (\$40). Fisher's executors sold the barn at the 1863 sale of personal property.

Beyond the barn was a nine-acre meadow where the Shermans grazed livestock and grew field crops. When Mrs. Sherman died, there were 158 shocks of wheat (\$51) "in the meadow." Other field crops included 119 shocks of rye (\$25), 1 lot corn (\$24), one-half acre potatoes and corn (\$9), one-half "ditto" (\$12) and 3 lots of oats (\$32).

Historical Archaeology

There were a number of architectural questions that could not be answered by observation or through a study of the historical record. Perhaps most important was the location of the bake oven for which there was no information whatsoever. Its existence was suggested by documented examples of bake ovens in this region and by a patch in the exterior brick wall at the rear of the kitchen. It was surmised that an oven projecting from the kitchen fireplace had been constructed here.

Beginning in April 1988, volunteers led by archaeologist Geoffrey M. Gyrisco, Ph.D. began an excavation to determine if an oven had previously existed at this location. The excavation revealed that a bake oven of an unusual type had been constructed and subsequently demolished. The location of the oven foundations demonstrated that the oven did not project from inside the house but instead was operated from outside. No extant oven matches this unusual location.

The excavated artifacts revealed important evidence about daily life and household furnishings. The Sherman and Fisher households showed a strong preference for lead-glazed earthenwares instead of safer stonewares, despite the knowledge that the lead glazes posed a health hazard. These households also preferred a variety of English pearlware tablewares, and Chinese export porcelain teawares. The discovery of original, albeit broken, ceramic forms will allow for accurate period room restorations.

Relatively few glass object fragments were found. One of particular note is a broken free blown, cobalt blue glass sugar bowl lid. This lid is stylistically related to an example produced at Frederick Amelung's New Bremen Glass factory in Frederick, Maryland (fl. 1784-1795). It may also be of European origin as is a broken cut and engraved wine glass. Both objects are consistent with the taste and wealth of the early residents.

Excavated bone fragments and oyster shells provide details about diet. Pigs, cattle, sheep and chickens were raised and butchered at the property. Iced oysters were carried by wagon from Baltimore to Westminster.

Future excavations of the known outbuildings and the garden are necessary to fully understand how the rear yard was used. It is hoped that this work will reveal the precise location and construction details of demolished outbuildings, their possible use as living quarters and work spaces for slaves and the configuration of garden beds and pathways. This information will provide the evidence to rebuild and restore the features of the rear yard.

Tours of the Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House are by appointment. Admission is free for HSCC members and \$5.00 for non-members. Call 410-848-6494 to schedule a tour.

Written by Jay Graybeal, Director of Museum & Library. Edited by Catherine Baty, Curator of Collections. Historic photographs from the HSCC collection; contemporary photos by Catherine Baty.