

The background of the cover is a photograph of a rural landscape. In the center, there is a rustic barn with a red-painted wooden upper section and a stone or brick lower section. The roof is made of weathered, grey wooden planks. To the right of the barn, there is a pond or stream, and a wooden fence runs across the foreground. In the background, there are green hills and a large bush of bright yellow flowers. The overall scene is peaceful and rural.

Spring Houses

Cool Countryside

Rustic Relics

*Harford County's
Rural Heritage*

Henry C. Peden, Jr. & Jack L. Shagena, Jr.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Preface | 8 |
| Acknowledgements | 9 |
| About the Authors | 10 |
| 1. Settlement of the Land | 11 |
| About Springs | 12 |
| Springs Beget Branches, then Brooks, then | 13 |
| Selection of a Pioneering Site | 14 |
| Two Settlers and Their Spring Experience | 17 |
| Early Spring House Records | 17 |
| 1798 Tax Records | 19 |
| 1814 Tax Records | 19 |
| <i>Maiden's Mount and Paradise</i> | 20 |
| Bel Air Town Pump and School House Spring | 21 |
| Jerusalem Mill Village | 22 |
| Environmental Pollution Protection..... | 24 |
| Bel Air Water Works | 24 |
| 2. Spring Houses Dot the Landscape | 27 |
| Spring-Well Shelter..... | 27 |
| Basic Layout of a Spring House | 28 |
| Ventilation and Some Light | 30 |
| Construction of Spring Houses | 31 |
| Making Butter | 32 |
| Smoking Meat | 34 |
| Spring House Vegetation | 36 |
| Now, That's a Crock | 38 |
| Distilling Alcohol..... | 39 |

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 3. Delivering Water to the Dwelling Door..... | 41 |
| Diving for Water | 41 |
| Well – It’s a Deep Subject | 42 |
| Wilna Farmers’ Club Meeting | 44 |
| Times of Drought | 45 |
| Cucumber Hand Pump | 46 |
| Wind-Powered Pumps..... | 48 |
| Early Plumbing | 50 |
| Hydraulic Rams Deliver Spring Water | 51 |
| Electricity: The Current Force | |
| 4. David Hopkins – His Stone Work Legacy | 57 |
| About Stone Masonry | 58 |
| The Golden Rectangle..... | 62 |
| Hopkins – A Master Mason | 64 |
| Stafford House, c.1799..... | 64 |
| Stump-Holloway House, 1805 | 65 |
| Hays-Heighe House, 1808-1814+..... | 67 |
| Vanneman House, 1810 (Inn and Tavern)..... | 68 |
| Smithson-Webster Spring House, 1816 | 69 |
| Smithson-Webster Upping Stone and Steps, 1819 | 73 |
| Hopkins Arrested and Jailed, 1820 | 74 |
| Hopkins Dies, October 1822..... | 76 |
| Architect/Master Mason/Builder..... | 77 |
| 5. David Hopkins – His Legend Rocks On..... | 79 |
| Birth in England..... | 79 |
| Off to London..... | 80 |
| London Bridge Needs Stone Work | 81 |
| Granite and a Dangerous Duel | 83 |
| Off to America | 86 |
| Stafford, c. 1799..... | 87 |
| Stump-Holloway House, 1805 | 88 |

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| Hays-Heighe House, 1808 | 89 |
| A Good Blacksmith and His Even Better Sister | 90 |
| Smithson-Webster Spring House, 1816 | 91 |
| Smithson-Webster Upping Stone and Steps, 1819 | 96 |
| Hays-Heighe House Revisited and his Death | 97 |
| Another Coded Message? | 99 |
| 6. The Coming of Technology | 101 |
| Ice Houses | 101 |
| Commercial Ice Manufacturing | 103 |
| Iceboxes | 104 |
| Electricity and Refrigerators | 105 |
| Solid State Cooling | 107 |
| 7. Photographs of County Spring Houses | 109 |
| 8. Spring Houses – Some Gone But Not Yet Forgotten | 181 |
| Appendix A: Stone Masons in Early Harford County | 199 |
| Appendix B: Spring Houses in the 1798 Tax List | 201 |
| Appendix C: Spring Houses in the 1814 Tax List | 205 |
| Appendix D: General Location of 19th Century Spring Houses | 209 |
| Index | 229 |

Preface

When our predecessor book *The Lofty Barn – A Farmer’s Castle* was enthusiastically received, it became apparent that the farming legacy of Harford County was still very much alive in the minds of many. Its subtitle *Harford County’s Rural Heritage* harkened to the county’s agrarian roots and in examining that simple but thought provoking line, we realized that more research, writing, and image recording was needed to illustrate, illuminate and enlighten the past for the inurnment of the present.

Like bulky barns and lesser sheds, all farm structures are fast disappearing and unless documented before their demise, these symbols of a lifestyle gone by might easily slip into oblivion. In our quest for barns, a number of spring houses had been spotted and the photographs taken served as a rock-solid foundation on which to build another book.

Fortunately, a few spring houses have been preserved serving as pump houses to deliver water to the dwelling. Others have been lovingly rebuilt by their owners and shine as quaint dots on the rural landscape. Nearly all were located near valleys making them difficult to see over the hillsides and with disuse many have fallen into decay making the already diminutive structures even smaller and harder to identify. With trees and brush overgrowing, they often blended into the countryside, but the presence of a pond or meandering brook usually signaled a spring was close by.

This identification difficulty was much abated when farm owners called to report a spring house on their property. The online Maryland Historical Trust pointed to others, and sometimes the authors stopped at an old dwelling and inquired about a spring. Most people were courteous and helpful.

Herein are the results of our efforts. We sincerely hope you enjoy learning about another chapter in *Harford County’s Rural Heritage*.