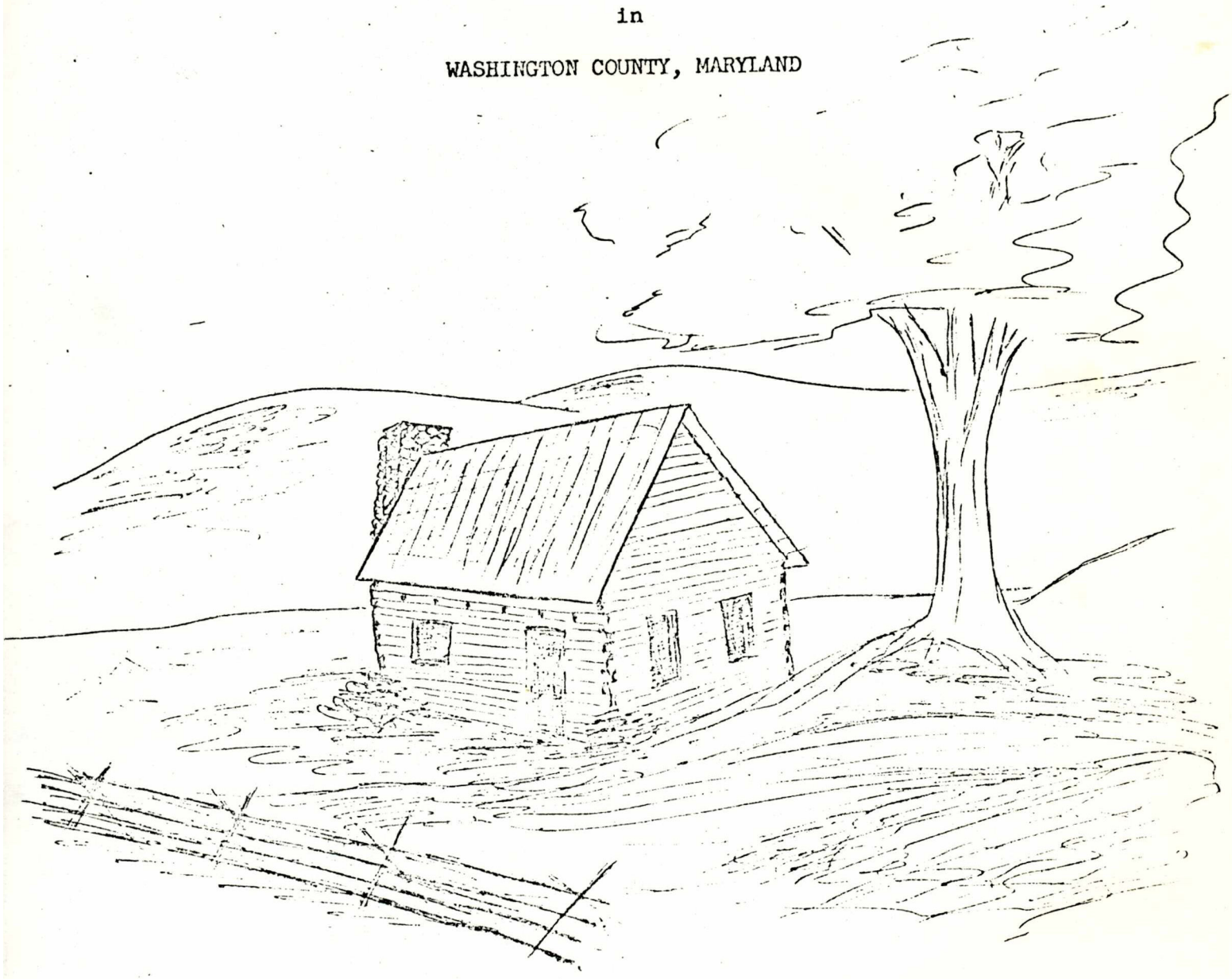
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THE BIRTHPLACE AND CHILDHOOD HOME OF ISAAC SHELBY

in

WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND



Prepared by:
Gerald J. Sword

For:
John Frye, Chairman, Washington County Historical Advisory Committee

July 29, 1972

FOREWARD

The writer's interest in the Shelby family became aroused several years ago while researching material relating to Blairs Valley, Washington County, Maryland. During that course of research information concerning the Shelby family was noted for future inquiry. However, due to various reasons continued research regarding Shelby was not continued until late in 1971. At that time John Frye, Chairman, Washington County Historical Advisory Committee to the Washington County Commissioners, urged that research be instigated at least to establish the most probable site of Isaac Shelby's birthplace and childhood home in present day Washington County.

The aim of this paper is not to present a biographical or genealogical history of the Shelby family, but to present various evidences which tend to locate the most probable site of Isaac Shelby's birthplace and childhood home as suggested by Mr Frye.

While assembling this material many persons not commonly known and/or associated with present day Washington County, Maryland, were revealed. Among those found frequently in the area were Doctor Charles Carroll; Stephen West, Abraham Barns, Isaac Brook, Isaac Baker, Edmon Moran, Thomas Johnson, Samuel Chase, David and George Ross, Thomas Jennings, Thomas Prather and Lancelot Jacques. Any one of these men would make a interesting subject for further study.

No formal acknowledgement can fully express the writer's gratitude to the many persons who assisted in making this presentation possible. Among them are the entire staff of the Maryland Hall of Records; the Washington County Library; officers of the Clerk of the Court, Register of Wills and Tax Assessor Offices in both Frederick and Washington County, Maryland. The Kentucky Historical Society, headed by Mr George M. Chinn, and the Maryland Historical Society, then headed by Dr. Harold R. Manakee. The officers and staff of the United States National Archives and of the National Society DAR and it's state and local chapters. Also a very sincere thanks is hereby expressed to the many friends and interested persons for their kind assistance and encouragement.

Gerald J. Sword

THE BIRTHPLACE AND CHILDHOOD HOME OF ISAAC SHELBY
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The purpose of this paper is to present various evidences indicating the location of Isaac Shelby's birthplace and childhood home site in present day Washington County, Maryland.

The usual and perhaps the most relied upon published sources locate Isaac Shelby's birthplace as near the North Mountain or west of present day Hagerstown, Washington County, Maryland (1) (2) (3) (4). Several unpublished manuscripts have located the site as near Hagerstown (5) (6) and as near the North Mountain (7). Two other sources, one published (8) and one unpublished (9), locate the most probable site as near the North Mountain and to the north and east of present day Clear Spring, Washington County, Maryland. Map #1, attached, presents a general layout of the above mentioned areas.

The published and unpublished secondary sources referred to were used as a foundation of clues for additional archival research through land records, court records and other miscellaneous records. Though none of the records located state specifically that Isaac Shelby was born at any particular location, it may be reasonably assumed that he was born at the home of his parents, Evan Shelby, Jr. and Letitia Cox Shelby (10) (11) (12) (13) (14) (15) (16) on December 11, 1750 (17) (18) (19) (20) (21) (22) (23). One unpublished source places the date as December 11, 1758 (24).

The first original source indicating the approximate location of Evan Shelby, Jr's. home appears to be a land grant to Doctor Charles Carroll for "Shelby's Misfortune", surveyed on April 24, 1749 and patented to Carroll on April 10, 1750 (25). This document gives as the starting point "a bounded white oak standing on a ridge near the road from Shelby's to Gillilan's Mill (26) about half a mile to the southeast of Evan Shelby's house being a tree that was bounded for part of a tract of land called 'Maiden's Choice' (27), running thence." It appears from Doctor Carroll's grant that on September 10, 1746, Evan Shelby, Jr. obtained a special warrant to survey fifty-four acres of "Maiden's Choice",

originally granted to his father, Evan Shelby, Sr. on August 7, 1739 (28) (29) and conveyed to Evan Shelby, Jr. The warrant was executed and a certificate of resurvey was returned to the land office in the name of "Maiden's Choice" and added to the original two hundred forty-four acres of vacant land which was never paid for by Evan Shelby, Jr. or patented according to the tenor of the warrant. Then, on October 25, 1748, Doctor Carroll was issued a Special Warrant for the same land which he named "Shelby's Misfortune", after paying twelve pounds and ten shillings as "Caution Money". It should be noted that Evan Shelby, Jr. and Letitia Cox were evidently married in 1744 (30) and it would be reasonable to assume that their new home would have been located in the same area as his father's (31) and his brother's (32). Perhaps this tract of land was a wedding gift from Evan Shelby, Sr. to his son and daughter-in-law. Now assuming the above conclusions to be reasonable and the information presented in the feferenced documents to be correct, the attached map #2 sets forth a clearer orientation of the information thus far presented.

Upon closer examination of Doctor Carroll's grant for a resurvey on "Iron Mountain", dated June 10, 1750, and known as "Hanover" (33) it is noted that this resurvey adjoined "Shelby's Misfortune" and "Maiden's Choice". The starting point of the resurvey was "at a Chestnut standing near a bounded Locust on the right hand of the road that comes from Pennsylvania to Gilliland's Mill (34) through a gap of the North Mountain and on the west side of Little Conigocheige Run." On June 18, 1750, Doctor Carroll wrote to Isaac Brook, Surveyor, instructing him to contact Mr. Thomas Prather to be shown, "the Resurvey I made on Iron Mountain that may be enabled to return the improvements and avoid any cause of quible which hereafter may be made by Mr. Shelby or others. The Resurvey contains Reese Shelby's Improvements viz: a log cabin, 15 or 16 acres of cultivated land about 40 young trees of little value as also part of Evan Shelby's improvements which Mr. Prather says you know the particulars of." (35) The previous year, Doctor

Carroll noted that "Iron Hill" began "at a Black Oak Saplin standing on a ridge about half a mile from Reese Shelby's, to the Northeast of said Shelby's, and on the side of a pond" near Little Conigocheige (36). On October 30, 1751, Doctor Carroll wrote to Mr. George Gordon to "lay out my pretensions, on an ejectment against Evan Shelby, Jr. a tract of land called Shelby's Misfortune" (37). Hance Waggoner, who lived near Shelby was to assist Gordon in proving the beginning of the tract. Doctor Carroll continued that the surveyor was to describe the situation of Shelby's clear ground or improvements within this tract and directed that if Mr. Shelby attempted to lay any claim, Hance Waggoner was to be present as a witness or any other person who could prove the starting point of "Maiden's Choice".

Of all the many thousands of acres of land owned by Evan Shelby, Jr., this particular tract - Shelby's Misfortune - appears to have been a real source of agitation for both Evan Shelby and Doctor Carroll. Early in 1753, Peter Stokes, a tenant on this tract of land and also being a leasee of Doctor Carroll, accused Evan Shelby of trespassing and ejectment on "Shelby's Misfortune" (38). However, when the Provincial Court tried the case on April 10, 1753, Shelby was declared not guilty. The court also directed that Doctor Carroll pay Shelby for any expenses resulting from the leasees' claim. Then in September 1753, Evan Shelby's wife, Letitia, was accused of having her Dutch Servant cut down the beginning tree of this same tract of land and burning it (39). This was followed by a request to the Attorney General of Maryland, Henry Darnall, by Doctor Carroll on January 22, 1754, that legal action be brought against both Evan and Letitia (40). After fifteen continuances the case was struck from the court docket (41). See map #3.

During the next few years, Evan Shelby, Jr. became very much involved in the military affairs of the Maryland and Pennsylvania frontiers (42) (43) (44) (45) (46) (47) (48) (49) (50) (51) (52) (53). This activity evidently reduced the volume of land trans-

actions which Evan Shelby, Jr., apparently pursued with vigor whenever the opportunity presented itself (54) (55) (56) (57) (58).

Sometime prior to the building of Fort Frederick in 1756, Evan Shelby, Jr., had a fortification of some description already erected on his land (59). This fortification may have been located near the mansion house now known as Mont Pelier which is situated on former Shelby lands (60) (61). In approximately 1758, Colonel Henry Bouquet, located Evan Shelby's home as six miles from Fort Frederick and five miles from Isaac Baker's via the "new cleared road" (62). The "new cleared road" evidently refers to the extension of the present day Broad Fording Road from the Broad Fording toward Fort Frederick. Isaac Baker, a gunsmith (63) and near friend of Evan Shelby's (64), lived at the Broad Fording along the Conococheague Creek (65) (66). The road mentioned leaves Baker's, passes Mont Pelier, and continues to present day Route 40 just west of Clear Spring. At this point the road name becomes "Boyd Road" and continues to Maryland 56 (67). Maryland Route 56, an east - west road, passes just north of Fort Frederick (68). See map #4.

As the French and Indian War came to a slow ending on the Maryland frontier, Shelby entered into a partnership with Samuel Postelwait and Edmon Moran and entered into a rather extensive trade business with the Indians and the trappers (69) (70) (71). Moran was a neighbor of Shelby's (72) and a relative through Moran's marriage to Catherine Blair who is alledged to have been Shelby's first cousin (73) (74). Evan Shelby, Jr. was also interested in an improved transportation route to the west. At Frederick, Maryland, in May 1762, he was elected to the position of being one of the Potomac Company managers (75). His interest in the area of transportation is very understandable in that it would increase his land values and also enhance his trade business, which at the time extended as far west as Green Bay, Wisconsin (76).

Pontiac's War in the 1760's brought great financial losses to the partnership known as Evan Shelby and Company (77) (78)

(79) (80) and/or Shelby, Moran and Postelwait in Company (81). Then in December 1763, Shelby's house near Fort Frederick was accidentally destroyed by fire (82). It's alleged nearness to Fort Frederick is quite vague. Traditional information supported by recent discoveries during building construction at Mont Pelier indicates that the "house" may have been the fortification mentioned earlier in this paper and that the "fort" was used as a trade center (83). Additional indication that the "house" was not the Shelby dwelling house, occurred during a conversation between a Mr. Denton and Evan Shelby on April 26, 1765. Shelby stated, "I am almost totally ruined by having my house and all my papers burnt, together with a great many goods, and should have been altogether ruined, had it not been for Mr. Jacques and Mr. Johnson" (84). Mr. Lancelot Jacques and Mr. Thomas Johnson, of Annapolis, Maryland, were at the time of this conversation settling some business with Shelby during a two day visit at Shelby's home.

Evan Shelby's "dwelling house" was then located on one of the following tracts of land, "Hanover", "Barron Hill","Notch", or "Shelby's Misfortune" (85) (86). It is also pointed out that Evan Shelby and Company was doing business from Fort Frederick in 1764 (87). In 1766, William McClellan, a former employee of Shelby's and brother-in-law of Edmon Moran (88), sold to Shelby four horses, some furniture and two pots which were in the possession of a Joseph Warford at Fort Frederick (89). Warford may have been the brother-in-law of Evan Shelby as a Warford married his sister-in-law (90) (91). Thus, it would appear that Shelby's trade business was somewhat a family business and that the house fire mentioned could well have been the burning of the old fortification and trade center at Mont Pelier. Following the fire, the business was relocated at or very near Fort Frederick. See map #5.

Shelby, however, continued to live near the North Mountain where he was visited by Charles Mason and Jeramiah Dixon on

October 1765 and March 1766 (92). On July 8, 1766, records reveal that David and George Ross obtained from Shelby three tracts of land and:

> the following stock goods and cattles now in or about the dwelling plantation of the said Evan Shelby near the North Mountain in the county aforesaid; a negro man named Joe about eighteen years of age, a convict servant man named Thomas who has about six years to serve, a English Bay Stone horse about five years old, a large black mare branded and marked with the letters ES; a black horse with the same brand ES; one young black horse with the said brand; one roan mare with the same brand; one bay horse with the same brand; one brown mare with three colts, one of the said colts being three years old, another two years old and the third one year old, all marked and branded as aforesaid with the letters ES as aforesaid; also one pair of draught oxen five years old, mark unknown; eight cows, eight calves marked with a slit on the left ear and a half penny on the right ear; twenty-eight head of steer and cows with the same mark; twenty head of sheep and sixty head of grown hogs, all of them marked with a slit on the left ear and a half penny on the right as aforesaid; also all the household stuff in use about the said dwelling house of the said Evan Shelby and the implements of husbandry on and belonging to the plantation aforesaid as also one convict servant woman named Elizabeth has about six years to serve. (93)

Three months later approximately 2,160 acres of Shelby's lands were "attached" in a debt suit between Evan Shelby and Stephen West of Prince Georges County (94). It is noted in this suit that Shelby may have left the province prior to August 16, 1766, however the Frederick County Sheriff's return to the October Term of the Chancery Court indicates that Shelby may have returned to Maryland.

On November 22, 1771, Stephen West released to Abraham Barns of St. Marys County, Maryland, over 1,800 acres of land, all of which was a part of the Resurvey on the Mountain of Wales which had been condemned for West (95) (96). Then on December

13, 1771, Abraham Barns purchased from Thomas Jennings of Annapolis, more than 2,000 acres of land (97), including the tracts upon which Shelby's "dwelling house" was located in 1765 (98). This property had been conveyed to Jennings by Shelby in 1770 (99), and contained most of Shelby's remaining lands. On September 10, 1772, Abraham Barnes obtained from Evan Shelby a deed and release for all the vacant lands Shelby still owned between the tracts Barns had purchased from Jennings and West (100). With this transaction, Shelby reserved one hundred fifty acres of land adjoining Simmon Stukey and the lands condemned for Stephen West to the south.

The last known record of Evan Shelby still residing in present day Washington County occurs in a land transaction dated November 23, 1773, which lists him as a "farmer" in Frederick County (101). The next month another land transaction lists Isaac Shelby as being of "Frederick County, Maryland" (102). This transaction involved Isaac's selling of land along Licking Creek, northwest of Fort Frederick, to one Jacob Mills. The most generally accepted dates for the Shelby's move from Maryland are 1771 (103) (104), 1772 (105), and 1773 (106) (107) (108) (109). Additional indication that the year 1773 is the correct date may be concluded from the fact that land transactions involving Evan and Isaac Shelby subsequent to that date all indicate their residences as Virginia or North Carolina (110).

In summary of the above presented materials, the writer feels that it can be safely concluded that Evan Shelby, Jr., the father of Isaac Shelby, the first governor of Kentucky, was married in 1744, and that perhaps as a wedding gift he was given several acres of "Maiden's Choice" which was surveyed for him. And also, that Shelby did have extremely close emotional ties with this parcel of land and that he did have improvements of some type on the land at the time of Isaac's birth in December 1750. At a later date, Evan Shelby Jr. and his family moved to what is now known as Mont Pelier and conducted a rather large

scale trade business until 1763 when fire destroyed the business house. The business was then moved to the Fort Frederick area, but Shelby continued to live at or near to "Mont Pelier" until 1773 when he and his family moved from Maryland to Southern Virginia.

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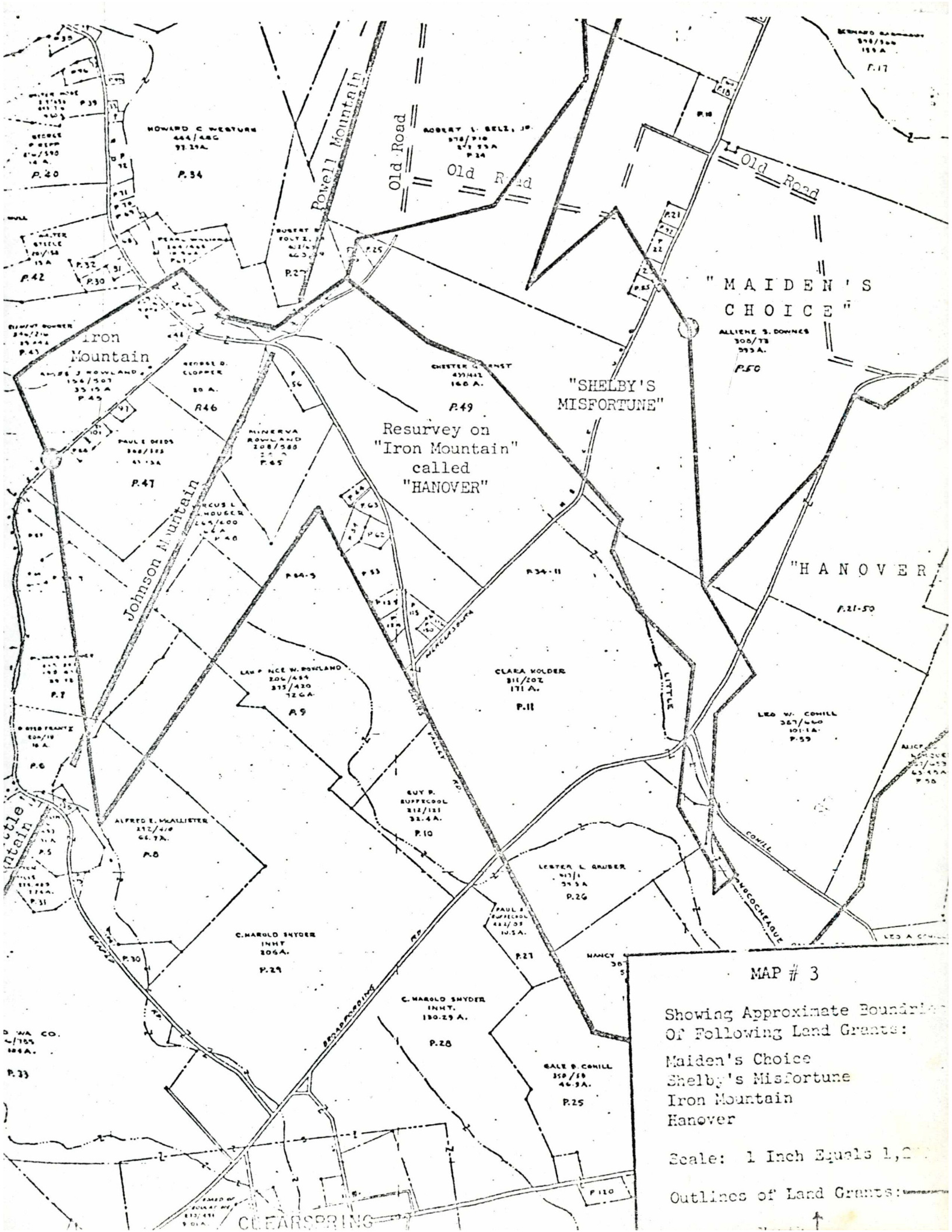
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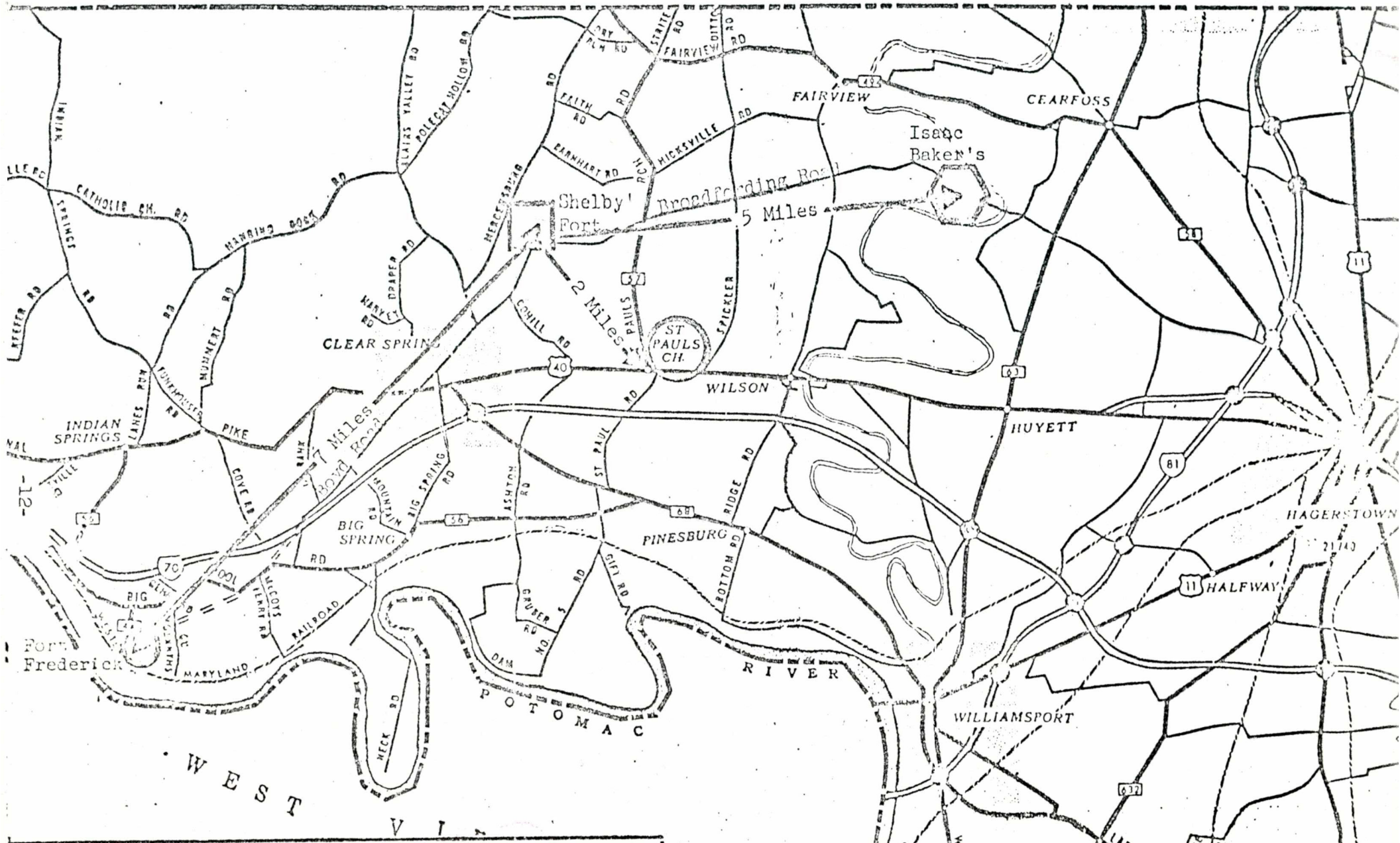
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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN REFERENCE LISTING

ALBDCC:	Account and Letter Books of Doctor Charles Carroll
ARSFCP:	American Revolutionary Soldiers of Franklin County, Pennsylvania
CCR:	Chancery Court Records
DAB:	Dictionary of American Biography
DCCLS:	Doctor Charles Carroll - Land Speculator
FCCH:	Frederick County Court House
FCLR:	Frederick County Land Records
FTGS in US:	A Report On The First Three Generations of The Shelby Family in The United States of America
HBV:	A History of Blairs Valley
ISOMH:	Colonel Isaac Shelby and Other Maryland Heroes of the Battle of King's Mountain, October 7, 1780
MHM:	Maryland Historical Magazine
MHR:	Maryland Hall of Records
QIS:	A Quest for Isaac Shelby in Washington County, Maryland
SCIS:	Sketch of Colonel Isaac Shelby, Hero of Three Wars and Later Governor of Kentucky
WCCH:	Washington County Court House
WCLP:	Washington County Land Patent


Powell Mountain
Old Road
Old Road
Old Road
"MAIDEN'S CHOICE"
ALLIENE S. DOWNES
300/73
393 A.
P.50
Iron Mountain
"SHELBY'S MISFORTUNE"
Resurvey on "Iron Mountain" called "HANOVER"
"HANOVER"
P.21-50
Johnson Mountain
HOWARD C. WESTERN
444/486
97.29A.
P.34
ROBERT L. BELZ, JR.
378/210
671.53A.
P.24
P.40
P.42
P.30
P.27
P.25
P.46
P.47
P.49
P.34-11
P.11
P.9
P.8
P.10
P.26
P.29
P.28
P.25
P.33
P.17
P.21
P.22
P.85
P.56
P.63
P.62
P.64-5
P.53
P.115
P.110
CLARA HOLDER
311/202
171 A.
LEO W. CONILL
367/440
101.1A.
P.59
GUY P. RUPPERSBURG
312/121
32.4A.
LESTER L. GRUBER
317/1
99.5A
P.26
C. HAROLD SNYDER
INHT
206A.
C. HAROLD SNYDER
INHT.
130.29 A.
GALE P. CONILL
350/58
46.9A.
P.25
CLEARSPRING
MAP # 3
Showing Approximate Boundries
Of Following Land Grants:
Maiden's Choice
Shelby's Misfortune
Iron Mountain
Hanover
Scale: 1 Inch Equals 1,
Outlines of Land Grants:

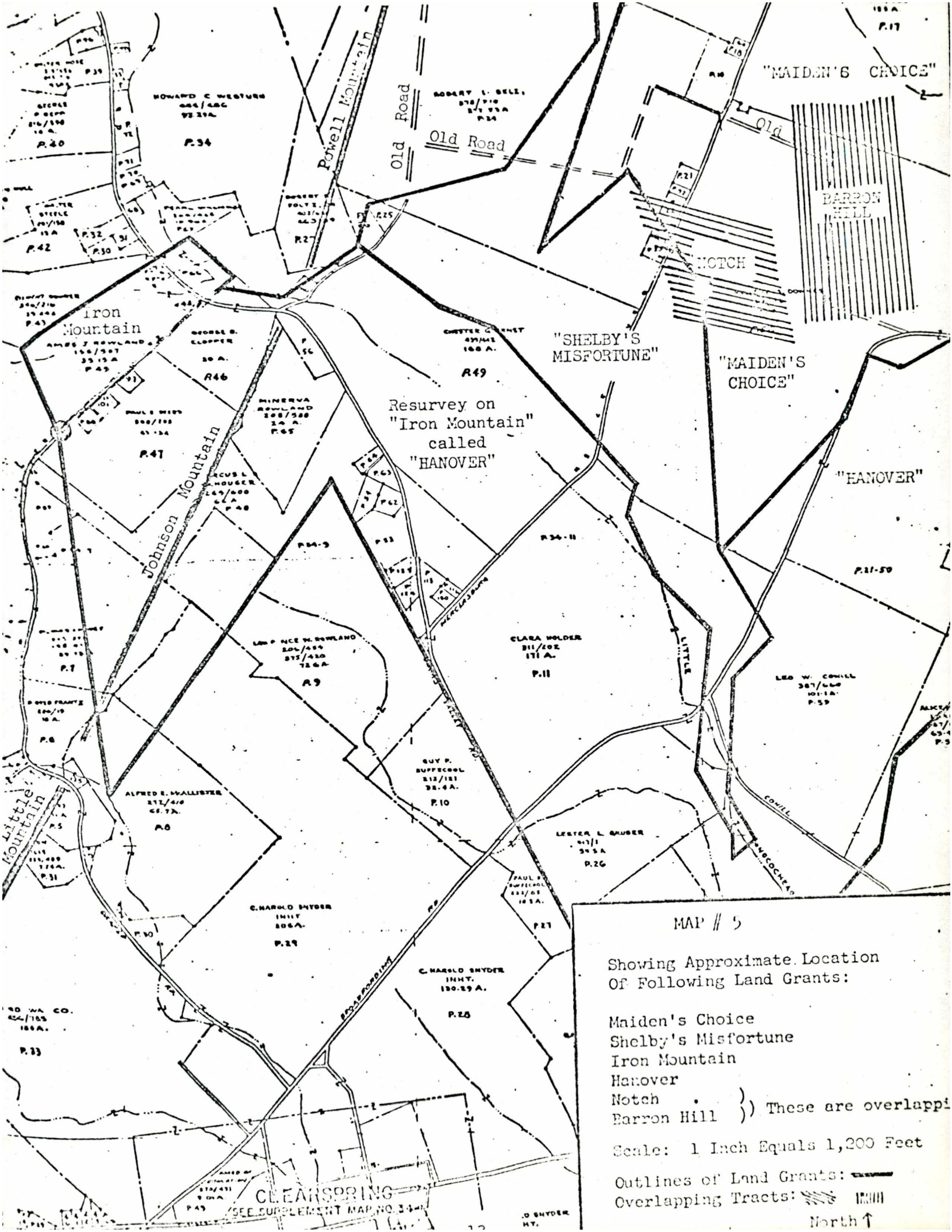


MAP # 4

Map Showing Distances Between Known Points And Evan Shelby, Jr's, Home During The Late 1750's.

Scale: 5/8 Inch Equals 1 Mile

North



MAP # 5

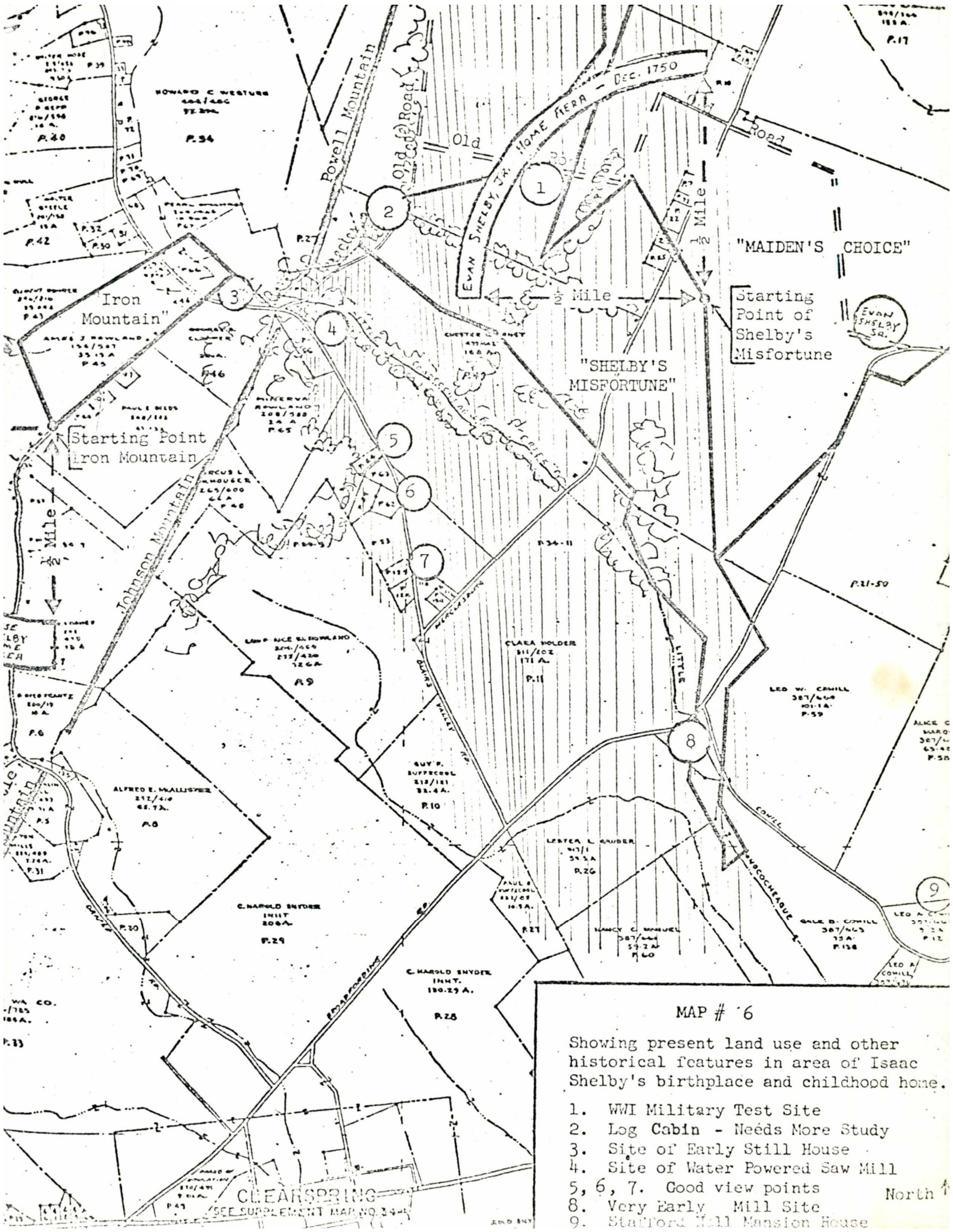
Showing Approximate Location Of Following Land Grants:

Maiden's Choice
Shelby's Misfortune
Iron Mountain
Hanover
Notch
Barron Hill
) These are overlappi

Scale: 1 Inch Equals 1,200 Feet

Outlines of Land Grants:
Overlapping Tracts:

North ↑



MAP # 6

Showing present land use and other historical features in area of Isaac Shelby's birthplace and childhood home.

1. WWI Military Test Site
2. Log Cabin - Needs More Study
3. Site of Early Still House
4. Site of Water Powered Saw Mill
5, 6, 7. Good view points
8. Very Early Mill Site
9. Stafford Hall Mansion House

North