

Shenstone, built probably 1820 by Harfield Timberlake
West Shenstone or Edgefield, built 1847 by Ambrose C. Timberlake
Resource History
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Local lore dates the Shenstone house to 1811, constructed by William Timberlake according to “Between the Rivers.” While the property indeed had a high value when it was sold in 1811 to Harfield Timberlake, the physical evidence does not appear to indicate quite that early a date of construction. The tax record is not entirely explicit in this case. In 1820 the building value on the property was \$1,000 and in 1821 it rose to \$2,000 without comment from the assessor. Given the dateable features of the brick house, however, a construction date of 1820 seems more reasonable than 1811.

1804 – In March 1804 Andrew Parks of Baltimore, Maryland purchased from Laurence Augustine Washington (of Frederick County) a tract of 400 acres for one dollar (JC DB 2/254).

The land was described as adjoining “the late General George Washington’s land,” Andrew McCormick, John Davenport (the land he purchased from Laurence A. Washington – see Locust Grove-Shirley House), “Mr. Timberlake’s land,” and Daniel Collett’s land. The 400-acre tract came from two tracts that Laurence A. Washington inherited from his father Samuel Washington:

One tract Samuel purchased from William McCormick “of Augusta County Virginia,” the 140 acres devised to William from his father John McCormick, for £146 in 1779 (BC DB 6/53, O’Dell:165).

The other tract “the said Samuel held under title from Laurence Washington deceased of Fairfax County...who purchased it of Robert Worthington of Frederick County...which said tract is known and called by the name of the rich woods...” (JC DB 2/254). Laurence Washington (father of Samuel) purchased the Worthington tract in 1748 (FC DB 1/413) and it passed to Samuel in 1779 by will following father’s death.

1809 – Andrew Parks of Baltimore entered into an “agreement” with Archibald Henderson of Baltimore and Joshua Longstreth of Philadelphia concerning his 400-acre Jefferson County Virginia tract. This agreement was not recorded but it was a Deed of Trust, on which it appears Parks defaulted, according to the newspaper sale advertisement in the Martinsburg Gazette dated July 27, 1810:

BY virtue of a Deed of Trust, executed by Andrew Parks of the city of Baltimore to Archibald Henderson and Joshua Longstreth...will be sold at public sale...*A TRACT of LAND*, containing 400 acres, situate near the head of Bullskin, Jefferson County, being a part of a tract called Rich Woods. There are two tenements thereon and a well of water on each.... Richard Llewellyn who lives thereon, or the subscriber will

shew [sic] the premises....” (John M’Pherson, Attorney for the Trustees, Jefferson County)

Parks (Parkes) was assessed on the JC land tax for 400 acres from 1806 through 1811.

1811 – May 21, Henderson and Longstreth recorded the deed for the 400 acres, sold to Henry Gantt for \$6,560 (JC DB 6/330).

August 15, 1811 – Henry Gantt sold the now 398 acres to Harfield Timberlake for \$10,000 (JC DB 6/405).

On the 1810 census, Harfield Timberlake was listed as the head of a household that included one male aged 45+ , one male and female aged 26-44, and six females and three males under age 15. I believe Harfield was the younger male, with wife and family. The older male was likely his father or father-in-law. There were also 19 slaves in the household.

Harfield Timberlake owned 200 acres adjoining the 400-acre Parks tract for which he was assessed in 1810. With 19 slaves he may well have been working at least part of the Parks land and possibly living in the house not occupied by Llewelin (see ad above).

1815 – Timberlake was not listed on the special house tax of this year, indicating that whatever house(s) he had on his acreage did not individually meet the \$500 minimum value.

1820 – Harfield Timberlake was assessed for his 398-acre farm with a building value of \$1,000. We know there were two houses there in 1810 so this likely represents those plus their associated outbuildings.

In 1821, Harfield Timberlake’s building value rose to \$2,000, without comment from the tax assessor, but this likely reflects the construction of his new, large brick house (Shenstone). This assessment remained the same through 1827.

On the 1820 census the Harfield Timberlake household again included one male over the age of 45, one male and one female aged 26-44, and now seven females and three males under the age of 15. Timberlake, listed as a farmer, also had 24 slaves.

1828 – Harfield Timberlake wrote his will and died (JC WB 5/404). He left everything to his wife Mary for “life” then to be divided equally among his children. Timberlake wrote his will in one short paragraph. He was apparently a man of few words.

Mary Timberlake lived on the 398-acre farm until 1845 when she passed away. Her tax assessment never changed during that time. When she died her property appraisal included 22 slaves, an 8-day clock “with brass works,” and a lot of furniture, silver, books, etc., as well as farm equipment, animals, and grain (JC WB 11/128).

1847 – In 1846 the Timberlake estate went into Chancery Court. By then the farm known as Shenstone (an Irish town) was divided into two tracts, one called West Shenstone and retained by Ambrose Timberlake, and the other called East Shenstone or just Shenstone (Shenston) – which included the brick house. East Shenstone was sold at public sale by Richard, Henry, and Ambrose C. Timberlake as commissioners (see attached plat). The purchaser of the 233-acre Shenstone farm was Thomas Lackland, for \$10,372 (JC DB 29/75). The family graveyard was excepted from the conveyance.

Ambrose C. Timberlake and his brother Henry first purchased their brother Richard's interest in the 167-acre West Shenstone tract in 1847 for \$5,364 (JC DB 29/232). Then in 1848, Ambrose purchased Henry's interest in the farm for \$2,682 (JC DB 29/505).

Ambrose Timberlake's land tax assessment in 1848 included \$600 in building value "added for new house." (West Shenstone-Edgefield) In 1851 his building value rose to \$800 without comment from the assessor.

On the 1852 map it appears that Ambrose Timberlake named his farm Edgefield.

1854 – Thomas Lackland sold "Shenston," now 231 acres, excepting the Timberlake family graveyard, to Jacob Foreman for \$55 per acre, or \$12,705 (DB 33/426).

Lackland's 1853 tax assessment had a building value of \$2,500, up from \$2,000 without comment from the assessor. Jacob Foreman's later assessments retained that \$2,500 building value.

1865 – Jacob Foreman sold the now 219-acre "Shinston" farm, "on which he now resides," to J.M. and R.M. (wife) Foreman for \$8,000, far below his 1854 purchase price (DB 1/52). This may be a conveyance to include his wife on the deed although the deed does not indicate whether "J.M. Foreman" is Jacob Foreman or somebody else.

1870 – J.M. and R.M. Foreman of Montgomery County, Maryland sold "Shenston" to William A. Shewalter for \$55 per acre – 219 acres for \$12,045 (DB 5/131).

1880 – William Shewalter mortgaged his "Shenston" farm to George Baylor (trustee), noted as now 193 acres minus "a portion sold to John M. Coyle (DB H/441).

John Coyle had purchased West Shenstone or Edgefield, however the deed was not recorded (may have been during the Civil War). He appears as the owner of "Edgeridge" on the 1883 S. Howell Brown map.

1892 – George Baylor was both the executor of John M. Coyle's estate and the Special Commissioner in an 1888 Chancery Case against William Shewalter. In May 1892 he sold "Shenston" to George W. Snyder for \$7,125 (DB Z/401). Then in December 1892 he sold "Edgefield" at public sale to George W. Snyder for \$8,020 (DB 73/388).

The two farms remained in the Snyder family, passing to Charles W. Snyder in 1916 (DB 115/48) and in a 1976 partition (DB 410/638) were described as: East Shenstone (Shenstone,

Showalter, Shewalter, or Hunsicker lands [46 acres]) of 302 acres including the “ancient” cemetery; and West Shenstone (Stenston, Homestead, or Edgefield) of 196 acres. Odessa Stanley Snyder, the last of Charles Snyder’s heirs (wife of James H. Snyder) died in 1997 and passed the farms to her children William N. and Elizabeth Stanley Snyder (WB LL/9).