

Maryland Historical Trust**Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form**Survey No. ^B4681**1. Name**

Historic 1801-1823 North Durham Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 1801-1823 North Durham Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21205 county

3. Classification**Category**

district
 building(s)
 structure
 site
 object

Ownership

public
 private
 both
Public Acquisition
 in process
 being considered
 not applicable

Status

occupied
 unoccupied
 work in progress
Accessible
 yes: restricted
 yes: unrestricted
 no

Present Use

agriculture
 commercial
 educational
 entertainment
 government
 industrial
 military
 museum
 park
 private residence
 religious
 scientific
 transportation
 other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number telephone
city, town state & zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
late federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

7. Description

Condition	Check One	Check One
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<input type="checkbox"/> moved: date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of ten two-story, two-bay wide vernacular Renaissance Revival-style brick houses with shed roofs and sheet metal cornices were built in 1903 by George F. Mitchell, a builder of working class houses in East Baltimore. Only four of the houses retain their original brick facades, which were originally painted a dark red, with the basement area painted white to imitate the marble basements of more expensive houses. The rest have been covered with formstone.

After the use of wood was outlawed for cornices in 1892, sheet metal became the predominant material used. By the early years of the 20th century, the most popular form of sheet metal cornice sported ball finials and often classical motifs like swags pressed into the frieze area. Generally, only main street two story houses had decorated friezes—the builder saved money on his small street versions by eliminating them. Likewise, while the main street houses in this style would have marble basements, stringers, lintels, and steps, builders used no marble at all on their small street versions, painting the basements white instead. Main street houses would have stained glass transoms over both the door and the wide first floor window; on the small streets builders offered stained glass only in the door transom.

The houses are two stories in height, 11'4" wide (15'5" for the end house which was built to serve as a combination storefront/residence), and occupy lots 80' deep. Each house is only two rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. The houses are constructed in running bond and have been painted. Each house has a single hooded chimney located near the rear of the house. The shed roof is capped by a continuous sheet metal cornice with a deep frieze area decorated with rosettes. Each sheet metal end bracket is decorated with grooves and bottom trefoils (in the style of earlier wooden brackets) but also has a rounded finial that projects above the cornice line and a stamped rosette decoration.

The door and window openings have segmentally arched brick lintels, composed of two rows of headers, with plain tympanums. The sills are wood. The slightly wider first floor window is a common stylistic feature of houses of this period, when the more common availability of plate glass made a wider window economically possible. In the most expensive main street houses of this style, the plate glass window would have a stained glass transom, but this feature was never found on small street houses. Although the first floor window is wider on these houses, the opening was filled with the less expensive, traditional 2/2 sash, a few sets of which remain. One original door may survive—at 1847—which has two sets of vertical panels (one long, one shorter) framed by a set of paired square panels at top and bottom. The houses sit on fairly low basements lit by a single-light sash, set beneath a double-header segmental arch. Each front door is reached by three concrete steps.

Although less than 12' wide, the houses show a stylish floor plan indicating the influence of Artistic-period houses with their central "reception room"/stair hall area located in the center of the house. In these more modest versions there is no stair landing, but the stairs are located in the middle room—the dining room—and rise in a straight flight against the side of the dining room wall (instead of being set between the parlor and dining room as in houses of the previous decade). Further stylish details include a wide, framed opening between parlor and dining room and a finely trimmed arched opening between dining room and kitchen.

8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates 1903

Builder/Architect George F. Mitchell

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This group of houses is significant as representing the very last type of small street houses to be built, in the period c. 1900 – 1909, when a new city ordinance outlawed building houses on streets less than 40' wide. The houses were built by George F. Mitchell, a local builder, according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the period c. 1880 to 1910. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of two-story house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and northeast of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell for \$1,200 - \$1,500; small street houses for \$700-\$750.

Occasionally, the builder retained ownership of his small street houses to provide income for himself as rental properties or sold them to other investors. In this way people of varying means could afford to live in the same block. If they couldn't afford the approximately \$750 purchase price of the small street houses, then they *could* afford the \$8 or so a month it would cost to rent one, while they saved to be able to buy their own home later.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

date June 2000

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

telephone

city, town Baltimore

state & zip code Maryland 21204

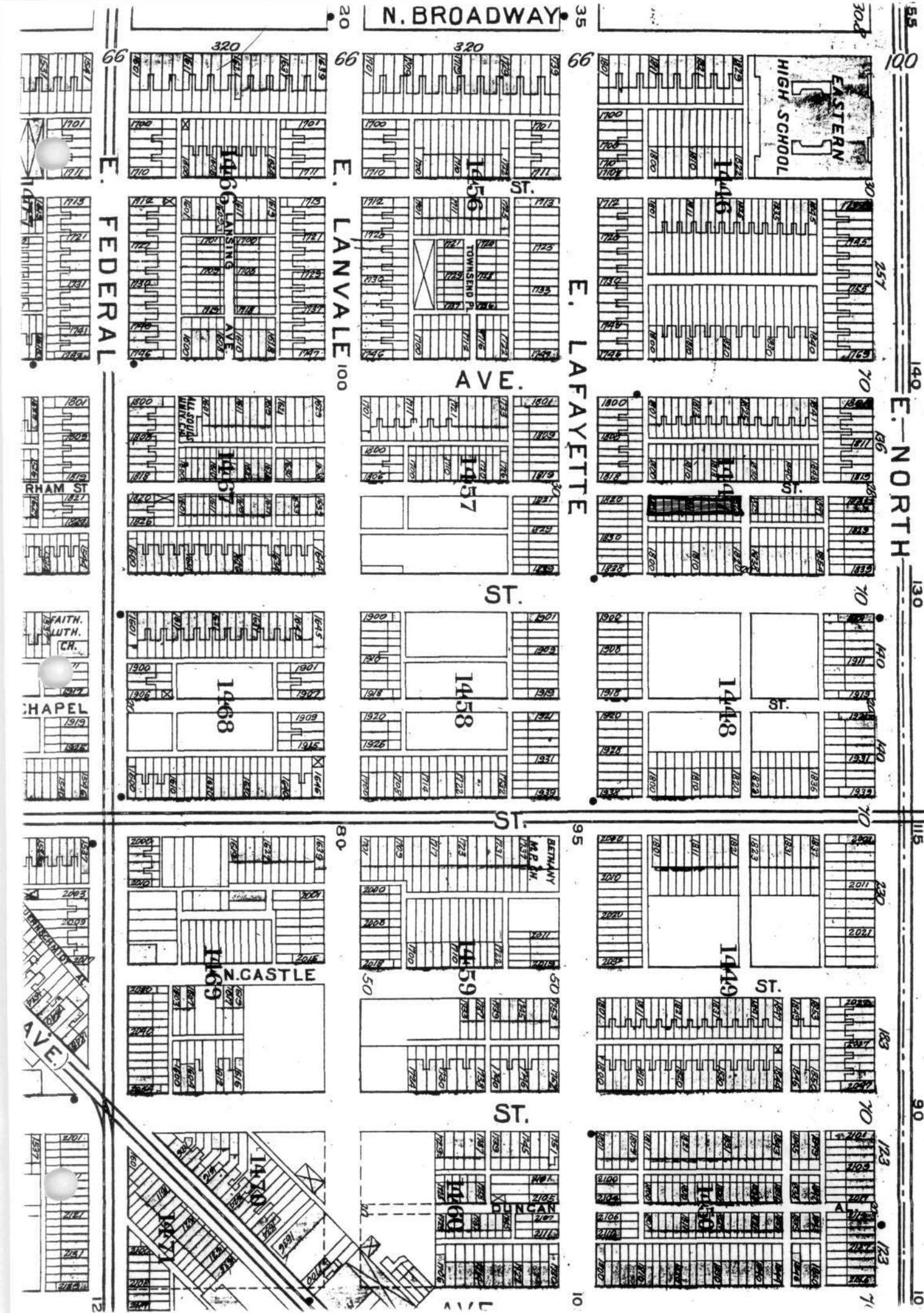
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of property rights.

Return to:
DHCP/DHCD
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032-2023

1861-1873 N. Baltimore St.
34170 MD

1906 City Atlas



N. BROADWAY

EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL

E. FEDERAL

E. LANVALE

E. LAFAYETTE

E. NORTH

LANSLING AVE.

AVE.

1456

1457

1458

1459

1460

1468

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1448

1449

1450

FAITH. LUTH. CH.

CHAPEL

AVE.

BENJAMIN M.P.M.

DUNCAN

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1800 Durham

Es S half

W 6

1801 - 1823

B-4681

1801-1823 N. Durham St.

BALTO., MD

W. Nield

11/96

MD SHPO

1/1