

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4749

1. Name

Historic 405 - 419 South Regester Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 405 - 419 South Regester Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21205 county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
date 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved:
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		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 eight two-bay-wide, two-story-and-attic brick houses are generally typical of a popular type of Baltimore rowhouse built in the late 1840s and 1850s to serve the city's growing working class population. The lower-pitched gable roof allowed for a more spacious upper story, which now could be lit by small rectangular windows at both the front and rear of the house, instead of the earlier dormer windows. Despite its practical nature, this new feature had its roots in a stylistic change in Baltimore's fashionable housing, the small "attic" windows being an important part of the façade design of much larger town mansions being built in the new Greek Revival style. In many cases, alley houses such as these are still occupied by working class families and many are still covered with the formstone put on in the 1950s or 1960s.

Pr

The houses are two-and-a-half stories in height, 11'6" and 12'6" wide, and occupy lots 75' deep. Each two-room-deep house has a one-story brick rear kitchen addition somewhat narrower than the house. The pitch of the gable roof is especially low, a characteristic of this particular type of two-story, gable-roofed alley house. Because early house lots in Baltimore were laid out back to back, without rear service alleys, the only entrance to the backyard is through the sallyport located in the center of the pair. The houses are probably constructed in running bond, which would always have been painted, but all of the facades are now covered with formstone. Originally each house had a simple brick corbelled cornice, but all are now obscured by the stucco and formstone. Chimneys are located in the middle of the front and rear rooms and each house also has a chimney at the rear end of the kitchen addition.

The original door and window openings probably had flat wood lintels and sills, but all have been completely obscured by the stucco and formstone coverings and all windows are filled with replacement 1/1 sash. At 419 S. Register St., the first floor window has been replaced with a wider plate glass window with stained glass transom popular in the early 1900s. No original doors survive and the row shows a mix of replacement door styles, all surmounted by a single light transom. The houses have no basements, the entrances being reached by a low, single concrete or brick step.

The houses are basically two rooms deep, with the front room being entered directly from the front door. The front and back rooms of the first floor are separated by a wide opening, with the tightly winding, narrow stairs set in the rear room, in the space between the partition wall and the fireplace. The one-story rear addition served as the kitchen, with its own cooking fireplace.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input 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 1853

Builder/Architect Edward W. Robinson

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

This row of houses is significant as being representative of a large group of such houses built in the 1840s and 1850s to accommodate the growing labor force centered around the Baltimore waterfront. Although showing stylistic influences from Greek Revival style buildings constructed in Baltimore in the 1830s and 1840s (in the proportions of the attic windows, the chaste exterior details, and the double parlor floor plan), the outstanding feature of these houses is their extreme simplicity of design and detailing. They are practical adaptations of a current mode of building, designed to meet the need for efficient, low-cost housing for a growing working class community. The floor plan is essentially the same as that of the earlier Federal-style two-and-a-half story houses, but the opening between the two rooms is wider, reflecting popular Greek Revival tastes. The increase in height of the third story (from a dormer story to an attic story) allowed the third story to be divided into two separate rooms, in place of the one open room of the dormer story, thus providing welcome additional private living space to large families or those who had to take in boarders. The houses do not differ markedly from similar two-story-and-attic houses built on nearby main streets—they are simply somewhat narrower versions priced to serve less affluent residents of the old walking city.

This group of houses was built by Edward W. Robinson, who also built the houses on the north side of Eastern Ave., the east side of Griffin Ct., and the north side of Portugal St. in this block, all in the early 1850s. The houses were sold and rented to German-American craftsman and laborers. The houses are especially significant since they today serve as housing for local working class immigrant families (now Latin-Americans, who have settled in this part of Fells Point), just as they did when built one hundred and fifty years ago.

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

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

city, town Baltimore

date June 2000

telephone

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 Annotate 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 rights.

Return to:

DHCP/DHCD

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023



ALL ITEMS
ON FRONT
STAIRS

B-4749

405-419 S. Regester St

BALTO. MD

M. Hayward

6/00

MS SAPO

2/2

KODAK PROFESSIONAL
PAPER • PAPIER • PAPER



B-4749

409-411 S. Reister
St,

BALTO. MD

M. Hayward

W/O MOSAPO

1/2