

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4857

1. Name

Historic 500 - 518 North Port Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 500 - 518 North Port Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21231 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

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check One

unaltered
 altered

Check One

original site
 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 1906 by Edward J. Gallagher, one of Baltimore's largest-scale builders of working class houses. The houses were originally painted a dark red, but now all are 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, 12' wide (the northernmost house is 14' wide, the southernmost 13'6" wide, designed to be used as combination storefront/residences) and occupy lots 70'4" deep. Each house is three small rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. Each house has a single hooded chimney located near the rear of the house. The houses were probably built in running bond and were originally painted, but now all are covered with formstone. The shed roof is capped by a continuous sheet metal cornice consisting of a crown molding set above a deep frieze area decorated with a cut-work band. The two framing end brackets are topped with ball finials that rise above the roofline and are decorated with an acanthus leaf on their lower portion and end with a trefoil pattern.

The door and window openings have segmentally arched brick lintels, with plain tympanums. The sills are brick. The windows are particularly narrow and all sash are 1/1, the original configuration. Doorways have a single-light transom but no original doors survive. The houses sit on fairly high basements lit by a tall, single-light sash. Each front door is reached by four brick or concrete steps.

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 1906

Builder/Architect Edward J. Gallagher

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. 1905 - 1909, when a new city ordinance outlawed building houses on streets less than 40' wide. The houses were built by Edward J. Gallagher, a major Baltimore builder, as part of his work in the McElderry St. area in the early 1900s. Unlike his later work south of Patterson Park, where he used the brown, Roman brick associated with the Renaissance Revival style, his houses in this neighborhood were still built with red brick that was originally painted. Most are now covered with formstone.

Gallagher developed this area 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 - \$900. Occasionally, the builder retained ownership of his small street houses to provide income for himself as rental properties. 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.

In this particular case Gallagher sold all of the houses to owner-occupants--mainly German skilled workers on the main streets and Polish laborers and tailors on the small streets

The land originally on which these houses are built belonged to the Patterson family as part of their 18th century estate, which also included the land given by the family to the city for Patterson Park. In the early 1900s the Patterson heirs began developing this block by leasing parcels to various builders who constructed modestly-scaled and priced housing for the mainly German-American semi-skilled tradesmen and laborers employed in nearby factories, who received mortgages from a variety of local building and loans, many of them sponsored by the German community.

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

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 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.

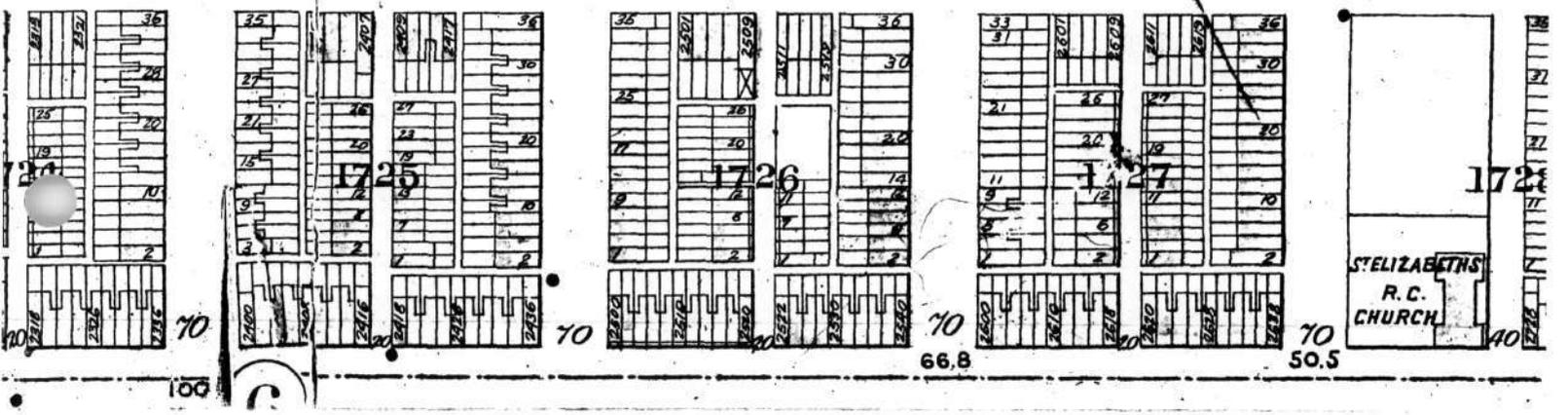
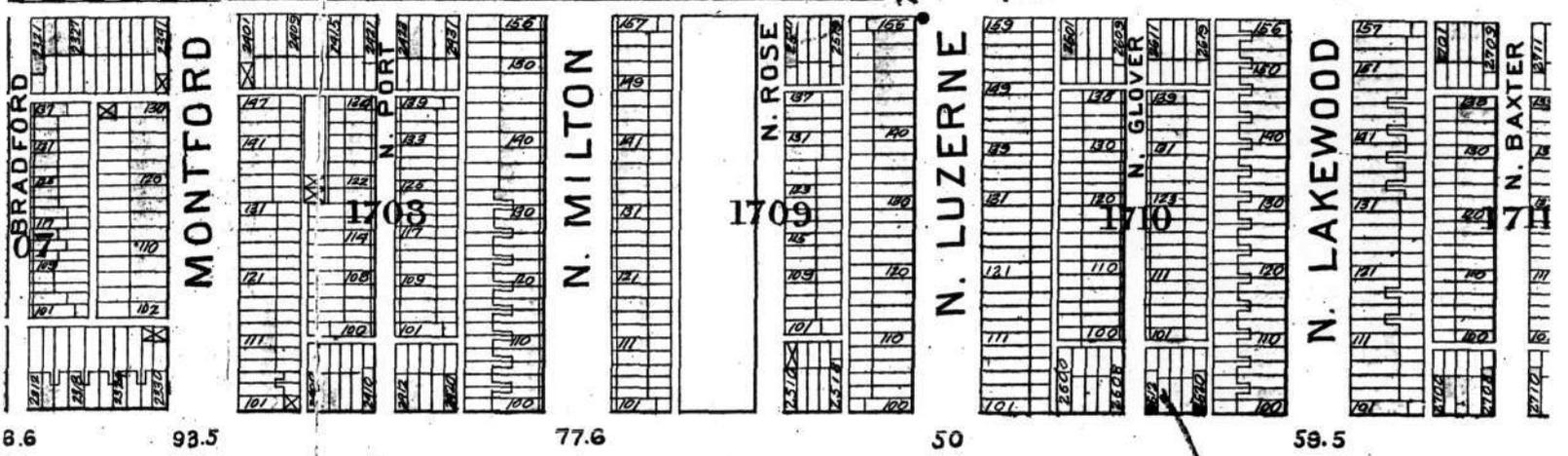
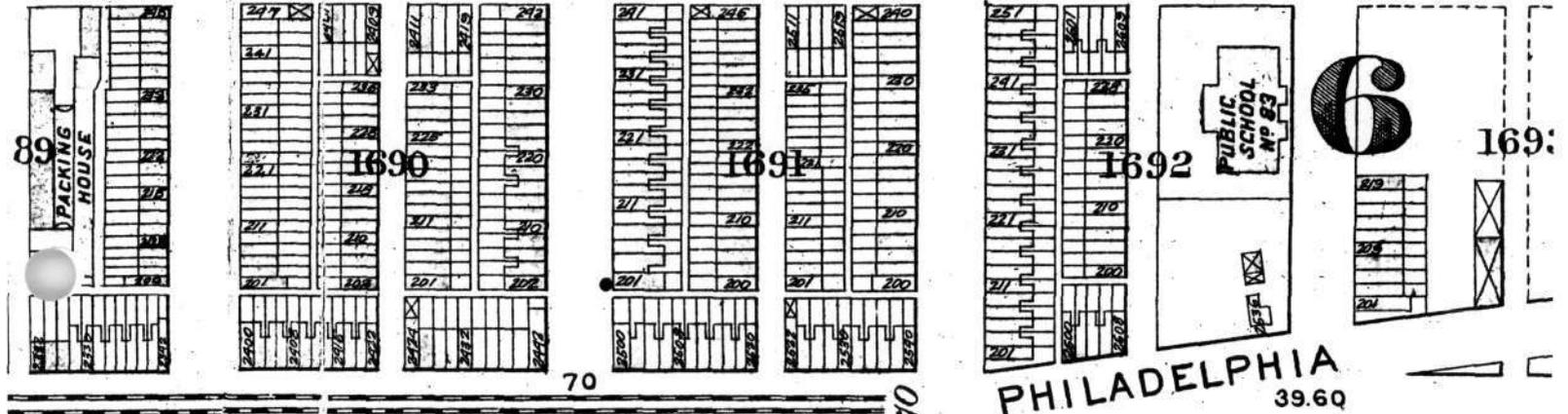
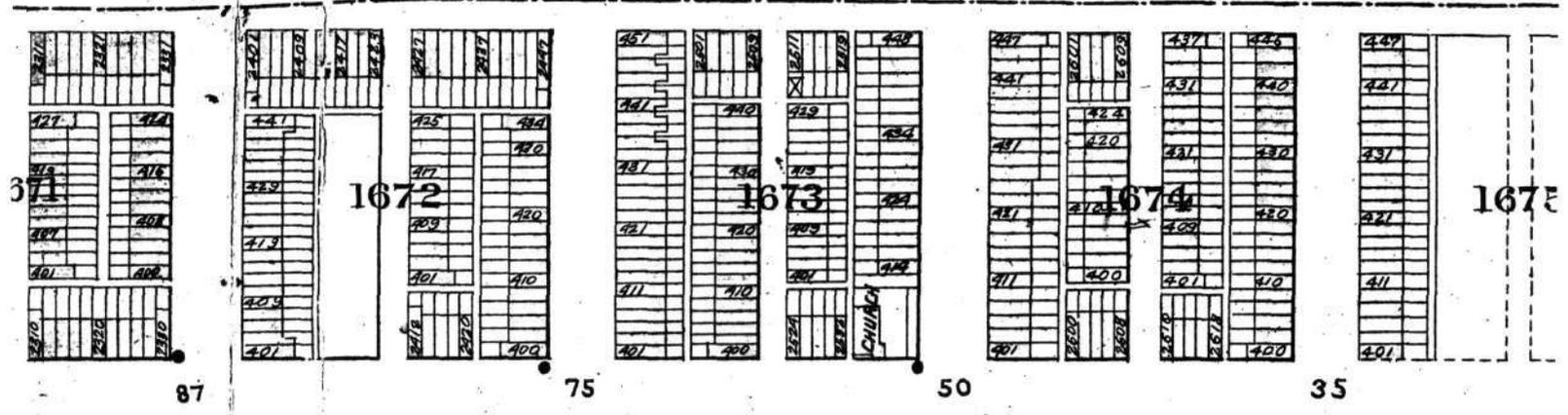
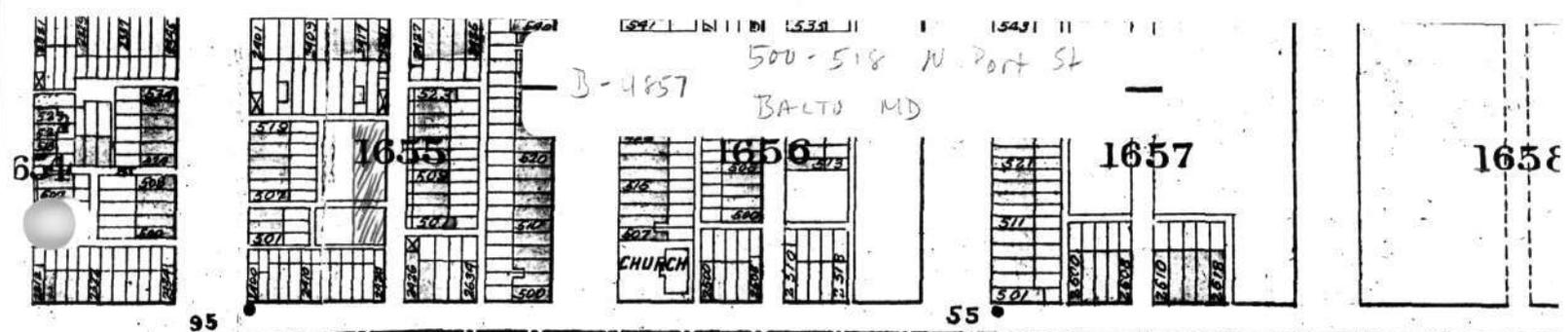
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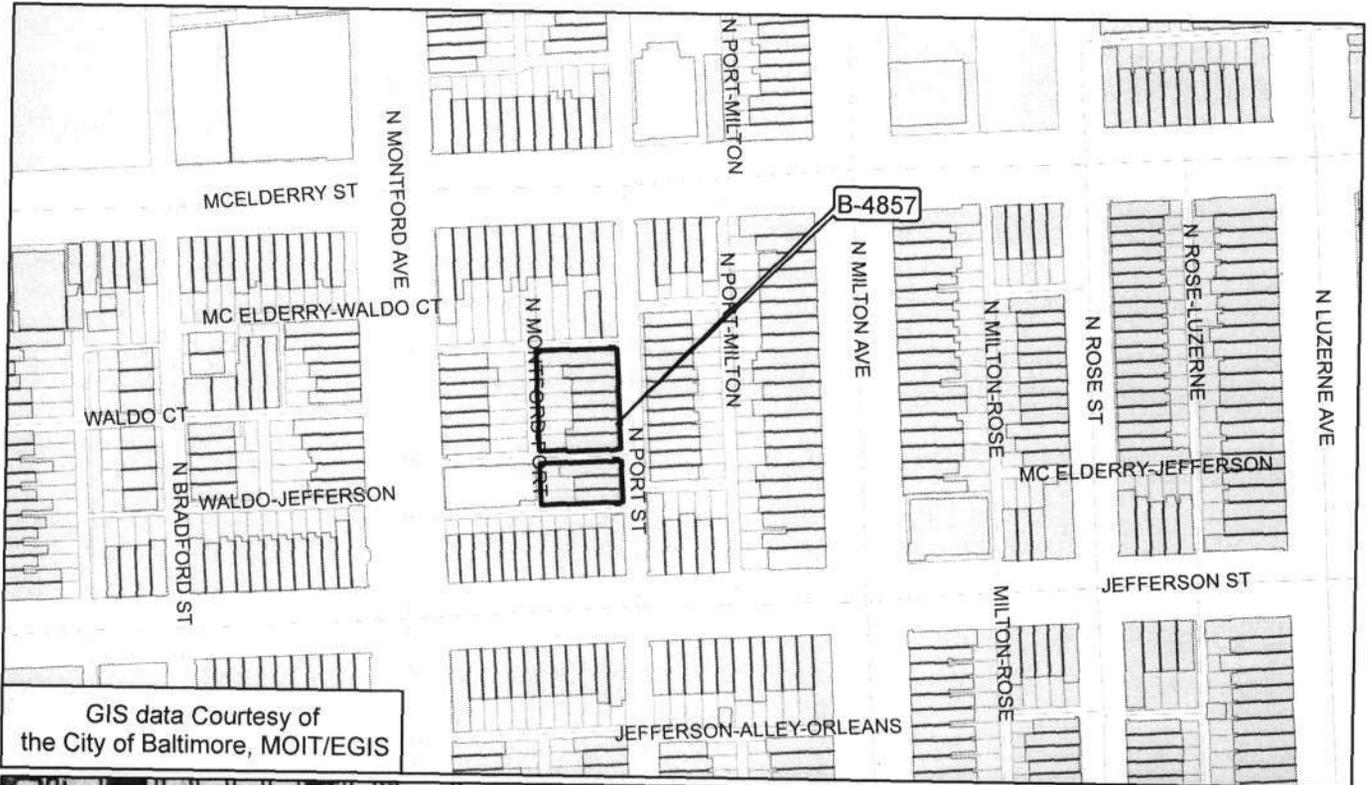
Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023



B-4857
500-518 N. Port Street
Block 1655, Lots 066-075
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.



GIS data Courtesy of
the City of Baltimore, MOIT/EGIS





B-4857

500-518

N. Port St.

BALTO. MD

M. Hayward

6/00

MD SAPO

1/2



B-4857

518 N. Port St.

BACTO. MD

M. Hayward

6/00

MD SHPO

2/2