

BA-142
English Consul Mansion
2820 Oak Grove Road
Halethorpe vic.
c. 1831-36.
Private

The English Consul Mansion is located at 2820 Oak Grove Road in southwestern Baltimore County, Maryland. The house is a 2 ½-story, five-bay by two-bay structure with a rubble stone foundation. The southwest and northeast walls are frame with weather boards that are covered by later asbestos shingles, and the northwest and southeast walls are stuccoed brick. The gable roof has a northwest-southeast ridge, and has standing seam metal. There are interior parged chimneys on both ends. The house currently faces southwest toward the road, though the original orientation was apparently to the northeast. On the southwest elevation, the center bay has a door with two tall, pyramidal panels with a four-light transom above it. Flanking the door are wide, plain pilasters and sidelights of two-over-two double hung sash with wood sills. There is a pediment above the door, but the top half is cut off by the porch soffit. This is a one-story, one-bay porch with a gable roof that has a northeast-southwest ridge, and standing seam metal. There are two large brick piers supporting the porch roof. The northeast elevation has a colossal pilaster at both corners. In the center of the first story is a pair of French doors and a two-light transom. There are freestanding wood Doric columns that support a semicircular arched hood with dentils. On the wall above the transom, inside of the hood, is a blind wooden fanlight. There is a two-bay by one-bay, one-story wing on the southeast end. It is constructed of rubble stone that is not pointed, and there are a few traces of stucco on the stone. It has a gable roof with a northwest-southeast ridge, asphalt shingles, and a new aluminum soffit. The first story has a center passage, double pile

plan with the stairway in a cross passage. The center passage is only single-pile in depth. About 18 feet southeast of the house is a garage. It is a one-story, two-bay by two-bay structure of rock-faced concrete block with a hip roof of standing seam metal and a new soffit on the cornice.

The English Consul Mansion stands on a small portion of the 245-acre parcel that was owned by Gabriel Wood, a Baltimore merchant living in London, when it was sold in 1817. William Cooke of Baltimore purchased the property, but died shortly afterward. His widow and their children, sold the property in June 1818 to Henry Thompson and Peter Wirgman of Baltimore. The following year they leased the property for 999 years, at a rate of one cent per year, to William Dawson, Esq., a merchant from Wakefield in the West Riding of the County of York who also served as the English Consul in Baltimore. Emilie M. Rosch explained in 1924 that, under the Maryland Constitution at the time, no alien could hold title to property in fee, so apparently Dawson used the grantors as his agents to side step this law. It has traditionally been assumed that Dawson was responsible for constructing the existing house, however this is almost certainly inaccurate. Dawson had little time in which to act, because he died in October 1820. Dawson left all his real estate and personal property in America to his wife, Eleanor, who died at Brighton, England on 29 December, 1833, at age 60. Eleanor Dawson apparently did not leave a will, so the property devolved to her children. With title to the property in the hands of several siblings, it would seem unlikely that any one of them would undertake the construction of a large, well-finished country house, but that is apparently exactly what happened. Traditionally, the date given for the house is 1819, with the

assumption that William Dawson quickly built upon the property. However, examination of the building suggests that the period of construction was in the 1830s. The plaster ceiling medallions, symmetrical architrave, and the marble mantels all reflect the Greek Revival period that is beginning to become popular c. 1820 in Baltimore, but is much more common fifteen years later. The most likely candidate for building the house is probably Frederick Dawson, who lived here for many years. There is the possibility that Eleanor Dawson had the house built for him shortly before she died, or that her death provided him with the funds and/or the freedom to build. The house finally passed out of the family in 1908, when Charles W. Hull bought all the interest in the property from two trustees of two separate Dawson lines that owned it. Hull, in turn, sold 20 of the 265 acres with the house the same year, to Conrad H. Unger, and had the land surveyed and platted. Hull was responsible for subdividing the remainder of the estate into building lots. There was originally a shorter two-story wing on the northwest end, which must have been a kitchen and servants space. This wing was removed c. 1919 and moved down the street to create another dwelling, at 2810-12 Oak Grove Avenue. The stone wing could date to c. 1916-17, but this is not certain.

7. Description

Inventory No. BA-142

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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

The English Consul Mansion is located at 2820 Oak Grove Road in southwestern Baltimore County, Maryland. The house is a 2 ½-story, five-bay by two-bay structure with a rubble stone foundation. The southwest and northeast walls are frame with weather boards that are covered by later asbestos shingles, and the northwest and south east walls are stuccoed brick. The gable roof has a northwest-southeast ridge, and has standing seam metal. There are interior parged chimneys on both ends. The house currently faces southwest toward the road, though the original orientation was apparently to the northeast. There is a two-bay by one-bay, one-story wing on the southeast end. It is constructed of rubble stone that is not pointed, and there are a few traces of stucco on the stone. It has a gable roof with a northwest-southeast ridge, asphalt shingles, and a new aluminum soffit.

On the southwest elevation, the west bay of the foundation has what appear to be two one-light casement windows. The center bay has a three-over-three double hung sash with a wood sill. Brick is used around the opening, and is toothed into the stone. The south-center and south bays are not visible. On the first story the west bay has no opening. The west-center bay and the two south bays each have a six-over-one double hung sash with a wood sill and plain head cut wood trim. The window trim laps over the weatherboards beneath it. The center bay has a door with two tall, pyramidal panels that have quirked Greek ovolo panel moulds and a large vertical bead down the center of the door. The transom bar has a quirked Greek ovolo, with a four-light transom above it. Flanking the door are wide, plain pilasters and sidelights of two-over-two double hung sash with wood sills. Below each sill is a sunk, flat panel with a quirked bead panel mould. There is a pediment above the door, but the top half is cut off by the porch soffit. This is a one-story, one-bay porch with a gable roof that has a northeast-southwest ridge, and standing seam metal. There are two large brick piers supporting the porch roof, with the bricks set rowlock on the bull. There are square vertical balusters and a moulded handrail. New aluminum soffit covers beaded-edge-and-center boards. The gable end of the porch has wood shingles alternating between square butts and paired saw tooth butts in each course, with each course staggered so that the square butts lap the saw tooth pair and vice versa. The second story has no opening in the west bay and typical six-over-one sash in the other four bays. There are plain corner boards and a box cornice.

The northwest elevation has a one-story porch the width of the house supported by four wide brick piers like those on the southwest porch. Between these piers is frame infill with wafer board sheathing, a door opening in the center, and a six-over-six aluminum sash in the ends. This infill construction was never completed. The foundation has a window opening near the north corner. North of center is a window opening with a four-light sash that has architrave with a broken field, a beaded interior edge, and is mitered at the corners. In the center of the foundation is a brick porch with two concrete steps on the northwest, and steps down to the cellar on the southwest that lead underneath of the porch. The side cheek wall to these cellar steps is brick. The first story has two windows set north of center, each with two eight-light casement windows. The center bay has a door with six lights over two panels, and one panel on each jamb and on the soffit. The panels have sunk fields and quirked Greek ovolo panel moulds. The symmetrical architrave has two beads in the center, with a fillet on each side that is flanked by a small bead on each side of the fillet. One plain corner block survives, though it may not be original. Just above the window and door opening height are three pockets in the brick wall, one near the north corner, one in line with the southwest end of the porch, and a third centered between these. The pockets suggest a wing attached to this elevation. Between the first and second stories are French doors in the center with new head cut trim. To the north of these doors are two casement windows identical to those on the first story. There is a ghost on the wall of a gabled roof eave that aligns with the pockets in the first story. The ridge of this roof was just below the eave cornice line of the main block of the house. The eaves of this wing roof were around the same height as the lintel of the French door between the first and second stories. The southwest wall of this wing was set just southwest of this door, and the northeast wall was near the northeast wall of the main block. Between the second story and the attic are French doors with a plain frame and a sill that is covered with metal. The raking eaves have a deeply overhanging box cornice with narrow boards on the soffit.

The northeast elevation has asbestos shingles over top of weatherboards that are fastened with cut nails. Both corners have a colossal pilaster with a Greek ovolo moulding on the capital, and entablature blocks. In the center of the first story is a pair of

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

French doors with eight lights over one panel, and a two-light transom. There are freestanding wood Doric columns with concrete plinths and short impost blocks with dentils. The columns support a semi circular arched hood with dentils and a soffit of narrow, beaded-edge boards. On the wall above the transom, inside of the hood, is a blind wooden fanlight with irregularly spaced battens and long, narrow dentils. The four end bays have six-over-one double hung sash with head cut trim and wood sills. Beneath the exterior window trim the window frames have a double bead. The second story has five typical six-over-one sash and there is a box cornice of all new wood. There are two dormers, one between the east-center and center bays and the other over the north-center bay. They are gabled and have one-over-one sash. There is an internal gutter system in the roof. On the northeast side of the house is a large concrete porch with parged brick end walls that are topped by old paving blocks made of fired clay, and are eight inches square. There are also square paving stones to the north side of the porch that are brownstone and are approximately 1 foot, 9 inches square.

Attached to the southeast elevation is a rubble stone wing that is not pointed, has brick around the window openings, and retains traces of rough casting. It is a one-story, one-bay by one-bay structure with a gable roof that has asphalt shingles, new vinyl soffit, and a northwest-southeast ridge. The northeast elevation has one window opening that is covered with vinyl siding. The southeast elevation has one window like that on the northeast, and the gable end has vinyl siding and a pair of four-light sliding sash. The southwest elevation also has a window opening covered in vinyl in the south bay, and a doorway in the west bay that has a new door, new frame that is smaller than the opening, and new infill. There are two large, scrolled wrought iron brackets that support a rebuilt pent roof over the door. The door lintel is marble and has a projecting Greek ovolo moulding on its face that forms a pediment. On the roof are two new skylights.

The southeast elevation of the main block has a three-light sash in the foundation, south of the wing. The stucco on this wall retains the ghost of the original wing cornice profile, which projected far from the wing wall. The second story of the main block has a six-over-one sash set just south of center, and another near the east corner. The gable end has two six-over-six sash and the raking eave is the same as on the northwest elevation. Some of the rough casting is missing, but some retains faint scoring lines that create the appearance of ashlar stone.

The cellar is not accessible from the main block, but can be reached from exterior stairs on the northwest. There is a six-panel door with sunken fields, quirked Greek ogee panel moulds, new hinges, and no lock. The cellar has a center passage that runs northwest-southeast, with a dirt floor, plaster on brick walls, and formerly had a lath and plaster ceiling. There is countersealing beneath the first story floorboards. The joists are sash sawn. The west cellar has a fireplace on the northwest elevation that has slightly splayed jambs and parged brick on the face. There is a metal plate on the back of the firebox. The floor of this room is concrete, and the ceiling was lathed and plastered. The north cellar is the same as the west cellar, and also has a summer beam that runs northwest to southeast. It is sash sawn and is 5 ½ inches wide by 11 ½ inches deep. The southwest center cellar had a lath and plaster ceiling, but this has been removed and some of the floor framing above replaced. There is countersealing between the surviving joists. All of the partition walls are plaster on brick. The south cellar has an arch at the southeast end beneath the first-story fireplace. The east cellar also has an arch on the southeast end. The southeast-center cellar has a wood cabinet with four shelves against the northeast wall. The doors are missing, but were probably added later. There are metal pieces driven into the wall and attached to the sides of the cabinet to hold it in place.

The first story has a center passage, double pile plan with the stairway in a cross passage. The center passage is only single-pile in depth. The floor is 2 ¼-inch-wide wood that runs northeast-southwest. It appears to be pine, but is now covered by the backing from linoleum flooring that is being stripped. The baseboard has a broken field and a quirked Greek ovolo. The southwest, or front, door has six lying panels above two panels, with sunken fields and quirked Greek ovolo panel moulds. The architrave has a Greek key pattern with square corner blocks. There is a pediment above the door with a quirked Greek ovolo on the raking cornice. The door is hung on three 5-inch cast-iron butt hinges marked "J. & Sons." This door is of double thickness, and has a

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 2

modern lock that replaces a mortise lock. All of the doors have this same architrave and pediment. There is a run plaster cornice with a Greek cavetto at the bottom, a bead, a Greek ovolo, and on the ceiling an ovoid flanked by fillets. There is a plaster ceiling medallion with an inner row of small acanthus leaves and an outer row that alternates between acanthus leaves and rosettes with foliage. Outside of this is a ring of three beads. The stair hall is off the northwest side of the passage, with a dogleg stair that ascends along the northeast wall, with a landing at the northwest end. The bottom of the stairway has been altered with a landing and steps on the southeast and southwest sides of this landing constructed of 2 ¼-inch-wide boards. There is a boxed newel post and tapered round balusters. The handrail is completely round. The sawn stair brackets are in a Vitruvian wave pattern. The stairway does not have a complete cornice, but only has the ovoid and fillets on the ceiling. On the northwest wall, under the stairway, is a door with six lights over two panels. Some of these lights still have quirked Greek ovolo panel moulds. The door has a new lock and two cast-iron butt hinges. There is a powder room built into the west corner under the stairway. There is a doorway on the landing with typical architrave and a pair of French doors with 12 lights each. There are two steps up to this doorway. The first story ceilings are 12 feet, 6 inches high.

The south room baseboard and architrave are identical to the passage, and the cornice is run plaster with a bead between fillets on the ceiling, and a small torus and two fillets at the bottom of a large cove. The floor is covered. The northwest door from the passage is missing. The door on the northeast is closed over. On the southeast, east of the fireplace, is a door with one large panel hung on hinges with ball finials. The door is shorter than the other doors. The architrave does not have frets on the top piece, or at the bottoms of the side pieces, and there are no blocks at the bottom. It also has a bead on the inner edge that no other door has. Centered on the southeast wall is a fireplace with an all-new brick firebox and brick mantel with wood shelf. The old brick hearth is probably original. The southwest windows have this same architrave as the doors, and it is carried down to the floor, with one large wood panel beneath the sills. The panels have raised fields with quirked Greek ovolo panel moulds. There are no pediments over the windows. The windows have parting beads. There is a large patch in the center that suggests a ceiling medallion here came down.

The east room floor is 2 ¼-inch oak with two strips of walnut inlay, and runs northwest- southeast. The baseboard and architrave are identical to the passage, and the cornice is the same as the south room. There is a plaster ceiling medallion with four palmettes and four Prince of Wales feathers, with acroterian in the center of them and small rosettes off of them. The door on the southwest wall, set to the west, is missing, but had been flipped and hung on cast-iron foliate butt hinges. The door on the southwest wall, set to the south, has eight panels, with the six at the top small lying panels that are almost square. The door is mortised and tenoned and pegged, and has quirked Greek ovolo panel moulds. There appears to be graining beneath the white paint. The door is hung on five-inch cast-iron butt hinges with fast joints, and has a mortise lock. The southeast elevation has a brick mantel with wood shelf identical to that in the south room. The firebox has newly parged, splayed jambs, and the old brick hearth has pencilled joints. On the northeast side of the chimney is a round patch where a bell crank apparently was. The center is approximately 31 ½ inches above the floor. The northeast windows match those in the south room, but have interior shutters that slide back into the wall. Each window has one pair of shutters that are mortised and tenoned and pegged, with four panels at the top and four lights below them. The panels have sunk fields with quirked Greek ovolo moulds. The glazing must be later, having mostly reused panel moulds, but some new ones as well. The southwest door has been taken off its hinges, but is a typical eight-panel door with a mortise lock that has a brass bolt marked "Stanley," and silver plate knobs. On the northeast elevation, the north bay (the center bay on the exterior) has a pair of French doors with eight lights over one panel, hung on brass butt hinges with ball finials. The panels have sunk fields and ogee moulds. There is also an eight-light transom. The northwest elevation has a door set to the north that has the typical eight panels. It is hung on two cast-iron butt hinges with fast joints, and has a mortise lock labeled "Stanley" and silver plate knobs. The ceiling has a ghost of plaster ornament near the edges that appears to have been straight lines that ended near the corners with curving feathers similar to those found in the ceiling medallion.

The north room has carpet laid over linoleum, and the same baseboard and architrave as the passage. The cornice and ceiling

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 3

medallion are identical to the east room. There is a typical eight-panel door on the southwest wall, set to the south. It has cast-iron butt hinges with fast joints and a mortise lock marked "Stanley" that has silver plate knobs. The lock is fastened with blunt-tip screws. On the northeast elevation is a fireplace with splayed, parged jambs and a hearth that is painted concrete or mortar. There is a black marble mantel with white and yellow veining. It has pilasters with quirked Greek ovolo capitals, plain impost and frieze, a plain shelf, and a marble surround. A circular patch on the northeast side of the chimney is probably where a bell crank was. On either side of the fireplace is a pair of eight-light casements with a small ogee cornice. The northeast windows and shutters are identical to those in the east room. Between the windows is a tall plaster panel recessed in the wall, with deeply sunk fields and quirked Greek ovolo and bead moulding. The ceiling has the ghost of plaster ornament that seems to have been similar to that on the east room ceiling, but it is not as well defined.

The west room has random-width flooring that is between three and four inches, and it runs northeast-southwest. The walls were covered in modern paneling and have plastic tile beneath it. The southwest wall has plaster on riven lath. The baseboard and architrave are identical to the passage and the cornice matches that in the south room. There is a pressed metal ceiling of squares that are about four inches. The northeast door is missing, and there is a typical window in the southwest, set to the south. There is a jog in the wall on the southwest elevation, in the center of the room, of about three inches. This must be an original feature, as the plaster cornice follows it. On the northwest elevation a fireplace is closed off. There is a gray marble mantel that has been painted over. It has plain pilaster strips on each side and a plain frieze. On each side of the fireplace are built-in closets with new hollow core doors. The cornice runs straight across the northwest wall as though earlier closets were located here.

The second story passage has 2 ½-inch pine flooring that runs northeast-southwest, and the baseboard is identical to the first story. The door architrave is plain, with a beaded interior edge, is head cut, and has a pediment. There is a run plaster cornice with a Greek ovolo at the bottom and a slight cove at the ceiling with a fillet and bead. There is a plaster ceiling medallion with a row of small acanthus on the inside and alternating acanthus and roses with foliage on the outside. On the northeast elevation the wall of the center bay is recessed, and has a segmental arch. The southwest window matches those of the first story, with the architrave matching the doors but without the pediment. The panel beneath the windowsill matches those of the first story. The second story ceilings are 10 feet, 5 inches high.

The south chamber floor is the same as the passage and the architrave is also the same, but without pediments. There is a run plaster cornice with a Greek ovolo below a cavetto, and a shallow cove. The baseboard has a single field with a Greek ogee. The door on the northwest elevation has six panels with sunken fields and quirked Greek ovolo moulds. It is hung on cast-iron butt hinges with fast joints, and has a mortise lock that is not original, as there is patching to the door around the lock. The northeast elevation has a doorway in the center that has been sheet rocked over. It has a painted frame but no evidence of hinges or lock. There is original baseboard across the bottom of the opening, with a sill that appears hewn and has a mortise in the top center of it. Above the opening is a stud in the center, with a door header that is wire nailed to the stud. The wall has riven lath with cut nails. The southeast elevation has a brick fireplace with splayed brick jambs and a new brick face with a steel lintel added. The hearth appears to be painted concrete. The mantel is of painted stone, except for the east pilaster, which is wood. It has plain pilasters with quirked Greek ovolo capitals, and a frieze with two large, recessed beads. The mantelshelf is plain. The windows match the second story passage, and the one to the south has plywood covering the panel below the sill.

The east chamber has the same floor and cornice as the passage, and the same baseboard and architrave as the south chamber. The windows on the northeast elevation have plywood applied over the panels. The southeast elevation has a fireplace in the center that has splayed brick jambs and a painted, parged hearth. There is a marble mantel with pulvinated pilaster strips, and impost blocks and a frieze block that have a shallow groove. The mantel shelf is cracked, and there is a patch in the plaster on each side of the shelf, and on top of it, suggesting that a slightly larger shelf was once here, or that this shelf came was broken and repaired. To the east of the fireplace is a window that is narrower than the northeast windows. The window opening passes more than 3

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 4

inches behind the fireplace breast. The south jamb of this window opening is face-nailed with what appears to be cut nails. Beneath the sill is a wood panel with a sunk field and quirked Greek ovolo panel moulds. The rails and stiles are mortised and tenoned and pegged. On the northwest elevation are two doors. The west door is a typical six-panel door hung on 5-inch cast-iron butt hinges with fast joints, and it has a mortise lock that is probably original and has glass knobs. The north door leads to the north-center chamber and is a typical six-panel door with typical butt hinges, but the mortise lock is not original.

The north-center chamber has a modern bathroom with a cast-iron pedestal sink and a toilet labeled "Standard," "Trenton," "Cadet," and "March 19, 1946." The floor is carpeted and patched and the baseboard is identical to that in the south chamber. The northeast window is typical, but has tile over top of the panel, and the architrave is identical to that in the south chamber. The cornice matches that of the passage. The southwest door is a typical six-panel door with typical cast-iron butt hinges, but the mortise lock is not original.

The north chamber has random-width flooring that is between 2 ¼ and 5 ¼ inches wide and runs northwest-southeast. The baseboard and cornice are identical to the passage, and the architrave is identical to that in the south chamber. The southwest door is a typical six-panel door with typical cast-iron butt hinges and an original mortise lock. The door appears to have been grained. The northeast windows are also typical, and have panels below the sills. On the northwest elevation is a fireplace with splayed jambs, a marble hearth, and a marble mantel that is identical to that in the east chamber. There is a round patch on the north side of the chimneybreast that probably indicates the former location of a bell pull. On either side of the fireplace is a pair of eight-light casement windows that are identical to those in the north room.

The west chamber has random width flooring that appears to be pine, varies between 4 and 5 inches, and runs northwest-southeast. The baseboard and architrave is the same as that in the south chamber, and the cornice is the same as in the second-story passage. The southwest elevation has a typical window with plywood over the panel. There is a typical six-panel door on the southeast that has been heavily patched and has new hinges. The door has been flipped to hang on the southwest jamb and the rim lock flipped to the opposite side, but it appears that this lock is original. The brass bolt is stamped "Stanley." The southwest wall does not contain a jog in it as it does on the first story. The northwest elevation has a fireplace with brick splayed jambs and a stone hearth. The marble mantel has plain pilaster strips and a plain frieze. On each side of the fireplace is a built-in cupboard with an original two-panel door above a one-panel door. These doors have been nailed together to make a single large door, and it has since been covered with paneling. The doors are mortised and tenoned and pegged and have new hinges, but originally had butt hinges. The north closet still has its shelves.

The stairway is opened all the way to the attic and has the same details all the way up. The stair landing has two 12-light casement windows hung on butt hinges with ball finials. There is plain architrave with a beaded interior edge, and a pediment with a quirked Greek ovolo on the raking cornice. There is a panel beneath the sill that has a sunken field and a quirked Greek ovolo panel mould. This is a narrow board that does not reach down to the floor. In the west corner of the landing, halfway up the wall, the brick chimney corbels out to the northeast and goes up through the ceiling. The plaster cornice continues on the northwest wall and abuts the chimney, where it ends. The flooring runs northwest-southeast, and is random-width, between 4 ¼ and 5 ½ inches. The walls and ceiling are finished with paneling.

The west attic has a doorway on the northeast with an architrave that has a broken field, a beaded interior edge, and plain corner blocks. The door is gone. The southeast door has the same architrave, and has six panels with sunken fields and no panel moulds. The cast-iron butt hinges have five knuckles and fast joints. The rim lock is made of iron plates and has brass knobs. There is a dormer on the southwest with a casement sash hung on butt hinges with loose joints. The north attic is now subdivided into several rooms by beaded edge and center vertical board half wainscot, and has plain trim and two-panel doors. Half of this space is a bathroom with a pedestal sink. The ceiling is plaster on riven lath. Part of the wall consists of reused shutters from the first story.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 5

There is a dormer on the northeast that has a two-light casement.

The southeast attic is now divided into three spaces by Masonite-covered walls on dimensional studs. There are two-panel doors hung on butt hinges with ball finials, and they have plain architrave. The two windows on the southeast are not mortised and tenoned and pegged, but they have architrave with a broken field, a beaded interior edge, and plain corner blocks. The rafter feet have a bird's mouth cut that laps over the narrow false plate. The rafters are set over top of the joists. The rafters are 2 ½ to 2 ¾ inches wide by 6 ¼ to 6 ¾ inches deep, but it is not possible to tell if they are tapered. They are sash sawn, and are spaced 16 ½ to 18 ¼ inches on centers.

The stone wing flooring is very rotten, but that that survives is 3 ¼-inch-wide pine that runs northwest-southeast. The joists run northeast-southwest and are approximately 3 inches wide by 13 inches deep, and are also rotten. The joists appear to be circular-sawn, but there are few good saw marks visible. The joists are set in pockets in the wall, and the walls have plaster on stone. The one-over-one sash are hung on sash weights with chains. Most of the ceiling is now gone, but had sawn lath with plaster. A summer beam runs northwest-southeast below the ceiling and is covered with beaded-edge vertical boards. There is all new flooring in the attic space above. A new stairway has been framed-in in the east corner, but never completed. In the west corner is a closet that is missing its side wall and door. There were formerly steps leading up to the south room of the house, but these are also missing and the door has been boarded-up. In the middle of the northwest wall are wooden steps that lead down to the cellar, with a portion of a 20th-century wall enclosing the stairway, but part of this wall is gone. There is just a crawl space beneath the first floor of this wing.

About 18 feet southeast of the house is a garage. It is a one-story, two-bay by two-bay structure of rock-faced concrete block with a hip roof of standing seam metal and a new soffit on the cornice. The southwest elevation has infill with two new metal garage doors, a flush door, and vinyl siding. The northwest, northeast, and southeast elevations each have two window openings with vinyl siding infill.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-142

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

Specific dates	n/a	Architect/Builder	n/a
Construction dates	c. 1831-36		

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The English Consul Mansion stands on a small portion of the 245-acre parcel that was owned by Gabriel Wood, a Baltimore merchant living in London, when it was sold in 1817. William Cooke of Baltimore purchased the property for \$3,812.50, but had little time to carry out whatever plans he may have had, as he died shortly afterward. His widow Elizabeth Cooke, gentlewoman, and their children, sold the property in June 1818 to Henry Thompson and Peter Wirgman of Baltimore. The following year they leased the property for 999 years, at a rate of one cent per year, to William Dawson, Esq., a merchant from Wakefield in the West Riding of the County of York who also served as the English Consul in Baltimore. Emilie M. Rosch explained in 1924 that, under the Maryland Constitution at the time, no alien could hold title to property in fee, so apparently Dawson used the grantors as his agents to side step this law. The 1818 tax assessment does not list Cooke and instead assesses William Woods heirs for the property, and notes that there are no improvements. It has traditionally been assumed that Dawson was responsible for constructing the existing house, however this is almost certainly inaccurate. Dawson was living at 18 Lombard Street according to the 1817-1818 city directory, and had moved to a dwelling on Franklin Street, extended by 1819. His office on Smith's wharf would have kept him in the city for much of his time, though he could have built a country house to escape the heat of the city. He had little time in which to act, however, because he died in October 1820. (1)

Dawson left all his real estate and personal property in America to his wife, Eleanor, with the recommendation that she should leave it to their children upon her death. His inventory does not distinguish whether the furniture and other personal property was in the city or country, but notes that he owned four cows, four calves, four farm horses, 20 pigs, two threshing machines and a chicken coop. This is more livestock than a city dweller would typically own and suggests he was doing some farming, somewhere. What is not clear is just how far out Dawson was on Franklin Street, extended, and how developed it had become there. Eleanor Dawson died at Brighton, England on 29 December, 1833, at age 60. Eleanor Dawson apparently did not leave a will, so the property devolved to her children, as William Dawson had wished. (2)

With title to the property in the hands of several siblings, it would seem unlikely that any one of them would undertake the construction of a large, well-finished country house, but that is apparently exactly what happened. Traditionally, the date given for the house is 1819, with the assumption that William Dawson quickly built upon the property. However, examination of the building suggests that the period of construction was in the 1830s. The plaster ceiling medallions, symmetrical architrave, and the marble mantels all reflect the Greek Revival period that is beginning to become popular c. 1820 in Baltimore, but is much more common fifteen years later. Jim Wollon has noted that the locks on the doors, all of which appear to be original, are marked "STANLEY." This was the monogram for the F. T. Stanley Company of New Britain, Connecticut, which was in business from 1831 to 1834, when it became the Stanley, Woodruff Co. This would suggest that the house was built in this period, or just a few years after, since there was likely some lag time before all the locks on the market disappeared into new homes. The most likely candidate for building the house is probably Frederick Dawson, who lived here for many years. There is

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

the possibility that Eleanor Dawson had the house built for him shortly before he died, or that her death provided him with the funds and/or the freedom to build. (3)

There are a number of interesting and unusual features to the house, beginning with the mixed construction-brick end walls and frame front and rear walls. There are several other examples of this treatment in the Chesapeake, but it was never common, and was probably employed simply because it was a cheaper method of construction than building completely in brick. The house is clearly oriented to face northeast, toward the Baltimore harbor, and has a symmetrical five-bay façade on this elevation. However, this was apparently not an entrance front, but more likely a garden front, because the door opens into one of the principal rooms, not into a passage. The passage is only one room deep, and is entered from the southwest door. The stairway is set off to one side. The southwest elevation is curious because there are no openings in the west bay (and no evidence that there ever were), though there is no physical reason why they could not have been placed there. The first story windows all had shutters that slid back into pockets in the wall, rather than folding back into the jambs, another uncommon feature, and most of the shutters survive. The walls had to be made thicker to accommodate these pockets, and this is most evident in the west room, where the wall is thinner to the west because there was never a window in this bay. The north room contains a plaster panel in the wall between the two windows, an unusual detail that could be added here because there was more space between the shutter pockets than in other locations. This elegant detail was presumably merely decorative.

There was originally a shorter two-story wing on the northwest end, and the ghost of it can be clearly discerned in the empty pockets in the brick wall at the first story, where wood beams had originally been inserted, and in the gable profile on the paring above. Part of this wing can be seen in a sketch published in the Sun in 1911. The wing was at least three bays long, with a frame wall on the southwest. This article also includes a photograph of an oven that was made in Baltimore by Henry Reip, as it is described as an "improved" oven, and Reip typically included this description on the brass labels of his ovens. Reip received a patent for his oven in 1825, and was still producing them as late as 1850. The article stated that the oven was in the dining room, though this reflects 1911 usage and not the early nineteenth century. There is no evidence anywhere in the existing house that there was an oven, so it was likely located in the wing, which must have been a kitchen and servants space. It could have been added at a later date, but was probably installed when the house was built in the 1830s. This wing was removed c. 1919 and moved down the street to create another dwelling, at 2810-12 Oak Grove Avenue. It has been altered and enlarged considerably, and only careful and systematic investigation beneath the later accretions could reveal its history. Otherwise, the house seems to have changed little from its description in 1911. (4)

The 1850 J. C. Sidney map of Baltimore indicates that Frederick Dawson owned or resided at the farm. Frederick Dawson had gone through bankruptcy proceedings in 1843, and this is the first definite evidence that he was involved with the farm. The inventory of his extensive holdings includes "32 sheep & lambs, 5 hogs, 1 carryall & harness, 1 cow, 2 horses, 1 colt, say 40 cords pine wood & a small quantity of hay" on the approximately 250 acre Annapolis Road farm. Frederick Dawson apparently continued at the farm, perhaps because much of it was owned by his relatives, and thus could not be seized during the bankruptcy proceedings. A story first recounted in the 1911 newspaper article claims that Frederick was the brother of William, and that he was an exile from Great Britain. The story is rather fantastical, including a yearly lashing of Frederick as punishment for a transgression he committed while a soldier in Britain. Frederick seems actually to have been a son of William Dawson, and while the whippings seem far-fetched, it is possible that he left his native land to avoid some scandal. After his death an inventory was made of his estate in 1868, and it noted that the farm was "improved by one brick + frame mansion house, one milk house, log stable, one pigeon house, one 2 story frame farmer's house and stable + the small log hut all of which are in bad repair." (5)

It seems certain that Frederick Dawson was still living in the brick and frame mansion house when he died, and his inventory gives an excellent portrait of how he used the building. The inventory begins in the "Dining Room," which one would think was

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

the north room, since it was closest to the kitchen wing, but evidence suggests it was probably the east room. Since the inventory does not start in the passage, the inventory takers must have come in the northeast door, into the large east room. The size of this room is appropriate for a dining room, and Dawson's dining room contained 46 yards of Canton matting. While this is likely an estimate, and is probably a little too high, the east room is the only one in the house that could have held something close to that amount. If laid wall-to-wall, this room would have about 45 yards. The dining room was well-furnished, though it had seen some wear and tear, with a mahogany dining table (four pieces of which were damaged), a mahogany breakfast table, two round card tables, an inlaid center table, two other mahogany tables, a small pine side table, a small inlaid secretary, two large pier mirrors, ten chairs with stuffed seats, a broken rocking chair, and two broken hair seat arm chairs. There was a large collection of china, including a white dinner set of 152 pieces, a lot of 121 pieces of white tea and coffee china, and an assortment of 111 pieces of figured and other china. The next room was the "Library," which had 25 yards of ingrain carpet and probably had two windows, since there were two window curtains. The room closest to this in size is the south room. It also contained a mahogany center table and a small mahogany breakfast table, along with a mahogany and haircloth sofa, and a mahogany bookcase that must have been quite large, as it had four glass doors and three "closets." There were no books listed here, but they were itemized later, with some of the titles given. These included 84 volumes of "Rease's Cyclopaedia," 36 folio volumes, primarily English history and dictionaries, 32 quarto volumes on the same subjects, plus bound copies of the New England Farmer and American Farmer periodicals, 206 octavo volumes, including books on law and medicine and the works of Lord Byron, and 292 duodecimo volumes of "French + English Books." (6)

The third room visited was the "Breakfast Room," which, because it had only one set of curtains (red moreen ones), one would assume was the west room. There was a mahogany sideboard, cutlery, glassware, teapots, and similar accoutrements, but curiously, no tables or chairs. The breakfast table was listed in the fourth room, the "Office." This also had a mahogany writing desk, a writing chair, a ladies work table, and a bureau. There is nothing listed that would suggest which room served as the office, though by process of elimination, it must have been the north room. Given its size, one would think it more likely to have been the library, with the office in, perhaps, the south room. Unfortunately, the inventory is too vague to be certain about the room locations. The last mentioned space on the first story was the "Hall," which one would assume to be the passage with the stairway. However, the large coal stove and pipe located there would seem to be very out of place, as there was no chimney flue nearby in which to vent the stove. Whether it was placed there to warm that space or merely was being stored there is not clear. The 23 cane and rush seat chairs, many of them broken, in the hall certainly suggest that it was being used for storage. In an earlier period, such as when the house was built, it would not be unusual to find many chairs here, partly perhaps in storage, ready for use, so this may have been the persistence of an earlier tradition. Only the marble top pier table really seems to belong here. The stairs were carpeted and had rods, and the second story passage had cherry and maple wardrobes, a mahogany bureau, a rocking chair and toilet table, and a clothesbasket. The kitchen, not surprisingly, had a cooking stove and the usual tools, though not a great deal of them. There were six bedrooms listed, which could have included one or two rooms over the kitchen, but the locations of each bedroom are not specified. The contents of these rooms were typical of what one would expect from the period. One interesting feature was "one Italian marble bathing tub." Unfortunately, its precise location was not noted, and there were no more details to describe whether this tub had running water or was filled and emptied by hand. (7)

The inventory also provides a further glimpse at the farm. Dawson's livestock included five cows and a young bull, 12 guinea fowl, 28 hens and three roosters, two peacocks and two peahens, 18 ducks and drakes, four geese and three ganders, a goose with six goslings, and 32 young chickens. No horses are mentioned, though he certainly must have owned at least one for his own personal use. Typical farming tools were itemized, including plows, a harrow, a cultivator, and numerous hand tools. The number of tools, however, like the number of tools mentioned in the kitchen, is much fewer than what would be listed for most farmers of the period. Since there was another farmhouse on the property, a tenant may have done much of the farming and he may have owned most of the tools he needed. It is not clear who was occupying the farm after Frederick Dawson's death. The

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

maps simply list it as the Dawson estate. The house finally passed out of the family in 1908, when Charles W. Hull bought all the interest in the property from two trustees of two separate Dawson lines that owned it. Hull, in turn, sold 20 of the 265 acres with the house the same year, to Conrad H. Unger, and had the land surveyed and platted. Hull was responsible for subdividing the remainder of the estate into building lots, beginning with the land on the west side of Annapolis Road, as can be seen in the 1915 Bromley atlas of the county. Conrad Unger in turn sold the house to Otto Unger in 1910, along with 10 acres. (8)

One confusing, and as yet unresolved, issue concerns the date of construction of the stone wing added to the southeast end. Little detail survives with which to date this structure, other than the wrought iron brackets supporting the pent roof over the southwest door, which are consistent with the late nineteenth century. The 1898 atlas shows a wing on this side, but not on the opposite side, where the original wing was clearly still standing. The 1915 atlas, however, shows the original wing on the northwest, and nothing on the southeast. Obviously, one of these maps is wrong, and it is difficult to be certain that either is complete. The 1911 sketch does not show the stone wing, but the angle is such that it may not have been visible, or artistic license could have been taken. The newspaper description states that the house was 50 feet by 90 feet, but for this to be accurate it would have to include the porch, as the width of the main house is just less than 38 feet. The length, with the existing wing, is close to 71 feet, leaving 19 feet for the missing wing. Based on the sketch, that wing must have been longer than that. However, if the existing stone wing had not been built by 1911, that would make the missing wing 40 feet long, which is very unlikely. Hence, the measurements from 1911 are probably not very accurate. In 1917 the tax records noted an addition to the house valued at \$400. The following year the assessment noted that the house was 37 by 48 feet, the exact size of the existing main block of the house. Was the assessor simply overlooking the wing, or was it not yet standing? The 1917 assessment of \$400 is probably sufficient to be the stone wing, and there are no other obvious changes to the house that could be reflected in this assessment. On the other hand, it seems odd that someone would add a wing to one side and two years later remove the existing wing from the opposite side. Thus, the stone wing could date to c. 1916-17, but this is not certain. An undated photograph (probably c. 1970s) shows this wing stuccoed, and the stonework was clearly never pointed up, indicating that the wing was always intended to have this finish. (9)

Otto Unger sold the English Consul Mansion, now reduced to 6.58 acres, to Ambrose Laukaitis in 1923, and Laukaitis made some changes to the property. He was probably responsible for the addition of a large, two-story porch on the northwest, alterations to the porch on the southwest, new flooring in a number of rooms, new six-over-one windows throughout the house, some new windows cut through the brick wall on the northwest, and the addition of several brick mantels in first-story rooms. He also added a garage southeast of the house. This garage is noted in the 1928 tax ledger. The porch is shown in an undated newspaper photograph clipping, and it was damaged by fire in 1959. At that time the house had passed to Paul and Lillian Schonfeld, but they were not living in the house, as the article on the fire states that the Adams family was forced to flee the flames. Throughout the twentieth century numerous layers of linoleum, carpet, and paneling have been added, and these are being removed to reveal the original fabric by the new owners. (10)

Notes:

(1) Baltimore County Tax Assessment, 1818, Maryland State Archives. Baltimore American, 9 October 1820, in Diehlman-Hayward File, Maryland Historical Society. John W. McGrain, "English Consul Mansion," BA-142, Maryland Inventory of Historic Places, August 1984. Baltimore County Land Records, WG 145-638; WG 150-53; WG 148-366. The Baltimore Directory, (Baltimore: Richard J. Matchett, 1819).

(2) William Dawson will, Baltimore County Register of Wills, 11-195. William Dawson inventory, Baltimore County Register of

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion

Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 4

Wills, 33-614. Baltimore American, 4 March 1834, in Diehlman-Hayward File, Maryland Historical Society.

(3) James T. Wollon, Jr. to Kim Abe, John McGrain, and Ken Short, 5 July 2001. Thomas F. Hennessy, Locks and Lockmakers of America (Park Ridge, Ill.: Locksmith Publishing Corp.) pp. 27-8.

(4) Baltimore Sun, 24 September 1911, part 4, p. 3.

(5) Petition in the Matter of the Bankruptcy of Frederick Dawson, 27 February 1843. Copy courtesy of John McGrain. J. C. Sidney, Map of Baltimore County, Maryland, 1850. Baltimore Sun, 24 September 1911, part 4, p. 3. Frederick Dawson Inventory, OPM 8-416, Maryland State Archives.

(6) Frederick Dawson Inventory, OPM 8-416.

(7) Frederick Dawson Inventory, OPM 8-416.

(8) Frederick Dawson Inventory, OPM 8-416. BCLR, WPC 333-222, WPC 333-316, WPC 337-68. Plat WPC 3-22. G. W. Bromley, Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland (Philadelphia, 1915).

(9) G. W. Bromley, Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland (Philadelphia, 1898, 1915). Baltimore Sun, 24 September 1911, part 4, p. 3. Baltimore County Tax Assessment, District 13, p. 580, Baltimore County Tax Assessment, District 13, 1918, vol. O-Z, p. 368. In John McGrain, MIHP BA-142.

(10) Baltimore County Land Records, WPC 574-585. McGrain. Baltimore County Land Records, GLB 2918-155. "Old Mansion Hit by Fire." Baltimore News-Post, 11 September 1959, in Enoch Pratt Free Library VF.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-142

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property .38 A.

Acreage of historical setting 225 A.

Quadrangle name Relay

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries consist of the outlines of the property, since much of the historic landscape has been developed.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth M. Short

organization

date

01/17/2003

street and number 610 Register Ave.

telephone

410-377-4953

city or town

Baltimore

state MD

zip code 21212-1915

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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 not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

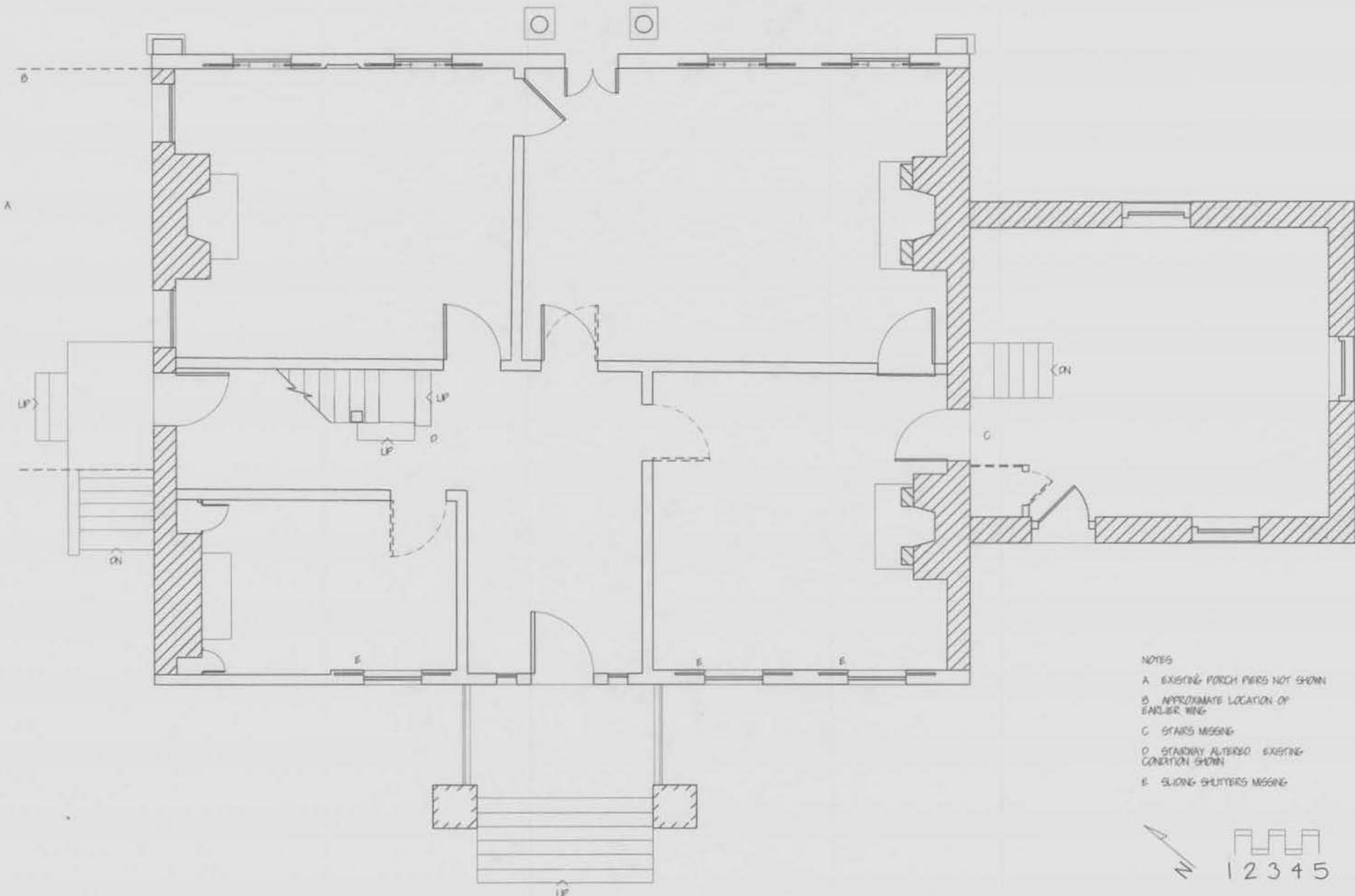
Inventory No. BA-142

Name English Consul Mansion

Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

See endnotes



- NOTES
- A. EXISTING PORCH PIERS NOT SHOWN
 - B. APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF EARLIER WING
 - C. STAIRS MISSING
 - D. STAIRWAY ALTERED. EXISTING CONDITION SHOWN
 - E. SLIDING SHUTTERS MISSING

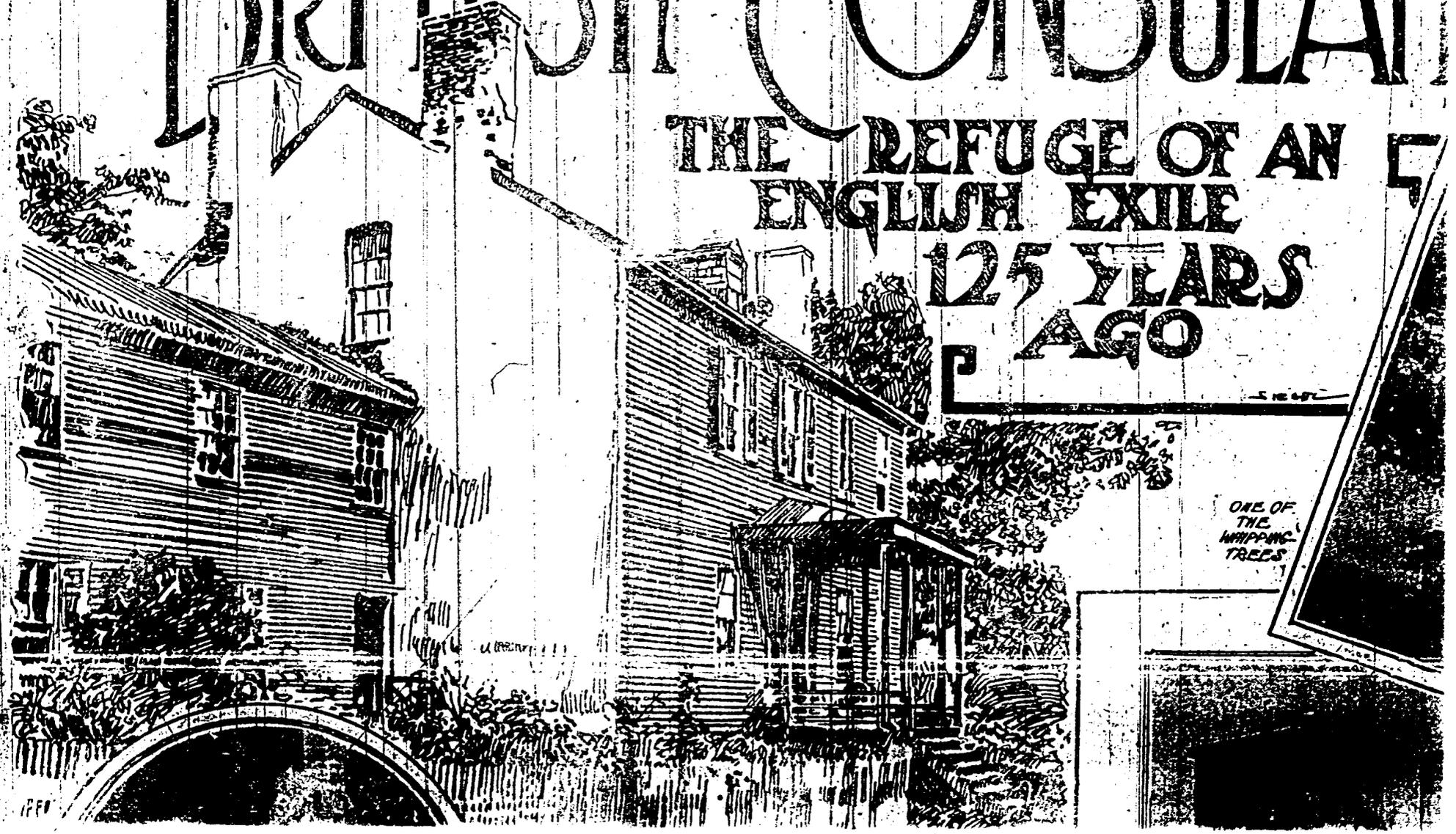


BA-142 ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION 2820 OAK GROVE AVENUE

FIRST FLOOR PLAN MEASURED BY KEN SHORT AND KAY SMITH DRAWN BY KEN SHORT JULY 2001

BRITISH CONSULATE

THE REFUGE OF AN
ENGLISH EXILE
125 YEARS
AGO



ONE OF THE WHIPPING TREES

B. 142
 English Consul Mansion
 2830 Oak Grove Ave.
 CHAIN OF TITLE

GRANTOR	HOME COUNTY	GRANTEE	HOME COUNTY	DATE	LIBER	FOLIO	TRANS-ACTION	COMMENTS
Remedios N. Plummer	?	Mark ^w & Charlyn Carter	?	28 Feb 2001	15 263	558	Deed feesimple	\$103,000 .38 A. lot 2 in plat in 8658-115 R.J. Plummer d. 28 Aug 2000
White Villa Corp	MD Corp	Roland J. & Remedios N. Plummer (cog)	?	6 Nov. 1969	5052	333	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 1A
Roland James & Remedios N. Plummer (cog)	?	White Villa Corp.	MD Corp	29 Oct. 1969	5052	331	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 1A.
Paul Schonfeld & wife Lillian Johnny H. Cowger & wife Nellie J.	Balto Co " "	Roland James Plummer unmarried	Balto Co	17 Apr. 1983	RRG 4131	267	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 1A. pt. of below unrecorded contract of sale to Cowgers
John J. & Anna E. Laukaitis (cog)	Balto Co.	Paul & Lillian Schonfeld (cog)	?	25 Apr. 1956	GLB 2918	155	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 6.58 A. - 3 tracts
Straw Man, Inc.	MD Corp	John J. & Anna E. Laukaitis	?	15 Nov. 1955	GLB 2870	548	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 6.58 A. - 3 tracts
John J. & Anna E. Laukaitis (cog)	Balto City	Straw Man, Inc	MD Corp	15 Nov. 1955	GLB 2870	545	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 6.58 A. - 3 tracts
Richard W. Kiefer H. Richard Smalbin, trustees	Balto Co.	John J. Laukaitis	Balto City	15 Nov. 1955	2619	470	Deed feesimple	Equity 59-30 John J. Laukaitis vs. Wm. F. Laukaitis \$11,200 13 th Dist. 6.58 A. - 3 tracts
Otto F. Unger & wife Gertrude L.	Balto Co.	Ambrose Laukaitis wife Sophia	Balto City	6 Aug. 1923	WPC 574	585	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 6.58 A.
Conrad H. Unger & wife Katie G.	Balto Co.	Otto F. Unger	Balto Co	1 Feb. 1910	WPC 356	315	Deed feesimple	\$5.00 10.025 A Southern half of below pt. of Section A. of plat of English Consul Estates lot back WPC 3-22.

W.C.B.

B. 142

B-142
English Consul Mansion

CHAIN OF TITLE

GRANTOR	HOME COUNTY	GRANTEE	HOME COUNTY	DATE	LIBER	FOLIO	TRANS-ACTION	COMMENTS
Charles W. Hull and Mary A.	Baeto Co	Conrad H. Unger	Baeto Co	21 Nov 1908	WPC 337	68	Deed facsimile	\$5.00 20.05 A pt of Section A
United States Trust Co, trustee Mary J. Frankland	N.Y. Corp Hawley, Eng.	Charles W. Hull	Baeto Co.	25 Sept 1908	WPC 333	306	Deed facsimile	\$15,111.11 265.6A 238/315th part pt. of 1st & 2nd parcel in WG 68-431
Henry E. Ahern, trustee	N.Y.C.	Charles W. Hull	Baeto Co	5 Oct. 1908	WPC 333	322	Deed	will of Frances Laura Mc- Donald - Baeto Co wills HR 13-473 265.6A. Ahern app'd trustee in place of late Jos. Gray - Equity
Mary Joy Frankland wife of Colville Frankland	Eastboro Eng.	United States Trust Co, trustee	N.Y. Corp	21 Mar. 1899	WPC 318	493	Indenture	17 Jan 1906 77/315 part both Owen & Gray dead deed of trust not fully perfected
Mary Joy Frankland & Colville Frankland (hus) (see was Dawson)	?	Edward H. Owen Joseph H. Gray counsellors at law	N.Y.C.	6 Feb 1871	EHA 70	559	Power of Atty	\$1.00 turn over mortgage Robert Lee Dawson to Mary Joy Dawson 4 Nov. 1868 for \$12,000 EHA 31-174
Mary Joy Frankland R.S. Thomas		Henry Thompson		11 Mar. 11 Aug 1801	WG 68	431		
John A. Barkay, trustee	Baeto	Joseph H. Gray, Surviving Trustee of Mary Joy Frankland & Frances L. McDonald	N.Y.C	20 Jan 1891	IWS 183	584	Deed	Circuit Ct 5 Dec. 1890 Henry F. Thompson et al. v. Nancy B. Hughes et al. \$50,000 on NW Side of Potomac 20 3/4 A. See WG 50-537
J. Morrison Harris admin of late Frederick Dawson	Baeto Co.	Joseph H. Gray Surviving trustee	?	15 Feb 1877.	JB 99	312	Indenture	7/9 of 1/35 part see EHA 70-560 \$5.00
J. Morrison Harris admin of late Eleanor Dawson, Mary Ann Dawson, Freder- ick Dawson, Win Dawson	Baeto Co to Eng to Robert L. Dawson	Edward H. Owen & Joseph H. Gray, trustees Frances L. M. McDonald	?	29 Apr. 1874	JB 86	445	assignment Indenture	orphans Ct order 24 Mar. 1874 26/35 to two trustees of 8/35 to P.L. McD of 24, 265.71 20 A. See WG 148-366
Frances Laura McDonald, widow Citizenship U.S.	Bishops Cannings Devized, Eng	Joseph H. Gray Edward H. Owen	N.Y.C.	30 Oct 1874	JB 94	360	Deed of trust Indenture	\$1.00 - purpose is to lease the land solely to maintain them, not to sell

18-9
48EE

238/
part
77/3
part

34-142

ac'd

10 Mar 1908 WPC 306 306

BA-142
English Consul Mansion

CHAIN OF TITLE

Eleanor F.L. McDonald et al. dan of late Frances Lama McDonald	Wills, Eng.	Henry E. Athery trustee	N.Y.C.	10 Mar 1708	WPC 326	380	Deed	\$110.00
Robert Lee Dawson	Bath Eng.	Frances Lama McDonald	Balto. City	4 Jan. 1870	EHA 67	234	Deed Asst.	\$5.00 see Wm. Cooke to Wm. Dawson
J. Morrison Harris, admin. of late Frederick Dawson	Balto. Co.	Joseph H. Gray, Surviving trustee	?	15 Feb. 1877	JB 99	311	Indenture	order of Orphan's Ct. - sold 5/9 of 1735 \$396.03 20 A. see JB 94-360
Henry Thompson Peter Wingman	Balto City	William Dawson, Esq.	Balto City	23 Nov. 1818	WG 148	366	Lease	1 Cent / yr. rent Dawson responsible for all taxes, etc. 999 yrs
Elizabeth Cooke gentlewoman, et al widow & children of William Cooke	Balto City	Henry Thompson Peter Wingman	Balto City	10 June 1818	WG 150	530	Deed Indenture in fee	Wm. Cooke decd. \$1.00
Robert Lee Dawson	Bath Eng.	Mary Joy Dawson	Balto City	4 Jan. 1870	GHA 65	9	Asst. Deed	\$5.00 5/21 parts see Wm. Cooke to Wm. Dawson
Mary Joy Frankland 2 hrs. Colville Frankland, capt. 103 rd Royal Fusiliers	Bath, Eng	Edward H. Owen Joseph H. Gray Counsellors at law	NYC.	6 Feb. 1871	E.H.A. 70	560	Deed of trust Indenture	marriage 22 Sept. 1870 marriage settlement turnover prop, stocks, etc. over to trustees
William Cooke		William Dawson						
Gabriel Wood merchant	Balto City living in London	William Cooke	Balto City	18 Jan 1817	WG 145	638	Deed Indenture	7 tract 5 in Balto. Co. 225 A. + 1 tract 20 3/4 A. \$3,812.50
Gabriel Wood		William Wood	Balto	5 Oct. 1807	WG 96	145		NW side of Antapscor Brother's inheritance, Leicest- ershire, Hammonds Struggle, Buck Ridge, Ruttskot Norway Discovery, Batsys chance

WG 154-88 Dawson fr. Hampdy

Gabriel sold to brother William
Wood decd, Gabriel his heir.

BA-142

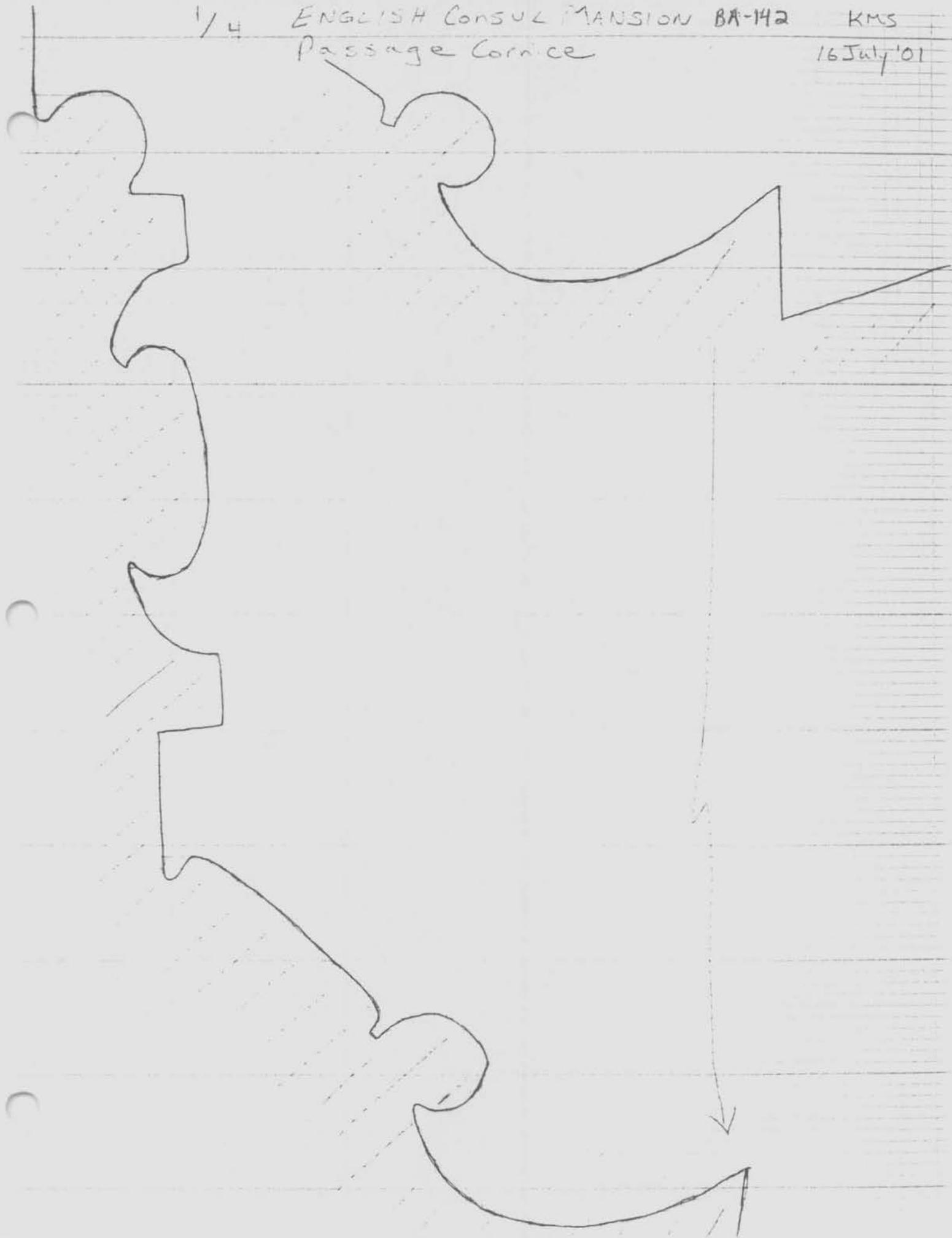
1/4

ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION BA-142

KMS

Passage Cornice

16 July '01

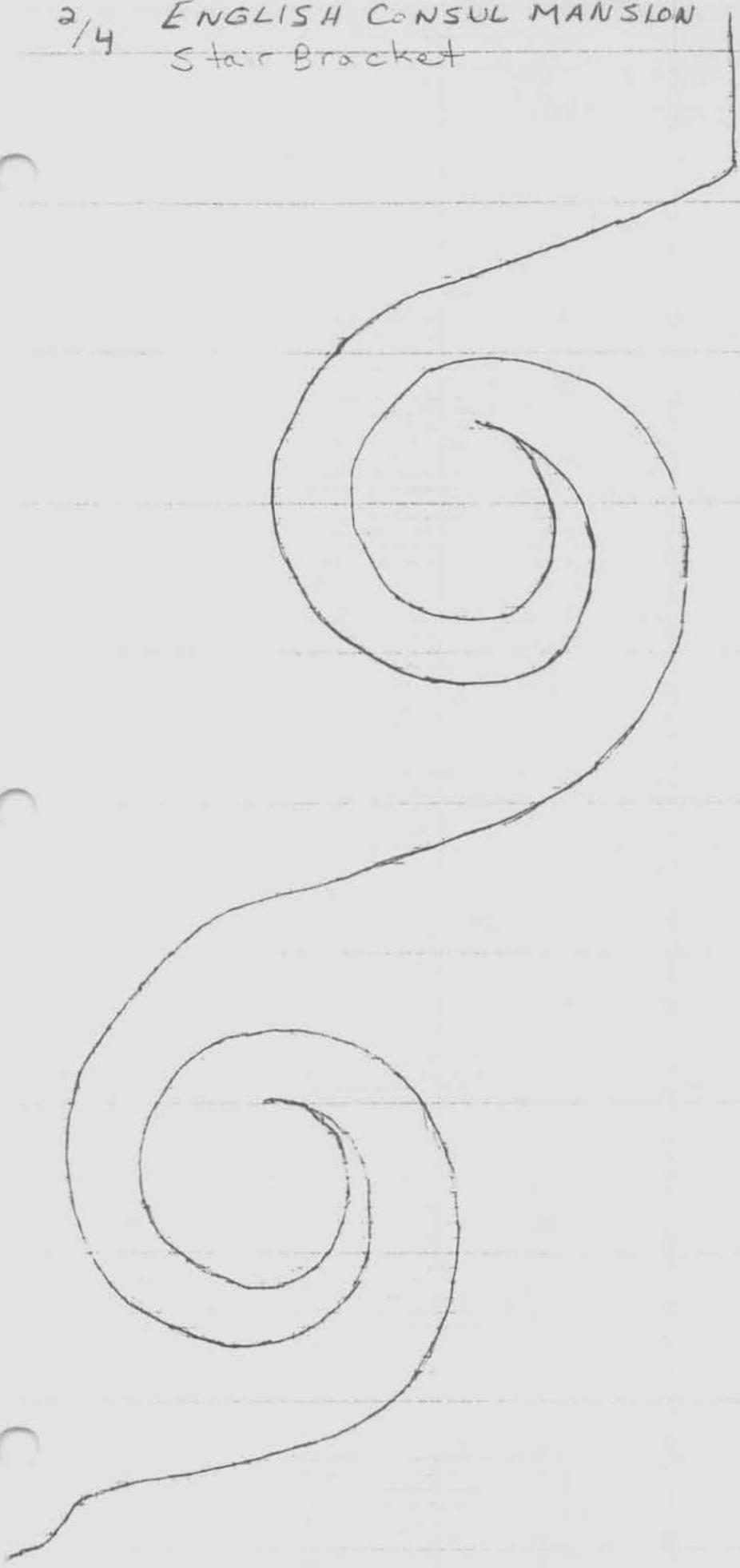


2/4

ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION
Stair Bracket

BA-142

KMS
18 July 01

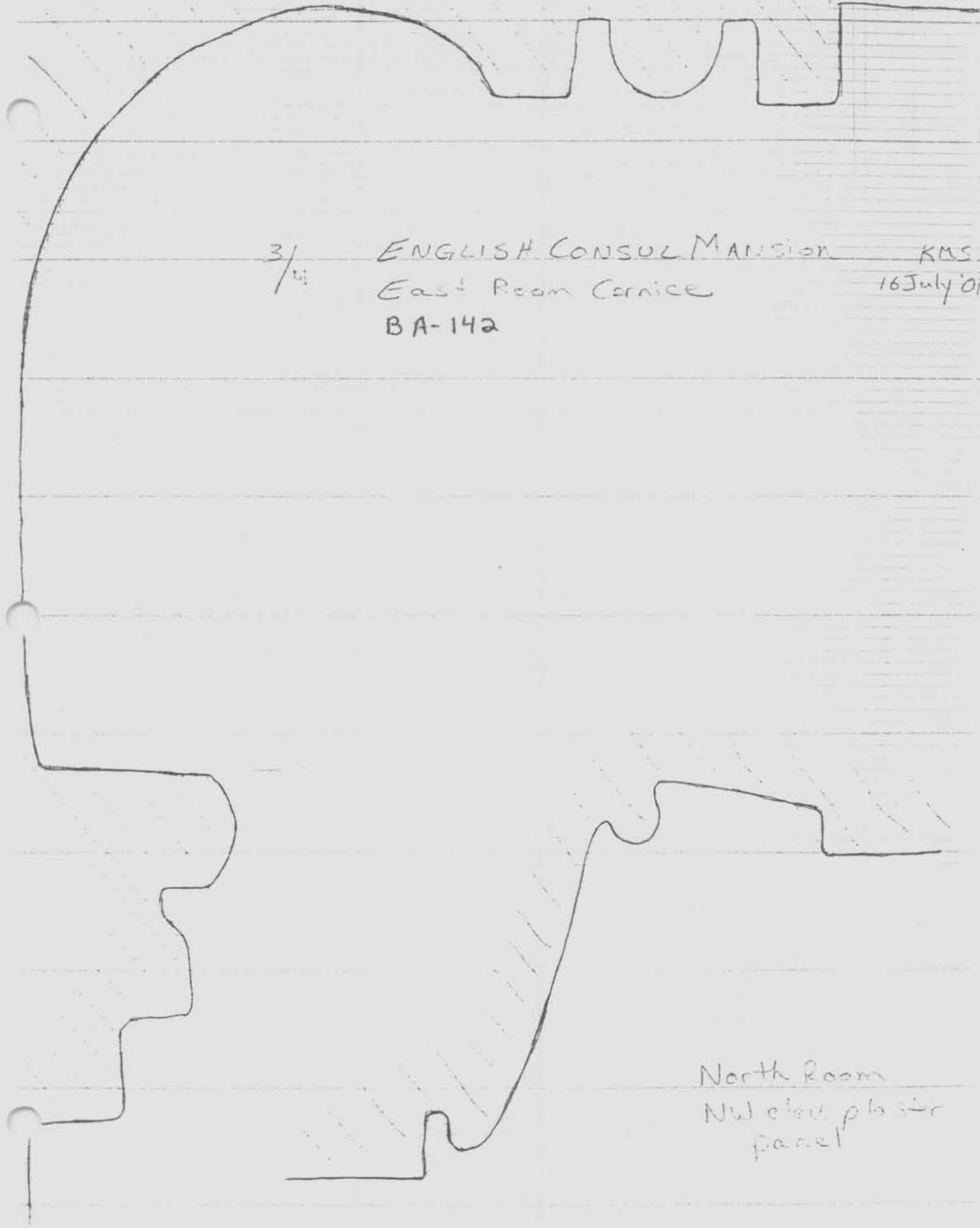


3/4

ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION
East Room Cornice
BA-142

KMS

16 July '01



North Room
NW elev. plaster
panel

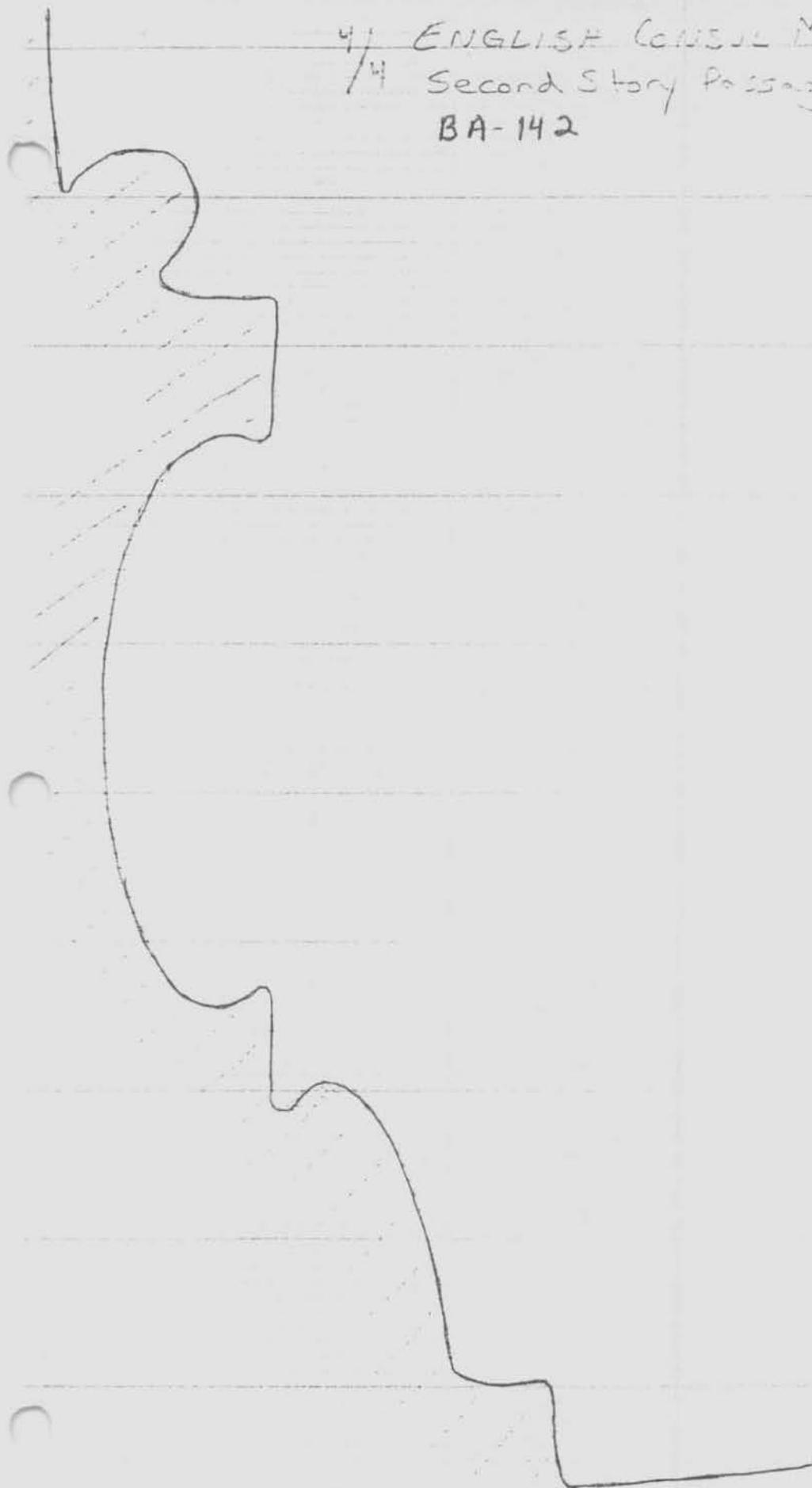
4/ ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION

KMS

7/4 Second Story Passage Corridor

1836/1907

BA-142



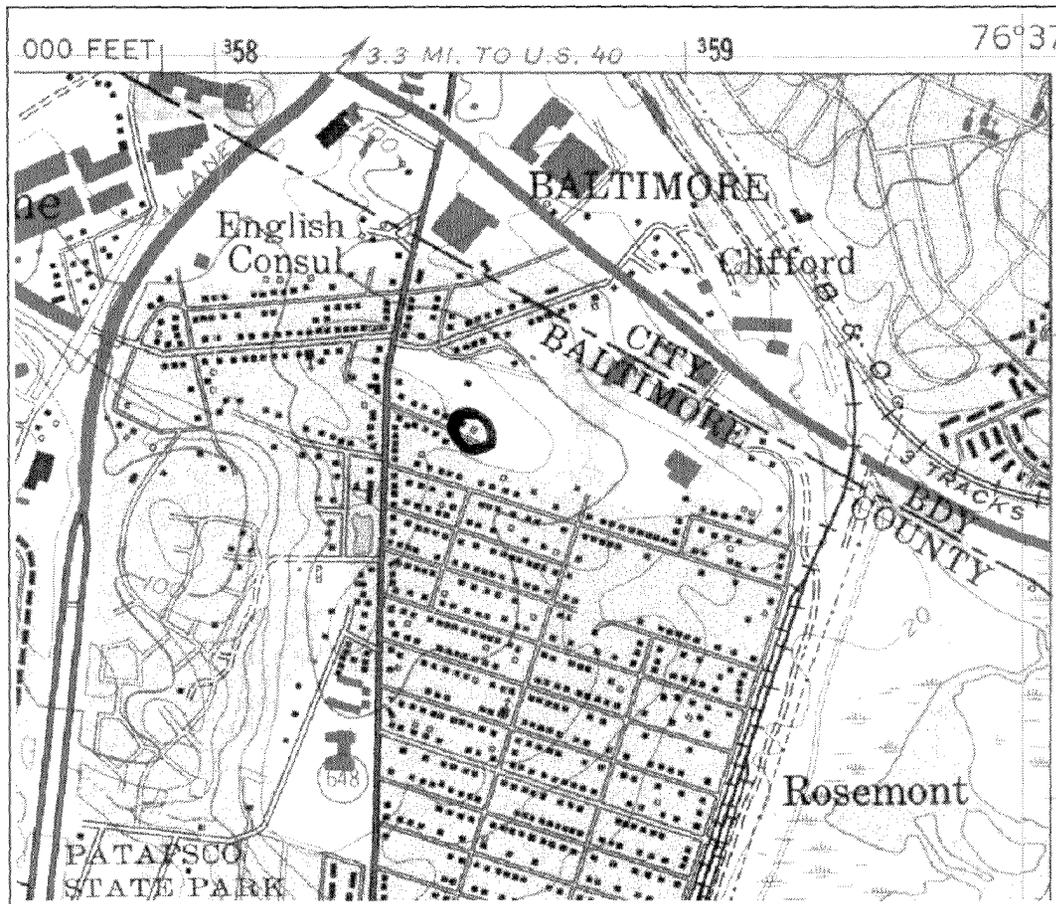
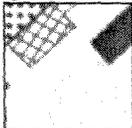
MERLIN Online Map

Base Maps

3.75' Quarter Quad Grid



Relay Quad 7.5' Topo



N 174999.61m E 431314.43m



Coordinates at center of image in Maryland State Plane, NAD 1983 meters

© Copyright 2002, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, www.mdmerlin.net
Created with TNTserver™ from MicrolImages, Inc

BA-142
English Consul Mansion
2820 Oak Grove Ave.



BA-142

English Consul Mansion

2820 Oak Grove Ave

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Short

July 2001

MD SHPO

Northwest & Southwest EUS

1/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion
2820 Oak Grove Ave

Balto. Co, MD

Ken Short

July 2001

MD SHPO

Southwest, southeast elevs

2/11



BA-142

English Consal Mansion

2820 Oak Grove Ave

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Short

July 2001

MD SAPO

Northeast cku

3/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion

2820 Oak Grove Ave

Balto. Co., MD

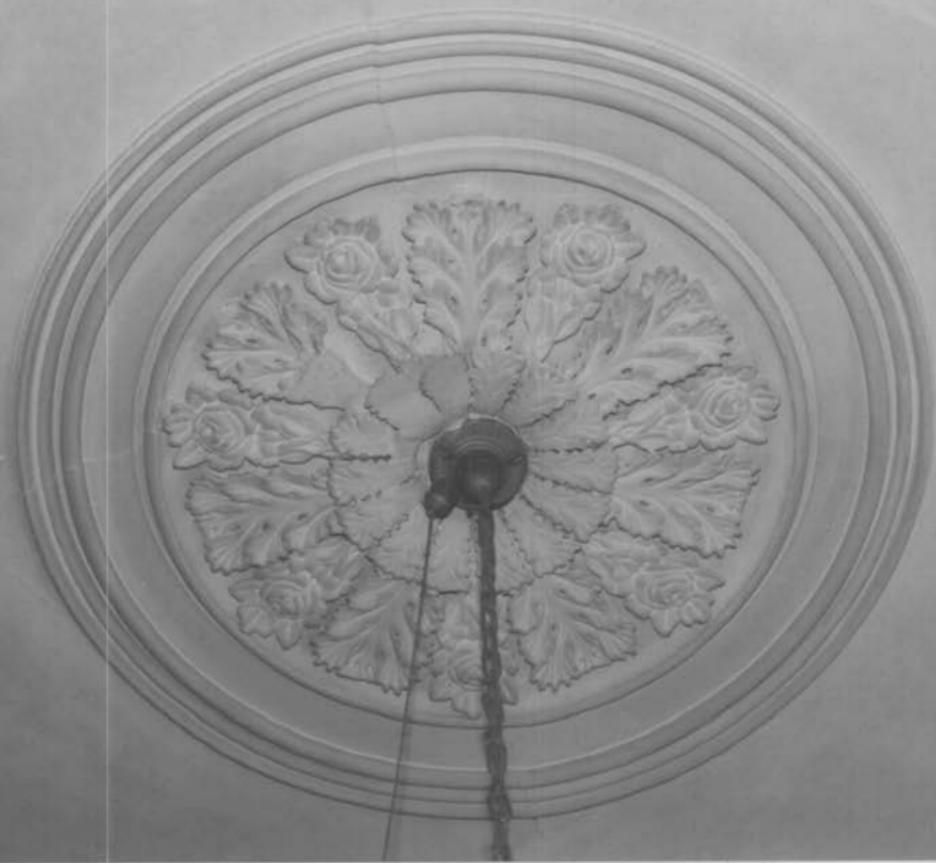
Ken Skert

July 2001

MD SHPO

Northeast elev. - door pediment

4/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion
2820 Oak Grove Ave

Balta Co, MD

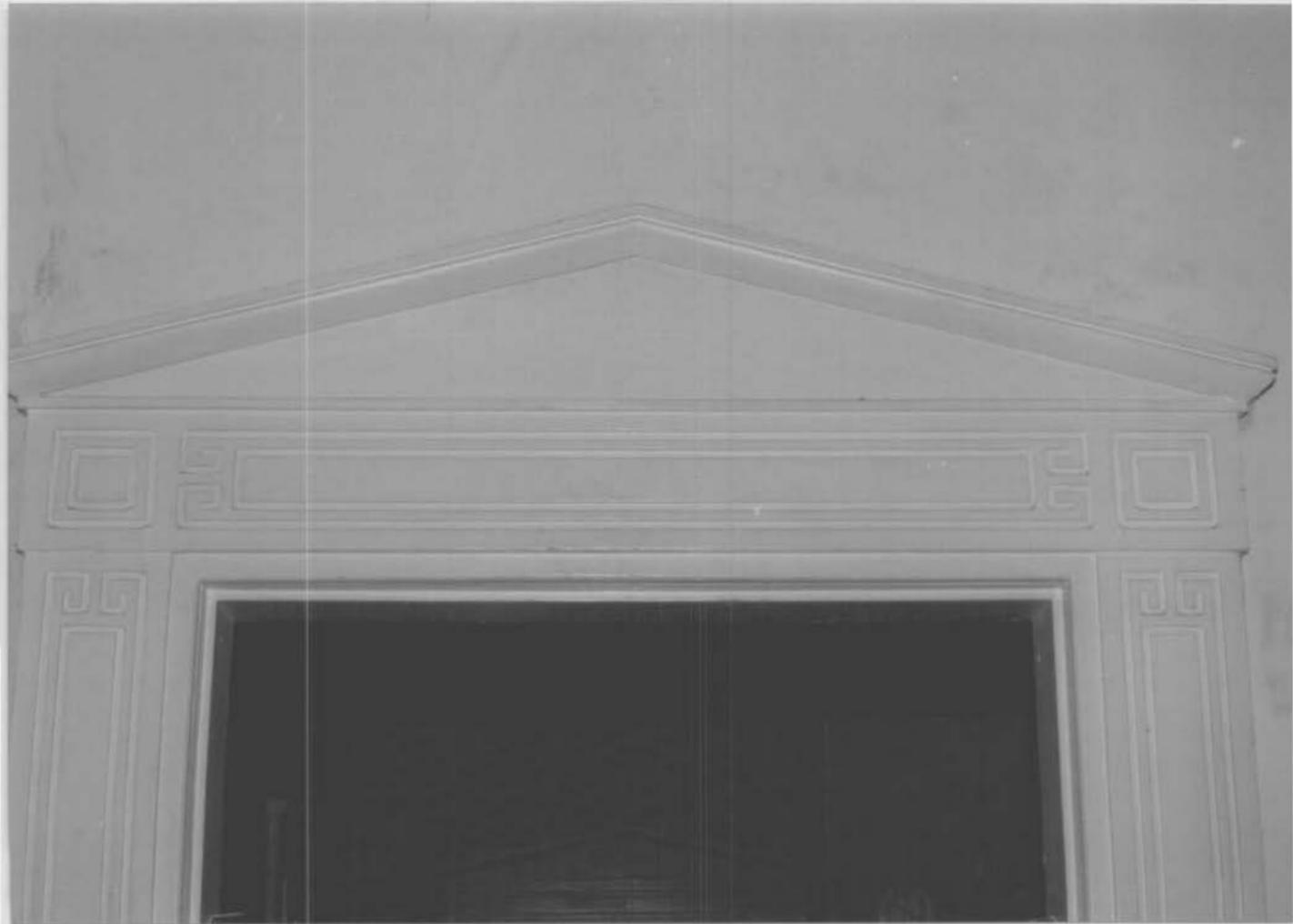
Ken Short

July 2001

MD SHPO

1st sty passage ceiling medallion

5/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion

2820 Oak Grove Ave

Balto. Co, MD

Ken Short

July 2001

MO SHPO

1st sty passage door architrave

6/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion

2820 Oak Grove Ave.

Balta Co, MD

Ken Stort

July 2001

MD SHPO

North rm, vw. north

7/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion
2826 Oak Grove Ave.

Balto. Co, MD

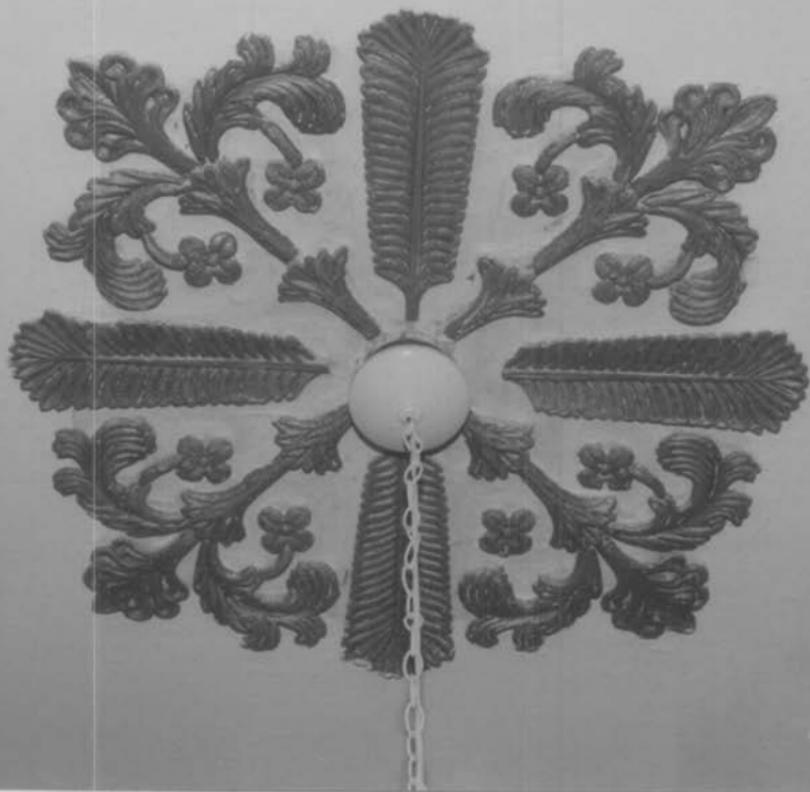
Ken Short

July 2001

MD SHPO

North rm. mantel

8/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion

2850 Oak Grove Ave.

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Skort

July 2001

MD SHPO

Northon ceiling medallion

9/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion
2820 Oak Grove Ave.

Balto. Co., MD

Ken Short

July 2001

MD SHPO

2nd sty passage - view northeast

10/11



BA-142

English Consul Mansion
2820 Oak Grove Ave

Balto. Co, MD

Ken Shurt

July 2001

MD SHPO

East chamber mantel

11/11

BALTIMORE COUNTY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2820 Oak Grove Avenue

1st Councilmanic District

CITY, TOWN

English Consul

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd Congressional District

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore 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"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Roland J. and Remedios N. Plummer

Telephone #: 636-3263

STREET & NUMBER

2810 Oak Grove Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21227

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Courts Building

Liber #: OTG 5052

Folio #: 333

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland 21204

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

MHT Inventory, Site No. BA 142

DATE

1965 - and on-going

___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

21 State Circle

CITY, TOWN

Annapolis

STATE

Maryland 21401

7 DESCRIPTION

ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE		CHECK ONE	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

English Consul Mansion is a large Federal style house of 2-1/2 stories with brick ends and facades of frame covered with white shingles. These are four inside end-chimneys, flush with the brick walls. The ends of the house are covered with rough-cast as stucco was called in the early 19th Century. There is a low, one-story wing on the east, a flat-roofed sun parlor on the west. The sun parlor is the replacement of a low, two-story frame and clapboard wing shown in a drawing published in 1911.¹ The north facade, which looks toward the city of Baltimore, is apparently the main facade, five bays wide with a center entrance sheltered by a semicircular hood; the transom is topped by an elegant carved sunburst. The hood is supported by two doric columns of wood. The facade facing Oak Grove Avenue is four bays wide, the windows spaced somewhat irregularly. The gable-roofed one-bay portico with its rose brick columns is centered under one of the second-story windows. The broad, paneled front door is topped by a transom, flanked by sidelights. This was the facade drawn by the Sunpapers' artist in 1911. At that time, the entrance portico was flat-roofed and rather ordinary. This probably became the main facade in laying out the nearby lots and establishing Oak Grove Avenue.

Two photographs in the glossy picture file at the Enoch Pratt Free Library's Maryland Department show that as of 1939, during the ownership of the Laukaitis family, the porch facing Oak Grove Avenue was exactly as it is now. However, where there is now a sun parlor, there were double-decker open porches at the second-story and at the attic levels. The lower porch deck was supported by square brick columns, while the upper deck was supported by round wooden columns seen in Colonial Revival suburban houses. Then, as now, most of the sash windows were six-over-one in format.²

The Pratt's vertical file also contains a clipping reporting that ten members of the Adams family, tenants at that time, were routed by a fire in September 1959.³

The extensive internal repairs made by the Plummer family were described in the News American in 1975:

"He found it," Mrs. Plummer says, adding, "I cried and cried. I couldn't believe it. It was so old and so, so ... I couldn't feature it as a house."

Doors had been removed. Parts of the ceiling had fallen. The bath leaked, and water ran down the walls. The porch had caved in.

Some rooms in the 17-room house are kept closed off and the fireplaces have been blocked up. But inside, remarkable changes have taken place, even though his work abroad permits Mr. Plummer about 15 days' leave every six months to come home.

He has replaced the ceilings, sanded all the floors, wallpapered and tiled, even recreated from wood the missing stucco moulding around the ceilings.

A few of the silver doorknobs remain, but he has replaced broken lights with chandeliers from Tunisia and the walls are decorated with 75 paintings from Spain, Italy and Holland, as well as ivory figures from Nigeria.

Though the Board of Education acquired a piece of their land, reducing the original 300 acres to a half-acre, there is still room for a swimming pool. Even William Dawson, the first English consul, didn't have that.⁴

To the west of the mansion is a ruinous stone well house. To the east of the house is a garage of rock-faced concrete block, first mentioned in the 1928 tax ledger.⁵ Northwest of the house is an old shattered oak tree (used for whipping the slaves, according to a legend cited by a neighbor).⁶ One of the great white oaks that had been part of the home cluster survives in a rear yard on the south side of Oak Grove Avenue, southwest of the mansion (Tax Map 109, Parcel P207).

The house is bounded on the north and east by county-owned open space that was originally acquired with the expectation of building a school.⁷ The lofty setting of the house is probably one of the "eminences" advertised by Samuel Croxall in 1792 when trying to sell 300 acres of farmland on the Patapsco, five miles from the town.⁸

NOTES:

1. Sun, September 24, 1911, Part 4, p. 1.
2. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Room, Glossy Photo file, "English Consul Mansion," photos by James W. Foster, December 1939.
3. "Old Mansion Hit by Fire," Baltimore News-Post, September 11, 1959.
4. J. William Joynes, "Old Baltimore Alive, Well in English Consul." Baltimore News American, June 9, 1975. For unknown reasons, the local people pronounce the place-name "English Council."
5. B.C. Tax Ledger, 1928-1940, District 13, f. 711.
6. Conversation with Mrs. Carl A. Koelbel, 25-year resident at 2821 Oak Grove Avenue, July 31, 1984.
7. Tax Map 109, Parcels P217, P435, P444.
8. Maryland Journal, Baltimore, February 23, 1792.



8 SIGNIFICANCE

ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<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 1818-1820

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The large house on Oak Grove Avenue is located in the narrow salient of Baltimore County between the southwestern city line and Anne Arundel County. The setting is on high ground, 2-3/8 miles south of the Mount Clare Mansion, only 3-1/2 miles from the inner harbor of Baltimore. This ground in 1798 belonged to the heirs of Charles Croxall and only log houses stood there.¹ By 1818, when owned by William Wood's heirs, the Assessor's Field Book reported "Improvements - none."² Known as the English Consul House, this large dwelling has given its name to the neighborhood. The story of its association with a consular officer from England sounds suspicious at first, but some reliable documentation can be found.

The 1817-1818 City Directory lists "William Dawson, British Consul, 18 Lombard."³ A title search started from the present house leads back to an indenture of lease signed on November 23, 1818, by William Dawson of Baltimore City. Henry Thompson and Peter Wirgman leased seven parcels of land to Dawson for 999 years.⁴ An explanation for the lease, which cost one cent per year, was offered in 1924 by Emilie M. Rosch, who stated that an alien could not acquire title to property in fee under the Maryland Constitution of that time.⁵ The two historical articles about this

house give William Dawson as its builder. However, he had little time for the project, as the city papers reported the death of "William Dawson, Consul of his British Majesty for Maryland" on October 9, 1820.⁶

Dawson's executrix was his wife, Eleanor. The inventory taken in March 1821 included a 254-acre farm on Annapolis Road. The property was fully equipped with stock and implements, including three plows, three thrashing machines, and a haymaker. The house was well furnished, and the late consul had stocked his sherry and Madeira by the pipe, the latter cask containing \$230 worth of Britain's favorite cordial.⁷

The Dawson family long remained rooted on this farm along the main road from Baltimore to Annapolis.

The second William Dawson was reported as marrying Sarah Jay, daughter of Peter Augustus Jay, in New York, in 1836.⁸ Mrs. Dawson lived but ten years and the Sun in 1846 reported her death in New York on January 9.⁹

J. C. Sidney's 1850 map and Taylor's 1857 map showed this house as property of Frederick Dawson, the person about whom the dubious legend is centered. Quite a number of Dawsons are found in Orphan's Court Inventories but only Robert Lee Dawson made a will, and he was in 1871 a resident of Bath, England, a retired London merchant.¹⁰ Other members of the Dawson family appear in Baltimore County inventories, starting with Frederick; his inventory was taken under court order issued on November 16, 1868. Like the other members of this large family, he owned fractional shares of the real estate. The 1868 enumeration mentioned the land on Annapolis Road and also a brick and frame mansion house, milk house, log stable, pigeon house, two-story frame farmer's house, "all of which are in bad repair, subject to a ground rent of one cent." Dawson had a library room and the inventory contains a long list of volumes on English history, Rease's encyclopedia, five folio volumes of Chambers

dictionary, two volumes of Johnson's dictionary, and other desirable editions.¹¹

The court ordered an inventory for William Dawson on June 11, 1873. That inventory is followed in the record books by inventories of Robert Lee Dawson, Frederick Dawson, Edward G. Dawson, and Mary Dawson.¹²

The 1876 tax ledger listed the "Dawson Estate Tract, either side of Annapolis Road, 265 acres" with \$2750 worth of "improvements," the whole place worth \$16,033.¹³

This property is shown in the 1877 atlas, very irregular in shape, on both sides of the road, stretching to the banks of the Patapsco.

Various fractional ownerships of the property were acquired by Mary Jay Dawson starting in January 1870 with a deed from Robert Lee Dawson.¹⁴ Mary Jay Dawson married Colonel Colville Frankland of the 103rd Royal Fusiliers, and in 1870 conveyed her interests in trust to two New York lawyers in connection with a marriage settlement.¹⁵

In 1908, the successors of the original trustees and Mrs. Frankland, then living in Howe, England, sold to Charles W. Hull, a southwest county developer.¹⁶

A few months later, Hull sold 20.05 acres to Conrad H. Unger, who, two years later, sold to Otto F. Unger.¹⁷

Starting in 1911 with a Sunday Sun feature story, some of the history of the house and its architectural changes can be established. This unsigned story apparently launched the fanciful English Consul legend.¹⁸

A line drawing accompanying this article shows that a small, two-story clapboard wing was attached to the west side of the house where there is now a sun parlor. The "house built more than a century ago"

was "in a good state of preservation," all its materials "imported from England." There were 17 rooms, and brownstone fireplaces, Italian marble mantels, mahogany bannisters, silver doorknobs, eight-paneled inside doors topped by pediments. Total dimensions were 90 by 50. A suit of armor found there had been taken away by Colonel Franklin [sic] of the British army. There was a grove of sweet honeybean trees, birch, and oak, including the tree featured in the legend, then 15 feet, 10 inches in girth, by 175 feet high. Otto F. Unger, the owner, was private secretary to the Collector of Customs, William A. Stone.

The 1911 tax ledger showed Otto F. Unger with a house worth \$2000, a barn (\$200), and an "outbuilding" (\$75). Corrections to the ledger entered as "New 1917" were "Addition to house — \$400."¹⁹ The 1918 tax ledger gave the value of the house as \$2415 and its dimensions as 48 X 37.²⁰ The 1919 tax ledger gave the same value and same dimensions.²¹ The 1923 tax ledger valued the house at \$3000, giving no dimensions.²² In August of 1923, Unger and his wife sold 6-1/2 acres to Ambrose Laukaitis, and the house remained in that family until 1956.²³

The second known historical article about this property appeared in the Maryland Historical Magazine in 1924, a mere three pages in that ponderous journal. This article also stated that the material of the house was brought from England; it gave the dimensions as still 90 by 50 (the measurements given by the Sun thirteen years before, 42 feet of frontage more than reported by the tax assessor in 1918. The author also stated that about five years before, Mr. Unger had seven rooms cut away and made into another dwelling. She reported high ceilings, masterpieces of stucco moulding, a wine cellar, and trees brought from England. "The present owner, William F. [sic] Laukaitis, is remodeling the property, leaving as many of the old hallmarks as possible in such restoration work." Ms. Rosch reported that the legendary 175-foot oak

tree was then a stump."²⁴

The tax ledgers of 1928-1940 showed the house still worth \$3000, a garage (\$500) listed for the first time when the book was set up in 1928.²⁵

John J. Laukaitis acquired the house in 1955 and kept it eight years. Some of his relatives still live two blocks away on Alabama Avenue.²⁶

Paul and Lillian Schonfield bought the house in 1956, selling in 1963 to the present owners.²⁷

The English Consul legend supposedly was put in print for the first time in 1911, collected as the author said "at this late day," from the 86-year-old Thomas James McGill (of 116 East Montgomery Street, Baltimore) and from 90-year-old Marguerite Riley, a former slave still living "within the shadow" of the towering oak tree. The anonymous Sun writer was not aware that William Dawson, the consul, had lived but two years after acquiring the land here. The newspaper headline placed the arrival of the consul 125 years before (i.e., 1786, even before the U.S. Constitution).

The story goes that Frederick Dawson was the brother of the consul, William. He had committed some sort of crime in defense of his honor in England, and was sentenced to be transported to Australia. But, through the influence of his parents, his sentence was "commuted" to being remanded to the custody of his brother, provided he would be given 30 lashes each year on the anniversary of the crime. Thomas James McGill recalled that when he was age 12 (i.e., about 1835), he was cutting through the Dawson property to get water from a common spring, and Frederick Dawson, whom he placed about 50 years of age, told him that the next day was the anniversary of his crime, which he could not recount to a young boy, but he was to repeat his punishment. The next day, McGill

54-172

watched from a polite distance while Dawson was tied to the oak tree and beaten; in fact, McGill's cousin, William Hawkes, was paid \$5 to serve as executioner — the Dawson slaves refusing to do the job, even under threat.²⁸ In 1924, Emilie M. Rosch stated that the son of the whipper still lived near the manor house.²⁹ Indeed, a family connection with Margaret [sic] Riley can be found in the Administration Accounts for Frederick Dawson, whose executor, Robert Lee Dawson, paid her \$27.50 in 1869 "on account."³⁰

The administration records also identify family relationships and prove that Frederick Dawson, Robert Lee Dawson, Georgianna Dawson, Mary Ann Dawson, Philip Thomas Dawson, Frances Laura McDonald, and William (2d), were all children of Mrs. Eleanor Dawson.

Thus, Frederick Dawson is the son of the original consul, not his brother, and the rationale of the exile story seems to fall apart, unless Frederick Dawson was fully grown at the time of his father's appointment to Baltimore, already serving in the British army. A package of Equity papers in Towson shows that William Dawson, the second, had been born in England, but later naturalized. This lawsuit of 1852 was a battle for the custody of nine-year-old Mary Jay Dawson, between the Jays of New York and Frederick Dawson of Baltimore County. Elizabeth Clarkson Jay declared in her bill of complaint that Dawson had spirited the orphaned child from New York, away from the "socially prominent" Jay family, to "the country seat occupied by him." Ms. Jay declared "that said country seat is very unhealthy and is unfit for her residence"³¹

NOTES:

1. Federal Direct Assessment, Patapsco Upper Hundred, Particular List of Lands, Entries #3534, 3536.
2. Assessor's Field Book, District 1, 1818, Hall of Records No. 8236-4-40-5.
3. Baltimore City Directory for 1817-1818, p. 46.
4. Baltimore City Deeds, WG 148:366.
5. Emilie M. Rosch, "The English Consul Estate," Maryland Historical Magazine, 19 (March 1924): 11.
6. Baltimore American, October 9, 1820.
7. Baltimore County Inventories, WB 33:614, Hall of Records.
8. Baltimore American, February 13, 1836.
9. Baltimore Sun, January 17, 1846.
10. Baltimore County Wills, Towson, OPM 4:173.
11. Baltimore County Inventories, OPM 8:416, 421.
12. Baltimore County Inventories, OPM 11:222, 567, 572, 574, 576, 578.
13. Tax Ledger, District 13, 1876, f. 22.
14. B.C. Deeds, EHA 65:9.
15. B.C. Deeds, EHA 70:559.
16. B.C. Deeds, WPC 333:316.
17. B.C. Deeds, WPC 356:315; WPC 337:68.
18. "British Consulate, The Refuge of An English Exile 125 Years Ago," Sunday Sun, September 24, 1911, Part 4, p. 1.
19. B.C. Tax Ledger, District 13, f. 580.
20. B.C. Tax Ledger, District 13, 1918, Vol. O-Z, f. 368.
21. B.C. Tax Ledger, District 13, 1919, f. 814.
22. B.C. Tax Ledger, District 13, 1923, f. 825.
23. B.C. Deeds, GLB 2918:155.
24. Rosch, "English Consul Estate," 11-13.
25. B.C. Tax Ledger, District 13, 1928-1940, Vol. A-L, f. 711.

NOTES, CONTD.:

26. B.C. Deeds, GLB 2870:545.

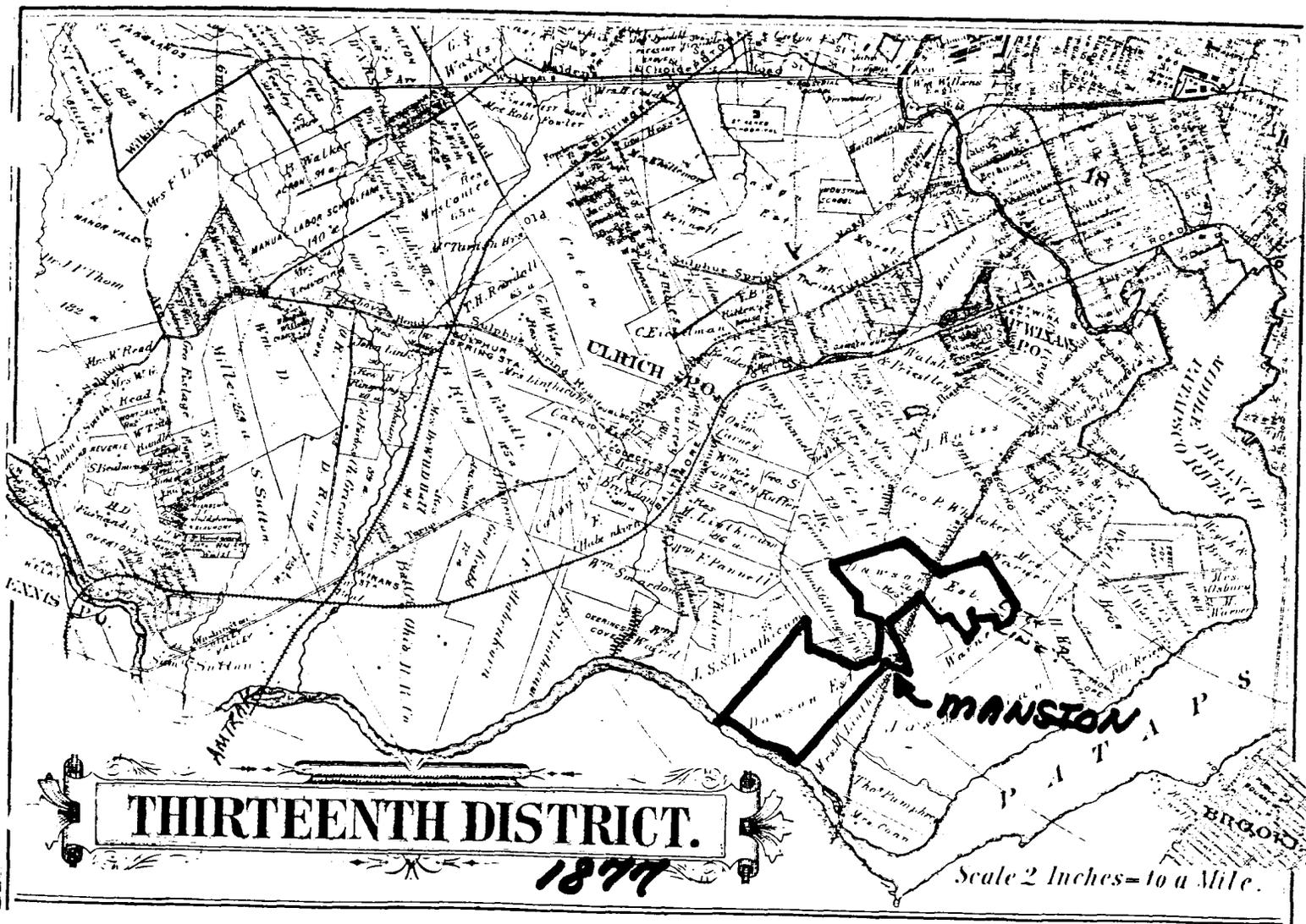
27. B.C. Deeds, GLB 2918:155; RRG 4131:267.

28. Sun, September 24, 1911. This text was reproduced verbatim, unattributed, signed with the name of an elementary school student, in the book supposedly written by the pupils, Real Stories from Baltimore County History, Isobel Davidson, editor (Baltimore 1917), pp. 31-32.

29. Rosch, "English Consul Estate," p. 13.

30. Administration Accounts, OPM 4:394.

31. Equity Papers No. 637, Dawson v. Dawson (1852).



DAWSON TRACT IN 1877 ATLAS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES ENGLISH CONSUL MANSION

- Baltimore Sun, September 24, 1911, Part 4, p. 3.
 Plat Books, WPC 3:22 (1908).
 Emilie M. Rosch, "The English Consul Estate," Md. Hist. Magazine,
 19 (March 1924).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATAACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.53**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Bounds 215 feet on n/s of Oak Grove Avenue. Depth of 208 feet, bordering County Open Space on the east, 203 feet on north. Bounded by Colonial Avenue 200 feet on west. (Tax Map 109, Parcel 116).

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John W. McGrain, Exec. Secy., Landmarks Preservation Commission

ORGANIZATION

Office of Planning and Zoning

DATE

August 10, 1984

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

TELEPHONE

494-3521

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland 21204

Maryland

BA-142

Baltimore County

English Consul Mansion

District XIII

2820 Oak Grove Ave. of Old Annapolis Rd.

1818

A 300-acre tract purchased by William Dawson, first British Consul to Baltimore. Brick manor house, colonial style, materials imported from England; seventeen rooms.

The Baltimore Highlands School and a number of developments are now located on the original tract.

White painted stucco (over brick).

(First HABS Report)
E. Frances Offutt
HABS COMMITTEE OF BALTIMORE
COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

July 29, 1965