

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

BA - 1435

MAGI-0314353601

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

203 West Chesapeake Avenue-State Attorney's Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

203 West Chesapeake Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Ninth

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

State Attorney's Office

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

203 W. Chesapeake Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21204

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Court House

Liber #: 5073

Folio #: 165

STREET & NUMBER

Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>Jan., 1978</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is a two story frame house with an attic. There is a shingle roof that caps the house and a coarsed stone foundation that supports the house. The house was originally covered with wood shingles, but has since been altered. The exterior is now covered with asbestos shingles.

On the north facade the house is three bays wide. On the north facade there are three doors and one window. Since the house has apparently been altered, it is difficult to determine which door was the original entrance. The door to the westernmost or center bay appears to be the oldest because of the wavy glass of the window pane and because the moulding of the door frame appears to be the same asin the doors of 205 and 207 W. Chesapeake Avenue.

The north or main facade is covered on the first story by a shingle roofed porch. The roof of this porch is supported by five narrow square columns that have been chamferred. There is a 2x4 railing that surrounds the porch. That the porch has been altered is made clear by the apparently new 2x4 railing and the cinder piers at the ground level of the porch.

The second story of the north facade has three large 1/1 sash windows. The upper sash of each of these windows has thin strips of blue, yellow, and red stained glass.

The north facade is characterized by a central pediment. In this attic story there are two 6/6 sash windows that are centralized. These windows appear to have been alterations because they are different from the twelve light casement window in 207 W. Chesapeake. The lower corners of the pediment have been decorated with a sunburst pattern that has raised details.

On the west side of the north facade the house appears to have been altered. There is a staircase of four steps whereby one enters a narrow hallway that leads to the second story of the house. The staircase to the second floor has been blocked up in the main part of the house.

On the west facade of the house the alterations have made the house very irregular in fenestration. On the first floor there is a twelve light casement window. In the second story there is another twelve light casement window of stained glass. There is a large 1/1 sash window with the same stained glass trim as in the windows of the north facade. The coarsed stone foundation is apparent in this facade.

The attic story has a small six light casement window and a four-panel door. Apparently at one time this door was used as either a fire escape or as some sort of outside entrance to the house.

On the south facade the house takes on its L-shaped appearance. The stone foundation is best seen on this facade. There is a wooden basement door that is inset in the stone foundation. This facade is two bays wide with a projecting bay (side entrance).

There are two large 1/1 sash windows on the first story of the south facade. The second story has three 1/1 sash windows.

On the left of this south facade there is a partially enclosed porch which is reached by climbing eleven steps. This porch is one bay wide with a 1/1 sash window on both the first and second story.

The stone at the basement level appears to be newer than the stone used on the side of the porch. Whether this is because of weathering or

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

because of an addition is hard to tell since entrance to the basement was not possible.

The east facade of the house is three bays wide. The windows again are 1/1 sash. Two of the three bays are placed together at the southeast corner of the first floor. In the attic story there are two six light casement windows that are placed in the center of the facade.

The stone foundation in the south facade has two three-light casement windows at ground level.

One enters the house through a center hallway. This is probably an alteration evidenced by the position of the door on the north facade which has the oldest glass window panes and door moulding. Four rooms of varying sizes are entered through doors that all lead from this center hallway. The entire first floor has been altered to provide for office areas so exact details on the original number of rooms and their sizes is difficult to determine. However some of the original fabric is still apparent.

On the first floor there are two fireplaces. Each of these is kitty-cornered in the room with a centrally located chimney. The fireplace with the slate mantel and four dentils is decorated with East Lake type carving on the surround. The fireplace measures 31" high, 28" wide, and 35" deep.

The fireplace in the southwest office area has a round arch with a key placed in the center of the arch. It is constructed of black and green Italian marble with inlaid spandrels. The fireplace has been filled in, but it was probably used to burn wood or coal.

All the rooms have been altered in that their walls have been panelled and the ceiling is now covered with modern materials. The floors have been covered with linoleum tiles. At one time the floors were probably covered with wooden floor boards as evidence in 205 and 207 W. Chesapeake Avenue. All of the rooms on the first floor have metal hot water radiators. Throughout the first floor there are four-panel doors with porcelain door knobs and metal box locks.

In the projecting south wing there appears to have been an interior end flue chimney.

The second floor is entered by the projecting addition on the outside of the house. As stated in the description this outside entrance is most likely an alteration. There is a narrow staircase which leads to the second floor. There are four office areas on this floor which were bedrooms.

The stained glass trim on the 1/1 sash windows can be seen more clearly from the inside of the second floor office on the north facade.

On the second floor the bathroom door has Ovolo molding surrounding it and Bulls Eye corner blocks at each corner of the door.

Although no entrance to an attic was found, one can assume that the attic was reached by climbing the same narrow stairs as in 207 W. Chesapeake Avenue. The attic walls were covered with hair plaster and lathing in 207 and therefore were probably of the same materials in 203 W. Chesapeake Avenue.

Evidence of the projecting south wing is seen on the Bromley 1898 Atlas.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

203 W. Chesapeake Avenue is significant for several reasons.

Stylistically this house shows strong influence of the Colonial Revival type of architecture. Certain original features are still present and the building is an integral component in a streetscape. The south side of this block of Chesapeake Avenue has the last evidence of residences between Bosley Avenue and York Road.

The Neo-Classical or Colonial Revival influences in the building are immediately observed when one sees the main or north facade. The roof of the building features a central pediment which is suggestive of the same Greek temples that the Court House identifies itself with. The front porch, which may be an alteration as evidenced in 205 and 207 W. Chesapeake Ave., is supported by columns with thrust upward towards the pediment which makes the porch seem almost like a portico of a Greek temple.

The building may be seen as important because of the original fabric that remains. This includes such features as a marble fireplace mantel and stained glass windows that would be difficult to replace. These materials are further evidence of the fact that the Court House neighborhood was once a fashionable and somewhat elegant place.

203 W. Chesapeake Avenue is a single component in the only block of residences between York Road and Bosley Avenue. Both the houses at 205 and 207 W. Chesapeake Avenue are similiar in design to 203 W. Chesapeake Ave. All of these houses show Colonial Revival influences, which was an important architectural style in Towson during the late nineteenth century.

The Court House Square spawned the development of this neighborhood which was once a collection of fine houses exhibiting the various architectural styles of the late nineteenth century. Evidence of this fact as provided by this row of buildings and their statement is a dramatic one given their location across the street from the new Courts Building.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Attachment

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BYWAYNE L. NIELD, II
HISTORIC TOWSON, INC.

NAME / TITLE

Melanie Butler-Student Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Goucher College-Historic Towson Inc.

DATE

January 12, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Goucher College

TELEPHONE

825-3300

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

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 individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

It has been documented that Towson owes much of its character to the fact that it grew as a "19th century court house town." It was complete with a courthouse on a large green surrounded by banks, lawyers' offices, a jail and some rather fine and fashionable residences. There are some visual documents of this fact remaining, but modern development has fragmented the blocks around the square, leaving these links with the past often isolated from one another and dwarfed in scale.

The single row of houses on the south side of the 200 block of Chesapeake Avenue, however, do provide a continuous streetscape that is the last row of 19th century residences on that street inside of the loop road. Dramatically juxtaposed to the New Courts Building, they provide an opportunity to realize the more human scale that this rural town possessed until only recently. The same row of buildings also provides examples of various late 19th century architectural styles and although they are now used for offices, they demonstrate a good deal about residential activity in Towson.

No. 203 W. Chesapeake Avenue is a rambling multi-directional building that shows the influence of the Queen Anne style. Modern siding does not offer the various textures one might expect but the tower, bay windows, polygonal projections and various shaped windows do provide the variety of forms typical of that style. In Numbers 205, 207 and 209, however, we see what was once three nearly identical houses that are not as organic in appearance. On the contrary they are much more regular in form and expressive of the classical attitude suggested by the Colonial Revival. In these buildings one sees regular fenestration, pedimented porches with slender Doric columns and each is centralized by a prominent central pediment. A curious feature found in all three is the very nice sunburst or fan-shaped design that decorates the bottom corners of the central pediment. Nicely balancing this row of buildings is No. 211 which, like its neighbor at the opposite end of the block, is more Victorian in nature. Its use of shingled gables and clapboards, the "swell front" and high fieldstone foundation are suggestive of the picturesque.

Title Search

Liber 5073, Folio 165 February 17, 1970
grantor- William P. Bolton, Jr. and Ellen W. Bolton and Stephen
Kirk and Anne R. Kirk
grantee-Baltimore County

Liber 2350, Folio 122 August 28, 1953
grantor-John and Elizabeth Lichtfuss
grantee- William P. Bolton

Liber 1966, Folio 142 May 10, 1951
grantor-William P. Bolton(widower)
grantee-Jon and Elizabeth Lichtfuss

Liber 1808, Folio 58 December 13, 1949
grantor-Mary E. Risteau
grantee-William P. Bolton

Liber 411, Folio 533 June 10, 1913
grantor-Bernard Wiesenfeld(Trustee) of Mary E. Risteau
grantee-Mary E. Risteau(daughter)

Liber 218, Folio 226 June 6, 1896
grantor-Augustus D. Clemens, Jr.
grantee-Mary E. Risteau, wife of William M. Risteau

Liber 170, Folio 287 July 1, 1888
grantor-lease made between Milton W. Offutt and Nannie A. Offutt to
Joseph J. Willis



BA-1435

CMS.
203 W. BAPT. AVE.
N.E. CORNER

W. NIELD
1/78



BA-1435

203 W. CHESAPEAKE Ave
S.

W. Need
1/78



BA-1435

203 W. ^{CHES} BAPT. AVE.
N.W. CORNER

W. N. Reed
1/78