

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes
no

Property Name: Hess Property Inventory Number: BA-3145
 Address: 4924 Ridge Road Historic district: yes no
 City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21237 County: Baltimore County
 USGS Quadrangle(s): Middle River
 Property Owner: Van E. and Marie A. Hess Tax Account ID Number: 1408032175
 Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 344 Tax Map Number: 82
 Project: Section 100: I-95, I-895(N) Split to North of MD 43 Agency: Maryland Transportation Authority
 Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company
 Preparer's Name: Stephanie Foell Date Prepared: 12/1/2003
 Documentation is presented in: See Key References List

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: Eligibility recommended Eligibility not recommended
 Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: _____
 Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: yes no Listed: yes no

Site visit by MHT Staff yes no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Architectural Description

The building at 4924 Ridge Road is an American-Foursquare residence which exhibits unique decorative concrete elements. The symmetrical, two-story house is constructed of quarry-faced, concrete blocks (molded concrete blocks which are formed to replicate rough-hewn stone). Replacement windows with one-over-one, double-hung sash are found on all elevations and are topped with lintels in a lighter shade of concrete. Lighter shades of concrete are also used decoratively at the corners and cornice, giving the illusion of quoins and a dentil course, respectively.

One of the most prominent elements of the residence is its wrap-around, hipped-roof porch. The porch supports on the main (west) façade consist of quarry-faced, concrete-block piers surmounted by concrete, stylized Corinthian columns, while the supports on the secondary elevations consist of slender wooden posts atop piers of plain concrete blocks. The porch is reached by a small flight of wooden stairs which extend from the north elevation. The area between the porch piers is filled in with a balustrade of simple rectangular members, and the raised foundation is covered with recently installed, wooden latticework.

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MHT Comments:	
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>6/15/04</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, National Register Program	<u>6/15/04</u> Date

The pyramidal roof is covered with asphalt shingles and punctuated with a single hipped-roof dormer on each façade. Each dormer contains a two-pane, sliding replacement window.

The grounds of 4924 Ridge Road contain minimal foundation plantings and trees of various ages, ranging from relatively recent examples to mature hardwoods.

History/Significance

General Regional History

The residence at 4924 Ridge Road is located in northeastern Baltimore County in the White Marsh neighborhood, which derives its name from the marshland which is located in this area of the county. The area also was known as Nottingham, named for the Nottingham Iron Works, an industry which dominated this portion of the county.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, much of the area developed as a result of its proximity to Philadelphia Road, a major thoroughfare within the region. From the early years of settlement into the twentieth century, much of the land of this portion of Baltimore County was involved in small-scale farming. After World War II, the growing suburbanization of the Baltimore region reached White Marsh and much of the farmland was subdivided into smaller lots. Many post-War neighborhoods containing small residences are concentrated in this part of Baltimore County.

Philadelphia Road

The area of Baltimore County that is now White Marsh developed largely as a result of its proximity to Philadelphia Road/Maryland Route 7, a road that originated as a Native American trail (Brooks and Rockel 1979:134). In 1729, the City of Baltimore was platted as a future port and commerce center. During that time, surveyors laid out the Philadelphia Road, linking Philadelphia, the New World's largest port city, with points south and west, including Baltimore.

The roadway's importance grew over time as interstate commerce became more prevalent. By the 1740s, commercial thoroughfares were being constructed to move farm produce, mill products, lime, and iron castings to the port city of Baltimore, and taverns and hotels sprang up along the Philadelphia Road. After several attempts to establish a turnpike, the Baltimore and Havre de Grace Turnpike Company received a charter to construct a toll road on the bed of the Philadelphia Road in 1814. The turnpike company initially enjoyed a period of prosperity. However, after only 20 years, railroads began offering intense competition (Hollifield 1978:81-82).

As Baltimore continued its expansion eastward, portions of the turnpike were ceded to the city. In 1888, Harford County assumed control of the turnpike contained within its boundaries. The end of the turnpike came in 1894, when Baltimore County assumed control of the remaining roadway within its jurisdiction.

During the twentieth century, traffic continued to increase on Philadelphia Road, particularly when automobiles became prevalent. Businesses arose along the former turnpike to serve the traveling public and many thought the road would continue to be the favored route for those traveling between Philadelphia and points south. However, in the late 1930s, the state held discussions regarding Works Progress Administration funds available for highway construction. A decision was made either to improve the existing Philadelphia Road, by then designated as Maryland Route 7, or construct a new roadway parallel to the old one. The businesses along the existing route fought to retain their source of business, but constructing a new, parallel road became the final decision, and work commenced on the new road, the Pulaski Highway, which eventually replaced Philadelphia Road as the primary thoroughfare through the area.

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Agricultural and Industrial Development in Northeastern Baltimore County

European settlement of northeastern Baltimore County likely began circa 1660. Because of the costly and complex land grant process, many wealthy landowners purchased parcels of land in Baltimore County, viewing these holdings as either investments in the future or potential bequests for heirs. Even land that had been purchased remained vacant (Marks 2000:7).

Consequently, during the early eighteenth century, land patterns consisted of small settlements, trails, and wilderness. Small-scale farmers, woodcutters, and miners were the primary residents, not the structured society of the southern Maryland gentry. This trend continued into later centuries as farmers continued to cultivate smaller plots of land than their Southern, plantation-owning counterparts (Marks 2000:11).

The Nottingham Company operated several iron furnaces in this area of Baltimore County, and collectively the business was referred to as the Nottingham Iron Works. Established in 1745 by Alexander Lawson, the company was named after investor James Russell's estate in Prince George's County, Maryland. Although the Nottingham Iron Works enjoyed several decades of prosperity, its holdings were seized after the Revolutionary War because of Lawson's strong ties to Great Britain. At this time, the company was subdivided among multiple landowners, although the Nottingham Forge remained productive until the late nineteenth century. The furnace, however, ceased production, although the actual date of cessation is somewhat in dispute as is the exact location of the ruins. Some early residents of Baltimore County may have been lured to the area because the iron works promised employment (Marks 2000:20-22).

By the mid-nineteenth century, many landowning residents were either German, Polish, or Irish immigrants. Other residents were tenant farmers who occupied land held by the descendants of the original landholders. Generally, farms were small in size and produced relatively minor amounts of what were known as "stoop crops," vegetables which required bending over to harvest. These included carrots, parsnips, beans, etc. These crops were either sold at markets throughout Baltimore City (usually the Belair Market, the closest to the area) or by the farmers themselves, a practice known as truck farming which was prevalent throughout the area. Also at this time, as greenhouses came into widespread use, this area of Baltimore County became an important center for the production of year-round cut flowers for weddings, funerals, and bouquets (McGrain 1990:17).

The American Foursquare

Residences, often simple I-house or American-Foursquare forms, were commonly constructed as the farmhouses or tenant-farmer residences for many small-scale farms throughout Maryland. American Foursquares were also an early suburban house form.

Essentially a subtype of the Prairie style of building, American Foursquares commonly have hipped or pyramidal roofs, and are symmetrical, although entrances, which are located on the front façades, may be off center. This was one of the earliest forms of Prairie-style architecture and was the most common vernacular version. Vernacular examples such as 4924 Ridge Road often feature hipped dormers and single-story, full-width porches (McAlester and McAlester 1984:439).

Determination of Eligibility

The residence at 4924 Ridge Road is a vernacular example of an American Foursquare. Constructed in 1924, the residence utilizes concrete for both structural and decorative purposes.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

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Reviewer, National Register Program							Date						

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

The residence at 4924 Ridge Road is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Under Criterion A, it is not associated with any events that impacted American history. Preliminary research did not uncover any associations with significant people, making it ineligible under Criterion B. Under Criterion C, 4924 Ridge Road is not a significant example of an American-Foursquare residence. The installation of prominent replacement fenestration compromises the integrity of materials. There are numerous other examples with high integrity within Baltimore County—some of which retain their original settings on farms or which are grouped in planned suburban neighborhoods. The property was not evaluated for significance under Criterion D.

Key References

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1979 A History of Baltimore County. Friends of the Towson Library, Incorporated, Towson, Maryland.

Hollifield, William
1978 Difficulties Made Easy: History of the Turnpikes of Baltimore City and County. Baltimore County Historical Society, Cockeysville, Maryland.

Hopkins, Griffith Morgan
1877 Atlas of Baltimore County. G.M. Hopkins, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Marks, David
2000 The History of Perry Hall, Maryland. Gateway Press, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester
1984 A Field Guide to American Houses. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, New York.

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n.d. Suburbanization Historic Context and Survey Methodology. Available at
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2002 Historic Residential Suburbs; Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places.

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MHT Comments:

 Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services Date

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National Register Bulletin.

Scharf, J. Thomas

1881 History of Baltimore City and County. Lewis Everts Company, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Sidney, James C.

1850 Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland. James M. Stephens, Baltimore, Maryland.

Taylor, Robert

1857 Map of the city and county of Baltimore, Maryland.

USGS

1890-1969 Quadrangle Maps for Baltimore East, Gunpowder, Middle River, and White Marsh. USGS 15 Minute Series. United States Department of the Interior.

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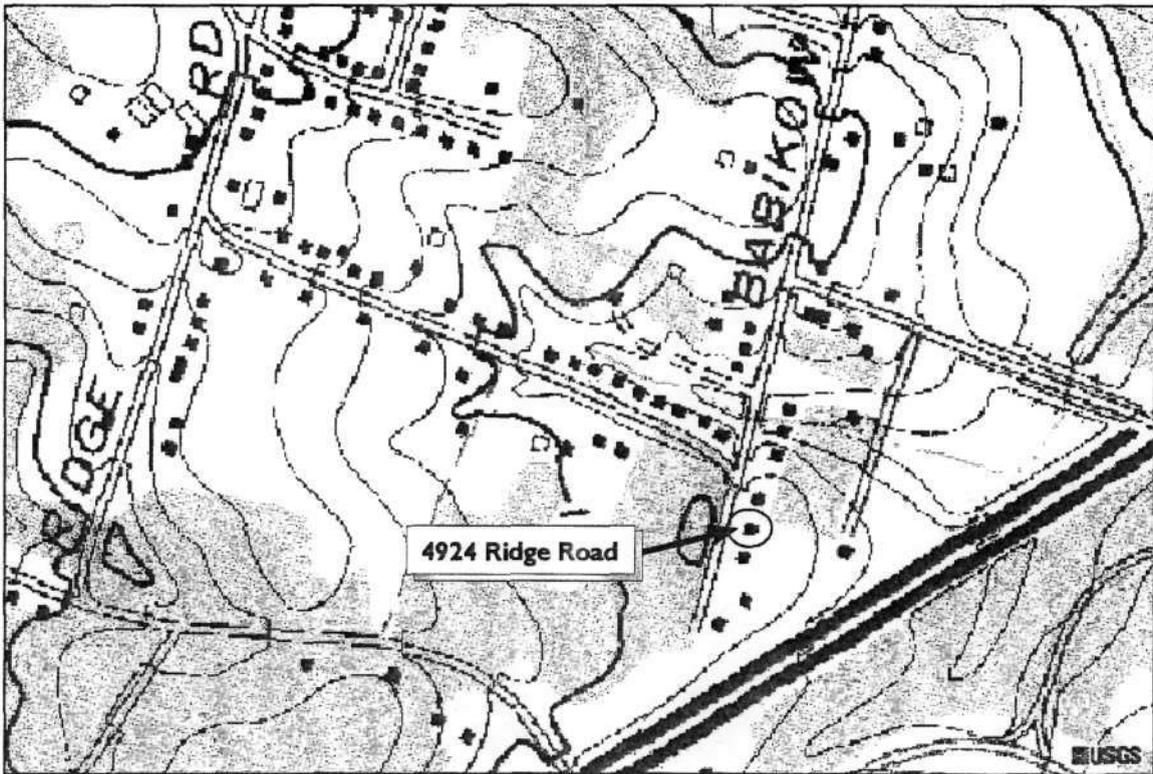
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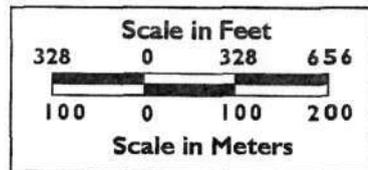
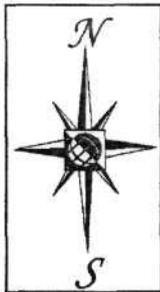
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BA-3145
Resource Location Map
Section 100: I-95, I-895 (N) Split to North of MD 43
Baltimore County, Maryland



Map Source: USGS Topographic Quadrangle, Middle River, MD





BA-3145

4924 Ridge Rd.

Baltimore County, MD

S. Foell

10/2003

MD SHPO

Front facade; view to the NE

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