

Form 10-445 (5/62)

1. STATE **Maryland**  
 COUNTY **Baltimore**  
 TOWN **Lutherville** VICINITY **CO. 5000**  
 STREET NO. **1708 Kurtz Avenue**

ORIGINAL OWNER **Reverend William Heilig**  
 ORIGINAL USE **residence**  
 PRESENT OWNER **W.G. & Elisabeth Packard**  
 PRESENT USE **residence**  
 WALL CONSTRUCTION **concrete mixture**  
 NO. OF STORIES **2**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY

2. NAME **Octagon House**  
 DATE OR PERIOD **1856**  
 STYLE **Octagon Mode**  
 ARCHITECT **based on O.S. Fowler**  
 BUILDER **Reverend William Heilig**

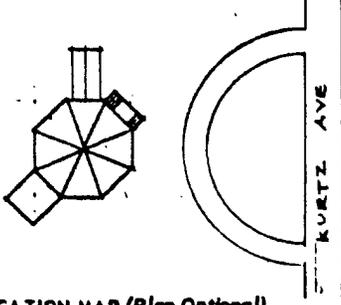
3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC **no**

Remodeled in 1947 due to its deteriorated condition, Lutherville's "Octagon House" stands presently as a structure shorn of nearly all its original architectural detail, though still retaining much of its interiors, its central stair hall floor plan and its "gravel" or "grout" walls based on an article in Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book in 1855 by Orson S. Fowler, author of A Home For All published in 1854.

In viewing the old photograph an even more architectural house may be seen of two stories with an attic floor within a mansard roof which was surmounted by an octagonal belvedere sandwiched between two chimneys. The first two floors were surrounded by a continuous veranda around all eight sides with a roofed gallery above, all supported on square columns spaced on each elevation at each corner and one between the two windows of each facade or one on either side of each doorway. Set between the columns was a round section hand rail with square balusters above the bottom rail. The columns appear to have been somewhat Greek Revival in character with a plain plinth or base and simple, moulded caps. There was no moulding between porch floors, though the upper gallery columns carried a heavy cornice which received the mansard roof of the attic space. This roof had plain corner boards and an upper moulded cornice. In each bay of each facade there was a segmentally arched dormer window with two over two sash, with moulded lintels or hoods, and with wide flared trim. Three courses of regular butt shingles alternating with three courses of picket cut shingles added a decorative pattern to the slate roof.

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered **NO**



6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.



Redd L. Wheaton Oct. 1971

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

Octagon House, 1708 Kurtz Avenue, Sheet 2

The belvedere, buttressed by the chimneys, was also of Greek Revival character. At each corner a pilaster carried a classical cornice complete with a full architrave and frieze space. An unusual wrought iron finial sat on the belvedere roof.

Surviving Greek Revival detail is evidenced by the use of the receding panel arrangement of the first and second floor sidelighted and transomed doors and the elongated proportions of the sash windows, four over four lights at the second floor and four over six lights at the first floor. Though the porches have been removed, salvaged antique cast and wrought iron window grills and balconies add a new and interesting architectural feature to the house.

The mansard roof and belvedere were replaced by the present low pitched hipped roof. During the remodeling it was noted that the attic floor joists extended beyond the 18" thick "grout" walls possibly suggesting that the entire roof structure seen in the old photograph was not original. Stylistically it seems to be an incongruous mixture of Greek Revival and Second Empire forms. Possibly the roof was raised in the 1870's.

The interiors of the first floor of the house are quite simple in detail and mouldings with exceptionally tall, paneled doors matching the scale of the windows with their interior paneled shutters set into the jambs. A simple pilastered mantel piece is restored to the parlour fireplace.

In plan the octagon shape was originally divided into four square rooms alternating with four triangular rooms which served as a pantry, two entrance vestibules, and a dressing room now part of one bedroom. These rooms are grouped around a square central stair hall which originally extended to the belvedere. The continuous handrail, set on turned balusters and uninterrupted for newels at landings, terminates at the first floor at a heavy turned newel.

The original kitchen was in the basement which served the main floor dining room by means of a dumbwaiter formerly located in the pantry.

Maryland  
Baltimore County  
Kurtz Avenue, Lutherville  
Dist. VIII  
1855

BA-66  
The Octagon

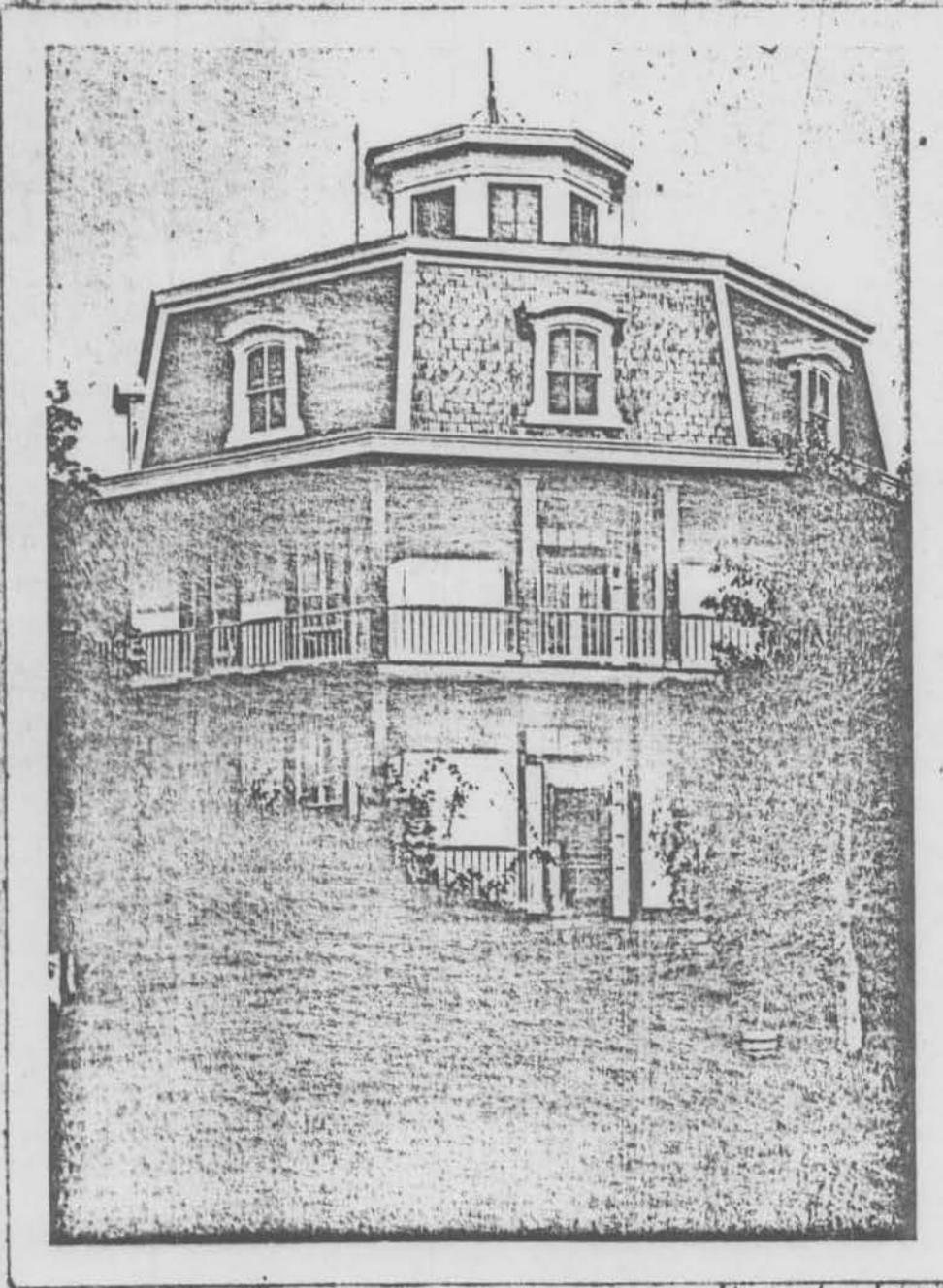
Built by Rev. William Heilig who was on the faculty of the Lutherville Seminary and several nearby churches. A three-story stucco house, originally with cupola and porches on all sides of first and second floors; grapevines screened the porches.

color slide

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

July 29, 1965

Octagon House, 1708 Kurtz Avenue, Sheet 3



An early view of Octogon House, circa 1915