

Maryland Historical Trust HISTORIC PROPERTIES
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

BA-682

DOE yes no

1291 NO 0306825204

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic BALMUCKETY

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 15 Iron Horse Lane not for publication

city, town Pikesville vicinity of Councilmanic District 2nd congressional district 3rd

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name John W, Tastet, Jr.

street & number 15 Iron Horse Lane telephone no.: (410) 636-0015

city, town Pikesville state and zip code MD 21208

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Courts Building EHK JR. liber 5996

street & number 401 Bosley Avenue folio 559

city, town Towson state MD 21204

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust Inventory

date March 17, 1973 federal state county local

depository for survey records 100 Community Place

city, town Crownsville state MD 21032

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

Balmuckety is a brick, Georgian Revival, two-story house with an attic level lighted by gabled ormers. The chief facade of the main block is five bays wide at the second-story level and three bays at the first floor level. The central front door is set in an elaborate Georgian enframingent with side windows. Broad outside end-chimneys rise at each end of the main block. The rear of the house is equally well designed with central double doors opening onto a porch facing the swimming pool. The rear roof features five Georgian gable-roofed dormers. The house was set on 54.13 acres and faced Reisterstown Road, some 1,600 feet to the east, when added to the Baltimore County digitized inventory in 1978. At that time the address was 8928 Reisterstown Road. Subsequently, the development of Cobblestone was built east of the mansion, leaving it accessible from Iron Horse Lane. The rear acreage was acquired by Baltimore County as a potential school site; at present, there is a county park on the school site. Balmuckety is only 195 feet from the park, from which its rear or west facade is visible.



BA-682



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
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> human. . .ian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1913-1914 **Builder/Architect** Wilson Levering Smith

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Balmuckety was built on part of the Lyon family holdings for a descendant of the original colonial family. Dr. William Lyon a Scottish settler, patented 720 acres under the name "Wester Ogle" in 1754. Dr. Lyon engaged in mercantile business in Baltimore Town and also operated a mill on Gwynns Falls at what is now McDonogh Road. At one point, his estate reached a total of 2,300 acres. The doctor's son Robert Lyon continued the farm and mill, living into his 80s. In 1836, the family agreed to a partition of the Lyon estate while Robert Lyon still lived. One large tract of 183 acres (Lot No. 2) went to the brothers Charles Graham Lyon and Edward Dorsey Lyon, who built the large stone and stucco Greek Revival house still called "Wester Ogle" and still inhabited by a Lyon. The name "Wester Ogle" was transplanted to this house which apparently standso on the land grants called "Spring Garden."

Further division of the land in early 1913 provided a large tract for Balmuckety. Fanny Moncure Lyon, widow, and Samuel Lyon deeded 7-plus acres to Fanny Moncure Lyon, daughter of Mrs. Lyon and niece of Mr. Lyon, shortly before her marriage. (Deeds WPC 406:344).

A week after the transaction, the county weekly announced:

The marriage of Miss Fannie Moncure Lyon, daughter of Mrs. Lyon and the late James W. Lyon, to Mr. Aubrey Pearre, Jr., son of Colonel and Mrs. Aubrey Pearre, will take place at St. Thomas Protestant Episcopal Church, Garrison, Md., on Saturday evening, April 5, at 6:30 o'clock. (Democrat and Journal, February 22, 1913).

City directories show that the younger Pearre was an anttorney who lived at 1601 Bolton Street in the 1913 issue; he was a member of the firm Barton, Wilmer and Stewart at 207 North Calvert Street.

Maryland Historical Trust/
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name of property: Balmuckety

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The Pearre family was already established in the neighborhood. The county paper reported early in 1915 that Aubrey Pearre and his wife had closed their city residence and along with Sifford Pearre had opened their summer residence at Rose Hill near Pikesville (Jeffersonian, April 17, 1915). A few months later, the obituary of Aubrey Pearre at age 79 makes it clear that Rose Hill was the home of the elder Pearre, called a Colonel in previous items. He had been vice president of the Maryland Casualty Company while son Aubrey Pearre, Jr., was still a member of Barton, Wilmer & Stewart, and brother Sifford Pearre was treasurer of the New Amsterdam Casualty Company (Jeffersonian, June 26, 1915).

The new house built for the younger Pearre probably stands on the colonial tracts "Mount Organ" and or "Serenity" which had been gathered up into Dr. Lyon's large plantation.

Family memoirs collected in 1973 for The Green Spring Valley credit the house to the architects Wilson Levering Smith and Laurence Hall Fowler; however, Fowler always worked alone and the Pearre use does not appear in the list of Fowler's projects published by the Evergreen Library which has most of his papers. The more likely partner is Howard May, AIA, who was Smith's partner as early as 1906 when he designed the former Towson High School on Allegheny Avenue. One of the Pearre descendants in New Jersey was believed to have the original house plans in 1995 but the material proved to be garden designs and specifications for a never completed expansion. Ms. Sarah Pearre informed Dr. Dawn F. Thomas that her mother had found a house in Annapolis with the exact shade of red brick and had the contractors find similar bricks for the new home. Some local lists have carried the construction date of 1910, which is too early; Ms. Sarah Pearre's estimate was 1914-1916 and that was published in Dr. Thomas' book in 1978. The 1911 Tax Ledger of Election District No. 3 showed the house for the first time in the additional assessments added to the book in 1915, charging Mrs. Fanny Lyon Pearre with:

New House	\$14,000
Garage	800. (1911 Tax Ledger, District 3, folio 722, Hall of Records)

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R. L. Polk's city directory "corrected to April 1, 1914," showed that Aubrey Pearre, Jr., no longer had a town house and listed his residence as "home, Roslyn, B. C." The same address appeared in the 1915 directory. Obviously the family was in residence by early 1914. Mrs. Pearre in 1955 opened the house to the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage (Sun, May 2, 1955). The tour brochure gave the construction date as 1913-1914 (MHS Vertical File, "Historic Houses").

In 1995, Mr. Skip Pearre noted that his grandfather was apparently in a position to build the house, have the garden professionally laid out, and the interior completely furnished, all in one smooth operation. Mrs. Ann Pardee, a daughter of the family has various plans for altering and expanding the garden by the Philadelphia landscaper, Thomas L. Sears.

Balmuckety in 1913 was not inconveniently located because a little to the west was McDonogh Station on the Western Maryland Railroad where frequent commuter trains stopped. Out on Reisterstown Road was the electric trolley car system, the Number 5 line, with equally frequent service into the city. The enormous size of old estates insulated residents from additional neighbors until almost the 1980s. The nearest commercial town was Pikesville, the nearest cluster of suburbanites was the spacious and thinly populated Sudbrook Park. Mr. Skip Pearre believed in 1995 that the Lyons had initially hoped to develop a suburb like Sudbrook on their property because the profits of dairy farming were in decline; a number of trees had been planted in strategic places in advance of developing; thus, there were well started trees near the site used for Balmuckety.

The house continued in the original family for two generations. Mrs. Fanny Lyon Pearre died in March 1973. In the early 1970s, her daughters Sarah and Betty Pearre continued there. It was Sarah Pearre who related the history of the house to Dr. Thomas in 1973 for the Middendorf Foundation book that appeared five years later. The property was set up as a trusteeship in 1974. In 1979, John W. Tastet, Jr., bought the 9.9832-acre parcel out of the 54 acres that the grounds had constituted at its maximum (Deeds EHK JR., 5996:559; Plat Books, EHK JR., 44:25).

HISTORIC HOUSES



BA-682
Balmuckety
Photograph by Miss Betty Pearre, [c. 1960s]
Collection of Miss Betty Pearre

BA-682

BALMUCKETY

w/s Reisterstown Road, 0.1 mi. north of Mt. Wilson Lane
Baltimore County

One of the newer buildings on the Wester Ogle estate is the distinctive Balmuckety, the home of the Misses Betty and Sarah Pearre. The house was built between 1914 and 1916 by their parents, Aubrey and Fanny (Lyon) Pearre. Mrs. Pearre was a direct descendant of Dr. William Lyon and the daughter of James William and Fanny M. (Nelson) Lyon.

Mr. Pearre, a lawyer by profession with an avid interest in architecture, worked closely on the design of the house with the architects, Wilson Levering Smith and Lawrence Fowler. The particular color of brick used was chosen by Mrs. Pearre: when walking through the streets of Annapolis she had chanced to see a piece of brick exactly the color she wanted for her own house. When the plans for the house had been drawn up, Mrs. Pearre pointed out that closets had been omitted, and they had to be sketched in.

Source: The Green Spring Valley
Its History and Heritage, Volume One, A History Historic Houses
by Dawn F. Thomas
(Pages 373-374)