

CHRISMAN-BARNITZ HOUSE

227 EAST MAIN STREET

The sections of this 3-bay, 3-story house are among the oldest in Westminster, dating from around 1770. The building has been much played with during its 206 years; early references mention it as a two-story log dwelling occupied by a blacksmith; it later became a summer house (and was probably then increased to its present three stories) around 1875. Later, it was a full-time home, and is now a law office. This most recent use i.e., as offices and apartments, is the result of superb, inexpensive, adaptive use.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Chrisman - Barnitz House

AND/OR COMMON

John Willis Law Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

227 East Main Street (MD 32)

6

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Carroll

STATE

Maryland

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 checked="" 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

John T. Willis

Telephone #: 876-3526

STREET & NUMBER

323 Mary Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21157

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 592

Folio #: 124

STREET & NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE		CHECK ONE	
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The intersection of Ralph Street and East Main Street (Maryland Route 32) is one of the most important and interesting crossroads in the City of Westminster. The interest and importance exist despite (because of?) the fact of the four buildings located at the intersection, only one would be immediately recognizable as indigenous to the area.

One of the structures that seems to defy being "localized" is no. 277 East Main Street; originally built as a single family dwelling, it has recently been agreeably adapted into an attorney's office

The building is basically a 3 bay by 2 bay 2 story clapboard box with several enlargements. The entrance (south) facade is 3 bays wide and 3 stories tall--this height is somewhat stagey as it is only 10 feet deep. The eastern ground floor bay (and all 3 bays on the second and third floors) is a single pane double-hung sash window with simple architrave enframingent. As a variation, the second floor central bay takes the form of a clapboard bow oriel window with simple cornice and plain pilasters. The oriel is painted white, as are the 2 elongated turned columns which support it, which nicely sets off the blue grey of the wall, and the black of the 2 panel shutters which flank all windows. The central and west ground floor bays are windowed doors.

The entire facade rests between a low coursed fieldstone foundation, and a broad but simple, thinly denticulated cornice. A one story white wood and glass sun porch extends along the eastern facade, below a shed asbestos-shingled roof. A wood and glass door allows entry to the porch from the east. Above the porch are 2 regularly spaced 1/1 windows flanked, as are all windows, by black 2 panelled shutters. Beyond the bulk of the house to the north is an extension shaded by a pair of porches - a ground floor glassed in porch, with a central 4 panel entrance door, and above it, an open porch with square posts and simple balusters. There is a simply enframed 4/1 window on both floors of the north front of the main building, looking onto the porch, and similar window on the north front of the extension. The porch is reached by two 90° flights of stairs.

All roofs on all sections, additions, and extensions, are tin shed roofs sloping to the north, except for the sun porch roof, which is covered with black asbestos shingles and slopes to the east.

One simple fireplace remains in the main room, the room is entered directly from the Main Street entrance doors.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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
c. 1770 (?)	John Crisman (Crielman)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

When the present owner took title in 1975, he took possession of one of the oldest, and most dilapidated, structures in the City. It has now been preserved and made structurally sound without damaging its integrity. This is more important than usual, as a portion of the building is certainly one of the oldest existing structures in the City. William Winchester sold the lot (number 17 of the original town) to John Crisman for 6 pounds on August 30, 1768 (Frederick County Deed L, page 481). Six pounds indicates an unimproved lot as assuredly as 60 pounds, its price when Crisman sold the place to Christopher Myers on March 20, 1775, (BDL/276) indicates improvements. It is possible today to see, in the cellar, above the crude massive foundations, the original floor beams: unfinished logs. Indeed Katharine Shellman's diary notes that the house was a comfortable two-story log dwelling occupied by Jacob Taney, blacksmith. The shop stood in the yard. Taney took title on June 3, 1822, paying \$650 for the place (JS 15/680). The house changed hands a few more times (bringing \$700 in 1831) until Michael Barnitz paid \$1000 for it in 1858 (Carroll County Deed 24/436). Barnitz died in 1874, leaving the house to his son, Covington; according to Mrs. Shellman, the house was "used as a summer house". It was probably Covington who added the narrow third story in front, as well as the oriel and entrance porch. His daughter, Grace, inherited the house when he died and lived there year-round. She was, apparently, quite a character: in perpetual mourning (long black dress, wide brimmed veiled hat), and kept chickens on the sun porch. Several natives have repeated the story that a favorite Halloween custom was pounding on the glass of the porch causing the chickens to screech, until Miss Barnitz, her dress dragging and her veil flowing, would chase the pranksters away. She died on February 27, 1939, and the house was then bought by the Robrecht's, who ignored it and used it as rental property until the present owner took title, on April 20, 1975, and made the long overdue repairs.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Being all of lot 17 as shown on a plat of the original town of Westminster as recorded among the Land Records of Frederick County in Book L, Page 472.'

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

STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Christopher Weeks, Consultant

October, 1976

ORGANIZATION

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Westminster

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

37°0



271

NO PARKING
ANY TIME
ON THIS STREET

A-10

~~37%~~
37%

Carr ^{134B}
~~10/10/60~~
225-7 E. Main St. Westmills

S. Jacaulé
10/76 - C. weeks

85%



CAPP-134B

7

~~85%~~

p. 15
17

1346

XIV

log walls in
227-229 East Main St.



CATER - 134 B

CARR ~~134 B~~

225 E. Main St. Westminster

NE facade

10/76 C. Wach

✓