

226 EAST MAIN STREET, WESTMINSTER

WILLIS HOUSE

In this house one can easily see the first steps of the area's architectural growth. John Clusser bought the lot in 1775 and the remains of the small log cabin that he built are still evident in the present cellar. Later generations, dissatisfied with this existence, built (c. 1810) the present 2 story 3-bay clapboard dwelling. In size, it is a logical first step beyond a 15' x 30' log cabin; in execution, it is a quantum leap, with its crisp denticulated cornice, fine door enframement, and masterfully handled scale and solid-void proportioning.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Willis House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

226 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 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 RESIDENCES
<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

Virginia E. Robrecht

Telephone #: 848-4184

STREET & NUMBER

230 East Main Street

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 #: 102

Folio #: 316

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 type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input checked="" 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

Although there are local suggestions (with some evidence) that what is now number 226 East Main Street was, 200 years ago, a one story log cabin, the present house is at least a generation later. The present house is a good example of the more modest house Westminster's citizens erected in the early and Mid 19th century. It is now a 3 bay wide, 2 bay deep, 2½ story building over a roughly coursed fieldstone foundation and full cellar, with a full-length 2 story (cellarless) addition to the south. Both sections are covered with clapboard. A simple flat-capped chimney rests a few inches within the west gable, piercing the black tin roof which covers both sections; the roof is very simply finished.

The door, the east ground floor bay, is simply, but elegantly treated with a flat modillion cornice, supported by rosetted scroll brackets above plain pilasters. The door itself, is a typical late 19th century half-glass, half-wood affair, with a 5-light rectangular transom above. To the east are 2 single pane double-hung sash windows with simple enframing. There are three 6/6 similar enframed windows on the second floor. All bays are vertically and horizontally aligned.

The east facade is blind; three 6/6 windows are intermittently placed along the west front. Under the south gable end is one centrally placed door per floor (that on the second floor is reached via a direct steep set of steps). A small flue is located about 10 feet from the south wall, at the peak of the roof.

In plan, the house is an expanded hall and parlor; the basemented section has a side stair hall, with one room to the west; beyond are 2 rooms in a line per floor. Door and stair treatment is of the simplest.

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

c. 1810

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Jesse Willis

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of 226 East Main Street is both architectural and sociological. Architecturally the house is important as an example of a hall and parlor house, a style once common in the area. The house represents the significant first step that the settlers would have taken from their not too much earlier log cabins of essentially the same plan. When John Closser bought the lot (number 41) from William Winchester on March 22, 1775, the price was 12 pounds, a low figure considering that Winchester retained "free access to the well on the lot and liberty to draw there from" (Frederick County Deed Book BD, page 185). Three lots (41, 42 and 43) were sold as a unit for 75 pounds in 1808 (WR 32/22), indicating that there was still no real construction. But when Ann Willis bought the lot for \$850 in 1819, we ought to deduce from the price that the lot was no longer unimproved. In fact, an examination of the existing cellar reveals the definite possibility that the present foundations date from the period in their massiveness and crudeness. Ann was the wife of Jesse Willis, who, the diary of Katharine Jones Shellman records, lived here between 1822-32, and running an "iron store".

The lot changed hands several times until the present owner's father took title on September 21, 1905 (Deed 102/316).

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

Being the western half of lot 41 of the original plat 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
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



CARR 360

224 E. Main St.
Westminster

S. facade

10/76 C. Weeks

8307. Y 4070



Inventory - Sect. A
A-9

40%

83% History Section
Chapter 4

P. 22
24

CAAR 360

226 E. MAW ST.

WESTMINSTER

N. Jacobs

C. Wood 4/77



Carr 360

224 E. Main St. Westminster

NW Juvelades

10/74 C. Weeks