

BENNETT-PARKE HOUSE

23 NORTH COURT STREET

The five-bay-by-two-bay Flemish Bond brick c. 1840 building now used by the Ascension Church as a rectory, formerly the home of F. Neal Parke, is a typical, if stellar, example of a local style of building. The principal (west) facade has a central ground story entrance door. The door is a fine Georgian eight panel door and seems to be original down to its hardware. The door, resting above three brick steps and a granite sill, is flanked by fine turned pilasters, six side lights, and is topped by a seven light transom. This door surround consists of smooth squared pilasters and a full three part cornice, the architrave of which is enriched rather boldly by a recessed enriched panel. All windows on this facade are regularly placed; there are four on the ground floor and five above. Windows have 6/6 panes, white wooden sills and lintels, and black louvered shutters, creating an impressively judical atmosphere.

The former residence of Judge Neal Parke is significant in a variety of ways-significant as a building in its own right, and for those who lived in it. Its architectural significance in Westminster is great. It has been stressed several times that the City was, in its early years, firmly planted in a Pennsylvania German building tradition, that its buildings are merely cogs in this great system. However, there is an occasional building in the City that, while a part of this whole, is, by virtue of detail, proportion, and material, notable as an individual artistic expression. The Bennett-Parke House is one of these. The precision of its Flemish bond brick, the fine window treatment (including lintels and sills and shutters), the massive fine chimneys, the existence of original outbuildings, the fine cornice, and the very sophisticated principal entrance door, all make the building stellar.

Furthermore, the crisp semi-vernacular pile makes the house an interesting addition to the land now or formerly owned by the Ascension Episcopal Church. Generally speaking, the Church's buildings (certainly those the Church had constructed) were flavored with a touch of Gothicism; this house makes a fine counterpart to those buildings. It also makes a fine counterpart to Court Street, this section of which is dominated by the Gothic spikes of the Church itself, the former Rectory, and the former chapel (all of which see).

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Bennett-Parke House

AND/OR COMMON Ascension Episcopal Church Rectory

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 23 North Court Street

CITY, TOWN Westminster VICINITY OF \_\_\_\_\_ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 7

STATE Maryland COUNTY Carroll

**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 type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" 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 Ascension Episcopal Church Telephone #: 848-3251

STREET & NUMBER 23 North Court 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 #: 261

STREET & NUMBER Center Street Folio #: 563

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**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The five-bay-by-two-bay Flemish Bond brick building now used by the Ascension Church as a rectory, formerly the home of F. Neal Parke, is a typical, if stellar, example of a local style of building. The principal (west) facade has a central ground story entrance door. The door is a fine Georgian eight panel door and seems to be original down to its hardware. The door, resting above three brick steps and a granite sill, is flanked by fine turned pilasters, six side lights, and is topped by a seven light transom. This door surround consists of smooth squared pilasters and a full three part cornice, the architrave of which is enriched rather boldly by a recessed enriched panel. All windows on this facade are regularly placed; there are four on the ground floor and five above. Windows have 6/6 panes, white wooden sills and lintels, and black louvered shutters, creating an impressively judical atmosphere.

The north facade is laid in 6 course common bond, and shows the L-shape of the building. There is one 6/6 window in the western part of the second story (treated the same, as are all windows, as those on the main facade), and a small 6-light attic window above. A massive corbel-capped chimney rises at the gable's peak flush with the wall. The extension goes back three bays; the bays are 6/6 windows. Probably original it only went back two bays, as there is a central corbel-capped chimney at this distance, doubtless marking a kitchen. A set of French Doors placed to the west of this extension leads to a screened porch. The porch has a fine two part entablature and is supported by well-proportioned Doric columns.

The south side of the building also shows some alterations. That facade of the principal section has a small, round capped chimney at its center flush with the wall, the requisite 6-side attic window to the west of it, a western ground story (modern) door and two 6/6 windows over the door. The door has the same white lintel as the windows, and the granite sill. This facade is also laid in 5 course common bond and was probably originally shaded to the east by a two story porch which still rises around the L: evidence for this is the modern brick and the definite seam in the courses, as well as the shifting pitch of the roof, and the local fondness for this sort of thing. Two 6-light casement windows are on the second floor of this addition, if such it be, and two 6/6 windows are on the ground floor. These windows have brick sills and three-coursed gauged, flat arches. As noted, a two story porch still exists on the L, above a fine herringbone-brick paved court yard. Three 6/6 windows are on the ground floor behind the porch. The second story of the porch has been filled in with board and batten construction and small four-light casement windows.

Also creating the atmosphere of a courtyard is a small, two story five-course-common-bond former staff house. The house has a gable

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 \_\_\_\_\_

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former residence of Judge Neal Parke is significant in a variety of ways-significant as a building in its own right, and for those who lived in it. Its architectural significance in Westminster is great. It has been stressed several times that the City was, in its early years, firmly planted in a Pennsylvania German building tradition, that its buildings are merely cogs in this great system. However, there is an occasional building in the City that, while a part of this whole, is, by virtue of detail, proportion, and material, notable as an individual artistic expression. The Bennett-Parke House is one of these. The precision of its Flemish bond brick, the fine window treatment (including lintels and sills and shutters), the massive fine chimneys, the existence of original outbuildings, the fine cornice, and the very sophisticated principal entrance door, all make the building stellar.

Furthermore, the crisp semi-vernacular pile makes the house an interesting addition to the land now or formerly owned by the Ascension Episcopal Church. Generally speaking, the Church's buildings (certainly those the Church had constructed) were flavored with a touch of Gothicism; this house makes a fine counterpart to those buildings. It also makes a fine counterpart to Court Street, this section of which is dominated by the Gothic spires of the Church itself, the former Rectory, and the former chapel (all of which see).

On July 7, 1841, Isaac Shriver, who owned lots at the corners of Court and Main Street, and who had recently donated land to the County for building the nearby Courthouse, sold this quarter acre to Solomon Zepp for \$400.00 (Carroll County Deed Book WW6, Page 222). Zepp sold the same lot two years later for \$1800.00 to Levi T. Bennett (2/145); such a four and a half fold increase in price in slightly less than two years, certainly indicates that something had been built, and the present building shows nothing to make us believe that it was not built at about that time, as it possesses all the features one would associate with the "Typically Westminster House" in an era when the traditional building pattern was at its strongest.

The house stayed in the Bennett family until January 11, 1871, when a variety of heirs, including Ruth Crawford, nee Bennett, sold the place to Joseph M. Parke for \$4600.00 (39/206); such a price was extremely

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 a parcel containing approximately 12,500 square feet and bounded by Court Street to the west, Winters Alley to the south, and the Ascension Church parking lot is labelled "J. M. Parke" on an 1876 plat of Westminster.

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

STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Christopher Weeks, Consultant

August, 1977

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

roof, three 6/6 windows to its south, below a fine brick dentil cornice. A 6/6 window lights the second story to the north of both the east and west facades. Other wooden sheds still exist also on the property, and give a slightly Faulkner-like appearance, as they are sheltered by massive drooping evergreens. Other plantings include a variety of herbaceous shrubs to the north towards the bold Ascension Church. When the judge's home was taken over by the Church to be used by offices, necessary extensions were built off of it to the east, extensions which were done in a matter not incongruous with the older building, and with the area itself.

high for Westminster in that era, and indicates the respect in which the building was held. Parke sold the lot to George M. Parke for \$3500.00 on July 23, 1887 (66/304); it is Joseph who is listed on the 1877 plat of the City, but George who is listed on the 1887 City Directory. Francis Neal Parke took title from Mary Neal Parke on January 5, 1920 (135/259); Parke was a prominent judge. His executors, George J. Parke and Ralph G. Hoffman (Will 17/89) sold this and the neighboring lot to the vestry of the Parish of Ascension for \$32,000.00 on January 17, 1956 (261/563); the Church owns the building today and built the labyrinth of offices to the rear, happily not altering the building's superb principal facade.

44 0/0



1

1

79

(A)

~~111~~

J-2

Carr 471

23 N. Court St.

Bennett - Parke House

Inventory Sec. 'J'

~~P-47~~

11697



LXXA

(471)

~~80~~  
79

11470

P. 513



CANN 471

22 N. Court St. Westminster

E. Jacode

5/77 C. Weech