

COURT SQUARE

COURT & WILLIS STREET

Court Square, which forms the intersection of Willis and Center Streets in Westminster, consists of the Carroll Court House (MHT No.), a National Register Property, and the surround buildings, buildings which house places of worship, places of work, and places of residence.

Approached from the south, from East Main Street down Court Street (which leads into the center of Court House), Court Square provides one of the area's great vistas. As originally laid out by Isaac Shriver in the 1830's, this scene would have been one of baroque splendor, as Court Street would have been bordered by the Colonnades of the Main Court Inn to the east, and by the "Lawyers Row" to the west (MHT No.). The Main Court Inn was destroyed and its site is now occupied by a gas station, but enough of the flavor is still present. Crossing Winters Alley, while approaching the Court House is a group of buildings that date from the 1840's (the Ascension Episcopal Church) and all through the later 19th century. The flank to the east of the Court House present a catalog of building styles in the City, from the simple three bay "Wampler House" to the high style exhuberance of the Roberts-Wood House. Homes along the north, along Willis Street, are fine examples of turn of this century upper middle class dwellings. The weakest spot on the square recently, is the square's west edge. Here formerly stood the battled-over Allender House, (destroyed July, 1977); the fate of the site is still uncertain.

Aesthetically, at least before the removal of the Allender House, this square was both unified and diverse. The square had perhaps the richest diversity of building styles in the City, yet the excellence in which each individual pile was executed made for a unity of quality, rather than a unity of form. Thus one's eye is not jarred as one casts glances at a grey fieldstone Gothic Church, a white plastered classic Revival Courthouse, a Second Empire residence, or a towered Italian residence now office building.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Court Square

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Court & Willis Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Carroll

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" 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

Mixed

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

DNA

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Westminster Bicentennial Celebration

DATE

October, 1964

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
 SURVEY RECORDS

Historical Society of Carroll County

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

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"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Court Square, which forms the intersection of Willis and Center Streets in Westminster, consists of the Carroll Court House (MHT No. 558), a National Register Property, and the surround buildings, buildings which house places of worship, places of work, and places of residence.

Approached from the south, from East Main Street down Court Street (which leads into the center of Court House), Court Square provides one of the area's great vistas. As originally laid out by Isaac Shriver in the 1830's, this scene would have been one of baroque splendor, as Court Street would have been bordered by the Colonnades of the Main Court Inn to the east, and by the "Lawyers Row" to the west (MHT No. 328). The Main Court Inn was destroyed and its site is now occupied by a gas station, but enough of the flavor is still present. Crossing Winters Alley, while approaching the Court House, is a group of buildings that date from the 1840's (the Ascension Episcopal Church) and all through the later 19th century. The flank to the east of the Court House present a cataloge of building styles in the City, from the simple three bay "Wampler House" to the high style exhuberance of the Roberts-Wood House. Homes along the north, along Willis Street, are fine examples of turn of this century upper middle class dwellings. The weakest spot on the square recently, is the square's west edge. Here formerly stood the battled-over Allender House, (destroyed July, 1977); the fate of the site is still uncertain.

Perhaps the most interesting buildings on the square besides the Court House itself, are those buildings built by the Episcopal Church along the square's southern edge. Here are located the Ascension Episcopal Church itself (architect Robert Carry Long), the former Rectory (MHT No. 328), and the former Chapel (MHT No. 400). These three buildings in their high style reveal the importance of the church on local affairs, despite its relatively small congregation. The gothic spikes of this group of buildings contrast with the French curves of the neighboring Roberts-Wood house, with the simple vernacular styles of most of the residences, and with the local classicism of the Court House itself.

(For a more complete description of these buildings, see there respective forms as indicated.)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

CARR-479

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1936-Present BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

If Westminster has a nucleus, an area which controlled the early growth of the City, it must surely be the Court House Square. Laid out by Isaac Shriver, a local merchant whose store stood at the corner of Main and Court Streets, it was obviously intended to be the town's center, and it probably still is. Here maybe found the Seat of County Government and jurisprudence, the compound of Westminster's Ascension Episcopal Church, as well as noble homes. From the beginning, as soon as the square was laid out, it became bounded by (showplace) homes and is still felt a desirable place to live. This wealth of important homes doubtless reflect the importance of the square itself, and makes a fine balance to the more relaxed avra of City's other square, Belle Grove Square (q.v.).

Aesthetically, at least before the removal of the Allender House, this square was both unified and diverse. The square had perhaps the richest diversity of building styles in the City, yet the excellence in which each individual pile was executed made for a unity of quality, rather than a unity of form. Thus one's eye is not jarred as one casts glances at a grey fieldstone Gothic Church, a white plastered classic Revival Courthouse, a Second Empire residence, or a towered Italian residence now office building.

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 of land beginning at Winter's Alley and running down Court Street, around both sides of the County Court House, to Willis Street.

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

August, 1977

ORGANIZATION

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Westminster

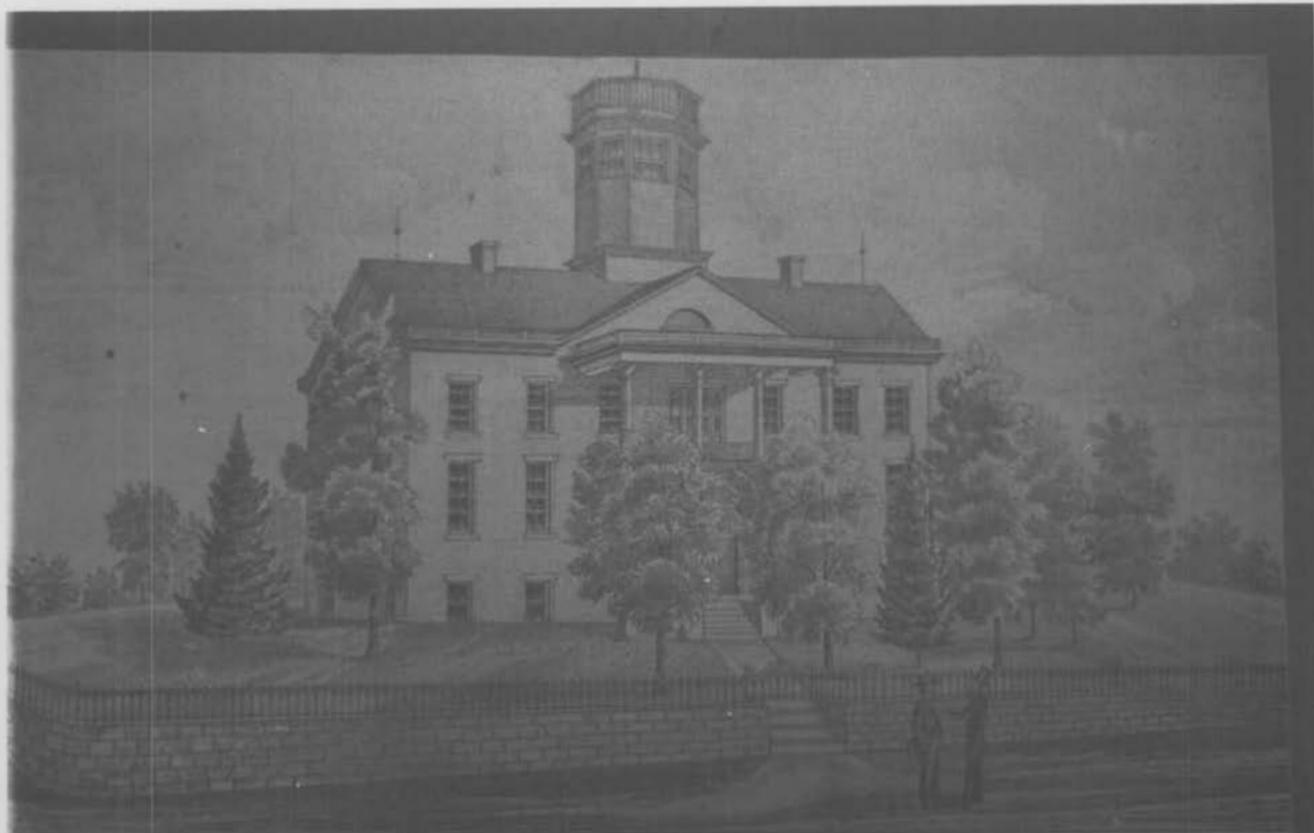
STATE

Maryland 21157

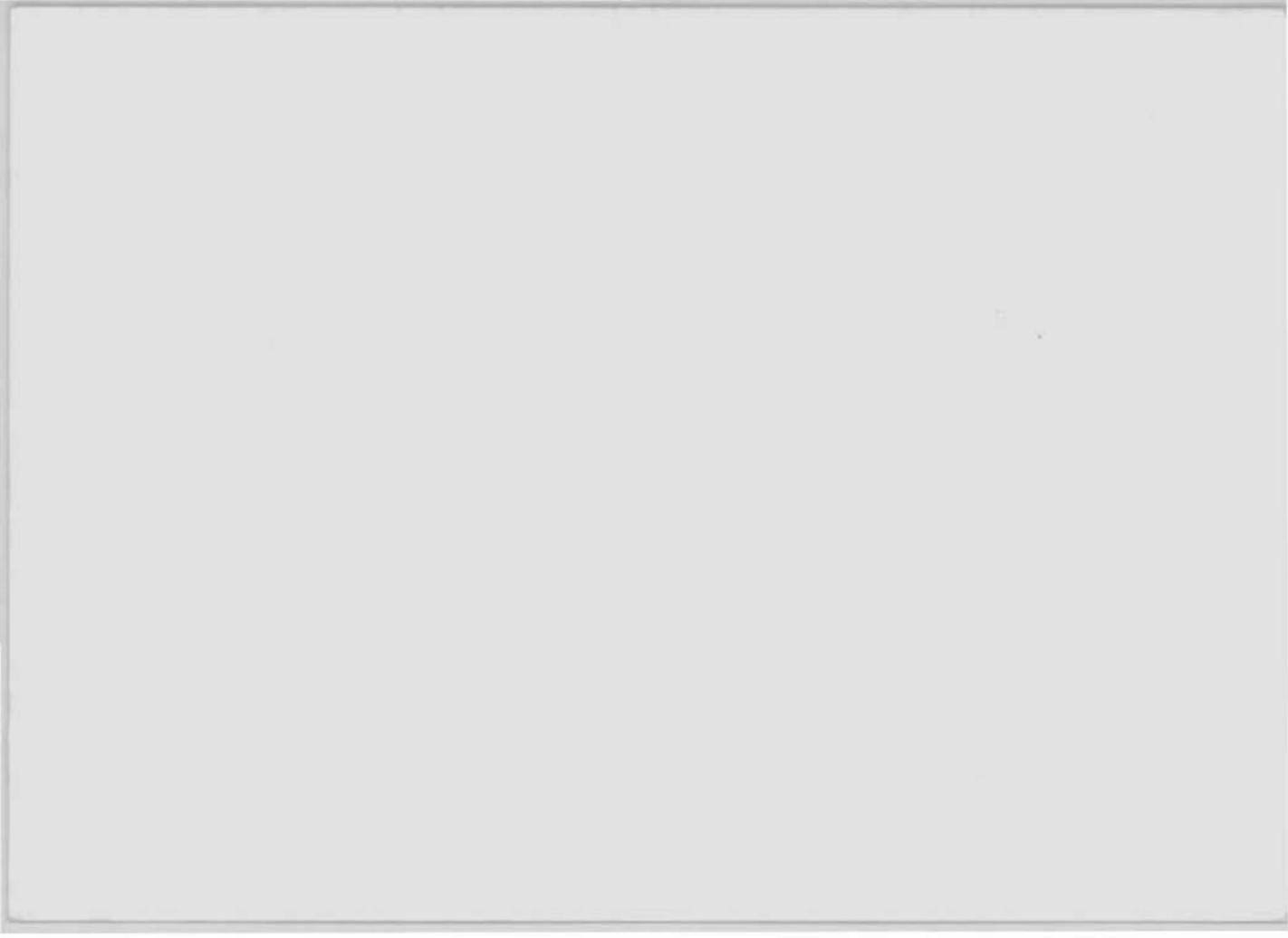
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

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



CHARLES COUNTY COURT HOUSE OF 1824





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Court Square



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