

CITY HALL  
LONGWELL AVENUE

Any building used as the City offices would be worthy of note for that reason alone. However, the Westminster City Hall, it is safe to say, is, for a variety of reasons, arguably one of the two or three most important buildings in the City, and has been since it was built in 1842. As a fine sample of an early 19th century Pennsylvania farmhouse, it would be notable for no other reason but its architecture. Its fine Rinehart mantels, and wealth of other details, all indicate the strivings of an educated mind to create a thing of beauty. In this instance, the creator was one of the key figures in Westminster's indeed of Carroll County's history, John K. Longwell.

According to J. Thomas Scharf, in his 1882 History of Western Maryland, there was "no man (who) has been more closely identified with the financial, political, and material history of Carroll County than Col. John K. Longwell."

Longwell moved to Westminster in 1833 and established a newspaper hauling, as its prime editorial function, the creation of Carroll County with Westminster as its Seat. Among his elected or appointed offices were: member of the 1867 State Constitutional Convention, County Commissioner, another of the charter of the Western Maryland Railroad, director of Union National Bank, president of the Baltimore and Reisterstown Turnp

The City purchased the estate, "Emerald Hill" in 1939 and tastefully adapted the residence into the home of city offices, which function the building still performs.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CARD # 534

DATE = OCTOBER 1964

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Emerald Hill

AND/OR COMMON

City Hall

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Longwell Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Carroll

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" 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 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 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 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

City of Westminster

Telephone #: 848-9000

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

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 #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

**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**

"Emerald Hill", or City Hall, sits on a rise overlooking the City of Westminster between Longwell Avenue and Locust Street. It faces south and is located about 200 yards north of East Main Street in that City.

Built as a private residence, and used for that purpose for over 100 years, the house has, for the past 35 years, been adapted to City offices, happily adapted, as the efforts were sympathetic in retaining the air of elegance intended by the builder. In fact, if a turn-of-this-century photograph is to be relied on, the building is in rather better condition now than it was in the last years of its private use.

Basically the building is a five-bay wide central hall double pile thus combining two of the favorite local building features, that is, the Pennsylvania farmhouse with heavy tinges of Georgian influence. The principal facade radiates about a central axis. This axis consists of ground floor double doors flanked by delicate side lights and topped by a transom. A similar arrangement exists above on the second floor. But the door there is a restoration, as the old photograph reveals that during the late 19th century, a cubic, shed-roofed addition jutted out here on the second floor, probably containing an up-to-date bathroom addition. About this axis, on the ground and second stories, are, on either side, double hung sash windows paned six-over-six. The windows are flanked by green louvered shutters. Three pedimental capped dormer windows are regularly placed out of the slate roof on the principal facade.

The west and east sides probably originally had one 6/6 window placed on each floor towards the extreme ends of the facade. Certain mild alterations have taken place, especially on the western facade. Formalism is heightened by a one story flat roof porch which surrounds the house on these three sides. The porch is supported by slender Doric columns, with paired columns to define the entrance; the ground story door is approached through these columns and across this porch by means of a single flight of steps.

Originally the building had a U-shape created by units built to the rear of the building. These units are two-bay-by-two-bay two-story gable roofed piles. Windows in these U-creating sections are treated similarly to those on the main section. Probably of later date is the two story shed-roofed four-bay long unit which connects these two rear sections. A second bay from the east on the ground floor is now an entrance and consists of a glass door enframed by unfluted pilasters and topped by a pyramidal pediment. The third bay from the east on both floors is a small rectangular bathroom window. The other five bays in this hyphen are 8/8 windows.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES                      1842                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT                      John K. Longwell

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Any building used as the City offices would be worthy of note for that reason alone. However, the Westminster City Hall, it is safe to say, is, for a variety of reasons, arguably one of the two or three most important buildings in the City, and has been since it was built in 1842. As a fine sample of an early 19th century Pennsylvania farmhouse, it would be notable for no other reason but its architecture. Its fine Rinehart mantels, and wealth of other details, all indicate the strivings of an educated mind to create a thing of beauty. In this instance, the creator was one of the key figures in Westminster's indeed of Carroll County's history, John K. Longwell.

J. Thomas Scharf, in his 1882 History of Western Maryland, devotes several paragraphs to Longwell. Scharf notes,

In the past half century no man has been more closely identified with the financial, political, and material history of Carroll County than Colonel John K. Longwell. He was born in Gettysburg on October 19, 1810...His... ancestors at a very early period immigrated from the north of Ireland and settled in Pennsylvania. His mother was of Hollandish Extraction and from a race known for their thrift and rare domestic qualities...In 1832 he moved to Taneytown, of this County, and established the Recorder, which were all published for a year or two. He printed this paper for about a year, and then in the spring of 1833 came to Westminster and established the Carrolltonian. This journal was chiefly devoted to the interests of the formation of a new County with a County Seat of Westminster. The first issue appeared June 25, 1833, and even the opponents of the measure acknowledged the zeal, ability, and fidelity with which it was conducted, until in four years afterwards the efforts of its editor were crowned with success.

A c. 1945 newspaper article explains how Longwell lobbied for the creation of a County; "in every issue of his paper there was a mention of the proposed partition, of the meetings being held throughout the area regarding the new County, and some strong inappealing and editorials on the subject." He edited, published, and was associated with this paper for about 18 years, which was finally merged into the American Sentinel.

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 lot of approximately 3 acres bordered by City Parking Lot, Longwell Avenue and, Locust Street in Westminster.

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

December

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Westminster

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

Brick chimneys rise flush with the rear walls of the rear sections at the gable roofs' peaks. Similar chimneys, but much broader, are to be found at the ends of the main section. These main-section chimneys rise from fireplaces which are graced twice by marble mantels attributed to the great 19th century sculptor, William Rinehart. In plan, the principal building consists of a central hall and (originally) twin double-parlors. Since becoming City offices, the ground story has been divided to accomodate better the various City functions. These new doors, however, try to match the old in trim and panelling. To the rear is a very formal garden laid out within a boxwood border; the garden was a gift of a former Mayor; otherwise the tree-shaded grounds are relaxed, parklike, and English.

#81.2

He was married in 1840 to the youngest daughter of Major John McCaleb of Taneytown.

(Longwell) was elected as state senator in 1850 and served four years. In 1867 he was elected one of the delegates of the constitutional convention, and assisted in the framing of the organic laws of Maryland. In 1871 he was again chosen state senator for a term of four years. He was prevailed upon to accept the nomination for County Commissioner-the most important office in the state to the farmers, businessmen, and tax payers, and was triumphantly elected and made president of the board. He was the author of the charter of the Western Maryland Railroad, and secured its passage by the Legislature, and when this railroad was put under contract he was one of its board of directors, and is now (1882) a member of the board. He became a director in the Westminster Bank (now Union National) and has been the president for 25 years. Since 1858 he has been the president of the Baltimore and Reisterstown Turnpike, a road built in 1805 and for many years the great national thoroughfare from Baltimore to Pittsburgh for travel and freight. At the centennial celebration of July 4, 1876, in Westminster, he prepared and read the history of the County, with which no person in its limits is more familiar. Colonel Longwell contributed more than any single individual in the organization of Carroll County, and since its erection has been constantly associated with its progress, and the many public and fiduciary positions conferred upon him show the esteem in which he is held by the community. Even allowing for mid-Victorian rhetoric, this is clearly a remarkable man.

After Longwell married in 1840, he purchased a tract called "Resurvey of Bedford" from Charles W. Karthause. When Longwell finished the home which he began in 1842, he named it "Emerald Hill". Scharf accorded it to be "one of the most elegant private residences in the county." (Scharf, volume 2, pages 953, 954.) Longwell lived at "Emerald Hill" until his death in 1896.

Longwell was also interested in education. He helped found the Westminster English and Mathematical Academy in 1836, the West End Academy 1858, and the Westminster Female Institute. He was elected to the first board of trustees of Western Maryland College and served many years in that capacity. From 1868 to 1870 he was a member of the County Board of School Commissioners.

During his later years he and his wife began selling off lots at the far end (east end) of his estate, near Court House Square. These lots were the beginnings of what is today Willis Street. In 1907, after the death of Sallie K. Longwell (his heir) her executor, Dr. J. W. Hering, continued the development of the estate and the creation, therefrom, of the lots Westward from Court Square. At a public auction on October 27, 1908, Hering sold all "the mansion house property (so called) comprising seven acres and 20 square perches of land, being a well-wooded lawn, and upon which is situated on commodious - MANSION HOUSE of the late Colonel John K. Longwell, with out-buildings, within three minutes walk of the Main Street, and five minutes from the Western Maryland Depoe" (from the circular on the auction). Longwell Avenue, Locust Street, Willis Street, North Street, parts of Center Street and West Street (all present thoroughfares) were laid out at this time to give frontage to these lots.

The 1940's newspaper article notes "where the municipal parking lot is now located, was swamp land, and in the vicinity of the present location of the B. F. Shriver company was an ice house along town branch, and close by toward the east along the stream, was a pond." Further, it goes on to note "that driving down from Main Street towards Longwell's Lane, one would come to a gate which led into Colonel's private drive up to his "Mansion House" which was it customary for him to call his home. The drive did not follow Longwell Avenue as we now know it, but went off towards the west over a little wooden bridge and up to the left of the house and around to his stables." When the house was sold at auction, it was purchased by George W. Albaugh, probably the most prominent late-Victorian/Edwardian real estate entrepreneur in the City.

In 1939 the City of Westminster purchased the house and tract surrounding it from the Albaugh Estate for \$12,000. During the administration of Mayor Frank A. Myers, it was decided to move the City's offices to the recently acquired building (according to a 1940 newspaper article). The Hanover Evening Sun, issue of August 17, 1942 in its article on the official opening of the Westminster City Hall, notes then-Mayor Joseph L. Mathias' tribute to "Frank A. Myers for his act of leadership and planning and remodelling the building. It is interesting to note that the City was established 140 years before it managed to secure this building, its first permanent home." An article in the Baltimore Sun of the same date notes that City Hall "was planned to be and actually now is the home of the civic center which by no means is yet complete and which is being advanced by certain municipal boosters including progressive Mayor Joseph L. Mathias, Sr. who was elected last May.

"At one side of the City Hall is a parking lot which can accomodate 800 automobiles; across the street is an armory and a municipal playground. Only a few steps away is the post office. Up the hill a piece is the high school. Behind City Hall, centered in two acres of lawn, grass and shrubbery, is a green hill which will be utilized by the municipality. And round about are fine substantial residences of as substantial citizens."

Thus the fine home of Colonel John K. Longwell, the most prominent man in the creation of Carroll County and in the affairs of the County during its first 50 years, passed to George W. Albaugh, the City's leading early 20th century real estate owner and developer, and eventually into the hands of the Westminster City Government. Since the house built in 1842, it has been a home or offices of the leading figures of the day. Significantly, it has performed these roles without giving up any of its dignity or beauty.

70% X



LONGWELL MANSION, WITH WELL WOODED LAWN OF SEVEN ACRES.

62

70%

p.# 43

L III

Longwell Mansion

1907

5-18

13070 & 68%



K130%

K68%—

68%—K

130%

# 63

~~1300~~  
%

History - P. #43

LIII

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 Carr 545 (J-19)  
 Inventory Section 5  
 (P. 52)

08%



CARR-545



CARR-545

457/0



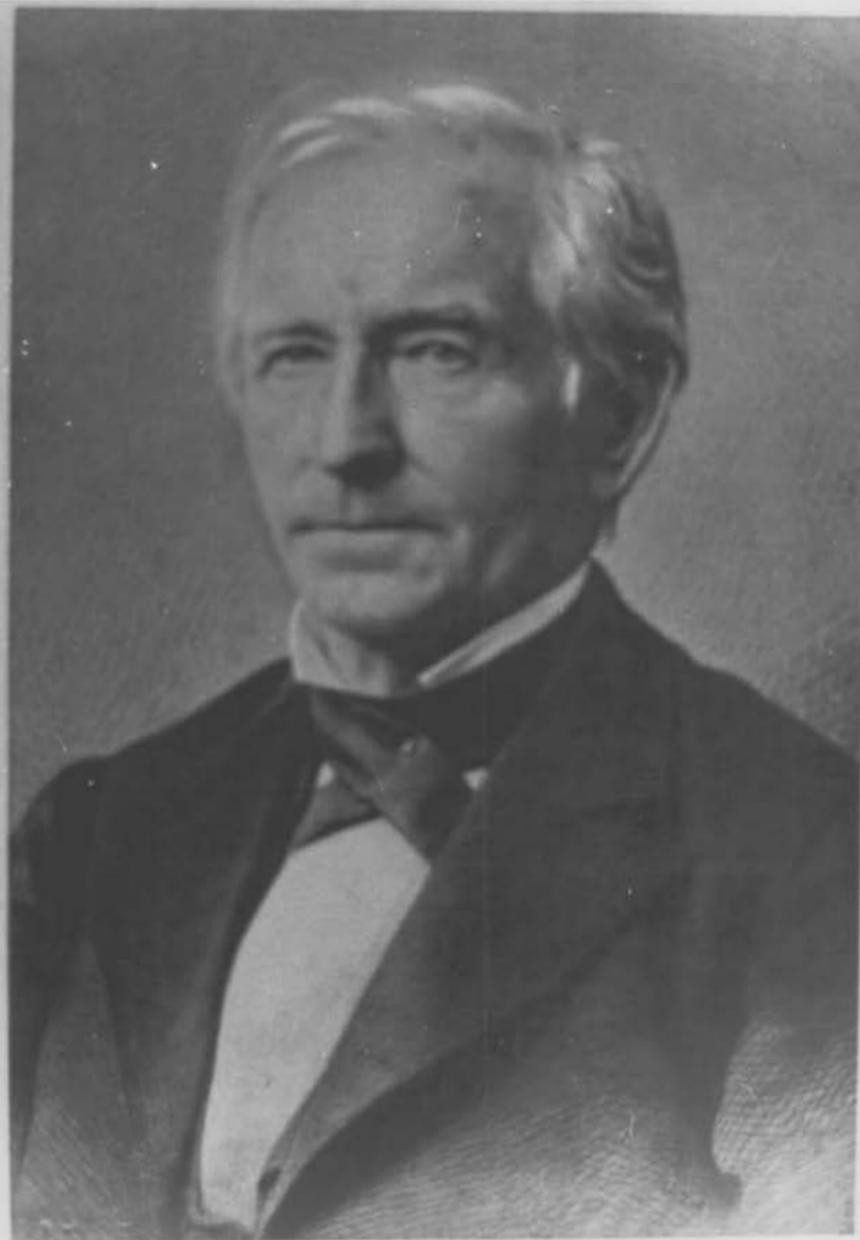
64

45% p. #73

TU

~~Found~~ Mantel in <sup>rest</sup> several floors <sup>front west</sup> ~~west~~  
 room of Loggell mansion - "Emerald Hill".  
~~The mantel here~~

5, 1955



575

61

Also see  
elotini in book

LII

John K. Congwell

Photo Courtesy Historical  
Society of Carroll County.