

Rev. prof

K-310

Nicholson House  
Queen St., Chestertown  
c. 1788

John Nicholson, son of Joseph Nicholson, Sr., had been active in the War for Independence, rising to the position of Captain in the Continental Navy. After the war, upon his return to Kent County, he became Register of Wills and resided in Chestertown before moving to Baltimore County in 1801.

In 1788 John Nicholson purchased part of lot No. 25 from Thomas Smyth for the sum of @137 and soon thereafter improved it with the construction of a large townhouse.<sup>1</sup> Like its nearby neighbor the Geddes-Piper House, the house was of a tall design allowing for room in the basement for the kitchen. The floor plan was also the same as the Geddes-Piper House, only in reverse, and on a larger scale.

For the three bay facade, Nicholson chose common bond, with cove water table. It lacked a belt course and decorative window heads above the large 12/12 sash. The single decorative feature of the facade was its cornice. Molded brick was used to imitate crown and fascia, beneath which was a row of brick dentils, supported on a cove molding. Short cornice returns wrapped around the gables. The Nicholson House and its neighbor the Chambers Tenement possessed the earliest examples of brick cornice work in Kent County. They are the only such examples to use molded brick.

Its interior was well finished with baseboard, chair rail and cornice. The two parlors have dentil cornices similar to rooms in River House, Dunn

House and the Buck-Chambers House. Many of the window and door openings are trimmed with double crossetted trim.

After John Nicholson departed for Baltimore County, he sold his residence to Margaret Forman, mother of Elizabeth Chambers her neighbor, and widow of Ezekial Forman, earlier Clerk of the Court.<sup>2</sup> In 1802, Mrs. Forman sold twenty five feet of her lot to her neighbor James Houston and in 1808 she sold another portion to her son-in-law Benjamin Chambers for a stable.<sup>3</sup> At that time she was living in Cecil County. When she finally sold her house in 1820, she was in fact living in Adams County, Mississippi. The following year Mrs. Forman's granddaughter, Elizabeth Chambers Wickes repurchased the house and resided there with her husband Joseph until they acquired the Wickes House in 1828.<sup>4</sup>

It was possibly during the Wickes tenure that the facade was improved by the addition of wooden lintels with corner blocks over all of the openings. Inside, large double doors between parlors were installed, creating, when needed, a huge double room.

In 1841 the lot was owned and occupied by Joseph N. Gordon, Clerk of the Court. In the Tax Assessment, the house and lot were assessed for \$1,600.

On the Map of Chestertown in the 1877 Atlas, the house is drawn without additions. Apparently, it was not until the 1890's that the two story brick wing with matching brick cornice was constructed off the back of the stairhall. The wing included a dining room and kitchen which moved the

location of the latter from the basement. Charles T. and Mary Westcott were responsible for the addition. The addition was constructed with a round corner and a cornia to match the original section.

Since 1900, the house has seen nine owners. Many alterations have been made during this century, most of which have occurred during the past ten years.

1. Land Records, Lib. EF 7, fol. 286.
2. Land Records, Lib. TW 2, fol. 97.
3. Land Records, Lib. BC 5, fol. 374.
4. Land Records, Lib. WS 3, fol. 425.

K-30

Nicholson House  
 Chestertown  
 private

c. 1788:1890's

The Nicholson house is one of a cluster of <sup>three</sup> ~~three~~ similar and contemporary brick Federal style townhouses on lower Queen Street. John Nicholson had the house built soon after 1788, the year he bought the property from local merchant/shipbuilder, Thomas Smyth. Of particular interest is ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> late nineteenth century Victorian wing with its curved front corner.

John Nicholson is remembered for his important career in the Continental Navy.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

*Nicolson House**K-310*

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

*111 Queen Street*

CITY, TOWN

*Chestertown*

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

*First*

STATE

*Maryland*

COUNTY

*Kent***3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

*Harold W. Brooks*

Telephone #: -

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

*Office of the County Clerk*Liber #: *EHP 68*Folio #: *368*

STREET &amp; NUMBER

*Kent County Court House*

CITY, TOWN

*Chestertown*

STATE

*Md.***6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

*none*

DATE

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

K-310

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	
<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

111 Queen Street is located on the southeast side of Queen Street between Church and High Streets in Chestertown. It is situated on a part of Town Lot 25. Its main wing is similar to those of 113 and 109, its neighbors on either side.

It is a 2½-story, 3-bays square brick Federal style town house with a steep "A" roof and two gabled dormers. The entrance is in the northeast (left) bay. There is a molded water table across the front. The brickwork is laid in common bond and has been whitewashed.

The door sits on a high brick stoop with an iron rail across the front and is ascended from either side up five brick steps. The door is 6-paneled and is framed by plain narrow pilasters and full length louvered shutters. Above is a 4-pane transom and a large wood lintel.

All five windows on the facade are double hung sash 12/12 with large wood lintels that match that over the door. The sills are wood. All have louvered shutters.

The main cornice is shallow and has dentils. There is a very short return along the gable ends. The roof does not overhang the gables. It is covered with composition shingles. There is one large chimney, flush with the southeast (right) gable end.

There are three windows on the first and second stories of the southeast gable end and all are 9/9; the center windows are set slightly off-center to the front. The first story windows have flat brick arches. All have louvered shutters. There is a small windows in the gable.

There is one 12/12 window in the front bay of the northeast gable end, two on the second story, and two small 6/6 attic windows set in the gable.

A 2-story wing, one bay wide by two bays deep, with a hipped roof has been built out from the rear bay of the northeast gable end; it overlaps the rear bay and extends on past the rear wall of the house. Its outside front corner has been curved. The cornice of the wing repeats the dentils on the main structure's cornice. There are paired 1/1 sash windows with flat brick arches on each story of the facade and two 2/2 sash windows on each story of the side elevation.

There are two frame porches added to the rear of the main section.



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Attached.

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

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Robert Neill Historic Site Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust / Town of Chestertown

DATE

May, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

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

The following is taken from The Kent Shoreman, Vol. 4, #7, Oct. 1968, Kent County, Md. "The Nicholson-Deringer House" by Maynard P. White.

Colonel Joseph Nicholson, father of James, Samuel and John, was one of the first Visitors and Governors of Washington College, helped Rev. Dr. William Smith begin the Kent Free School, and in 1774 became a member of the Kent County Committee of Correspondence. He was also a member of the extra-legal revolutionary assembly that sat at Annapolis from 1774 to 1777 when the first state constitution went into effect. Joseph Nicholson also served locally as High Sheriff of Kent County.

The eldest son, James, <sup>(1736-1804)</sup> as Captain, was head of the Maryland Navy. He was given command of the largest armed vessel the DEFENCE and in October 1776 became Head of the Continental Navy a position he held until it was disbanded in 1785. Following the war he went to New York and there took an active part in politics.

Samuel Nicholson was Captain of the armed cutter DOLPHIN, and later the frigate DEANE. He had the longest command, being aboard from 1776 to 1782, except when temporarily relieved by his brother, John in 1780. After the war he moved to Boston, and later entered the U.S. Navy as second ranking officer in 1794. The frigate CONSTITUTION was built under his supervision and he was its first skipper.

John Nicholson was also born in Chestertown in 1756. It is thought he attended the Kent Free School and later was educated in England. He was commissioned a Lieutenant and master of the DEFENCE while his brother, James, stayed at Fells Point to supervise the construction of the frigate VIRGINIA. In Oct. 1776 as a Lieutenant in the Continental Navy he was appointed in charge of the frigate WASHINGTON. He rose rapidly in the Navy as was promoted in November 1776 to Captain was commander of the Continental sloop HORNET. John was captured by the British and held prisoner in England. He was either exchanged, escaped or "bought" as in 1780 he was again at sea. After the war John returned to Chestertown and was a merchant, Register of Wills and a member of the Chestertown Committee of Public Safety. About 1800 he moved to Baltimore County where he died in 1844.

## Verbal Boundary Description for 111 Queen Street

I. Part of Town Lot 25, having a frontage of  $54\frac{1}{2}$  feet on Queen Street and a depth of 123 feet southeasterly from Queen Street, together with the stable lot at the back of said lot, having a length of 16 feet and a breadth of  $14\frac{1}{2}$  feet, with a right of way to and from said stable lot through and over the 12 foot alley to Queen Street.

II. All that lot of ground adjoining the above named stable lot on the east side of the 12 foot alley, beginning 102 feet, 8 inches southeasterly from the south corner of the brick residence on the above lot and running southeasterly along said alley 19 feet, 7 inches to the rectory stable lot, thence northeasterly at right angles 22 feet 10 inches, thence at right angles southwesterly 22 feet, 10 inches to the beginning with the common use of the way over said 12 foot alley.

III. All that parcel of ground adjoining II and described as follows: Running in a southeasterly direction along said 12 foot right of way 39 feet to the property owned by J.B. Metcalfe; thence northeasterly along said Metcalfe line 41 feet, 4 inches; thence in a northwesterly direction 17 feet to a point; thence in a northeasterly direction  $3\frac{1}{4}$  feet, 8 inches to the property of or formerly of Dr. H.G. Simpers, thence with the said Simpers land  $61\frac{1}{2}$  feet; thence in a southeasterly direction 16 feet to Lot II above; thence with the line of Lot II to the point of beginning.

Title Search on 111 Queen Street

George William Forrester, Jr. to Emory Sudler DD 4 25 (1772) \$70  
(Lot 25 from Lot 34 line to 113 Queen Street)

Emory Sudler to Thomas Smyth EF 6 487 (1785) \$2998  
(Northeast half of Lot 34, except for small piece fronting on High Street and bordering on Southeast half of 34, and Lot 25 from Lot 34 line to 113 Queen Street) *26 feet*

Thomas Smyth to John Nicholson EF 7 286 (1788) \$137  
(~~Lot~~ Piece of Lot 25 from 113 Queen Street line to ally) - This deed includes note that 113 Queen Street has been built.

John Nicholson to Margaret Forman TW 2 97 (1801) \$325

Margaret Forman to Thomas Worrell WS 3 238 (1820) \$1250  
(She sold off 25 foot piece to James Houston of 113 Queen adjoining in 1802)

Thomas Worrell to Elizabeth Wickes WS 3 425 (1821) \$1800

Joseph and Elizabeth Wickes to Edward Freeman JNG 2 498 (1831) \$2500

~~Charles de Ridgely~~

Etc.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

1. STATE COUNTY TOWN VICINITY STREET NO.	<b>Maryland</b> <b>Kent County</b> <b>Chestertown</b> <b>111 Queen Street,</b>	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY	K - <del>44</del>
ORIGINAL OWNER ORIGINAL USE PRESENT OWNER PRESENT USE WALL CONSTRUCTION NO. OF STORIES	<b>John Nicholson</b> <b>Dwelling</b> <b>CAPT &amp; Mrs. H. Deringer,</b> <b>Dwelling</b> <b>Brick</b> <b>2-1/2</b>	2. NAME	<b>111 Queen Street</b>
		DATE OR PERIOD	<b>1788</b>
		STYLE	<b>Federal - townhouse</b>
		ARCHITECT	
		BUILDER	<b>John Nicholson</b>
		3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE	

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION

OPEN TO PUBLIC NO

Number 111 Queen Street is a 2-1/2 story brick house, three bays long and two rooms deep. The entrance door is on the east end of the facade and has a panelled soffit, a transom and louvered shutters. It stands on a high basement and there is a molded water-table. The brick on the facade is laid in Flemish bond. The dentil cornice is of molded brick and returns upon itself at the corners. The windows have applied wood lintels and 12 over 12 sash. There are louvered shutters throughout. On the west gable is the large narrow chimney which serves the two fireplaces on each floor. There are two pedimented dormers on the roof with 6 over 6 sash.

On the east corner of the house a nineteenth century wing was attached which has one rounded corner. Here a cornice, similar to that of the main house, has been used. This wing is now used as the dining room. The interior is finished with trim of the period.

Condition: Good

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE    Endangered    Interior    Exterior

6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

1 B&W  
1 Color

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)  
INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER

**Michael O. Bourne**  
**Maryland Historical Trust**

**February 8, 1968**

DATE OF RECORD

K-310

N

CEMETERY

VITA FOODS

FOODS (NEW) FARM

COUNTY

RAILROAD

KENT

PENNSYLVANIA

LYNCHBURG

POPLAR RD.

STREET

KENT

STREET

MILL

STREET

CROSS

TWILLEY

LANE

QUEEN

WATER

CANNON

HIGH

PARK COURT ST.

CHURCH ST.

STREET

AVENUE

MAPLE

RIVERSIDE TERRACE

STREET

PROSPECT

STREET

STREET

SPRING ST.

ROW

STREET

MT. VERNON

WASHINGTON U.S. 213

PHILOSOPHERS

TERRACE

KENT

BYFORD DRIVE

WALDO DRIVE

DAVID DRIVE

BARROLL DRIVE

BYFORD COURT

COLLEGE

CAMPUS

COLLEGE

AVENUE

AVENUE

GREENWOOD VALLEY STREET

PINE

STREET

SCHOOL STREET

SCHOOL AVENUE

STREET

MORRIS

MORGNEC

STREET

ELM STREET

KENT

Chester

River

U.S. 213

K-30



any idea of #s for houses here?

Chestertown



N.E.

direction

N. QUEEN STREET, CHESTERTOWN, MD

107 N. Queen St. K-338

109 N. Queen St. K-26

111 N. Queen St. - K-310

101 N. Queen St. K-340

103 N. Queen St. K-27

113 N. Queen St. - k 23

K-310  
Nicholson House  
111 Queen St.  
Chestertown  
Chestertown Quad.  
Kent County





K 310 Nicolson House

1/77 W + S



CHURCH ALLEY

SPEED  
LIMIT  
10

K 310 Nicolson House

111 Queen

1/77

W + N