

GREAT OAK MANOR HOUSE
Chestertown, Maryland
(1938-40)

Great Oak Manor House is five bays wide, two-and-one-half stories tall, and two rooms (4 bays) deep. North of the main house is a two-story, two-bay hyphen, and a two-story wing with a hipped roof that is four bays long & two wide and is set perpendicular to the main block. The entire building is Flemish bond brick and the roofs are covered with wooden shingles. Pairs of wide brick chimneys with mullioned faces and corbelled caps rise at the gable ends of the main house block. These chimneys intercept the brick curtains which finish the gable roof and are themselves connected by brick curtains.

The house is a Neo-classical building designed by the Maryland architect, Douglas Gordon Braik, about 1938. In 1940, Mr. Braik received the state award for superior architecture from the Maryland Society of Architects. The building bears a distinct resemblance to Maryland houses of the late 18th and early 19th century and can be considered a revival of that period. The workmanship of the brick walls and interior woodwork is outstanding, equalling that of many period houses. Interior rooms are spacious and well-proportioned.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Great Oak Manor House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Mouth of Fairlee Creek on

Fairlee Neck Road

1st

JIN 2/7/94

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Kent

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Donald E & Ruth Othoson

Telephone #: 301-778-3482

STREET & NUMBER

Rt. #2, Box 752

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21620

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent County Court House

Liber #: EHP 67

Folio #: 421

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

R-412

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	slightly	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Great Oak Manor House is located on a bluff overlooking the mouth of Fairlee Creek. The building is surrounded by lawns, formerly planted in formal gardens, and park-like woodlands. The long, curving entry driveway is surfaced in river run gravel and terminates in a circle at the front of the dwelling.

The main part of the house is five bays wide, two-and-one-half stories tall, and two rooms (4 bays) deep. North of the main house is a two-story, two-bay hyphen, and finally a two-story wing with a hipped roof that is four bays long & two wide and is set perpendicular to the main block. The entire building is Flemish bond brick and the roofs are covered with wooden shingles. Pairs of wide brick chimneys with mullioned faces and corbelled caps rise at the gable ends of the main house block. These chimneys intercept the brick curtains which finish the gable roof and are themselves connected by brick curtains. A fifth brick chimney projects from the center, rear part of the hip-roofed wing.

The main house has a central hall plan and the land entrance is emphasized by a square, flat-roofed bay which projects about 18" from the front facade. Its corners are emphasized by brick pilasters and it has the entry door on the first level and a large 6/6 sash window on the second. The architrave has a broken, scroll pediment with a pineapple centerpiece and fluted pilasters. The door is paneled.

Windows have 6 over 9 sash on the first floor and six over six on the second. The window trim is beaded on the inner edge and has a quarterround backband. There are three small dormers with 6 over 6 sash and segmentally arched roofs in each slope of the main house roof. Elsewhere in the building there are 6 over 6 sash windows.

In the large, central entrance hall is a curved stairway with slender turned balusters--two per step--and spiral design step bracketts. On the second level the

8 SIGNIFICANCE

K-412

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 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 1938-40 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Architect: Douglas G. Braik
Builder: Russell B. D'Oench, Esq.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Great Oak Manor House is a Neo-classical building designed by the Maryland architect, Douglas Gordon Braik, about 1938. In 1940, Mr. Braik received the state award for superior architecture from the Maryland Society of Architects. The building bears a distinct resemblance to Maryland houses of the late 18th and early 19th century* and can be considered a revival of that period. Interestingly, Mr. Braik freely reinterpreted design motifs of this period and details from the late Georgian to late Federal period with careful sense of proportion and balance, particularly in the interior woodwork. On the exterior, the entrance bay and the little dormers with their flat, curved roofs seem strangely out of proportion with the rest of the structure and give the facade a heaviness that it would not otherwise have.

The workmanship of the brick walls and interior woodwork is outstanding, equaling that of many period houses. Interior rooms are spacious and well-proportioned.

* See the Mitchell House, Tolchester (K-276).

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

K-412

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marsha L. Fritz, Survey Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Planning Commission

DATE

778-4600, ext.67

STREET & NUMBER

Court House

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

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

stair hall becomes a living hall.

A secondary hallway bisects the house laterally, allowing access to the bedrooms on the second floor and to a glass side porch and kitchen wing on the first.

At the intersection of the two major halls on the first floor is a handsome architrave with fielded-panel jambs; beyond it is the water front entry door which has a leaded glass transom and is overhung on the outside by an iron balcony. The library and dining room both have entrances into this narrow rear hallway. The architrave trim to the library has a lamp of knowledge, the doorway to the dining room a crab, and the doorway outside marine symbols. In the front of the house is the music room (adjacent the library) and a hunt room beyond the stair.

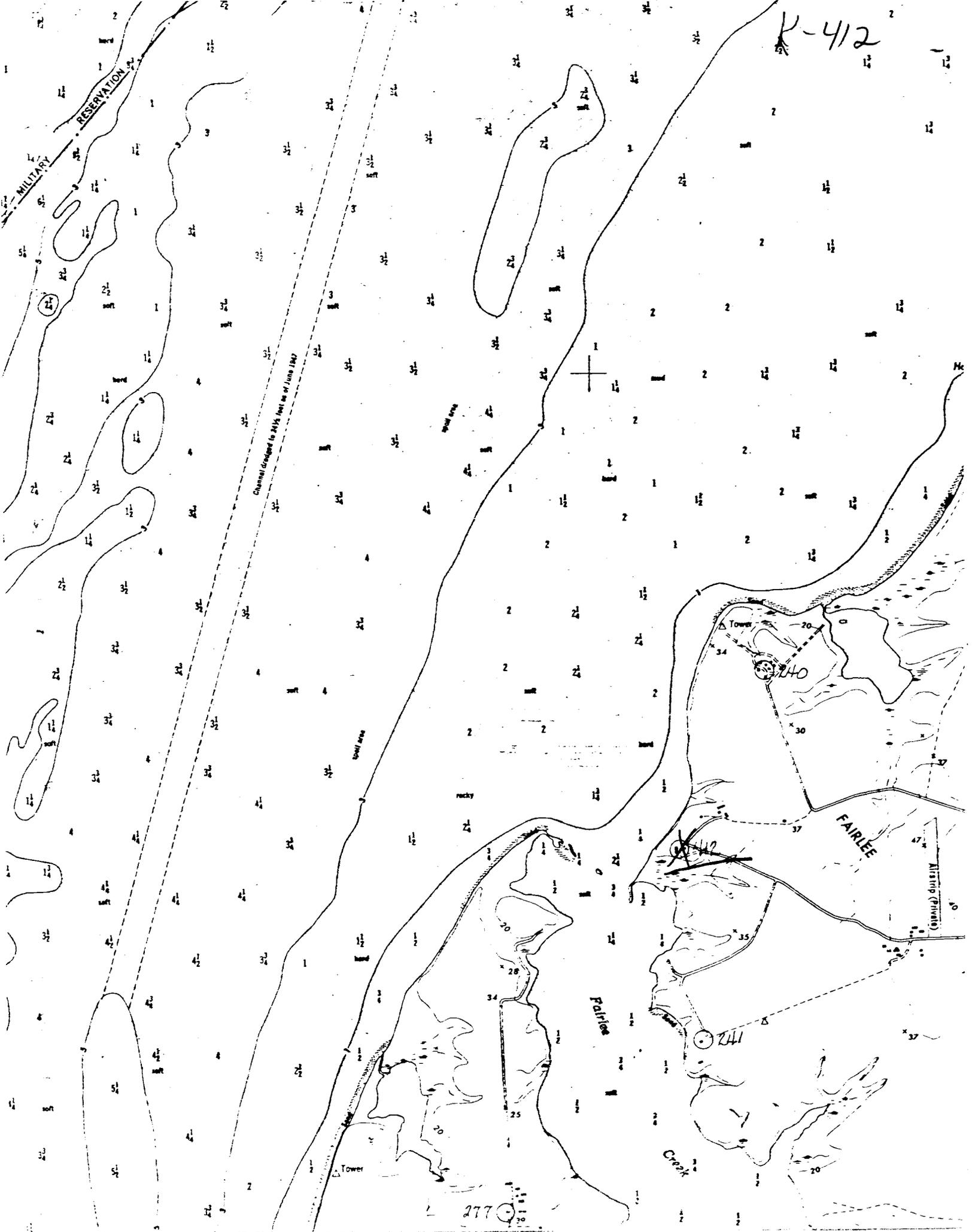
Downstairs rooms have mantles with paneled over mantles and molded shelves. Chairrails with reeded fascia are found in the downstairs rooms. Window and door trim have split fascia and moldings with Greek profiles. Major first floor rooms also have wooden cove cornices.

The kitchen and informal dining room are in the wing. These rooms are the only one to be substantially changed with alterations to windows, floors, and fireplaces.

Upstairs trim is simpler but chairrails are used in most rooms. Here as well as downstairs the mantles have relief carving on the frieze--a basket of flowers, a scene, a sailing ship.

The architect's plans called for symmetrical hyphens and wings, only the northern of which were constructed. Running east from the south wall of the hip-roofed wing is a brick wall with a wooden gate that is terminated by a well house with a pyramidal roof and finial. There were also formal gardens south of the house. The buildings of the estate originally included barns and a square frame bathing house which still stands on a point of land reaching into Fairlee harbour.

The building is well maintained and beautifully furnished.





K-412

Great Oak Manor House

View to West

Fairlee Creek

Kent County

J. Tyler Campbell
FREE-LANCE PHOTOGRAPHY
CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND

JAN 15 1980

M.L. Fritz

4/1980