

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Edgewater

and/or common Edgewater

2. Location

street & number East side Lawton Avenue, 1/6 mi. north of Rt. 20,
Gratitude not for publication

city, town Rock Hall vicinity of congressional district first

state Maryland county Kent

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Thomas J. Ryan, et. al., c/o Michael Joseph

street & number 6610 Pinidale Court, Falls Church telephone no.:

city, town Falls Church state and zip code Virginia 22041

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Court House liber EHP 51

street & number folio 28

city, town Chestertown state Maryland 21620

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-528

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This early 20th century former frame boarding house, located in a one-time resort community, has a 2-1/2 story, 5-bay main section with a full-width front porch, a tall and steep gable roof with two Victorian dormers on the approach side only, and a central hall plan with a dogleg stair. The large, ornate classical revival mantels in the parlor and dining room are Edgewater's most notable features. The offset, contemporaneous 2-story, frame, rear wing, houses the kitchen and one bedroom.

8. Significance

Survey No. K-528

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				recreation/tourism

Specific dates _____ **Builder/Architect** _____

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Used as a boarding house for many years (at least from the 1920's through the 1950's) by vacationers arriving primarily by the Gratitude steamboat or ferry whose wharves were nearby, and later by steamboat at Tolchester, Edgewater may have been built expressly to be a boarding house, one of at least four in the resort community of Gratitude. This is suggested by the second-story main section's small bedrooms, a characteristic of boarding houses. The house is a not quite successful attempt at the Colonial or Georgian, Revival style popular in Kent County circa 1900-1930. It appears somewhat ungainly on the exterior, with its unusually tall gable roof and Victorian returns and strangely placed, tall Victorian dormers. But no opportunity seems to have been missed to use such "Colonial" details as chamfers with lambs' tongues. The frequency with which they are used (also the case at Biscuit Hill, K-526, in its porches, and at the Reni House, K-527 , both of about the same period) causes one to wonder if this was a stock-in-trade of a local carpenter or carpenters, aside from reflecting owner preference. The most notable features of this house are the splendid mantels in the parlor and dining room, which would have been the public rooms of a boarding house. No expense seems to have been spared to include every possible element thought to have been "colonial" or classical: festoons, medallions, fluted columns, bead molding, secondary shelves, overmantels with mirrors, quatrefoils, "Ionian" columns, chamfers with lambs' tongues, etc. The grander parlor mantel measures 5 feet wide by 7 feet high.

The manner in which the contemporary rear wing was attached to the main section is unusual in Kent County but is seen in other Rock Hall-area houses of the period (particularly along Route 20). The wing is offset, protruding beyond the main section's rear corner, perhaps to provide additional light, another entry, and/or design interest.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.1 DESCRIPTION (continued)

BUILDING FORM AND MATERIAL

1. Size
Main Section: 2-1/2 stories; 5 bays wide, 2 bays (1room) deep
Wing A: (Kitchen)- lower 2 stories; 2 bays wide; 1 or 2 bays (1 room) deep. Wing is to the rear, at north end of east side of main section, offset beyond main section's north gable end.
2. Plan type (main section): central hall, one room deep
3. Roof type:
Main Section: gable, steep Wing: gable
4. Chimney(s): None at present; have been removed from each gable end of main section, but mantels remain.
5. Material/Walls
Main Section: Frame; lapped horizontal weatherboard with 5" exposure.
Wing A: Same
6. Material/Roofs
Main Section: wood shingles Wing A: asphalt shingles over wood shingles.
7. Material/Foundation
Main Section: brick piers only originally, now also with 1-brick-thick mortared brick infill
Wing A: brick piers with concrete block infill
8. Age: ca. 1900-1920. Wing contemporary with main section
9. Style: vernacular classical revival and vernacular Victorian elements (dormer shingling, roof returns, 2/2 windows, and others)

BUILDING ELEMENTS AND DETAILS

1. Doors
main entry: central bay, west (approach) side. Door has 1 large light over 6 small recessed panels (arranged 3/3), white porcelain knob; 3-light transom with etched patterned glass (in 2 lights); 3-light sidelights with colored stippled and wavy glass over 2 small recessed panels; transom bar-chamfered with lambs' tongues over door and sidelights.

secondary entries: 1) southeast bay, rear of Wing A; 4 lights (2/2) over 2 vertical panels; 2) rear of central hall to rear porch, same door; 3) south side of wing A, to rear porch. There appears to once have been a door in the Wing A offset, facing west (the street); there is now a window in this location, probably the one removed from the rear of wing A, where a new window is installed (siding evidence, door seen in this location in other Rock Hall area houses with similar rear wing offsets).

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.2 DESCRIPTION (continued)

2. Windows

Main Section: type: double-hung; lights: 2/2; details: Plain shutters: removed

3. Dormers

2 large, approach side only (also badly proportioned in relation to house, i.e. too large and unusually placed, over each outside bay). Gable roofs (90 degree), plain pilasters with flared piece added at base, double-hung sash with 2/2 lights, weatherboard cheeks, clipped-corner butt shingles in tympanum, bold roof returns of ca. 12-15" with box cornice, crown of cyma recta with fillets and smaller of same as bed molding.

4. Roof details

Main Section: Box cornice with ca. 30" returns, large cyma recta with fillets as crown and smaller of same as bed molding upon broad (ca. 8-10") frieze board.

Wing: same, but with no returns except on offset (northwest) corner, visible from street.

5. Porches

1) approach (west) side- 5 bays, now screened, low hipped roof with roll asphalt roofing, concrete floor and step on block foundation, large square posts with chamfered edges and lambs' tongues, bases probably removed when original wood flooring replaced with concrete and screening done. 2) rear of wing A-2 bay, shed roof, 2 posts chamfered (reused?), concrete floor. 3) in L at rear of main section and to south of wing A- 4/5 bays, upper half screened, lower half with lapped horizontal weatherboard, compound shed roof, concrete floor.

6. Color: current-grey with white trim Historic: not known

7. Other:

Doors on 2nd story still have room numbers. Shallow closets have been added. Second story of main section has two fairly small rooms each side of stair, the small size being typical of boarding houses of the period. Second story of wing added? Trim is different; access is through rear main section bedroom. Third story has two large rooms, closet; numbers on doors. Total of 6 bedrooms in main section, 1 in wing over kitchen (for proprietor's use?).

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

1. Plan type: central hall

2. Major stair: dogleg, open string, window at landing, 2 turned colonial revival balusters per pine tread; newel is large, simply turned and square (with lambs' tongues), large ball cap; intermediates are square with smaller ball caps.

Other stairs: none at present; one may have been removed from kitchen.

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.3 DESCRIPTION (continued)

3. Major mantels: north room, 1st story (formerly dining room)-"classical revival," opening rectangular but now closed and chimney removed, plain pilasters, deep frieze with festoon in center. Supporting the shelf, in front of the pilasters, are columns with space flutes with 8" tall square (ca. 4-1/2x 5") bases and smaller square caps. Shelf is rectangular with coved edge and a row of beads beneath. Overmantle: mirror in center, with surrounding wide boards chamfered with lambs' tongues as mirror frame. Simple, single columns aligned with the lower shelf-supporting columns support eccentrically a small shelf on each side of the mirror. Above the small shelves are festoons. Above mirror center is horizontal row of beads with center large quatrefoil and smaller quintrefoils at each end. This mantel, as well as the one in the south room, is probably a catalogue item.
- South room, 1st story (parlor): more imposing with larger elements, classical revival style. Large rectangular opening, now closed and chimney removed (once used only for stove?). Opening trim is attempt at chamfered edges with lambs' tongues but is really cyma reversa with lambs' tongues. Rectangular shelf with rounded edge and cove is supported by pair of simple brackets each end. The narrow pilasters, with the fake chamfering on the inner side, have outside bed. Deep frieze has two spaced horizontal rows of small beads with applied medallions (4) between. Measuring from the floor, and including the "square" bases, a ca. 72" column of about 3" diameter rises each side of pilasters and shelf, with "Ionian" capitals supporting a 5" deep cornice, or shelf. Between this shelf and the regular mantel shelf is a large, bevel-edged mirror. The mirror surround has the same pseudo-chamfering with lambs' tongues as the fireplace opening below. Each side of mirror is a vertical applied decorative. Overmantel shelf has cyma recta edge above half-round with spaced groups of 3 vertical striations. Above overmantel shelf is a frieze with cap moldings totaling about 6" in height. Whole mantel array measures about 7-0 high x 5-0 wide. Now painted white with gold trim.
4. Major trim
 Doors/windows: trim is central half-round flanked by reeding and outside fillets, also used as window aprons; there are recessed-bullseye corner blocks.
 Baseboards: rounded ogee and bevel above 5-3/4" plain board
 Cornices: small, compound. Ceilings are high.
 Chair rails: none
5. Major doors: 4-panel (2/2)
6. Floors: 3-inch strip pine
7. Walls/ceiling finishes: paint on plaster

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.4 DESCRIPTION (continued)

OUTBUILDINGS/SITE DESCRIPTION

1. Outbuildings: There is a small gable-roofed, concrete block shed.
2. Site description: The lot is narrow and deep (70ft. x 300ft.), nearly level but sloping up slightly from road to house; in the rear the ground slopes down to the marsh to the east. Lawns, trees, ornamental shrubs. Concrete walkway from road to front porch door.
3. Views to/from site: To east- marsh with trees beyond. To northeast- outbuildings of adjacent house and Swan Creek Marina; harbor is partially seen beyond. To north- house on next lot. To south- undeveloped lot (lawn) not belonging with this house, with row of houses down the street beyond. To southeast- can see Gratitude water tank. To west across road 2 buildings directly across, one a low 2-story former seafood restaurant at Bay's edge. Can see Bay and numerous long docks through the undeveloped lot across the road and to the southwest.

USE OF BUILDING

1. Current: private residence (weekend/summer home)
2. Historic: boarding house as late as 1950's. Heyday was when steamboat and later a ferry ran to Gratitude.

HISTORY OF BUILDING/PAST OWNERSHIP

(see also Shady Rest, K-530, for history of Gratitude)

On May 28, 1912, James A. Pearce, attorney and executor of the estate of Christopher Wilkinson, conveyed several lots as a parcel to George E. Albee (Kent Co. Land Records **JTD** 25/376). Wilkinson was the nineteenth-century farmer who had owned all of the area which later came to be known as Gratitude, calling it Deep Landing Farm. Deep Landing Wharf was at the west end of present-day Route 20, or Gratitude Road; it served initially as a farm wharf and for a time in the twentieth century as the western terminus of a ferry to the western shore. Wilkinson's will (TRS 1/54) was dated December 26, 1889; he seems to have died soon after the will was drawn (January, 1890?). The will directed sale of the farm. In order to sell to the estate's best advantage, or perhaps because subdivision was already planned (the area appears not prime farmland- low, poor drained, heavy soil), and probably because of negotiations already in progress with the Chester River Steamboat Company to have a wharf in the area, Pearce had the farm surveyed and laid off into lots. The plat is found in a book called Inventory and Sale - Real Estate (1860-1909), p. 244 (see copy of plat, with report for Shady Rest, K-530). In 1891 the Orphans' Court directed Pearce to sell the property. He did sell lot 44 along with lots 199, 30, and 43 on July 16, 1891, at public auction for \$35.00 to Charles R. Webb (see p. 236 of above book). Before Webb received the deed, he sold to James Joiner and wife, so Pearce delivered the deed to him.

CONTINUATION SHEET

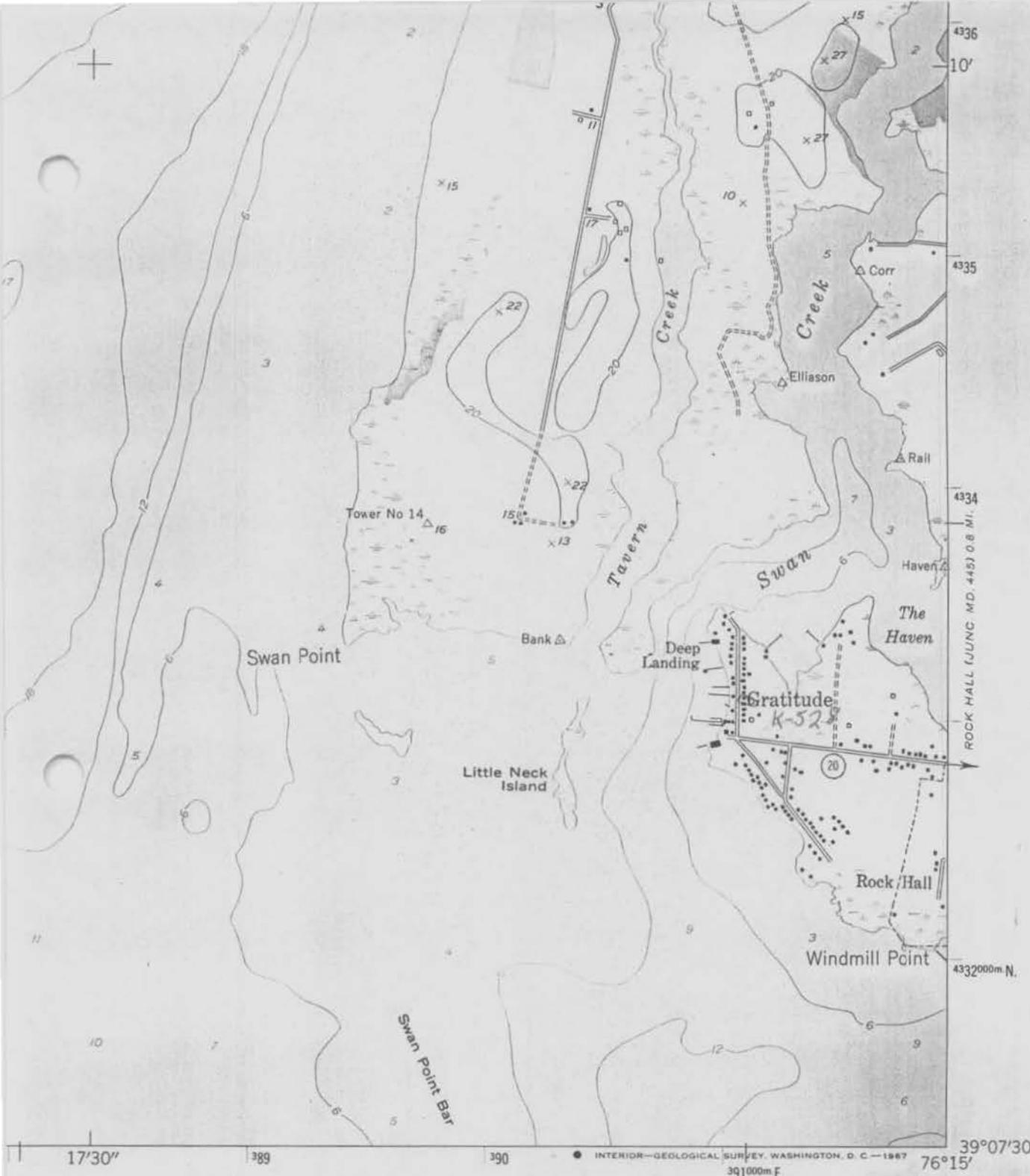
7.5 DESCRIPTION (continued)

However, he failed to record the deed and it was presumed lost. He made a new deed (SGF 1/74) dated June 9, 1892, but apparently it never was recorded either. Webb also had sold lots 19, 30, and 43, which were in a row behind each other; 44 was next to 43. (The road shown on the plat called E. Avenue--Eastern Avenue? -- was never built.) The Joiners sold on November 15, 1892 (SGF 1/154) lots 19, 30, and 43 to Abram Casey and intended to convey also lot 44, lots 43 and 44 being enclosed together by a fence (why?) and considered one tract. The deed says that Joiner used and occupied it as his own. The Caseys are also shown as buyers of two small lots where K-527 is (they were butchers?).

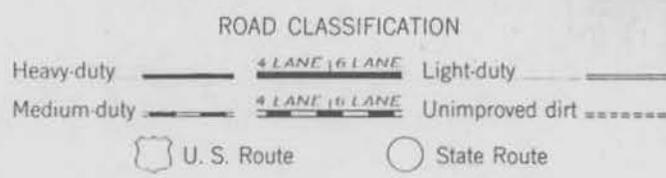
On September 18, 1899 Casey and wife sold to John A. and Mary A. Sweitzer (JTD 2/495). On July 12, 1909, the Sweitzers sold to George E. Albee (JTD 19/204). The deed of 1912 from Pearce to Albee was to give Albee clear title to lot 44, for which the estate of which Pearce was the executor was still the owner of record.

What appears to be the case is that there was considerable speculation and turnover with these Gratitude lots. Between 1891 and 1909 there were five owners. Though it is possible, it is not likely that this house was built before about 1910. The earliest houses in Gratitude appear to be the one listed as J. Hynson (now the Swan Creek Marina headquarters), G.J. Dawson house at the north end of Lawton Road, and Shady Rest (K-530) on the steamboat property. It is interesting to note that the axis of these three ran east-west, whereas those of the later houses on the street was north-south.

This surveyor does not know whether this house was built to be a boarding house. However, it was used for that purpose from the 1920's to ca. 1959, when John A. Hersch and wife sold the property. Room numbers are still on 2nd and 3rd story doors. According to Mr. Hersch, vacationers came for stays of several weeks, a month, or the entire summer. The location was particularly attractive because a wife and children at Gratitude for an extended stay could easily be joined on the weekends by a husband working in Baltimore. At first the steamboat and later the ferry docked at Gratitude itself; when such service ceased, the boats to Tolchester (nearby to the north) could be used.



● INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C.—1967
 391000m E



SWAN POINT, MD.
 NE/4 NORTH POINT 15' QUADRANGLE
 N3907.5—W7615/7.5

1953
 AMS 5762 III NE—SERIES V833