

Site M:26/10/37

The Williams Farmhouse

222 West Montgomery Avenue

Built: pre 1846, rebuilt 1910 Private

The present square, shingled Colonial Revival house was built on the site of an earlier vernacular farmhouse. The room at the west end of the house was the only remnant of the original house before it, too, was altered in the 1960's. Circuit Court Clerk James G. Hening lived here from 1846 to 1868. After that date, attorney Richard Williams and his heirs owned the house and approximately 100 acres of land to the west and south. Much of this acreage was sold in the 1880's to investors for development of the West End, but the house remained in the Williams family until 1947.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. M:26/10/37

Magi No. 1650532704

DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Williams Farmhouseand/or common Dowell house

## 2. Location

street & number 222 West Montgomery Avenue  not for publicationcity, town Rockville  vicinity of congressional district 8state Maryland county Montgomery

## 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	<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 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 D. James and E. V. Dowellstreet & number 222 West Montgomery Avenue telephone no.: 424-5858city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Land Records liber 2641street & number Montgomery County Courthouse folio 195city, town Rockville state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title National Register - West Montgomery Ave. Historic District - 1974Locally designated historic district - 1974date M-NCPPC - 1976  federal  state  county  localpository for survey records City of Rockvillecity, town Rockville state Maryland 20850

# 7. Description

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**Condition**

- excellent
- good
- fair

- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

**Check one**

- unaltered
- altered

**Check one**

- original site
- moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

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

This three bay wide frame house is situated at the southeast corner of Williams Street and West Montgomery Avenue, and faces north. An asphalt shingled hip roof covers the 2 1/2 story square main section of this house, which rests on a stuccoed cement block foundation. The entire house is clad in salmon-colored composition weather boards about 11" wide. A 1 1/2 story gabled 2 bay by 3 bay west side wing incorporates a remainder of the 19th century house which occupied this site. This side wing disrupts the near-symmetry of this simple and functional Craftsman style home.

A Doric - columned deep entry porch extends across the north facade. Accessed by two wooden steps, this porch has a tongue and groove floor and no balustrade. A wood and glass paneled door, set in the west bay, has paired sidelights and a wide transom with textured glazing; this entrance is a remainder of the earlier structure. The two first floor and three second floor windows are 6 over 1 double hung wood sashes. A central roof dormer has three 4 light window units.

The east facade projects at its southeast corner with a three-sided first floor bay window surmounted by a square second floor arrangement. A stuccoed exterior chimney is located rear the northeast corner.

The south (rear) facade and the west wing both evidence modern alterations. A one story extension spanning the south facade adjoins an open carport added to the rear of the west wing.

The main section of this house is a variation on the popular Craftsman style which stressed honesty and functionalism in domestic design. 222 West Montgomery has been altered from its original appearance, and some of its architectural integrity has been sacrificed; however its main facade retains the 1909 form.

C-A-E

# 8. Significance

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates: Mid 19th century, Rebuilt 1909 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.

The house at 222 West Montgomery Avenue is still known as The Williams Farmhouse. This name evokes a memory of the past era when the house bordered the dusty road west from Rockville to the mouth of the Monocacy River and the traffic passing the house was the infrequent plodding of a farmer's cart, not the incessant rumble of today's cars and trucks. The Williams family occupied the house from 1868 to 1947, converting it to a suburban residence in 1909.

The lands west of the Courthouse were owned and farmed by the Andersons, Woottons, and Wests; these were already old names in the area by the time the Town was laid out in 1803. Upon the occasion of Eliza Wootton's marriage to Lewis Beall in 1803, her father gave her 400 acres of "Exchange and New Exchange" lying in the triangle between the Road to the Mouth of Monocacy and the Great Falls Road.<sup>1</sup> Lewis Beall died in 1811, and his brother Upton, Administrator of the Estate, filled no list of debts which resulted in litigation which lasted from 1817 to 1825. In 1825 some of the land was ordered sold to pay the debts, and one parcel of 14 3/4 acres was sold to A. L. Kilgour for \$57.50.<sup>2</sup> Kilgour also had to sell the land to pay his debts, and his Trustee sold the land to John Cooke for \$325. Cooke left a will dated 21 April, 1846 in which he left to his wife Mary "My dwelling house and improvements and 12 acres attached that I bought of Judge Kilgour..."<sup>3</sup> Mary Cooke married and moved to Iowa sometime before 1855 and no deed was recorded, until her Trustee sold the property again that year to James G. Hening.

Hening was a Methodist preacher who was living in the Rockville area with his wife and four children at the time of the 1850 Census. He became Clerk of the Circuit Court in 1851 and, along with his Courthouse job, performed many of the Methodist marriages noted in the County papers. Since the Methodist Church and Parsonage had not been built yet, it is probable that he performed them in the subject house between 1855 and 1857. The Martinet & Bond Map of 1865 shows the house and property in his name. James and his wife Alice moved to Washington City and sold the house to Richard Williams in 1868; Williams paid \$3,000 for the 11 3/16 acres.<sup>5</sup>

Richard Williams was a young attorney from Poolesville who came to Rockville to enter the law firm of Judge Bouic. He married Rose Anderson,

#8 CONTINUATION P. 8.1

daughter of Dr. John W. Anderson. Along with the 11 acres of Hening land, he bought several contiguous parcels bordering the road west. In 1875 Williams deeded all his lands to his wife and children.

Williams was well respected and considered a rising power in the City. He was asked to be a Director of the newly-formed Rockville Mutual Building Association, and was active in many Town affairs. But in the fall of 1881 he was attacked on the street, robbed and left for dead. Paralyzed and speechless, he lingered for six months before dying at home in July, 1882. His obituary simply said, "Richard Williams, age 42, died at his residence yesterday."<sup>6</sup>

Most of the Williams land was easily sold in the next few years; the development of the West End of Rockville made the acreage a prime investment. Mrs. R. T. Veirs bought 12 acres on which she platted "Veirs Addition to Rockville". By 1886 Rose Williams was taxed for 6 1/2 acres, with an improved lot valued at \$1,500. The City announced that the hill in front of Mrs. Williams' house would be graded and that pavement would be laid from her house to Rev. Bonds' (#400 West Montgomery). Mrs. Williams and her children remained in the old house. The attached photo c. 1900 shows the long, clapboard farmhouse with its gabled dormers on a street level lot.

Walter Anderson Williams was eight years old when his father was murdered. In 1909 he married Emma Berry Abert and brought her home to live. Mrs. Williams (Senior) agreed to the modernization of the house, but refused to move out while it was undertaken, so she stayed in the room closest to (what became) Williams Street while the house was rebuilt around her in a more fashionable Colonial Revival style. She died in 1910 and the house passed to Walter.<sup>7</sup>

In 1914 he divided the land remaining into 10 building lots; the lots fronted on the Williams' stable lane, renamed Williams St.<sup>8</sup> Walter Williams and his family lived there until 1947. He was a widower when he sold the house to A. Barton Ashford and wife. The Ashfords added the composition siding, but the interior and most of the exterior was not changed from the 1909 rebuilding.

In 1959 the property was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. D. James Dowell, who reside here. They renovated the west wing of the house in the mid-1960s.

1. Land Records of Montgomery County Md. K/465 (1803).
2. Montgomery County Judgement Record, 1823-25, p. 125 et seq.
3. Montgomery County Wills, Liber H.H. 1, folio 448. Cooke was an attorney with houses in Georgetown and Washington. He left his law books to his nephew.
4. Montgomery County Land Records, JGH 4/115 (1855).
5. Ibid, EBP 5/157 (1868).
6. Montgomery County Sentinel, July, 1882.
7. Some of the information was supplied by Walter Williams' son-in-law, Richard Buckingham, D.D.S. He was married to Rose Williams Buckingham, who died 1980.
8. Plat Book 2/169.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. M:26/10/37

Maps & Atlases: 1865 Martinet & Bond, 1879 Hopkins, 1917 Deets & Maddox  
Montgomery County Land, Equity, Will, Plat & Tax Records  
Montgomery County Sentinel; family histories & genealogies  
Interview with Richard Buckingham, 1984

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 13,721 square feet

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C 

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D 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Fronting on West Montgomery Avenue at northeast corner of Williams St.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

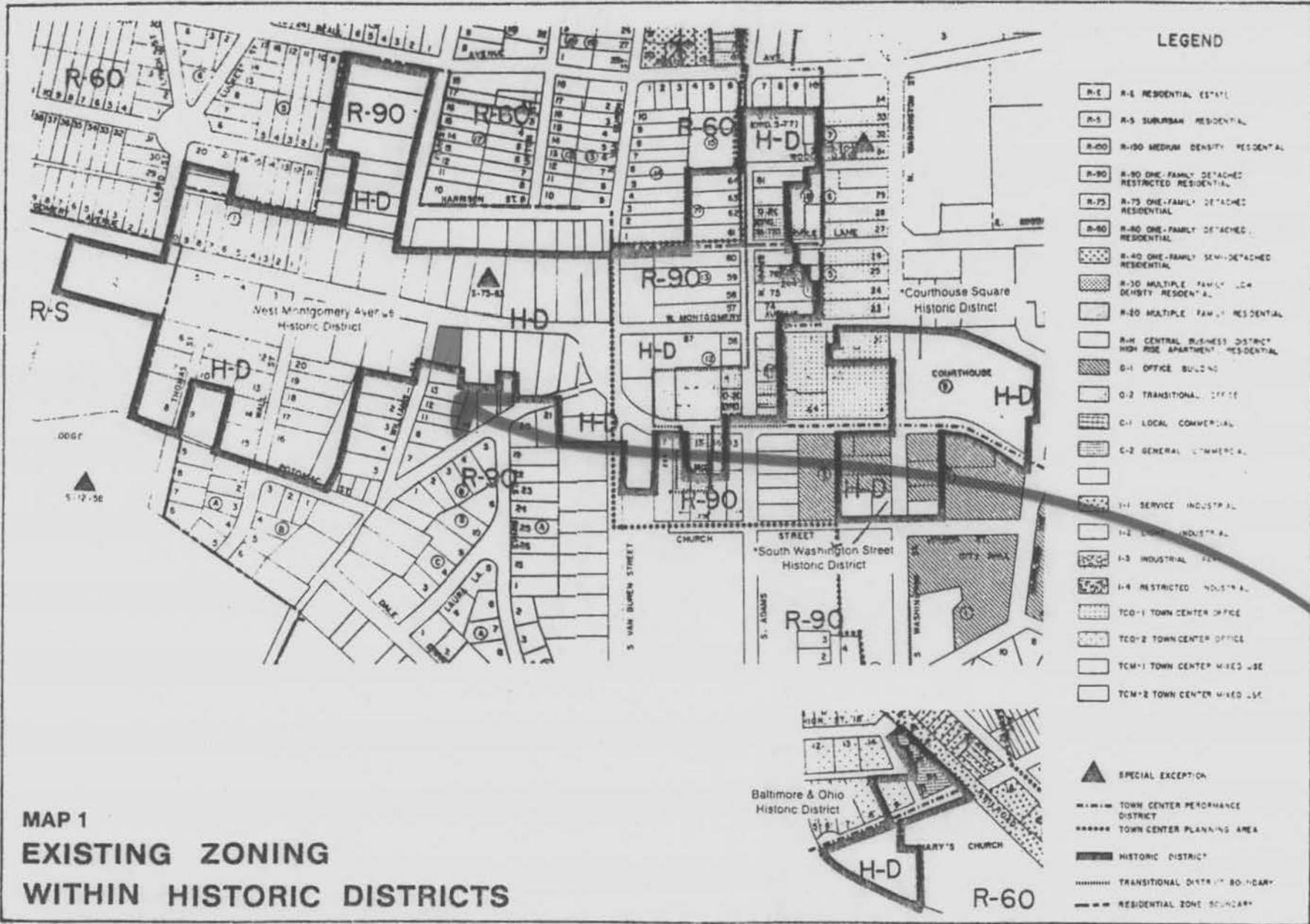
## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne W. Cissel/Glen Leiner, arch. desc.organization Peerless Rockville date September 1984street & number P.O. Box 4262 telephone 762-0096city or town Rockville state Maryland 20850

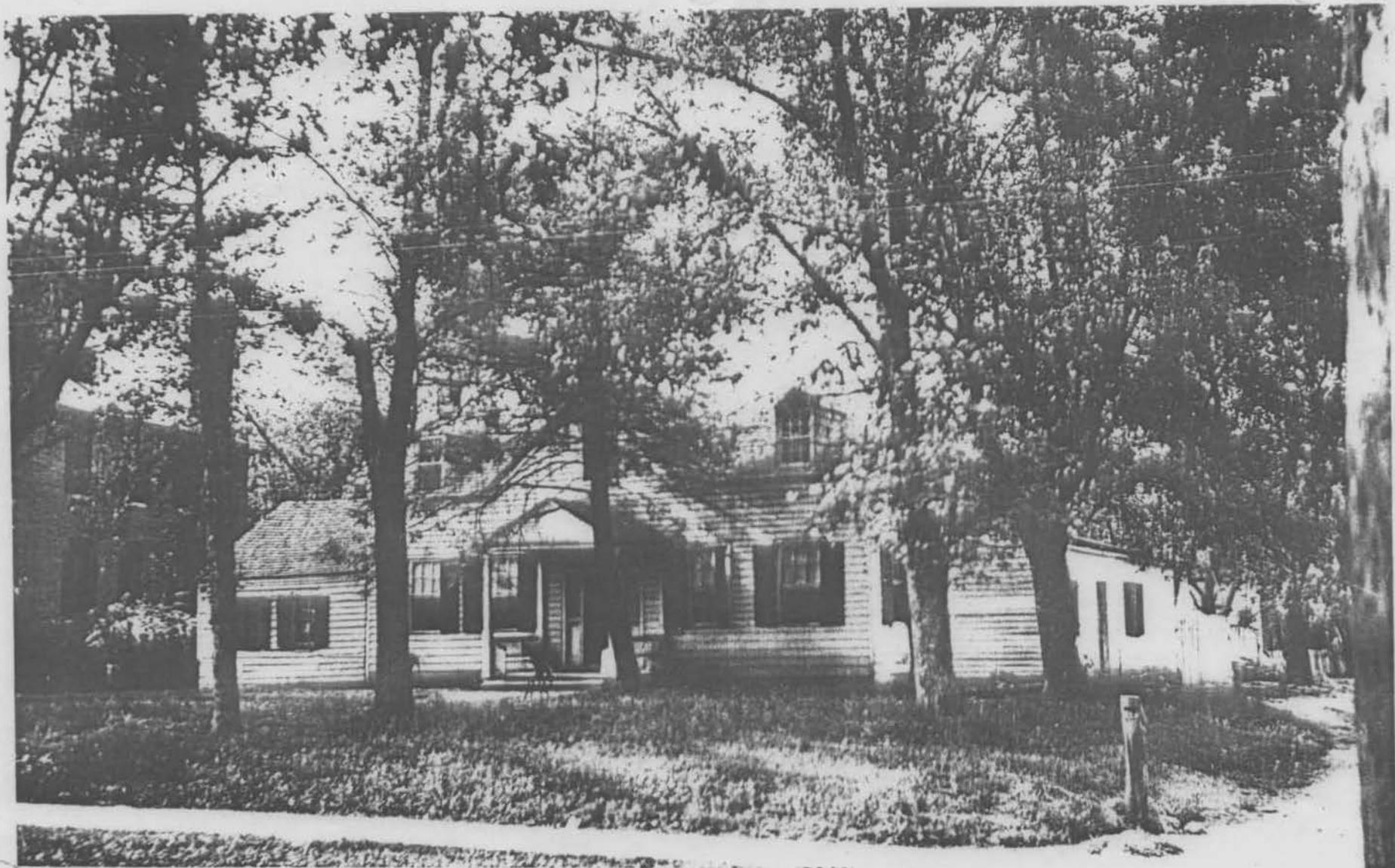
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438



\*Note: For discussion and planning purposes South Washington Street and the Courthouse Square district are considered independent Historic Districts even though they are shown on the existing zoning map as one district.



M: 26/10/37  
Williams Farmhouse

222 West Montgomery Avenue  
c. 1900  
Courtesy of Charles Brewer

R7  
388



1019-6

M: 26/10/37  
THE WILLIAMS FARMHOUSE  
222 W. Montgomery Ave.  
NORTH ELEVATION

RICHARD H. ANDREWS  
1608 Farragut Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20851

AUGUST, 1984