

Site: M: 26/10/47

Welsh's Folly

301 West Montgomery Avenue

Built: 1913 Architect/Builder; Franklin H. Karn Private

This house is a vernacular adaptation of the Prairie Style of architecture and has been little altered. Its broad eaves and its three-sided first floor porch emphasize the horizontal planes extending from its basic square block. It is also significant for its association with two prominent Rockville families, the Dawsons and the Welshes.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Welsh's Folly

2. Location

street & number 301 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Barnard T. and Helen T. Welshstreet & number 301 West Montgomery Avenue telephone no.: 762-2332city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery Co. Land Records liber 1196street & number Montgomery Co. Courthouse folio 97city, town Rockville state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title National Register of Historic Places -1974date City of Rockville Historic District- 1974 federal state county localdepository for survey records City of Rockvillecity, town Rockville state Maryland

7. Description

Survey No. 26/10/47

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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move _____

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

This large 3-bay frame house faces south on West Montgomery at its junction with Forest Avenue. The property is well landscaped and screened with a three foot border hedge. A variety of other shrubs are planted in the front and rear yard. Two large trees frame the front facade. A two-car garage with wood paneled-12 light overhead doors is on the north side of the site. A flat roof covers this structure which houses classic autos collected by the present owner, Mr. Welsh. Garage access is from Forest Avenue.

This 1913 transitional Prairie house shows local awareness and acceptance of new styles, yet reluctance to abandon comfortable older features. In height/width proportions, symmetrical massing of paired windows against flat stuccoed "panels", low hipped roof, broad enclosed eaves, and low central dormer, this is a vernacular Prairie house. The "orientalized" roof line with its slight flare, applied decorative rafter ends, and the central dormer which echoes and completes the roofline, are details borrowed from the Craftsman movement, a common complimentary blend. However, the open three-sided veranda with its Doric column supports and the now enclosed rear "sleeping porch" are characteristics typical of Colonial Revival and the common Maryland foursquare types which suited Rockville's more southern climate. Set on a brick foundation and covered with stucco, the 2 story house has an asphalt shingled roof, centered wood-shingle clad, asphalt roofed dormers on all sides and two central brick chimneys. A rear porch completes the back side of the house. In plan, it is a center hall and stair with symmetrically flanking rooms.

Windows throughout the house are 1-over-1 double hung wood sash, except for those on the rear porch, two small second floor side case-ments which have 8 lights each, and the entry vestibule. The window openings are framed by plain wood sills and broad surrounds, capped by molding lintels and flanked by louvered wood shutters.

BFB
The symmetrical 3-bay south (front) facade is surrounded by a 1-story veranda which wraps around three sides of the house. It is supported by twelve Doric columns and covered with a flat seam tin roof which breaks into a slightly pitched hip roof over the entrance. The porch base is enclosed by a cross-hatched lattice wood screen. A slightly flared smaller eave overhang runs below the porch roofline. A central, hipped roof dormer with paired 8-light windows graces the front facade. Three sets of paired windows are evenly placed in the second story 3 bays, and in the first and third bays on the first. The center bay is occupied by an entry vestibule and door.

Continued on attachment 7.1

Six steps lead to the central entrance. The later center vestibule is formed of a wood panel base topped with 3 - twelve light sections. There is an entry door on the east side. The front exterior door with side lights and transom is beyond the entry vestibule.

The west facade contains 8 windows with unique spacing. The windows closest to the front corner are spaced at least one window apart. The remaining windows are all closely spaced with little wall area between them. In contrast to the front facade, these windows create an asymmetrical rhythm.

Most of the modifications done in the late 1950s - early 1960s are seen in the rear (north) facade. The first floor porch originally had a balustrade with square railings and posts; however, during renovation a three foot painted brick wall and large square panelled posts were added. Another entry is found through this porch; the asymmetrical rear entrance is through a small foyer. Dark vertical wood siding covers the foyer with one small metal frame, double-hung window on the front, and two larger windows divided horizontally in three parts on the sides. The rear wood door has a horizontal louvered glass panel. Two awnings with the initial "W" add protection.

The second floor enclosed sleeping porch has a vertical siding wood base with seven large louvered windows. Exposed white square posts demonstrate the original support structure. A central hipped roof dormer with paired casement windows rests above the rear porch.

The east facade has eight windows. They are closely spaced and separated centrally by a door on the first floor and a small casement window on the second floor. The door is wood with two decorative Queen Anne paneled insets, colored glass, and a transom. A bay projects out and the door is located on the side of the bay. The central hipped roof dormer has triple casement windows.

The interior rooms have been opened and rearranged somewhat over the years but the fine millwork and carpentry has been retained. The front staircase and large semi-elliptical entry arch has classical decorative wood moulding and a scroll-like keystone motif with panelled inset trim. The balustrade has square railings and square posts with Doric caps at the ends. There is scroll detailing along the stairwall.

The east sitting room has a 6' wide brick fireplace with a decorative classical entablature carved below it. The mantel has a cornice piece with frieze and architrave elegantly carved below it. The dining room is separated from the west sitting room by a square doorway with paneled sliding doors. A built-in china cabinet with decorative wood panels and glass shelves frames the north dining room wall. Classical cornice moulding runs exist throughout the first floor main rooms. All door and window trim has classical detailing on both first and second floors. A rear staircase is situated between the dining room and kitchen for servant's access to the second floor.

The second floor has a central hall which opens into a major sitting room. Six bedrooms flank the hall. Interconnecting doors between bedrooms as well as onto the hall is an interesting feature. The house has a full attic.

8. Significance

Survey No. 26/10/47

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Local History

Specific dates 1913 Builder/Architect both: Franklin H. Karn

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.

Significance

The house at 301 West Montgomery Avenue is important as a vernacular adaptation of the the Prairie Style of Architecture which has been little altered. It is also significant for its association with two Rockville families, the Dawsons and the Welshes.

History and Support

The lot, at the corner of Montgomery and Forest Avenues, was once the site of a private tennis court used by residents of the West End of Rockville at the turn of the century.^{1/} The Dawson family, which played important roles in local politics and commerce for several generations, owned much of the property north and east of this site.

Henry A. Dawson and his wife Mary Pearson Hoff Dawson purchased the property from Robert D. Cummin in 1913, and hired local builder Franklin Karn to construct their residence. ^{2/} Mr. Dawson was one of the Beall family heirs, and "Polly" was a Pennsylvania heiress. The Dawsons were social leaders in Rockville and resided here until they died a few weeks apart in 1944. ^{3/}

Judge Stedman Prescott then purchased the property for his daughter, Calla, who was married to Gerald Wilhelm. Two years later the Wilhelms sold to Trowbridge E. and Louise H. Sebree ^{4/} who renovated the interior of the house. After a brief ownership by the VonSteiners, the house was purchased by F. Barnard Welsh and his wife Helen Talbott Welsh.^{5/}

Welsh's father, William W. Welsh, had come to Rockville after the Civil War and operated a general store until his death. His mother, Margaret Ann Higgins Welsh, founded the Woman's Club of Rockville in 1900.^{6/} F. Barnard Welsh was a prominent Rockville attorney, serving as both County and City Attorney as well as conducting a private practice. He was a leading opponent of charter government in Montgomery County.

Continued on attachment 8.1

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Welsh's Folly
Attachment 8.1

Barnard T. Welsh and his wife Helen Tyler Welsh, daughter of the Methodist minister, took up residence at #301 W. Montgomery Avenue in 1948. Barnard T.'s mother deeded the property to him after F. Barnard's death six years later.^{7/} Mr. Welsh carried on his father's law practice in Rockville, additionally utilizing his numerous talents in other areas. He was a teacher, national tennis figure, local historian, and newspaper columnist. "Welsh Rarebit", "Monty Gopher's" weekly commentary on the social and political ideosyncracies of Montgomery County, was published by the Montgomery County Sentinel from 1958 through 1972.

The Welshes have altered the rear facade of the house, enclosing sleeping porches and replacing rear balustrades. Barney Welsh's name for his residence typifies the blend of honesty and humor which has made him an interesting local personality for the past fifty years.

Footnotes:

1. This lot was part of the 5 acre Sarah West McCahill estate, not included in "the West End Park" development. It was subdivided by Robert Cummin et al. On the 1906 Tax Records, Cummin owned 2-1/2 acres, improved by Tennis Courts, at a value of \$800.
2. Montgomery County Land Records, 236/32. (Deed from Robert Cummin to Mary P.H. Dawson, recorded May 3, 1911), and 235/348 (mortgage from Harry Dawson to Franklin Karn in the amount of \$3524.40.)
3. Montgomery County Sentinel (1944) Obituary in Dawson family genealogical files at Montgomery County Historical Society.
4. Land Records, op.cit., 1054/275 (1946)
5. Ibid., 1196/97 (1948)
6. Barnard T. Welsh, Rockville Lawyer (1984) and interviews with the Welsh family. The Welsh store is now Wire Hardware & Lumber Co. on Baltimore Road.
7. Land Records op. cit., 1195/222 (1954).



"Welsh's Folly"
301 W. Montgomery Ave.
Rockville
So. Facade
6/85

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RICHARD H. ANDREWS
424-8282
1608 FARRAGUT AVE.
ROCKVILLE, MD 20851