

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland
COUNTY: Baltimore
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Auburn House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 7500 Osler Drive  
Osler Drive between Towsontown Boulevard and Stevenson Lane

CITY OR TOWN: Towson CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Second

STATE: Maryland CODE: 24 COUNTY: Baltimore CODE: 24

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Faculty Club the staff and leaders of the community.

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Towson State College

STREET AND NUMBER: 8000 York Road

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore STATE: Maryland CODE: 21

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Baltimore County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: Allegany Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Baltimore STATE: Maryland CODE: 21

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland  
 COUNTY: Baltimore  
 FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Auburn House is located on the grounds of the Towson State College campus on Osler Drive between Towsontown Boulevard and Stevenson Lane. The structure was part of the Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital property recently acquired by the school.

The house is a rectangular three-story stone structure faced with stocco. The low-pitched slag roof, with three foot overhanging eaves, concealed gutters, and skylights into the third floor bedroom, slopes from all sides to a center point capped by a trap door.

The first floor center hall measures 45' x 13' and features acanthus patterned cornices. The double front doors are surrounded by leaded glass panels above and on each side. Covered porches (10' x 15') shelter each entrance and are constructed of heavy millwork wooden rails and balusters.

Two rooms measuring 20' x 20' open from the side of the hall. These rooms contain delicately formed rose pattern cornices and fireplaces of black Italian marble mantel and facings. A low ornamental iron grill guard is installed on the outside of the front window. These rooms open to a 12' wide porch which extends the full depth of the east side of the house. This porch is similar to the ones described above and are constructed of similar millwork.

The library is the rear also contains a fireplace with black Italian marble mantel and facings. All walls are lined with bookshelves to the level of the top of the window.

The front rooms and the library are connected by a 8' opening with sliding double doors recessed in the walls.

The dining room, measuring 20' x 22', opens from the center hall in the front and contains a fireplace similar to the one previously described with the addition of fluted marble columns in front of the facings. The west window of the rooms opens to the 6' x 6' porch. Eight foot closed cupboards with paneled arched-top double doors are set into the wall on each side of the front windows. The other walls have plaster paneling to conform with the cupboards and doors. Brass hardware adorn the cupboards.

The stairway to the upper floors has a graceful, curved mahogany balister and handrail supported by simple cylindrical tapered balusters.

The second floor plan is essentially the same as the first floor. A center hall, the depth of the house and the same width as the first floor, also provides access to the four bedrooms. Later renovations modified the center hall by converting the ends into clothes closets and bathrooms. All of the second floor bedrooms contain fireplaces. The original marble mantels and facings have been replaced by carved wood. Electrified sconces over the mantels and in the side walls remain and are functional. All of the second floor windows are the same size and position and directly above those on the first floor. The windows from the east side bedrooms open on-

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**3. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

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SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

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AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Local history</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Auburn is an important example of the Italianate-Federal style, "sub-species" of the broader term Greek Revival. The subtle architectural effects of Auburn created through a careful handling of proportion as opposed to elaborate ornamentation illustrates a dominant characteristic of the Greek Revival.

The historical associations of Auburn begin with Rebecca Dorsey Ridgely the wife of Charles Ridgely, builder of Hampton. She lived at Auburn from 1791 to 1812. Her association with the property adds currency to the theory that Auburn was a copy of Hampton on a five-eighths scale.

Three decades later Henry Cristie Turnbull, the son of William Turnbull a Scottish immigrant and founder of the prominent Baltimore County family, acquired Auburn. During his occupancy the whimsical barn was constructed and formal gardens were laid out. In 1849 a severe fire destroyed most of the Ridgely house. Turnbull erected the present structure, on the earlier foundations incorporating some of the original walls and salvage woodwork. Auburn became a "mecca" for Turnbull family reunions.

During the Civil War Turnbull's son Lawrence Turnbull and his younger brothers published a literary magazine called The Acorn at Auburn. The ambitious publication appeared monthly from May 1861 through March 1863. One of his sisters Ellie M. Turnbull faithfully saved each issue, now in the Maryland Historical Society. Lawrence Turnbull, after receiving a bachelors degree at Princeton (his father's alma mater) and a legal education from Severn Teackle Wallis, engaged in an active literary career. As the publisher of The New Eclectic he gained wide acclaim as well as the friendships of prominent figures like Sydney Lanier. (Turnbull's summer home La Paix played a part in the career of another literary figure, F. Scott Fitzgerald.)

John Symington a subsequent owner modernized Auburn and added the Fitch wing to accommodate his style of life. The son of a Confederate officer and an all American lacrosse player, Symington became an officer of Barrett Hayward Company which manufactured munitions and of Locke Insulation Company before his retirement in 1924. Auburn his Baltimore County house, served as an appropriate setting for this prominent member of the Elkridge Fox

(see continuation sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

The Acorn. 1861-1863. Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.  
Published at Auburn by Lawrence Turnbull and his brothers.

Baltimore County Land and Probate Records. Baltimore County Courthouse,  
Towson, Maryland.

Edmonds, Anne C. "Land Holdings of the Ridgelys of Hampton 12. 1726-  
1845." Thesis. 1959. The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.  
(see continuation sheet #2)

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	39	23	10
NE	° ' "	° ' "	76	56	48
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: two acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
John Miller, Curator

ORGANIZATION: Hampton Mansion DATE: May 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Towson STATE: Maryland CODE: 21

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>Orlando Ridout, IV</u></p> <p>Title <u>State Historic Preservation Officer for Maryland</u></p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #1

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COUNTY Baltimore	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Auburn House

No. 7. Description Continued.

to the flat roof over the side porch. This second floor porch is surrounded by a milled rail and balusters matching the porch below.

The third floor plan is basically the same as the second floor including the alterations. The rooms are the same size as the rooms below. The fireplaces in these rooms are simple and without mantels. All ceilings on the third floor (8' in the center sloping to 5' at the outside walls) are lower. Light wells with glass tops are installed in the ceiling of each bedroom. Each can be opened and are installed with roller blinds or shades which can be operated from below. A trapdoor leading into an unfloored, unfinished attic is in the center hall.

Access to the cellar is via a stairway below the first floor stairs. The walls below the center hall are supporting walls about 16" thick that extend to the attic floor and are generally considered to be part of the house surviving the fire of 1849. The southeast corner of the cellar contains a room the same size as the living room, considered to be the original kitchen of Auburn. In its west wall is a large fireplace with a sturdy swinging crane and a heavy hook set into its sides. Smaller rooms, probably utilized as a buttery, milk pantry and cook's pantry open from this room.

Water appears originally to have been brought into the house by piping from a spring one hundred yards away, under force from a hydraulic ram. At an unknown point in time, a very large cylindrical iron water tank was set up in the cellar which forced water to the upper floors through an air pressure system. The tank itself is something of a mystery. It is 5' in diameter and 20' long, made of 1/4" thick boiler plate held together with hand-driven rivets. It must have been constructed in the cellar since it is much too large to have been brought in through any exterior opening.

This provides a description of the house as restored and as it stood until John Fife Symington purchased it. He modified the structure by adding a large two-story kitchen wing. This addition contains a large butler's pantry, a cold pantry and back stairs leading to two servants rooms, a bath and a housekeeping closet on the second floor. Its cellar has a large laundry room and a general storage room with an opening to the outside.

Standing majestically before the front doors of Auburn are the two largest English elms in Maryland (ref., Big Tree Champions of Maryland, 1965. Fred W. Buly, State Forester, 1906-1942, pub. State Department of Forests and Parks). The trees are called "The Bride and the Groom" and were measured each spring by the State Forestry Department. The measure approximately 20' in girth and stand over 125' tall. Many other very large trees enhance the grounds of the estate.

(see continuation sheet #2)

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet) #2

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STATE	
Maryland	
COUNTY	
Baltimore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Auburn House

No. 7. Description continued.

To the east of the house is the poorly tended remains of a beautiful formal Italian garden and yew walk on two levels. A native field spring house completes the description of the property.

No. 8. Significance continued.

Hunting Club, the Maryland Club and the Baltimore Country Club. In 1944 Symington sold the property to Sheppard-Pratt Hospital which is visible from Auburn's north lawn. The hospital used it as housing for one of its more prominent physicians, Harry Murdock.

In 1971 the house became the property of Towson State College whose administration plans to rehabilitate and restore the building for a faculty club - a function to which its grandly proportioned rooms are well suited.

No. 9. Major Bibliographical References continued.

"Hampton." Maryland Historical Magazine. Volume 43. (1948), 96-107.

Peterson, Charles E. "Notes on Hampton Mansion." U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Library, Fort McHenry, Baltimore, Maryland.

The Sun (Baltimore), February 23, 1934 and November 6, 1949.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

BA-213

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

<b>1. NAME</b>		
<b>COMMON</b>	<b>AND/OR HISTORIC</b>	<b>NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)</b>
Auburn House		
<b>2. LOCATION</b>		
<b>STATE</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>TOWN</b>
Maryland	Baltimore	Towson
<b>STREET AND NUMBER</b>		
Osler Drive between Towsontown Boulevard and Stevenson Lane		
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>		
<b>PHOTO CREDIT</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>NEGATIVE FILED AT</b>
Nancy Miller	January 1973	Maryland Historical Trust 2525 Riva Road Annapolis, Maryland 21401
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>		
<b>DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.</b>		

South facade



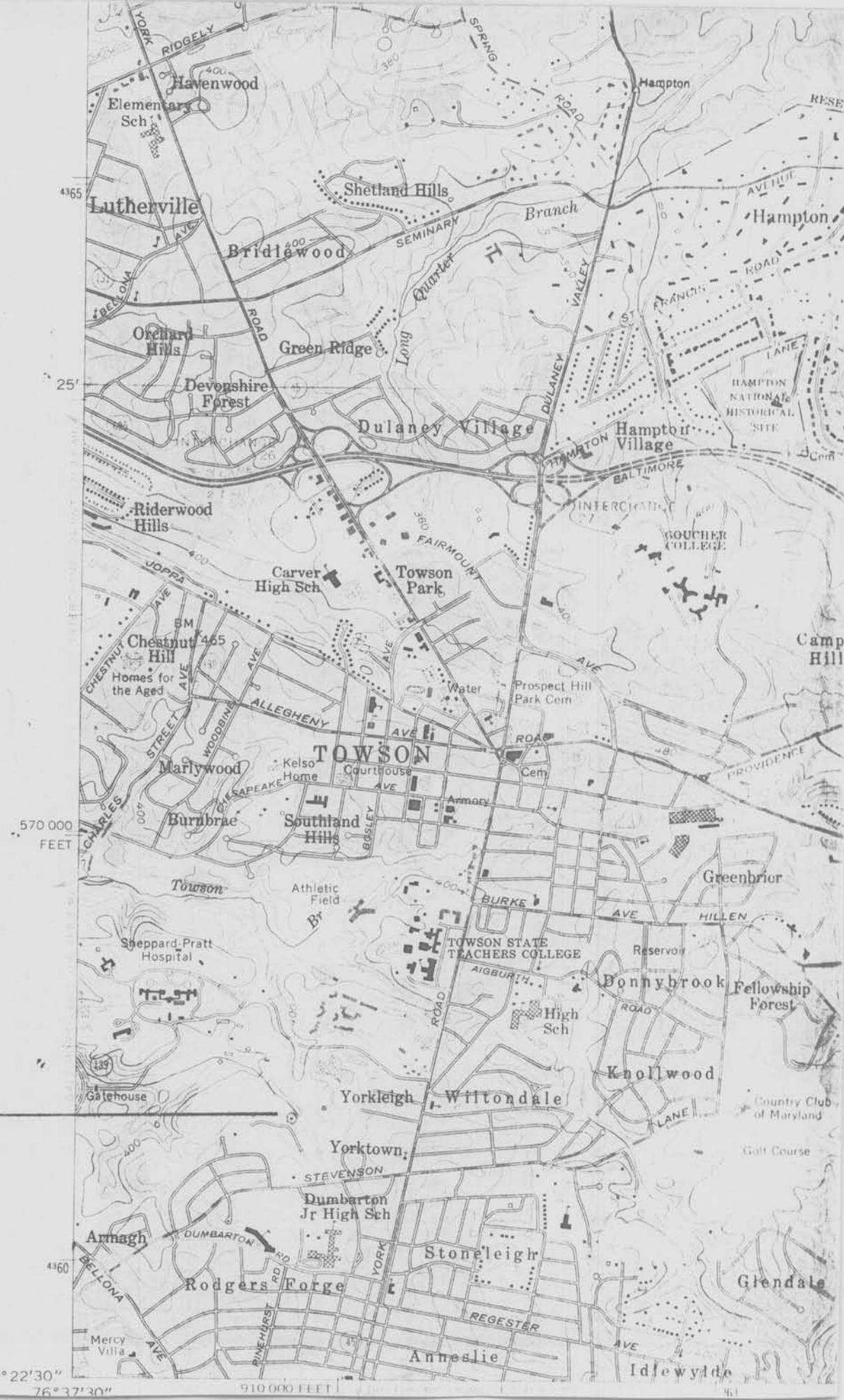
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PROPERTY MAP FORM**  
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

BA-213

<b>1. NAME</b>		
COMMON	AND/OR HISTORIC	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Auburn House		
<b>2. LOCATION</b>		
STATE	COUNTY	TOWN
Maryland	Baltimore	Towson
STREET AND NUMBER		
Osler Drive between Towsontown Boulevard and Stevenson Lane		
<b>3. MAP REFERENCE</b>		
SOURCE	DATE	SCALE
U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute map Towson Quadrangle	1957	1:24000

REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW.



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Auburn

lat. 39° 23' 10"  
 long. 76° 36' 48"

39° 22' 30" 76° 37' 30" 910,000 FEET 4.1

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MHT Inventory No.

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The stairway to the upper floors has a graceful, curved mahogany baluster and handrail supported by simple cylindrical tapered balusters.

The second floor plan is essentially the same as the first floor. A center hall, the depth of the house and the same width as the first floor, also provides access to the four bedrooms. Later renovations modified the center hall by converting the ends into clothes closets and bathrooms. All of the second floor bedrooms contain fireplaces. The original marble mantels and facings have been replaced by carved wood. Electrified sconces over the mantels and in the side walls remain and are functional. All of the second floor windows are the same size and position and directly above those on the first floor. The windows from the east side bedrooms open onto the flat roof over the side porch. This second floor porch is surrounded by a milled rail and balusters matching the porch below.

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This provides a description of the house as restored (after the fire) and as it stood until John Fife Symington purchased it. He modified the structure by adding a large two-story kitchen wing. This addition contains a large butler's pantry, a cold pantry, and back stairs leading to two servants' rooms, a bath, and a housekeeping closet on the second floor. Its cellar has a large laundry room and a general storage room with an opening to the outside.

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Standing majestically before the front doors of Auburn are the two largest English elms in Maryland (ref., Big Tree Champions of Maryland, 1965. Fred W. Besley, State Forester, 1906-1942, pub. State Department of Forests and Parks). The trees are called "The Bride and the Groom" and were measured each spring by the State Forestry Department. They measure approximately 20 feet in girth and stand over 125 feet tall. Many other very large trees enhance the grounds of the estate.

UPDATE - 1999 (JWM):

The Towson Club was eventually closed although catered affairs continued in the house. The Bride and Groom trees were in 1985 discovered to be suffering from Dutch Elm Disease and were cut down. In early 1999, a plant was announced to conduct a learning program for retired persons in this house by the Auburn Society at Towson University.

Auburn is now the only structure on this parcel, but in 1975, John Miller's report noted:

Other buildings existing on the property consist of a barn built around 1820-1830, and a spring house dated approximately 1790. Remnants of a formal garden exist from the Turnbull period around 1830. Interior and exterior pictures of the house exist including many fine details of its interior construction and furnishings as early as 1915. Pictures also exist of the formal gardens in their prime about the same era.

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Disrespect and Slights, tho I have not put  
my self much in his power, which makes me  
Glad, tho I have given up all power over  
him, which makes it a great time of trial  
to me, to be ill used by one I looked on  
as a child . . . you know I believe I have  
been as a Mother to him . . . .

For many reasons, widow Rebecca Dorsey Ridgely decided not to remain in the Hampton House or live in the old farm house as were the options of her husband's will. An agreement was finally reached between widow Rebecca Dorsey Ridgely and Charles Carnan Ridgely on January 17, 1791. This agreement stated that Charles C. Ridgely would cede the 244½ acres of land called "Demitt's Delight." That property included a carriage house and stable for six horses and five thousand chestnut fence rails. In addition, to this he agreed to provide her with the Auburn house and other general supplies for her self-support. In return, Rebecca agreed to give up all her "the said Rebecca Ridgely's Right, Title, Interest, and Claim to the house and Three hundred Acres of land at Hampton."

Although Mrs. Ridgely acquired the tract "Demmitt's Delight" she did not build her principal residence there (Deeds WG FF:462).

Rebecca Ridgely took title to the future Auburn property from Edward Owings on April 14, 1791 (Baltimore City Deeds, WG No. FF:543). The tract names mentioned were Haile's Fellowship and Samuel's Hope. A point mentioned in the deed was the "Surveyor's Spring" which can still be found on tax maps today. The ground acquired by Rebecca Ridgely had never been part of her family's holdings and in fact the deed states that Edward Owings had acquired the Samuel's Hope component from Solomon Bowen. Total area was 120-3/4 acres for which Mrs. Ridgely paid ₣ 650.

The Ridgely-Pue papers in the Maryland Historical Society manuscript department contain Rebecca Ridgely's receipt book and a ledger covering the 1790s. Some of the ledger pages account for the Demmitt's Delight farm, others refer to Auburn. Mrs. Ridgely received a quarterly allowance from Charles Carnan Ridgely, often delivered as in-kind services or produce or materials. The name Auburn appears for the first time on November 22, 1791 (Ledger, folio 36). The entry for buying the land from Edward Owings appeared on December 27, 1791 (folio 27), cost ₣ 650.

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Building activity carried on at both properties into the end of the decade with such entries as "hauling plank" or "digging a cellar" (1797), or "plastering done by John Whitelock" (1798), or "hanging windows by William Roberts" (1797), or "laying brick for a stable--Hugh Allen" (1803). The ledger was maintained by William Buchanan of George who certified his accounts on January 24, 1792 (folio 53). Neither the ledger nor the receipt book contain enough detail to determine if the many persons paid "on account" were the actual builders of Auburn. It is possible that Charles Carnan Ridgely as part of his in-kind support of his aunt engaged the actual craftsmen. (MHS Library, Manuscripts Department, MS. 693) One recognizable person was William Bowen, paid for "smith's work" on January 14, 1792 (Ledger, folio 36). The blacksmith Bowen lived at what is now numbered 40 York Road in what is now Towson. His family house stood until 1984.

One of Mrs. Ridgely's largest expenditures was for a coach. Other items included horses, cattle, and farm wagons. One of the few specific items was a carpet, mentioned in 1792, another was 4-½ yards book muslin, purchased from Burnetson and Wilkins in the city, also acquired in 1792.

The 1798 tax list of Back River Upper Hundred showed Rebecca Ridgely as owner of:

1 stone dwelling house	
2 stories, 24 x 50 feet	
1 frame kitchen, 16 x 33	
Old log Negro house	10 x 16
Log Meat House	8 x 10
Barn	18 x 30
Stable & outhouse	16 x 20
2 Old log stables each	16 x 20

The 1798 tax list gave only "Tracey's Park" as the name of the land survey comprising Mrs. Ridgely's 171 acres. Her other farm was listed in the 1798 tax list of Gunpowder Upper Hundred. The tract name was not given at all but there were 35 acres, 10 slaves, and a two-story frame dwelling house, 28 by 18 feet, "in good repair," with a log kitchen 18 by 14 feet, certainly a less important property

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than Auburn. The 1783 tax list proves that Dimmitts Delight (an alternate spelling) was in Gunpowder Upper Hundred, the property of James Dimmitt. A Dimmitt house appears on Jerusalem Road on the 1850 county map by Sidney and Browne, but the tractname Dimmitt's Delight is not encountered by tracing the deed of that house. The same Dimmitt property was the source of a stream that empties into Little Gunpowder Falls near the former location of Jericho Mill; William B. Marye stated that the stream, nameless on the topo maps and quad sheets, was Dimmitt's Branch (MHM, 51 (March 1958):50).

Rebecca Dorsey Ridgely remained at Auburn House until her death in 1812. She is the first resident who can be directly traced to the historic house. By her will written in 1811, Rebecca Ridgely left the Auburn property to her niece Rebecca Pue (Wills J, folio 265). In 1818, Rebecca Pue sold to John Yellott (Deeds WG 144:415).

The 1823 tax ledger of Old District 3 showed John Yellott with 132 acres, "pt. of Auburn," \$400 worth of improvements, and three slaves (Assessment, 1833, MD. HR CR 39605). On John Yellott's death his executor Charles Worthington in 1830 sold to Benjamin P. Moore (Deeds, WG 203:254). Seven years later Benjamin P. Moore sold to a city resident, Henry C. Turnbull (Deeds, TK 274:378).

When Auburn was written up for the National Register in 1975, the exact date of the fire that destroyed Mrs. Ridgely's home was not known, although 1849 was the correct year. Later, the following item in the Baltimore Republican & Argus of November 1, 1849, was discovered:

Fire in Baltimore County.--During the height of the storm on Monday, the beautiful residence of Mr. Henry Turnbull, situate about six miles from the city on the York Road, was entirely destroyed by fire. The loss is estimated at \$5,000, and there is a policy of \$4,000 in the Baltimore and Harford county Mutual Insurance Company.

Turnbull apparently replaced the Ridgely house with one deeper and higher, although tradition holds that the foundations and some of the walls of the original were reused. The main entrance was certainly centered on the Bride and Groom trees. Sidney and Browne's 1850 map of the county showed the H. C. Turnbull house where Auburn stands today, just a year after the fire.

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James T. Wollon, Jr., AIA, noted on June 30, 1995, on comparing the tax ledger dimensions of 1798 and 1918:

The 1798 dimensions of Auburn are very revealing, bearing little resemblance to what's there now. The south front is about 50 feet so it is possible that the south or the north foundation wall might be original. The present depth, north-to-south, is about 43 feet and none of the chimneys is in an expected position for the late 18th century. I used to think the plaster-paneled room remained from the 18th century but I cannot explain the chimneys' position and now I have Dudley Brown's 1975 report, when the house was somewhat ruinous, which indicates that the lathing behind that paneling to be early 20th century.

Photos supplied by Mr. Wollon showed that the house on the 1850 map was a simple rectangle, its west wing not then in place.

John Miller noted in his 1975 nomination form, "Auburn became a 'mecca' for Turnbull family reunions." During the Civil War, Turnbull's son Lawrence Turnbull and his younger brothers published a literary magazine called The Acorn at Auburn. The ambitious publication appeared monthly from May 1861 through March 1863. One of his sisters, Billie M. Turnbull, faithfully saved each issue, now in the Maryland Historical Society. Lawrence Turnbull, after receiving a bachelor's degree at Princeton (his father's alma mater) and a legal education from Severn Teackle Wallis, engaged in an active literary career. As the publisher of The New Eclectic he gained wide acclaim as well as the friendships of prominent figures like Sydney Lanier. (Turnbull's summer home, La Paix, played a part in the career of another literary figure, F. Scott Fitzgerald.)

On Henry C. Turnbull's death, the Maryland Journal of September 23, 1893, presented a detailed biography:

Henry C. Turnbull, one of the best citizens of Baltimore county, died at his beautiful residence, "Auburn," one mile south of Towson, Friday, 15th inst., in the 84th year of his age. He had been in feeble health for several years past, but was carefully nursed by his devoted daughter. He was a quiet, estimable citizen. He took no part in public affairs, though several years since he took a deep and active interest in the Baltimore

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County Bible Society and was its president. He was a consistent member of the Presbyterian Church, and for many years worshipped at the Presbyterian Church, Govanstown. His remains were taken to Philadelphia Tuesday, 19th inst., for interment alongside those of his wife, who died several years since. He leaves five sons and one daughter--Alex. Nisbet, Lawrence, Rev. Lennox, Henry C., and Chester B. and Miss Ella Turnbull.

Mr. Turnbull was born in Philadelphia, November, 1809. Shortly afterward his father's family moved to "Montrose," the home of the Nisbet family, in this county. His mother was Mrs. Mary Nisbet, daughter of the Rev. Charles Nisbet, late President of Dickinson College, Carlisle. Mr. Turnbull was educated at St. Mary's College, Baltimore, now known as the Seminary of St. Sulpice. Afterward he pursued his studies at Princeton College, N.J. He at first engaged in mercantile pursuits, but subsequently served in the U.S. Navy as private Secretary of the late Commodore Nicholson. He married Anna Graem Smith, of Philadelphia, and settled at "Auburn" in 1838, which was his home until his death. In early life he united with the First Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, in which he was elected to the office of Deacon. He was specially interested and active in Sunday School work, more particularly among the colored people. The First Colored Presbyterian Church in Baltimore is the outgrowth of the Sunday School organized through his instrumentality. After removing to "Auburn," he, with several gentlemen of the neighborhood, (all now gone) bought and supported Epsom Chapel at Towson as a Union Church. Through his efforts Govans Chapel was built and organized in 1844, of which he was a ruling Elder for many years.

Although Mr. Turnbull was never a robust man, he was a most active member of society and of the church. He had been laid aside for a long period by ill health and died of old age, surrounded by his family.

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John F. Symington bought Auburn in 1915, modernized the house, and added the west kitchen wing to accommodate his style of life and renamed the place Kenoway House. The son of a Confederate officer and an all-American lacrosse player, Symington became an officer of the Bartlett-Hayward Company, which manufactured munitions, and of Locke Insulator Comapny, before his retirement in 1924. Kenoway House served as an appropriate setting for this prominent member of the Elkridge Fox Hunting Club, the Maryland Club, and the Baltimore Country Club.

About 1915, Symington added a west wing to provide a large kitchen. The 1918 tax ledger for District No. 9 showed J.F. Symington with the following assets on 25 acres:

House	52 x 44 30 x 28	\$7,231
Gardener's House	32 x 17	632
Barn	68 x 46	777
Barn		547

No doubt the second house dimension was the modern kitchen wing.

In 1944, Symington sold the property to the adjoining Sheppard-Pratt Hospital, which is visible from the rear lawn at Auburn. One of the hospital's most prominent chief physicians, Dr. Harry Murdock, resided here until he retired in 1965. The Baltimore News American of July 20, 1982, represented the following obituary on his death at age 79:

A memorial service for Dr. Harry M. Murdock will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 2, at Trinity Episcopal Church of Towson, 120 Allegheny Ave.

Dr. Murdock, 79, died Saturday at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center after a brief illness.

A native of Omaha, Neb., he received both his undergraduate and medical degrees at the University of Nebraska. He came to Baltimore in 1930 to take a position at the Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital. He had been a resident of Towson ever since.

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During World War II he served as a lieutenant commander with the Navy Medical Corps. In 1949, Dr. Murdock was appointed medical director of at Sheppard Pratt, a position he held until his retirement in 1963. After his retirement he served as consultant to Sheppard Pratt on the needs of older patients who require long-term hospitalization. He also was a consultant to the Social Security Administration.

Dr. Murdock was a member of the American Board of Psychiatry and from 1953 until 1955 he served as president of the Maryland Psychiatric Association. During the early 1950s he served as chairman of the Board of Review for Mental Hygiene of the State Department of Mental Hygiene. In 1957 he served as chairman of the Neuropsychiatric Section of the Baltimore City Medical Society, which advised police agencies how to handle people with mental difficulties.

In 1926 he married the former Margaret Shaw of Omaha, who died in 1977.

Outside his work in medicine and psychaiatry, Dr. Murdock was a founder and early president of the Orchid Society of Maryland.

He is survived by a son, Bruce P. Murdock of Timonium, and three grandchildren.

Sheppard Pratt's director of public information, Priscilla M. Tainter, wrote in the Towson Times of March 11, 1981, that the hospital had not left the Auburn house prey to vandals:

Dr. Harry Murdock, former medical director of Sheppard Pratt Hospital, resided in Auburn House from 1945 until his retirement in 1965. Contrary to the Times' article, the residence did not become vacant, but was occupied by Mr. John Moro, plant manager for Sheppard Pratt. He and his family were in residence there until March 1, 1971. The mansion maintained "its elegance and dignity" throughout its ownership by Sheppard Pratt.

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Transfer of ownership from Sheppard Pratt to the State of Maryland took place March 1971 when the property was in impecable condition. The "decay and destruction" of this lovely homestead referred to in the article took place when the property was no longer under the jurisdiction of Sheppard Pratt.

The grounds and facilities of The Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital have always been a source of pride to those associated with the local institution and to the community itself. We are therefore understandably distressed when the public is misinformed about our purported neglect of Auburn House.

Towson State College as it was then called acquired the house in 1971 and the vandalism occurred between then and 1976 when its restoration as a faculty club began. The club opened in 1977 even before the landscaping was completed.

John and Emma Moro returned to Auburn House in 1985 to pose in front of the doomed Bride and Groom trees that supposedly had been planted in 1789 (Towson Times, October 9, 1985). The date given in the article had been calculated some years ago--1954--when a large branch had broken off in a storm.

↓  
by Dr. Murdock

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Carleton Jones visited the house in 1975 while it was being readied for restoration. Jones stated that the marble fireplaces that had been smashed by vandals and been installed only about 1913 by John Fife Symington. Vandals and restorationists, said Jones, had stolen the oak stair rail and ballusters, wall brackets, and custom-built bookcases. Only one fireplace survived. Jones quoted the interior design consultant C. Dudley Brown who said the house "is as level as the day it was built," except for a sag between the north and south parlors. Brown stated that he was not designing in "prettified Colonial." In his opinion Auburn "is a dignified and conservative throwback to Federal architecture of the early Nineteenth Century, with perhaps a few overtones of the great day of Latrobe, Bulfinch, and William Thornton." Either Carleton Jones or Brown made a comparison to the 1810 Talbot County house, "Knightly." A flier distributed by the Towson Club about 1976 stated that the Talbot County prototype was "Presqu'Isle," also dated at 1810. Jones noted that "the only eighteenth century elements in the design are splendid trees . . . plus three-fixed-panel doors, similar to those in Hampton, and probably replaced in Auburn in the 1850s after an original Ridgely house on the spot burned to the ground." Jones noted that "elaborate cornice mouldings have survived." (Sunday Sun, November 30, 1975, p. F-1).

The two houses to which Auburn has been compared are depicted in Christopher Weeks' Where Land and Water Intertwine. There is no resemblance to the gable-roofed, temple-fronted Presqu'Isle (MHT No. T-86) at Longwoods. There is a resemblance in the use of proportion to Knightly on Leeds Creek at Tunis Mills (MHT Site No. T-94) but the Eastern Shore example lacks the Greek Revival attic of Auburn.

An anonymous feature story in a Towson weekly paper, probably written by William Williams of Lutherville, was the only source that suggested that the first Auburn had been on a different site--slightly to the south of the present structure. It was Williams who first attributed the marble fireplaces to John Fife Symington. Williams also reported that Henry Turnbull had bought a fire engine to spray the great trees. He also noted that Henry C. Turnbull had given up his plans to enter the ministry and that the ship on which he served as ship's clerk was the U.S.S. Potomac (Jeffersonian, February 23, 1934).

Auburn is not found in the transfer book series that began in 1853; thus it was probably already entered into the main series of tax ledgers of ca. 1851 which are now lost. That new set of tax ledgers would have been needed as soon as the city and county split apart in 1851. Large villas belonging to other persons are found in the

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1853 entries in the transfer books, standing out from other domestic buildings because of their \$5000 and \$6000 assessment figures. With the first Auburn's fatal fire taking place in late October 1849, reconstruction probably had to wait for the building season of 1850.

Kahn and Amon were the restoration architects and Roy Kirby, Jr., contractor. The Sun Magazine of August 15, 1976, contained an anonymous update on the project and noted that vandals had continued to assault the structure, "breaking out newly installed, custom-milled windows as building progressed." A full-time K-9 dog left on the premises overnight put an end to the intrusions. Walls were scraped and replastered and new blades were cut to produce the 3-½-inch chairrails and 8-inch baseboards. The kitchen area was given steel reinforcement., and the front portico was "remilled, dug under, supported, sanded, apainted, fitted with bulbous balustrades and Greek Revival columns, past which club members soon will be sauntering towards the past." The year before, Carleton Jones noted that the round, 10,000-gallon sheet-iron water cistern in the basement would have to be cut apart by a welder's torch to get its pieces out of the building---presumably the holding tank had been assembled inside about 1850 (Sunday Sun, November 30, 1975).

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for HNT from 1945-48 files

AUBURN, *Older Drive, Towson County*

OLD TURNBULL MANSION NEAR TOWSON. PHOTO TAKEN  
FEB. 1900 BY <sup>the late</sup> MR. AUBREY PEARRE. CONTACT PRINT MADE  
FROM ORIGINAL (DAMAGED) GLASS PLATE, FEB. 1973.  
PLATE BORROWED FROM <sup>Mr. Pearre's daughter</sup> MISS ELIZ. PEARRE OF REIS-  
TERSTOWN RD., PIKESVILLE.



BA-213  
AUBURN



AUBURN HOUSE RESTORATION, BALTIMORE COUNTY  
Project # 24-76-00258-00

BA-213

Finished facade in snow

2



BA-213

"AUBURN", TOWSON, BALTIMORE COUNTY



BA-213

"AUBURN", TOWSON, BALTIMORE COUNTY

Historic  
**AUBURN  
HOUSE**

*Home of...*

*The  
Lowson  
Club*

a distinguished dining club at  
Towson State College

1799

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

**AUBURN**

RESTORATION  
OF THIS PROPERTY WHICH IS LISTED IN  
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
HAS BEEN PARTIALLY FUNDED WITH THE  
ASSISTANCE OF A MATCHING GRANT FROM  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,  
UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF  
THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966.

AUBURN HOUSE RESTORATION, Baltimore County  
Project # 24-76-00258-00 BA-213

Entrance sign



BA-213

Auburn House

One of the two English elms sheltering the  
front entrance. Photographed from the  
front porch

James Karmrodt Lightner  
1972

Negative with James K. Lightner  
611 Park Avenue, Baltimore

James Karmrodt Lightner  
611 Park Ave.  
Tel: 685-0201  
Order # **8537006**



BA-213

Auburn House

View of front facade from the southeast corner  
of the building; the larger east porch is to  
the right out of range of the camera.

James Karmrodt Lightner

1972

Negative with James K. Lightner  
611 Park Avenue, Baltimore

James Karmrodt Lightner  
611 Park Ave.  
Tel: 685-0201  
Order #8537002



BA-213

Auburn House

View of Southwest corner of Auburn House  
showing Kitchen wing addition.

James Karmrodt Lightner

1972

Negative with James K. Lightner  
611 Park Avenue, Baltimore

James Karmrodt Lightner  
611 Park Ave.  
Tel: 685-0201  
Order # 8537609



Auburn BA-213

Metzke Photography

③  
Main Hallway - view North

Center Hall  
Looking toward  
Rear

Order #12233



Huburn BA-213

Metz Photography

Order #12235

①  
FRONT SOUTH - WEST SIDE



Auburn BA-213

Mettee Photography

Library  
near  
Living Room

Order #12236

REAR WINDOW - EAST SIDE - VIEW FROM

(2)