FHR 7-300 (11-78)

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

B-3708
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received
date entered 107

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic: Clifton School (Preferred)

and or common: C.H.M. School

2. Location

street & number: 2670 Kennedy Avenue — N/A not for publication

city, town: Baltimore — ___ vicinity of — congressional district

state: Maryland — code 024 — county: Independent City — code 510

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	N/A	___ no	___ military	X other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name: C.H.M. Limited Partnership, c/o Struever Brothers and Eccles, Inc.

street & number: 519 North Charles Street

city, town: Baltimore — ___ vicinity of — state: Maryland 21202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: Baltimore City Courthouse

street & number: 100 North Calvert Street, Room 601

city, town: Baltimore — state: Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title: see continuation sheet #1 — has this property been determined elegible? X yes ___ no

date: ___ federal ___ state ___ county X local

depository for survey records

city, town — state

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Title: City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey

Date: January 1982

Depository for Survey Records: C.H.A.P., Room 601 City Hall

City: Baltimore State: Maryland 21202

Title: Maryland Historical Trust Inventory of Historic Sites

Date: January 1982

Depository for Survey Records: Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

City: Annapolis, State: Maryland 21401

7. Description

B-3708

Condition		Check one	Check one
excellent	___ deteriorated	X unaltered	X original site
good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date _____
fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The Clifton School is a late 19th century school with an early 20th century addition. Located in northeast Baltimore just west of the former Johns Hopkins estate, Clifton (now Clifton Park), the school lies on a site which slopes gently down from north to south. Its materials, scale, and volume are all very similar to the nearby residences, but unlike the adjacent rowhouses it is a detached building. It combines a gable roofed, T plan, brick county school built in 1882 with a Colonial Revival, flat roofed, rectangular plan, brick city school addition built in 1915. The structure is now approximately ten bays wide and eight bays long. Stylistic details occur mainly on the southeast elevation and include a pavilion with truncated corners, a wood frontispiece door, brick belt courses, and nine over nine wood, double hung windows with subsills and segmental arches. The interior consists of simple detailed rooms with wood or vinyl-asbestos tile floors, plaster walls, and pressed metal ceilings.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The central bay is an advanced pavilion with truncated corners. The main door within is a frontispiece door with paneled pilasters on plinths with a full entablature and broken pediment above. The doors are double wood and glass paneled doors with a boarded transom above. On the second floor, the two bays are coupled with nine over nine double hung windows having six light transoms, a flat arch, and concrete subsills.

The two end bays of the building are blind. On the basement level on either side of the pavilion are boarded over windows. Stairs lead down in front of them to a basement entrance underneath the main entrance. There is a beveled water table with a soldier course above forming a belt course around the building and the lintels for the basement windows. The other two stories have nine over nine double hung windows with concrete subsills. On the first floor the windows have the same soldier course lintels within a belt course found on the basement. The second story has segmental arch soldier course lintels.

Above the third floor arches there is a wood cornice with a raised brick facia. A brick parapet surmounts the cornice and has a terra cotta coping. The north wall of the building has seven bays, with only six open for fenestration, which is identical to the main facade. The soldier course belt course continues around from the main facade. The cornice and parapet continue around as well.

On the southwest side of this building is the original "T" shaped 1882 school structure. It also has five course common bond brick; the roof is gabled. Its north wall has four windows on the first and second stories with the same details as the previously mentioned windows. The soldier course belt course from the addition emerges with a raised brick string belt course here. The gables are stepped and have terra cotta coping. The intersecting walls of the "T" are each one bay. On the first floor there is a door with a wood awning above and the other bay has a boarded over window identical to the others.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

On the second floor there is a window in each bay. The eaves overhang. The east wall of the building has two bays of boarded over windows, a stepped gable, and a stone stating "Public School No. 4, District 9". The south wall of the structure is identical to the north.

The interior consists of a fully utilized basement, first, and second floor. The stairs are located in the truncated pavilion of the southeast facade. A main hallway axis extends in a straight westward line from the main door. Offices and classrooms open off of both sides and the hallway terminates in classrooms. The northwest end of the structure contains a subsidiary staircase.

Interior details and finishes are minimal and in a deteriorating condition. The floors have linoleum tile, and the walls and ceilings are finished in plaster. There are plain baseboards and plain surrounds on all openings. Most doors are wood and have boarded transoms. The stairs are metal, with a closed string, plain balusters and paneled newels having finials. Some rooms retain the pressed metal ceilings and wood floors. The school is solidly built and is readily adaptable to housing. Some of the original details can be incorporated into the building's rehabilitation plans. These include the wood floors, the multi-pane windows, the banisters and newel posts, and the pressed metal ceiling in the front entrance area.

8. Significance

B-3708

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400-1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600-1699	___ architecture	X education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700-1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
X 1900-	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates 1882 ; 1915 **Builder/Architect** Smith and May, architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criterion: A

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Clifton School is significant to Baltimore because of its association with a difficult period in the expansion of the city's public school system. The upheaval followed the city's annexation in 1888 of 26 square miles of Baltimore County. The transferral of Clifton (built in 1882) along with about 15 other county schools forced Baltimore to first adapt these schools to their system and to serve a much larger area. The grade levels had to be divided by sex (they were already divided by race); the teachers had to be evaluated; and most of the buildings had to be repaired or replaced. Later population expansion in the 26 square miles of annexed area forced the construction of new schools or - as in the case of Clifton in 1915 - the expansion of the existing ones. Since the annex schools had been poorly built and maintained, most of them were eventually replaced, and thus Clifton exists as a rare survivor of this significant epoch in the city school system.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Near the turn of the eighteenth century, William Patterson, a significant figure in Baltimore's early commercial history, purchased land bounded roughly by Gorsuch Avenue, Harford Avenue, North Avenue, and York Roads. He informally named this estate Cold Stream, and built a country house on it variously called Cold Stream, Exeter Hall, and Homestead. The Homestead name seems to have been the most popular and became the name of one of Baltimore's earliest planned subdivisions, created by developers of Patterson's estate after his death. It was the easternmost of a belt of communities north of Baltimore City.

An advertisement in Matchett's 1853-1854 Baltimore City Directory stated, "the situation is one of the most beautiful, most healthy, and most convenient of access in the neighborhood of Baltimore.... It is about 390 feet above tide water and commands views of the city and bay in the distance." Like contemporary subdivisions, the developers emphasized the opportunity for an affordable rural residence in close proximity to the city. The developers apparently anticipated a large community; for the first area sold was called "Eastern Homestead" on an early map. Perhaps there was to be a western, southern, and northern section. The project did not succeed, though, because the area had no rail connection to the city (according to Thomas Scharff).

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (Continued)

In 1866, Scharff claims, the idea was revised and a success. The community grew roughly within present day Abbottston Street, Harford Avenue, Homestead Street, and Montepelier Street. It was still known as Homestead, and in April of 1882, "a delegation from Homestead presented in a forcible manner the necessities for better school accommodations for School 4, District 9". Two months later the board approved construction of a new school. Initially it may have been called Homestead School, but it was eventually called the Clifton School; in fact, the whole area was known as Clifton by the 1890s due to the proximity of Johns Hopkins' estate a few hundred yards to the east.

In its historical context, the structure was built at a time of steady growth of the county school buildings. In the ten year span 1877-1887 an average of five new structures were built each year, netting 16 additional buildings. The trend was to build brick or stone buildings, rather than log and frame schools. Log schools were the least preferred, and very few existed by 1887.

At the same time, the county school commissioners were placing much greater emphasis than earlier on the durability, function, and appearance of the schools. The 1878 Annual Report of the Baltimore County School Commissioners stated that schools "no longer (are) built of (the) roughest materials without symmetry or design... in some remote corner or district; but the most desirable and convenient sites are selected, upon which substantial houses, neat in design, ornamental in appearance, with all modern imporvements, are erected." In 1886 the report said, "In this age of progress the schools should be in the vein...; in fact, a good school house, to be attractive, should have all the comforts and conveniences of a good home." These new requirements caused a paradoxical rise in the cost of the schools at the same time the commissioners were exercising a conservative, tight fiscal policy. Nonetheless, schools of this period are designed individually and built of brick - not wood - and exhibit a fair amount of embellishment.

Albert Shriver supervised the Clifton School's construction while the architect of the school probably was Frank E. Davis, who designed many county schools and who is the only architect mentioned at this time in conjunction with the design of schools in the Commission's minutes. In fact, the county had a policy of hiring one architect; in the mid-1860s it was Thomas and James Dixon, in the early 20th century it was Wilson J. Smith and Howard May. Davis was an important Baltimore architect who designed the Pine Street Police Station c. 1871, in the High Victorian Gothic style, and the Odd Fellows Hall in 1891 in the Romanesque Revival style. This building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This structure was a small school; perhaps only an annex to the existing P.S. #4. It contained four rooms for five teachers, and contained about 190 white male and female students in grades 1-7. At this time, Baltimore schools were completely segregated, and black schools were always old, used white schools.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #4

The school remained in the county for only five years; for, in 1888 the city annexed 23 square miles of land north and west of the city, which included Clifton and 15 other county schools. (This was the second of three annexations after the initial organization of city land in the 18th century.) Clifton then became directly involved in the difficult period of transition for the city school commissioners.

The annexation created four immediate tasks for them. First, many of the county school buildings were in poor, aged condition and needed replacement. Secondly, because the two systems had different criteria for, and groupings of, grade levels, the schools had to be reorganized. Thirdly, the county also had different criteria for the hiring of teachers than the city, and thus the commissioners required teachers to reapply for their jobs. Fourthly, although both systems racially segregated their schools, the county did not divide them by sex, which the city then had to do.

The long term effect of this annexation (and the 1918 annexation) was a great geographic expansion of the school commissioners' authority and responsibility. Specifically, more school buildings had to be constructed as population growth in outlying areas of the city accelerated rapidly. As early as 1888 Clifton had been noted as overcrowded with five teachers dispersed among 195 students, but it was not until 1915 when an addition was built on its southeast elevation which doubled the school's size. This treatment was unusual, since the commission preferred to replace rather than expand the poorly built and maintained annex schools. Hence, few of them still survive, and Clifton stands as evidence of the school system's adjustment to the expansion of Baltimore and its population.

Wilson J. Smith and Howard May, architects for the county school commissioners, undertook this project. Smith and May had begun in the Baltimore firm of Parker, Thomas and Rice who designed the Savings Bank of Baltimore, Belvedere Hotel, Alex Brown and Sons Building, and the B & O Building. All of these structures still exist as superb examples of the Neo Classical and Beaux Art schools of design. Smith left the firm in about 1912 to begin his own firm, which specialized in the design of educational buildings. They were the official architects for Baltimore County and the University of Maryland, as well as the consulting architects for the Maryland State Board of Education. They did city design also, including the Forest Park Junior High in 1924, and the Gwynn's Falls Park School in 1925. One of their most important designs was not a school, though, but the Baltimore Trust Building (now Maryland National Bank Building) with Taylor and Fisher in 1929. Their Clifton School design harmonizes well with the older section by using the same brick, fenestration, and belt courses on all the facades. The addition is typical of early twentieth century school design which almost exclusively employed either the Gothic or Colonial Revival styles.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #5

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (Continued)

During the twentieth century, the school's population slowly declined. In 1936 there were six teachers and 180 pupils in the grades 1-4; in 1941-1942 there were only 3 teachers and 89 pupils. As a result, the school was closed in 1944, and the students were transferred to school #50. The Clifton School became Administration Annex #521, housing the Art Education, Audiovisual Education, Music Education, and Physical and Health Education offices until 1965, when these offices moved to the annex building at Oliver and Eden Streets.

Vacant for some time, the school will soon become one of many which have been rehabilitated for residential use. In 1979, six historic schools were converted to low-income housing, and in Federal Hill the city converted a school for use by artists. Another school is undergoing rehabilitation for housing and a community center. The Clifton School will be rehabilitated into eleven subsidized apartments. Many of its original features such as pressed metal ceilings, wood floors, wood frame windows, and decorative metal banisters will be incorporated into the rehabilitation plans, where possible. The adaptive reuse into housing is compatible with the Urban Renewal Plan developed by the community to stabilize the neighborhood, provide housing, and upgrade the existing residential and commercial structures. The rehabilitation of the school, which will assure the preservation of the historic structure and will stimulate rehabilitation and other adaptive reuse projects in the community.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Annual Minutes of the Baltimore County Board of Education, Towson, Baltimore County Board of Education, 1877-1887.

Annual Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners, Baltimore Board of School Commissioners, 1944, 1966.

Annual Report of the Board of School Commissioners, Baltimore Board of School Commissioners, 1888, 1915, 1916.

Annual Report of the Public Schools of Baltimore County, Maryland, Baltimore County Board of Education, Towson, 1882, 1883.

Bromley, G.W., Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Philadelphia, G. W. Bromley and Company, 1896.

"Cold Stream", Query File, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department, Baltimore, Maryland.

Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation, "Determination of Eligibility Documentation: Old Clifton School", Baltimore, 1981.

Hall, Clayton Colinan, ed., Baltimore: Its History, Its People, I, New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #6

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Continued)

"Homestead", Query File, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department, Baltimore, Maryland.

Matchett's Baltimore Directory, Baltimore, Richard J. Matchett, 1853-1854.

"May Howard", Biography File, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department, Baltimore, Maryland.

National Cyclopedia of American Biography, Vol. 23, New York, James T. White and Company, 1922.

"Plan of Eastern Homestead", Map, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department, Baltimore, Maryland.

Scharf, J. Thomas, History of Baltimore City and County, Vol. II, Philadelphia, Louis H. Everts, 1881.

School Directory, Baltimore Public Schools, Baltimore, Department of Education, 1936/37, 1941/42, 1948/49, 1965/66, 1966/67.

"School Houses", Vertical File, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department, Baltimore, Maryland.

"Smith, Eildon L.", Biography File, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland Department, Baltimore, Maryland.

Vavina, Vernon S., The History of Public Education in the City of Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, series 17, no. 12, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1899.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning for the same at the southwest corner of Gorsuch Avenue and Kennedy Avenue (formerly Harrison Street) and running thence westerly binding along the line of the south side of Gorsuch Avenue thirty feet thence southwesterly at right angles to Gorsuch Avenue ninety feet to a twenty foot alley there laid out thence easterly binding on said alley with the use thereof in common with other lots binding thereon thirty feet to Kennedy Avenue (formerly Harrison Street) ninty feet to the place of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property included in the nomination is only the city lot upon which the resource stands.

9. Major Bibliographical References

B-3708

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS #5 and #6

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .062 acre

Quadrangle name Baltimore East, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	362420	4353480	B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

For Boundary Description see Continuation Sheet #6.
For Boundary Justification see Continuation Sheet #6.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara A. Hoff, Director of Development

organization Dalsemer, Catzen and Associates, Inc. date January 1982

street & number 14 Light Street telephone (301) 837-3691

city or town Baltimore state Maryland 21202

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature J Mitchell 11-8-82

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

For HCRS use only

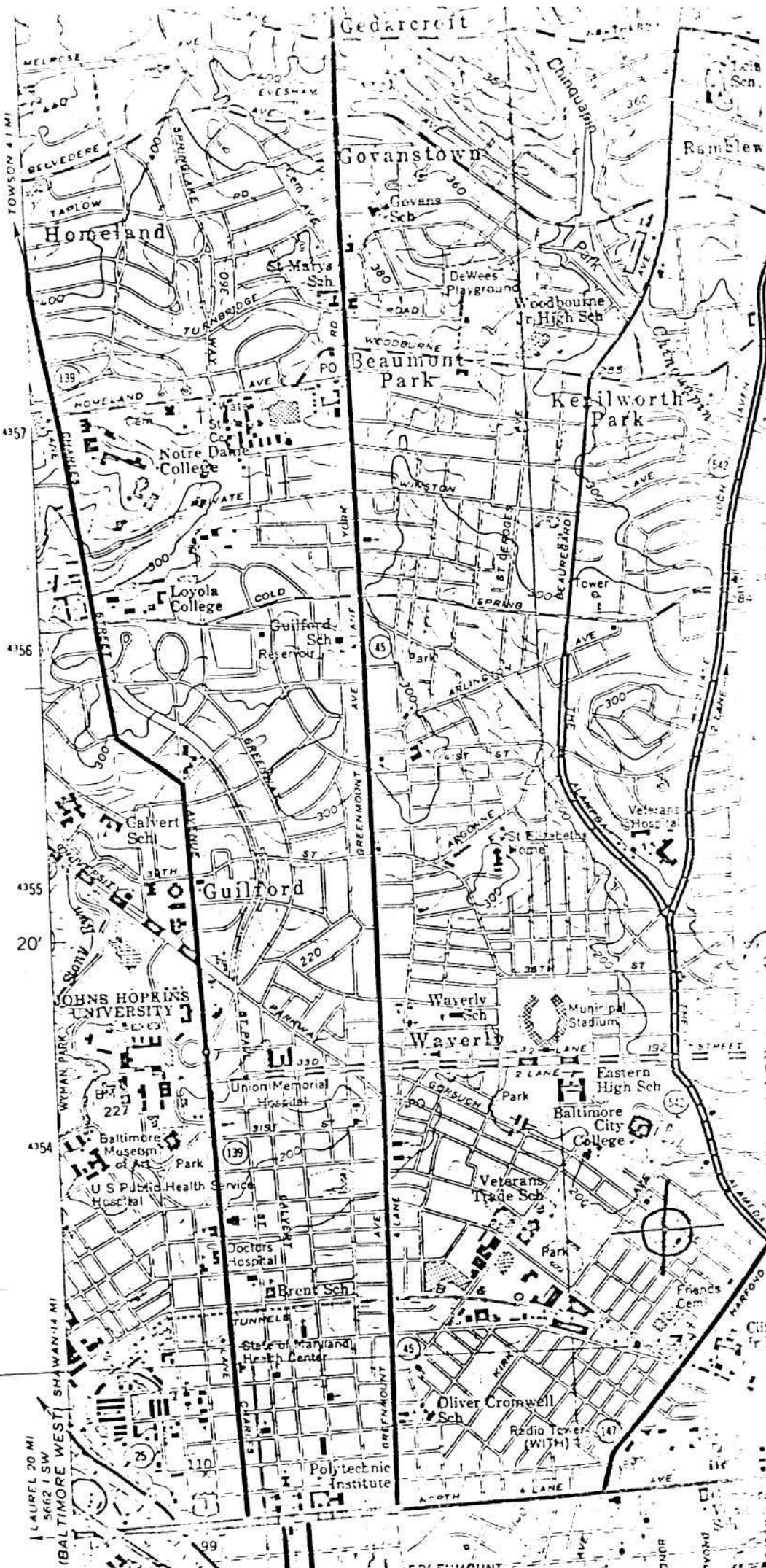
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

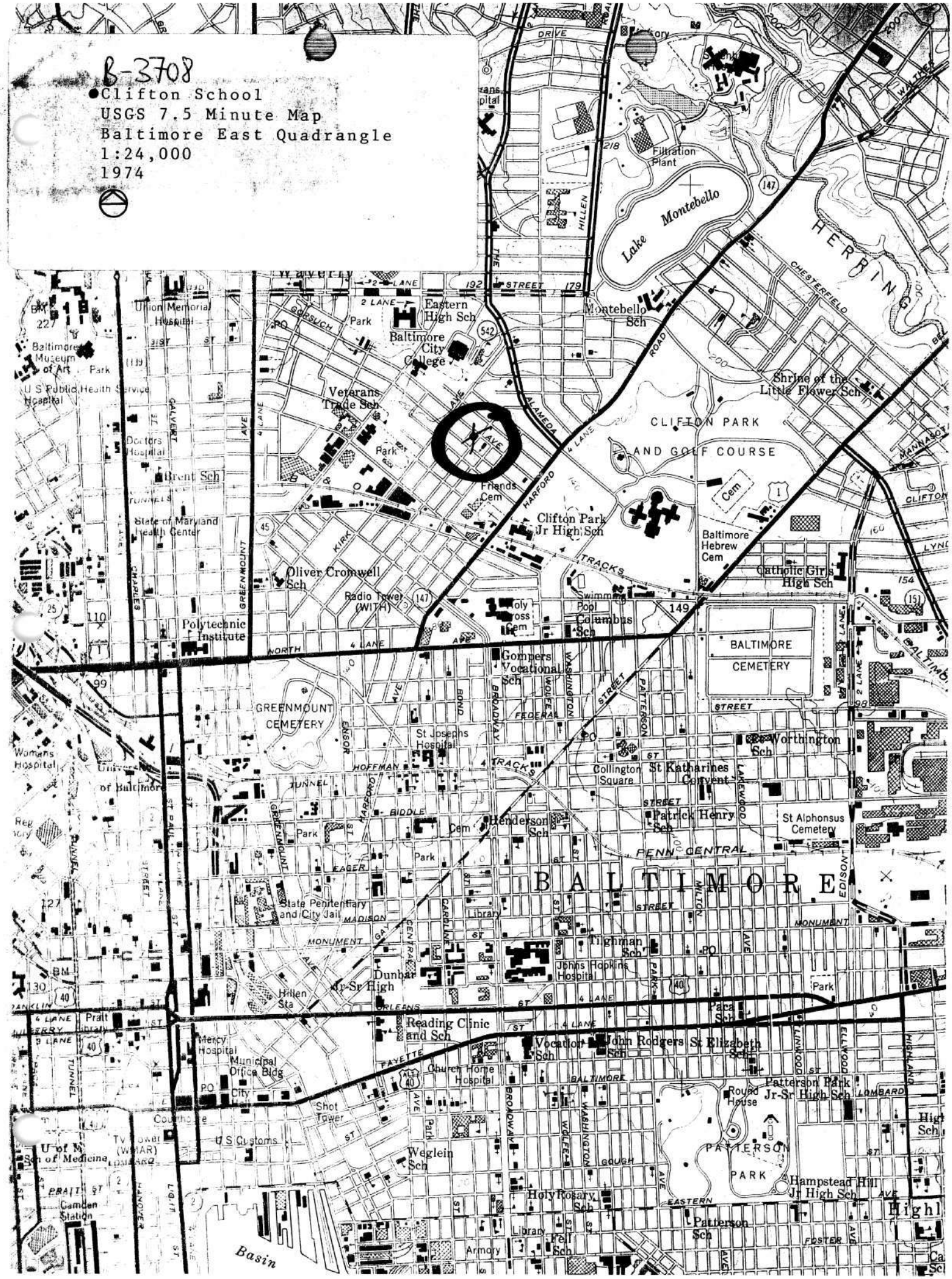
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration



B-3708
CLIFTON SCHOOL
BALTIMORE CITY, MD

18-362420-4353480

B-3708
•Clifton School
USGS 7.5 Minute Map
Baltimore East Quadrangle
1:24,000
1974