

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #67-16

Building Date: 1890

Building Name: Pickett House

Location: 8616 57th Avenue, Berwyn Heights, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Pickett House is a two-and-one-half-story cross-gable frame house, highlighted by stick style decorative elements and novelty shingling. The main entrance is in the first bay of the south (main) gable end through a heavy 12-panel door with a single-pane transom and plain board surround. Filling the second and third bays of this gable end is a one-story projecting semi-octagonal bay with shed roof. The same roof forms a one-story porch with a small pedimented peak over the entrance to the main door. The porch wraps around part of the west facade and it is supported by chamfered posts and has an openwork geometric frieze course and a picket railing. Siding of the building is plain horizontal board on the first story, and fishscale shingles on second and third stories, all painted yellow. The cornice is boxed with crown molding. A two-bay gable-roof kitchen wing extends to the north, making the house roughly cruciform in plan. A one-story rectangular projecting bay fills the second and third bay of the three-bay east facade. A one-story shed-roof (enclosed) porch with Tuscan columns shelters the north gable end of the kitchen wing.

Significance

The Pickett House is a good example of a late Victorian suburban dwelling. Fairly simple in plan, it is highlighted by novelty shingling and stick style/geometric decorative elements. It was probably constructed from a pattern book design, and is one of the first dwellings built in the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights. The Town of Charlton Heights was platted in 1888 by Edward Graves, on 383 acres of land bounded by the Branchville Road and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Graves sold the land to the Charlton Heights Improvement Company in that year, and the company immediately began construction of dwellings ordered by pattern through the mail. The subject house was built in 1890 by the Charlton Heights Improvement Company. It was probably constructed from a pattern book design, as were the other early houses in Charlton Heights. In 1891 (for \$5,000) the Company sold the house (and two lots on which it stood) to Bessie Cummings, who then mortgaged the property to James Waugh. Bessie Cummings' house, now with seven lots, changed hands several times in the early twentieth century. In 1934 it was acquired by Gustey and Ida Pickett, and remained the Pickett family home for 45 years. Although simpler in plan and decoration than some of the earlier pattern-book houses built in Charlton Heights, it holds a commanding position in the angle of one of the old streets, and is a significant landmark in the community of Berwyn Heights today.

Acreage: 31,464 square feet

Survey No. PG#67-16

Mag. No.

DOE. yes no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (Indicate preferred name)

historic: Pickett House

and/or common: Pickett House

## 2. Location

street & number: 8616 57th Avenue not for publication

city, town: Berwyn Heights vicinity of: congressional district 5

state: Md. county: P.G.

## 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 Acquisitions	Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> year restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> year unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

names: Cornelis Gehrels

street & number: 8616 57th Ave. telephone no.:

city, town: Berwyn Heights state and zip code: Md. 20740

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: P.G. Co. Courthouse liber #5628

street & number: Main Street folio 524

city, town: Upper Marlboro state: MD.

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title: None

date:  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records:

city, town: state:

# 7. Description

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

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

The Pickett House is a two-and-one-half-story cross-gabled frame house, highlighted by stick style decorative elements and novelty shingling. It stands on one of the original lots of the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights.

The house stands on an angular lot, facing roughly south toward the oblique intersection of 57th Avenue and Quebec Street. Principal facade is the three-bay south gable end. The main entrance is in the first bay of this south gable end through a heavy 12-panel door, of which the upper panels are glazed. The door has a single-pane transom and plain board surround. Filling the second and third bays of this gable end is a one-story projecting semi-octagonal bay with shed roof. This roof continues across the south gable end, forming a one-story porch with a small pedimented peak over the entrance to the main door. The porch wraps around part of the west facade; it is supported by chamfered posts (painted dark green) with an openwork geometric frieze course, and has a picket railing.

Siding of the building is plain horizontal board on the first story, and fishscale shingles on second and third stories, all painted yellow. The third story is slightly flared over the second story. The cornice is boxed with crown molding; at the gable ends, the eaves are flared and decorated with bulleye corner blocks. In the south gable end, at third level, is a four-segment semi-circular window within a rectangular casing. Other windows are 2/2 double hung sash; lintels on the first story have crown molding, other windows have plain (white aluminum) surrounds.

A two-bay gable-roof kitchen wing extends to the north, making the house roughly cruciform in plan. This north gable end, as well as the projecting west cross-gable, is decorated at third level with a stick style cross and pendant. A one-story rectangular projecting bay fills the second and third bay of the three-bay east facade. A one-story shed-roof (enclosed) porch with mock Tuscan columns shelters the north gable end of the kitchen wing.

The roof of the building is covered with gray asbestos shingle. There are two tall brick chimneys in the east plane of the roof of the main block, and another at the north end of the kitchen wing. The house stands on a brick foundation which encloses a basement, entered through a bulkhead on the west.

The principal south entrance opens into a narrow side stairhall. The three-run staircase begins against the south wall, turns 90° and rises along the west wall, and then turns again to the east. It has a large, tall turned newel, with spherical cap. The stair itself is closed string, with turned balusters.

Two doors lead east from the stairhall into a front and back parlor, connected by pocket doors which retract into the dividing wall. Centered in the east wall of the front (south) parlor is a fireplace with molded - Victorian wood mantel and over-mantel; its firebox is framed with ceramic tiles. Surrounds of doors and windows have multi-band molding, with a wide convex center band, and bulls-eye corner blocks.

In the yard northeast of the house is a pyramidal roof garage building, with yellow German siding and dark green trim; a shed addition extends to the east. Immediately to the (north) rear of the house are an old well and pump.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. PG#-67-16

Period:	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input 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 date: ca. 1890 Builder/Architect: Charlton Heights Improvement Co.

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 Pickett House is a good example of a late Victorian suburban dwelling. Fairly simple in plan, it is highlighted by novelty shingling and stick style/geometric decorative elements. It was probably constructed from a pattern book design, and is one of the first dwellings built in the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights.

In 1887, Edward Graves of Washington, D.C. purchased 383 acres south of the Branchville Road and bounded on the west by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He engaged the firm of Newby and Howell to survey and plat a new residential community, and called it Charlton Heights.<sup>1</sup> The plat of 1888 showed 50-foot-wide streets, criss-crossing at varied angles, and lots of approximately 50 by 200 feet. Graves sold the land in 1888 to the Charlton Heights Improvement Company, which immediately began construction of dwellings ordered by pattern through the mail. Within the same year, the Company began to sell lots, some unimproved, and some with new houses already erected.<sup>2</sup> By the end of the first year, approximately 20 houses had been built, and the new town became the home principally of professionals who used the Baltimore and Ohio railroad to commute into Washington, D.C.<sup>3</sup>

For the next three years, the Charlton Heights Improvement Company continued to sell lots, but with only limited success. In 1892, Edward Graves, the developer, and James Waugh, secretary of the Company, both of whom resided in Charlton Heights, bought the remaining unsold lots; they continued to sell them, and the Charlton Heights Improvement Company ceased operations. In 1896, by an act of the Maryland General Assembly, the town was incorporated, and its name was changed to Berwyn Heights. It continued to grow slowly; by 1910, the population was slightly over 150, and there were 38 dwellings.<sup>4</sup> Today most of the lots have been filled in by 1950's subdivision housing, and Berwyn Heights is a quiet residential community with curving streets and old trees, set back and somewhat secluded, between two major highways.

The subject house was built in 1890 by the Charlton Heights Improvement Company; it was one of the second group of houses built by the Company. It was probably constructed from a pattern book design, as were the other early houses in Charlton Heights. In 1891 (for \$5,000) the Company sold the house (and two lots on which it stood) to Bessie Cummings, who then mortgaged the property to James Waugh.<sup>5</sup> Miss Cummings defaulted on her mortgage, and Peter Tome (to whom Waugh had assigned the mortgage) offered the property at public sale, as decreed by the Court of Equity. The property (Block 8, Lots 40 and 41) was described as "improved by a two-story frame dwelling with attic and necessary outbuildings"; Tome himself purchased the property for the high bid of \$2,000.<sup>6</sup>

Peter Tome was an officer of the Jacob Tome Institute, a charitable organization located in Cecil County, Maryland. The Tome Institute purchased a great deal of land in the new town, both unimproved and improved, for investment purposes; the Institute bought and sold lots in the community until nearly 1910.<sup>7</sup>

Bessie Cummings' house, now with seven lots, changed hands several times in the early twentieth century. In 1934 it was acquired by Gustey and Ida Pickett, and remained the Pickett family home for 45 years. Since 1983 it has been the home of the Gehrels family.<sup>8</sup> Although simpler in plan and decoration than some of the earlier pattern-book houses built in Charlton Heights, it holds a commanding position in the angle of one of the old streets, and is a significant landmark in the community of Berwyn Heights today.

#### Notes

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<sup>2</sup> Prince George's County Deeds, JWB #11:543; R. W. Shoppell Modern Houses, 1887; Artistic Modern Houses at Low Cost, 1888; Beautiful Homes, 1887; Building Plans for Modern Low Cost Houses, 1884, etc.; cf. Charlton Heights Improvement Company deeds, 1888.

<sup>3</sup> Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1888-1890; Census for Prince George's County, E. D. #1, 1900.

<sup>4</sup> JWB #20:496; JWB #21:225; JWB #22:53; G. M. Hopkins map, 1894; Census for Prince George's County, E.D. #1, 1900, 1910; Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1890-1910; Skarda, D.D., Berwyn Heights - History of a Small Maryland Town.

<sup>5</sup> Prince George's County Deed JWB #17:402, 411; Prince George's County Tax Assessments, 1888-1900.

<sup>6</sup> Prince George's County Equity #2203; Prince George's County Deed JWB #34:549.

<sup>7</sup> Prince George's County Deeds #12:21, #15:55, #96:317.

<sup>8</sup> Prince George's County Deeds #417:348; #5154:838; #5628:524.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#67-16

Cf. notes, item #8

## 10. Geographical Data

Area of nominated property: 31,464 square feet Tax Map: 33, Block 8, Lots 38-40

Quadrangle name: Washington East, Section C

Quadrangle scale:

UTM References: do NOT complete UTM references

A:          
Zone Easting Northing

B:          
Zone Easting Northing

C:

D:

E:

F:

G:

H:

Verbal boundary description and justification:

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: Susan G. Pearl, Research Historian

organization: Historic Preservation Commission

date: August 1986 and September 1987

street & number: c/o County Planning, MNCPPC

telephone: 952-3521

city or town: Upper Marlboro

state: MD

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

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #67-16 Building Date: 1890

Building Name: Pickett House

Location: 8616 57th Avenue, Berwyn Heights, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Pickett House is a two-and-one-half-story cross-gable frame house, highlighted by stick style decorative elements and novelty shingling. The main entrance is in the first bay of the south (main) gable end through a heavy 12-panel door with a single-pane transom and plain board surround. Filling the second and third bays of this gable end is a one-story projecting semi-octagonal bay with shed roof. The same roof forms a one-story porch with a small pedimented peak over the entrance to the main door. The porch wraps around part of the west facade and it is supported by chamfered posts and has an openwork geometric frieze course and a picket railing. Siding of the building is plain horizontal board on the first story, and fishscale shingles on second and third stories, all painted yellow. The cornice is boxed with crown molding. A two-bay gable-roof kitchen wing extends to the north, making the house roughly cruciform in plan. A one-story rectangular projecting bay fills the second and third bay of the three-bay east facade. A one-story shed-roof (enclosed) porch with Tuscan columns shelters the north gable end of the kitchen wing.

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Acreage: 31,464 square feet

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Pickett House

and/or common Pickett House

## 2. Location

street & number 8616 57th Avenue  not for publication

city, town Berwyn Heights  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Md. county P.G.

## 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 Cornelis Gehrels

street & number 8616 57th Ave. telephone no.:

city, town Berwyn Heights state and zip code Md. 20740

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P.G. Co. Courthouse liber #5628

street & number Main Street folio 524

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD.

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date  federal  state  county  local

repository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
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# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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
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<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** ca. 1890                      **Builder/Architect** Charlton Heights Improvement Co.

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

Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

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Chain of Title  
Pickett House  
PG #67-16

#5628:524  
7 Jan 1983  
Deed  
Jay and Tessa Mahalek to Neil Gehrels and Ellen Williams, Block 8, lots 38-40 in Berwyn Heights.

#5154:838  
18 Aug 1979  
Deed  
Miriam Pickett, personal representative of Ida Mae Pickett, deceased, surviving tenant of Gustey Pickett to Jay and Tessa Mehalek, Block 8, lots 38-40 in Berwyn Heights.

417:348  
8 June 1934  
Deed  
Molyneaux and Grace Turner to Gustey and Ida Pickett; Block 8, lots 35-39, part of 15-16 and 40-42 in Berwyn Heights.

152:361  
30 Dec 1919  
Gaius Brumbaugh of D.C. to Molyneaux and Grace Turner of Berwyn, Block 8, lots 36-42 in Berwyn Heights.

#128:435  
July 1918  
Deed  
Mary Shea and Mary Mullin to Gaius Brumbaugh, Block 8, lots 36-42 in Berwyn Heights, which grantors acquired by #96:318.

96:318  
22 July 1913  
Deed  
Katherine Foote Maas of London, England, to Mary Shea and Mary Mullin, Block 8, lots 36-42 in Berwyn Heights; which grantor inherited from Ellen J. Foote by will WAM #1:417.

12:21  
15 Dec 1902  
Deed  
Jacob Tome Institute to Ellen Foote for \$2000, Block 8 lots 40-42 in Berwyn Heights.

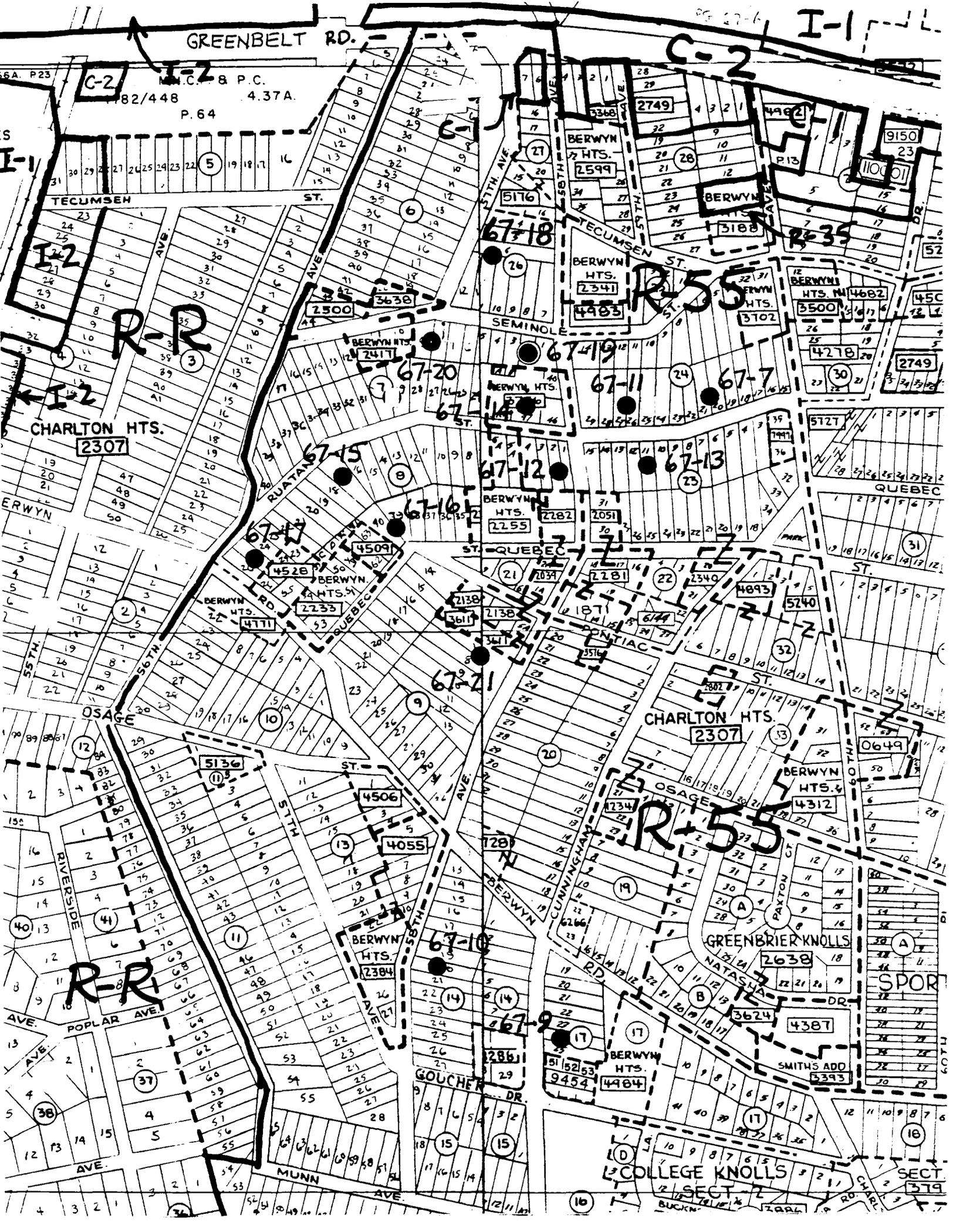
15:55  
6 Feb 1903  
Jacob Tome Institute to Ellen Foote for \$100, Block 8 lot 39, in Berwyn Heights.

JWB #34:549  
30 Nov 1895  
William H. Dawson, trustee to Peter Tome; Dawson appointed by court to sell property of Bessie Cummings; Peter Tome purchases, so Dawson executes this deed for Block 8, lots 40 and 41, Berwyn Heights.

#2203  
1895  
Equity  
Bessie Cummings mortgaged property to James Waugh, who assigned it to Peter Tome; after default, court ordered that the property (Block 8, lots 40 and 41 in Berwyn Heights) be sold. Peter Tome appointed to sell, and property is sold to Tome.

JWB #17:411  
17 Feb 1891  
Mortgage  
Bessie Cummings to James E. Waugh to secure debt of \$2000, Block 8, lots 40 and 41 in Charlton Heights.

JWB #17:402  
1 Jan 1891  
Deed  
Charlton Heights Improvement Company to Bessie Cummings, for \$5000, Block 8, lots 40 and 41 in Charlton Heights.



GREENBELT RD.

M.C. & P.C.  
82/448 4.37A.  
P.64

R-R

R-55

R-R

R-55

C-2

C-2

CHARLTON HTS.  
2307

CHARLTON HTS.  
2307

BERWYN HTS.  
2384

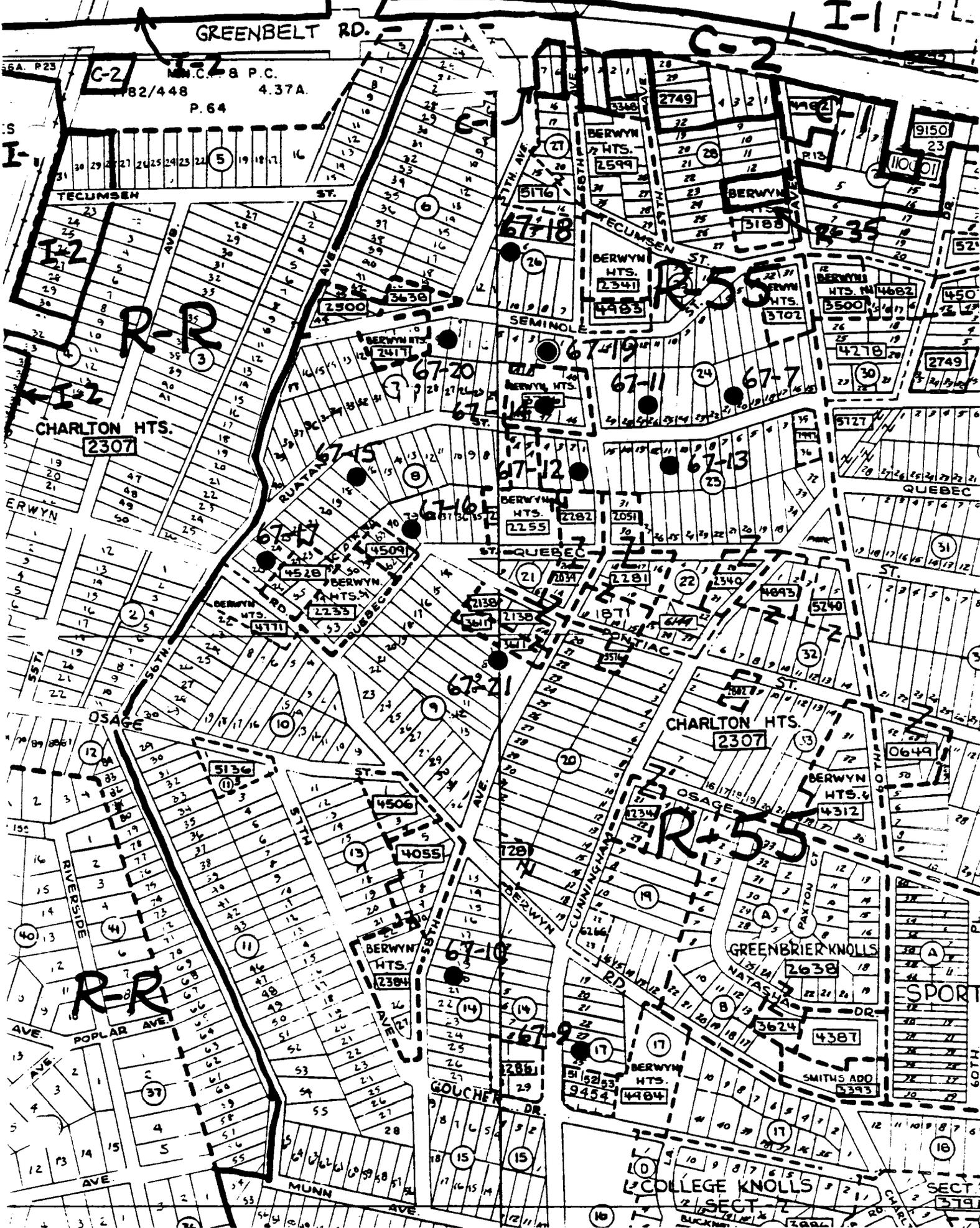
GREENBRIER KNOLLS  
2638

BERWYN HTS.  
4484

SPOR

COLLEGE KNOLLS

SECT 3



GREENBELT RD.  
M.C. 8 P.C.  
82/448 4.37A.  
P. 64

TECUMSEH ST.  
R-55

CHARLTON HTS.  
2307

OSAGE ST.

POPLAR AVE.  
R-55

CHARLTON HTS.  
2307

R-55

GREENBRIER KNOLLS  
2638

COLLEGE KNOLLS  
SECT 2



P.G. #67-16

Pickett House  
Prince George's County, MD.  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
Southeast 3/4 elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



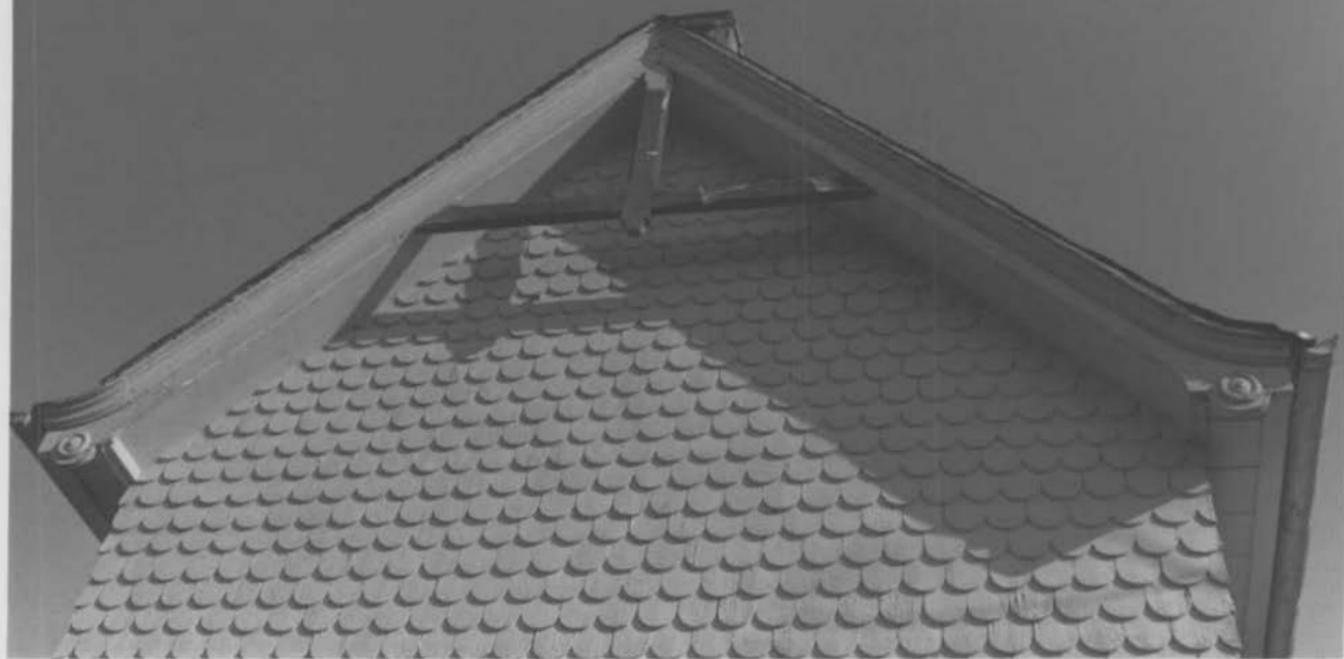
P.G. #67-16

Pickett House  
Prince George's County, MD.  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
Northwest 3/4 elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #67-16

Pickett House  
Prince George's County, MD.  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
Southwest 3/4 elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #67-16

Pickett House  
Prince George's County, MD.  
Susan G. Pearl  
March 1986  
North detail  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.