

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #68-34 Building Date: ca. 1890

Building Name: Smith-West House

Location: 5104 42nd Avenue, Hyattsville

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Smith-West house is a two-story frame, gable roof dwelling with an ell-shaped plan, situated on a small town lot fronting on 42nd Avenue. The three bay east (main) facade is surmounted by a gable over the first two bays. Entrance is in the third bay, through a double door with two upper, round arch glass panes, surmounted by a rectangular glass transom and a plain, wide board surround. The windows, one-over-one-double hung wood sash on the first level, have a heavy projecting lintel resting on brackets. Windows throughout the rest of the building have plain board surrounds. The first level is sheltered by a hipped roof porch which rests on tapering Doric columns. The house is sided with gray asbestos shingle, rests on a brick foundation and is covered with a black asphalt shingle roof. The heavy, crown molded cornice is returned in the gable ends. The two-bay south facade is marked by two projecting semi-octagonal, two-story bays with shallow hipped roofs. The house has a north side hall and two south parlors, with the kitchen to the west (rear) in the ell-wing. In the stairhall, the door surrounds have banded molding and corner blocks with a central flower blossom. The front and rear yard of the house are planted with flowering trees and shrubs. A wrought iron fence with a gate encloses the front yard.

Significance

The Smith-West House is significant for its ca. 1890 Victorian architecture. It is a fine example of a suburban dwelling, constructed on a small town lot in the streetcar suburb of Hyattsville. The house was constructed ca. 1890 by Benjamin F. and Francis Smith. In 1909 the house was sold to John Gipson, Jr., General Manager of the Boston Coal Company. Gibson held the property through 1936. The house contains much original interior detail, such as its four-panel doors with ceramic knobs, banded molding with floral corner blocks and stair with turned balusters. The exterior is notable for the double main entrance door with two round-arch upper glass panels, ornate wooden lintels above the windows and two south semi-octagonal two-story bays. The small lot the house stands on contains a number of ornamental bushes and trees, planted in the 1940's by a former owner, a botanist at the University of Maryland.

Acreage:

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Smith-West Houseand/or common West House

## 2. Location

street & number 5104 42nd Avenue  not for publicationcity, town Hyattsville  vicinity of congressional district 5state Maryland county Prince George's

## 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 Jane Weststreet & number 5104 42nd Avenue telephone no.:city, town Hyattsville state and zip code Maryland 20781

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 6105street & number Main Street folio 766city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title NAdate  federal  state  county  localdepository for survey records Historic Preservation Commission, CAB, Rm. 4010city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

# 7. Description

Survey No. P.G.#68-34

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

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

The Smith-West house is a two-story frame, gable roof dwelling with an ell-shaped plan. It is situated on a small town lot fronting closely on 42nd Avenue in Hyattsville.

The three bay east (main) facade is surmounted by a gable over the first two bays. Entrance is in the third bay, through a double door with two lower panels and two upper, round arch glass panes. The door is surmounted by a rectangular glass transom and has a plain, wide board surround. Between the door and the transom is a decorative quarter-round molding with a repeating pattern of two narrow and one wide vertical band.

The windows on the facade are one-over-one-double hung wood sash on the first level and two-over-two sash on the second level. The first two bays of windows, have a heavy projecting lintel resting on brackets. Windows throughout the rest of the building have plain board surrounds. Windows on the main facade have fixed louvered shutters. Old hinge pins for hinged shutters project from the window frames.

The first level of the main facade is sheltered by a hipped roof porch which rests on tapering Doric columns. It has a wide frieze and overhanging eaves. The facade is surmounted by a four pane, square window in the upper gable, which surmounts the first two bays.

The Smith-West house is sided with gray asbestos shingle. It rests on a brick foundation and is covered with a black asphalt shingle roof. The heavy, crown molded cornice is returned in the gable ends. There is a frieze beneath the overhang cornice.

The two-bay south facade is marked by two projecting semi-octagonal, two-story bays with shallow hipped roofs. The bays project just below and do not break the cornice line of the main block. Windows on the bays are one-over-one sash. Their interconnected sills form a narrow string course across the first and second stories of the bays. A corbelled brick interior chimney rises between the two bays.

The north gable end is unfenestrated save for a square four-pane window in the upper gable. The ell between the north gable end and a west facing gable end is infilled on the north with a one-story, one-bay shed roof addition, and a one-story projecting bay surmounted by a gable roof.

The west (rear) facade is complex. The unfenestrated west facing gable end of the main block has a narrow two-story west gable addition in which three modern windows of differing sizes have been placed. The addition has a cornice similar to but plainer than that on the main block. A small shed roof screened porch projects from the south side of the addition.

The Smith-West house has a north side hall and two south parlors, with the kitchen to the west (rear) in the ell-wing. In the stairhall, the door surrounds have banded molding and corner blocks with a central flower blossom. The door at the west (back) end of the hall has two round-arch upper panels, mirroring the round-arch glass panels in the entrance door. The stair rises, along the north wall of the hall, turns 90° at a stair landing and turns 90° once again, to rise along the south wall to the second story. There are three white-painted turned balusters to a step. The newel post is square, set on a square base block, with a carved flower blossom in each of the three faces of the post and a spherical knob on the top.

A high double door in the south wall of the hall leads to the south-east parlor. The east and west parlors are lighted by the semi-octagonal windowed bays in the south wall of each room. Moldings vary in these rooms. There are some bulls-eye cornerblocks, and the west parlor has one-step architrave door and window surrounds. There is a capped baseboard throughout the first and second story. Louvered wooden pocket shutters cover the lower half of the windows in all rooms except the kitchen and west bedroom.

The second story has a bedroom over each of the first floor parlors and a small room over the front door. Doors on the second story are surmounted by transoms and have high surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks.

To the west of the house, in the rear yard, is a gable roof one-story cement block garage. It is unusual and attractive in that large, heavy wooden brackets from an older building were re-used to decorate its overhanging eaves above the south entrance. The small front yard and larger rear yard of the house are planted with a number of flowering trees and shrubs such as azaleas, magnolias, dogwood, lilacs, wisteria, apple and cherry trees and a grape arbor. A wrought iron fence with a gate encloses the front yard.

# 8. Significance

Survey No.

P.G.#68-34

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				local history

**Specific dates** 1890 **Builder/Architect**

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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 Smith-West House is significant for its ca. 1890 Victorian architecture. It is a fine example of a suburban dwelling, constructed on a small town lot in the streetcar suburb of Hyattsville.

The Smith-West house was constructed ca. 1890 by Benjamin F. and Francis Smith, on lots #6 and 7 in Wine and Johnson's Addition to Hyattsville.<sup>1</sup> In 1902 the house was sold for \$1,750 to Harry W. Shepard, listed as a clerk in an insurance office in the 1900, U.S. Census.<sup>2</sup> In 1909 the house was sold to John Gipson, Jr., General Manager of the Boston Coal Company. Gibson held the property through 1936.<sup>3</sup>

The house contains much original interior detail, such as its four-panel doors with ceramic door knobs, banded molding with floral corner blocks and stair with turned balusters. The exterior is notable for the double main entrance door with two round-arch upper glass panels, ornate wooden lintels above the windows and two south semi-octagonal two-story bays. The small lot the house stands on contains a number of ornamental bushes and trees, planted in the 1940's by a formal owner who was a botanist at the University of Maryland.<sup>4</sup>

Notes

- 1 Land Records of Prince George's County, JWB 8:121, 123; and Tax Assessments, Prince George's County, District 2, 1890, Vol. #12,234, available at the Maryland State Archives.
- 2 Land Records, 9:177.
- 3 Land Records, 55:133; and United States Census, Prince George's County, District 2, 1910, #232.
- 4 Interview with Jane West, present owner, February 1987.



Chain of Title  
P.G. #68-34  
West House

6105:766  
10 May 1985  
Deed Charles C. Brown and Kathleen Ford to Jane West. For \$92,000 grantors convey Lot #6 and south 8 feet of Lot #7 in Wine & Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville. Same property described 4740:650.

4740:650  
21 March 1977  
Deed John C. Stevenson and Susan F. Stevenson to Charles C. Brown and Kathleen Ford. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and south 8 feet by full depth of Lot #7. Same described in 4154:904.

4154:904  
28 Nov. 1972  
Deed William R. Trammell, Jr. and Frances T. Trammell to John C. Stevenson and Susan F. Stevenson. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and a part of Lot #7.

1965:318  
2 March 1956  
Deed Gertrude S. Baker to William and Frances Trammell. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and a part of Lot #7. Same described in 696:432.

696:432  
22 Aug. 1943  
Deed Thomas J. Ashe and Martha R. Ashe to Gertrude Baker. For \$10 grantors convey same lots obtained from Arthur H. Vanscoy, 29 June 1943 - 713:45. Subject to two Deeds of Trust, for \$5,500 and \$1,100.

713:45  
29 June 1943  
Deed Arthur and Patricia Vanscoy to Thomas J. and Martha R. Ashe. Same obtained from Perry Boswell, Inc. 23 June 1941, 618:371.

618:371  
23 June 1941  
Deed Perry Boswell, Inc. to Arthur and Patricia Vanscoy. For \$10 grantor conveys Lot #6 and south 8 feet of Lot #7.

572:21  
7 Oct. 1940  
Deed Emile A. Richard and Florence G. Richard to Perry Boswell, Inc. For \$10 grantors convey same land obtained from Bessie M. Gibson.

443:422  
2 May 1936  
Deed John Gibson, Jr. and Primrose D. Gibson to Bessie M. Gibson. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and part of Lot #7 in Hyattsville. Same conveyed by Harry W. Shepard to John Gibson, Jr., Oct. 1, 1909, 55:133.

55:133  
1 Oct. 1909  
Deed Harry W. Shepard and Clara Shepard to John Gibson, Jr. For \$1 grantor conveys Lot #6 and south end of Lot #7.

9:177  
17 July 1902  
Deed Jackson H. Ralston and E. Quincy Smith, Trustees, to Harry W. Shepard. For \$1750, Shepard is granted Lot 6 and etc.

- 2 -

JB 11:268  
15 May 1900  
Deed Benjamin F. Smith (widower) of Hyattsville, for \$5 to Jackson H. Ralston and E. Quincy Smith, Trustees, to secure a Deed of Trust, conveys Lots 6 and 7.

JWB 8:121  
4 Feb. 1887  
Deed George J. Johnson and Annie E. Johnson and Louis and Lucy Wine to Benjamin F. Smith. For \$550 grantors convey Lot 7 on Wine Avenue.

JWB 8:123  
3 Feb. 1887  
Deed Francis H. Smith of D.C., Trustee, under deed of Trust from Benjamin F. and Francis E. Smith recorded JWB 2:238. For \$1 conveys to Benjamin F. Smith Lot #6 on west side of Wine Avenue.

JWB 8:123  
7 Feb. 1887  
Mortgage Benjamin F. and Fannie E. Smith to Laurel Building Association. Smith has received advance of \$1,000. To secure loan, conveys Lots 6 and 7 on Wine Avenue. Lot 6 conveyed to Smith by George J. Johnson et al., March 19, 1883, recorded JWB 1:677.

JWB 2:238  
7 April 1883  
Indenture Benjamin F. Smith and Frances E. Smith, his wife, both of Washington, D.C. and Francis H. Smith and Joseph T. Coldwell. Benjamin Smith indebted to Frank Smith, George A. Johnson and Louis D. Wine for \$1,200. To secure debt, conveys Lot 6 of Wine and Johnsons addition to Hyattsville.



# WASHINGTON EAST



68-34

69-2

68-22

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey: 68-34  
PG#68-10-34 Building Date: ca. 1884, ca. 1888

Building Name: Benjamin F. Smith House

Location: 5104 42nd Avenue, Hyattsville, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Excellent/Inaccessible

Description:

The Benjamin Smith House is a two-story frame dwelling of the gable-front-and-wing plan, situated on a small town lot fronting on 42nd Avenue. The principal east facade consists of a two-bay gable front on the south, with a slightly recessed perpendicular wing adjoining on the north. Entrance is in the east facade of the wing through a double door with two round-arch glass panes over lower panels. Above the entrance in the north wing, the second-story space has been expanded to fill the corner of the gable-front with the crossgable wing, creating a flush third bay for the east facade at second level. In the front-gabled section windows are surmounted by a heavy projecting wood lintel supported by two large jigsaw brackets. The main east facade is sheltered by a one-story porch with wooden Tuscan columns; the porch turns and wraps around the easternmost bay of the south elevation. The original wood siding is covered with gray asbestos shingle. On the south elevation are two two-story semi-octagonal projecting bays which light the parlors. A rear gable-roof kitchen wing extends west from the main block. Interior features a two-run stair with decorative square newel, turned balusters and pendants. Moldings are multi-band, with floral corner-blocks in the formal spaces. The grounds are planted with flowering trees and shrubs, and a wrought iron fences encloses the front yard.

Significance:

The Benjamin Smith House is a good representative of late Victorian residential architecture. It was begun, possibly as a simple front-gabled urban dwelling, soon after 1883 when Smith bought Lot #6 of Wine and Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville. In 1887, Smith purchased Lot #7, which adjoined to the north, and built on it a cross-gabled frame dwelling. Soon after this, he enlarged and embellished his own residence on Lot #6. One of his improvements was the addition of two two-story projecting bays on the south side. The Smith family lived in this house until the end of the century, after which it became the home for nearly 30 years of the family of John Gibson. The house has seen several changes in the last 50 years, but it still exhibits many early and handsome features, both interior and exterior, and is still a good representative of a late Victorian urban dwelling. It is an established and familiar visual feature of the Hyattsville community.

Acreage: 9075 square feet

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. ~~PG#68-10-34~~

Magi No. PG:68-34

DOE  yes  no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Benjamin Smith House

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 5104 42nd Avenue  not for publicationcity, town Hyattsville  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

## 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 Elisa J. Walker

street &amp; number 5104 42nd Avenue telephone no.:

city, town Hyattsville state and zip code MD 20781

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 7830

street &amp; number 14735 Main Street folio 917

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title P.G.C. Historic Sites and Districts Plan

date 1992  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation, M-NCPPC

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD 19772

# 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 Benjamin Smith house is a two-story frame dwelling which stands on one of the original lots of the Wine and Johnson First Addition to Hyattsville subdivision. It fronts directly on 42nd Avenue.

The house has had numerous additions since it was first built circa 1887, including a small expansion in the front which slightly alters its original gable-front-and-wing configuration, the addition of two two-story projecting bays on the south side, and several lower additions to the rear. It is still, however, a good representative of a late Victorian urban dwelling and exhibits many early and handsome features.

The principal east facade fronts on 42nd Avenue, and consists of a two-bay gable front on the south, with a slightly recessed perpendicular wing adjoining on the north. Entrance is, and was, in the east facade of the wing through a double door with two lower panels and two upper, round-arch glass panes. Above the door is a rectangular glass transom with plain, wide board surround. Between the door and the transom is a decorative quarter-round molding with a repeating pattern of one wide and two narrow vertical bands. The main east facade is sheltered by a one-story hip-roof porch with wooden Tuscan columns painted white. The porch turns and wraps around the eastmost bay of the south elevation; it has a wide frieze and overhanging eaves.

Above the entrance in the north wing, the second-story space has been expanded, bringing the second-story east exterior wall eastward to be flush with the front gable. This gives the main east facade a somewhat unusual configuration at second level, creating a (flush) third bay for the east facade; detail of the second-story windows of the wing does not match that of the second-story windows in the front gable.

Windows are 1/1 double hung sash on the first story and 2/2 on the second story. In the first two bays, in the front-gabled section, the windows are surmounted by a heavy projecting wood lintel supported by two jigsaw brackets (painted white). Above the entrance in the third (created) bay are two side-by-side 2/2 windows with a plain board lintel painted white.

Above the plain frieze board, the wood cornice of the house has a crown molding and is painted white. Cornices of the front gable and of the north wing and west (rear) wings are returned at the gable ends. The original returned cornice of the principal gable front is interrupted by the enlargement above the main entrance, but the added cornice has been designed to match. At loft level in the principal gable front is a small square four-pane single-sash window; a similar window lights the shallow loft level in the north wing.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

PG: 68-34  
Survey No. PG#68-10-34

Description (continued)

Section 7 Page 2

The original wood siding of the Smith House is covered with gray asbestos shingle. Windows throughout the rest of the house are generally 1/1 or 6/6, and have plain board surrounds. On the main east facade there are black louvered wood shutters, fixed in place; old hinge pins for hinged shutters project from the window frames.

The south side elevation of the house is distinguished by two two-story semi-octagonal projecting bays which light the two principal spaces of the house. The bays project just below the cornice and do not break the cornice line of the main block. Close inspection of the brick foundation walls of these bays reveals that they were added after the main block was erected, but their lines and details suggest that the addition was completed very soon after the construction of the main block. Windows in the bays are 1/1 double hung sash and have plain board surrounds and no shutters. Their interconnected sills form a narrow string course across the first and second stories of the bays.

The roof of the house is covered with black asphalt shingle. A narrow brick interior chimney rises from the south plane of the roof between the two projecting bays. The house rests on a brick foundation which encloses a partial basement.

The west (rear) elevation of the house is complex, and exhibits several additions. A (rear) kitchen wing extends west from the main block; its west (rear) gable end is unfenestrated. A narrow two-story addition extends further to the west, lighted by three modern windows of differing sizes. The addition has a cornice similar to but plainer than that of the main block. A small shed-roof screened porch projects from the south side of the addition, reached by a door in the south wall of the kitchen.

The north gable end of the north wing is also unfenestrated except for the small window at loft level. Built into the angle formed by the wing and the main block is a one-story, one-bay shed-roof addition lighted by two side-by-side 1/1 windows. To the west of this is a small gable-roof space projecting to the north from the west kitchen wing.

Interior plan of the Smith House comprises connecting front and back parlors in the front-gabled main block and a spacious stairhall in the north cross-gabled wing; the kitchen is in the west (rear) wing. In most of the first-story formal spaces the doors and windows have multi-band molding with floral corner blocks. In the northerly stairhall, the open-string stair rises to the west along the north wall, turns 90 degrees at a landing, and 90 degrees again rising southward to the second story. The stair has turned balusters and a square newel post; the chamfered incised newel is decorated with carved rosettes on three of its four faces, and is surmounted by a spherical knob. The staircase is decorated at the turns with pendants, and the intermediate newels are square and perfectly plain. There are indications

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORMSurvey No. ~~PG#68-10-34~~

Description (continued)

Section 7 Page 3

that the staircase has been altered at second-story level, probably at the time of the creation of the small second-story room in the space above the main entrance.

At the rear (west) end of the stairhall is a double door with round-arch upper panels, reflecting the principal entrance doors which lead into the stairhall.

A double door leads south from the stairhall into the front (east) parlor. Both the front and rear parlors are lighted by the projecting semi-octagonal bays in the south wall. Moldings vary in these parlors; the multi-band molding of the stairhall is consistent through most spaces, but in some places there are floral corner blocks and in others the standard bull's-eye corner blocks. Throughout the first- and second-story rooms there is a baseboard with crown molding. Narrow-board floors have been installed in this century, in some places over the original floor boards. Louvered wooden pocket shutters cover the lower half of the windows in all rooms except the kitchen and west bedroom. Doors on the second story are surmounted by transoms and have bull's-eye corner blocks.

To the west of the house in the rear yard, is a front-gabled garage constructed of concrete block painted gray. It is distinguished by the recent addition to the south cornice of large, heavy and ornate console brackets in two different patterns. The garage doors open to the west onto a dividing alley which runs east and west between the lots. The shallow front yard and larger rear yard are planted with a number of flowering trees and shrubs: azaleas, magnolias, dogwood, lilacs, wisteria, apple and cherry trees and a grape arbor. A wrought iron fence encloses the front yard, a gate allowing access to the yard from 42nd Avenue.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** ca.1884, ca.1888      **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
 and/or  
 Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  
 Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Benjamin Smith House is a good representative of late Victorian residential architecture; it is a strong contributing element in the historic community of Hyattsville. It stands on part of two lots in Wine and Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville, platted in 1882.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Christopher C. Hyatt had purchased property north of Bladensburg at the intersection of the old Washington and Baltimore Turnpike and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He built his brick mansion (no longer standing) on the west side of the railroad, and opened a store directly across the tracks. In 1859, Hyatt was appointed postmaster of the new crossroads community which thenceforth was to bear his name.

In 1873, Hyatt had a section of his property surveyed and platted into building lots roughly 60 by 280 feet. This roughly 20-acre area was known as Hyatt's Addition to Hyattsville. By 1878, the town was developing into a desirable place of residence for commuters to the Capital City. An 1878 account describes the new town as follows: "Hyattsville, on the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, is a beautiful village, tasteful houses in the modern style of architecture, ornamented with gardens and lawns, is largely indebted, for its prosperity, to Christopher C. Hyatt, . . . it has gradually increased in beauty and prosperity until it stands as one of the foremost villages between Baltimore and Washington."

<sup>1</sup> Prince George's County Deeds JBB#1:280; JBB#2:481; JBB#4:113,337; CSM#3:476-477.

<sup>2</sup> G. M. Hopkins Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington including the County of Prince George, Maryland, 1878, "Historical Sketch".

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM  
Statement of Significance (continued)

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In 1882, George Johnson and Louis Wine purchased 196 acres adjoining the original section of Hyattsville, and undertook the development of what they called "Wine and Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville". This section was surveyed and platted by Surveyor George W. Jackson in September 1882, to create approximately 100 building lots (roughly 50 by 150 feet each), with two areas of parkland and street names honoring the developers.<sup>3</sup>

The subject house was built by Benjamin F. Smith of Washington, D. C., who in March 1883 purchased from the developers Lot #6 on Wine Avenue, the principal north-south street through the developing community. He paid \$340 dollars for this unimproved lot.<sup>4</sup> Within a few months of his purchase of Lot #6, Smith executed a mortgage to secure payment of his \$1200 debt; it is almost certainly at this time that he began construction of a dwelling.<sup>5</sup> The house which he built was at first assessed at a value of \$800, indicating a modest building, possibly just the southerly front-gabled section of the present house. Smith and his wife, Frances, moved into this modest frame dwelling.

In February 1887, Smith purchased Lot #7 from Wine and Johnson for \$350; Lot #7 was at that time unimproved, and adjoined Lot #6 on the north.<sup>6</sup> Again he immediately took out a loan from the Laurel Building Association, presumably in order to build a house on Lot #7. At the same time, he had completed the payment of his earlier mortgage, and was legally released from that indebtedness.<sup>7</sup> The house which Smith built on Lot #7 was similar to his own residence, though slightly larger and with a crossgable wing; it was assessed at a value of \$1200. At this time, Benjamin Smith's family was still living in the subject house on Lot #6, and the new house on Lot #7 was soon afterwards rented to the family of George Britt, who worked as a bookbinder.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Prince George's County Deed JWB#1:244; Prince George's County Plat JWB#1:286, 1882.

<sup>4</sup> Prince George's County Deed JWB#1:677.

<sup>5</sup> Prince George's County mortgage JWB#2:238.

<sup>6</sup> Prince George's County Deed JWB#8:121.

<sup>7</sup> Prince George's County mortgage JWB#8:123; Prince George's County mortgage release JWB#8:123.

<sup>8</sup> Tax Assessments for Election District #2, Hyattsville, Prince George's County, 1888; Federal Population Census for Enumeration District #16, Hyattsville, Prince George's County, 1900.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM  
Statement of Significance (continued)

At approximately the same time, Smith enlarged and embellished his dwelling on Lot #6, probably adding the northerly crossgable wing which now houses the handsome stairhall. It was probably during this period also that Smith added the two southerly two-story bays which light the south parlors. These improvements to the house on Lot #6 increased its assessed value to slightly more than that of the house on Lot #7.

The family of Benjamin Smith lived in the subject house until just before 1900, when he encountered serious financial difficulties. In May of 1900, Smith took out two separate mortgages, one for \$600 and the other for \$1600, on the two houses and lots which he owned. By that time, his family had moved out of the subject house, and he had rented it to the family of William Porter, who worked as a government clerk; the Britt family still rented and lived in the house on Lot #7 immediately to the north.<sup>10</sup>

By 1902, Benjamin Smith was declared insolvent; he had defaulted on his mortgages, and trustees were appointed to sell his real estate to pay his debts. The sale of both lots was advertised in the local newspapers for 24 May 1902: "Valuable real estate situated in the town of Hyattsville, Prince George's County, Maryland, located on Wine Avenue between Ralston and Littlefield Avenues, and consisting of two good frame houses in excellent repair." The trustees first attempted to sell the two lots as a package, but there were no bids; they then offered them separately. Caroline S. Chase was the high bidder for each property, with an offer of \$1750 for each.<sup>11</sup>

Ms. Chase subsequently directed that the trustees convey the subject house (the southerly of the two) to Harry W. Shepherd. This they did in July 1902, conveying to Harry Shepherd, for \$1750, Lot #6 and the southernmost 8 feet of Lot #7 "including the southerly house and land appurtenant of the two houses described".<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, July 1902, the trustees sold to Caroline S. Chase, also for \$1750, the northernmost 44 feet 5 inches of Lot #7 "including the

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<sup>9</sup> Prince George's County Tax Assessments, Election District #2, Hyattsville, 1888-1900.

<sup>10</sup> Prince George's County Deeds of Trust, JB#11:264, 268; Federal Population Census, Enumeration District #16, Hyattsville, Prince George's County, 1900; dwellings #78 and #79.

<sup>11</sup> Prince George's County Equity Case #2856, recorded at BDS#7:122.

<sup>12</sup> Prince George's County Deed #9:177.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM  
Statement of Significance (continued)

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northerly house and land appurtenant." Ms. Chase never lived in the house on Lot #7, but just a month later sold it to William and Maud Hamilton.<sup>13</sup>

Harry Shepherd had been living with his uncle in Hyattsville for several years, working as a clerk in an insurance office. After his purchase in July 1902, Shepherd moved into the house on Lot #6, but lived there for only a few years. In October 1909, he sold the house and Lot #6 and the southernmost 8 feet of Lot #7 to John Gibson, Jr., who worked as general manager for the Boston Coal Company.<sup>14</sup>

Members of the Gibson family lived in the house until 1940. At the time of his purchase, John Gibson was 30 years old; he lived in the house with his older unmarried sisters, Sadie and Bessie, his mother, Georgiana, and his father John, Sr., a retired hotel keeper. In 1936, he conveyed his interest in the property to his sister, Bessie, and she in turn sold it to a real estate partnership.<sup>15</sup>

Since that time the Smith House has changed ownership seven times. One owner, a botanist at the University of Maryland, is credited with the planting of the grounds during the 1940s.<sup>16</sup>

The Benjamin Smith House has seen several changes over the years since the Gibson family ownership. The space above the stairhall has been enlarged, moving the east (front) exterior wall of the crossgable wing out to be flush with the southerly gable front.<sup>17</sup> Asbestos shingle has been applied over the original (probably German) wood siding. The house, however, still exhibits many early and handsome features, both interior and exterior, and still embodies many of the distinctive characteristics of this period and type of dwelling; it is a good representative of a late Victorian urban dwelling, reflecting the development of the suburbs of the late nineteenth century. Prominently located on one of Victorian Hyattsville's principal streets, the Benjamin Smith House is an established and familiar visual feature of the community.

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<sup>13</sup> Prince George's County Deed #10:106.

<sup>14</sup> Prince George's County Deed #55:133; Federal Population Census, Enumeration District #16, Hyattsville, Prince George's County, 1900, dwelling #2.

<sup>15</sup> Prince George's County Deed #443:422; Federal Population Census for Enumeration District #16, Hyattsville, Prince George's County, 1910, 1920.

<sup>16</sup> See Chain of Title.

<sup>17</sup> See 1911 photograph, view south along Wine Avenue; cf. Item #7.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. ~~PG#68-10-34~~

See Chain of Title  
See notes, Item #8

PG:68-34

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 9075 Sq. ft. Tax map 50, Lt 6 and part of lot 7 in Wine & Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville  
Quadrangle name Washington East Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

1:24000

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C 

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D 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian; (Marina King, Preservation

organization Historic Preservation, M-NCPPC date December 1992 (September 1987)

street & number 14741 Gov. Oden Bowie Drive telephone 301-952-3521

city or town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

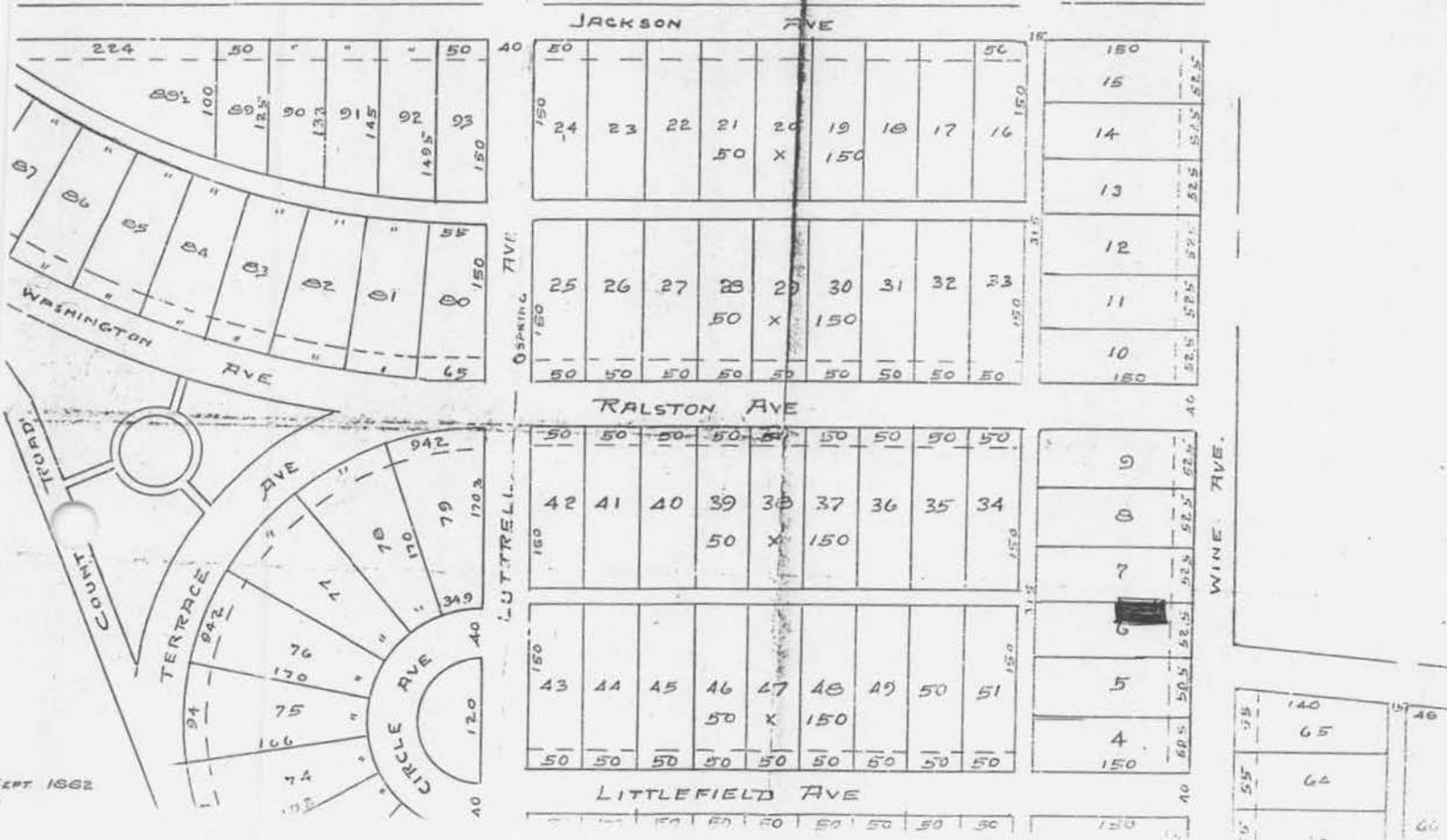
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 4I, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

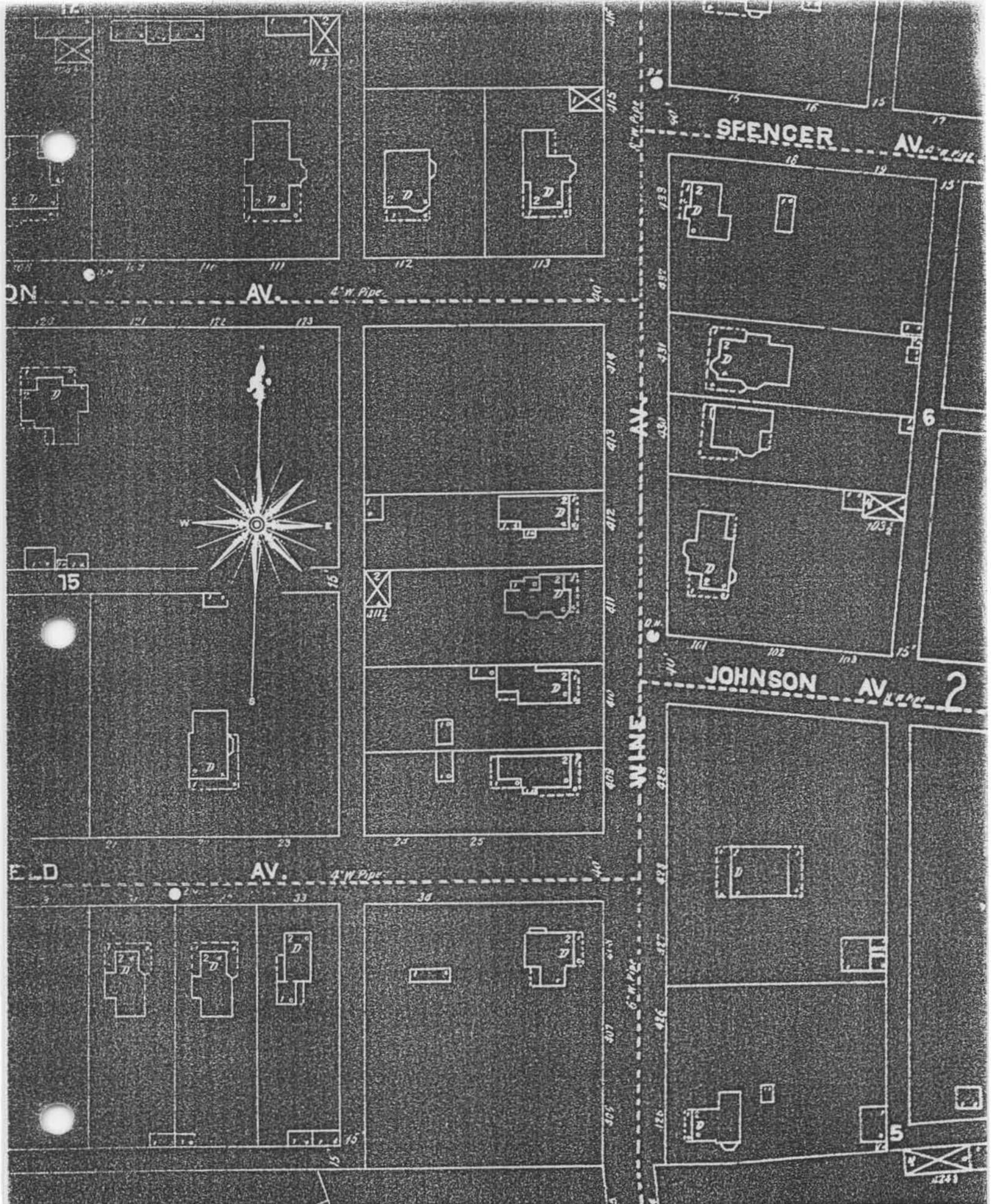
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

WINE & JOHNSON'S  
 1ST. ADD. TO  
 HYATTSVILLE  
 1882

ENTROLLED SEPT. 30-1882.



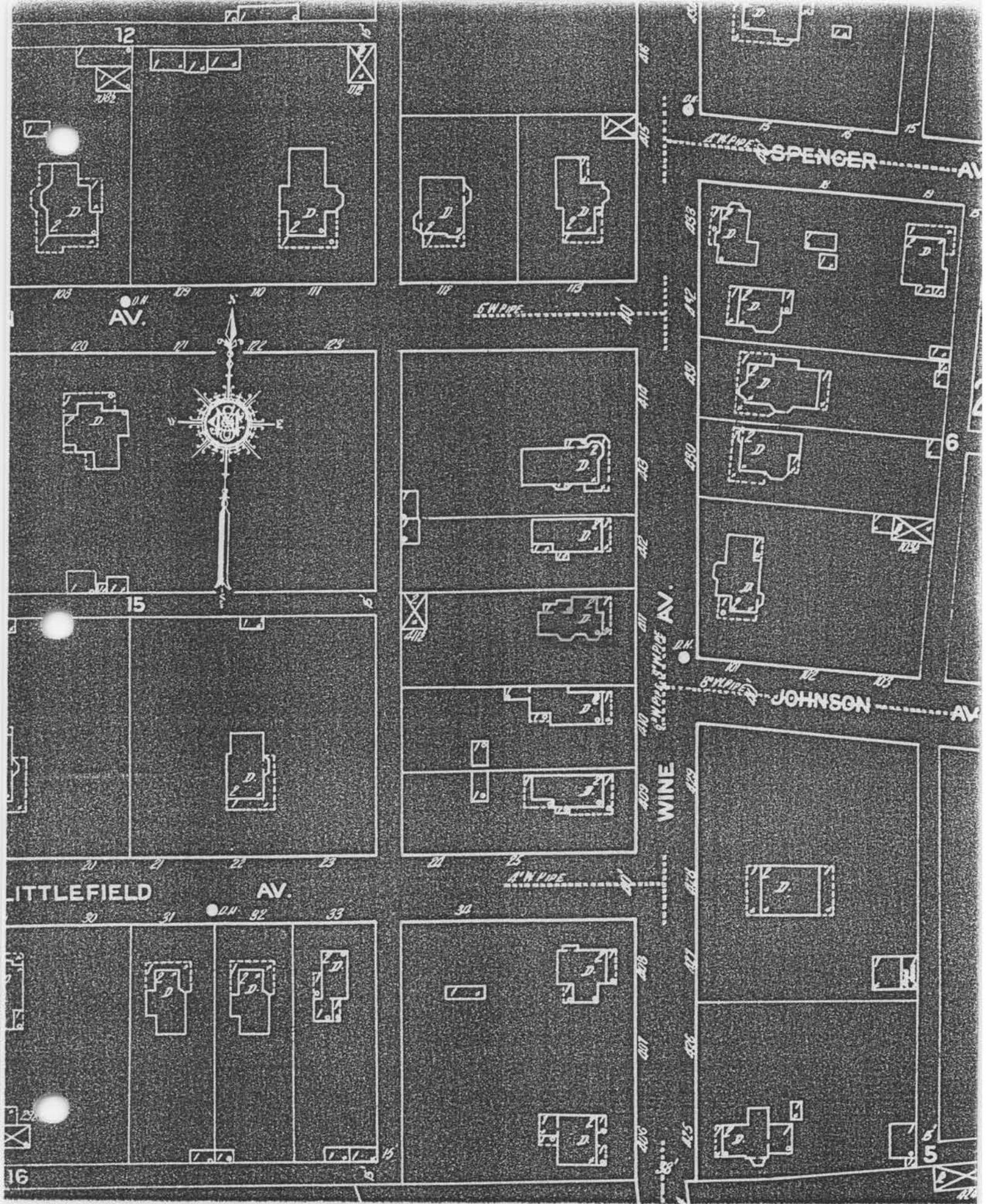
SEPT 1882



*Sambora*

1906

PG:68-34



*Sambore*

Chain of Title  
Benjamin Smith House  
PG#68-10-34

7830:917 Dec 1990	Jane West to Elisa J. Walker, Lot #6 and south 8 feet of Lot #7 in Wine & Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville.
6105:766 10 May 1985 Deed	Charles C. Brown and Kathleen Ford to Jane West. For \$92,000 grantors convey Lot #6 and south 8 feet of Lot #7 in Wine & Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville. Same property described 4740:650.
4740:650 21 March 1977 Deed	John C. Stevenson and Susan F. Stevenson to Charles C. Brown and Kathleen Ford. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and south 8 feet by full depth of Lot #7. Same described in 4154:904.
4154:904 28 Nov. 1972 Deed	William R. Trammell, Jr. and Frances T. Trammell to John C. Stevenson and Susan F. Stevenson. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and a part of Lot #7.
1965:318 2 March 1956 Deed	Gertrude S. Baker to William and Frances Trammell. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and a part of Lot #7. Same described in 696:432.
696:432 22 Aug. 1943 Deed	Thomas J. Ashe and Martha R. Ashe to Gertrude Baker. For \$10 grantors convey same lots obtained from Arthur H. Vanscoy, 29 June 1943 - 713:45. Subject to two Deeds of Trust, for \$5,500 and \$1,100.
713:45 29 June 1943 Deed	Arthur and Patricia Vanscoy to Thomas J. and Martha R. Ashe. Same obtained from Perry Boswell, Inc. 23 June 1941, 618:371.
618:371 23 June 1941 Deed	Perry Boswell, Inc. to Arthur and Patricia Vanscoy. For \$10 grantor conveys Lot #6 and south 8 feet of Lot #7.
572:21 7 Oct. 1940 Deed	Emile A. Richard and Florence G. Richard to Perry Boswell, Inc. For \$10 grantors convey same land obtained from Bessie M. Gibson.
443:422 2 May 1936 Deed	John Gibson, Jr. and Primrose D. Gibson to Bessie M. Gibson. For \$10 grantors convey Lot #6 and part of Lot #7 in Hyattsville. Same conveyed by Harry W. Shepard to John Gibson, Jr., Oct. 1, 1909, 55:133.
55:133 1 Oct. 1909 Deed	Harry W. Shepard and Clara Shepard to John Gibson, Jr. For \$1 grantor conveys Lot #6 and south end of Lot #7.
9:177 17 July 1902 Deed	Jackson H. Ralston and E. Quincy Smith, Trustees, to Harry W. Shepard. For \$1750, Shepard is granted Lot 6 and etc.

JB 11:268  
15 May 1900  
Deed

Benjamin F. Smith (widower) of Hyattsville, for \$5 to Jackson H. Ralston and E. Quincy Smith, Trustees, to secure a Deed of Trust, conveys Lots 6 and 7.

JWB 8:121  
4 Feb. 1887  
Deed

George J. Johnson and Annie E. Johnson and Louis and Lucy Wine to Benjamin F. Smith. For \$550 grantors convey Lot 7 on Wine Avenue.

JWB 8:123  
3 Feb. 1887  
Deed

Francis H. Smith of D.C., Trustee, under deed of Trust from Benjamin F. and Frances E. Smith recorded JWB 2:238. For \$1 conveys to Benjamin F. Smith Lot #6 on west side of Wine Avenue.

JWB 8:123  
7 Feb. 1887  
Mortgage

Benjamin F. and Fannie E. Smith to Laurel Building Association. Smith has received advance of \$1,000. To secure loan, conveys Lots 6 and 7 on Wine Avenue. Lot 6 conveyed to Smith by George J. Johnson et al., March 19, 1883, recorded JWB 1:677.

JWB 2:238  
7 April 1883  
Indenture

Benjamin F. Smith and Frances E. Smith, his wife, both of Washington, D.C. and Francis H. Smith and Joseph T. Coldwell. Benjamin Smith indebted to Frank Smith, George A. Johnson and Louis D. Wine for \$1,200. To secure debt, conveys Lot 6 of Wine and Johnsons addition to Hyattsville.

JWB#1:677  
19 Mar 1883

Louis D. Wine and George A. Johnson to Benjamin F. Smith of Washington D. C., Lot 6 of Wine and Johnson's First Addition to Hyattsville.

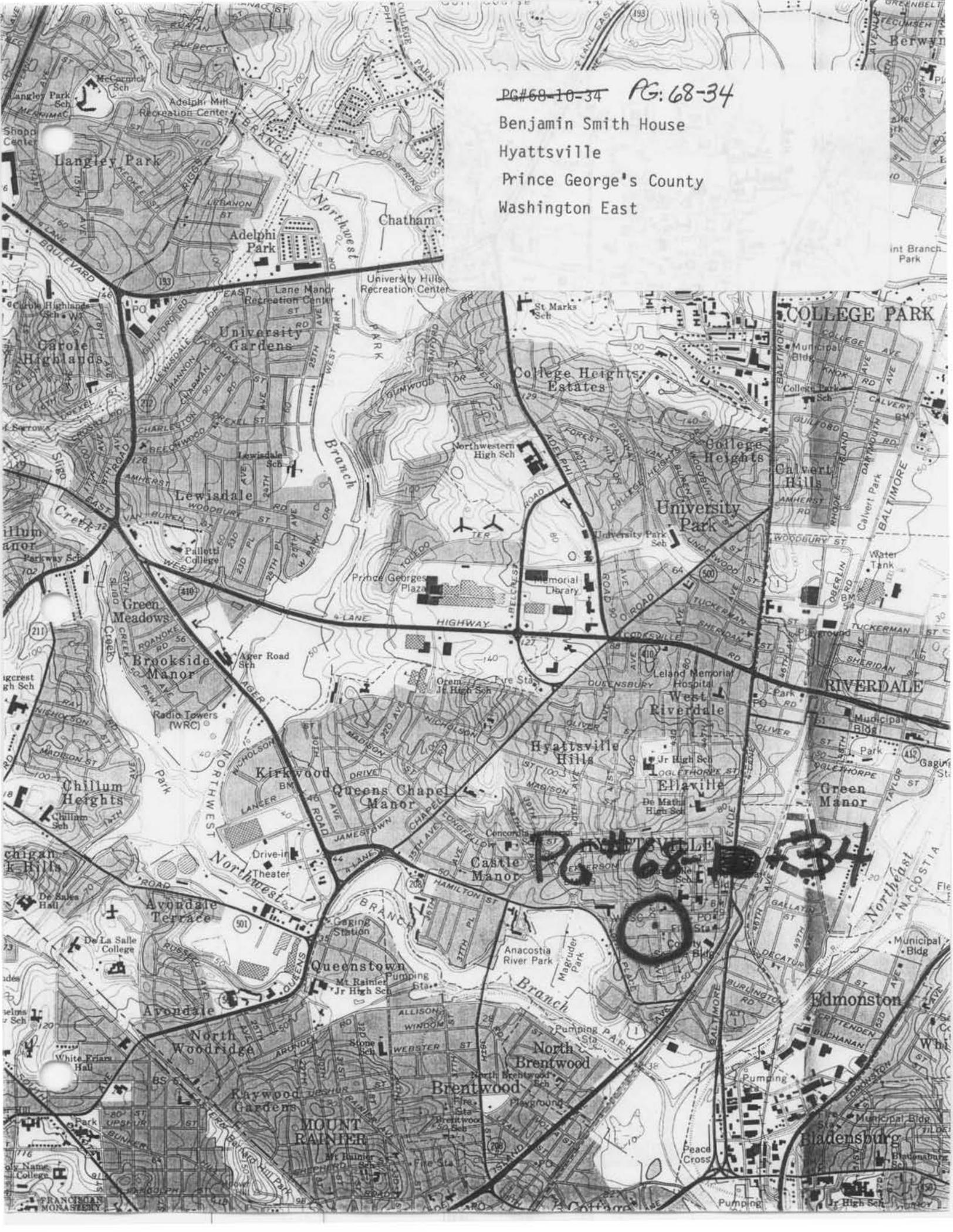
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PG: 68-34



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Benjamin Smith House  
Hyattsville  
Prince George's County  
Washington East





Pg # 68-10-34

Benjamin Smith House  
Prince George's Co. MD

Susan H. Pearl

December 1992

Stack hall, view to east

Ref: MD SHPO

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Benjamin Smith Horse  
Princi Hops's Co., MD  
Susan H. Pease  
December 1992  
Hall molding  
Ref: MD / SHPO



Beymer's South House  
Prince George's County MD  
Susan H. Pearl  
December 1992  
Stair detail  
Mfg. MD SAPO



Pg # 68-34

Benjamin Smith House  
Prince George's Co. MD  
Susan H. Starr

December 1992

MD JHPO

East door

496



Benjamin Smith House  
Prince George's Co MD  
Susan G. Lavelle  
December 1992  
MD SHPO  
Smith says from SE

596



Benjamin Smith House

Prince George's Co. MD

Josias H. Pearl

December 1792

MD SHPO

East facade from NE

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