

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey: PG#68-79-1 Building Date: 1901

Building Name: Poppleton-Roberts House

Location: 5104 Emerson Street, Edmonston, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description:

The Poppleton-Roberts House is a side-gabled frame house two stories high and five bays by two. Siding is German, painted white on the first story and light gray-green on the second. Windows are long 2/2 double hung sash with plain board surrounds. The roof surfaces, which are extensive and prominent features of this house, are covered with asbestos shingle of the same gray-green color. The principal facade and gable ends are sheltered by a deep covered porch whose hip roof is integral with that of the house; the porch posts are chamfered with jigsaw brackets. Above the central entrance, a large dormer, set into the slope of the porch roof below forms a central cross gable and dominates the second story of the principal facade. There are two chimneys at the gable ridge, symmetrically flanking this central gable. On each side of the central dormer is a very shallow "eye brow" shed dormer. Some of the gable surfaces are sided with clipped-corner shingles. There are several large evergreen trees in the front yard of the house, and lining the street to the east are several large old magnolias which were probably planted near the time of construction of this house.

Significance:

The Poppleton-Roberts House is a unique example of its type in Prince George's County. Its gable-on-hip roof and wraparound porch are reminiscent of French Colonial dwellings of the deep South, while its late Victorian trim and the shallow shed dormers look forward into the twentieth century. It was built in 1901 by A. D. Poppleton. In 1900 Poppleton had contracted to purchase two acres of land from J. Harris Rogers; he then undertook construction of this large and unusual residence on this land which was not yet legally his. The house was complete and the Poppleton family took up residence in 1901, but Poppleton was unable to pay the costs of the construction. Suit was brought and the property was offered for sale in order to pay the debt. Information in the court case provides important information about construction of the period, e.g., labor costs, names of local contractors, and time spent in the various phases of construction. Combining an updated French Colonial profile with late Victorian decorative elements, the Poppleton-Roberts House is a unique and prominent feature of the Edmonston community.

Acreage: 1.33 acres

Poppleton-Roberts House

PG#68-79-1

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Development Periods:

Industrial/Urban Dominance - AD 1870-1930

Historic Period Themes:

Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Functions and Uses: Domestic/Single dwelling

Design Source: unknown

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Poppleton-Roberts House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 5104 Emerson St. not for publicationcity, town Edmonston vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's County

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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 Ethel Talley

street & number 5104 Emerson St. telephone no.:

city, town Edmonston state and zip code MD 20740

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County liber 5066

street & number 14735 Main Street folio 495

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD 20772

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	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 Poppleton-Roberts House is a large two-story frame house of a type which is rare in Prince George's County. Its gable-on-hip roof and wraparound porch give it the appearance of a French Colonial style house of the deep South. It stands on an oversized lot fronting on one of the principal streets of the Edmonston community.

The house is two stories high and side-gabled, five bays by two. The south facade and the east and west gable ends are sheltered by a deep covered porch whose hip roof is integral with that of the house; the porch posts are chamfered with jigsaw brackets. Entrance is in the central bay of the five-bay south facade. Centered at this point in the porch roof is a projecting cross gable which forms a small entry canopy; this gable is sided with clipped-corner shingles. The canopy marks the entrance to the porch by a short flight of concrete steps.

Above the central entrance, a large dormer forms a central cross gable and dominates the second story of the main south facade; centrally located, it pierces the south plane of the gable roof and is set into the slope of the porch roof below. The gable front of this dormer encloses two 2/2 double hung sash windows which light the second story; above these two windows, the upper gable is sided with clipped-corner shingles.

Siding is German, painted white on the first story and light gray-green on the second. Windows are long 2/2 double hung sash with plain board surrounds. The roof surfaces, which are extensive and prominent features of this house, are covered with asbestos shingle of the same gray-green color. There are two chimneys at the gable ridge, symmetrically flanking the central cross gable.

In addition to the central gable dormer of the main south facade, two other pairs of dormers light the second story and add variety to the lines of the house. On each side of the central dormer, a very shallow shed dormer opens out of the south plane of the roof. Each of these shallow "eye brow" dormers encloses two narrow side-by-side horizontal six-pane windows. An entirely different type of shed dormer, large and vertically oriented, lights each of the gable ends of the house. Each projects substantially from the gable end, and is set into the slope of the porch roof below; each encloses two long 2/2 double-hung-sash windows. The gable surface above the

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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 dates 1901 **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 Poppleton-Roberts House is a rare, indeed unique example of its type in Prince George's County. Its gable-on-hip roof and wraparound porch are reminiscent of French Colonial dwellings of the deep South, while its late Victorian trim and the shallow shed dormers look forward into the twentieth century. It was one of the earliest dwellings built in the community of East Hyattsville (which would become Edmonston), and certainly one of the most prominent. It is a noticeable landmark in the community of Edmonston.

The land on which this part of Edmonston was developed had been part of the tract "Charles and Rebecca" which made up the southeasterly part of the Calvert family's Riversdale plantation. This part of the land was known as Spa Woods; it lay a short distance northeast of Bladensburg's Spa Spring Park, within the loop of the mill race for the Calvert family's Avalon Mill. This land was purchased in 1886 by J. Harris Rogers of Hyattsville, and years later he undertook a plat of subdivision for the property as a residential expansion of Hyattsville. The land was surveyed and platted as "East Hyattsville" in 1903, but the plat was not recorded, and during the early years of its development, building lots were sold by metes and bounds rather than by lots and blocks. The subject house was built before the land¹ platted for subdivision.

In 1901 A. D. Poppleton contracted to purchase two acres in the northernmost section of this land from J. Harris Rogers. Poppleton paid Rogers a deposit of approximately 40% of the cost of the property, but a deed was not executed. In spite of this, Poppleton undertook construction of a large and unusual

¹ Hopkins, G. M., Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington including the County of Prince George Maryland, 1878; unrecorded plat of East Hyattsville, Prince George's County Courthouse, Drawer 11, #99; Prince George's County Deed JWB#7:85.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#68-79-1

See Notes, Item 8

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.33 acres

Quadrangle name Washington East

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian

organization Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission date March 1993

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

city or town Upper Marlboro state MD 20772

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

Description (continued) .

Section 7 Page 2

windows is sided with rectangular lapped shingles.

There are several large evergreen trees in the south (front) yard of the house; lining the street to the east are several large old magnolias which were probably planted near the time of construction of this house.

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STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM
Statement of Significance (continued)

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residence on this land which was not yet legally his. He purchased lumber and hardware, and hired a mason, plasterer, painter, and several carpenters; the house was essentially complete by the end of 1901 and the Poppleton family had taken up residence early in 1902. Poppleton had run up a bill of over \$1800 for construction of the house, and was unable to pay his debts. One of his largest creditors, The Frank Libbey Company, suppliers of lumber, brought suit against Poppleton for non-payment of debt, and the Equity Court appointed trustees to sell the property in order to pay the debts.² A public sale was set for 12 May 1902; the property was advertised as including a handsome new eight-room house with a porch all around, a summer kitchen and all necessary outbuildings, on 2 acres of rich land only 1/2 mile from the steam and electric cars.³ The high bidder was Rufus Clarke of Washington, D. C., who offered \$1500; the trustees conveyed the property to Clarke in June 1902. A month later, Poppleton still occupied the property, and Clarke requested and received from the Court an order for Poppleton to vacate the property and deliver it to Clarke, now the legal owner.⁴

The Equity Court case which describes Poppleton's situation is particularly interesting and informative. The case itemizes the work of the various craftsmen in their attempts to receive payment. Carpenter John Decatur worked for 43 1/2 days (at \$2 per day) to complete the house, and carpenter Lenthel Poppleton (almost certainly a relative) worked for 50 days at \$1.50 per day. Painter George M. Suit applied one coat of paint to the exterior of the house, and two to the interior in December 1901 and January 1902. A bill for a large variety of building supplies was owed to William P. Magruder, Hyattsville lumber and hardware dealer. The Bill of Complaint made it clear that Poppleton had undertaken construction before he owned the land, that the dwelling was "large, handsome and valuable", and that by early 1902 it was entirely complete and occupied by the defendant (Poppleton) as his private residence.⁵

² Prince George's County Equity #2840

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid.; Prince George's County Deed #9:35.

⁵ ibid.

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

Survey No. PG#68-79-1

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It is not certain whether Rufus and Annie Clarke ever lived in the Poppleton house; they sold the property within a year to Helena Grove of Washington, D. C. The Grove family probably did occupy the house, but only for a short time; in 1905 Helena and Edward Grove sold the two-acre property to F. Ambrose Armstrong, whose family occupied the house until 1919.⁶

In order to secure payment, Helena Grove held a mortgage on the property which she had conveyed to Armstrong. Armstrong took out a second mortgage at the same time. Although the Armstrong family occupied the house for nearly 15 years, Armstrong defaulted on payments for the second mortgage, and suit was brought to recover payment.⁷ In 1919 the property was offered at public sale and the high bid of \$2200 was offered by Bertha Lee Miller.⁸ It is doubtful that the Miller family ever lived in the house; they sold the property to a real estate speculator, who in 1928 sold it to James A. and Edna F. Roberts. James and Edna Roberts raised their family in this house, and it has remained the home of their heirs to this day.⁹

The Poppleton-Roberts House is significant for its unusual form, which combines an updated French Colonial profile with late Victorian decorative elements. It is also significant for the information available about its construction, e.g., labor costs, names of contractors, and time spent in the various phases of construction. The Poppleton-Roberts House was one of the earliest dwellings built in the community of East Hyattsville (now Edmonston), and is a familiar and prominent visual feature in its neighborhood.

⁶ Prince George's County Deeds #11:505, #25:37

⁷ Prince George's County Mortgages #25:39, 41, 44; Prince George's County Equity #5181.

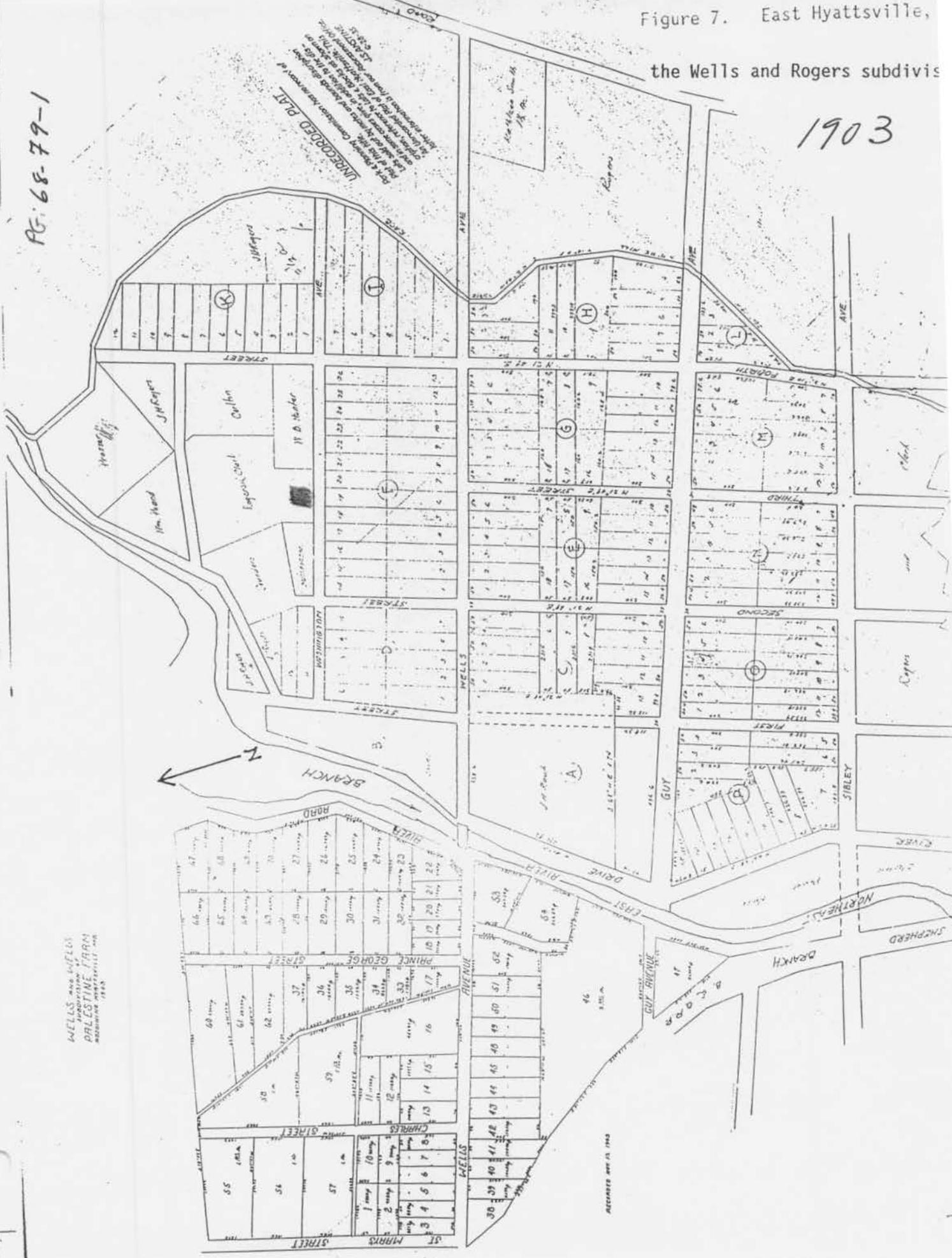
⁸ Prince George's County Equity #5181; Prince George's County Deed #143:166.

⁹ Prince George's County Deeds #303:373, #5066:495; Prince George's County Estate File #25617.

Figure 7. East Hyattsville,
the Wells and Rogers subdivis

1903

PG. 68-79-1



WELLS AND WELLS
SUBDIVISION OF
PALESTINE FARM
RECORDED MAP 13 1903

RECORDED MAP 13 1903

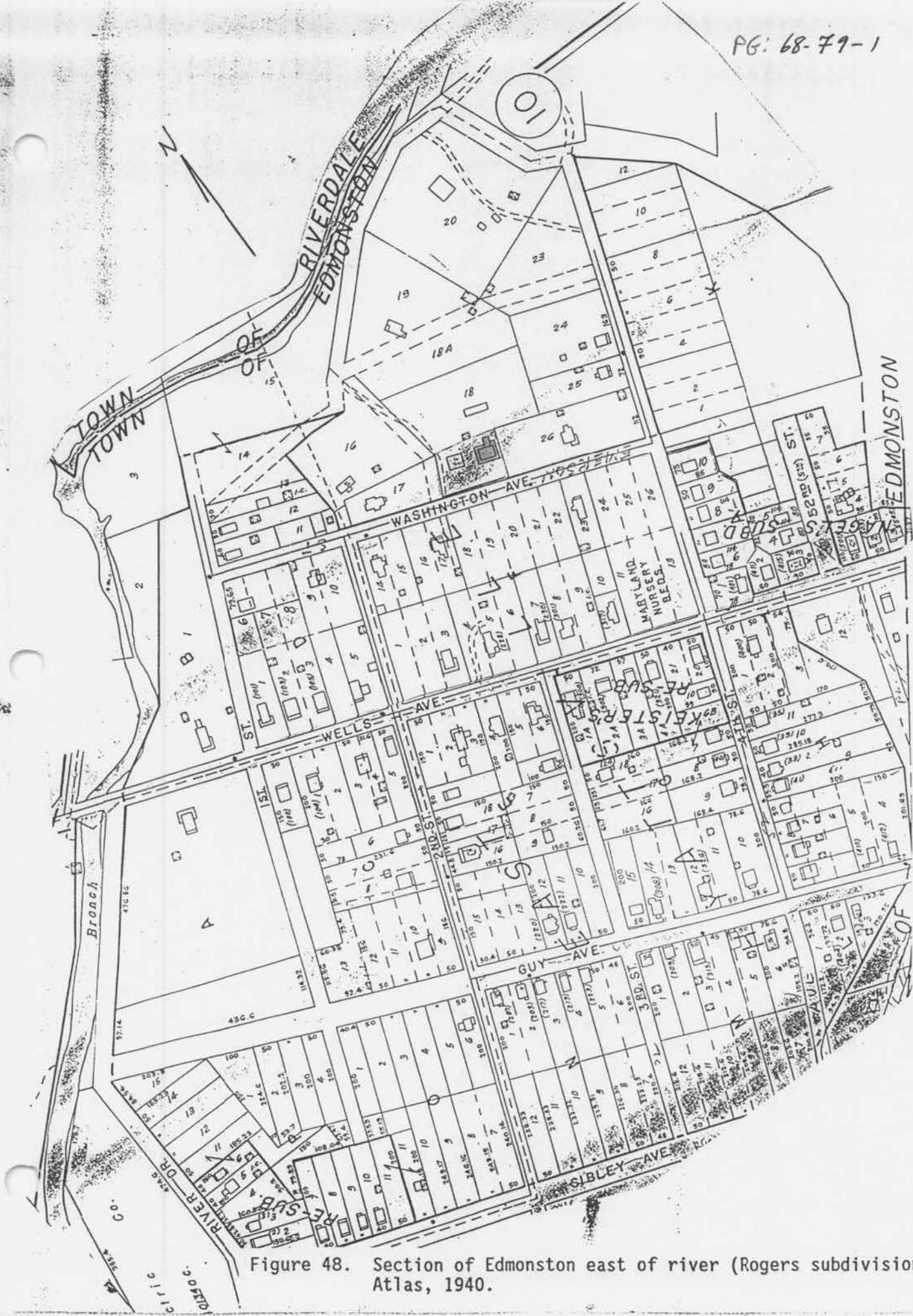


Figure 48. Section of Edmonston east of river (Rogers subdivision), Frank Atlas, 1940.

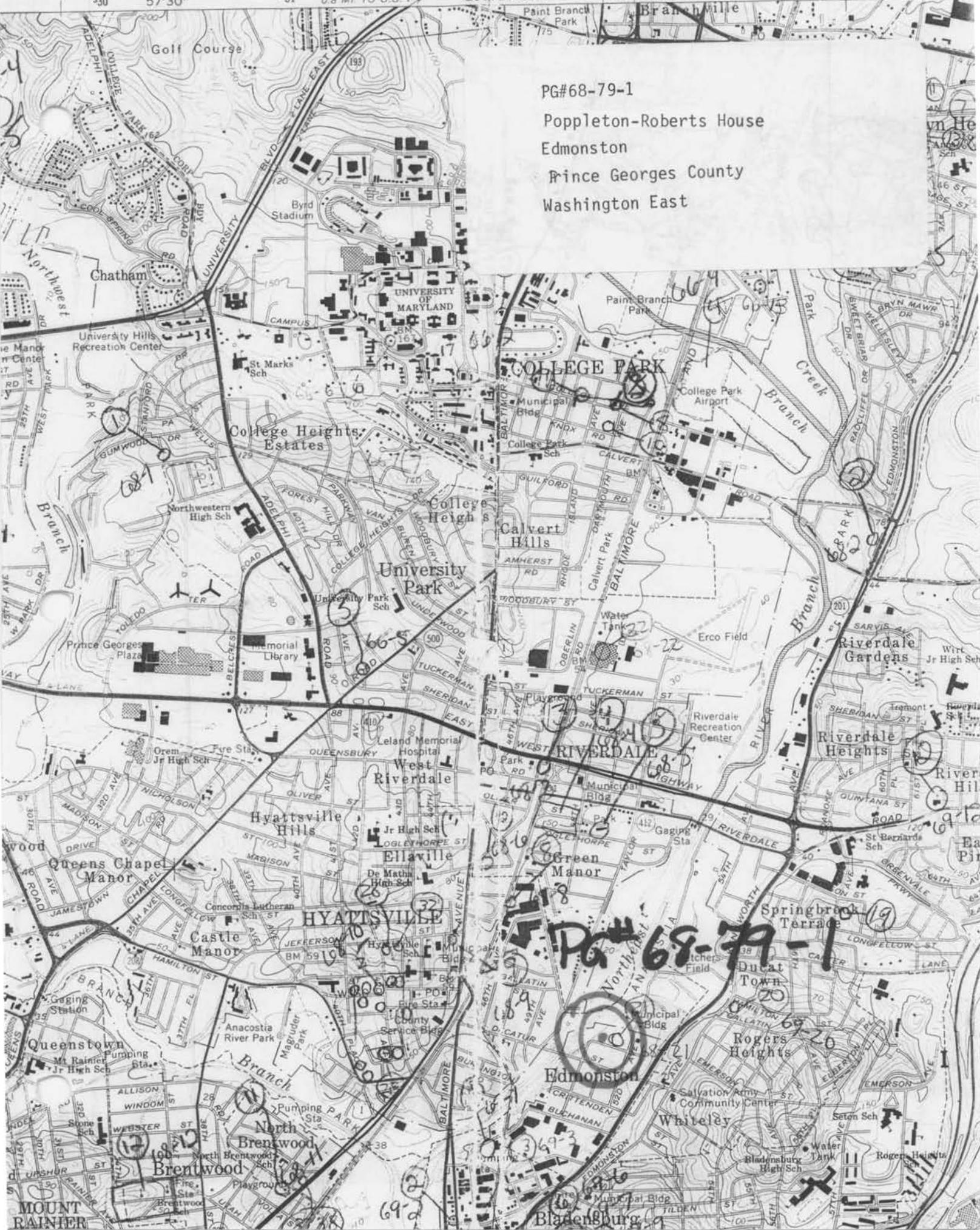
PG#68-79-1

Poppleton-Roberts House

Edmonston

Prince Georges County

Washington East





Pla # 68-79-1

Pappletter - Roberts House
Prince Georges Co. MD
Susan Y. Pearl

February 1993

MD SHPO

Smith facade for SW

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Pg # 68-79-1

Puppator Roberts House
Prince & Lopez's Co., MD
Susan L. Powell

February 1993

MD SHPO

Auth. records

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Pg # 68-79-1

Poppleton - Roberts, Karen
Prince George's Co, MD

Susan H. Paul

February 1993

MD SHPO

South gable detail

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