

A Georgian Revelation

By ROBERT G. BREEN

AFTER three years of painstakingly meticulous work, the Brice House in Annapolis is encouragingly near a state of complete rejuvenation.

The present owners of the Brice House, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley S. Wohl, have done everything possible to restore to their original state such features as the horizontally wood-pegged floorings, the mahogany window frames, hardware, elaborate wood carvings, chair-rails and doors, all eight architecturally designed and richly crafted mantels, the tremendous chimneys (buttressed indoors at their foundations by a series of structural arches) and the vaulted ceiling of the second-floor hallway, which is the only one of its kind in an American Eighteenth Century home.

The Most Magnificent

Little wonder that the Brice House has been called "the most magnificent Georgian residence in America . . . palatial in its proportions and remarkable in its effect of arrogance."

Consonant with the elegance of the "feature rooms" of the main section of this five-part house of 35 rooms, are the accessories which Mrs. Wohl has spent a lifetime in collecting. Among these are numbered the lighting fixtures, fireplace grates and hardware.

Also included is the Waterford glass chandelier which has just been hung in the dining room.

The chandelier is 4½ feet deep and has a spread of nearly 4 feet, with sixteen solid crystal glass arms in two tiers. They are fitted for candles.

The chandelier is believed to have been made about 1790.

Only Two Others

There are only two other similar chandeliers extant in the United States today, according to Mr. Wohl. One is in the Green Room of the White House. The other is in the Miles Brewton House, Charleston, S.C.

Before being acquired by the Wohls, the chandelier had been packed away, piece by piece, and stored for 65 years.

Because of its great size and magnificence, it is supposed to have hung in a public building in early Washington.

The restoration of the Brice House, which has been the special province of Mrs. Wohl, has been achieved with the utmost attention to detail.

Sets A Standard

A measure of the success of Mrs. Wohl's task may be seen in the comment of Dr. Richard H. Howland, president, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, who last year wrote, "You (Mrs. Wohl) have revealed the unique qualities of the Brice House. The Brice House restoration . . . sets a standard for other private owners throughout the country who are concerned with the renovation of historic and architectural monuments."

John H. Scarff, Baltimore architect and historian, had this to say of the Brice House: "With its great central house and twin wings much lower, set at right angles and connected by passages, it is the finest example of the distinctive five-section Maryland plan. With its great height, beautiful fenestration and towering gable chimneys, it remains one of the most effective of all Colonial houses—a monument to some past designer."



The dining room of the nearly restored Brice House, featuring a Waterford glass chandelier.

Sunpapers photo; Klender