

## SUMMARY

## Easement

BA 2

MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY

1851

Catonsville

Private

Mount de Sales Academy consists of two notable structures, the Academy Building and the Gate House. The academy is 390 feet wide, 22 bays across, including three pedimented end-pavilions. Style is Greek Revival, adapted to institutional use. James Curley and Son of Baltimore are recorded as contractors for the first phase of building, and E.F. Baldwin was listed as architect in 1882 when the design was carried to completion. The school was conducted by the Visitation Sisters, but girls of all denominations were enrolled as boarders. The chapel is regarded as the oldest surviving place of Catholic worship in the county. The gate house is apparently the same age as the school and served as a rectory for the first pastor of Saint Agnes Church, the nearest parish to Catonsville in the 1850's.

E. Rosemen

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

BA-2

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered 30 May 1986

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

1. Name

historic Mount de Sales Academy of the Visitation  
and or common Mount de Sales Academy (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 700 Academy Road N/A not for publication  
city, town Catonsville N/A vicinity of Third Congressional District  
state Maryland code 24 county Baltimore code 005

3. Classification

<u>  </u> district	<u>  </u> public	<u>  </u> occupied	<u>  </u> agriculture	<u>  </u> museum
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u>  </u> unoccupied	<u>  </u> commercial	<u>  </u> park
<u>  </u> structure	<u>  </u> both	<u>  </u> work in progress	<u>X</u> educational	<u>  </u> private residence
<u>  </u> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>  </u> entertainment	<u>  </u> religious
<u>  </u> object	<u>  </u> in process	<u>X</u> yes: restricted	<u>  </u> government	<u>  </u> scientific
	<u>  </u> being considered	<u>  </u> yes: unrestricted	<u>  </u> industrial	<u>  </u> transportation
	<u>X</u> not applicable	<u>  </u> no	<u>  </u> military	<u>  </u> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Trustees of Mount de Sales High School, Inc.  
c/o Sister Frederick Mary  
street & number 700 Academy Road  
city, town Catonsville N/A vicinity of state Maryland 21228

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse  
street & number  
city, town Towson state Maryland 21204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust  
Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible?    yes X no  
date 1980    federal X    state    county    local  
depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle  
city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

# 7. Description

BA-2

<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 <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Number of Resources		Number of previously listed National Register properties included in this nomination: <u>0</u>
Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> buildings	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures	Original and Historic functions and uses: educational, religious
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects	
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> Total	

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Located facing south on a prominent rise of ground northeast of Catonsville in Baltimore County, Maryland, Mount de Sales Academy is a massive four-story brick building, 21 bays wide by 5 bays deep, constructed in three stages beginning in 1852. The building comprises three pedimented pavilions connected by full-height hyphens; this final 5-part form was achieved in 1882, when a monastery to house the cloistered Sisters of the Visitation was added to the 1852 chapel and classrooms and 1857 music hall and dormitory. The building features restrained Classical detailing in its two-story Ionic entrance portico and modillioned cornice; the music hall (the easternmost section) displays Italianate influence in its molded window hoods supported on scrolled brackets. A multi-level gallery with cast iron posts and railings spans the entire rear elevation. A cupola caps the gabled roof. The interior of the building remains largely unaltered, and is particularly noteworthy for the original chapel furnishings and an elaborate trompe L'oeil fresco ceiling in the music hall. Interior spaces, including several floors of small cells occupied by sisters in the monastery, remain intact. Associated with the Academy are a pre-1860 Italianate gatehouse, a two-story brick infirmary building constructed in 1894, and a late 19th century brick ice house.

BA-2

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Mount de Sales Academy

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland Item number 7 Page 1

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The main building, which faces south, is a Classical-influenced brick structure which stands four stories high above a basement. It consists of three three-bay-wide gable-fronted projecting blocks connected by six-bay-wide hyphens for a total of 21 bays in width. This complex structure was built in three stages. The original section, constructed in 1852, comprises the central projecting block and the six-bay-wide wing which extends to the east. The east block was added in 1857, balancing the composition, and the building's final five-part form was achieved in 1882, when the west block and its connecting wing were constructed. A two-story hip-roofed infirmary was constructed in 1894 adjacent to the northeast corner of the main building.

The central pavilion holds the main entrance under a two-story Ionic portico reached by granite steps. The fanlighted doorway is flanked on either side by paired 4/4 double-hung sash windows. At second-story level the 3 bays are defined by tall paired 4/4 sash with heavy wooden lintels set in recessed brick arches. The central opening on the third story has been bricked in; the remaining windows are similar in size and treatment to those on the first floor. The three paired windows lighting the fourth floor are shorter than those on the lower stories. The block is crowned by a modillioned cornice which forms a pediment, and capped by a cupola with a bell-cast roof.

The east hyphen is fenestrated and detailed in a manner similar to that of the central block just described, as these two sections were built contemporaneously (1852); the west hyphen, constructed in 1882 was designed to match. The 1882 west block repeats the pattern, with three paired windows at each level and a modillioned pediment.

The east block, constructed in 1857 to provide space for a music hall and dormitory, follows the general form and massing of the original central pavilion but is more ornately detailed with decoration reflecting Italianate influence. Its fanlighted central entrance is served by a brick stoop with a curving flight of steps at either side; the flanking bays hold exceptionally tall paired 6/6 sash in round-arched openings, with heavy molded wooden lintels supported on scrolled brackets. Above these windows, approximately at the level of the second story, recessed brick panels define the bays. The third-floor windows have heavy bracketed lintels. This section of the building has a bold modillioned cornice with a course of dentils in the frieze. The fenestration pattern and decoration are carried around the five-bay-wide east elevation of the block as well. A photograph taken before 1882 shows a one-bay entrance portico on this section with four Ionic columns supporting a full entablature; the portico, as well as all the window lintels, had anthemion-like decoration. This view also shows an iron-railed balcony spanning the facade of the 1852 building below the elongated second-story windows.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet    Mount de Sales Academy    Item number    7    Page    2  
Baltimore County, Maryland

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

An open, four-decked gallery with iron columns and balustrades formerly spanned the entire north elevation of the building; as the upper levels deteriorated, however, they were taken down, so that now only two levels remain across most of this facade. The full-height survives in the northeast corner of the building.

The main entrance opens into a receiving room, or small entrance vestibule with locked doors on all sides. Because the Sisters of the Visitation were a cloistered order, contact with the outside world was made through wooden grillwork, which survives in the vestibule. Adjacent to the vestibule on the right is a parlor which serves as office space; it retains a set of large double doors with a Victorian grain-painted finish. Behind the vestibule is the school library, called the "birdroom" for its display of works of the wildlife artist Rex Brashear.

A hallway opens off the birdroom to the east; it is flanked by classrooms and offices, and extends to the 1857 music hall. The music hall, which measures approximately 40' wide by 80' long, has a two-story-high ceiling decorated with elaborate trompe l'oeil fresco designs. Four marbled columns support the ceiling, which also has molded coffering and a dentil cornice.

The third floor has additional classroom space. The fourth floor is given to a large open space devoted to art instruction, and two large dormitory rooms. The dormitories were partitioned with curtains in the manner of a hospital ward; each student had a bed and nightstand. The north end of the dormitory room located above the music hall had an altar, where students could say their prayers before retiring.

Many of the rooms in the 1852 and 1857 sections retain early furnishings and decorative detailing, including wainscoting, built-in cabinets and bookshelves, plaster cornice moldings and grain-painted woodwork. The interior of the chapel, located on the second floor above the entrance hall and library, is unaltered save for the stained glass windows added in 1884 and a baldacchino which was placed over the altar in the 1930s; the chapel retains its original pews, gallery with wrought-iron railing, and iron observation balcony as well as its original ceiling finish. The three-sided projections on the rear facade are stair towers, holding broad spiral stairs with turned balusters and scrolled step-ends.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

BA-2

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Mount de Sales Academy Item number 7 Page 3  
Baltimore County, Maryland

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

The interior of the 1882 monastery is laid out on a cross plan, with a longitudinal hallway running the length of the wing crossed by a short transverse passage near the west end. On the first floor, rooms of varying sizes open off either side of the hall, functioning as visitors' quarters, infirmary, dispensary, and meeting rooms. On the upper floors, numerous equal-sized sisters' cells flank the hallway; these small rectangular rooms were each provided with a window, bed, and washstand. Most of the cells are unheated, with the only heat in the monastery section provided by large radiators in the hall.

The basement contains storage, cooking, and dining facilities. In the original section it is paved with brick.

A two-story brick infirmary building, constructed in 1894, is attached at an angle to the northeast corner of the Academy. This building is comprised of three hip-roofed sections which intersect to form a "U", enclosing a recessed porch on the north elevation. Windows are paired on the south, east, and west sides; those on the second story have round-arched heads. The building rests on a stone foundation.

South of the infirmary and roughly contemporaneous with it is a small brick ice house, two bays wide by one bay deep.

A picturesque gatehouse lies southeast of the main building; it is an Italianate-influenced brick structure with a five-part symmetrical facade. A wide arched driveway runs through the central block; this section rises three stories high with a shallow-pitched, front-facing gable roof. A three-part round-arched window is centered on the second story; the third floor is lighted by an oculus window flanked by round-arched niches. Flanking the central section are two-story wings, one bay wide; the ridges of their gabled roofs run parallel to the facade. These wings project slightly from the plane of the central block, and have a stepped water table. On the first floor, a 6/6 window is set within a round-arched recess; another 6/6 sash lights the second story. Low one-story gabled wings, two bays wide, extend to the north and south, completing the five-part composition. All sections feature an elaborate bracketed cornice. At the rear, a three-bay ell extends to the west, and a balcony supported on heavy scrolled brackets spans the second story of the central block.

# 8. Significance

BA-2

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 dates** 1852; 1857; 1882; 1894 **Builder Architect** see below

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

1852: James Curley and Son, builders	Applicable Criteria: A, C
1857: unknown	Applicable Exceptions: A
1882: E. F. Baldwin, architect; John Stack, builder	Significance Evaluated: local

### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Mount de Sales Academy is significant for its association with the development of education for women in Maryland, and for its architecture. Still housed in its original 1852 building, the Academy reflects the pioneer era of women's boarding schools; prior to the Civil War, convent schools offered practically the only opportunity for formal education for women in the nation. Mount de Sales Academy is the oldest school for girls in Baltimore County and the oldest educational facility in the county still in use as a school. The Chapel is also the oldest Roman Catholic house of worship in Baltimore County. Architecturally, the massive Academy building presents a noteworthy example of mid-nineteenth-century institutional design combining Classical and Italianate detailing. The multi-decked cast-iron porches are uncommonly large in scale and represent perhaps the only surviving example of this feature in the county. The building retains a high level of integrity, especially on the interior, where all the original functional spaces remain unaltered including classrooms, dormitory, music hall, chapel, and sisters' cells; the vast majority of decorative detailing is also intact including grain-painted woodwork and a trompe l'oeil fresco ceiling in the music hall.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Mount de Sales Academy Baltimore County, Maryland Item number 8 Page 4

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

Mount de Sales is the first academy in Baltimore County that offered formal education to young women of all denominations. Sisters of the Visitation had established an academy in Baltimore City in 1837 at the behest of Most Reverend Samuel Eccleston, the young fifth archbishop of Baltimore. At his prompting they bought land in Catonsville in 1850 for a country school that could accommodate boarders. The ground was acquired by Mother Mary Cecelia Brooks in her own name from William T. Somerville. The tract name was "Nancy's Fancy" and the survey began at Old Frederick Road and Five Mile Lane.<sup>1</sup> The Sisters had received a bequest from a New York friend that was exactly enough to cover the cost of the school site. The money was received on August 15 - a Catholic holy day - and spent by the 20th on the 76-acre site.<sup>2</sup>

The grounds were described as "having several fine springs of water, a good orchard, and a view of the Patapsco River, the Chesapeake Bay, and the surrounding country, even from some of the valleys of this beautiful spot."<sup>3</sup>

The church weekly reported that the site was near Franklin:

From what will be the southeast front, can be seen the harbor of Baltimore, Fort McHenry, and the Government works now going on at Sol-ler's Flats, and in clear weather the cupola of the capitol at Annapolis is visible to the naked eye.<sup>4</sup>

The digging of the cellar was begun on January 29, 1851, and the corner-stone was laid in May by Bishop Charbonnel.<sup>5</sup> Twelve Sisters were assigned to the School from the Visitation Convent in Georgetown, D.C. and they arrived via Baltimore on August 11, 1852. It was a four-hour trip from the city convent and the new faculty dressed in ordinary bonnets and shawls rather than religious garb out of fear of the Know-Nothing party.<sup>6</sup>

The faculty kept detailed records and in the Centennial year, 1952, Sister Ignatia wrote, quoting original papers:

"The large sheets of tin which fashioned the roof were brought from England in wooden sailing vessels... large beams supporting the chapel ceiling were axe hewn with no mark of a saw upon them." When the Sisters arrived, there was still very much to be done and the Sisters helped to carry bricks and mortar up the four flights of stairs and even laid the bricks in the cellar. Because of the presence of the workmen, the sisters continued to wear secular clothing until the 15th of August, feast of the Assumption, when Mass was said and the house canonically erected.

BA-2

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet    Mount de Sales Academy    Baltimore County, Maryland    Item number    8    Page    5

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

September 5, 1852, saw the opening of the academy with twenty-one boarders. By the end of the first year the number had increased to fifty-one. The first commencement exercises were held in June 1853, owing to the fact that all boarders were transferred from the Baltimore Visitation (then located at Park Avenue and Centre Street) which thenceforth remained a day school.<sup>7</sup>

The church paper was much impressed by the structure and the view was even better now that there was a fourth floor; one could hear the bell of the downtown cathedral from the deck and the drawing department of the school had a room with a view that "we are sure must give inspiration to the pencil and brush." The chapel was equipped with stained-glass windows and marble altar; the dormitories had low partitions between beds to allow the circulation of air. The structure was 105 feet front by 60 feet deep, and the contractor was James Curley and Son.<sup>8</sup>

Yet, what existed then was fairly small in comparison with the plan. The first installment included the central pavilion and a wing six bays wide. It was in 1857 that another block fronted by a pediment was added on the right end of the building. The new space provided dormitories and a music hall; a city paper described it as a five-story addition, 43x93 feet, with a "saloon" on the first floor that would accommodate a thousand persons.<sup>9</sup>

Students included children from Protestant and Jewish families, as well as Catholics, and girls from Latin America and the West Indies, as well as various regions of the United States. Enrollment plummeted during the Civil War since Catholicism was a largely Southern phenomenon prior to the age of immigration. One graduate of 1871 was Mary Pinkney Hardy, who later became the mother of General Douglas MacArthur. She was graduated with highest honors and "a crown and gold medal for excellence in conduct."<sup>10</sup>

Since life choices for women were limited in the mid-nineteenth century, those who came to Mount de Sales to live as nuns were drawn from diverse areas. The 1860 census lists forty-nine nuns from four countries and six states.

Mrs. Mary Teresa Waggaman (1846-1931) had been a member of the class of 1866 and wrote in a yearbook memoir that the gatehouse was of red bricks and served as the residence of Father Caton who was waiting for the Saint Agness Church (or more likely, its rectory) to be completed. Mrs. Waggaman had written

BA-2

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet    Mount de Sales Academy    Item number    8    Page    6  
Baltimore County, Maryland

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

a number of juvenile books. She recalled good times and treats, a musical event held on Saint Cecelia's day, and walks in the woods - after praying to Saint Patrick to drive off the snakes. The school infirmarian would give girls heading home to the south a dose of malaria preventative. Plays were given before candle footlights and the players had to memorize stretches of blank verse from Maria Stuart or Fabiola. The original bill of fare was plain but plentiful, but years later the Sister in charge of the menu told Mrs. Waggaman, "girls now would not stand for what girls stood for in your time. But I think our children loved us the best."<sup>11</sup> Old catalogs show that the school uniform was uniformly black and chapel attendance was mandatory. On the other hand, discussion of sectarian differences was not allowed.<sup>12</sup>

The main structure was doubled in width in 1882 and assumed the present facade of three pedimented pavilions instead of two:

Addition to Mt. DeSales - The Academy of the Visitation at Mt. DeSales, near Catonsville are about to add an additional wing to their building to correspond with the wing on the north end. It will require over a year's work to finish the new addition. Mr. E. F. Baldwin is the architect and Mr. John Stack the builder. The huge building already looms up on the horizon and from its elevated position serves as a guide to the mariners of the Chesapeake Bay. The thought must bring pleasant reflections to the Nuns that such a mission is characteristic and typical of their faith, and in raising such an addition to be building they increase and brighten their guide lamp.<sup>13</sup>

The addition provided the monastery, which had been called for in the original plans but postponed in execution until funds were available.

Gradually, in the present century, the institution became more day school than boarding academy and in 1933 the boarding school was discontinued. In the 1940s, the grammar school was discontinued. Finally in 1979, the Sisters, many of whom were of advanced years, gave the school up and left the monastery. In September of 1979, the convent furniture and the originals of the "birdroom" prints were offered for sale at public auction.<sup>14</sup> The school continues under the management of board of directors; the educational function has recently passed to a group of Dominican sisters.

BA-2

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Mount de Sales Academy

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland Item number 8

Page 7

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Notes:

- <sup>1</sup>Baltimore City Deeds, AWB 440:359.
- <sup>2</sup>Sister M. Aloysius Elkins, "History of Mount de Sales," ms., 1968, in Baltimore County Historical Society Library.
- <sup>3</sup>Elkins, "History of Mount De Sales", p. 1.
- <sup>4</sup>Catholic Mirror, Baltimore, November 27, 1850.
- <sup>5</sup>Sister Ignatia, "Mount De Sales, Catonsville, Maryland,"ms. 1952, p. 2.
- <sup>6</sup>Elkins, "History," pp. 1-2.
- <sup>7</sup>Sister Ignatia, "Mount De Sales," p.2.
- <sup>8</sup>Catholic Mirror, Baltimore, September 4, 1852.
- <sup>9</sup>Baltimore American, November 13, 1858.
- <sup>10</sup>Sister Ignatia, "Mount De Sales," p. 3.
- <sup>11</sup>Mary T. Waggaman (Minnie McKee), "In the Beginning," yearbook item prior to 1931.
- <sup>12</sup>Prospectus of Mount de Sales Academy of the Visitation For Young Ladies Near Catonsville, 1876, p. 1.
- <sup>13</sup>Maryland Journal, Towson, May 6, 1882.
- <sup>14</sup>Sunday Sun, September 9, 1979, adv.

BA-2

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Mount de Sales Academy Item number 9 Page 8  
Baltimore County, Maryland

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

- Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County (Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, 1979).
- Lathrop, George Parsons and Rose Hawthorne Lathrop. A Story of Courage (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1894).
- Offutt, E. Francis. Baltimore County Landmarks. (Towson, MD: Baltimore County Library, 1971).
- Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881).
- Sullivan, Eleanore. Georgetown Visitation: Since 1799 (Wash., D.C.: Privately published, 1975).
- Vertical files, Maryland Historical Trust: draft National Register applications for Mount de Sales Academy by John McGrain (1979) and Rev. Michael Roach (1985).

Also see Footnotes, Continuation Sheet No. 7.

BA-2

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Mount de Sales Academy Item number 10 Page 9  
Baltimore County, Maryland

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Verbal Boundary Description: BEGINNING FOR THE SAME at a point on the southerly right of way line of Academy Road, 60 feet wide, said point being distant 335.38 feet, as measured northwesterly along said right of way line from the northerly end of the fillet curve connecting the southerly right of way line of Academy Road with the northerly right of way of Whitfield Road, located in Baltimore County, Maryland; thence from said beginning point south  $41^{\circ} 32' 27''$  east 335.38 feet, thence along the aforementioned fillet curve 35.04 feet to the right, said fillet curve having a radius of 20.00 feet subtended by a chord bearing south  $8^{\circ} 39' 01''$  west 30.73 feet, thence binding on the northerly right of way line of Whitfield Road, 60 feet wide, along a curve to the right 812.08 feet, said curve being subtended by a chord bearing south  $48^{\circ} 43' 07''$  west 807.84 feet; thence binding on the northerly right of way line of Northdale Road 60 feet wide, along a curve to the right 50.00 feet, said curve being subtended by a chord bearing south  $86^{\circ} 43' 23''$  west 50.00 feet, thence for lines of division the three following courses viz: (1) north  $31^{\circ} 27' 03''$  west 498.93 feet (2) north  $34^{\circ} 20' 39''$  east 440.00 feet (3) north  $72^{\circ} 35' 57''$  east 386.75 feet to intersect the southerly right of way line of Academy Road, thence along a curve to the right 120.00 feet said curve being subtended by a chord bearing south  $43^{\circ} 17' 09''$  east 119.98 feet to the point of beginning. (Baltimore County Land Records, Liber 6793, Folio 502).

Boundary Justification: The nominated property, 10.2674 acres, comprises the remnant of the original 74-acre tract which remains associated with the resource, encompassing the Academy and associated buildings within their surviving historic setting. The academy commands a prominent rise of ground, facing southeast across a broad open field. Dense suburban development immediately surrounds the Academy property on all sides.

See Continuation Sheet No. 8.

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 10.2674 acres

Quadrangle name Baltimore West, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 8	3 5 1 6 0 0	4 3 4 9 7 5 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	1 8	3 5 1 7 0 0	4 3 4 9 6 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	1 8	3 5 1 4 8 0	4 3 4 9 4 4 0
---	-----	-------------	---------------

D	1 8	3 5 1 3 6 0	4 3 4 9 6 7 0
---	-----	-------------	---------------

E			
---	--	--	--

F			
---	--	--	--

G			
---	--	--	--

H			
---	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet No. 9

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter E. Kurtze (research by John McGrain 1979 and Rev. Michael Roach (1985))

organization Maryland Historical Trust date September 1985

street & number 21 State Circle telephone (301) 269-1438

city or town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

### 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature] 4-24-86

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

BA-2  
MOUNT DE SALES  
ACADEMY

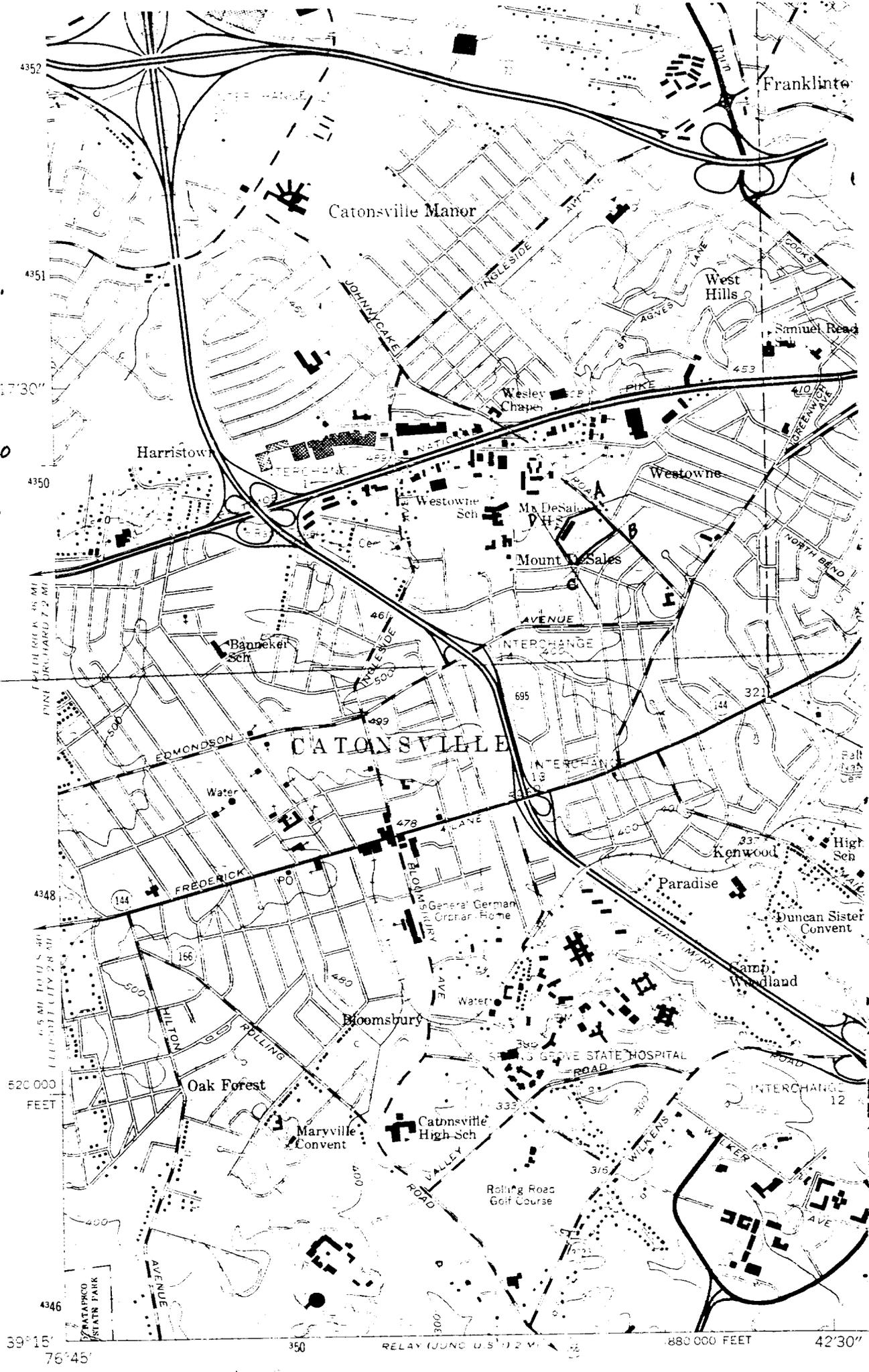
BALTIMORE COUNTY,  
MARYLAND

A: 18-351600-4349750

B: 18-351700-4349630

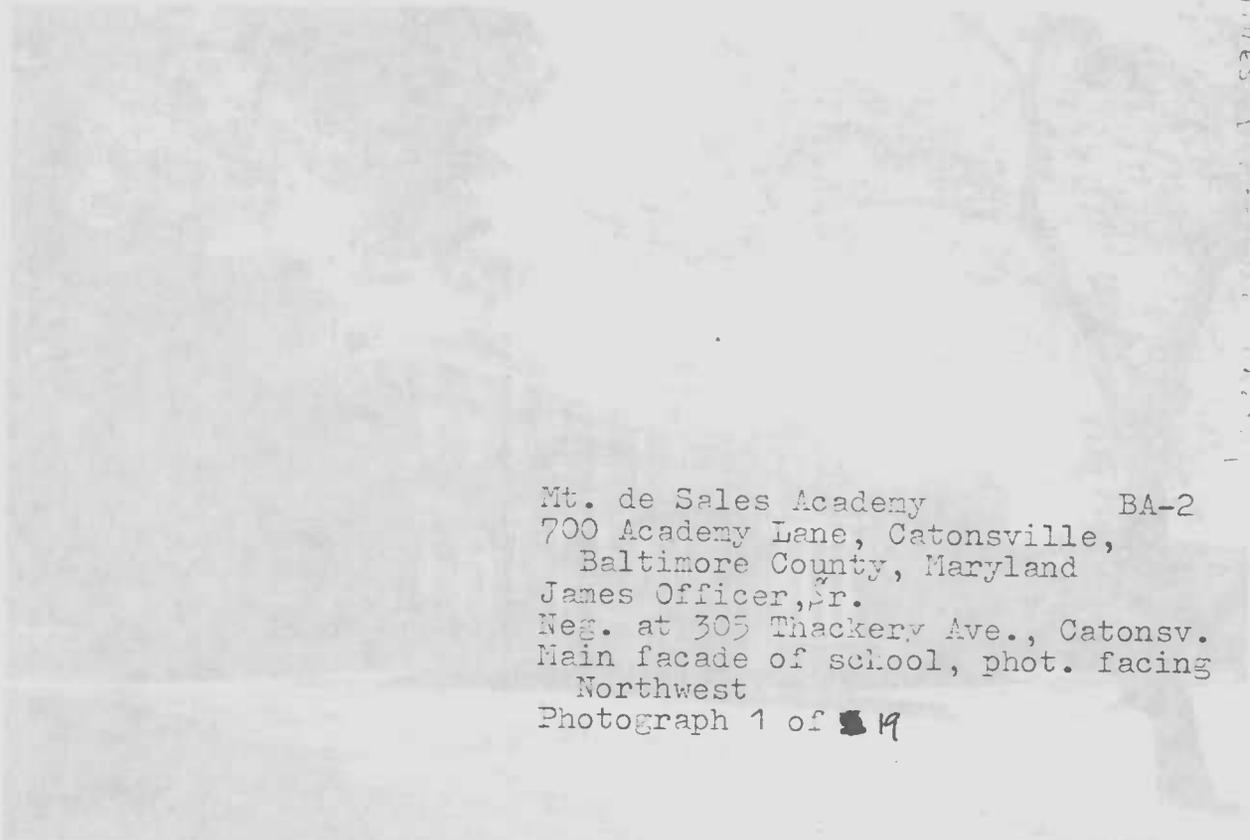
C: 18-351480-4349440

D: 18-351360-4349670





2 10



JAMES V. OFFICER, SR.

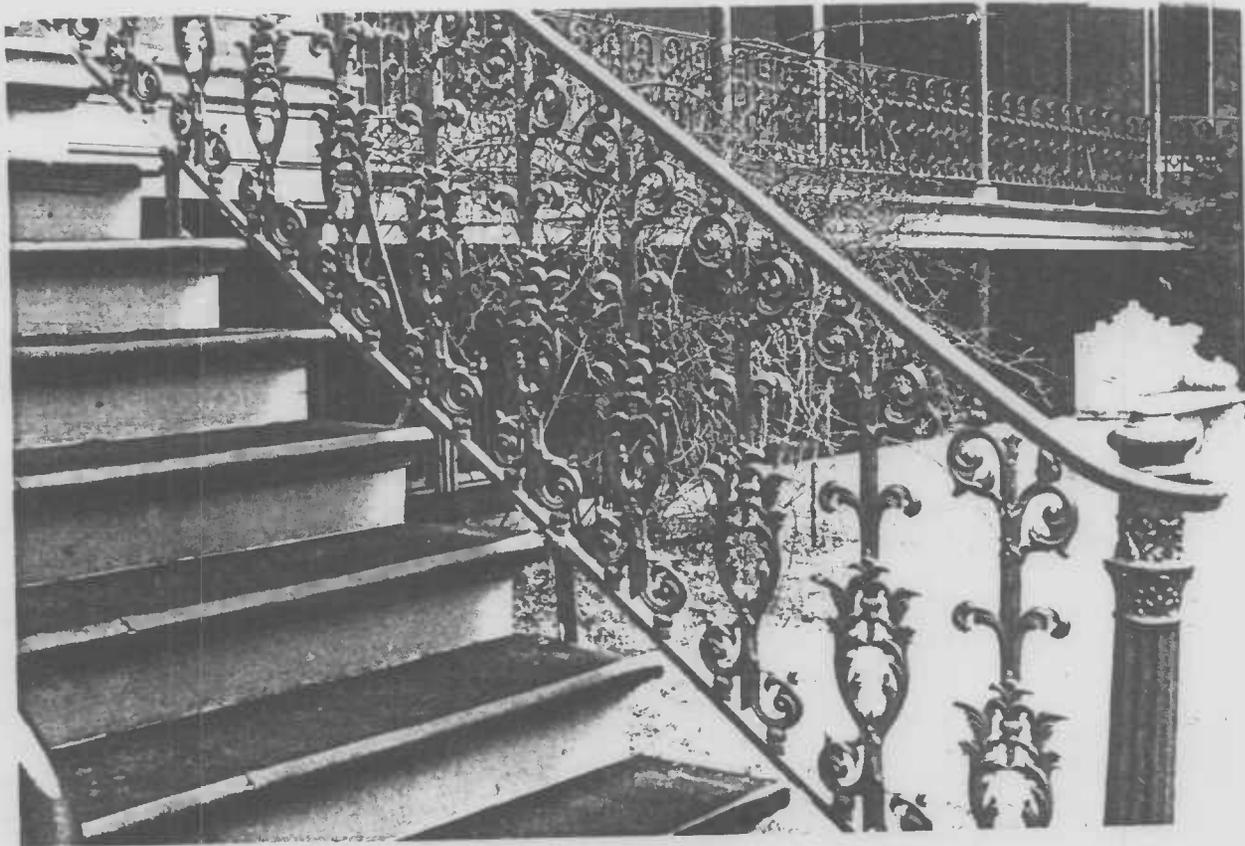
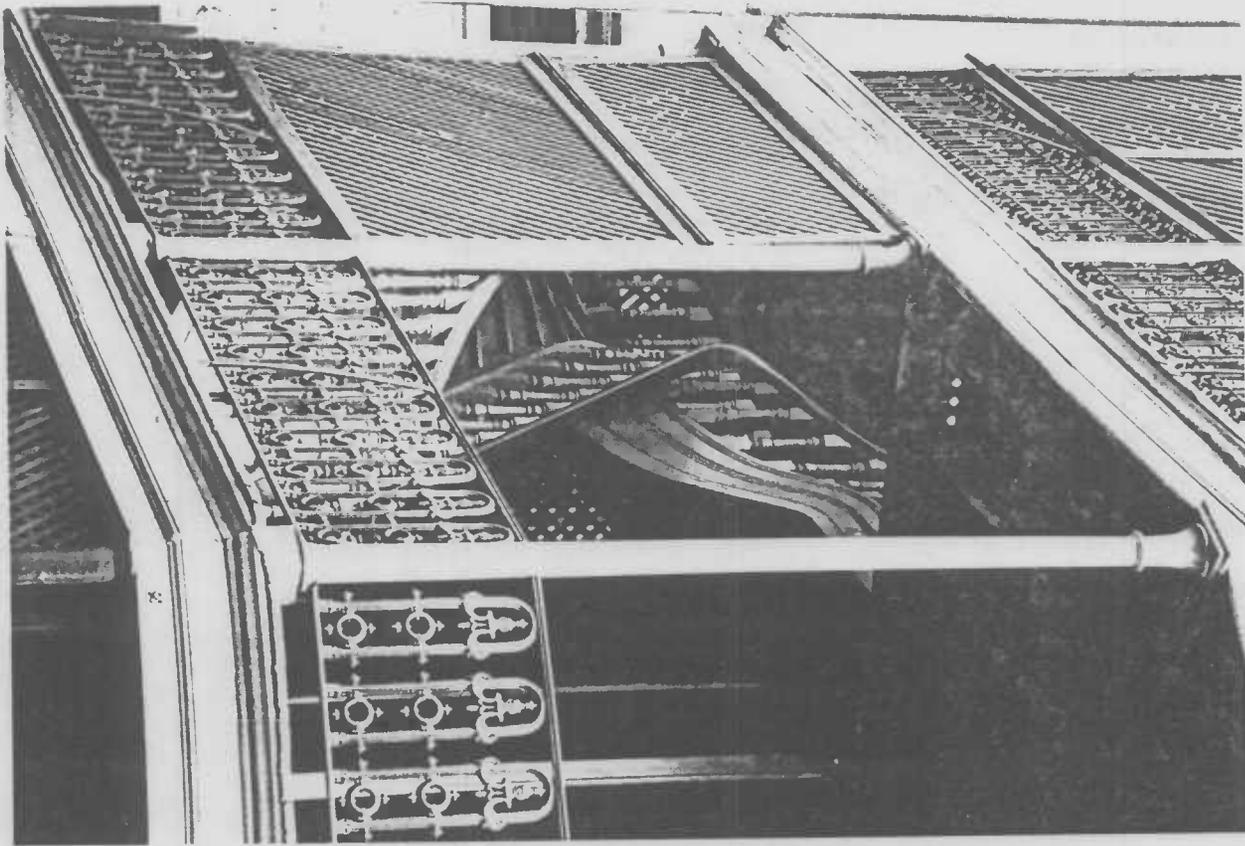
Mt. de Sales Academy BA-2  
700 Academy Lane, Catonsville,  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
James Officer, Sr.  
Neg. at 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsv.  
Main facade of school, phot. facing  
Northwest  
Photograph 1 of 19

Mt. de Sales Academy BA-2  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

(5)

View from northeast; infirmary in  
foreground #2/19

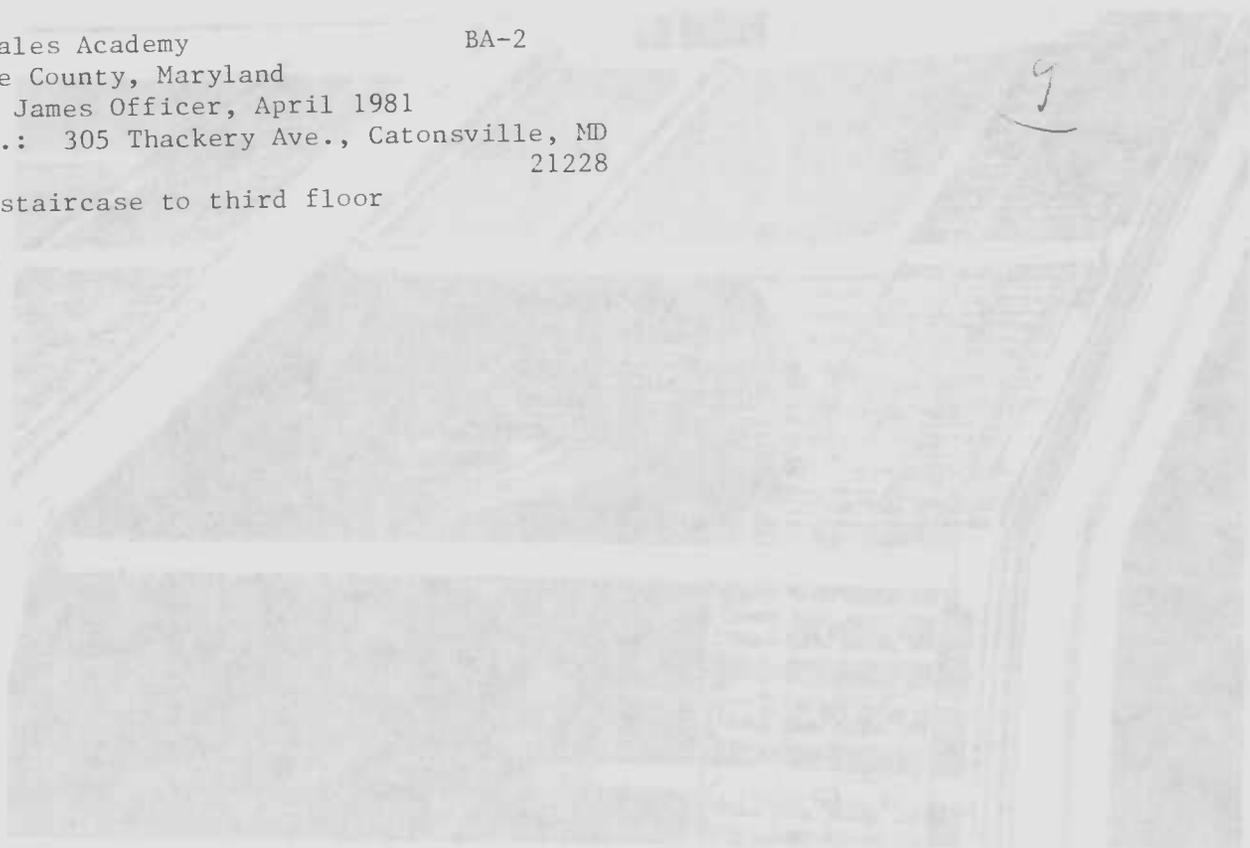




Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

Winding staircase to third floor

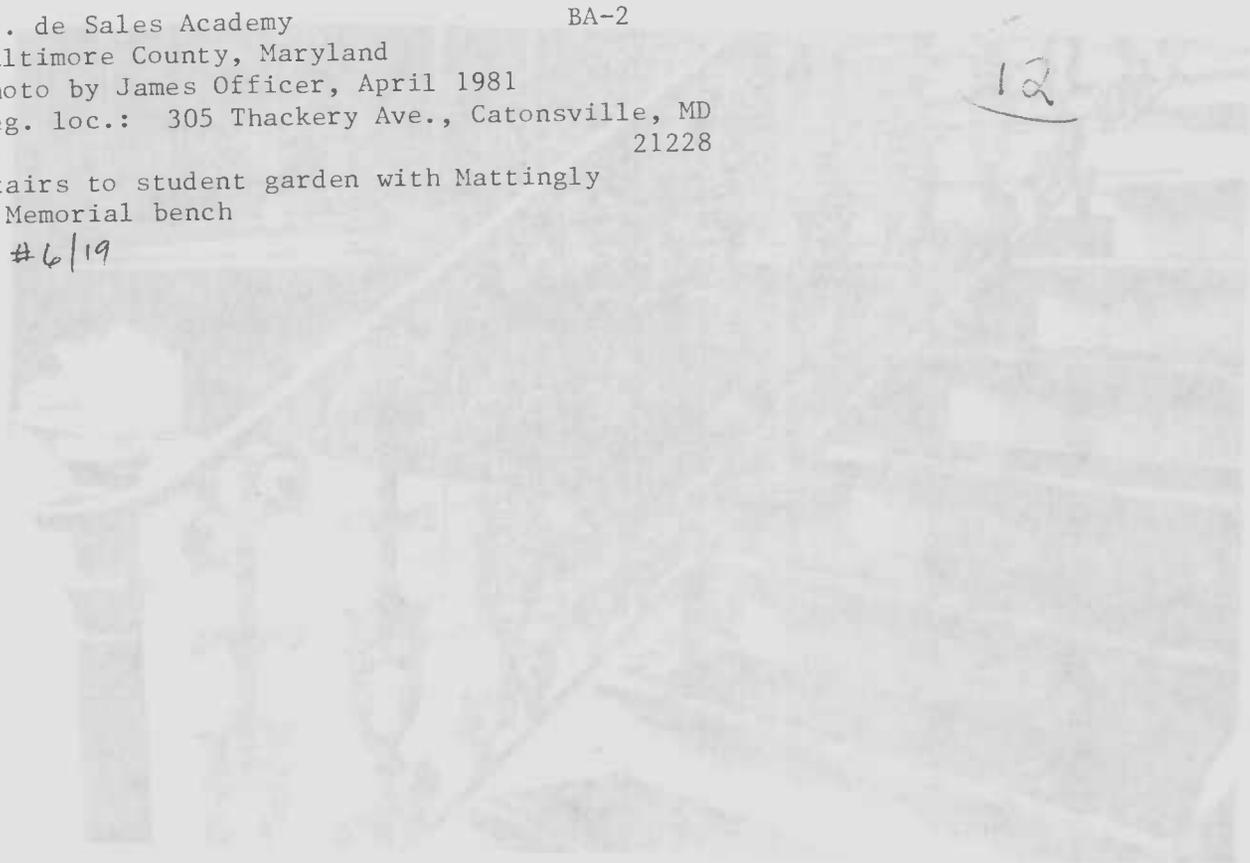
#5/19



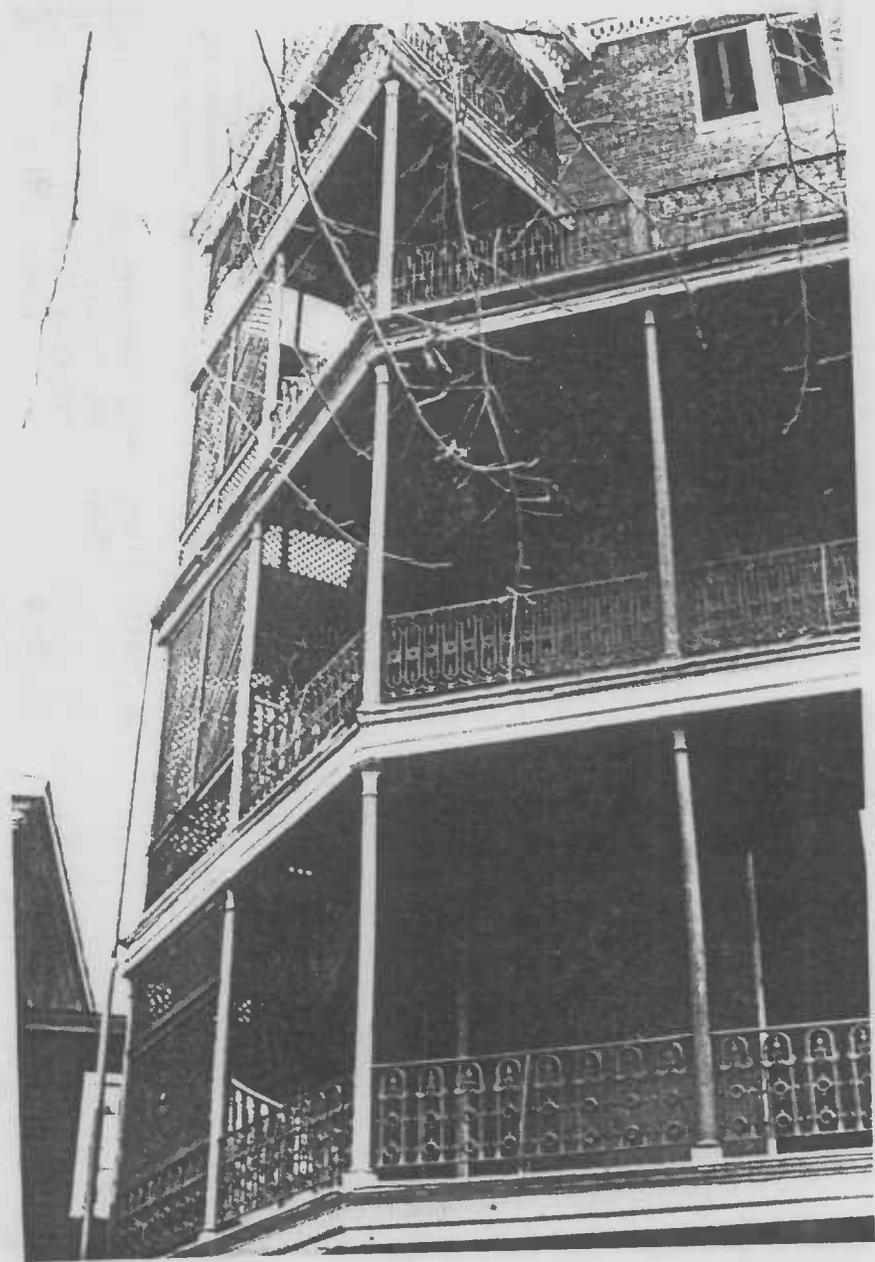
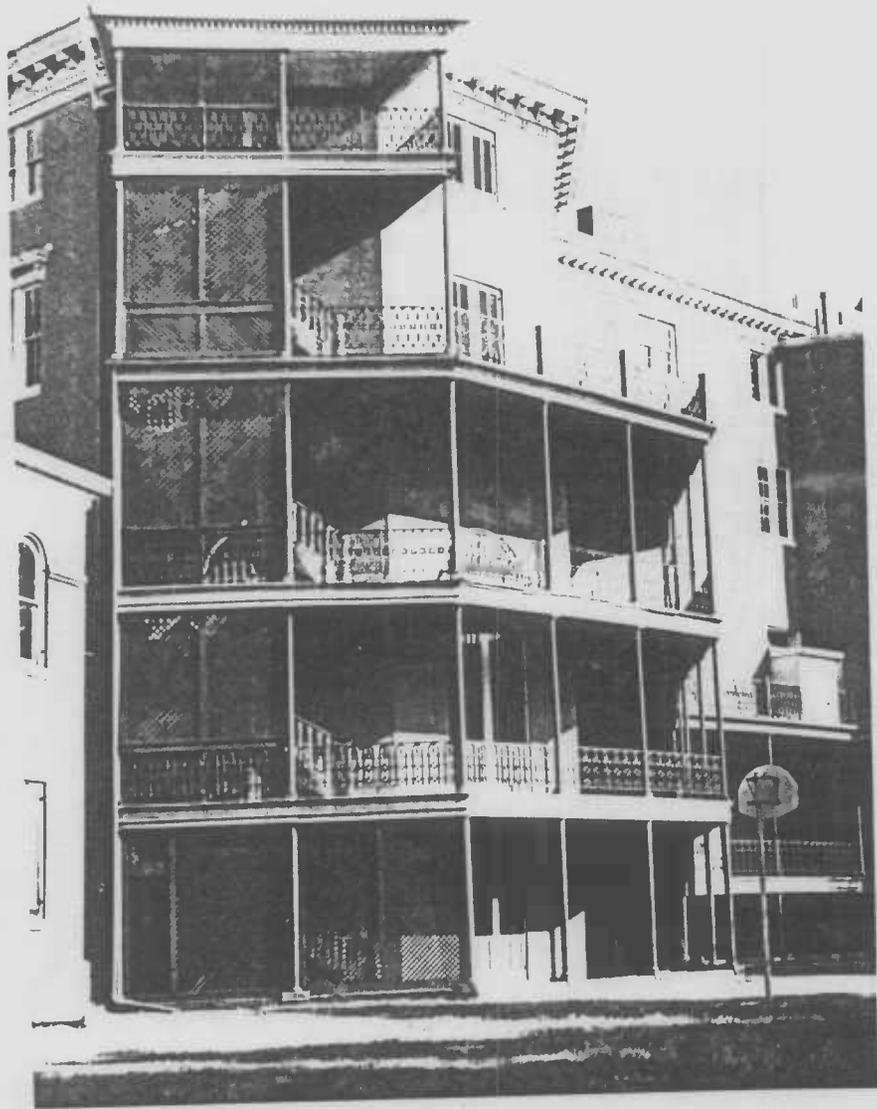
Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

stairs to student garden with Mattingly  
Memorial bench

#6/19



BA-2



Mt. de Sales Academy  
700 Academy Lane, Catonsville,  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
James Officer, Sr., 4/81  
Neg. at 305 Thacker Ave., Catonsv.  
East end, rear, balconies, from NE  
Photograph ~~3~~ of ~~3~~ 19  
3

BA-2

Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thacker Ave., Catonsville, MD

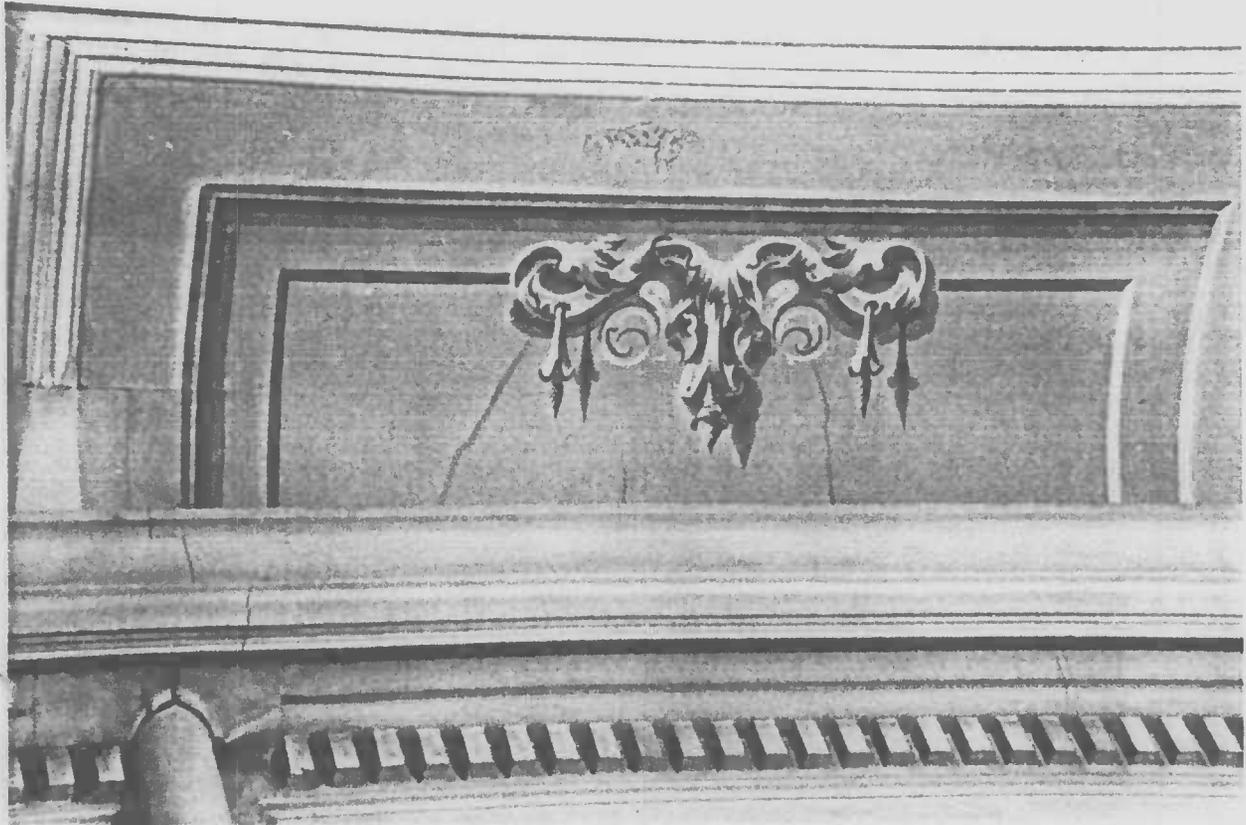
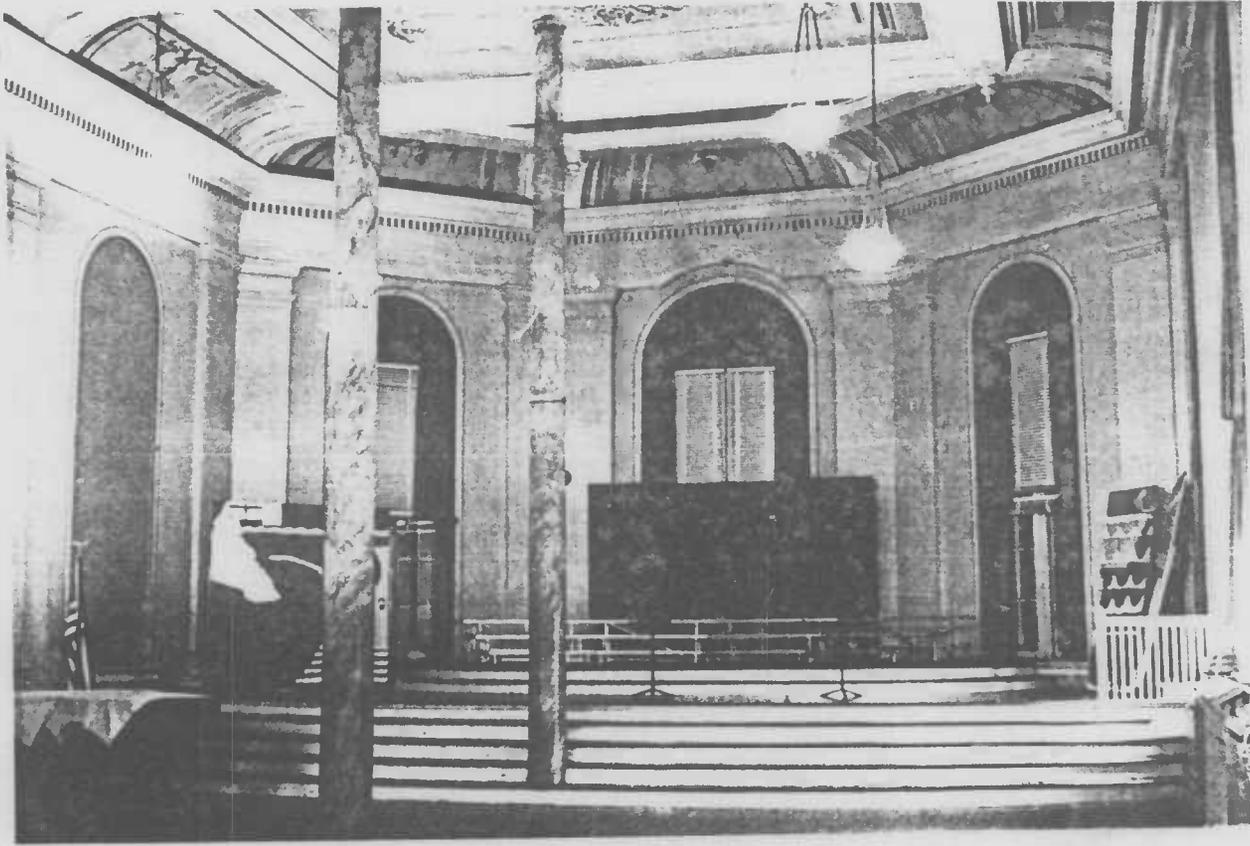
BA-2

21228  
The porches, showing three different styles  
of ~~various~~ iron work

#4 | 19

CAST

(11)



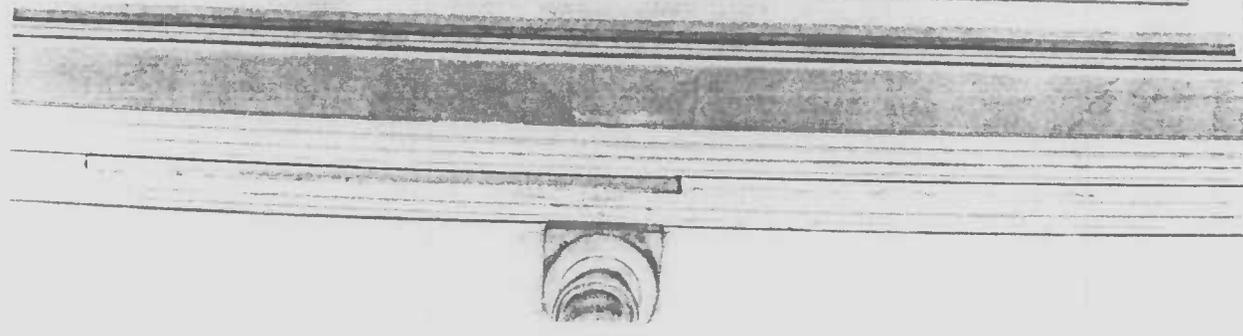
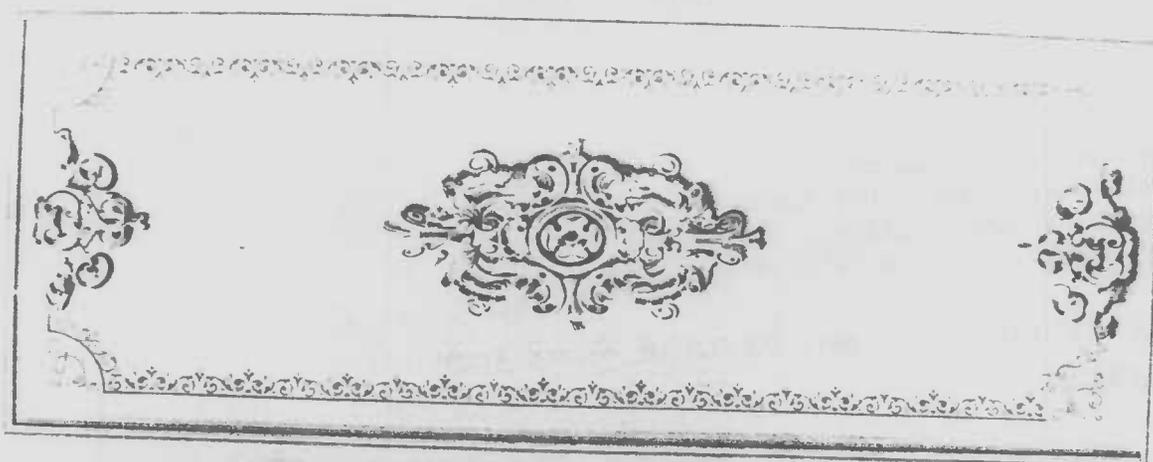
Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc., 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

music room, facing north  
#7/19

Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc., 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

detail, trompe l'oeil fresco in music room  
#8/19

(15)



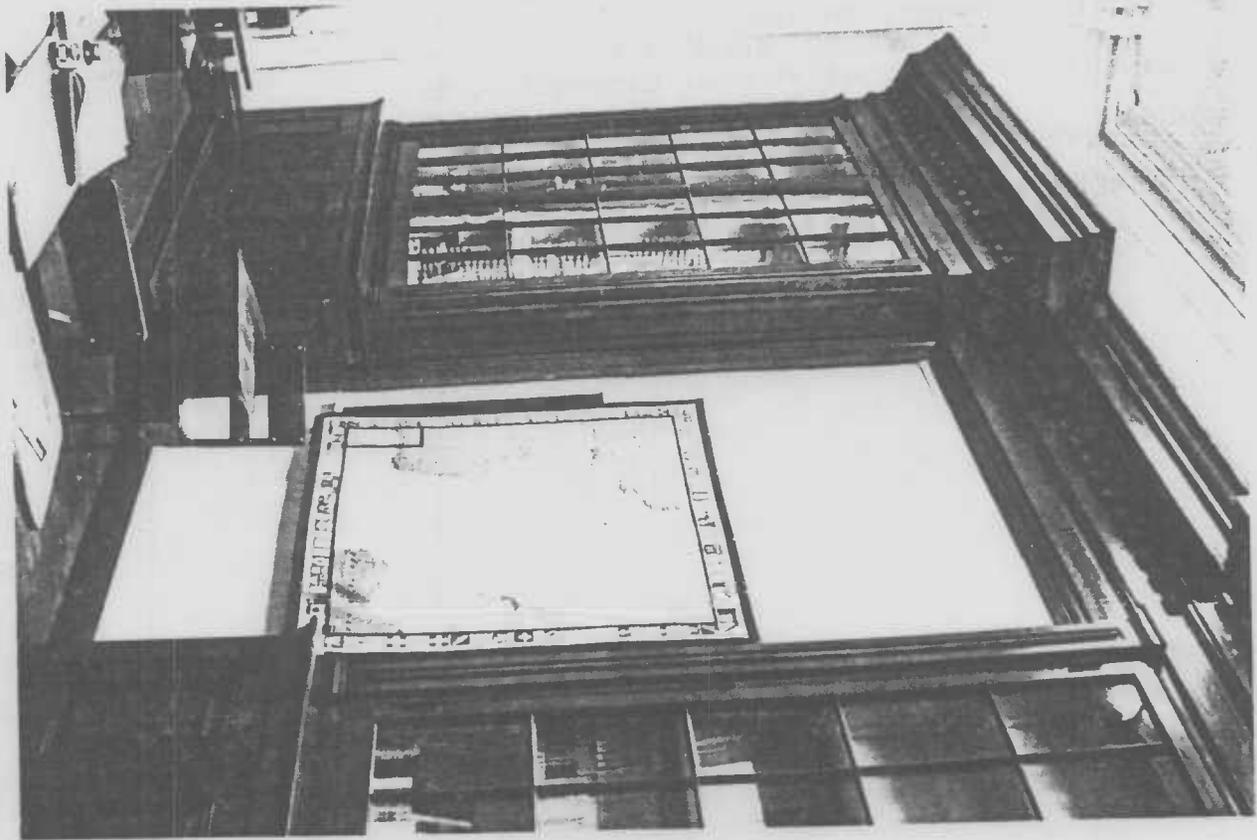
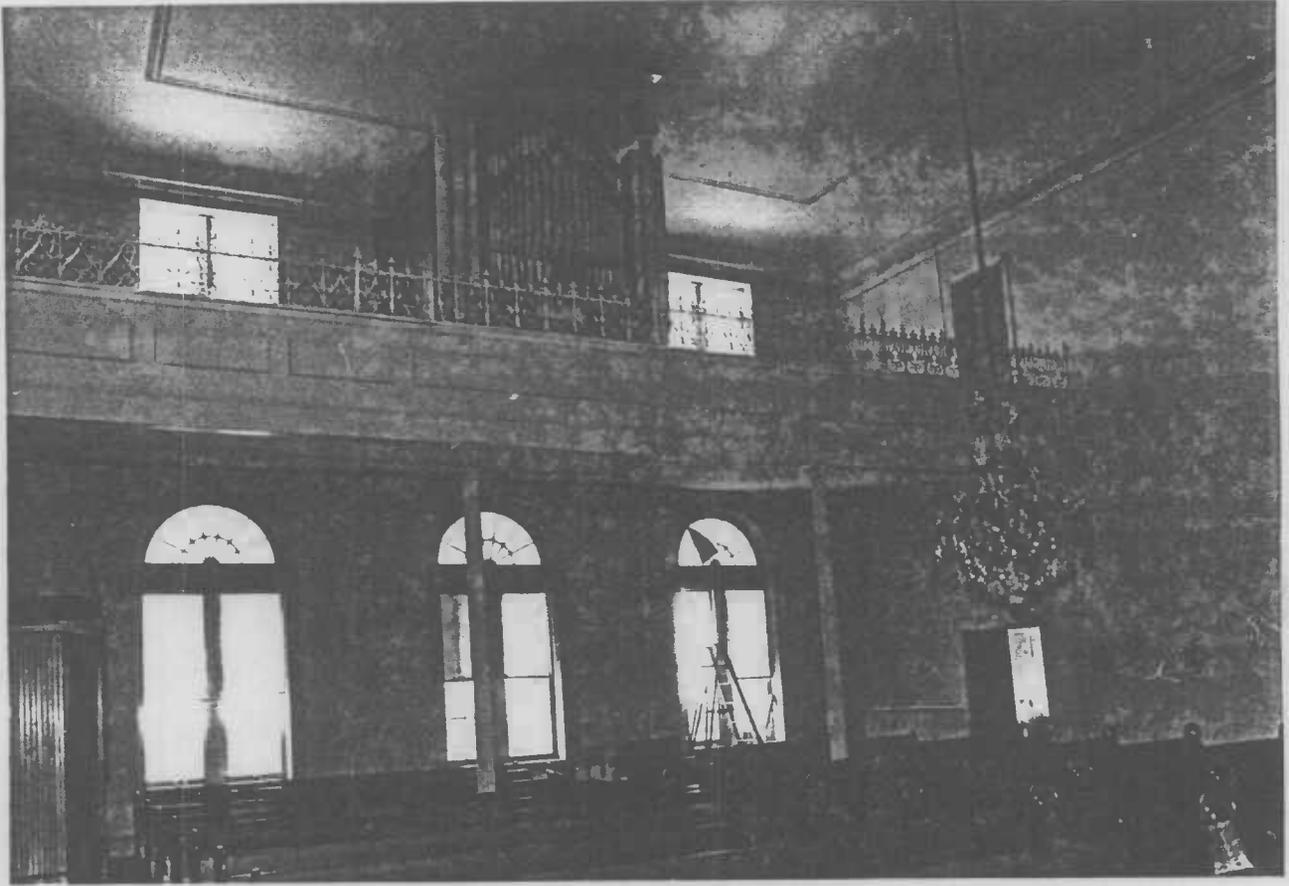
Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc., 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

detail, trompe l'oeil fresco in music room  
#8/19

15

BA-2  
Mt de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, MD  
photo by Peter Kurtze, 10/85  
chapel, facing NE

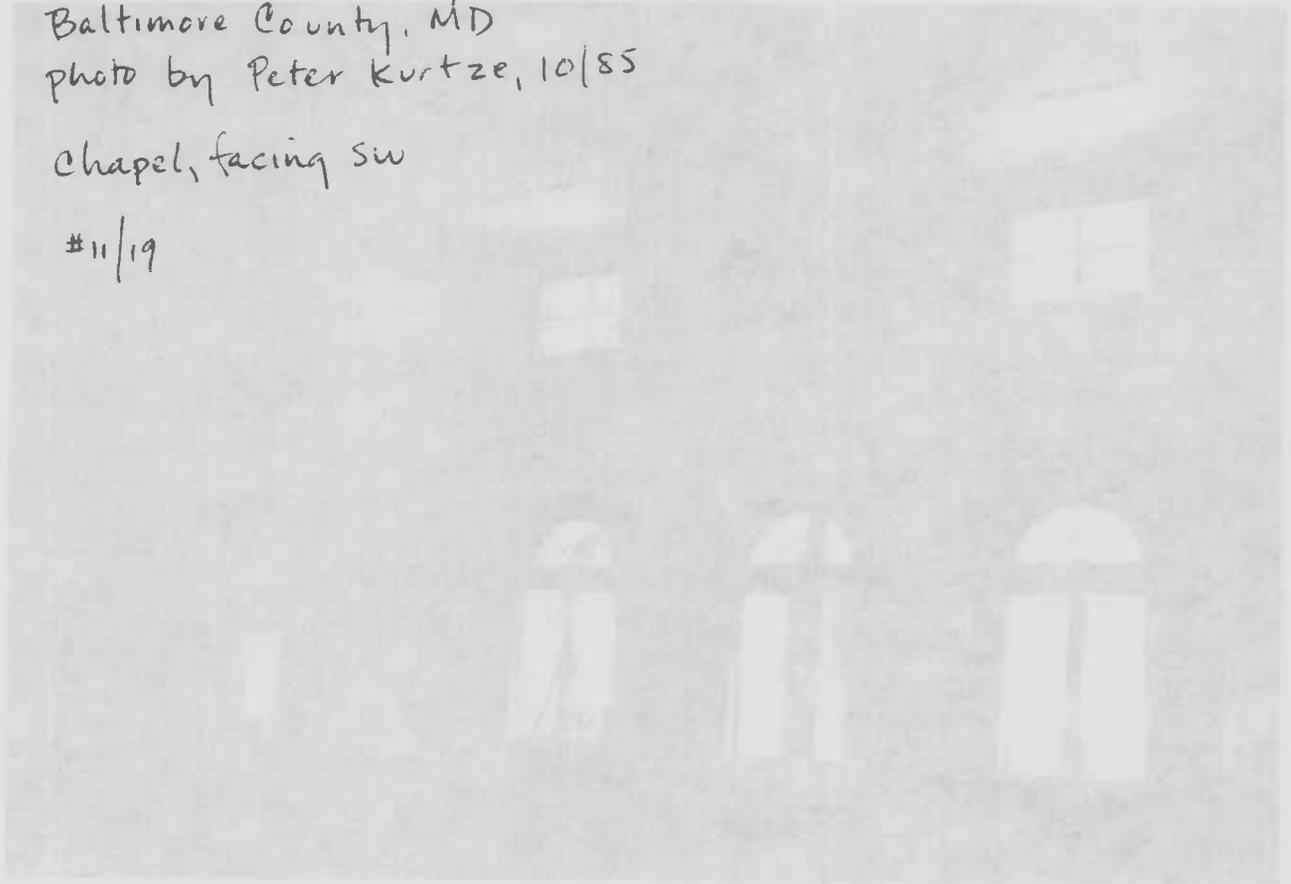
#10/19



Mt de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, MD  
photo by Peter Kurtze, 10/85

Chapel, facing SW

#11/19



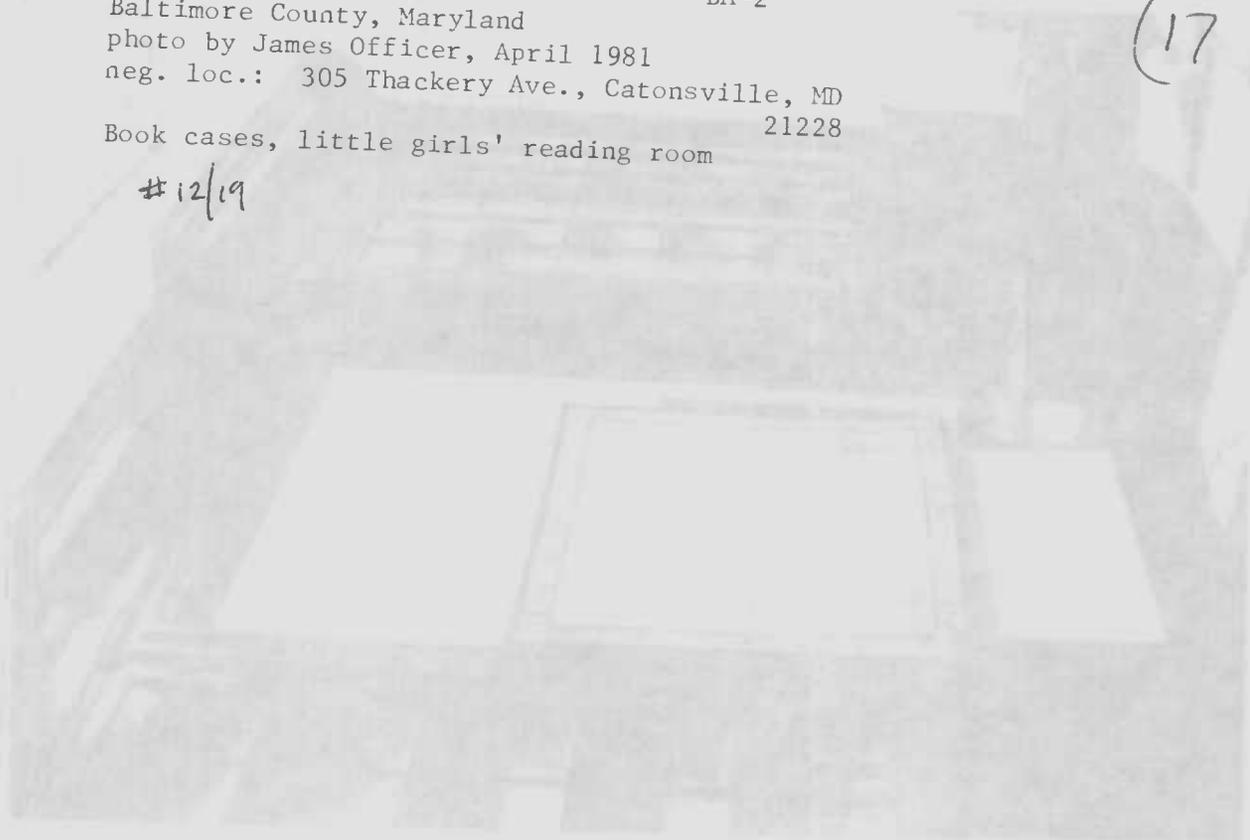
Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

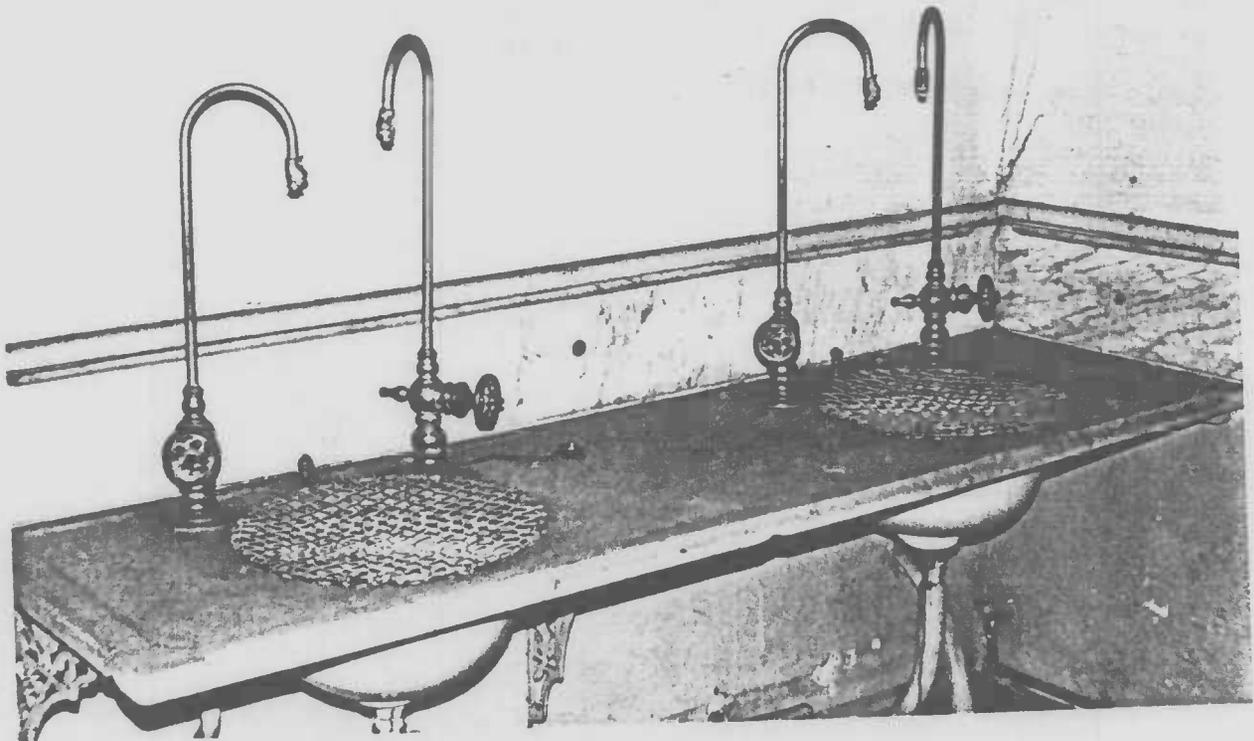
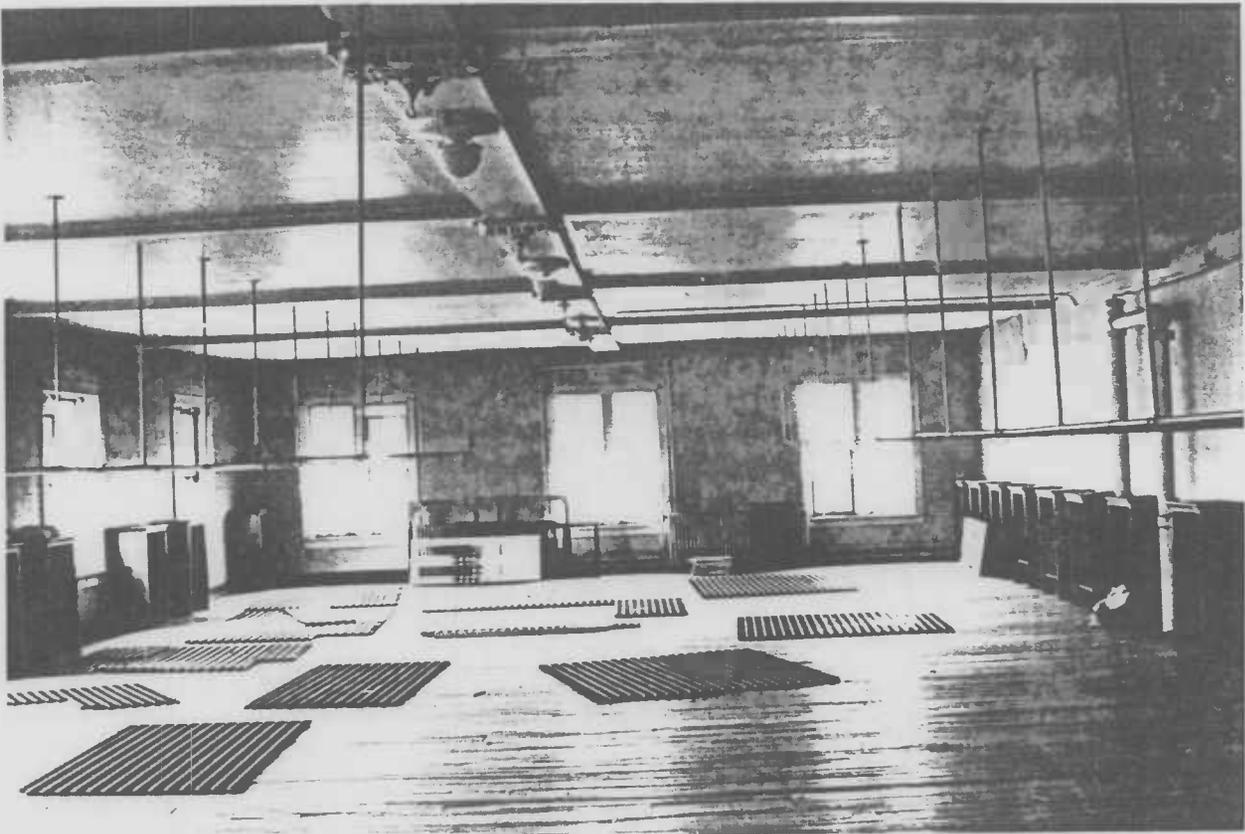
BA-2

(17)

Book cases, little girls' reading room

#12/19





Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

BA-2

(21)

Dorm, 3rd floor

#13/19



Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

BA-2

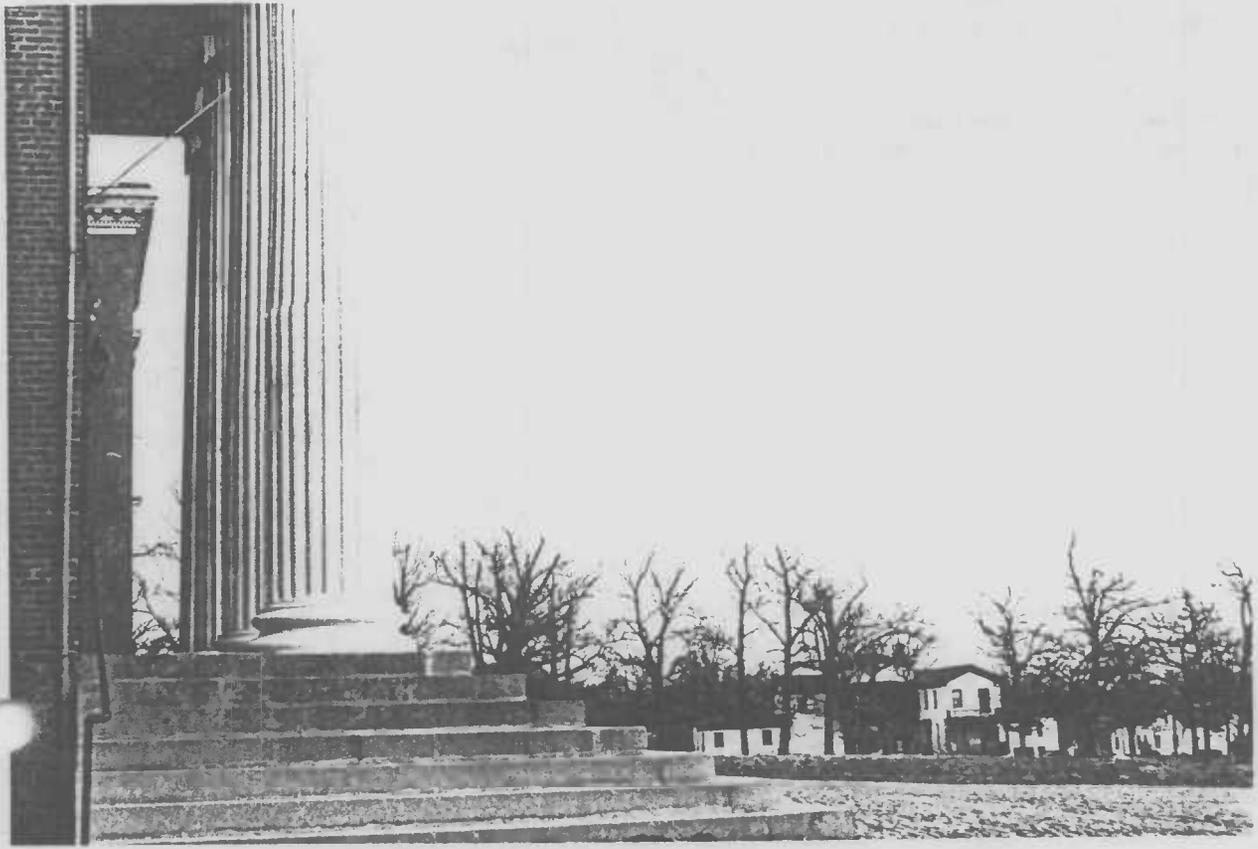
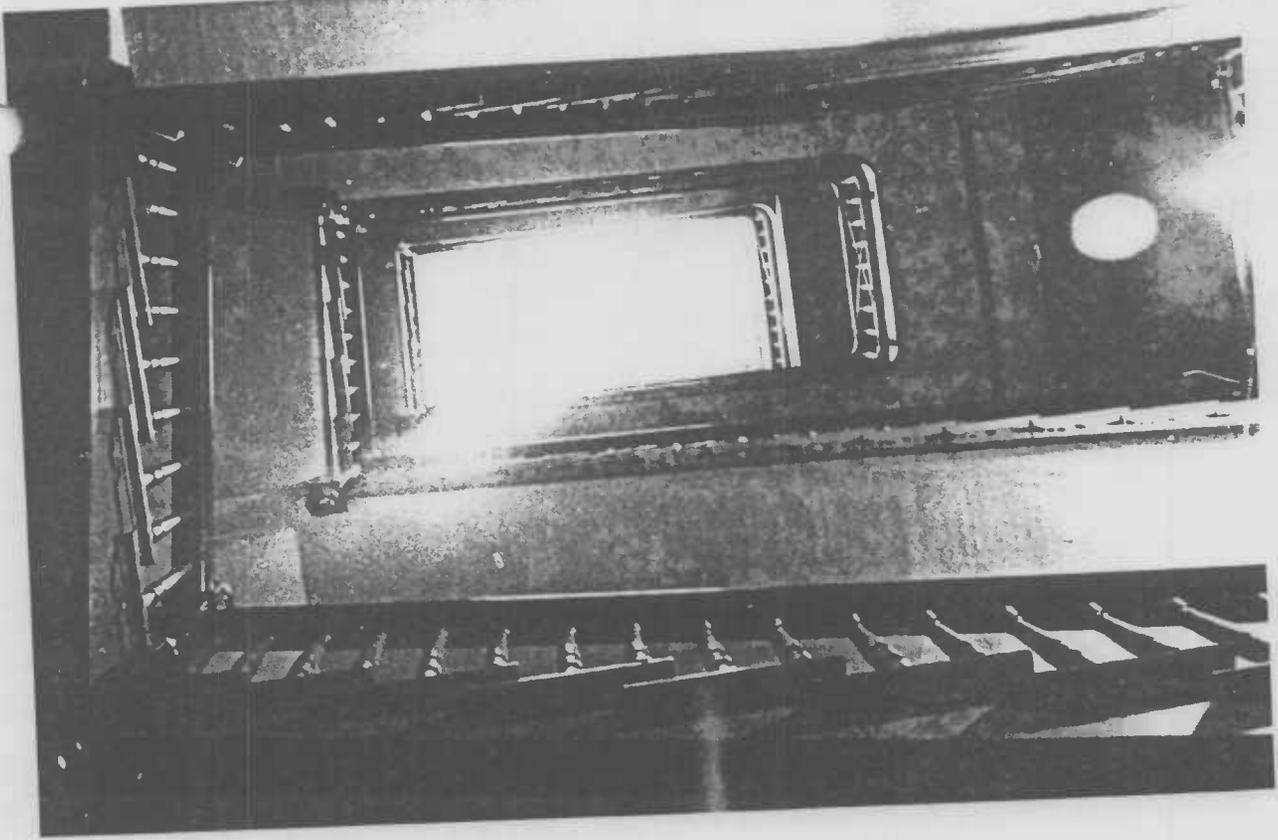
(22)

Dolphin head spiggots, Third floor  
washrooms

#14/19



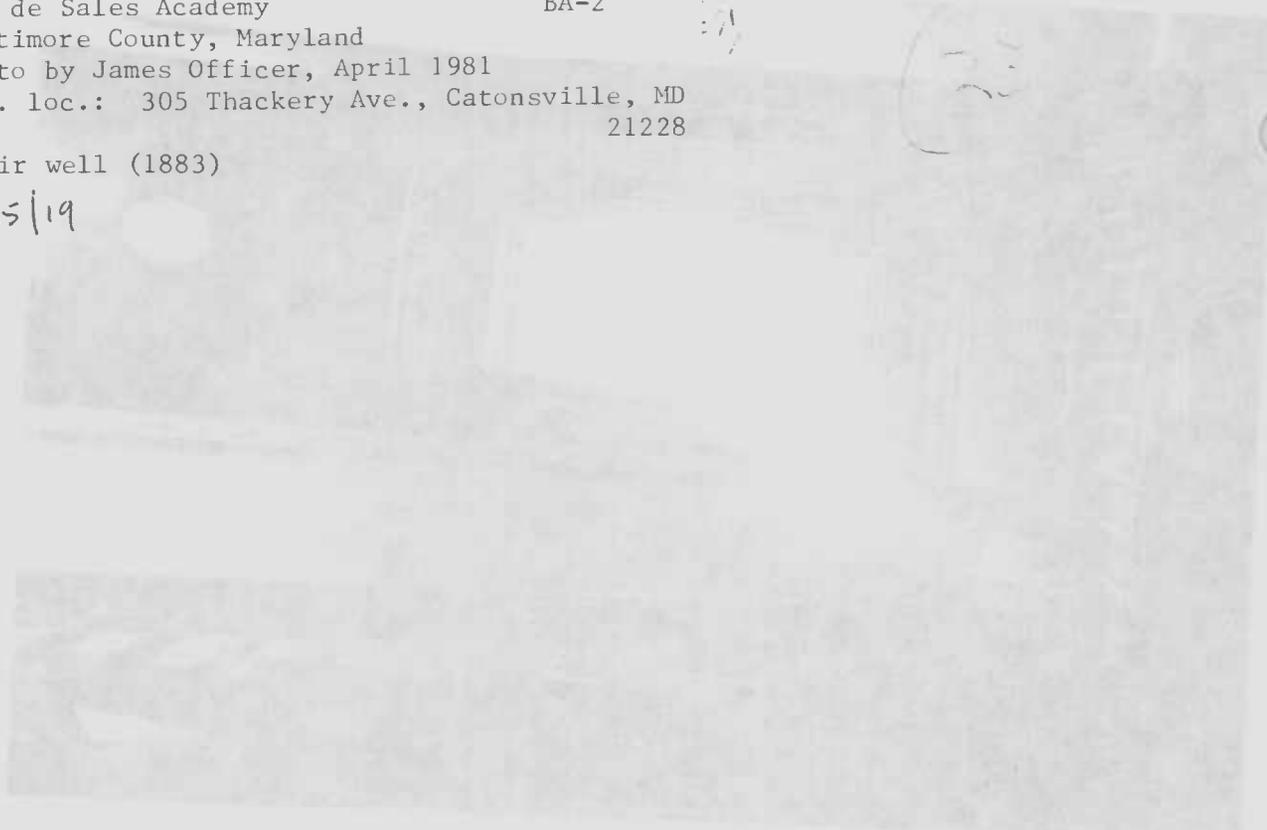
BA-2



Mt. de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

stair well (1883)

#15/19



Mount de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

Gatehouse & Chaplain's Residence (1862)  
as seen from Ionic Portico, Mt. de Sales

#16/19



BA-2



James D. Officer, Sr.  
Neg. at 305 Thackery Ave.  
5/22/81

Mt. de Sales Academy BA-2  
700 Academy Lane, Catonsville,  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
James Officer, Sr, 4/81  
Neg. at 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville  
Main, or east, facade of gatehouse,  
facing SE  
Photograph # 17 of # 19

JAMES D. OFFICER, SR.

Mt. de Sales Academy BA-2  
700 Academy Lane, Catonsville.  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
James Officer, Sr, 4/81  
Neg. at 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville  
West facade of gatehouse, from west  
Photograph # 18 of # 19



C-15

JAMES J. OFFICER 14

Mt. de Sales Academy BA-2  
 700 Academy Lane, Catonsville,  
 Baltimore County, Maryland  
 James Officer, Sr., 4/81  
 Neg. at 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville.  
 Inner courtyard of gatehouse, facing  
 Southwest  
 Photograph  of   
 19 19

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

PA-2  
MAGI # 0 22 Z 2004  
5503

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC MOUNT DE SALES ACADEMY/School Structure and Gate House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 700 Academy Lane Road

CITY, TOWN

Catonsville VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd

STATE

Maryland 21228

COUNTY

Baltimore 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Academy of Visitation B.V.M. at Mount De Sales

Telephone #: 744-8498

STREET & NUMBER

700 Academy Road

CITY, TOWN

Catonsville VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21228

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC County Courts Building

Liber #: HMF 7

Folio #: 542

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland 21204

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

B.C. Historic Sites Inventory

MHT No. BA 2

DATE

On-going since 1964

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Maryland Historical Trust  
21 State Circle

CITY, TOWN

Annapolis

STATE

Maryland 21401

# 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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The academy grounds are situated approximately 500 feet above sea level and provide extensive views of Baltimore City and the harbor to the southeast. The building was originally situated on approximately 100 acres bordered on the north and south by Old Frederick Road and Edmondson Avenue respectively, on the east by Nunnery Lane (now Academy Road), and on the west by Harlem Lane. Today, there are about 28 acres remaining, essentially the north central portion of the original plot. The grounds are now bordered on the north by apartments and on the south by North Dale and Whitfield Roads.

The building is approximately 390 feet wide, 115 feet deep, and 60 feet high, not including the sloping roof, which was originally tin. There are 22 bays across the main facade. There are four levels and a basement. The foundation is of fieldstone. The walls are of rose-colored, hand-fired brick, which were made on the premises. The adjoining Monastery building and wing were added in 1882. Style is a form of Greek Revival adopted for institutions, characteristic of antebellum days, and represents a link with the Southern past. (The architecture has been called Late Georgian in some accounts.)

This is a complex structure, built in three phases. The three pavilions that project from the main facade are actually wings in their own right, running back to a considerable depth, housing school, chapel, music hall, and convent (i.e., Monastery). The central pavilion projects eight feet from the main facade and is 42 feet in width. The portico is 42 feet high with four Ionic columns molded from metal and projects 16 feet. The granite entrance steps, from Woodstock, in Baltimore County, are 12-inch blocks.

As shown in a stereograph and a Hoen lithograph of the mid-1800s, there had been a shed-roofed porch across the full front of the building at first-story level. The entire cornice is dentiled as well as the inside of the pediments. The building is topped by an open belfry surmounted by a cross.

The rear of the building is fairly complex, if not cluttered. Two of the wings terminate in a three-sided projection. As designed, four decks of spacious porches in the southern manner extended across most of the rear space. The dentiled cornice followed the outlines and projections of the porch roofing. The porches were decorated with wrought iron railings and a spiral stairway five decks high led to the various levels. In later years, some of the porch system was taken down.

A small two-story infirmary building in Italianate style is attached at an angle to the right-hand end of the academy. This structure is comprised of three segments, two hip-roofed portions linked by a gable-roofed segment. Second story windows are set in round arches.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

ERIOD		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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<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 1851

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Curley & Son

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mount de Sales claims to be the first academy in Baltimore County that offered education to young women of all denominations. The ground was acquired in 1850 by Mother Mary Cecelia Brooks in her own name from William T. Somerville. The tract name was "Nancy's Fancy" and the survey began at Old Frederick Road and Five Mile Lane. (1) The Sisters of the Visitation, who had convents in Washington and at Park Avenue near Centre Street in Baltimore, had received a bequest from a New York friend that was exactly enough to cover the cost of the school site. The money was received on August 15—a Catholic holy day—and spent by the 20th on the 76-acre site. (2)

The grounds were described as "having several fine springs of water, a good orchard, and a view of the Patapsco River, the Chesapeake Bay, and the surrounding country, even from some of the valleys of this beautiful spot." (3)

The church weekly reported that the site was near Franklin:

From what will be the southeast front, can be seen the harbor of Baltimore, Fort McHenry, and the Government works now going on at Sol-ler's Flats, and in clear weather the cupola of the capitol at Annapolis is visible to the naked eye. (4)

The digging of the cellar was begun on January 29, 1851, and the cornerstone was laid in May by Bishop Charbonnel. (5) Twelve Sisters were assigned to the School from the Visitation Convent in Georgetown, D.C. and they arrived via Baltimore on August 11, 1852. It was a four-hour omnibus trip from the city convent and the new faculty dressed in ordinary bonnets and shawls rather than religious garb out of fear of the Know-Nothing party. It was "probably not too convincing a disguise," wrote Sister M. Aloysius Elkins about 1952. "The workmen were still all over the place, a fact which made the sisters somewhat timorous, for they continued to wear their 'secular dress' for some days more." (6)

The faculty kept detailed records and in the Centennial year, 1952, Sister Ignatia wrote, quoting original papers:

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

- "Mount De Sales," Catholic Mirror, September 4, 1852.  
 "History of Mount De Sales," Sister M. Aloysius Elkins, ms., c. 1968.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 28

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Bounded on north by White Oaks Apartment tract; on NE by Academy Road; on SE by Whitfield Road; on SW by Northdale Road; on west by irregular line with White Oaks Apartments, Section 2 (which is east of Harlem Avenue).

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE None COUNTY None

STATE None COUNTY None

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

John W. McGrain

ORGANIZATION

Baltimore County Office of Planning and Zoning

DATE

October 2, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

TELEPHONE

494-3495

CITY OR TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland 21204

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.

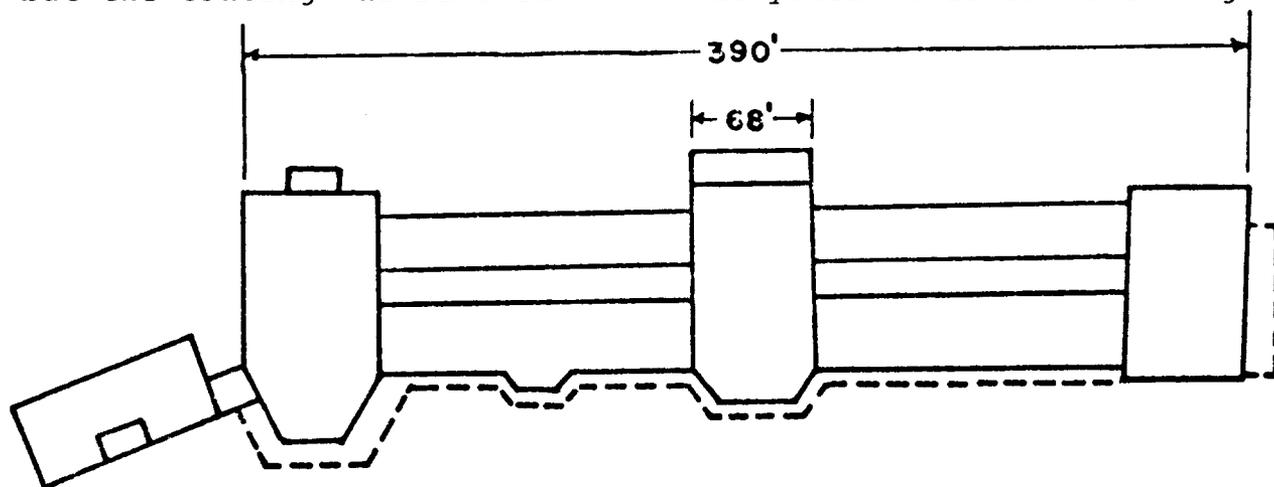
The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 267-1438

GATEHOUSE

The gatehouse is a brick building with an arched driveway running through it. The entrance is flanked by two arched entrances for pedestrians. The entrance portion of the building is three stories with a gable roof, its ridge line running the same direction as the traffic. On either side of the entry are wings just one bay wide, two stories high, built with gable roofing perpendicular to the entry road. The building is heavily bracketed under the eaves in the Italianate style. There is also a long back building; a one-story wing is attached to the north end. The structure was certainly in place in the early 1860s, if not at the beginning of the school. The brick is painted grey. There had been a fence surrounding the property built in 1850, with a picket or paling fence surmounting the brick portion. At present, the campus is protected by a chain link fence. The gatehouse has also lost a cupola and a balcony.

A number of chimneys and louvered cupolas that once decorated the academy have vanished. The entire structure was once painted a yellow or cream color, but the coating was removed in recent years to reveal the original brick.



### INTERIOR

The main entrance wing consists of a receiving room, or small entrance hall surrounded by locked doors. Evidence remains of a grillwork in one of the large doors where the nuns would peer through to see a visitor. The electric lock would then be activated and the visitor allowed to enter. Another grillwork still exists where sisters could once talk with friends and relatives. Behind the entrance hall is a foyer and off to one side, a parlor. To the rear of the wing is what is called the "Birdroom" because it had on display sketches of birds by wildlife artist Rex Brasher.

Access to the school building is through the "birdroom" into a hallway. Academy halls have the original 4-1/2 foot high wainscoting. Most rooms have recessed windows and many windows retain the original "wavy" glass. The halls and many of the rooms have broad-planked floors. This section of the building contains nine rooms.

The hallway continues down to the music hall, which is about 40 feet wide by 80 feet long. It has a highly ornamented fresco ceiling, in its original condition. The supporting pillars (four in number) are about 45 inches in circumference and about 50 feet high. There is a circular stage or platform with two levels, and two fan-shaped windows leading to the rear porch and spiral staircase. The beams and pilasters are extremely ornamental.

In the hallway, just outside the music hall entrance, a staircase leads to the lower level. There are four rooms under the school building (classroom, locker room, restroom, kitchen). The original brick floors are in the kitchen and basement areas, as well as the areaways which surround the building and serves as a natural "air conditioning" system in hot weather. A refectory also exists under the music hall.

The second floor contains ten rooms and the chapel. In three rooms, there are floor-to-ceiling built-in bookcases. The chapel has three large stained glass windows from Chartres, dated 1884, gifts of the Bogne family and others. It contains the original large crystal chandelier, which now holds 36 lights. Overlooking the chapel is an observation balcony-window, enclosed with wrought iron with fleur-de-lis designs.

"The large sheets of tin which fashioned the roof were brought from England in wooden sailing vessels ... large beams supporting the chapel ceiling were axe hewn with no mark of a saw upon them." When the Sisters arrived, there was still very much to be done and the Sisters helped to carry bricks and mortar up the four flights of stairs and even laid the bricks in the cellar. Because of the presence of the workmen, the Sisters continued to wear secular clothing until the 15th of August, feast of the Assumption, when Mass was said and the house canonically erected.

September 5, 1852, saw the opening of the academy with twenty-one boarders. By the end of the first year the number had increased to fifty-one. The first commencement exercises were held in June 1853, owing to the fact that all boarders were transferred from the Baltimore Visitation (then located at Park Avenue and Centre Street) which thenceforth remained a day school. (7)

The church paper was much impressed by the structure and the view was even better now that there was a fourth floor; one could hear the bell of the downtown cathedral from the deck and the drawing department of the school had a room with a view that "we are sure must give inspiration to the pencil and brush." The chapel was equipped with stained-glass windows and marble altar; the dormitories had low partitions between beds to allow the circulation of air. The structure was 105 feet front by 60 feet deep, and the contractor was James Curley and Son. (8)

Yet, what existed then was fairly small in comparison with the plan. Taylor's 1857 map carried an illustration showing more of the school than had actually been built. The first installment included the central pavilion and a wing six bays wide. It was in 1857 that another block fronted by a pediment was added on the right end of the building. The new space provided dormitories and a music hall; a city paper described it as a five-story addition, 43 X 93 feet, with a "saloon" on the first floor that would accommodate a thousand persons. (9) A stereograph photo of the period proves that the Taylor map was not based on a sketch from actuality.

Students included children from Protestant and Jewish families, as well as Catholics, and girls from Latin America and the West Indies, as well as various regions of the U.S. Enrollment plummeted during the Civil War since Catholicism was a largely Southern phenomenon prior to the age of immigration. One graduate of 1871 was Mary Pinkney Hardy, who later became the mother of General Douglas MacArthur. She was graduated with highest honors and "a crown and gold medal for excellence in conduct." (10)

Mrs. Mary Teresa Waggaman (1846-1931) had been a member of the class of 1866 and wrote in a yearbook memoir that the gatehouse was of red bricks and served as the residence of Father Caton who was waiting for the Saint Agnes Church (or more likely, its rectory) to be completed. Mrs. Waggaman had written a number of juvenile books. She recalled good times and treats, a musical event held on Saint Cecelia's day, and walks in the woods—after praying to Saint Patrick to drive off the snakes. The school infirmarian would give girls heading home to the South a dose of malaria preventive. Plays were given before candle footlights and the players had to memorize stretches of blank verse from Maria Stuart or Fabiola. The original bill of

fare was plain but plentiful, but years later the Sister in charge of the menu told Mrs. Waggaman, "girls now would not stand for what girls stood for in your time. But I think our children loved us the best." (11) Old catalogs show that the school uniform was uniformly black and chapel attendance was mandatory. On the other hand, discussion of sectarian differences was not allowed. (12)

The main structure was doubled in width in 1882 and assumed the present facade of three pedimented pavilions instead of two:

Addition to Mt. DeSales—The Academy of the Visitation at Mt. DeSales, near Catonsville are about to add an additional wing to their building to correspond with the wing on the north end. It will require over a year's work to finish the new addition. Mr. E. F. Baldwin is the architect and Mr. John Stack the builder. The huge building already looms up on the horizon and from its elevated position serves as a guide to the mariners of the Chesapeake Bay. The thought must bring pleasant reflections to the Nuns that such a mission is characteristic and typical of their faith, and in raising such an addition to the building they increase and brighten their guide lamp. (13)

The addition provided the area called the "monastery," which had been called for in the original plans but postponed in execution until funds were available.

Gradually, in the present century, the institution became more day school than boarding academy and in 1933 the boarding school was discontinued. In the 1940s, the grammar school was discontinued. But the old traditions of the graduation ceremony were kept up, including long white gowns, roses, bowing to the honored guests. Sister M. Aloysius Elkins' story included this item:

Apropos of the Commencement curtsey, the following story may be interesting. When the Queen of England came to this country several years ago, a lady in Washington, D.C. was asked to present roses to her. She was asked afterwards, "Where did you learn to make the bow of the Court of Saint James?" to which she replied, "At the Mount de Sales Commencement." She had had plenty of practice, as she was a former student. (14)

Finally in 1979, the Sisters, many of whom were of advanced years, gave the school up and left the monastery. In September of 1979, the convent furniture and the originals of the "birdroom" prints were offered for sale at public auction. (15) The school continues under the management of a board of directors.

## NOTES:

1. Baltimore City Deeds, AWB 440:359.
2. Sister M. Aloysius Elkins, "History of Mount De Sales," ms., 1968, in Baltimore County Historical Society Library.
3. Elkins, "History of Mount De Sales," p. 1.
4. Catholic Mirror, Baltimore, November 27, 1850.
5. Sister Ignatia, "Mount De Sales, Catonsville, Maryland," ms., 1952, p. 2.
6. Elkins, "History," pp. 1-2.
7. Sister Ignatia, "Mount De Sales," p. 2.
8. Catholic Mirror, Baltimore, September 4, 1852.
9. Baltimore American, November 13, 1858.
10. Sister Ignatia, "Mount De Sales," p. 3.
11. Mary T. Waggaman (Minnie McKee), "In the Beginning," yearbook item prior to 1931.
12. Prospectus of Mount de Sales Academy of the Visitation For Young Ladies Near Catonsville, 1876, p. 1.
13. Maryland Journal, Towson, May 6, 1882.
14. Elkins, "History," p. 4.
15. Sunday Sun, September 9, 1979, adv.

PLAT #1  
CATONSVILLE  
MANOR  
Δ 6:109

EDMONDSON HEIGHTS

PLAT #4  
CATONSVILLE  
MANOR  
Δ 6:160

NORMAN OF MD., INC.  
5340/393  
15.9A.  
P 242

NATIONAL

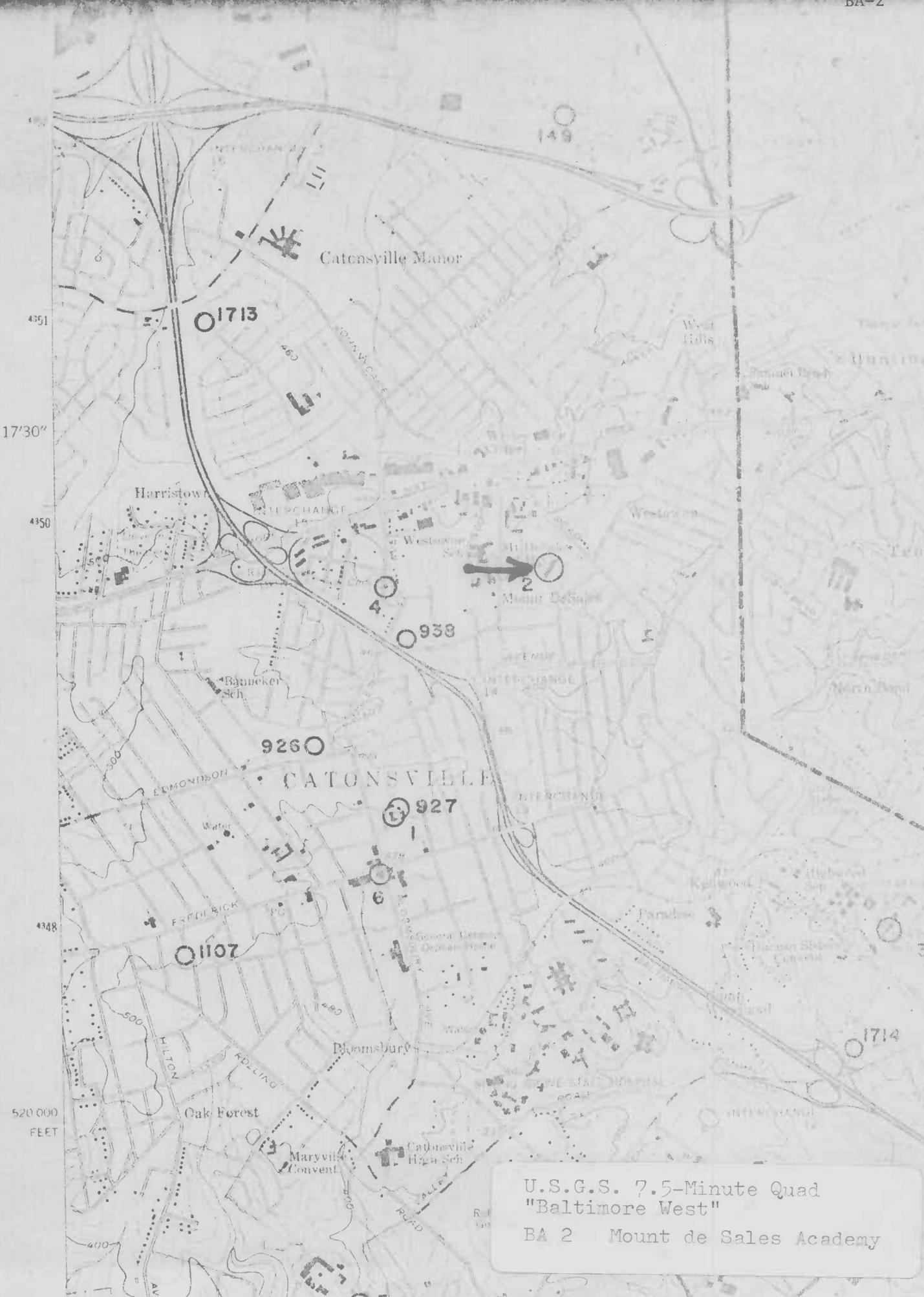
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
1791/26  
9.84A.  
P.70

JOSEPH H. LOVEMAN  
5088/246  
11.49A  
P.71

M. DE SALE  
ACADEMY  
7/542  
P.380

SEE MAP 101

Baltimore County Tax Map  
No. 95



4351  
17°30"  
4350  
4348  
520 000  
FEET

U.S.G.S. 7.5-Minute Quad  
"Baltimore West"  
BA 2 Mount de Sales Academy

Brooks, Neal A., and Richard Parsons

1988 Baltimore County Panorama. Towson, Maryland: Baltimore County Public Library.

251



*Mount de Sales Academy was founded in the summer of 1852 by nuns from the Visitation Order, headquartered in a Georgetown Convent. Because of the violent Know-Nothing, anti-Roman Catholic agitation in Baltimore at that time, the Mother Superior found it advisable to arrive in lay clothes when she came to take over the property. The school opened with 21 students; the number increased to 51 by the end of the first year. A century later there were 215 pupils receiving the excellent education offered by the school. After 1971 the school became a private Catholic high school.*

*Beginning in 1916, the cupola and cross of this notable building were used as a triangulation marker by both state and county surveyors.*

*The Reverend Dr. Libertus Van Bokkelen (1815-1898), pictured as an inset in a memorial window at St. Timothy's, established the first church-sponsored military school for boys in the nation. The Civil War was divisive; in spite of their headmaster's support of the Union, most of the students withdrew to fight for the Confederacy. The school closed. Van Bokkelen was appointed the first state superintendent of education and served from 1864 to 1867. He established what is now Towson State University, among other progressive acts. A vindictive, Southern-sympathizing legislature fired him, at which point he resumed his rectorship of St. Timothy's Church. In 1871 he rented the school buildings to the Misses Carter who used them for a girl's boarding school. The main structure burned on June 29, 1872. The grounds and the few remaining buildings were sold in 1881 to the renters, who then started what is now known as St. Timothy's School. This school moved to Stevenson in 1951.*

*In 1869 Van Bokkelen became president of the National Education Association. From 1874 to 1886 he was rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Buffalo, New York. (Photo by James D. Officer)*



*The Dulaney Valley School, built to accommodate sixty children, opened for the school year 1877-1878 six miles from Towson on land mostly donated by the heirs of Joshua Jessop. It cost \$1,695. Because it lay in the path of water impounded by the expanded Loch Raven Reservoir, the school board accepted Baltimore City's offer of twenty-five hundred dollars for the building and a hundred dollars an acre for adjacent land. The photo is dated June 1921. The site is now under water near Peerce's Plantation, Dulaney Valley Road.*

252

*A routine hoof cleaning seems to be in progress at the Mount de Sales Academy barn.*



Brooks and Parsons, 1988



*It seems to be nearly unbelievable that this was Dulaney Valley Road near Towson in the World War I era.*

*Alvah Merritt and his nephews, Enoch and Alonzo Merritt, are standing on their pig farm.*



BA-2





Mount de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
photo by James Officer, April 1981

BA-2

①

neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

View of academy building prior to 1882  
addition



STONE BARN, Mt. de Sales  
demolished 1976

BA-2

(2)



Infirmery (1895) and  
garden front of the  
Academy at Mt de Sales

PA-2 (5)



Mount de Sales Academy  
Baltimore County, Maryland

BA-2

photo by James Officer, April 1981  
neg. loc.: 305 Thackery Ave., Catonsville, MD  
21228

Infirmery (1895) with ambulatory to  
Music Hall

(4)