

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Magi No.
DOE yes no

DEMOLISHED - 1992

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Aigburth Park

and/or common Aigburth Park Offices, Victoria House (named for newly proposed development)

2. Location

street & number 7925 York Road N/A not for publication

city, town Towson _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 2

state Maryland 21204 county Baltimore

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" 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 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 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"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: offices

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

name A. Eric and Esther J. Dott

street & number Box 357 telephone no.:

city, town Lutherville state and zip code Maryland 21093

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courts Building liber 2198

street & number 401 Bosley Avenue folio 307

city, town Towson state Maryland 21204

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. BA-2539

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.

SUMMARY:

The building at 7925 York Road is an example of a Queen Anne style detached dwelling typical of its late nineteenth century construction date. It is of frame construction covered with gray composition shingles, two and one-half stories with a three story tower. The plan is L-shaped with a cross-gabled roof. Many porches, gables, bay windows, a tower and other elements contribute to an asymmetrical footprint as well as provide decoration. The building sits on a rough-cut stone foundation well back from York Road.

Alterations to the structure include two additions: a porch which extends the width of the rear "L" and a small two-story enclosure inset at the intersection of the two wings. In addition the walls of the structure have been covered in composition shingles. The structural alterations have virtually no impact on the building's historic character. It is not possible to determine if the reshingling covered decorative detail and as a result impacted historic character.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The structure, originally a dwelling now used as offices, sits on a large lot shaded by many large trees at the southeast intersection of York Road and Aigburth Road. Access is from Aigburth Road by a driveway which encircles the dwelling.

The principal or west facade consists of a side-gabled section at the right with a smaller projecting front-gabled section to the left of this. At the extreme left, a three-story tower projects from the corner of the facade.

The side-gabled section is of two and one-half stories. A projecting porch extends the width of this section and wraps around the south side of the house, mounted on a brick foundation. The shed roof of the porch is supported by square wooden posts and turned spindles complete the balustrade. The porch deck is constructed of wooden tongue-and-groove boards. The front door, paneled with six lights at the top, is located at the right of this section. A small window to the left of the door is the only other opening in the first floor of this section.

(continued)

CONTINUATION SHEET NO.1, ITEM 7, PAGE 2 AIGBURTH PARK

The second story of the side-gabled section contains two window openings: one small leaded casement or fixed window and one double window each with 12/2 sash. The overhanging roof of this section is punctuated by a hipped-roof dormer with double casement windows of nine lights each. The side walls of the dormer flare slightly where they join the roof. An interior chimney, rising from the ridge at the gable end of the roof, consists of a projecting course of brick below the cap and is painted gray.

The front-gabled section of the main facade contains concrete steps which rise to the porch entrance. The first story contains a single 12/2 window sash. The second story flares over the first slightly and contains the same style single window opening. The wall of the gabled third story projects beyond the second story wall, flaring out at its base. A pair of casement windows, each with four lights, fills the space near the peak of the gable. A simple molded raking cornice surrounds the gable.

The three story tower, octagonal at the first story and round at the second and third stories, rises at the left of the building. Each successive story is shorter than the preceding one. A 12/2 window sash fills each of the five ground level sides. The base of the second story flares over the first and is supported by five simple wooden consoles. Five windows circle this section: three 12/2 sash alternating with two 12 light casements or fixed windows. The glazing in both type windows is curved to accommodate the line of the tower.

The third story rests on the molded wooden cornice of the second level. Its five window openings include alternating 8/2 sash and eight-light casements positioned just under a molded cornice. The tower is topped by a slightly bell-shaped conical roof with a metal finial at its peak.

On the south facade, the porch wraps around from the west and encompass a 12 light casement window. A bay window, extending to the ground, occurs just to the right of the porch with one-third of its projection covered by the porch roof. Each side of the bay contains either a 12/2 or a 9/2 sash. Two door openings, each with a paneled wooden door with six lights at the top and a transom above, occur to the right of the bay window. Two 12/2 sash complete the openings on the ground level.

The second story flares over the first to the right of the porch and bay window. Two single, one double and three single 12/2 window sash extend the length of the facade.

CONTINUATION SHEET NO.2, ITEM 7, PAGE 3 AIGBURTH PARK

The third story includes two gables which project well beyond the second story and are each supported by two consoles. Each gable encloses a triple casement window. As on the west facade, the walls of the gables flare at their bases and the gables are surrounded by a molded raking cornice. A side gable roof tops the remainder of this side.

The rear or east facade of the house is L-shaped. The long east-projecting section contains a full width porch at ground level with square posts matching those of the front porch supporting the roof. The spindles of the balustrade are square and not turned as are those on the other porches. A paneled door opens from the porch. This porch appears on the 1932 Sanborn Map but not on the 1929 edition. The second floor contains no openings. The third story gable end duplicates the others with its flaring and cornice. This gable contains two small rectangular single-light windows.

The north wall of this section contains two 12/2 sash at the ground floor with one 12/2 sash and one 6/6 sash at the second level. As elsewhere on the house, the second story flares over the first.

The east side of the main block of the house reflects some alteration. At the ground level, a porch with shed roof appears to have extended the full width at one time but now is partly enclosed. The porch support and railing details match those of the front porch. This enclosure, at the left side, contains two somewhat contemporary style window openings, one a horizontal three-part window. On the porch, one window and door open into the enclosure and one window and door open into the main house. A basement entrance lies under the porch at the north side.

The second story of this rear section includes a small square enclosure above the one on ground level. This space contains an 8/8 sash below its shed roof. A small vertical 2/2 sash and a 12/2 sash complete the openings on the second floor. This small enclosure appears on the 1929 Sanborn Map.

The first story of the north facade includes a bay window recessed under the overhanging gable end of the second story and a three sided projecting porch which meets the tower at the northwest corner of the house. The three windows of the bay are 12/2 sash. The details of the porch match those of the front porch. A 12/2 sash and a door open onto the porch. Steps lead from the porch to the ground near the tower. Second floor openings in both the gable end and side gable sections are the same 12/2 sash. The third story of the gable end section contains the same flaring and

cornice details found elsewhere on the house and encloses a double window. A brick chimney rises from the roof of the middle section between the gable and the tower.

All windows retain shutter hinges but no shutters are currently hanging. Shutters are stacked in the garage.

Because the building has been reclad in shingles it is not possible to determine how decorative the detailing was originally. The original siding may have included one or more varieties of patterned shingles.

An eight car garage, a shed-like structure without doors, lies to the southeast of the house. This structure appears on the Sanborn Map dated 1932 with corrections to 1950.

8. Significance

Survey No. BA-2539

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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1894 Builder/Architect Hubner/Cone/Hunting

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.

SUMMARY:

The Queen Anne style house at 7925 York road is significant as an example of one of the first "cottages" in "Aigburth Park", one of the earliest planned communities in Baltimore County. The house was constructed by the Maryland Real Estate Company of Baltimore City. This land acquisition company purchased the 208 acre "Aigburth Vale", the former estate of late actor John B. Owens, in 1891 to develop a summer community in Towson. The corporation enlarged the mansion to accommodate summer guests and laid out sites for summer cottages on the surrounding lots. By 1894, four "cottages" appeared in the tax records, including the frame Queen Anne dwelling at 7925 York Road, largest of the four. Although the resort was successful, few cottages were actually constructed in the nineteenth century.

The partnership of builders and real estate developers erected the cottages immediately following the establishment of an electric car service to Towson in 1893. This newly facilitated means of transportation not only carried city dwellers to suburban resorts but ultimately lead to the construction of a year-round community on the lots surrounding the former Owens mansion.

The exterior of the house is predominantly unaltered from its original design. The only structural changes appear to be a small two-story enclosure inset at the L on the east facade and the addition of a porch across the rear projecting wing. The two and one-half story dwelling with three-story tower retains its 12/2 window sash, curved glazing in the tower windows and three porches with wooden trim. Composition shingles cover the original wooden shingles which can be seen where it joins the stone foundation.

CONTINUATION SHEET NO. 1, ITEM 8, PAGE 2 AIGBURTH PARK

GENERAL STATEMENT OF HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

The house at 7925 York Road in Towson, Baltimore County, now called Aigburth Office Park, is built on part of the former estate of actor and comedian John Owens. Owens accumulated his acreage and erected his mansion "Aigburth Vale" in 1868. When the actor died in 1889, his estate was sold at auction to Solomon King for \$28,000. One year later, in July 1890, King realized a sizable profit when he sold the land to John Hubner for \$45,000.

Hubner was one of five men who incorporated and served as directors of the Maryland Real Estate Company of Baltimore City in October, 1890. Hubner had moved to Baltimore following the Civil War and began work in the brick business. He later became involved in the real estate business and was associated with a number of building companies. He is credited with building over 200 houses in Catonsville and Towson. Hubner served in the House of Delegates and as a state senator.

One of Hubner's partners, Col. William A. Hanway, was a lawyer and city commissioner. He arrived in Baltimore in 1870 and soon began to deal in real estate. Hubner and Hanway were joined in the partnership by builders Joseph M. Cone, Frederick Rice and Eben B. Hunting. Cone was another prolific builder in both Catonsville and Towson. Hunting had built, among other projects, houses in Bolton Hill and School #12 on Ridgely Street in Baltimore City. The five partners formed their real estate firm to "buy, sell, mortgage, lease improve, dispose of or otherwise deal in land in the state". By February 1891, four of the original five partners conveyed the land to their corporation.

The real estate company planned to develop a summer resort on the former "Aigburth Vale". A market clearly existed; Towson had been a resort destination for city residents for nearly two decades. Hotels and boarding houses had sprung up in the 1870's and 1880's. By 1893, the real estate firm had enlarged the mansion house which could boast of a successful summer business.

In addition to improving the main house, the Maryland Real Estate Company laid out lots on the surrounding land for summer cottages. By 1894, four cottages had been constructed. Although the architect of the four dwellings is unknown, Hubner and Cone used William Gerwig as the chief architect in many of their projects.

Two of the cottages, located in a prominent setting at the north and south corners of Owens Avenue (now Aigburth Road) and the York Turnpike, would have provided good

CONTINUATION SHEET NO.2, ITEM 8, PAGE 3 AIGBURTH PARK

publicity for the resort as traffic passed along the turnpike. The cottage on the south side of the intersection, now 7925 York Road, was significantly larger than the others; it was valued at \$4000 in 1894. The other three ranged in value from \$3000 to \$1800. The dwelling on the north corner is no longer standing and has been replaced by a modern brick apartment building.

The large cottage may have served as a summer home for several years before it was sold to one of the partners. In 1896, the company sold the dwelling to William A. Hanway. In 1900, the census listed Hanway, a widower, with two adult unmarried daughters and two black servants as the residents.

In 1905 Hanway sold his house and land, designated as lot #1 and part of lots #2 and #9 in section "C" of "Aigburth", to Ernest and Kate McElroy. This lawyer and his wife occupied the house alone according to the 1910 census; they were childless and had no live-in help. A week after purchasing the property, McElroy mortgaged the property to the Savings Bank of Baltimore for \$4000.

The value of the property increased steadily during the time that McElroy owned it. The assessed value of the land increased over 70% from 1911 to 1918, attesting to the popularity which the suburbs had acquired, while the value of the improvements rose 20%. McElroy added to these improvements when he constructed a garage sometime between 1918 and 1923.

Kate McElroy died in 1926 and three years later Ernest McElroy sold the house to Sallie I. King. In February 1934, the Savings Bank of Baltimore assigned McElroy's now long overdue mortgage to Sarah Katherine King, Sallie's granddaughter. To settle the debt, the house was sold at public auction in April 1934 to Walter King, son of Sallie King, for \$7050.

When Walter King died in 1935, his daughter Sarah Katherine King inherited the house. Sarah Katherine, later named Berry through marriage, retained her grandmother's house until 1952 when she sold it to A. Eric and Esther Jackson Dott. She had previously sold about half an acre of the land in 1938. The Dotts are the current owners.

By at least the early 1950's the dwelling housed several families as an apartment. Currently called Aigburth Park Offices, the building now houses several small businesses.

This Queen Anne dwelling, with its setting on a 1.66 acre shaded lot slightly elevated above York Road, retains a great deal of its nineteenth century integrity. The

CONTINUATION SHEET NO.3, ITEM 8, PAGE 4 AIGBURTH PARK

original massing is unchanged; in fact the house has undergone only limited alterations to its exterior in nearly a century. It is one of a rapidly dwindling number of nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural examples in Towson. Moreover, it is an example of one of the earliest dwellings built in the planned community of "Aigburth Park". The Maryland Historical Trust stated in June 1990, that the building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Development Period:
Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1815-1930

Historic Period Theme:
Architecture and Community Planning

Resource Type:
Category: Building
Historic Environment: Suburban
Historic Function and Use: Summer Home, Single Family
Dwelling, Apartment

Known Design Source: Unknown

68

(A 68)

AIGBURTH RD

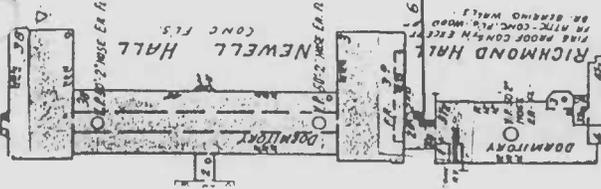
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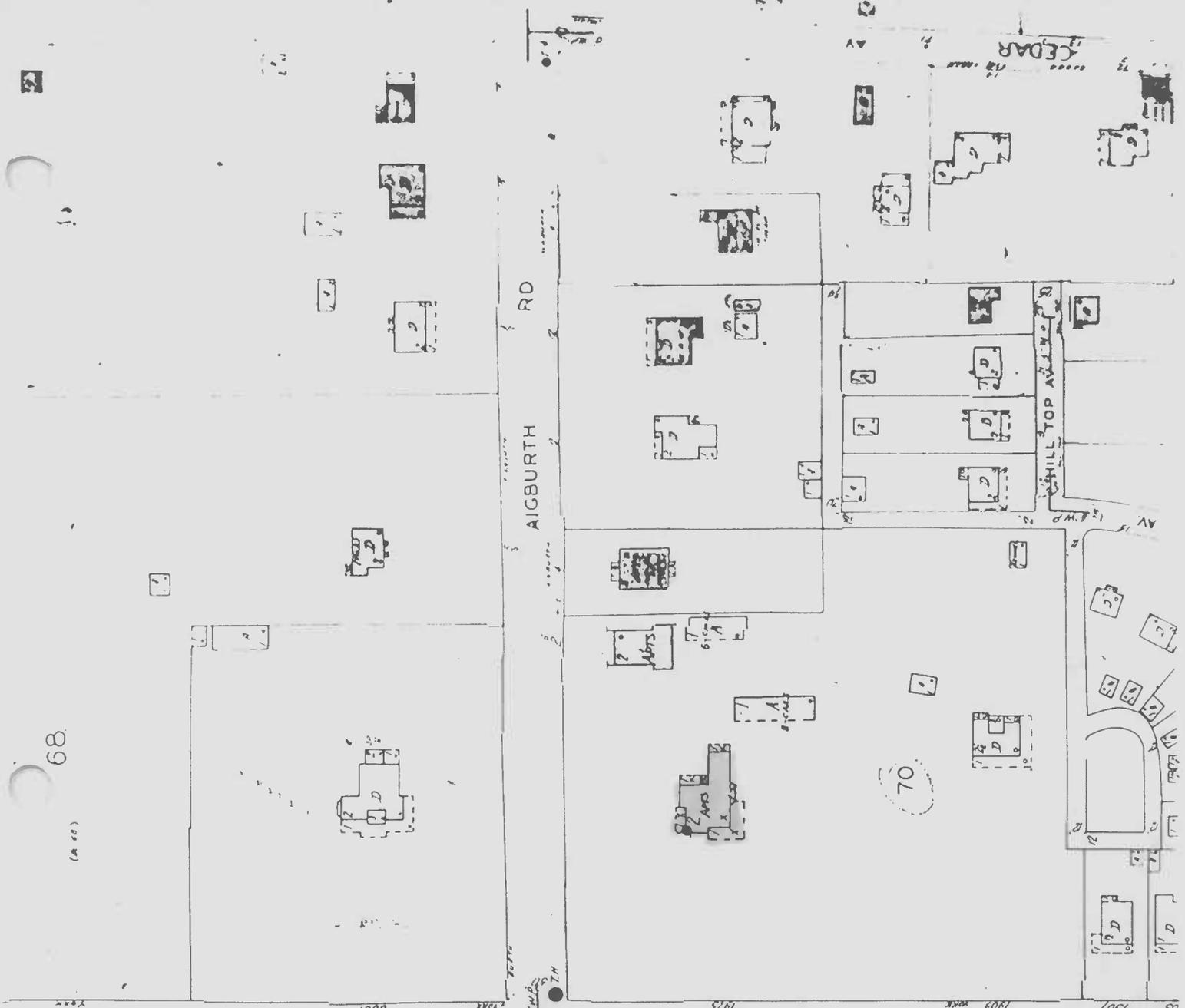
U.S. HWY. III OR YORK RD

70

DRIVE



BA-2539
 Aigburth Park
 Towson
 Baltimore County
 Sanborn Map Corrected to 1950



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YORK

AV.

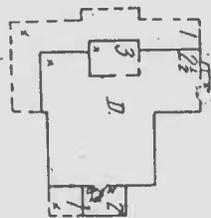
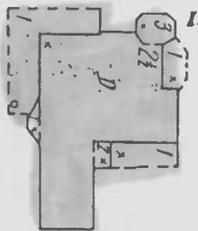
910

911

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916

AIGBURTH
RD.



BA-2539
Aigburth Park
Towson
Baltimore County
Sanborn Map 1929

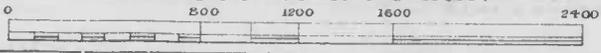


BA-2539
 Aigburth Park
 Towson
 Baltimore County
 Bromley Atlas 1915

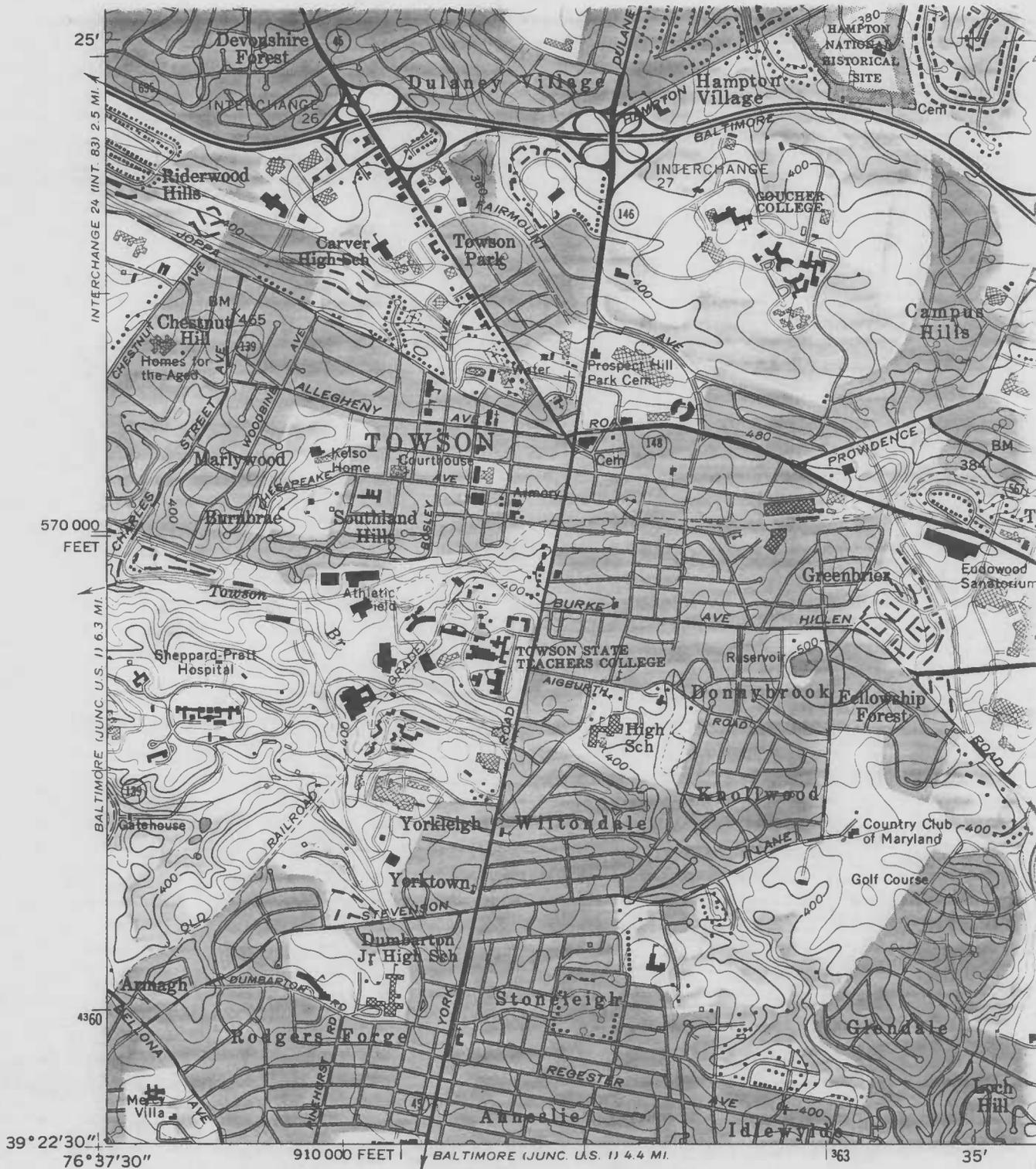


PART OF
 9TH & 11TH
 DISTRICTS

Scale 800 Feet to the Inch.



BA-2539
 Aigburth Park
 Towson
 Baltimore County
 Bromley Atlas 1898



(BALTIMORE WEST)
5662 / SW

Mapped by the Army Map Service
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Maryland
 Bureau of Control Surveys and Maps

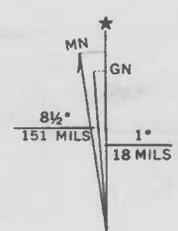
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs
 taken 1943. Topography by planetable surveys 1944
 Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
 1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only
 landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey
 aerial photographs taken 1966 and 1974. This information
 field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

BA-2539
 Aigburth Park
 Towson
 Baltimore County
 Towson Quadrangle



BA-2539

"Arlingth Dale"
Arlingth Park (Victoria House)
7925 York Road
Towson, Md. 21284

Barbara Necks

2/20/92

176



BA 2539 "Able" (Victoria House)
Arlow Park
7925 York Road
Towson, Md 21284

Barbara Smith
2/20/92

2 of 6



BA-2539
"Aigburth Vale"
Aigburth Park (Victoria House)
7925 York Road
Bowie, Md. 21204

Barbara Hecks

2/20/92

3 of 6



BA-2539
"Argburt Vale"
Argburt Park (Victoria House)

7925 York Road

Cowson, Md. 21204

Barbara Weeks

2/20/92

4076



BA-2539
"Aigburth Gate"
Aigburth Park (Victoria House)
7925 York Road
Towson, Md. 21204

Barbara Hecker

2/20/92

5 of 6



BA-2539
"Aigburth Vale"
Aigburth Park (Victoria House)
7935 York Road
Towson, Md. 21284

Barbara Weeks

9/30/92

6 of 6



BA - 2539

"Aigburth Vale"

Aigburth Park (Victorian House)

7925 York Road

Towson, Md 21204

Photograph: c. 1915

taken by

William C. Kenney