

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ___
no ___

Property Name: Dent's Palace Inventory Number: CH-40
 Address: Trinity Church Road (MD 232) City: Bryantown Zip Code: 20622
 County: Charles USGS Topographic Map: Hughesville, MD Quad
 Owner: Arnold W. Barnett Is the property being evaluated a district? ___yes
 Tax Parcel Number: 129 Tax Map Number: 56 Tax Account ID Number: 023862
 Project: Gilbert Run Emergency Tower- Charles County Government Agency: F.C.C.
 Site visit by MHT Staff: ___no ___yes Name: _____ Date: _____
 Is the property located within a historic district? ___yes X no

If the property is within a district District Inventory Number: _____
 NR-listed district ___yes Eligible district ___yes District Name: _____
 Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource ___yes ___no Non-contributing but eligible in another context ___

If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)
 Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible Xyes ___no

Criteria: ___A ___B XC ___D Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G ___None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)
 Dent's Palace is located down a long private drive, entered from the east side of Trinity Church Road, just south of Md. Route 6. Thought to be constructed in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the architecture has a pronounced Federal styling. Physical and historical evidence suggests the three-part telescoping (styled) house was constructed all at this time. The large, (two and one-half story) brick structure is laid in common bond throughout. The house retains much of its original character and architectural integrity. The level of detail in the construction including wooden dormers that have arched upper sash with sophisticated detailing and carved trim work is remarkable. The exterior boasts two flush gable chimneys at the west end and one on the east. The exterior has been altered with an insensitive masonry pointing work at the area below the two story monumental porch construction. This later porch (believed to date from the 1960s) also detracts from the building's architectural significance. The interior of the main block includes a side stair hall and double parlor floor plan. The center section contains the dining room. There is some debate over the generations of fine woodworking at the house, appearing to be two generations probably close in time to the original construction. The exterior and interior woodwork is finely crafted and is in good condition. The property is recommended as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The Property may also be considered eligible for listing on the NR under Criterion B, but research was not undertaken to confirm that possibility. The property was not considered eligible under Criterion A; and was not evaluated for Criterion D.

Prepared by: Kate Mahood, Architectural Historian Date prepared: July 8, 2003

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW	
Eligibility recommended <u>X</u>	Eligibility not recommended _____
Criteria: ___A ___B <u>X</u> C ___D	Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G ___None
Comments: _____	
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>7/17/03</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, NR Program	<u>7/21/03</u> Date



DENT'S PALACE

KATE MAHOOD

CHAS. COUNTY

06-26-03

CH-40

MDSHPO

DETAIL WEST FACADE SHOWING DOUBLE CHIMNEYS

Photograph #4 of 4



DENT'S PALACE

CHAS. COUNTY

KATE MAHOOD

06-26-03

CH-40

MD SHPO

VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST (MAIN HOUSE)

Photograph # 2 of 4



DENT'S PALACE

CHAS. COUNTY

KATE MAHLGOD

06-26-03

CH-40

MD SHPO

VIEW LOOKING NORTH

Photograph # 1 of 4



DENT'S PALACE

KATE MAHOOD

CHAS. COUNTY

06-26-03

CH-40

MDSHPC

REAR FACADE, VIEW LOOKING SOUTHWEST

Photograph #3 of 4

CHAS-40
DENT'S PALACE
Bryantown
Private

late 18th century

A three-part stepped house of Federal styling, Dent's Palace is thought to have been built by Captain Hezekiah Dent (1747-1792) in about 1785. The house is of common bond brick construction and there is substantial physical and historical evidence to support a recent determination that, contrary to traditional belief, all three parts of the house were built at the same time.

The property was patented in 1754 by Hatch Dent, a grandson of Captain John Dent, Gent., who arrived in Maryland in about 1658. Hatch Dent died in 1781 and the probate records of his modest estate indicate that although he refers to Dent's Palace as his dwelling plantation, the existing house had not yet been built. Hezekiah Dent, on the other hand, was significantly more prosperous, substantially increasing the improvements and value of the estate left to him by his father, including Dent's Palace. His sizeable personal estate indicates that he was, at the time of his death, living in a fairly large and well furnished house, possibly the one known today as Dent's Palace. Hezekiah Dent was an active member of Trinity Church in nearby Newport. In 1777 he was commissioned a full lieutenant in Captain McPherson's Company of the Lower Battalion of the Charles County Militia and, in 1779, was promoted to Captain.

Contrary to popular belief, Dent's Palace is not a true "telescoping" house since the south, front walls of all three sections are flush to one another. Among its notable features are unusually sophisticated pedimented dormers with twisted rope moldings, arched upper sash and fluted pilasters. Modern additions include a two-story porch on the south front of the main block.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CHAS-40

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY *FILE # 2004-5204*

1 NAME

HISTORIC

DENT'S PALACE

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Trinity Church Road (MD 232)

CITY, TOWN

Bryantown

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Charles

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Arnold W. Barnett

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

Dent's Palace

CITY, TOWN

Bryantown

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Charles County Courthouse

Liber #: 139

Folio #: 225

STREET & NUMBER

Charles Street (P.O. Box B)

CITY, TOWN

La Plata

STATE

Maryland 20646

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CH-40

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

Approached by a long private drive entered from the east side of Md. Rte. 232 approximately two-tenths of a mile south of the intersection of Rte's. 232 and 6, Dent's Palace is the last remaining of the many early homes of this once prominent family. An examination of the existing three-part, Federal style house, however, reveals it to be of a later construction date than is traditionally believed.

The architecture of Dent's Palace is distinctly Federal and is very similar to that of Hard Bargain (CHAS-41) and other stepped or telescoping houses found throughout the three Southern Maryland counties. In addition, rather than being built in different stages, as is commonly stated, the house was definitely built all at one time. Existing interior and exterior features indicate that it was probably built in the latter part of the 18th century, an opinion supported by historical evidence.

The largest, west end section of the house, the main block, is of two-story height, three bays in width on both side elevations. At the west end of the gable roof are two flush gable chimneys, with a single chimney at the east end. The house is of common bond brick throughout and has splayed flat arches over the windows and doors. The main block and one and one-half story, two bay center section both have two pedimented dormers on the south side of the house, apparently the original front. These dormers are unusually sophisticated in their detailing, having arched upper sash with twisted rope moldings and fluted pilasters, and are in rather sharp contrast with the rather severe architecture of the house. They do, however, appear to be original and are of a design appropriate to the date and architecture of the house. It is interesting to note that the two dormers of the center section extend down into the front eave cornice, which like the front cornices of the main block and east end kitchen, is decorated with closely spaced "dentils". Additional exterior features of the house include a transomed rear door on the main block, 9-over-6 first floor sash, and a small foliated half-round window in the west gable of the main block. The third and smallest section of the house was and continues to be used as a kitchen though it has been modernized on the interior. It is two bays wide on the south side and has a large flush gable chimney at the east end. It should be noted that Dent's Palace, despite all that has been written about it, is not a true telescoping house since the south wall of all three sections are flush to one another, instead of set back to give the illusion from the end of the building that each section could be pushed back into the next corresponding larger section. At Dent's Palace, as with many other examples of this building type, the

(continued on attached sheet)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
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/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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	C. 1785	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Hezekiah Dent
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A three-part stepped house of Federal styling, Dent's Palace is thought to have been built by Captain Hezekiah Dent (1747-1792) in about 1785. The house is of common bond brick construction and there is substantial physical and historical evidence to support a recent determination that, contrary to traditional belief, all three parts of the house were built at the same time.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Dent's Palace is located on a 271 acre tract of land identified as parcel 9, Map 57 of the Charles County Tax Maps (revised January, 1976).

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

STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

J. Richard Rivoire, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Charles County Planning Department

DATE

June, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Charles County Courthouse

TELEPHONE

645-6537

CITY OR TOWN

La Plata

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 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

Continuation of #7 (Description)--DENT'S PALACE
Page 2

walls are only stepped back from one another on one side.

Unfortunate additions that detract from the integrity of the house include a two-story open porch with flat roof and square posts on the south front that replaced an earlier though not original one-story porch of more acceptable architecture, and a glass enclosed "sun room" addition to the north side of the kitchen.

The first floor interior of the main block includes a side stair hall and double parlor floor plan. The center section contains the dining room. The woodwork throughout appears to be later stylistically and not nearly as sophisticated as the dormers. However, it is of basic Federal styling, with molded trim and "bulls eyes" framing the doors and windows, and large mantels that employ a combination of early and late Federal details. Connecting the two first floor drawing rooms is a large doorway framing two, double leafed paneled doors. Because of the discrepancy between the two types of woodwork, and assuming that the dormers are original, it is possible that the interior of the house was renovated a decade or so following its actual construction date.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
INVENTORY

1. STATE *Md*
 COUNTY *Chas*
 TOWN _____ VICINITY _____
 STREET NO. _____

ORIGINAL OWNER _____
 ORIGINAL USE _____
 PRESENT OWNER *Wm. C. Barnette*
 PRESENT USE *dwelling*
 WALL CONSTRUCTION _____
 NO. OF STORIES *2 1/2*

2. NAME *DENTS PALACE*

DATE OR PERIOD *2nd 1/2 18th.*
 STYLE _____
 ARCHITECT _____
 BUILDER _____

3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE

4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC

3 part brick

5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE *Endangered* *Interior* *Exterior*



6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)

7. PHOTOGRAPH

8. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages)
 INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.

9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER

DATE OF RECORD

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE



CH-40

DENT'S PALACE. View From West
JRRivoire. 1978



CH-40

DENT'S PALACE, Detail, South
Sommer. JRRivoire, 1978



CH-40

DENT'S PALACE

JRRivoire, 1978



CH-40

DENT'S PALACE. View From SW
JRRivoire, 1978