CARR 376

276 EAST MAIN STREET, WESTMINSTER

ZEPP HOUSE

Built by William Zepp, c. 1860, this house has retained its rural innocence despite being surrounded by a laundromat, a gas station, and a used car lot. This house is a sophisticated version of the house usually produced by Westminster's rural psyche. While it retains the standard 5 bay-central hall - 2 story - L-shape, it displays, in details, a high level of achievement; the brick is a pleasant uniform rosey color, it is laid in a precise Flemish Bond, the windows' flat arches are, at 4 courses, larger than usual and other eave decorations - the mouse-toothing, the modillions, and the precisely drilled dentils, all combine to create a thoughtful, almost academic, specimen of a "popular" type.

Carr 35
0703564504

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC: William Zepp House

AND/OR COMMON:

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 276 East Main Street (MD 32)

CITY, TOWN: Westminster ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 6

COUNTY: Carroll

STATE: Maryland

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Robert Lee Myers

Telephone #: 848-7155

STREET & NUMBER: 257 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN: Westminster ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code: Maryland 21157

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 610
Folio #: 314

STREET & NUMBER: Center Street

CITY, TOWN: Westminster

STATE: Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: None

DATE:

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

CITY, TOWN:

STATE:

CARR-35E

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
X FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Not all houses could maintain their character and, one would almost say, innocence, if bordered by a laundromat, a used-car lot, and a gas station. The Zepp house, on the southwest corner of East Main Street (MD. Route 32) and Bishop's Alley in Westminster, does. Perhaps this is because the house has always been in the midst of commercial bustling; when it was built, its neighbors were a tavern, a hatmaker's shop, and a tanyard, with grocery stores nearby. The house has survived in this brawling atmosphere by adapting and by being constantly busy itself; although the north facade is calm, the south is a confusion of extensions and expansions. (An early version of the house was probably an L-shape, opening to the southwest and thus away from its neighbors activity.)

The "calm" north front is 5 bays long and 2 stories high on a raised roughly coursed fieldstone foundation. A one story hipped roof porch contains the central 3 bays (the center of which is the door). Three square posts support this tinned roof with a 2 board railing in the front; the porch rests 3 feet above the ground, approached by symmetrical placed steps on the east and west sides, and is supported by a stretcher bond brick foundation. All windows (4 on the ground floor, 5 on the second, symmetrically placed) are double-hung sash (with a single pane per sash). The windows have white painted wooden sills, four course gauged flat arches, and broad but simple enframements. (unless otherwise indicated, all windows on all facades are treated the same.) Walls are of rosey Flemish Bond brick (on the north front). A very sophisticated cornice (with modillions and drilled dentils) enlivens the eaves of the north facade; above, the roof is covered with white painted corrugated sheet metal.

The east end stretches along Bishop's Alley for over 60 feet. It is probably that the original house was only 2 bays deep (the value of the house increased from $850 in 1842 to $3125 in 1867, then dropped to $1700 in 1898, indicating an expansion in the 1860's and a subsequent deterioration). In any event, it is this facade that most clearly indicates the house's 100 year growth patterns. The 4 course common bond original (north) section displays 2 windows on all floors, "standard" windows (1/1, with broad simple enframements and sills), 2 small 4-light windows under the gable, and 2 easement windows in the cellar; all windows are regularly placed, symmetrical about a flush flat-capped chimney which is at the gable's peak. Roof molding here is of the simplest; folded over and nailed tin extended from the main roof.

Stretching to the south is a 4 bay, 2 story gable ended wing (gable at the south end) dating from the early 1870's. The roof and its inch overhang are over a wall laid in 5 course common bond, windows are standard in design and placement except for the 2 southerly ground floor

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CARR-356

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1860, 1870, 1950 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The architectural significance of the William Zepp house is closely bound up with its social history (with that of the house itself, not necessarily with that of its owners'). If one accepts the idea of a house as being a manifestation of the mind of its builder (and later owners), the Zepp house tells us quite a bit about the mentality of at least one of Westminster's early citizens. The Zepp house has, from the beginning been surrounded by intense (for the area) commercial activity, yet it was built exactly as one would build an isolated farmhouse; later generations have not modified this obliviousness. Other houses in the immediate area are, by contrast, townhouses - the Blizzard house would be difficult to imagine any where but in an urban context - its porch looks onto a garden, not, as at the Zepp House, a laundromat and used car lot. Furthermore, proto-row houses can be seen nearby. The Zepp House seems to be an embodiment of a rural psyche that is never very far from Westminster's surface. (There is, of course, a danger in carrying such discussions too far, but, to a degree, it seems at least colorable.)

The house is also an example of this rural psyche at a very high level of achievement; the Zepp house is the work of an owner/builder who sought the best - the brick is a pleasant uniform color, it is laid in a not-too-imprecise Flemish Bond, the flat arches over the windows are, at 4 courses, larger than usual and are neatly done. Most clearly, however, we can read the pride and care the Zepp's felt in the cornice treatment; the use of mouse-teeth (although, as will be noted, muisetanden is idiosyncratically popular to this block), the modillions and precisely drilled dentils - all these combine to make the Zepp House a thoughtful "academic" version of a building type normally regarded as "popular".

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CRF-356

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 30 as shown on the original plat of the City of Westminster recorded among the Land Records of Frederick County in Book L page 472 being that lot on the southwest corner of Main Street and Bishop Alley.

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Christopher Weeks, Consultant

DATE
September, 1976

ORGANIZATION
Westminster Historical Sites Survey

STREET & NUMBER
c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN
Westminster

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

windows which are now much smaller in size and closer together in location than they originally were. (One can see the arches of the original windows today in their "proper" places.) The west front of the front section is blind except for 2 attic windows identical with those of the east front; there is also a matching chimney.

The first definite stage of growth, probably dating from the mid-19th century, is a section placed in the formerly open southwest section of the buildings, making the L a solid rectangle. The addition is 2 stories high, has a shed roof sloping to the south. This addition is in itself a bipartite creation; the northerly section is of stretcher bond brick, the southerly is of white clapboard (both have 1 centrally located window per floor). A 2-tiered porch is at the rear destroying the rectangle shape, but offering open southern and western exposures. The porch, supported by square posts, is screened in on the ground floor and open on the second.

In the early 1950's, a stretcher bond 1 story cinder block foundation section was added to the southern end of the house; this addition has 2 windows to the west (one onto the porch). A louvered glass, aluminum roofed porch extends from the southern end of that addition. (This addition consists of 2 apartment units, 1 on the ground floor and 1 in the basement, the latter being lighted by 2 small sliding windows to the east.)

In plan, the house has a typical full Georgian Mid-Atlantic layout - 2 rooms on either side of a center stair hall, with the ell being entered by a door from the rear of the hall (the ell consisting of 2 linear rooms). Interior doors are now glass, but do possess their - presumed - original Georgian enframement.

CARR 356
276 & Main St. Westminster
N. facade
7/76 C. Wecks

47%

CARR 350
276 E. Main St. Westminster

NW facade
9/76 C. Weeks

A-23