

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G.# 72-9-37 Building Date: 1921

Building Name: James A. Campbell House

Location: 709 61st Avenue, Fairmount Heights, Md.

Private/---/---/Demolished/Inaccessible

Description:

The James Campbell House is a one-and-one-half-story hip-roof frame bungalow, which rests on a high brick basement. Entrance is inset in the fourth bay of the four-bay principal (north)west facade; the entrance is sheltered by a small corner porch with one Tuscan column at the corner of the principal roof. This house is distinguished by a semi-octagonal pyramidal-roof dormer centered in the main west plane of the roof; it corresponds to a plain hip-roof dormer in the rear plane of the roof. The house is covered with narrow board siding painted white. It has deep overhanging eaves, and the roof is covered with green asbestos shingle. There is a door in the third bay of the basement level of the main west facade; this entrance is framed by a below-grade lightwell. The steps which lead down from the entry porch are framed with light modern brick, as is the retaining wall across the front of the lot. There is a shallow addition constructed on the rear of the house, and this addition shows signs of damage by fire. The entire house is boarded up. (The house was demolished in June 1991.)

Significance:

The James A. Campbell House is a handsome frame dwelling with a distinctive profile built by a local carpenter for one of the leaders of the community. It was built in 1921 by carpenter Louis Brown, for printer James A. Campbell. Campbell, with his wife May Williams (from the early black community of Rossville), had settled in Fairmount Heights in 1908, residing at first on Clark Avenue two blocks to the north of the subject house. He worked as a messenger for the Government Printing Office, and later opened his own print shop on the lower level of this house. In 1914 he was appointed as instructor for the Industrial Department of the new public school. Campbell was the first Treasurer of the town of Fairmount Heights, when it was incorporated in 1935. He was later elected Mayor of the Town, and served in this office from 1943 to 1955. The subject house was built in 1921, constructed for Campbell by his neighbor, carpenter Louis Brown. It is a handsome structure with a distinctive profile, and occupies one of the highest points of land in the community. Although it is in seriously deteriorating condition, it is a noticeable landmark in the community. (The house was demolished in June 1991).

Acreage: 9,375 square feet

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic James A. Campbell House

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 709 61st Avenue  not for publication

city, town Fairmount Heights  vicinity of congressional district 5

state MD county Prince George's

## 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	<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 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"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Herman Chase

street & number 709 61st Avenue telephone no.:

city, town Fairmount Heights state and zip code MD 20743

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 2213

street & number 14735 Main Street folio 214

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. PG#72-9-37

<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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The James A. Campbell House stood (until 1991) at 709 61st (originally Chapel) Avenue. It was built in 1921 on lots 27-29, Block I of the Fairmount Heights subdivision, which was platted in 1900.

The James Campbell House is a one-and-one-half-story hip-roof frame bungalow, which rests on a high brick basement. Entrance is inset in the fourth bay of the four-bay principal (north)west facade; the entrance is sheltered by a small corner porch with one Tuscan column at the corner of the principal roof. This house is distinguished by a semi-octagonal pyramidal-roof dormer centered in the main west plane of the roof; it corresponds to a plain hip-roof dormer in the rear plane of the roof.

The house is covered with narrow board siding painted white. It has deep overhanging eaves, and the roof is covered with green asbestos shingle. There is a door in the third bay of the basement level of the main west facade; this entrance is framed by a below-grade lightwell. The steps which lead down from the entry porch are framed with light modern brick, as is the retaining wall across the front of the lot.

There is a shallow addition constructed on the rear of the house, and this addition shows signs of damage by fire. The entire house is boarded up.

(The house was demolished in June 1991.)

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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** 1921 **Builder/Architect** Louis Brown

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.

The James A. Campbell House is a handsome frame dwelling with a distinctive profile built by a local carpenter for one of the leaders of the community. It was built in 1921 on one of the highest points of land in the Fairmount Heights community.

The Town of Fairmount Heights is located just outside the easternmost point of the District of Columbia in Prince George's County, Maryland; it is composed of a group of early twentieth-century subdivisions that form one of the earliest planned communities for blacks in the Washington, D. C., area. The community began with the Fairmount Heights subdivision in 1900, followed by five adjoining subdivisions, the last being Sylvan Vista platted in 1923. The Town was incorporated in 1935, and grew steadily through the years before World War II.

The land which was to become Fairmount Heights consisted, during the late nineteenth century, principally of parts of the small farms of John H. Wilson, John and Caroline Silence, Samuel Hoover, Mosby Brown and John Wiessner, all clustered around the east corner of the District of Columbia. In the early years of the twentieth century, these farms were bought up and subdivided by land speculators, who then began to sell individual lots to black families, most of whom worked in the District of Columbia.

The first section of Fairmount Heights was subdivided in 1900 by Robinson White and Allen Clark (both white men) out of parts of several small farms which they had purchased from the Wilson, Godfrey, Belt and Lee families. Robinson White was a lawyer and developer who resided in the District of Columbia; Allen C. Clark was a lawyer and manager of the Equitable Life Insurance Company of

Washington, D. C. White and Clark had approximately fifty acres surveyed by County Surveyor Edward L. Latimer, and laid out in lots and streets radiating from the northeast boundary of the District of Columbia. The deep, narrow lots were generally 25 by 125 feet; two of the streets were named for these first two developers. Sale of lots began almost immediately, and within a few years, dwellings were constructed and a community began to form.

From the beginning, blacks were encouraged to buy lots and settle in the new community. White and Clark sold the lots at relatively low prices, making home ownership finally attainable for black families. Most of the earliest purchasers of lots worked for government agencies; many built their own houses, or relied on friends and family to help with construction. Many families were quick to seize the opportunity to move out of the city, determined to progress, by hard work and amid healthful surroundings, toward a better life.

The earliest dwellings were of frame construction, modest in size and form, and many of these have not survived. Within a few years, however, several interesting and substantial houses were constructed for individuals who would make significant contributions to the development of Fairmount Heights.

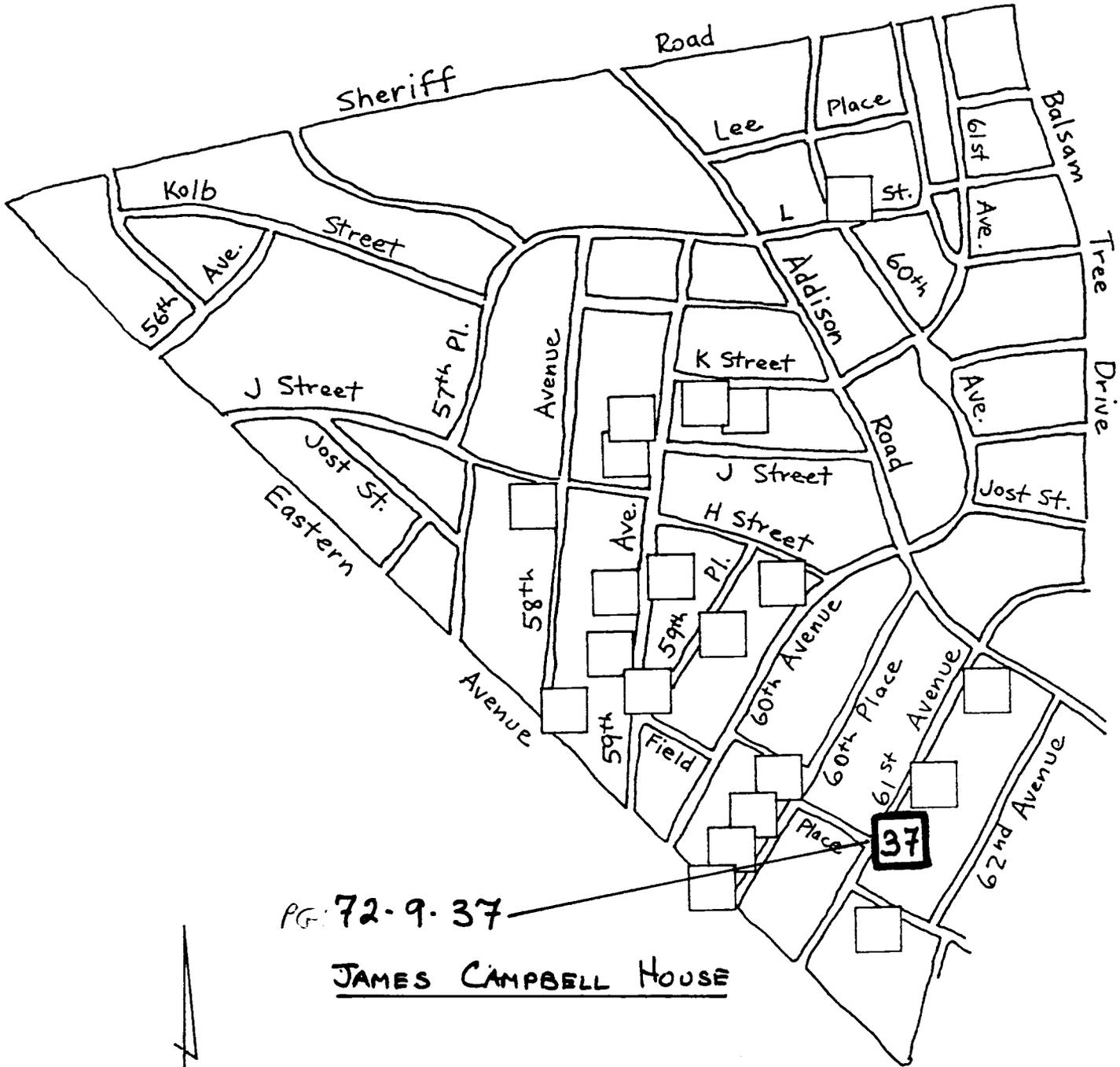
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The subject house was built in 1921, constructed for Campbell by his neighbor, carpenter Louis Brown. It is a handsome structure with a distinctive profile, and occupies one of the highest points of land in the community. Although it is in seriously deteriorating condition, it is a noticeable landmark in the community.

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# Town of Fairmount Heights



PG: 72-9-37

JAMES CAMPBELL HOUSE





DISTRICT HEIGHTS 2.3 MI. UPPER MARLBORO 11 MI. 55' 334 335000m E INTERIOR-GEOLOGICAL SURVEY WASHINGTON D.C. - 1971 76'



PG: 72-9-37  
**72-9-37**

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty Light-duty
- Medium-duty Unimproved dirt
- Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

0 FEET  
 LEVEL  
 TUM IS MEAN LOW WATER  
 LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER  
 ATELY FEET



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

WASHINGTON EAST, MD. - D. C.  
 N3852.5 - W7652 5/7.5

ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
 ABOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1965  
 PHOTOREVISED 1971  
 AMS 5661 IV NW - SERIES V833



Pb. # 72-9-37

James A. Campbell Home

709 61<sup>st</sup> Ave., Fairmount Heights

(FH I: 27/29)

Prince George's Co. MD.

Juan S. Pearl

February 1991

Northwest facade

778-1117