

Easement

MHT K-12

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland	
COUNTY: Kent	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Denton House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Denton-Weeks House or River House Smyth-Letherbury House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
107 Water Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Chestertown

STATE: Maryland      CODE: 24      COUNTY: Kent      CODE: 031

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>tenanted</u>
Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
State of Maryland, Maryland Historical Trust

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Post Office Box 1704

CITY OR TOWN:  
Annapolis

STATE: Maryland      CODE: 24

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURT-HOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Kent County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Courthouse Square

CITY OR TOWN:  
Chestertown

STATE: Maryland      CODE: 24

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
National Historical Landmark

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
National Historic Landmarks Program

STREET AND NUMBER:  
U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE: D. C.      CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Maryland  
COUNTY: Kent  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
ENTRY NUMBER: 11  
DATE:

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY Kent	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Benton House

#6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS continued

Maryland Register of historic sites and landmarks

1970 - State

Maryland Historical Trust  
Post Office Box 1704  
Annapolis, Maryland 21404 code: 24

Historic American Building Survey

1969 - Federal

Library of Congress  
Washington, D. C. code: 11

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located within the area designated as a National Historic Landmark in Chestertown, the Denton House is on the southeast side of Water Street between Maple Avenue and High Street.

The house, under restoration, will be more easily understood described as it will appear.

The existing five-bay long street facade is unique in Chestertown. It stands three full stories above a high basement, separated by a painted, molded stone water table. The Flemish bond brickwork has a very narrow, convex, white mortar joint. Each window of the basement, first floor, and second floor is accentuated by a rusticated, painted stone, flat-arch with keystone. On the first and second stories, the window lintel keystones are double, and the central window keystone of the second story is molded and carved. Between the first and second stories is a plain belt course of stone, painted white.

Wood steps will ascend one flight to the central entrance, similar to the stoop design of the James Brice House, Annapolis. Both the entrance door and reveals are paneled with molded raised panels and are flanked by plain Doric pilasters which will support a full pediment. The outline of the original pediment was revealed when the nineteenth-century porch was removed, thereby enabling an exact replica to be constructed.

Brick pilasters at the corners of the facade rise three full stories from the water table up to the cornice and are a feature of the facade. A less developed prototype is found at the headquarters building of the Kent County Historical Society on Church Alley, Chestertown. A rosette carved in a square panel is recessed in a stone block, between the capital of each pilaster and the main cornice. The cornice is a simplification of a Corinthian design with the modillions and plancers (the soffit of a cornice) carved above the capitals only; the carved plancers repeat the design of the rosettes below.

On the river facade, the basement is at ground level, creating a full story. The Flemish bond brickwork is similar to that used on the street (west) facade. A nineteenth-century photograph shows the design of a two-story porch which will be reconstructed. Brick piers will support the wood porch, supported by square columns from the first to the second floor and round columns from the second floor to the roof, a modified continuation of the main roof. A simple balustrade will extend between columns at both levels.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
Maryland	
COUNTY	
Kent	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Denton House

#7. DESCRIPTION continued

Doors to the interior from each porch level will be located in the central bays. The ground level porch has a wide, diamond chevron, batten door with original long iron strap hinges.

The gable-ends were originally without openings except for a door at the basement level on the southeast; and two casement windows flanking the chimney in each end of the attic.

Mt. Pleasant, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has a first-floor plan with a central passage flanked by a single large room on the north and a smaller room and stairhall at the south ends. Each room is treated simply, having paneled, recessed interior shutters, a chair-rail, dentil cornice and plaster walls. One original mantel repeats the dentil mold of the cornice. An elliptical arch separates the stair from the passage of the first and of the second stories, although the staircase extends to the attic.

More elaborate rooms are located on the second story. Paneling from the "Chestertown Room" now installed in the Winterthur Museum, was originally in the northeast room. The precedent for its intricate design has been compared with designs in William Pain's The Practical Builder (1744) in a report "The Chestertown Room at Winterthur" by John Snyder, Jr., a Winterthur Fellow. The two remaining rooms retain paneled fireplace walls and dado, reflecting the transition between the earlier Georgian and the Federal designs.

One original raised-panel wall remains on the third story in the southwest room; and a mantel with Chinese fretwork remains in the northeast room. Three small rooms with beaded board partitions were originally located in the three bays of the northeast (entrance) facade.

The latter arrangement was also found off the kitchen in the basement. When restored, the basement will contain kitchen, dining and utility areas. The upper stories will be used as reception rooms and sleeping quarters.

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1784-87

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The affluence and influence of the combination college town on a navigable river is exemplified by the architecture of the Denton House, a waterfront residential property.

The first professor of law (1791) at Washington College (founded 1752) was a former resident in the house and recently Miss Frances Denton, the former executive secretary to Colonel Edward House (1858-1938), advisor to President Woodrow Wilson.

The house is known in Chestertown for its local architectural excellence. A room from the house was recognized by Mr. Henry Francis DuPont as worthy of being moved to Winterthur.

The Denton House stands on parts of "water lots" number 12 and 13 of the original plat of Chestertown. John Tennant and Jude Clarkson were the first known grantees of the two lots. In 1736 and 1737, William Timbull, a Barbados merchant, purchased the two waterfront lots from Tennant and Clarkson. At the time of his death, William Timbull had built a house on the lots, as recorded in the legal transactions after his death in the Barbados in 1741. By petition to the General Assembly of Maryland, legal title was granted in 1784 to Eleazer McComb. Upon his legal acquisition of the property, he immediately sold it to Thomas Smyth.

Thomas Smyth (1729-1819) was one of the wealthiest merchants of Chestertown and Kent County prior to and just after the Revolution. He was Judge of the Court for Kent County (1757-1769), a member of the Maryland Conventions of 1774 through 1776, signer of the Association of Freemen in 1775, and member of the Council of Safety for the Eastern Shore in 1775-76. During the Revolution, he was actively involved in securing supplies for the continental army. Thomas Smyth owned the property for two and a half years and then sold it to his son, Richard Gresham Smyth, who held it for only nine months before he deeded it to Peregrine Letherbury.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
Maryland	
COUNTY	
Kent	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Denton House

#8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

The purchase price for the property was unchanged from 1784, when Thomas Smyth bought the property, to the time it was sold to Richard Smyth. However, in 1787, Letherbury paid £ 1200 current money, an increase of £ 900 over the original cost of £ 300. Considering the value of the pound after the Revolution and the family relationship between Thomas and Richard Smyth, it is possible that the present structure was constructed during the Smyths' ownership. If not, it was constructed by Peregrine Letherbury, after his purchase on July 19, 1787.

Peregrine Letherbury practiced law in Chestertown, and was the first professor of law (1782-1801) at Washington College. He, as well as Thomas and Richard Smyth, contributed to the founding of Washington College in 1782. Letherbury served as Secretary, and later President, of the Board of Visitors and Governors of the College. In 1776, and again in 1779, he had been elected to the General Assembly of Maryland. After the Revolution he was actively involved in Masonry and in 1791 was elected Grand Master of the Maryland Masonry for one year.

After his death in 1801, the house was left to his daughter Mary, who later married Doctor George Washington Thomas, a physician in Chestertown. Mrs. Thomas had no children and upon her death in 1849 she devised the property to Peregrine Letherbury Wickes and provided for his education. After graduation from Princeton in 1856, he studied law with Severn Teakle Wallis, a very prominent barrister of Baltimore. He settled in Chestertown and later moved to York, Pennsylvania, his wife's home. He then sold the house to his brother, Ezekiel Chambers Wickes, also a lawyer.

In 1877, the house was purchased by Mary Elizabeth Willson Brown, granddaughter of Thomas Smyth. During her ownership, the building was used as a school for girls. From then until 1938, the property passed to various local families, until Miss Frances Denton, former private secretary to Colonel Edward House (1858-1938), advisor to President Woodrow Wilson, purchased the property. Upon her death in 1948, she bequeathed the property to her niece, Miss Marion Weeks. Prior to Miss Weeks' death in 1968, she deeded it to the Maryland Historical Trust to secure its future preservation. Upon the Completion of its restoration, it will be rented as a private home, to be opened to the public five times annually.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Recorder: Michael Bourne, Field Surveyor, Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, Maryland, November 1970.

Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland: Deeds, Wills, Revolutionary Papers.

Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland: Wills, Deeds.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39 ° 12 ' 29.0 "	76 ° 03 ' 46.5 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/4 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Mrs. Preston Parish, Keeper of the Maryland Register

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust      DATE: Jan. 22, 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Post Office Box 1704

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis      STATE: Maryland      CODE: 24

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Orlando Ridout IV

Orlando Ridout IV

Title: State Liaison Officer for Maryland

Date: JAN 28 1971

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
Maryland	
COUNTY	
Kent	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Denton House

#9. REFERENCES continued

Schultz, Edward T., History of Freemasonry in Maryland, J. H. Medairy & Co., Baltimore, 1884, Vol. I, p. 396.

"History of Washington College," Vertical Files, Washington College Library, Chestertown, Maryland.

Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and the District of Columbia, National Biographical Publishing Company, Baltimore 1879, p. 424.

"The Smyth Family," Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

Snyder, John, Jr., "The Chestertown Room, Winterthur," paper written May 1969, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware.

Maynard P. White, 107 South Mill Street, Chestertown, Maryland; interviews.

Denton House is located in the First Congressional District of Maryland.

# Easement

K-12

16-20 River House

c. 1785

Chestertown

public: Maryland Historical Trust

River House is a fine example of those dwellings built by prosperous merchants of the eighteenth century. Erected in the 1780's prior to Chestertown's decline as a port in favor of Baltimore, it exemplifies the transition of ~~that~~ the late Georgian to Federal style. The house has been completely restored inside and out.

The existing five-bay street facade is unique in Chestertown. It stands three full stories high framed by full height ~~brick~~ pilasters with elaborate capitals. The water table and belt course are of painted white stone. The Flemish bond brickwork has a very narrow, convex, white mortar joint. Each window of the basement, first floor and second floor is accentuated by a rusticated, painted stone, flat arch with keystone. On the ~~of~~ first and second stories, the window lintel keystones are double, and ~~the~~ the central window keystone of the second story is molded and carved.

Between the capital of each pilaster and the ~~main~~ main <sup>Cornice</sup> ~~cornices~~ a rosette carved in a square panel <sup>is</sup> recessed in a stone block. The cornice itself is a simplification of a Corinthian design with the modillions ~~the~~ and plancers carved above the capitals, repeating the design of the rosettes.

Wood steps ascend one flight to the central entrance, similar ~~to~~ to the stoop design of the James Brice House in Annapolis. Both the entrance door and reveals are paneled with ~~wood~~ molded raised panels and are flanked by plain Doric pilasters which support a full ~~pediment~~ pediment. (The outline of ~~the~~ the original ~~pediment~~ pediment was revealed when the nineteenth century porch was removed, ~~there~~ thereby ~~making~~ enabling an exact replica to be reconstructed.)

The interior of each room on ~~the~~ the first story ~~is~~ is treated simply, having paneled, recessed interior shutters, a chairrail, dentil cornice ~~and~~ and plaster walls. More elaborate rooms are located in the second floor. Paneling ~~from~~ for ~~the~~ The Chestertown Room now installed in the Winterthur Museum, was originally in the ~~northeast~~ northeast room. The two remaining rooms retain paneled fireplaces walls and dado, reflecting the transition between the earlier Georgian and the Federal designs. One original raised panel wall remains on the third story in the southwest room; and a mantel with Chinese fretwork remains in ~~the~~ the northeast room.

The house is in splendid condition and is opened periodically to the public.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Denton-Weeks House or Denton House  
AND/OR COMMON  
River House

K-12  
~~K-12~~

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
107 Water Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Chestertown  
STATE  
Maryland

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
First  
VICINITY OF  
COUNTY  
Kent

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER tenanted

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Maryland Historical Trust  
STREET & NUMBER  
2525 Riva Road  
CITY, TOWN  
Annapolis

Telephone #:  
STATE, zip code  
Md. 21620

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Office of the Clerk  
STREET & NUMBER  
Kent County Court House  
CITY, TOWN  
Chestertown

Liber #: EMP 26  
Folio #: 7

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
National Historic Landmark

DATE  
1970  
xx FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
National Historic Landmarks Program

CITY, TOWN  
U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service  
STATE  
Washington, D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

K-12

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	** Restored**	

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located within the area designated as a National Historic Landmark in Chestertown, River House is on the southeast side of Water Street between Maple Avenue and High Street on a part of Town Lot 12.

The existing five-bay long street facade is unique in Chestertown. It stands three full stories above a high basement; separated by a painted, molded stone water table. The Flemish bond brickwork has a very narrow, convex, white mortar joint. Each window of the basement, first floor, and second floor is accentuated by a rusticated, painted stone, flat-arch with keystone. On the first and second stories, the window lintel keystones are double, and the central window keystone of the second story is molded and carved. Between the first and second stories is a plain belt course of stone, painted white.

Wood steps ascend one flight to the central entrance, similar to the stoop design of the James Brice House, Annapolis. Both the entrance door and reveals are paneled with molded raised panels and are flanked by plain Doric pilasters which will support a full pediment. The outline of the original pediment was revealed when the nineteenth century porch was removed, thereby enabling an exact replica to be constructed.

Brick pilasters at the corners of the facade rise three full stories from the water table up to the cornice and are a feature of the facade. A less developed prototype is found at the headquarters building of the Kent County Historical Society on Church Alley, Chestertown. A rosette carved in a square panel is recessed in a stone block, between the capital of each pilaster and the main cornice. The cornice is a simplification of a Corinthian design with the modillions and plancers (the soffit of a cornice) carved above the capitals only; the carved plancers repeat the design of the rosettes below.

On the river facade, the basement is at ground level, creating a full story. The Flemish bond brickwork is similar to that used on the street (west) facade. The nineteenth century photograph shows the design of a two-story porch which was reconstructed. Brick piers support the wood porch, supported by square columns from the first to the second floor and round columns from the second floor to the roof, a modified continuation of the main roof. A simple balustrade extends between columns at both levels.

Doors to the interior from each porch level are located in the central bays. The ground level porch has a wide, diamond chevron, batten door with original long iron strap hinges.

The gable ends were originally without openings except for a door at the basement level on the southeast and two casement windows flanking the chimney in each end of the attic.

Mt. Pleasant, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has a first-floor plan with a central passage flanked by a single large room on the north and a smaller room and stairhall at the south ends. Each room is treated simply, having paneled, recessed interior shutters, a chair-rail, dentil cornice and plaster walls. One original mantel repeats the dentil mold of the cornice. An elliptical arch separates the stair from the passage of the first and of the second stories, although the staircase extends to the attic.

More elaborate rooms are located on the second story. Paneling from the "Chestertown Room" now installed in the Winterthur Museum, was originally in the northeast room. The precedent for its intricate design has been compared with designs in William Pain's The

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

K-12

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 checked="" 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 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 1780's BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The purchase price for the property was unchanged from 1784, when Thomas Smyth bought the property, to the time it was sold to Richard Smyth. However, in 1787, River House is a fine example of those dwellings built by prosperous merchants of the eighteenth century. Erected prior to Chestertown's decline as a port in favor of Baltimore, it exemplifies the transition of the late Georgian to Federal style in American architecture.

The house is known in Maryland for its architectural excellence. Paneling from the room was removed to Henry Francis du Pont's Winterthur Museum where it was incorporated into the Chestertown Room.

The first professor of law (1791) at Washington College (founded 1752) was a former resident in the house as was Miss Frances Denton, the former executive secretary to Colonel Edward House (1858-1938), advisor to President Woodrow Wilson.

The Denton House stands on parts of "water lots" number 12 and 13 of the original plot of Chestertown. John Tennant and Jude Clarkson were the first grantees of the two lots. In 1736 and 1737, William Timbrill, a Barbados merchant, purchased the two waterfront lots from Tennant and Clarkson. At the time of his death, William Timbrill, a Barbados merchant, purchased the lots and had built a house on the lots, as recorded in the legal transactions after his death in the Barbados in 1741. By petition to the General Assembly of Maryland, legal title was granted in 1784 to Eleazer McComb. Upon his legal acquisition of the property, he immediately sold it to Thomas Smyth.

Thomas Smyth (1729-1819) was one of the wealthiest merchants of Chestertown and Kent County during the Revolutionary period. He was judge of the Court of Kent County (1757-1769), a member of the Maryland Conventions of 1774 through 1776, signer of the Association of Freemen in 1775, and member of the Council of Safety for the Eastern Shore in 1775-76. During the Revolution he was actively involved in securing supplies for the continental army. Thomas Smyth owned the property for two and one half years and then sold it to his son, Richard Cresham Smyth, who held it for only nine months before he deeded it to Peregrine Leatherbury.

The purchase price for the property was unchanged from 1784, when Thomas Smyth bought the property, to the time it was sold to Richard Smyth. However, in 1787, Leatherbury paid £1200 current money, an increase of 91% £900 over the original £300. Considering the value of the pound after the Revolution and the family relationship between Thomas and Richard Smyth, it is possible that the present structure was constructed during the Smyth's ownership. If not, it was constructed by Peregrine Letherbury, after his purchase on July 19, 1787.

(continued)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

K-12

### 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md.: Deeds, wills, Revolutionary papers.  
 Kent County Courthouse, Chestertown, Md.: Wills, deeds.  
 Schultz, Edward T. History of Freemasonry in Maryland, J.H. Medairy and Co.,  
 Baltimore, 1884, Vol. 1, pp. 396.  
 History of Washington College, Vertical Files, Washington College Library, Chestertown.  
 CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY (Continued)

### 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/4 acre

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning on the south side of the pavement on the south side of Front Street at a point opposite to and on a line with the center of a brick wall standing on a part of the ~~division~~ line between the lot formerly of M.J. Fleming and this lot of land and running thence with said side of said Front Street in a southwest course 84 feet 5 inches to a point opposite the center of the ally between the house standing on this lot and the residence formerly of the late C.L. Mynson and running from thence with the center of the alley and the center of a brick wall ~~between this lot and the lot formerly of the late C.L. Mynson to Chester River, thence~~  
 LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

with Chester River to the center of the said wall between this lot and the lot formerly of M.J. Fleming, thence with the center of said wall to the line of division to the beginning.

STATE COUNTY STATE COUNTY

### 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	Michael Bourne--recorded by Robert Neill Historic Site Surveyor
ORGANIZATION	Maryland Historical Trust/Town of Chestertown
DATE	July, 1976
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN	STATE

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

## Description (continued)

Practical Builder (1744) in a report "The Chestertown Room at Winterthur" by John Snyder, Jr., Winterthur Fellow. The two remaining rooms retain paneled fireplace walls and dado, reflecting the transition between the earlier Georgian and the Federal designs.

One original raised panel wall remains on the third story in the southwest room; and a mantel with Chinese fretwork remains in the northeast room. Three small rooms with beaded board partitions were originally located in the three bays of the northwest (entrance) facade.

The latter arrangement was also found off the kitchen in the basement which contains kitchen, dining and utility areas. The upper stories are used as reception rooms and sleeping quarters.

## Significance (continued)

Peregrine Letherbury practiced law in Chestertown, and was the first professor of law (1782-1801) at Washington College. He, as well as Thomas and Richard Smyth, contributed to the founding of Washington College in 1782. Letherbury served as Secretary, and later President, of the Board of Visitors and Governors of the College. In 1776, and again in 1779, he had been elected to the General Assembly of Maryland. After the Revolution he was actively involved in Masonry and in 1791 was elected Grand Master of the Maryland Masonry for one year.

After his death in 1801, the house was left to his daughter, Mary, who later married Dr. George Washington Thomas, a physician in Chestertown. Mrs. Thomas had no children and upon her death in 1849, she devised the property to Peregrine Letherbury Wickes and provided for his education. After graduation from Princeton in 1856, he studied law with Severn Teackle Wallis, a very prominent barrister of Baltimore. He settled in Chestertown and later moved to York, Pennsylvania, his wife's home. He then sold the house to his brother, Michael Chambers Wickes, also a lawyer.

In 1877, the house was purchased by Mary Elizabeth Willson Brown, granddaughter of Thomas Smyth. During her ownership, the building was used as a school for girls. From then until 1938, the property passed to various local families, until Miss Frances Denton, former private secretary to Colonel Edward House (1859-1938) advisor to President Woodrow Wilson, purchased the property. Upon her death in 1948, she bequeathed the property to her niece, Miss Marion Weeks. Prior to Miss Week's death in 1968, she deeded it to the Maryland Historical Trust to secure its future preservation. Mr. and Mrs. Karl Miller now occupy the home in return for a contribution toward its restoration. River House is periodically opened to the public.

## Bibliography (Continued)

Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Maryland and the District of Columbia, National Biographical Publishing Company, Baltimore, 1879, pp 424.  
"The Smyth Family," Vertical Files, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore, Md.

Snyder, ~~John~~ John, Jr. "The Chestertown Room, Winterthur," paper written May, 1969  
Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware.

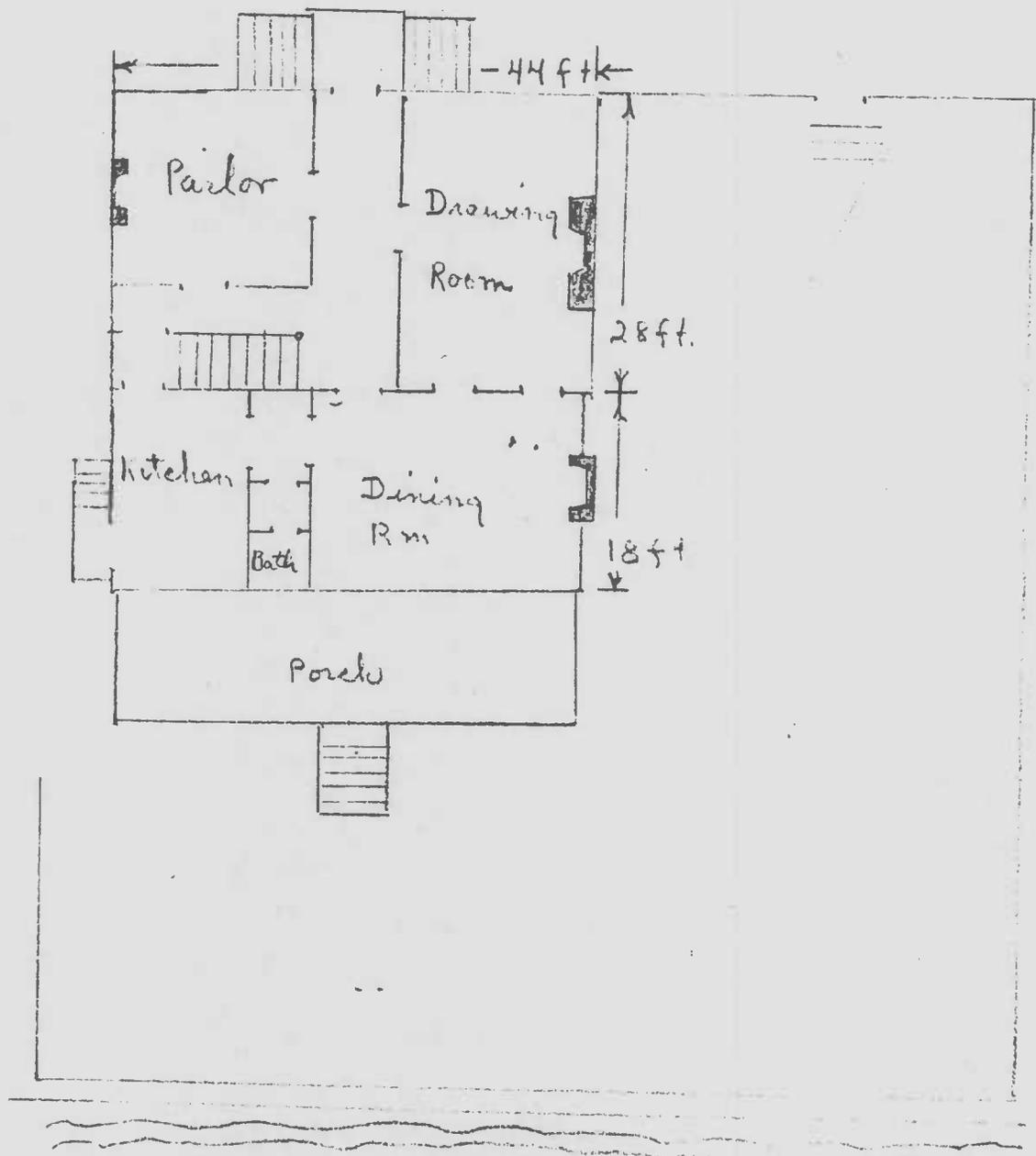
Maynard P. White, 107 South Mill Street, Chestertown, Maryland; interviews.

K-12

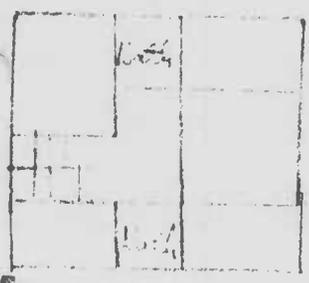
~~SURE~~  
PROJECTS

The Weeks-Denton Home  
Chestertown, Maryland  
# 107 Water Street

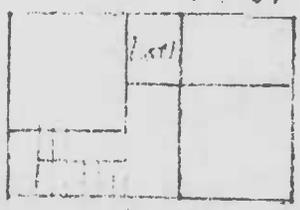
RIVER HOU  
KENT CO



2<sup>nd</sup> floor

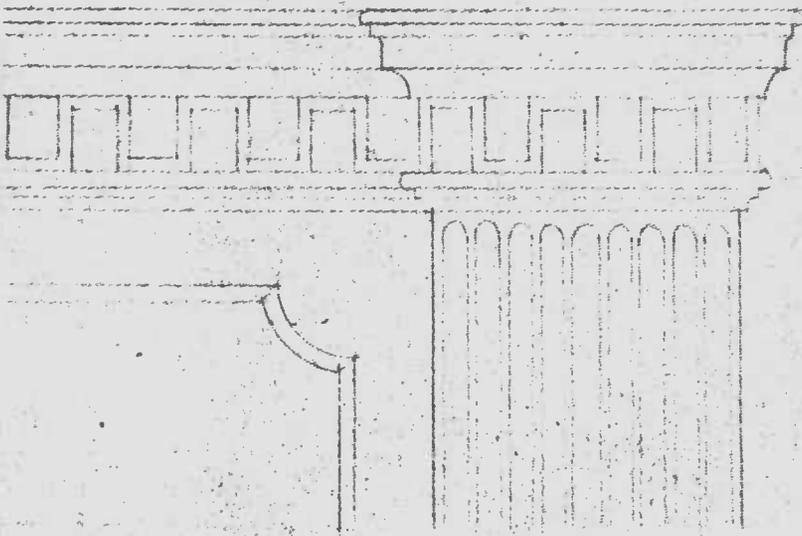


3<sup>rd</sup> floor

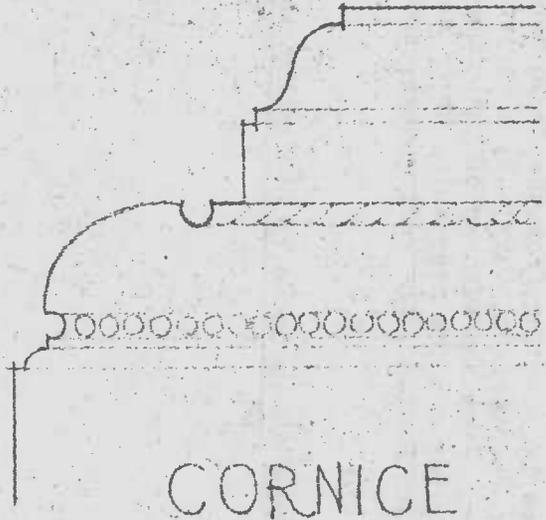




THE MATERIAL IS MAHOGANY



BASE



CORNICE

FIREPLACE  
MOULDING

GUEST BED ROOM  
WATER STREET CHESTER  
HOUSE BUILT IN 1753

HOME OF  
MISS FRANCES B. DENTON

K-12

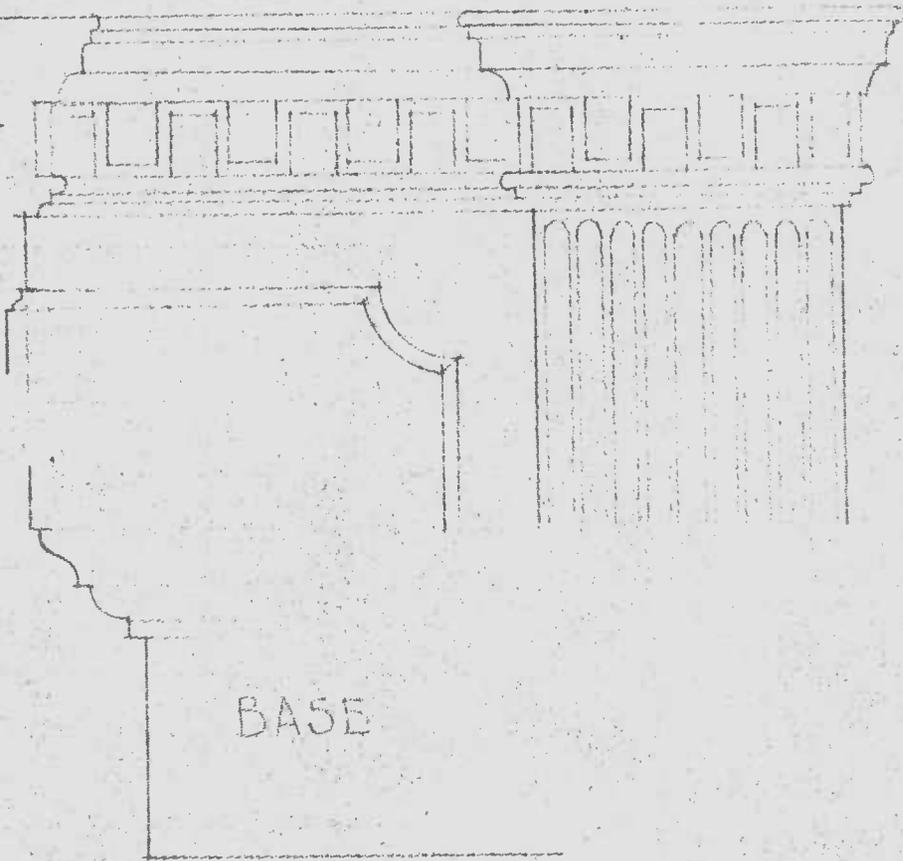
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### CHESTERTOWN ROOM

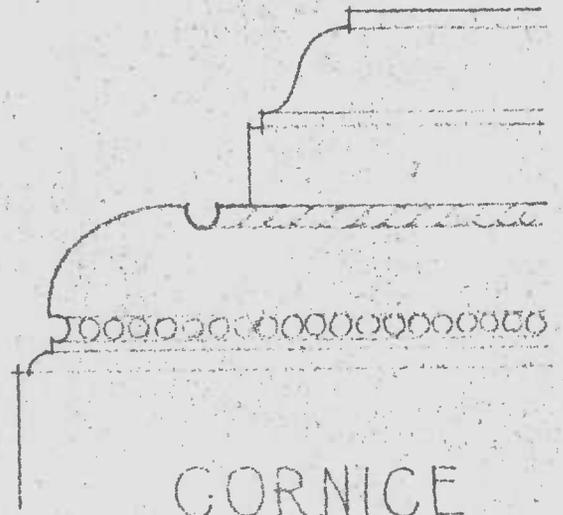
Installed here is paneling from the Brown house, built about 1762 in Chestertown, Maryland, a thriving port on the Chester River. From the windows of the house was a splendid view of the river and the many ships which sailed between Chestertown and England, the West Indies, and the northern colonies.

From Museum Guide to Winterthur in the Spring  
1964

THE MEMBRAL IS MAHOGANY



BASE



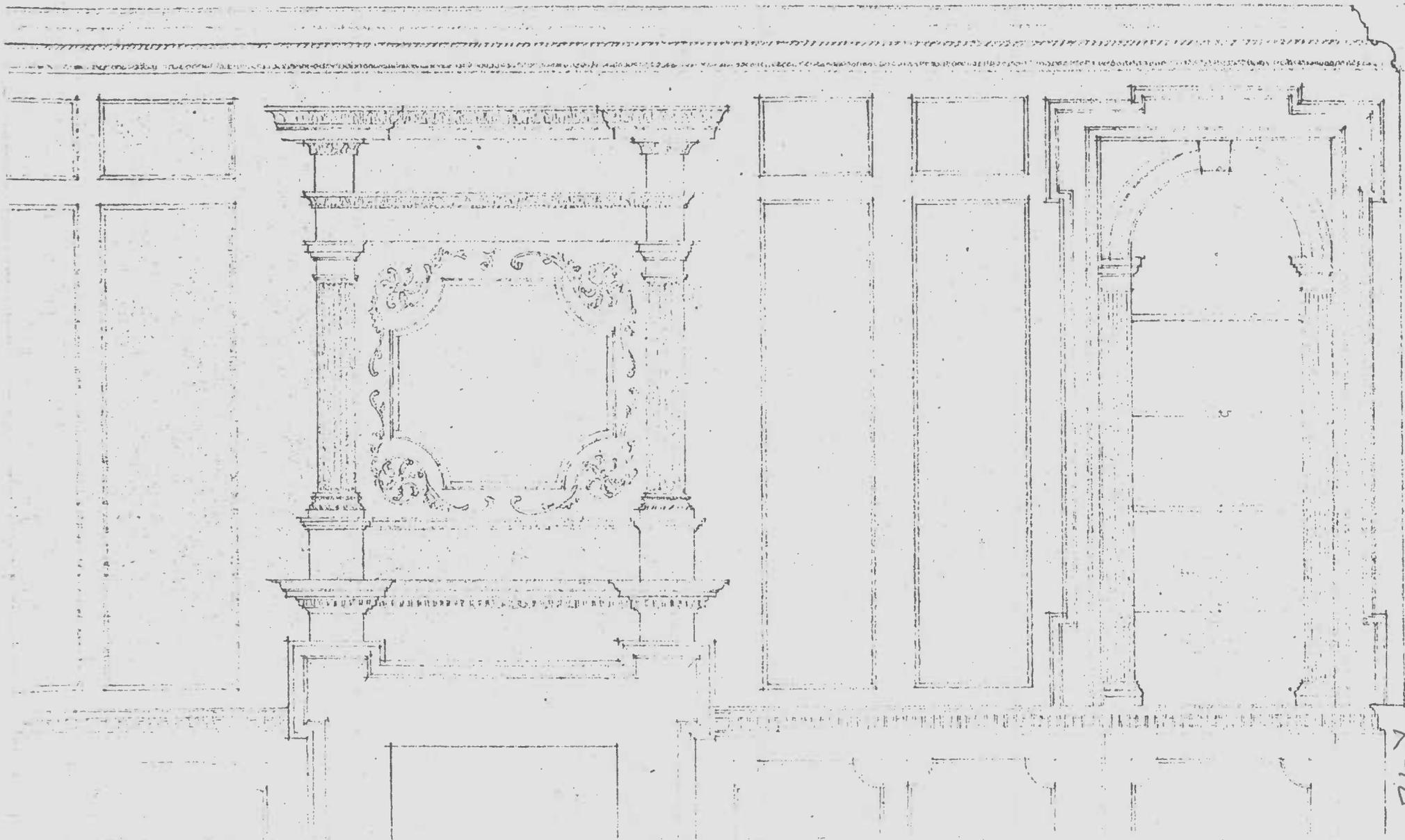
CORNICE

GUEST BED  
WATER STRE

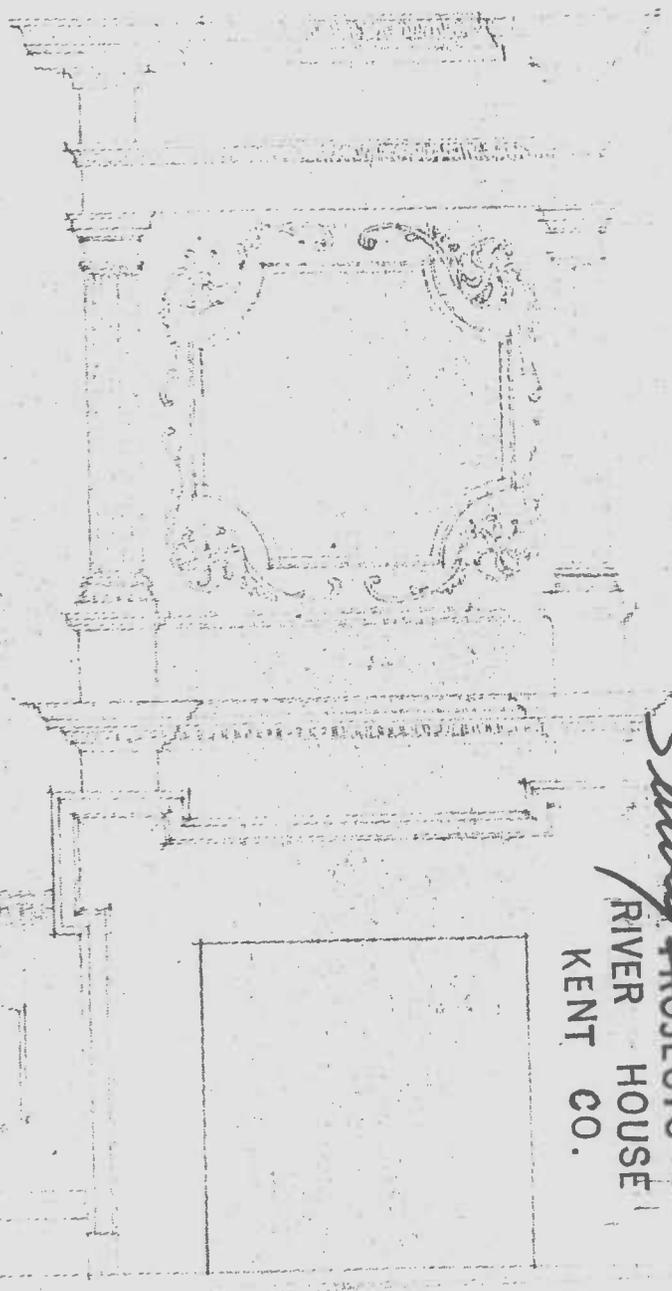
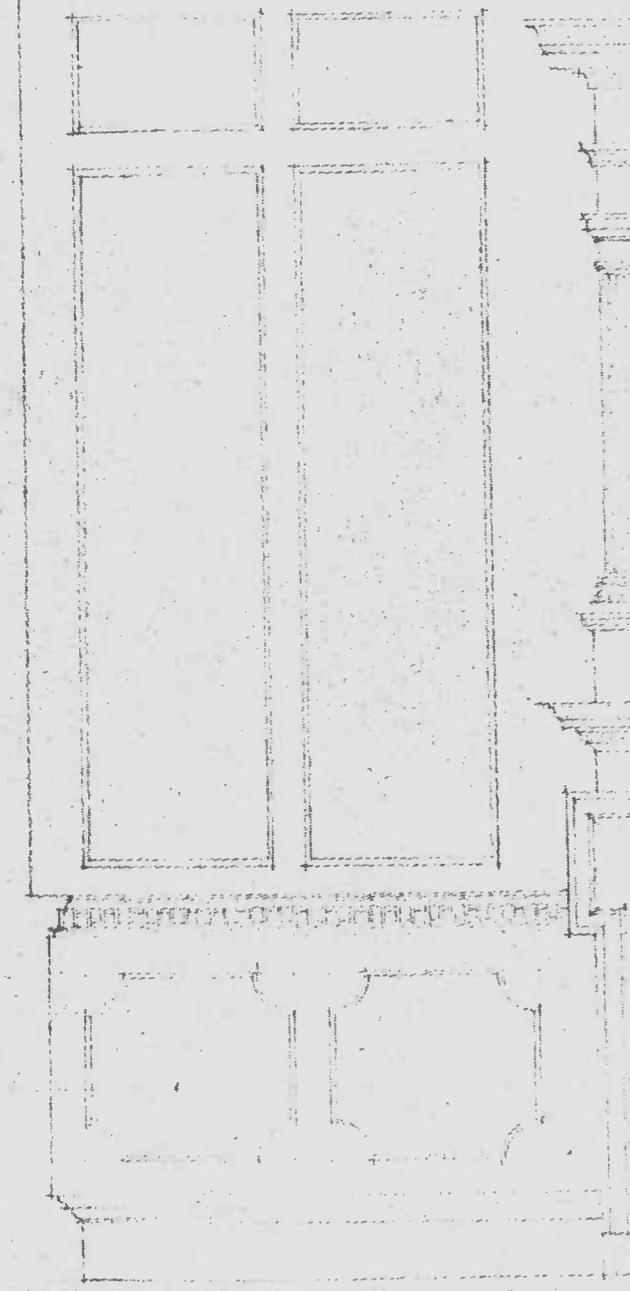
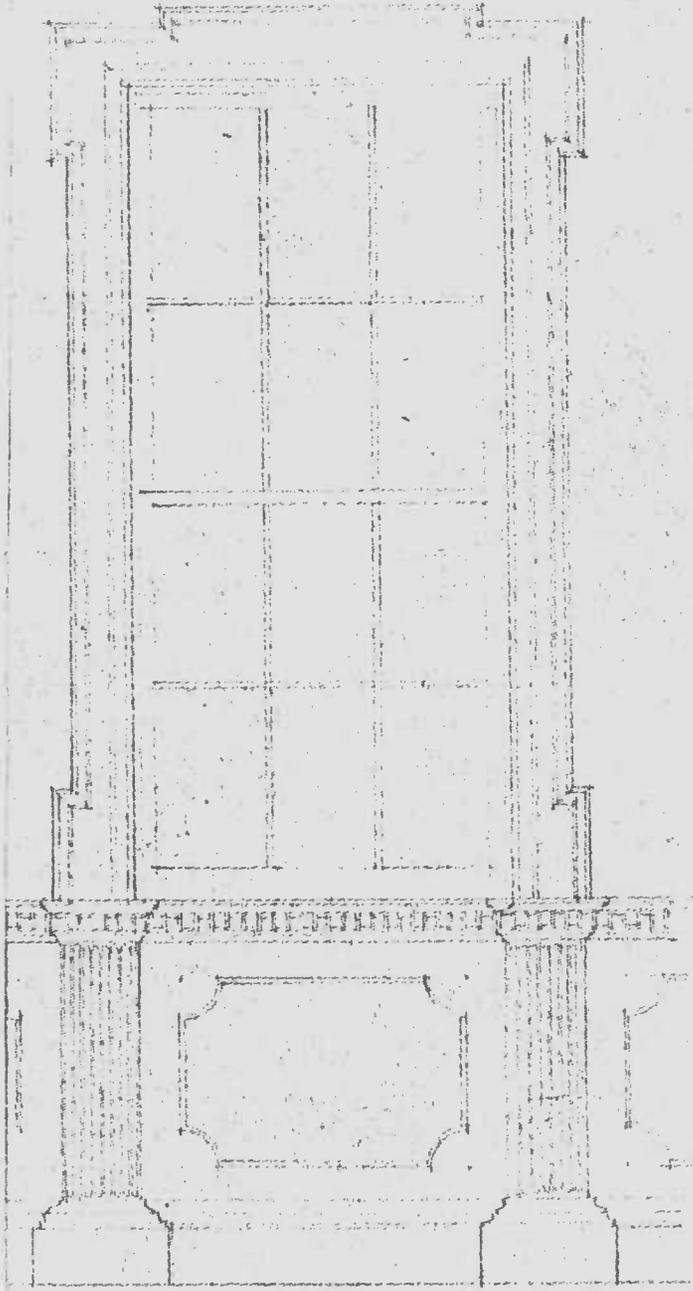
HOUSE BUILT IN 1753

HOME OF  
MISS FRANCES B. DENTON

K-12

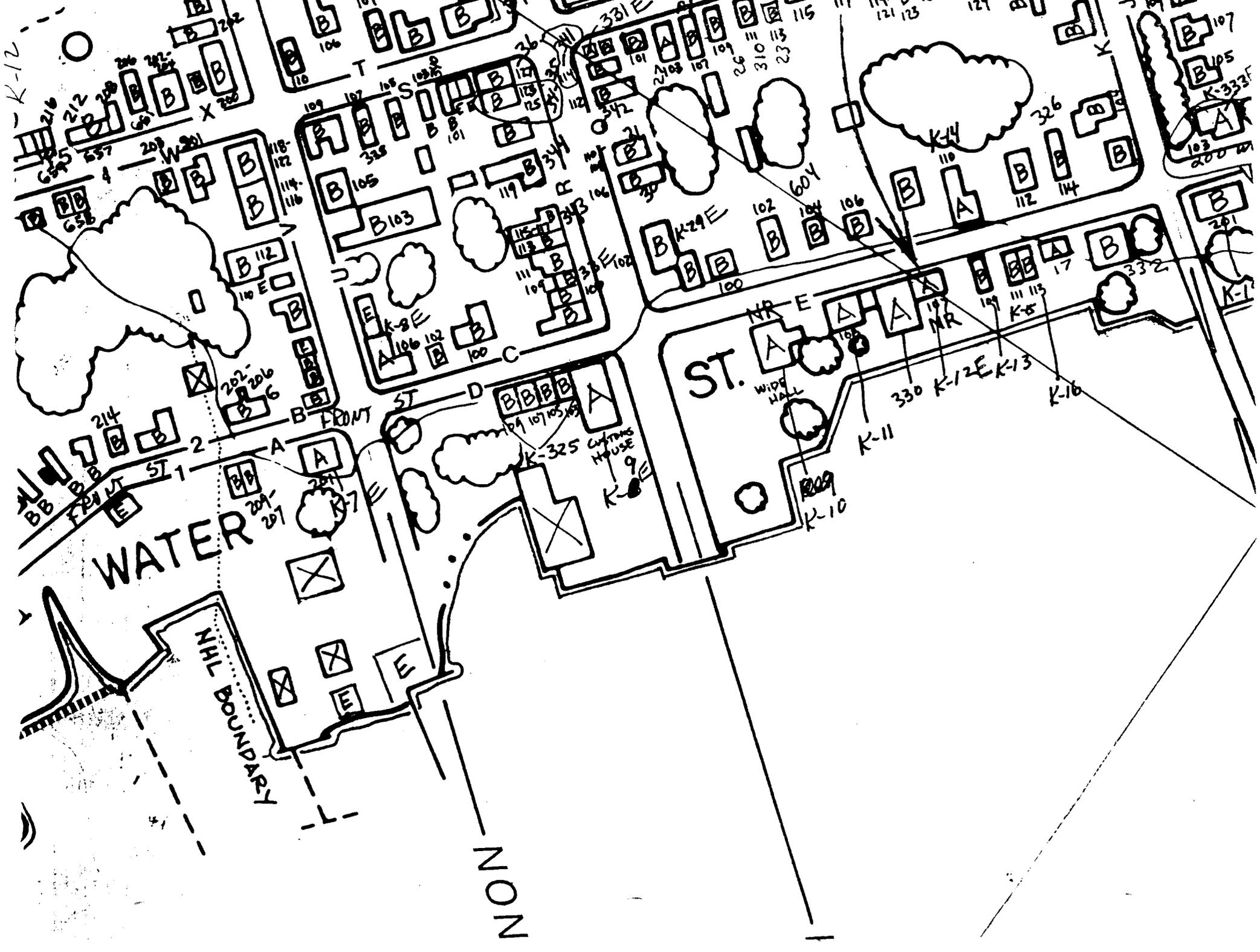


K-12



*Sawney* PROJECTS  
RIVER HOUSE  
KENT CO.

K-12



K-12

N

FOODS (NEW) FARM

COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

KENT

CEMETERY

VITA FOODS

LYNCHBURG STREET

POPLAR RD

PROSPECT ST

STREET

KENT STREET

STREET

STREET

WASHINGTON COLLEGE

CAMPUS

COLLEGE

AVENUE

AVENUE

MORGNEC

STREET

ELM STREET

GREENWOOD

VALLEY

SCHOOL

MT VERNON

WASHINGTON U.S. 213

BROWN VIEW RD

STREET

MILL

CALVERT STREET

STREET

RIVER

SCHOOL STREET

SCHOOL AVENUE

SPRING ST

PHILOSOPHERS

TERRACE

BYFORD DRIVE

WALDO DRIVE

DAVID DRIVE

BARROLL DRIVE

CROSS

ROW STREET

STREET

TWILLEY LANE QUEEN

PARK COURT ST

CHURCH ST

AVENUE

STREET

BYFORD COURT

WATER CANNON

HIGH

STREET

MAPLE

RIVERSIDE TERRACE

COURT

K-12

U.S. 213

Chester

River

K-12

CHESTERTOWN QUADRANGLE  
USGS 7.5 minute map  
scale: 1:24 000  
1953

12'30"

Denton, House  
Lat. 39°12'29.0"  
Long. 76°03'46.5"

PENNSYLVANIA

Rutledge

WASHINGTON COLLEGE  
High Sch

CHESTERTOWN  
(BM 22)

Barron Pt  
Hope

Chestertown Creek

Gasoline

Chester River  
Country Club

QUEE

Mill Pond





DENTON HOUSE  
Chestertown

KENT COUNTY  
EASTERN SHORE

1-12

MD. HISTORICAL TRUST  
BOX 1704  
ANNAPOLIS, MD. 21404

PICKERING COLLECTION 33.



K.12



K. 12

(6)



HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
(Library of Congress Negative)

Jack E. Boucher, Photographer

Date June, 1964

K.12



107 Water Street  
Chester town, Maryland

K.12

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
(Library of Congress Negative)

Jack E. Baucher, Photographer

Date June, 1964



K-12

Denton-Weeks House

3rd floor, southeast room

J.T.W., Jr

10/22/69

NO. 101  
NO. 102  
NO. 103



DENTON-WEEKS HOUSE, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor SE Rooms.

K-12

27

G. F. W. JR 1969



K-12

Denton-Weeks House

2nd Floor West bedroom

J.T.W. Jr

10/22/69

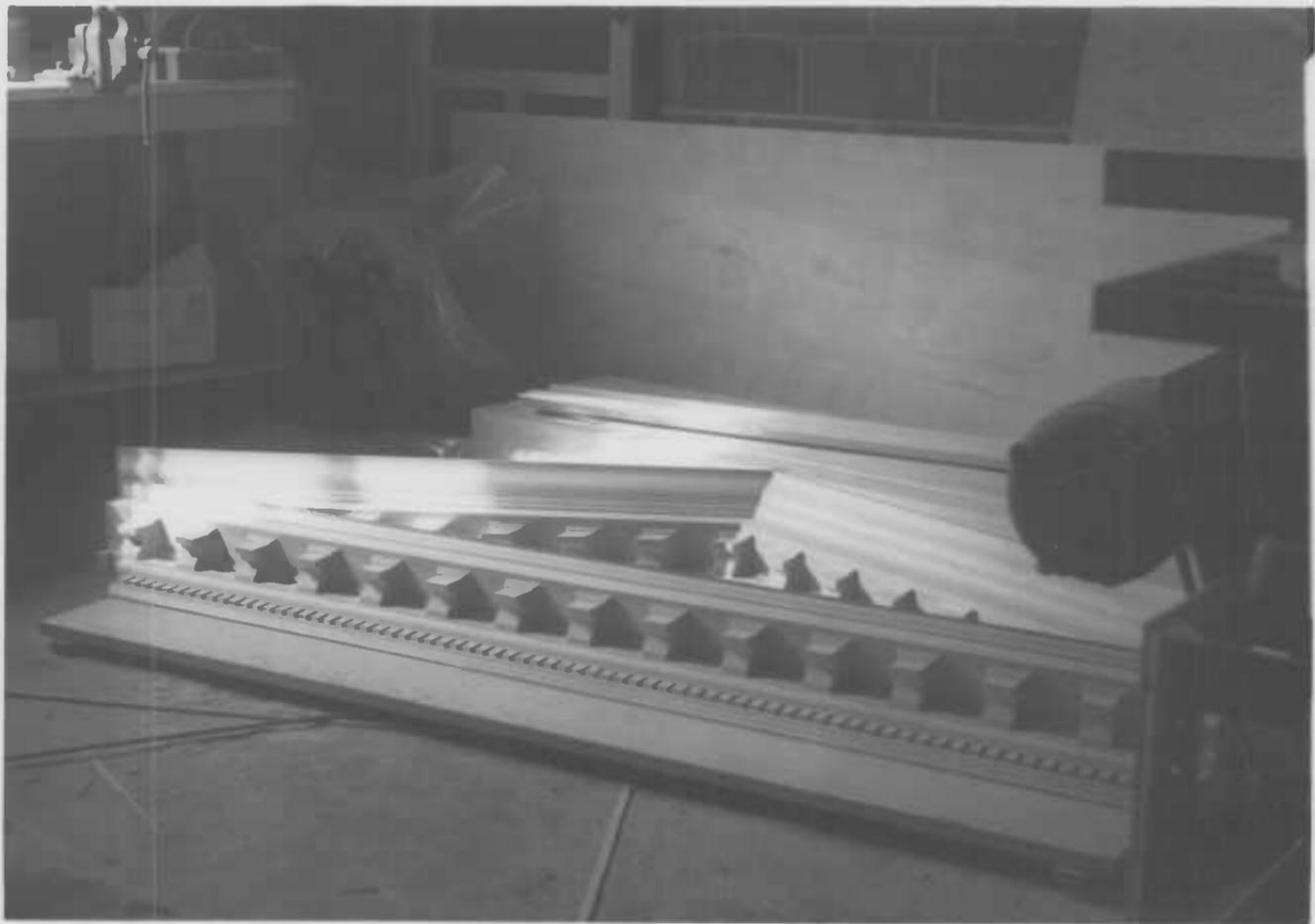


DENTON WEEKS HOUSE

K-12

27

J.T.W. JR - 1969



DENTON - WEEKS HOUSE Pediment over street port door K-12  
& contractor's shop person  
no installation

NEW PEDIMENT FOR W (STREET) ENTRANCE DOOR  
LAID OUT ON FLOOR OF CONTRACTOR'S SHOP.  
UNPAINTED

252

2.20 70 ~~1~~ J. T. W. JR

Prior to installation



DENTON - WEEKS HOUSE

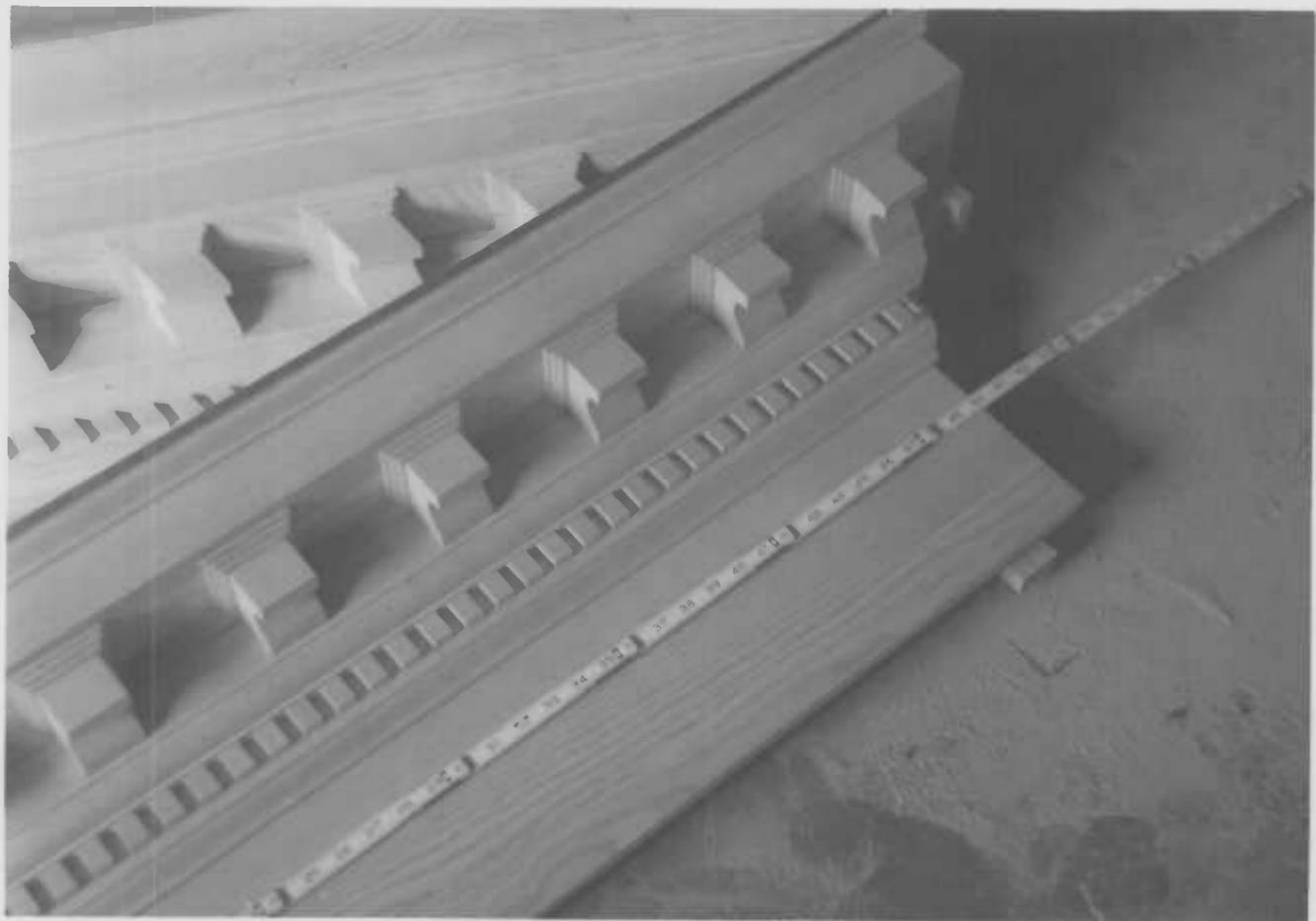
K-12

NEW PEDIMENT FIR ENTRANCE DOOR (W/ STREET)  
N. END - unpainted  
2

2.20.70

J.T.W. JR

LAI'D OUT ON FLOOR OF CONTRACTOR'S SHOP



DENTON - WEEKS HOUSE

K-12

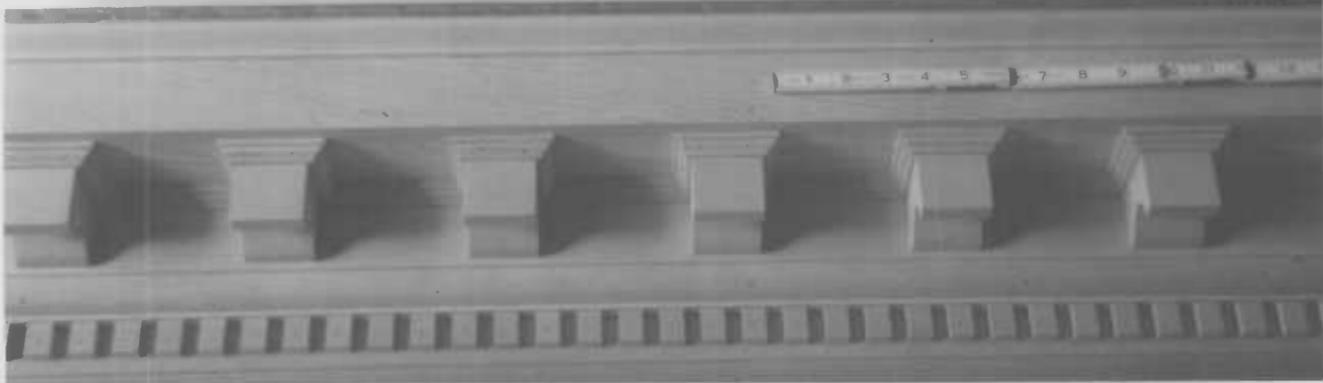
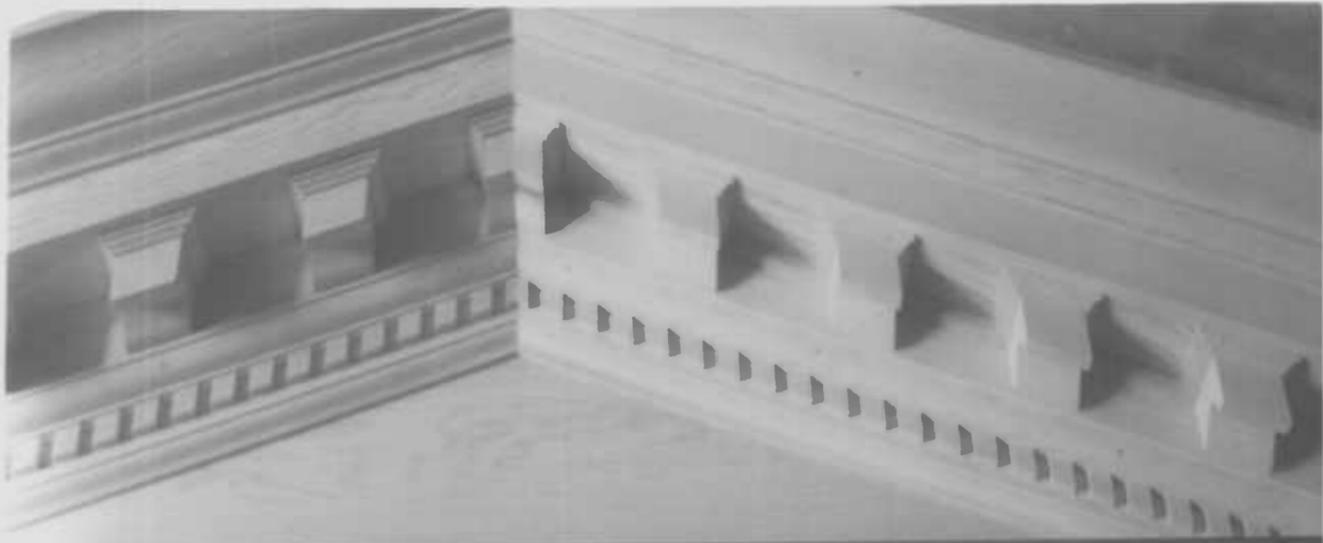
NEW PEDIMENT FOR ENTRANCE DOOR (W-(STREET))  
SOUTH END.  
unpainted

PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.

2 2

2 20 70 J. T. W. JR

LAI D OUT ON FLOOR OF CONTRACTOR'S SHOP.



DENTON-WEEKS

232

K-12

TOP

NEW PEDIMENT FOR OVER W (STREET) ENTRANCE DOOR.

LAIID ON FLOOR IN CONTRACTOR'S SHOP. UNPAINTED

K-12

2.20.70  
~~10/22/69~~

J. T. WJR



1st floor staircase

RIVER HOUSE K-12 Anthony Q. James 8/73



mounted - 2nd floor - (not  
original  
to house)

9

9



1 Drop out white of sky

← Reduce to 3" → 50%

course

by

C

RIVER House K-12

Peter Chambliss

12/73



13%

1st floor staircase

(7)

RIVER HOUSE - K-12

Peter Chambliss 12/73



13-1

K-12

Maryland Historical Trust  
2525 Riva Road  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Reduce to 13 picas  
wide

Foot House

13-1

XKW



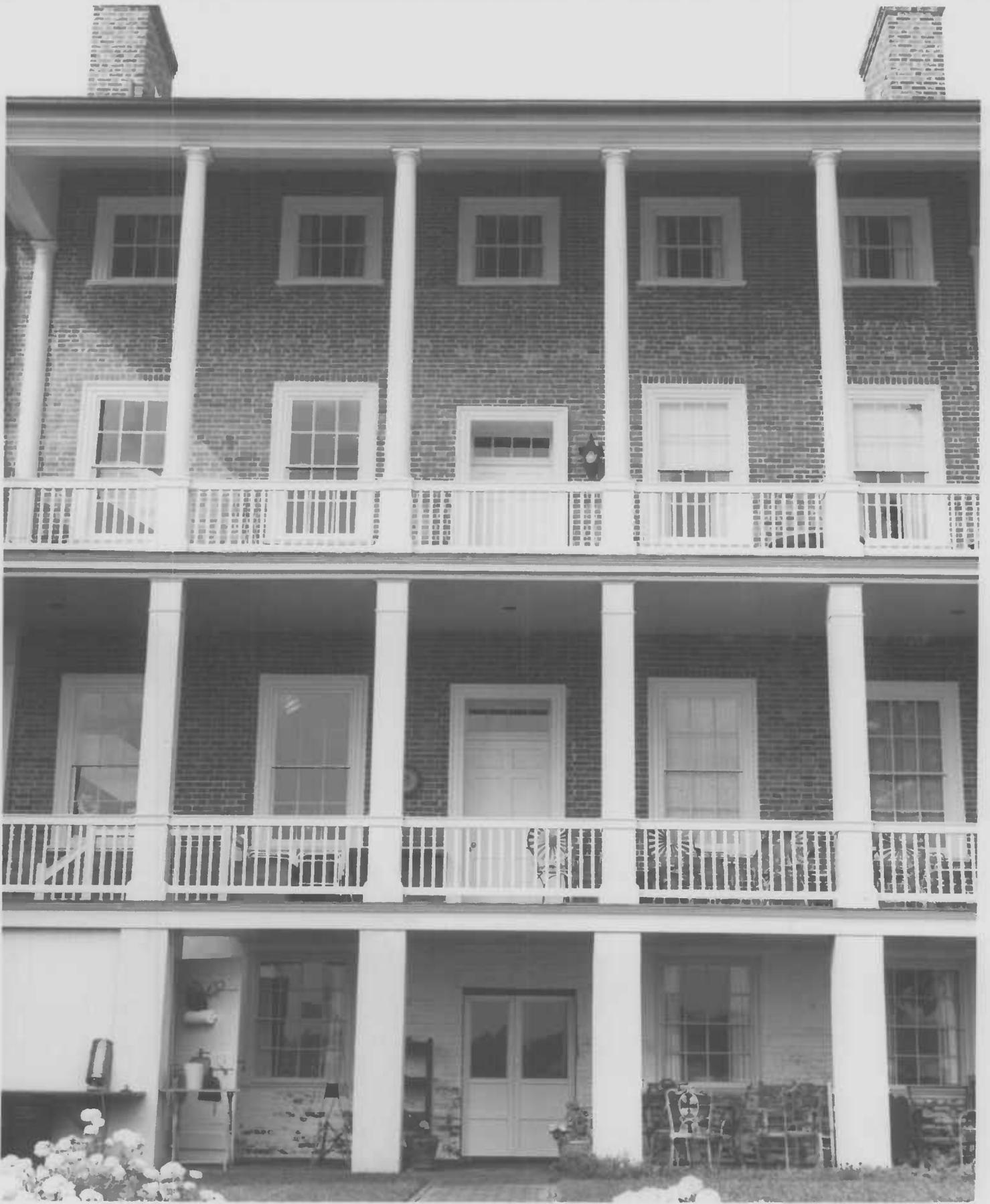
Denton Mesko Co, Chester Town, Kent

Before - Small K-11

Denton House K-12

MD. HISTORICAL TRUST  
BOX 1704  
ANNAPOLIS, MD. 21404

OK - 1968



555

K-12

River House - Kent Co. - C. Battenham  
Rear - 1175 - JMK





K-12

Kent County

River House-Denton House



ANNAPL