

QA-93
Pratt Mansion
Ruthsburg
private

3rd quarter 18th Century

The most important mid-Georgian style house remaining in Queen Anne's County is the Pratt Mansion east of Ruthsburg. It is a classical large brick structure with hip roof having a service wing to the rear, like the Ringgold House in Chestertown. The plan is similar to Reed's Creek west of Centreville, and Widehall, Chestertown, although Pratt Mansion is on a slightly larger scale than either. Original woodwork exists throughout the house, except for the stair itself, which had been relocated during its use as the County Alms House between 1830 and 1951.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Pratt Mansion

AND/OR COMMON

Alms House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Md. Rt. 304 east of Ruthsburg, Maryland

CITY, TOWN

Ruthsburg

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Maryland

CDUNTY

Queen Anne's

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED
- not applicable

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John R. Grove

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Ruthsburg

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code
Maryland 21617

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Queen Anne's County Courthouse

Liber #: TSP 41

Folio #: 520

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

—FEDERAL —STATE —COUNTY —LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

QA-93

7 DESCRIPTION

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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

East of the village of Ruthsburg, on the north side of Rt. 304, stands the Pratt Mansion, the most ambitious mid-Georgian style house in Queen Anne's County. It stands back from the road, the lane being flanked by large maple and linden trees. The lane circles in front of the house and continues back to the service wing.

The mansion is five bays wide and four bays deep, the central bay of the facade is a projecting pavillion with entrance door on the first story and window above. It terminates in a moderate pediment, which is highlighted by a course of carved egg-and-dart molding in the cornice. The cornice of the remainder of the main block has shaped modillions and a delicate wall-of-troy molding. From the ground to the main floor is a stair and platform of flagstone, the lower step being the original sandstone. The architrave around the door has bold restricted stone pilasters supporting an entablature with carved guilloche molding, having a star in each of the 13 circles.

The facade is laid in Flemish bond above an ovolo water table. Arches of the basement windows

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.1 DESCRIPTION

are segmental on the bottom and flat on the top. All other arches are rusticated wood with projecting key-stones. Flanking the pediment of the pavillion are two dormers with round head upper sash, the remainder of the dormers on the hip roof are less sophisticated. Two large chimneys rise from the ridge of the hip roof.

On the northwest side of the house is a five bay, two story brick service wing. Presently, there is a door in the second bay from the north, but originally there were two doors, the second and third bays from the north. The identical door arrangement existed on the east side of the wing and the reverse door was made into a window. At the north west corner of the main house, adjacent the wing, is a covered way to the basement.

The floor plan is almost identical to Widehall in Chestertown, with the main door opening into a central passage off of which is a large stair hall separated from the passage by two elliptical arches. A third arch divides the passage into front and back. The house faces southeast, so the stair hall is located in the south corner of the house. The east corner room is the parlor, with tall pedimented tabernacle overmantel on the chimney breast. Over each of the huge windows is a flat entablature above the crossetted trim. Beneath the chair rail is a flush paneled dado. This paneling continues

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.2 DESCRIPTION

into the recesses of the four windows. The door has a pedimented architrave. Around the ceiling is a handsome and bold cornice with course of wall-of-troy molding.

The dining room, in the north corner of the house, has basically the same type woodwork as the parlor, except that flanking the chimney are two recessed panel cupboards. The door and window trim is simplified.

In the west corner, and separated from the passage by a secondary passage with enclosed stairs, is the library. It is a smaller version of the dining room, but in place of the flush dado, there is a raised panel dado.

The secondary passage leads northward, down six steps to the kitchen wing. The first of the three rooms is the present kitchen which is devoid of any trim other than the basic ovolo trim of the windows and doors. This room originally had an open fireplace with two door cabinet on the left side. This cabinet was moved to the old kitchen in the remodeling of 1951-52. A door to the adjoining room on the left side of the fireplace was probably a later addition for storage from the middle room. The original door between the kitchen and middle room is still on the right or northeast side of the fireplace.

The middle room, called breakfast room on the plan, has a six foot arched fireplace backing up to the kitchen

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.3 DESCRIPTION

fireplace. It has a simple mantel with plaster panel above. There is also chair rail in this room, all finished naturally. One original exterior door on the northeast is hung on huge strap hinges. There was originally a door opposite, but this was closed up in 1952. Another alteration to this room is the raising of the floor, which used to be on the same level as the old kitchen at the northwest end of the service wing.

One step down from the breakfast room is the brick-floored old kitchen. This room retains its original seven foot fireplace and oven, along with the enclosed stair with closet beneath (now a lavatory). The walls and ceiling have had their plaster removed. One curious feature of the fireplace is a support for the brick arch consisting of two separate spans of wrought iron connected by spacers at intervals. This is the same arrangement that can be seen in the kitchen of the Customs House in Chestertown.

The basement is accessible from the library. It is essentially divided into the same spaces as above. There are brick piers supporting large girders in the center of the hall and parlor. A board partition was installed in the 19th century below the library making a corridor from the outside entry to the center of the building. Both arch supports in the back of the house have the ovens of 1859 cook stoves remaining in the masonry. Each of the

CONTINUATION SHEET

7.4 DESCRIPTION

outside windows had been lengthened to below grade (probably with outside "wells".) These have been reconstructed to the original level, but the seams are still visible.

Behind the house is a large low stucco-covered brick meat house. Its gable and door face the back of the service wing. Behind this structure is a large 3 bay, two story brick building which was constructed in 1892 for an expansion of the County Alms House. A plaque on the south corner bears the names of the officials who ordered it constructed.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

QA-93

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/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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The most important mid-Georgian style house remaining in Queen Anne's County is the Pratt Mansion east of Ruthsburg. It is a classical large brick structure with hip roof having a service wing to the rear, like the Ringgold House in Chestertown. The plan is similar to Reed's Creek west of Centreville, and Widehall, Chestertown, although Pratt Mansion is on a slightly larger scale than either. Original woodwork exists throughout the house, except for the stair itself, which had been relocated during its use as the County Alms House between 1830 and 1951. The elliptical arches separating the large stair hall from the passage, as well as in the middle of the passage, are strongly reminiscent of Widehall. Each of the principal rooms has a tabernacle overmantel with broken pediment, the dining room's and library's being flanked by paneled cupboards.

The service wing is a very well developed three

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

CONTINUATION SHEET

8.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

room plan and retains much of its original modest
woodwork, as well as fireplaces, ovens, etc. Behind the
house stands a brick meat house and a large brick
structure, the latter having been constructed in 1892 for
expansion of the County Alms House.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael O. Bourne, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Queen Anne's County Historical Society

DATE

8/18/83

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Centreville

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

QA-93

PRATT MANSION

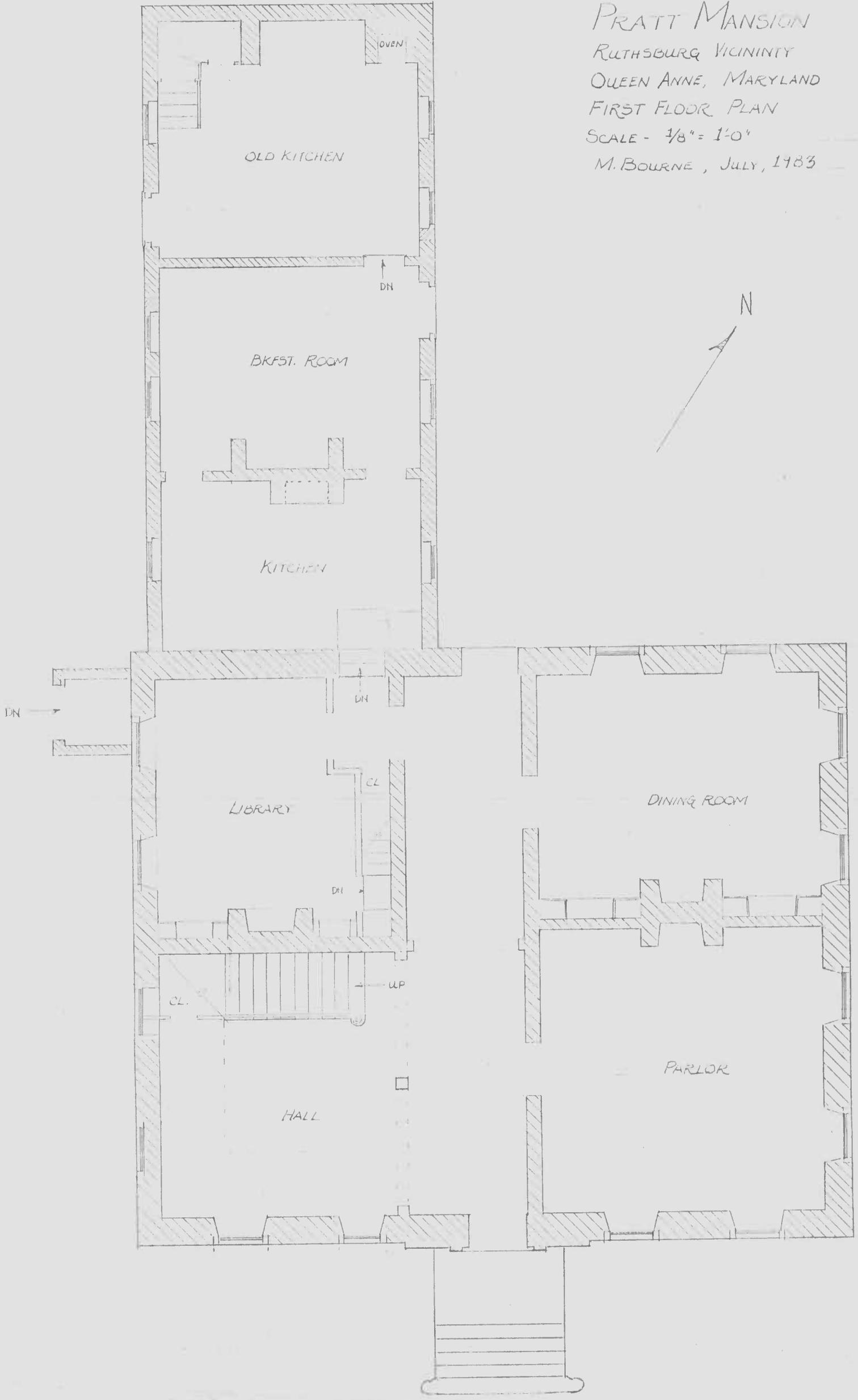
RUTHSBURG VICINITY

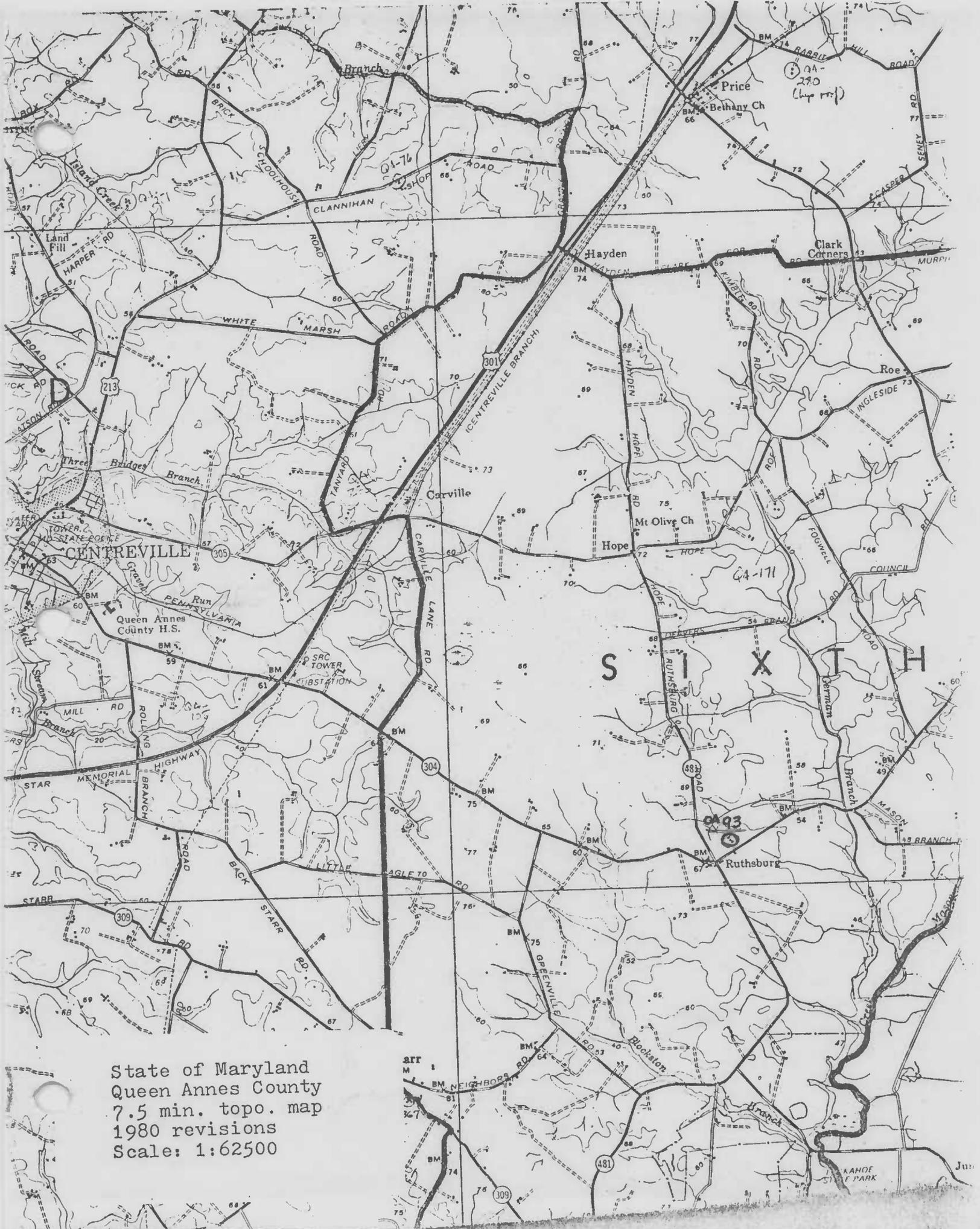
QUEEN ANNE, MARYLAND

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE - 1/8" = 1'-0"

M. BOURNE, JULY, 1983





State of Maryland
Queen Annes County
7.5 min. topo. map
1980 revisions
Scale: 1:62500

QA-93
Pratt Mansion

Mary McCarthy
Spring/Summer 2003
Digital color photo on file at MHT





Pratt Mansion RA 43

South facade

March 1934

M. Bourne



Prett Mansion QA 93

South facade

March 1984

M. Bourne



Pratt Mansion RA 93

West elev.

March 1984

M. Bourne



Pratt Mansion QA-93

North elev.

March 1934

M. Bourne



Pratt Mansions QA 93

Service Wing - West elev.

March 1984

M. Bourn



Pratt Mansion Q493

Dining Room - looking South

March 1984

M. Bourne



Pratt Mansion QA 93

Middle Room - rear wing

March 1984

M. Bourn



Pratt Mansion Q4 93

Kitchen - North elev.

March 1984

M. Bourne



Pratt Mansion QA93

Library - south

March 1984

M. Bourne



Pratt Mansion, Q.A. -93

Front Parlor, looking west

March 1984

M. Bourne



Pratt Mansion - QA-93

Front Hall - looking east

March 1984

M. Bowne



QA-93

Pratt Mansion
South Entrance

MOB 7/1983



Pratt Mansion . Q.A. 93

Almshouse - S.W.

March 1984

M. Bourne

ERECTED 1892

RICHARD TILGHMAN EARLE

WILLIAM M'KENNEY

JOEL THOMAS JAMES BROWN EDWARD C. ENO

WILLIAM EARLEY RICHARD C. CARMICHAEL

THOMAS W. CABVILLE WOOLMAN HOPPER GIBSON

JOHN GEDWIN
TYPE-SETTING

Q. J. WALTERS
CONTRACTOR

DR. MERIAM WILSON
ATTORNEY AT LAW

Pratt Mansion - QA 93

Almshouse cornerstone

March 1934

M. Bourne