

WO-333

1899

Margaret Vandegrift Guest House
(Tarry-A-While Guest House)
Ocean City
Private

The Margaret Vandegrift guest cottage, known by most Ocean residents as the Tarry-A-While guest house, is a rare survivor of the city's late nineteenth century architecture. Characteristic of many Ocean City buildings erected during the nineteenth century is the plain, straightforward nature of the structure with little architectural ornamentation. The two-story Tuscan columned porch that dominates the gable-front building was designed with a minimum of extra detail. Historic photographs of the is property indicate the structure has changed little since the early twentieth century.

Worcester County land records reveal this two-story frame guest cottage was erected for Margaret Vandegrift of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania after she purchased "Lot No. 39" as designated on the original plat of Ocean City. She purchased the Dorchester Street property for \$200 in 1899 and evidently improved the lot that year. However, two years later Calvin B. Taylor was authorized to sell the property as a result of a default mortgage. In 1901 the lot with improvements was sold to Thomas J. Cropper for \$1275. The 1901 deed reads, "...in and to all taht lot of land and cottage called Tarry-A-While situated and lying in Ocean City." The property has remained in Cropper family hands. It was one of the early guest houses to advertise a luxury of running water for each room.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: TARRY-A-WHITE GUEST COTTAGE

MHT Inventory Number: NO - 333

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):

ARCHITECTURE
COMMENCE

2) Geographic Orientation:

EASTERN SHORE

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

INDUSTRIAL - URBAN DOMINANCE
(1870 - 1930)

4) Resource Type(s):

STANDING STRUCTURE

1. GUEST HOUSE

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. WO-333

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic MARGARET VANDEGRIFT GUEST COTTAGE, TARRY-A-WHILE GUEST COTTAGE

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Dorchester Street not for publication

city, town Ocean City vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Worcester

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

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

name

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio

city, town Snow Hill state MD 21863

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. WO-333

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 of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The Margaret Vandegrift guest cottage, known for the past century as the Tarry-A-While guest cottage or the Cropper house, the two-and-a-half story gable front frame building stands on the north side of Dorchester Street in the heart of Ocean City, Worcester County, Maryland. The guest house faces south with the principal gable roof oriented on a north/south axis.

Reported by Cropper family descendants to have been built in 1899, the two-story-and-a-half story frame building is supported by a low masonry foundation, and the walls are covered with a combination of vinyl siding and asbestos shingles. The steeply pitched gable roof has slightly extended eaves.

The south (main) elevation is an asymmetrical three-bay facade with a center, partially glazed front door and flanking twenty-over-one sash windows. The first and second floors are sheltered by two-story Tuscan columned porch with square baluster handrails. The porch stretches across the full front of the main block and turns the southeast corner to extend down the east side. Access to the second floor porch is provided by a center paneled door topped by two-light transom. Two-over-two sash windows mark the wall to each side. The second floor of the porch has been partially enclosed on the east side. Piercing the upper gable end are a pair of doubled two-over-two sash windows. An interior brick stack rises through the east side of the main block, and a cross gable marks the west roof slope.

The interior was not seen.

8. Significance

Survey No. WO-333

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 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 checked="" 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 1899 **Builder/Architect**

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 Margaret Vandegrift house, known by most Ocean City residents as the Tarry-A-While guest cottage, is a rare survivor of the city's late nineteenth century architecture. Characteristic of many Ocean City buildings built during the nineteenth century is the plain, straightforward nature of the structure with little architectural ornamentation. The two-story Tuscan columned porch that dominates the gable-front building was designed with a minimum of extra detail. Historic photographs of this property indicate the structure has changed little since the early twentieth century.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Worcester County land records reveal this two-story frame guest cottage was built for Margaret Vandegrift of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania after she purchased "Lot No. 39" as designated on the original plan of Ocean City. She purchased the Dorchester Street property for \$200 in 1899 and evidently improved the lot that year. However, two years later Calvin B. Taylor was authorized to sell the property as a result of a defaulted mortgage. In 1901 the lot with improvements sold to Thomas J. Cropper for \$1275.(FHP 15/211) The 1901 reads, "... in and to all that lot of land and cottage called Tarry-A-While situated and lying in Ocean City." The property has remained in Cropper family hands. It was one of the early guest houses to advertise a luxury of running water for each room.

WO-333
MARGARET VANDEGRIFT GUEST COTTAGE
(TARRY-A-WHILE)
Dorchester Street
Ocean City, Maryland
Chain of title

FHP 15/211

Calvin B. Taylor, mortgagee

to

6/4/1901

Thomas J. Cropper

\$1275.00 -public sale made 2/21/1901-
special power and authority vested in
him (as mortgagee) in and by a certain
mortgage from Margaret Vandegrift to
Calvin B. Taylor bearing 1/24/1900
FHP 13/188 defaulted mortgage-being
the property by said mortgagee conveyed
was sold unto Thomas J. Cropper of Ocean
City who was then and there the highest
bidder...

...in and to all that lot of land and
cottage called Tarry-A-While situated
and lying in Ocean City...designated on
the plat of said Ocean City as lot
numbered thirty-nine and on the north side
of Dorchester street

FHP 12/300

Howard N. Potts, of Philadelphia

to

5/27/1899

Margaret Vandegrift of Pittsburg, Pa.
\$200 all that lot of land as Ocean
City designated on the plot of said city
as lot no. thirty-nine

ITM 5/596

Hillary R. Pitts, Benjamin Jones Taylor,
George W. Purnell, trustees

to

1/19/1878

Howard N. Potts

...whereas Stephen Tabor and Rosetta M.
Tabor of Queens County, New York did on

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MARGARET VANDEGRIFT GUEST COTTAGE

(TARRY-A-WHILE)

Dorchester Street

Chain of title continued

7/28/1876 execute a deed to said Hillary R. Pitts, B. Jones Taylor, and George W. Purnell, authorizing them as trustees to convey certain lots of land at Ocean City, Maryland to such persons as respectively drew the same according to their respective number at a drawing held for the distribution of said lots at Ocean City on 8/31/1875 as will more fully appear by reference ITM 4/536-538

- No. 266 -

Ocean City

LIFE-SAVING

MUSEUM

COLLECTION

WO-333



LE OF WIGHT

BAY

North Ocean City

Trailer Park
Filtration Plant
Water Tank

Trailer Park
N. 26TH ST

Trailer Park
N. 14TH ST

PHILADELPHIA AVE
BALTIMORE ST

ST LOUIS ST
6TH ST

ST ST
Municipal House
Water Tank
Parking
Coast Guard Lookout Tower

Ocean City

WO-333
TARRY-A-WHILE GUEST COTTAGE
Ocean City, Maryland Quadrangle
1942

le of Wight

The Thorofare

Dog and Bitch Islands

Captains Hill

Bay Shore Acres

Horn Island

West Ocean City

Ocean City Harbor

Ocean City Inlet

