

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #67-12 Building Date: 1889

Building Name: Chlopicki House

Location: 5717 Ruatan Street, Berwyn Heights, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Chlopicki House is a two-and-one-half-story yellow frame cross-gable dwelling which is distinguished by a three-story tower and decorative treatment of the gable ends. The building is T-shaped, consisting of main block and south (rear) wing. The first bay of the main (north) facade is composed of a one-story projecting semi-octagonal bay. Sheltering the north facade, and wrapping around part of the east facade, is a one-story hip-roof porch with chamfered posts and arched openwork frieze course. Built into the northwest corner of the main block is a three-story pyramidal-roof tower; a metal finial surmounts the roof. South of the tower is a two-story semi-octagonal projecting bay. Above these two bays at third level is a pedimented cross gable with dogs-tooth shingle siding. The asymmetrical east facade is highly ornamented. Below and incorporated into the principle cross gable are two smaller pedimented gables; the southerly of these surmounts a two-story rectangular projecting bay. Tall corbelled brick chimneys rise at the principal north-south ridge of the roof and near the southwest corner of the main block. Extending to the south, and giving the building the shape of a T, is a two-and-one-half-story gable-roof wing. Siding of the first story is plain horizontal board painted yellow. The second story is sided with rectangular shingle, as is the third story of the tower. The gable ends at third level are sided with a variety of decorative surfaces.

Significance

The Chlopicki House is a fine example of a late Victorian house with Queen Anne style decorative motifs. It was constructed from a pattern book design, and is one of the first dwellings built in the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights. The Town of Charlton Heights was platted in 1888 by Edward Graves, on 383 acres of land bounded by the Branchville Road and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Graves sold the land to the Charlton Heights Improvement Company in that year, and the company immediately began construction of dwellings ordered by pattern through the mail. The subject house was built in 1889 by Elizabeth Stoner, who in the previous year had purchased two unimproved lots from the Charlton Heights Improvement Company. Mrs. Stoner used a pattern designed by the Cooperative Building Plan Association, and distributed through the pattern book catalogs of R. W. Shoppell. The house was distinguished by a three-story corner tower and considerable variety in the panelling of the gable ends. It has been the Chlopicki family home since 1928. The dwelling retains almost all of its original trim, is unique in Prince George's County, and is a distinctive landmark in the community of Berwyn Heights.

Acreage: 23,900 square feet

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Chlopicki House

2. Location

street & number 5717 Ruatan Street not for publicationcity, town Berwyn Heights vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 Joseph Chlopicki

street & number 5717 Ruatan Street telephone no.:

city, town Berwyn Heights state and zip code MD 20740

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P.G.Co. Courthouse liber #5881

street & number Main Street folio 474

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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 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 Chlopicki House is a two-and-one-half-story yellow frame cross-gable dwelling which is distinguished by a three-story tower and decorative treatment of the gable ends. It stands on a corner lot, one of the original lots in the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights.

The building is T-shaped, consisting of main block and south (rear) wing. The main block is roughly two bays by three bays, and faces north toward Ruatan Street. Entrance is in the second bay of the asymmetrical north facade through a modern door with plain board surround. The first bay of this facade is composed of a one-story projecting semi-octagonal bay with 1/1 windows. Above the projecting bay is a pair of 1/1 windows, and above them at third level the gable end is embellished with geometric design panelling. Sheltering the north facade, and wrapping around part of the east facade, is a one-story hip-roof porch with chamfered posts and arched openwork frieze course.

Built into the northwest corner of the main block is a three-story pyramidal-roof tower. In both the north and west faces of the tower at third level is a two-part round-arched window; each leaf of the window has nine panes. A metal finial surmounts the pyramidal roof. South of the tower, the west facade is ornamented with another (shallower) two-part round-arched window, which lights the staircase; south of that is a two-story semi-octagonal projecting bay. Above these two bays at third level is a pedimented cross gable which encloses two small rectangular windows flanked by a raised ray design, and surmounted by dogs-tooth shingle siding.

The asymmetrical east facade is highly ornamented. The principal cross gable is adorned with a single small circular window high in the gable end. Below and incorporated into this cross gable are two smaller pedimented gables; the tympanum of each is ornamented with ramiform panelling painted white, against the yellow background. The southerly of these two decorative pediments surmounts a two-story rectangular projecting bay. A tall corbelled brick chimney rises at the principal north-south ridge of the roof; another rises transversely near the southwest corner of the main block.

Extending to the south, and giving the building the shape of a T, is a two-and-one-half-story gable-roof wing. It is one bay by one bay; extending south from its pedimented south gable end is a one-story shed-roof enclosed porch, now sided with dogs-tooth shingles.

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/ 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 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 1889 **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 Chlopicki House is a fine example of a late Victorian house with Queen Anne style decorative motifs. It was constructed from a pattern book design, and is one of the first dwellings built in the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights.

In 1887, Edward Graves of Washington, D.C. purchased 383 acres south of the Branchville Road and bounded on the west by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He engaged the firm of Newby and Howell to survey and plat a new residential community, and called it Charlton Heights.¹ The plat of 1888 showed 50-foot-wide streets, criss-crossing at varied angles, and lots of approximately 50 by 200 feet. Graves sold the land in 1888 to the Charlton Heights Improvement Company, which immediately began construction of dwellings ordered by pattern through the mail. Within the same year, the Company began to sell lots, some unimproved, and some with new houses already erected.² By the end of the first year, approximately 20 houses had been built, and the new town became the home principally of professionals who used the Baltimore and Ohio railroad to commute into Washington, D.C.³

For the next three years, the Charlton Heights Improvement Company continued to sell lots, but with only limited success. In 1892, Edward Graves, the developer, and James Waugh, secretary of the Company, both of whom resided in Charlton Heights, bought the remaining unsold lots; they continued to sell them, and the Charlton Heights Improvement Company ceased operations. In 1896, by an act of the Maryland General Assembly, the town was incorporated, and its name was changed to Berwyn Heights. It continued to grow slowly; by 1910, the population was slightly over 150, and there were 38 dwellings.⁴ Today most of the lots have been filled in by 1950's subdivision housing, and Berwyn Heights is a quiet residential community with curving streets and old trees, set back and somewhat secluded, between two major highways.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#67-12

cf. notes, item #8

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 23,900 square feet
Quadrangle name Washington East, section C

Tax map 34, Block 8, lots 1-3

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

Zone	Easting							Northing	

C

Zone	Easting							Northing	

E

Zone	Easting							Northing	

G

Zone	Easting							Northing	

B

Zone	Easting							Northing	

D

Zone	Easting							Northing	

F

Zone	Easting							Northing	

H

Zone	Easting							Northing	

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research Historian

organization P.G. Historic Preservation Commission date August 1986

street & number c/o County Planning, MNCPPC telephone 952-3521

city or town Upper Marlboro 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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

The entire building rests on a brick foundation. Siding of the first story is plain horizontal board painted yellow. The second story is sided with rectangular shingle, as is the third story of the tower. The gable ends at third level are sided with a variety of decorative surfaces (as noted above). Windows are generally 1/1 double hung sash, with plain board surrounds painted white. The roof is covered with gray asbestos shingle.

To the south of the house, on the adjoining lots is a two-story gable-roof garage. It is six bays long, rests on a high brick foundation, and is sided with German siding painted yellow.

The subject house was built in 1889 by Elizabeth Stoner, who in the previous year had purchased two unimproved lots from the Charlton Heights Improvement Company. Mrs. Stoner used a pattern designed by the Cooperative Building Plan Association, and distributed through the pattern book catalogs of R. W. Shoppell.⁵ The house was distinguished by a three-story corner tower (probably lighted originally by eyelid dormers) and considerable variety (geometric and ramiform) in the panelling of the gable ends. It is uncertain whether Mrs. Stoner ever lived in the house; in any case, she sold it in 1903, and it was for many years the house of Charles Donaldson, newspaper editor.⁶ Donaldson, who had acquired also the two lots adjoining on the west, sold the property in 1928 to Joseph Chlopicki, and it has been the Chlopicki family home from that time to the present.⁷

Since 1928 the Chlopicki family has constructed a two-story garage behind and south of the house. The dwelling itself stands on a shaded corner lot. It retains almost all of its original trim, is unique in Prince George's County, and is a distinctive landmark in the community of Berwyn Heights today.

Notes

¹ Prince George's County Deeds, JWB #9:127, 130; Prince George's County Plat, JWB #10:309.

² Prince George's County Deeds, JWB #11:543; R. W. Shoppell Modern Houses, 1887; Artistic Modern Houses at Low Cost, 1888; Beautiful Homes, 1887; Building Plans for Modern Low Cost Houses, 1884, etc.; cf. Charlton Heights Improvement Company deeds, 1888.

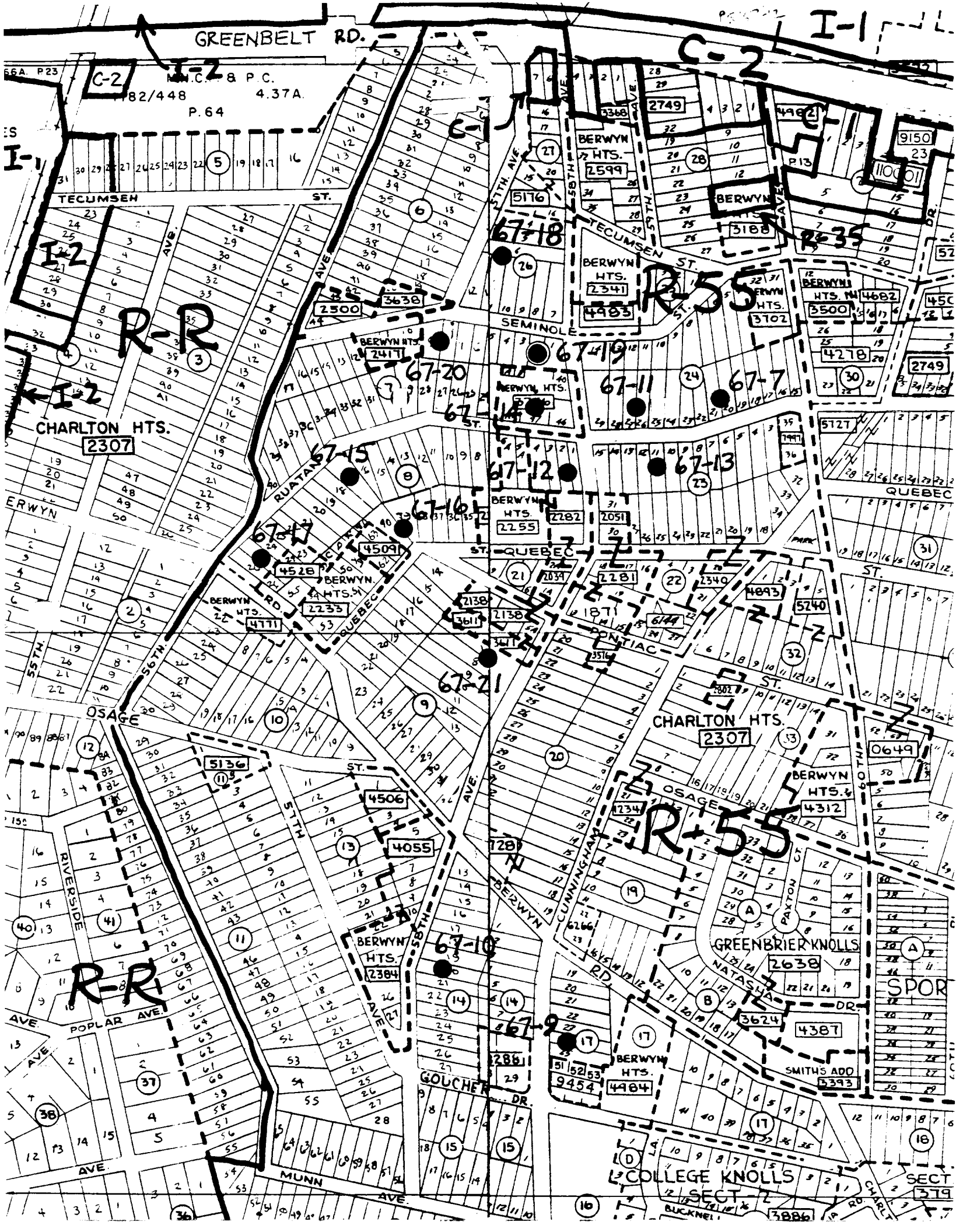
³ Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1888-1890; Census for Prince George's County, E. D. #1, 1900.

⁴ JWB #20:496; JWB #21:225; JWB #22:53; G. M. Hopkins map, 1894; Census for Prince George's County, E.D. #1, 1900, 1910; Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1890-1910; Skarda, D.D., Berwyn Heights - History of a Small Maryland Town.

⁵ Prince George's County Deed JWB #15:258; R. W. Shoppell, Artistic Modern Houses of Low Cost, 1888; Design #277; Shoppell's Modern Houses, 1887, Design #449.

⁶ Prince George's County Tax Assessments, 1889-1910; Census for Prince George's County, 1900; Prince George's County Deed #15:107.

⁷ Prince George's County Deed #22:211; #313:543.





P.G. #67-12

Chlopicki House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1986
East elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #67-12

Chlopicki House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1986
Southeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



P.G. 67-12

Chlopicki House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1986
House and garage from southwest
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



PG#67-12

Chlopicki House

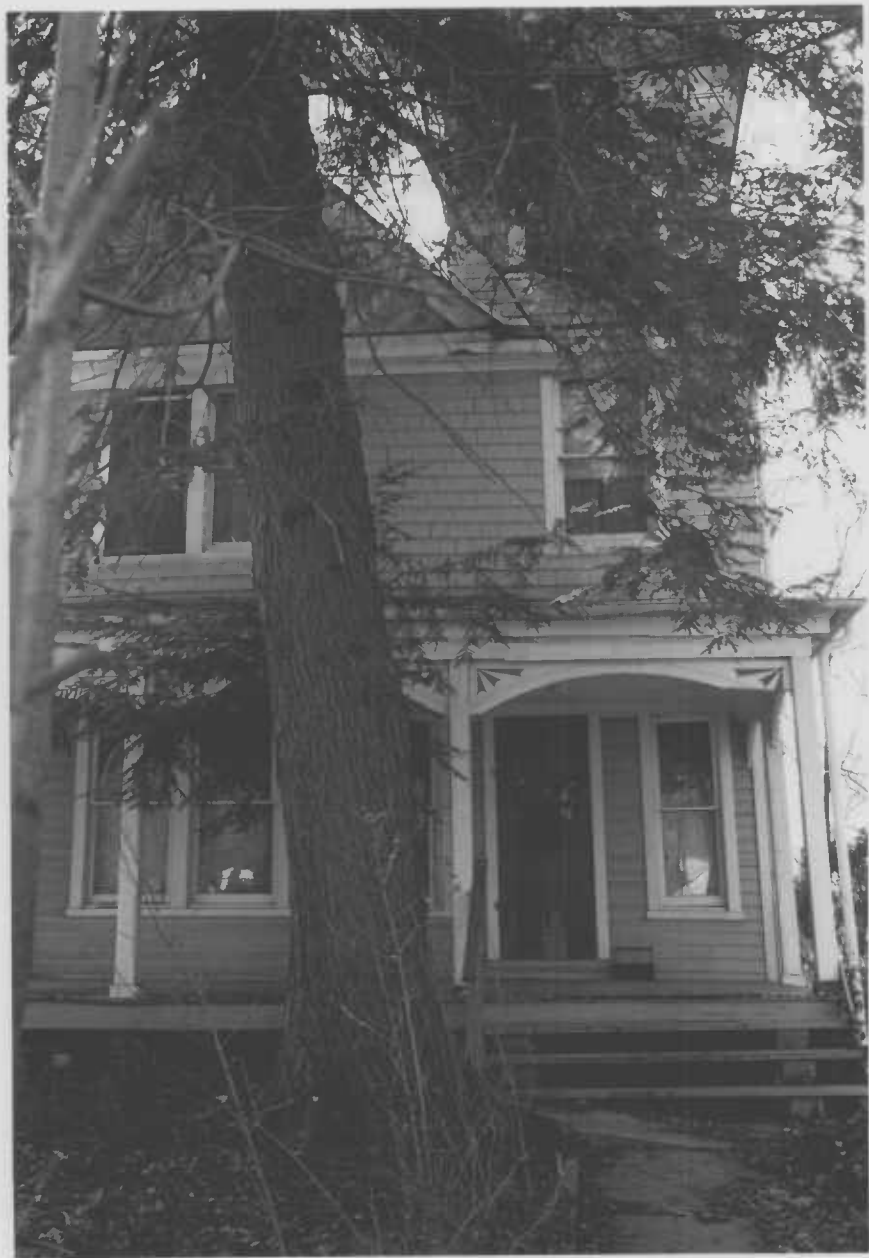
Prince George's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

March 1986

West detail

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



P.G. #67-12

Chlopicki House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1986
North elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.