

CARR-433

Smith House, (Rosser's Choice Apartments)

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

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Last Updated: 04-16-2004

THE SMITH HOUSE

79 WEST MAIN STREET

Probably built around 1860 by the Orndorff Family, no. 79 West Main Street, now known as Rosser's Choice Apartments, is an L-shaped building composed of two perpendicular gable-roofed sections, one 3 stories tall with dimensions 5 bays by 2, the other 2 stories tall, with dimensions 2 bays by 2. The building is interesting as the superb example of what sort of house a smalltown mid-19th century businessman would build for himself. He would want something substantial, to impress his success on those around him, but he would also want something staid, so not to offend his neighbors and potential customers. Rosser's Choice is large enough to impress, but is conservative enough not to alienate.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Smith House

AND/OR COMMON

Rosser's Choice Apartments

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

79 West Main Street (MD 32)

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Carroll

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 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Roger L. Schultz, et. al

Telephone #: 876-1440

STREET & NUMBER

c/o Care Homes Manchester Road

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21157

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 482

Folio #: 644

STREET & NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Westminster Bicentennial Celebration

DATE

October, 1964

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Historical Society of Carroll County

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

CARR-133

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE		CHECK ONE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Number 79 West Main Street, known as "Rosser's Choice", faces the south side of West Main Street (St. Route 32) opposite the point where Carroll Street dead ends into West Main. It is an L-shaped building composed of two perpendicular gabled-roof sections, one three stories tall with dimensions 5 bays by 2, the other, two stories tall with dimensions two bays by two.

The north (principal) facade rests on a low fieldstone foundation and has 15 regularly placed bays (5 per floor). The entrance door is the central ground floor bay; smooth pilasters support a full entablature - this surrounds the door itself, which is a typical 4-panel Georgian door with now-filled-in transom and still functioning side lights. The side lights are separated from the door by slender turned columns. All other bays (windows) are identical to each other; six-over-six, double-hung sash windows with 4 course gauged, flat arches, white wooden sills, and black louvered shutters. Four step brick corbelling leads the wall into the roof; the corbel course is finished by a row of brick pendants shaped like crosses, enlivening both the corbel course they hang from and the wall they rest on. The low gabled roof is covered with rolled tin, and is balanced at the end by matching corbel-capped chimneys which rise from the roof's peak, flush with the east and west walls.

The east front displays the building's two sections, the north three-story section continues the corbelling pendants; the rear two-story section has only simple architrave trim. There are two 6/6 windows per floor in each section; between all windows is a small 1/1 (kitchen?, bathroom?) window. A modern, three-section, aluminumed addition goes to the south, covering most of the rear of the ell (the remainder of which is dominated by a broad, flush, flat-capped chimney rising from the roof's peak). There are two 6/6 windows per section on both the east and west walls of this addition.

The corbel and pendants continue along the eaves under the western roof. Two 4/4 windows light the attic on this facade, above three altered floors. Presumably, the front originally matched the main sections' east front in having two 6/6 windows per floor; today, there are two doors per floor, leading to a three tier iron balcony.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 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

c. 1860

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of "Rosser's Choice" is architectural, both in terms of the house itself, and also in terms of how it works with other Main Street buildings erected at about the same time. Taken on its own terms, no. 79 is a superb example of what sort of house a small town mid 19th century businessman would build for himself. He would want something substantial, to impress his success on those around him, but he would also want something staid, so as not to offend his neighbors (read: present and potential customers). "Rosser's Choice", built by Joseph Orendorff was large enough to impress, but is conservative enough not to alienate; it is conservative in form (two perpendicular gabled-roof sections, 5 bays wide) and detail (the habit of decorating the eaves with brick crosses is one of Westminster's most prominent whimsies).

This desire to conform, to seek the middle path, is clearer when comparing "Rosser's Choice" with some contemporaries. For example, it is more daring than its close geographical neighbor, the Montour House, but it is a good deal less "Baroque" than the contemporaneous Fisher-Smith-Fletcher House (249 East Main Street). These three buildings are, as noted, all roughly contemporaneous, and are almost identical in form and volume, yet their decorations clearly separate them from each other. (If form follows function, decoration must follow desire.) The "Fletcher House" was built by a man secure enough to indulge his fancies and to be bold enough to actively set out to impress his neighbors, whereas Orendorff's house, of the same size, was more restrained and conservative in exterior appearance; possibly because he still had ambitions for self-advancement, he could not afford to separate himself too much from the common man of the 1870's. His family was newer on the scene, and maybe it was felt necessary to wait a few generations before enjoying self-indulgence.

Berre S. Pigman owned a large tract of land to the west of Westminster, and divided it into lots. He sold our lot, lot no. 1, to Isaac Shriver on May 23, 1832 (Frederick County Deed Book JS 39, Page 140). The lot measured 90' x 198', and was sold by Shriver to Joseph Orendorff on September 9, 1848, for \$350, (Carroll County Deed Book 9, Page 77). Orendorff got \$3500 when he sold the identical lot on April

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Being known as lot no. 1 of B. S. Pigman's Addition to Westminster, lot measuring 90' x 198' as described by metes and bounds Frederick County Deed Book JS 39, Page 140.

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Christopher Weeks, Consultant

February, 1977

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Westminster

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

#8

19, 1866, (to Joshua Yingling); we could safely assume that he built the house in the interim. This conclusion is given extra weight when we observe that Yingling resold the lot a year later on July 18, 1867, for \$10,905.50 to John Smith (34/440). Smith sold the place to Joseph W. Smith on July 11, 1890, for \$6000 (74/123). These last two deeds refer to "Pigman's Alley" as a boundary, which must be the alley that today runs along the eastern wall of the house. Joseph owed his sister \$3000, and she took the house as payment on March 6, 1902 (95/253); Smith's sister was named Ada McDaniel, and she and her husband William sold the place to Samuel L. Bare on March 29, 1911 (116/545). Bare's widow, Nellie Schaefer Bare sold the building to its present owners Roger L. Schultz et. al., on February 26, 1971 in deed 482/644.

GRANDDADDY'S HOUSE
79 WEST MAIN ST.

CARR-433

This house was built in the early 1800's by Joshua Orendorff who subsequently gave all the ground from the house to the Catholic Church and part of Carroll Street. This was a farm with farm buildings even in 1910 when it was purchased by S. Luther Bare. The farm extended out to the Fenley home on New Windsor Road. The ground to the farm however, was on the left of New Windsor Road--all of the Ridge Road, Green Street and surroundings were a part of the farm. The Fanny's Meadow- lot 1741- by James Walls seems to be the first record of the land.

Col. John Brook Boyle lived here - we do not know how many years. The house is pictured on the Civil War Centennial plate--two story with small windows at that time. It was used as Headquarters for Col. T. L. Rosser, 5th Va. Calvary during the war (Sept. 11th, 1862)

In 1867 it was bought by John Smith of Wakefield who added the third story and enlarged the windows. Otherwise the house has never been changed...excepting when the Bare's bought it they built a bath room, tore down the back oven and extended the porch--Mr. Joe Smith, son of John Smith lived here until 1911.

The house was built with hand made nails and no nail work--all hand--and there were originally fire places in every room.

Two rooms were made of the drawing room, used by Dr. Bare as offices for over 50 years.

Pump was out at the foot of the porch. Barn covered the back of the lot, all the way across the lot.

Hay mounds, horse stalls and wagon shed--smoke house was close to the porch.

The Smiths occupied this house, Father John Smith Son Joseph Smith in all 44 years. We have lived here for 54 years.

Carroll County was settled in an early period in the history of the State. First settlers were Scotch, Irish, Germans and the decendants of the English from Southern Maryland. This disproves the therory that we have sprung from the Hessians of the Revolutionary. The Indians had retired across South Mountain before the advent of the whites excepting for a remnant of the Susquchannocks who left over night in 1750. In the land office at Annapolis there are grants for this portion of the State as early as 1727--"White land" on which the original town of Westminster was built was granted to John White in 1733---"Fanny's Meadow" embracing the west end was granted to James Walls in 1741 (our house is a part of "Fanny's Meadow") Bond's Meadow another portion of Westminster was granted to John Ridgelly in 1753 (1915 acres)--Carroll Co. was made a County in 1837--taking in parts of Frederick & Baltimore County. The Court Sessions were held in the Old Union Church until a Court House was built. The Stone for our present court house was laid June, 1838. The cost of the building was \$18,000.00. Westminster was laid out in 1764.

John Orendorff (the builder of our house) was mainly instrumental in building the Catholic Church having given the bricks--built in 1866--he died 1869 at age 74.

Grace Lutheran Church was organized in 1864 before that the members had worshiped at the Old Union Meeting House--& Kreigers.

The Union National Bank was removed in 1868 from the building it had occupied for more than half a century, to its present home--it is one of the oldest institutions in the state--was incorporated in 1816.

Door to Virtue Lodge No. 46 was chartered November 4th, 1811. Grandfather McCollum was a charter member in the Carroll Co. Temperance Society---(1844).

The Democratic Advocate was established in 1838.



CARR 433

79 W. Main St.

Westminster

E. Jacard 2/77

C. Weeks



CARR 433

79 W. Main St.

Westminster

SW facade 2/77

C. Weir

5070



500/7

E-2

CARR 433

77 W. Main Street

Westminster 2/77

N. Jacade

C. Weach 2/77