

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 31 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 13 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
 * * Mitchell House

AND/OR COMMON
Mitchell House

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 131 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN Elkton

STATE Maryland

VICINITY OF 1

COUNTY Cecil

CODE 24

CODE 015

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Judge Edward D. E. Rollins

STREET & NUMBER 131 East Main Street

CITY, TOWN Elkton

STATE Maryland

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Cecil County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Elkton

STATE Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

The Mitchell House is located at 131 E. Main Street in Elkton, Maryland, next to the Cecil County Court House. This Georgian Townhouse was built circa 1769-1781 by Dr. Abraham Mitchell, a physician from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. It shows fine original detail characteristic of both the early and later periods of the Georgian style in America.

This 2-1/2 story house of three by two bays on a high basement is almost square in plan. On the exterior, white stucco over brick simulates ashlar masonry. There are wooden flat arches with large keystones over the southeast (front) first floor windows. These lower windows have paneled blinds, but those of the second floor are louvered.

The small portico at the entrance has slender Tuscan columns and granite steps which run parallel to the sidewalk. It is accessible from either lateral direction. Fluted pilasters at the front entrance support a partial entablature with dentils over a fire-light rectangular transom. The ridge of the roof is parallel to the street and a wooden cornice with large modillions extends around all sides forming a pediment in the gabled ends.

The Mitchell House has a floor plan characteristic of many Georgian Townhouses. The stair hall extends to the rear of the original house along the southwestern side. On each floor are two rooms, each heated by a fireplace. An interior chimney served all four fireplaces, of which three remain open.

Originally there was an arcade extending from the rear of the main house to a two-story kitchen. The kitchen has been remodeled and incorporated within a two story addition which replaced the arcade. To the rear along the northeastern property line is a two story carriage house now used for law offices.

The interior of the Mitchell House shows good workmanship and proportion. The stair, with scrolled steps, has turned balusters, two on each step, and a mahogany handrail which runs directly into the newel post without an easing. Underneath the stair there is one large triangular panel. In the front parlor there are segmental arched openings flanking the fireplace, which has a dentiled mantel with a projecting shelf. At the top of the windows in this room, and in the dining room to the rear of it, there is a decorative, carved board. Both of the rooms on this lower floor have a deep cornice, and that of the parlor has dentils. The dining room, separated from the parlor by a large opening, had a corner fireplace which is now closed. The window in the dining room is splayed; and, as in the parlor, there is an eared architrave surrounding the door to the stair hall. Throughout the first floor, the walls are plastered above and below a chair rail.

On the second level, there are two bedrooms and a small room at the front of the stair hall. In the front bedroom, the fireplace is flanked by two closets in a typical Georgian symmetrical arrangement.

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Medicine
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Robert Alexander, a Baltimore lawyer who owned the lot in Elkton in the decade before the Mitchell House was built, was a prominent Maryland Patriot just before the start of the American Revolution. In the decade preceding the war, he participated in many revolutionary meetings and organizations. He was selected to represent Maryland at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia in 1775. He attended the Congress for five months, leaving in May 1776 because he ultimately could not support the idea of independence for the colonies. He had to flee Maryland for this conviction, and much of his property was later confiscated by the government. Supposedly the only man of social standing from Cecil County to become a Loyalist¹, Alexander owned a large amount of land in and near Elkton. Because he had moved to Baltimore, he leased much of this land.

Abraham Mitchell, a physician who came to Cecil County from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in the 1750's, leased one of Alexander's lots in Elkton, then called Head of Elk, in 1769. An interesting phrase in the lease states that Mitchell agreed to "not raise or keep any swine or goose on the said demised premises."² It was possible between 1769 and 1781, when he moved his family to property he had purchased at Fair Hill,³ that Dr. Mitchell built on this lot, the brick (now stucco) house today bearing his name.

In the years after he settled in Cecil County, Dr. Mitchell's practice expanded to include parts of Cecil and Harford Counties in Maryland and New Castle County in Delaware. This extended practice brought sufficient income for him to invest some of his money in real estate. He bought 300 acres in the Elkton vicinity and took up farming in addition to medicine. By 1783, he had 5 slaves, 20 head of cattle, 5 horses and 630 acres of land.⁴ During the Revolution, he opened his home in Elkton (the Mitchell House) as a temporary hospital for the Continental Army, and for this the Maryland apse in Valley

¹ George Johnston, History of Cecil County, Maryland, Reprint of 1881 ed. in Cecil County, a Reference Book of History, Business, and General Information (Baltimore: County Directories of Maryland, Inc., 1956), p. 320.

² Cecil County Land Records 11/485, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland

³ Johnston, p. 496.

⁴ Tax Assessment of 1783, Cecil County, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Primary Sources

Land Records, Cecil County. Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland
Tax Assessment of 1783, Cecil County. Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 87' x 93'

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 8	42 8 8 70	4 3 84 4 6 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Pamela M. James, George Andreve

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

21 State Circle

TELEPHONE

301-267-1438

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis, Maryland

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

John N. Pearce 10/24/15

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

5/13/96

ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

[Signature]

DATE

5.12.76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Significance

CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7&8 PAGE 1

MITCHELL HOUSE-CONTINUATION

Description

Framed by a molded, eared architrave, the fireplace has no mantel shelf; but over the fire opening, there is a single large panel with an eared architrave. The remainder of this wall has a painted, plastered surface with a chair rail.

Throughout the Mitchell House, the doors have six panels, and those on the second floor have original L-shaped wrought iron hinges. Only the door to the attic is board and batten.

In the basement, the beams are notched and pinned. The attic floor of 18 inch wide boards is original.

Significance

Forge Chapel is dedicated to him. He was a founder of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland in 1799.

In 1790, Dr. Mitchell sold the "brick message lot" that was the Mitchell House and its outbuildings to James Partidge, a gentleman of Delaware. A clause in the deed states that the sale was retroactive to December 14, 1780. In 1782, the "Commissioners appointed to Preserve Confiscated British Property" held three sales of some of Robert Alexander's property in and near Elkton, in the spring, summer, and fall.⁵ There does not seem to be any record of Alexander selling the Elkton lot to Dr. Mitchell, so it is possible that Mitchell did not gain actual title until after the land was confiscated. Perhaps he bought the lot in 1780 at a sale similar to those held in 1782. A list of claims against confiscated British property in 1787 lists a debt of £14,,15,,⁹ from the Alexander estate to the account of Doctor Abraham Mitchell.⁶

⁵Journal of the Proceedings of the Commissioners Appointed to Preserve Confiscated British Property, 1781; February 23, 1781-November 21, 1782; Acc. No. 17289; Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

⁶List of Claims against Confiscated British Property; Acc. No. 17296; Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

MITCHELL HOUSE-CONTINUATION

When James Partridge sold the property in 1810, he had moved to Baltimore where he was a merchant. The house passed through a number of hands, until 1859 when it was purchased by James T. McCullough. He was the husband of Catherine W. Mitchell, granddaughter of Abraham Mitchell. Her father, Colonel George Edward Mitchell, was probably born in the Mitchell House in 1781, just before Dr. Mitchell moved his family to Fair Hill. Colonel Mitchell practiced medicine with his father, but was also very active in politics and the military. He studied with his father and received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1805. He was a member of the Maryland House of Delegates from 1808 to 1809 and was President of the Executive Council from 1809 until 1812. He served nine years with the Army, beginning during the War of 1812. He was commissioned as a major but became a brevet colonel because of the bravery and competence he exhibited in the campaign of the Army of the Niagara in northern New York. He served in the U. S. Congress from 1822 to 1827 and from 1829 until 1832. He became friendly with the Marquis de Lafayette during the latter's visit to the United States in 1824-1825. Colonel Mitchell died in Washington, D. C. in 1832.

Abraham Mitchell's descendants through his son's daughter owned the Mitchell House from 1859 until 1935. It is today the residence of Judge Edward D. E. Rollins, former Attorney General of Maryland, and his wife.

⁷Works Progress Administration Writers' Project, Maryland, A Guide to the Old Line State (Reprint of 1940 ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 320.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 3

MITCHELL HOUSE-CONTINUATION Bibliography

Secondary Sources

Cordell, Eugene Fauntleroy. The Medical Annals of Maryland, 1799-1800. Baltimore: Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of the State of Maryland, 1903.

Dole, Esther Mohr. Maryland During the American Revolution. [Chestertown, Maryland]: By the Author, 1941.

Johnston, George. History of Cecil County, Maryland.... Reprint of 1881 ed. in Cecil County, a Reference Book of History, Business, and General Information. Baltimore: County Directories of Maryland, Inc., 1956.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County. Reprint of 1881 ed. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1971.

Works Progress Administration Writers' Project. Maryland, a Guide to the Old Line State. Reprint of 1940 ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

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MITCHELL HOUSE
Cecil County

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

Statement of significance

The Mitchell House is a good example of a small Georgian Townhouse having a stair hall extending to the rear of the building with two adjoining rooms to the side on each floor. Though there have been additions to the rear of the house, the main part has retained its original character. Throughout the Mitchell House there is good proportion and design which incorporates characteristic features of both early and late Georgian architecture.