orm No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

PHO PG-72A-2 / 8 / FOR NPS USE ONLY

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| NAME                 |  |                                       |                       |                     |
| HISTORIC             |  |                                       |                       |                     |
|                      | s Pleasure                               |                                       |                       |                     |
| AND/OR COMMON        |  |                                       |                       |                     |
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| SITE                 | PUBLIC ACQUISITION                       | ACCESSIBLE                            | ENTERTAINMENT         | RELIGIOUS           |
| OBJECT               | IN PROCESS                               | X_YES: RESTRICTED                     | GOVERNMENT            | SCIENTIFIC          |
|                      | BEING CONSIDERED                         | YES: UNRESTRICTED                     | INDUSTRIAL            | TRANSPORTATION      |
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|                      | d Landover Road                          |                                       | ·                     |                     |
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|                      | Upper Marlboro                           |                                       |                       | 0870                |
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| TITLE                |  |                                       |                       |                     |
|                      | ric American Building                    | s Survey                              |                       |                     |
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| 1936                 |  | <b>X</b> _FEDERAL                     | _STATE _COUNTY _LOCAL | -                   |
| DEPOSITORY FOR       |  |                                       |                       |                     |
| SURVEY RECORDS       | Library of Congress                      | , 10 First Street                     | \$ S.E.               |                     |
| CITY, TOWN           | Wachington D C                           |                                       | STATE                 |                     |
|                      | Washington, D. C.                        |                                       |                       |                     |



#### CONDITION

CHECK ONE

**CHECK ONE** 

EXCELLENT GOOD

\_\_FAIR

\_\_DETERIORATED
\_\_RUINS
\_\_UNEXPOSED

\_UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

\_\_MOVED DATE\_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Beall's Pleasure is located between 75th and Pennsylvania Avenues, east of Landover Road and the Stratford Woods Apartments in Landover, Prince George's County, Maryland. It is a two-story brick house constructed circa 1795 with a 1½-story brick wing constructed in 1936.

The house is situated on a knoll at the back of well-kept grounds. The drive to the property begins at the rear of the Stratford Woods parking lot and winds up to the house through a stand of large maples, pines, locusts, and ash. Behind the house is a landscaped garden of large boxwoods set in four squares. Day lilies and roses are also prominent in the design. The garden was landscaped in 1936 by the late Boris V. Timchenko, long-time chief architect of the annual National Capital Flower and Garden Show and designer of gardens for President John F. Kennedy and Mrs. Mamie Eisenhower.

Beall's Pleasure is two stories high, five bays wide on the front and three on the rear, and two rooms deep. Laid in common bond, it has three courses of stretchers to each course of headers. There is a double interior chimney with parapets at each end. The chimneys and parapets are both capped with several courses of brick. The cornice is laid in three courses, the lower one of projecting headers, the center one of sawtooth pattern, and the top one of stretchers.

The central doorway on the south facade contains a six-panel door and has an arched head with fanlight and sidelights flanking the door. The fanlight has radiating wood muntins which divide the light into ten sections; an arched muntin divides each radiating section into two panes. Modern brick steps lead up to the front door. The windows on the front facade have 6/6, double-hung sash and modern louvered shutters. There are jack arches above all the original windows, including those in the basement. The roof is covered with terracotta tiles, which replace cedar shingles.

The garden or north facade is three bays wide with a central doorway, which has a paneled surround consisting of pilasters supporting an arched pediment with Adamesque motif. The windows on this facade contain 9/6, double-hung sash and have jack arches, except for the east window on the first floor which has been enlarged to a pair of 9/6 sash under a single segmental arch.

The west end wall of the house is blank except for a 16-light casement window in the attic. On the east end of the house is a  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -story, three-bay addition that is one room deep; this was added in 1936. The fenestration of the east end wall of the main house consists only of a casement window similar to that on the other end; however, a doorway stood in the north bay of the first floor of this facade before the wing was added; it is now bricked up.

The floor plan of the main block consists of a central stair hall with two rooms on either side -- the dining room and study on the east and two parlors connected by a doorway on the west. All of these rooms contain fireplaces; those in the dining room and the parlors have original mantels of Adamesque design. The fireplace wall in the library is completely paneled, including a closet, and has shouldered architrave trim

| PERIOD   | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW  |  |  |  |
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| 1900-<br><br>SPECIFIC DAT  | _communications  | _INDUSTRY _INVENTION  BUILDER/ARCH   | A POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  HITECT                              | Aother (Specify) local history                                   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Beall's Pleasure typifies the characteristics of Federal architecture as interpreted in central Maryland. Its basic form of two-story height, five-bay width on one facade and three on the other, and two-room depth has often been recorded for buildings in this area built from the late 18th through the first half of the 19th century. A doorway with elliptical fanlight and sidelights is seen on nearly every structure of this type. Evidence of a sophistication not commonly found exists in the parapets on the end walls and the garlanded Adamesque style of the mantels and cornices on the first floor.

A patent for 500 acres called "Beale's Pleasure" was issued to Colonel Ninian Beale on July 10, 1706 (DD5/681, PL3/308).

Beale, born in Scotland in 1625, fought in the Scottish-English army raised to resist Cromwell. He was captured in the Battle of Dunbar and condemned to servitude in the British plantations, which included Ireland and the American colonies. Beale arrived in Maryland in 1658 and served out his term as an indentured servant with Richard Hall. He later was an Indian ranger and held several civil posts in Calvert, Charles and Prince George's Counties. He helped establish the first Presbyterian Church in Prince George's. Beale died in 1717.

After Col. Beale received the Beale's Pleasure patent, he sold portions of it, and it was not until 1794 that the entire land grant was again owned by one person -- Benjamin Stoddert, the builder of the present house.

Benjamin Stoddert was born in 1751, the son of Thomas and Sarah Marshall Stoddert of Charles County. In January, 1777 he enlisted in Captain Hartley's "Additional Continental Regiment of Cavalry," which was raised in Pennsylvania. He became Captain and served with distinction until he was severely wounded at Brandywine.

In an undated letter to John Templeman, who was then in Boston, Benjamin Stoddert summarized his early years:

Brought up a merchant, the Revolutionary War commenced, just as my apprenticeship ended—and I entered into the Army—in two or three years was made Secretary to the Board of War, but before the end of the War, returned to Maryland to marry—looking to commerce as the means by which I was to support a family—and to determine to enter into commerce as soon as the war was ended if not before.

(Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.)

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SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #6.

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| William A. Aleshire ORGANIZATION  Prince George's Jay STREET & NUMBER  P. O. Box 14   | cees   | s and James Maher<br>(301) 262-3360;(3  | DATE August 1977 TELEPHONE 301) 559-4326; (3                                  | 01) 422-4861   |
| CITY OR TOWN  Hvattsville   |  |   | STATE Maryland 2078   |  |
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| As the designated State Historic P hereby nominate this property for criteria and procedures set forth b  | r inclusion in the National R<br>by the National Park Service.   | Register and certify that i   |   | according to the   |
| TITLE STATE HISTORIC  | PRESERVATION OFFI  | CER   | DATE  |  |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY  I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS  | $\mathcal{M}$  |   | DATE N  | 1/19   |
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Form No. 10-300a (Rev. 10-74)

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Beall's Pleasure
Prince George's County
Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7

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CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

(DESCRIPTION, continued)

around the fireplace opening, framing the space above the fireplace, and around the closet door. The woodwork in this room appears to have been added to the house later; it may date from the 1930's. The woodwork, including chairrail and cornices in all four rooms and two round-arched cupboards in the north parlor, window glass, locks and other hardware, and random-width hard pine flooring, are original throughout most of the first floor. An elliptical arch with double keystone supported by pilasters spans the center of the hall. The hall has paneled dado and an open stairwell with two flights at the rear. The open string stair has carved stepends, very simple turned balusters, round handrail, and newel with return. Under the stair landing the rear door opens to the outdoors.

The floor plan of the second story is identical to that of the first. The four rooms have six-panel doors, cornices (simpler than those of the first floor), and mantels with fluted pilasters and frieze. The northwest bedroom has shouldered architraves around the door openings. The attic is reached by a steep flight of stairs between the west bedrooms.

Access to the basement stairs, which are beneath the first flight of the main stairs in the central hall, is gained through the library. The foundation walls and chimney bases in both basement rooms are built of stone to the first floor level. The basement under the wing is entered from the main house basement.

In the 1936 HABS photographs of Beall's Pleasure, the windows on the front facade have 2/2 sash rather than the present 6/6 sash, although the rear facade had 9/6 sash as it does now. A one-story, three-bay porch is centered on the south; it is very simple with four Doric columns. The rear door has no surround; the double window on the first floor at the east end is in place, but the wing had not yet been added. A small porch stood to the east where the presently bricked-up doorway stands. A 1948 Rogers' family photograph of the house shows it with the wing, 6/6 sash on the front and with a small portico over the door in place of the porch. (Traces of other porches can be seen on the south facade.)

#### Outbuildings:

- Summer house--small screened structure with a brick floor and cedar shake roof, built in 1936.
- Tool house -- frame structure with cedar shake roof, built in 1936.
- 3. Carriage house -- moved in 1947 and converted to a cottage, frame structure, very altered.
- Old gas station -- frame structure said to have been a gas station, apparently moved from Cheverly in 1945.
- 5. Chapel -- James W. Rogers built this frame structure with parts of St. Ambrose Church, torn down in 1960 to make way for U.S. Route 50. The

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Maryland

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#### (DESCRIPTION, continued)

steeple, double doors, and stained glass windows of this chapel came from the church.

- Tenant house -- frame, 20th century, in bad repair (located right on the property line).
- Well and pump house -- constructed in 1936.
- Fence -- white picket fence with gates from Firwood, a circa 1850 house in Hyattsville torn down to make way for a county office building.

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Beall's Pleasure Prince George's County

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(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

This appointment as Secretary to the Board of War introduced Stoddert to John Adams, then chairman of the Board. When Adams became President, he appointed Stoddert Secretary of the Navy.

On June 17, 1781 Stoddert married Rebecca Lowndes, daughter of Christopher Lowndes of Bostwick (NR) in Bladensburg, Maryland. Stoddert began his commercial career in Georgetown in 1783 as a shipping merchant in the firm of Forrest, Stoddert, and Murdock. In 1787 he built the Halycon House (NR) on lot 16 in Georgetown.

During early negotiations to establish the federal city in 1791, Stoddert acted as George Washington's confidential agent. He and others quietly made private purchases of large parcels of land at favorable prices. When these tracts were combined to form the District of Columbia, Stoddert was one of the nineteen "original proprietors who signed the agreement for the ten-mile square." (WPA, Washington City and Capital.) When the Bank of Columbia was founded in 1793 to finance the early operations of the District, Stoddert was one of its incorporators; he later became its president.

The bill establishing the Department of the Navy was passed on April 26, 1798 and signed by President Adams on April 30. Adams' first choice for Secretary of the Navy was George Cabot of Massachusetts, who did not accept. On May 22, 1798 President Adams sent a commission via Secretary of State Timothy Pickering to Benjamin Stoddert asking that he accept the Secretaryship.

Stoddert, who was unsure of the proper decision, wrote to his father-in-law, Benjamin Lowndes of Bladensburg, on May 29 asking: "But that I may be able to consider every side of the question let me know whether you will in case I do accept undertake to act as owner of my concerns on the Beaver Dam [Beall's Pleasure property] for two years and a half. . . . " Stoddert did accept the position in a letter dated May 28, 1798, and in mid-June of that year he set up the first office of the Secretary of the Navy in Philadelphia. (General Records of the Department of State, National Archives; Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.)

Stoddert's role in American history can best be understood in light of the fact that the proponents of a strong army, including Alexander Hamilton and James McHenry, Secretary of War, were strongly opposed to the establishment of a viable navy. Stoddert was adamant in his belief that a strong mavy was essential to national defense, a position also held by President Adams. Stoddert wrote: "...I not only believe now, but always did, that a Navy was the only national plan of defense for this country.. . . (Gibbs, Vol. II, p. 115.)

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(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

Numerous accounts indicate that Stoddert administered his new office with great skill. Oliver Wolcott described him as "a man of great sagacity, [who] conducts the business of the Department with success and energy; he means to be popular; he has more of the confidence of the President than any officer of the government." (Gibbs, Vol. II, p. 315.)

Within five weeks of taking office Stoddert had three frigates and two ships cruising the American coast, mounting a total force of 168 guns. By the close of 1798 twenty vessels were in commission; in December 1799, thirty-three. The naval force during the French war amounted, according to Thomas Clark, to forty vessels; another estimate declared it to be fifty vessels of various sorts. (Columbis H.S., Vol. 20, p. 157.)

Stoddert's lasting contribution to the American Navy was the establishment of six navy yards for the building and repairing of large ships. These were located at Portsmouth, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D. C., and Norfolk. This was accomplished on his own initiative, as Congress had no express provision for navy yards. (Carrigg, p. 360.)

On April 1, 1801 Benjamin Stoddert ended his term as Secretary of the Navy and was replaced by President Jefferson's appointee, Henry Dearborn. Stoddert returned to private life as a merchant. His wife died in 1801, and Stoddert in 1813. They are both buried at Addison Chapel in Seat Pleasant, Maryland.

After Benjamin Stoddert's death the Beall's Pleasure property was maintained briefly by Thomas Gantt, trustee, and then passed on to Thomas Ewell, Stoddert's son-in-law and administrator of his estate. (Deed AB2/529.) Ewell then sold the property to John and William Thomas. (Chancery Paper 8973.) John Thomas ended up with the property and became involved with some type of note whereby Jacob Jones (Commodore, U.S. Navy) apparently thought he had some claim to the property. Due to this confusion the property was ordered to be sold in 1835.

The property, including Gordon's Pleasure, Beall's Pleasure, and Waring's Lot Enlarged, 503-1/4 acres, and the house Stoddert built were sold to Levi Sherriff for \$5,000.00 (Deed 10/225.) Sheriff died in 1854, leaving the property to his grandsons, George Beall Sheriff, Lemuel Levi Sherriff, Jr., and Dionysius T. Sheriff. The latter obtained the house in a suit that was settled in 1866. (Equity Case 416, Prince George's County Courthouse.) Sheriff mortgaged the house and 51-3/8 acres to George W. Berry; he paid this debt off by 1889, but in all the transactions over the next seventy-six years this acreage and the house remained distinct from the other Beall's Pleasure property. (Deeds JWB 8/175,177.) Sheriff sold the house in 1890 and it passed through

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(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

a number of hands until 1933. In that year Brice and Sarah McAdoo Clagett purchased it from Kate Caufield of Colorado. (Deed 392/484).

The Clagetts did a lot of work on Beall's Pleasure, adding the present wing and a small entrance porch that is now gone.

On July 10, 1944, Brice Clagett and Sarah McAdoo Clagett, his wife, sold Beall's Pleasure, 51-3/8 acres, to Richard S. Huested and Constance Marlatt, his wife. (Deed 756/323.) On November 21, 1944, Richard S. Huested and Constance Marlatt, his wife, soll the property to Anna C. Rogers and James W. Rogers, her husband. (Deed 769/215.) Mr. Rogers died in 1965, and Mrs. Rogers continues to live in the house.

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Beall's Pleasure Prince George's County CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland . ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 6

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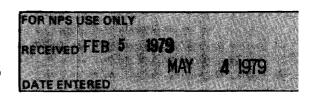
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SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #7.

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