Substantive Review United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. Specific properties in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property				
historic name	Truman's	Place		
other names/site number				

2. Lo	cation								
street &	& number	Eas	t sid	e of	Gallant	Green	Road		not for publication
city, to	wn	Hug	hesvi	11e				X	vicinity
state	Maryland	code	24	c	ounty Char	les	code	017	zip code 20637

3. Classification					
Ownership of Property Category of Property		Number of Resources within Property			
X private	X building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing		
public-local	district	_1	<u>4</u> buildings		
public-State	site		sites		
public-Federal	structure structure		structures		
	🔲 object		objects		
		1	<u>4</u> Total		
Name of related multiple property listing:		Number of cont	tributing resources previously		
			tional Register <u>N/A</u>		

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

■ Inomination ■ request for determination ■ Register of Historic Places and I	tional Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amen on of eligibility meets the documentation standard meets the procedural and professional requireme does not meet the National Register criteria.	ds for registering properties in the ints set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property 🗴 meets 🗌	does not meet the National Register criteria.	See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Date
State or Federal agency and bureau		
5. National Park Service Certification	·····	
I, hereby, certify that this property is:	<u></u>	
entered in the National Register.	attick Andres	Ilan 188
determined eligible for the National		
Register. See continuation sheet.		
determined not eligible for the National Register.		······
removed from the National Register.		
other, (explain:)		
	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

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CH-22

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6. Function or Use	CH-22			
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)			
Domestic	Domestic			
Single dwelling	Single	dwelling		
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)			
	foundation	Brick		
_Mid-19th Century	walls	Brick		
	roof	Slate		
	other			

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Attractively sited amid lawns and meadows surrounded by woodland, Truman's Place stands at the end of a private gravel road, 1.2 miles from its entrance on the east side of Gallant Green Road, 1.3 miles north of the intersection of Gallant Green Road and Maryland Route 5. A two and one-half story brick structure, to which is joined a smaller two-story brick wing, the house was built on a north-south axis. The formal, five-bay principal elevation of the main block faces west and features a bracketed eave cornice and ornamental boxed cornices over The four-bay rear elevation has a centered the first floor windows. door but an assymetrical arrangement of windows. The north end is unbroken except for a small window near the gable peak, and two flush gable chimneys stand at each end of the dormered roof. The lower, one-room deep service wing has an unbalanced composition of windows and doors, a bracketed eave cornice on the west front, and an exterior chimney with stepped weatherings. The masonry of both parts of the house incorporate the brick shell of a circa 1770, one story, five-bay dwelling with a kitchen-service wing. The Flemish bond brickwork of the earlier structure contrasts sharply with the common bond masonry used in raising the two parts of the original house to their present height circa 1850. The interior of Truman's Place was in extremely poor physical condition by the late-1930s and has been largely rebuilt. Its nineteenth century center hall plan remains essentially unaltered, but the structural framing, as well as the woodwork and other finishes are contemporary with its 1938-1946 rehabilitation. Exterior features of the same vintage include slate roof shingles and a pedimented architrave framing the transomed entrance door. Ancillary structures, including a tenant house with an attached stable, a tobacco barn, a garden shed and a three-bay garage, all date from this century.

X See continuation sheet

For General Description see continuation sheets

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---GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

A two and one-half story, gable-roofed brick house with a two-story kitchen-service wing, the architecture of Truman's Place is of a regionally characteristic late-Federal design while combining decorative elements that add a certain Greek Revival flavor to its overall exterior appearance. The house possesses a number of interesting features, notably the fact that it incorporates in its outer walls the shell of an earlier brick dwelling. Although of only one story height, the older building was of the same basic plan as the existing structure. The outer walls of the original house are easily discerned in the exterior masonry on all four sides of both sections of the building, but especially so on the north end where its gabled wall and two flush chimneys are clearly defined.

The principal part of the circa 1770 dwelling was of Flemish bond, brick construction exhibiting a random use of glazed headers. Its fivebay front elevation consisted of a centered door flanked by four windows. The rear elevation was apparently only four bays wide, having a centered door with two windows to its right and one to its left. The north end wall was unbroken at the first floor but had two gable level windows: one located between the two chimneys and another to its right. This same arrangement of chimneys and gable windows is believed to have been repeated at the opposite end.

The earlier house had a chamfered watertable and a gable roof that possibly featured dormer windows. A one story, brick, kitchen-service wing stood at the south end. Although it, too, was of Flemish bond construction, it did not possess a watertable, and may have been added shortly after the main block was built. The fenestration and door locations in the side elevations of the wing cannot be precisely determined as these walls were later substantially rebuilt in the areas of the present openings. At the south end, however, the outline of its original roofline and two former gable windows can be seen. (The existing exterior chimney appears to have been built before the raising of the house to two stories. It likely replaced a previous chimney, and has a brick centered in its lower wall that is inscribed with the date 1811.)

The first floor plan of the original dwelling was probably of the regionally characteristic four rooms with a centered rear stair passage. Like other brick houses of this plan, a masonry partition wall extended through the house end to end, providing a bearing wall for the floor framing systems. The intersecting partition walls were of frame. The wing is believed to have contained two rooms separated by a brick wall. The south end room contained the kitchen, and the space between the kitchen **United States Department of the Interior** National Park Service

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and the main block might have housed a passage and storage rooms.

According to an appraisal made of the property in 1810 the house was "out of repair" at that time. The 1811 date on the kitchen chimney, together with recorded references to the house, suggest that various repairs and modifications were made to it between 1811 and 1830. (See Section #8: Historic Context.) There were also a number of ancillary domestic support structures proximate to the house during this period and earlier, none of which have survived.

In about 1850 the roofs of both parts of the house were removed and the two sections raised to their present two-story height. The modillioned and bracketed eaves cornices, the cornice-like lintels over the front windows, and a former Greek Revival-style porch that once sheltered the front entrance door are all believed to be contemporary with this conversion. Another change contemporary with this renovation was the widening of the first floor door and window openings.

Photographs taken of the house during its 1938 renovation show it to have suffered extensive physical deterioration by that date, not only in regard to its interior fabric, but of its exterior masonry surfaces as well.

The 1938-1946 rehabilitation of the building included the partial removal of the interior masonry support wall, the rebuilding of the floor framing systems and partition walls, and the replacement of all of the interior finishes, including the woodwork. As far as can be determined, however, the nineteenth century center hall plan, believed to have been a circa 1820 modification, as well as the stair location and basic room configuration was repeated. The profiles of the existing door and window trim is appropriate to the early and mid-nineteenth century, and may be a reproduction of the trim it replaced. Other details include bold ceiling cornices in the first floor rooms and elaborate, Federal-style mantles.

Exterior repairs and changes included the repointing of large areas of the masonry surfaces, the replacement or introduction of gable-roofed dormers on both sides of the main block, and the existing slate roof shingles. The nineteenth century front porch was removed and a pedimented architrave with plain pilasters installed around the front door.

There are no historically contributing structures, nor are there identifiable early sites, such as those of the former domestic dependencies. Non-contributing buildings include a frame garage and a garden house immediately south of the main residence. Both were probably built in the 1940s or early 1950s. A frame tobacco barn standing on a rise United States Department of the Interlor National Park Service

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of land north of the house dates from early in this century. A frame, T-shaped, gambrel-roofed tenant house with an attached stable stands several hundred yards northwest of the house. It was built not long before the purchase of the property by the present owners.

The surrounding grounds are informally landscaped, and the setting of the house is probably very similar to its appearance of the last century. An old farm road branches off from the approach drive, passing the house on the south side and continuing east to north through the property. This is believed to be a segment of a road "leading up county" frequently referred to in early land records associated with Truman's Place.

8. Statement of Significance		CH-22
Certifying official has considered the significance of this propert	ty in relation to other properties:	
Applicable National Register Criteria	D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	D E F G	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Architecture	Period of Significance 1759-1850	Significant Dates 1770 1850
	Cultural Affiliation	
Significant Person N / A	Architect/Builder Richard Gardiner Thomas I. Gardiner	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Taking its name from a 1,000-acre proprietary manor grant to Nathaniel Truman in 1666, of which this property was a part, Truman's Place is the largest and most sophisticated mid-nineteenth century brick house of its architecture in Charles County. Particularly noteworthy features include its overall scale and composition, the five-bay, central passage plan of the main block, and the bracketed eaves and window cornices of the principal facade. Most Charles County houses of this period, during which the three-bay/side passage plan was the most favored, exhibit considerable restraint in their exterior decorations; the exuberant treatment of the front cornices and windows of Truman's Place are especially important when viewed in that context. Contributing to the local significance of the building is the remarkable similarity between its nineteenth century masonry and other construction details and design elements to three other substantial brick structures in this locality. These buildings, all of similar age and designed and constructed by Baltimore contractors, represent the first complete break from regional vernacular forms and construction methodology, and were the last "important" houses to be built here until several decades after the Civil War. Of these buildings, Truman's Place is by far the most architecturally refined. Also of interest is the fact that the house evolved to its present plan and appearance from a considerably older, one-story, two-part dwelling. The outer walls of the earlier building are clearly evident in the exterior masonry of all four elevations of the existing structure and constitute the only local example of its design to survive in any physical form. The original dwelling was built by Richard Gardiner between 1759 and 1782, and enlarged by Richard's grandson, Thomas I. Gardiner circa 1850. The Gardiner family, who figured prominently in the county's social and economic history throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, retained ownership of Truman's Place until 1938.

See continuation sheet

For Historic Context and Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan, see continuation sheets. See notes on continuation sheet Section 8, Page 6.

has been reques previously listed previously detern designated a Na recorded by Hist Survey # recorded by Hist Record #	rmination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) sted in the National Register mined eligible by the National Register tional Historic Landmark toric American Buildings	Conternation State age of Federal agence Content of Content of Con	of additional data: preservation office gency y nent	
10. Geographica	Approximately 18.8 acre		<u> </u>	
UTM References A 1.8 34.5 Zone Easting	$\begin{array}{ c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c$	B 1 8 13 4 5 2 Zone Easting	1210 4126198120 Northing 610 4127000410	
Verbal Boundary De	escription			
-	of Truman's Place is shown in	dashed lines on th		ey map.
Boundary Justificati	on			
The boundari oribabke sut	es shown encompass the house, es if firner dinestuc dependen the house and associated site	cies, and serve to		
		See continuati	on sheet	
11. Form Prepar				
name/title	J. Richard Rivoire, Preserva			
organization		date	August 1987	
street & number	P. O. Box 132	telephone _		0646
city or town	LaPlata	state Mary	<u>zip code 2</u>	0040

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Truman's Place Charles County, Maryland

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Truman's Place is of special significance in the context of Charles County's architectural history by representing two distinct periods in the development of local architectural design. Although only the outer walls of the original eighteenth century structure survive, the evident quality of its exterior plan, masonry and other details combine to constitute an important link in the evolution of local building traditions in the latter part of the eighteenth century. However incomplete it might be, the fact that the earlier house has no local surviving counterpart distinguishes what remains as a valuable cultural artifact.

Of equal or greater significance is the fact that the enlarged house clearly establishes a distinct departure from regionally traditional architectural values, marking the final chapter in the history of vernacular forms and methods of construction in this region. Even though the building evolved from an earlier structure--the basic layout and exterior design of the older house having been essentially retained and only raised in height--the end product was a distinctly different type of house, made even more so by its exterior ornamentation and resulting overall effect.

The significance of Truman's Place is further enhanced by its relationship with three other Charles County houses of the same basic styling built in the decade preceeding the Civil War. Cedar Grove, Green Park (Green's Inheritance) and Thainston were all built by Baltimore contractors and share obvious similarities in construction, design and decoration. Given the resemblance between Truman's Place and these other buildings, together with the fact that this house was modified and enlarged during the same period, indicates a strong probability that its alteration may have been carried out by one of these contractors, most likely G. A. Henisler. A major difference between Truman's Place and the others, however, is its considerably less restrained and somewhat "citified" exterior embellishment. Truman's Place is the only mid-nineteenth century house in Charles county ornamented in this manner.

While a great deal of building activity took place in Charles County in the several decades prior to the Civil War, the county plunged into a long period of economic and social stagnation as a result of that conflict from which it never fully recovered until after World War I. Consequently, extremely few architecturally noteworthy buildings were erected here between about 1860 and 1920. Truman's Place, regardless of the extent of its 1938-1946 renovation, is a uniquely important representation of Charles County's nineteenth century architectural and cultural heritage. United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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The earlier brick structure from which the existing house evolved was built by Richard Gardiner, a relatively prosperous planter, between 1759, when he purchased the property on which the house stands, and his death in 1782.

Gardiner established his dwelling plantation on 500 acres of what was initially a 1,000-acre proprietary grant to Henry Darnall in 1664. Darnall conveyed the 1,000 acres by assignment to Nathaniel Truman, a Calvert County justice, to whom a patent was issued in 1666. Truman died in 1677 and Truman's Place passed in ownership to his brother Thomas, from whom it was purchased the same year by James Nutwell. Although originally granted as a manor, with intendent proprietary privileges bestowed on its owner, there is no evidence that it functioned as such. Truman's Place was one of thirteen manor grants made in Charles County between 1642 and 1680.¹,²

Nutwell, an illiterate merchant-planter of modest means, sold 500 acres of Truman's Place to a neighboring merchant, Richard Charlett, in two deeds recorded in 1679 and 1681. This half of the original tract later came into the possession of William Wilkinson and remained in that family until 1811. (Located to the east of the property known today as Truman's Place, Wilkinson's half of the original tract was later known as "The Heights" and has been owned for many years by the DeMarr family. An earlier researcher of the history of Truman's Place incorrectly identified Wilkinson's 500 acres as encompassing the subject of this nomination. As a result, the house has long been accorded certain historical associations that it never actually had.)³

The 500-acre balance of Truman's Place remained in the possession of James Nutwell, and then his son, James Jr., until 1700 when the latter sold it to Ignatius Craycroft. In 1735, Charles Craycroft, son and heir of Ignatius, mortgaged the 500 acres, together with a contiguous tract of 100 acres called The Denyal, to Charles Carroll Esq. of Annapolis, administrator of the estate of Daniel Carroll of Duddington Manor in Prince George's County. Craycroft defaulted on the loan and the property used as security became part of the Daniel Carroll estate, remaining so until 1759 when the 500 acres of Truman's Place and 160 acres called Nutwell's Branch were sold to Richard Gardiner for 372.17.10 pounds sterling.⁴

Land records and other documents associated with its previous owners indicate that Richard Gardiner was the first owner to live on this part of the 500 acres. The chronology of its subsequent ownership, references to this part of Gardiner's estate as his dwelling plantation, 1783 and 1810 descriptions of improvements, and details of the architecture of the

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building all suggest that the oldest part of the existing house was built before 1782, possibly as early as circa 1760.

Richard Gardiner died in the summer of 1782. In his will he provided each of his five sons with land (all contiguous tracts), as well as money to be used in constructing either a dwelling or to make additional improvements to their respective properties. Each was also given the use of his "negro carpenter, Moses" to assist in constructing these buildings. To his son, Charles, he bequeathed "all my plantation on which my dwelling house stands," comprised of parts of Truman's Place, Allen's Grove and Allen's Addition.⁵

In the 1783 tax assessments, District 3, Charles County, the "Richard Gardiner Heirs" are listed as the owners of 500 acres of Truman's Place, improved by "2 good dwelling houses, orchards, etc." valued at 600 pounds, 160 acres of Nutwell's Branch with "1 old dwelling and [a] tobacco house" valued at 120 pounds, and 363 acres called Inclosure with "1 good dwelling and [a] tobacco house" valued at 363 pounds sterling.

The ownership of these various parts of Richard Gardiner's estate and overlapping boundaries, add considerable complexity to the property history; nevertheless, later surveys of Charles Gardiner's share of his father's estate prove conclusively that the house known today as Truman's Place incorporates what was the original dwelling house of Richard Gardiner.

Charles Gardiner died intestate between 1805 and 1810 for in the latter year Joseph A. Gardiner, in right of his wife, Harriet, the eldest daughter and heir of Charles Gardiner, petitioned the Charles County court for a division of the land among Charles Gardiner's four children, three of them being under 15 years of age at the time.

At the court's direction the property, then referred to as "Truman's Plantation," was surveyed, but the commissioners appointed to settle the matter filed a return stating that the property could not be fairly divided among the heirs because "it is very bare or timber [and] broken and hilly" and that the buildings were "out of repair and so fixed together on one part of the land" that it could not be divided into four parts of equal value. The land, together with its improvements, was valued at \$8.00 per acre. Joseph and Harriet Gardiner elected to take the property at the value given, paying each of the three remaining heirs their proportionate share.

It is apparent from these proceedings, and the dated brick (1811) in the chimney of the wing, that repairs were made to the house about this time, and that this renovation had nothing whatever to do with damage

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purportedly inflicted by the British on their march toward Washington from nearby Benedict in 1814.

Joseph and Harriet Gardiner may have lived at Truman's Place for a brief period, but then sold it to Harriet's uncle, John Francis Gardiner, one of Richard Gardiner's five sons.

John F. Gardiner died in 1831 leaving a will in which he bequeathed the land he "purchased of Joseph Alexius Gardiner and wife Harriet, being part of Truman's Place and part of Allen's Addition where my dwelling house stands" to his son, Thomas Ignatius Gardiner. Gardiner was a fairly prosperous planter, owning 48 slaves and what appears to have been a very handsomely furnished home. His will is of additional interest in that he made various bequests of furniture, including a sideboard and a looking glass "now in the hall." This suggests that the suspected modification of the first floor plan, whereby a central passage was created by the partitioning of the largest front room, had occurred by this date; however, there is no evidence in these documents, including the inventory of the household contents, that the building had been raised to two stories.⁸

Thomas Ignatius Gardiner maintained the property left to him by his father as his own dwelling plantation, and in 1836 nearly doubled its size by the purchase of an additional part of the original Richard Gardiner estate bordering it on the northwest side. In the 1850 census records for the Bryantown District of Charles County, Thomas Ignatius Gardiner is listed as 60 years of age, a farmer by profession, and owner of real estate valued at \$6,000.00.9,10

Gardiner died intestate at Truman's Place in 1876, leaving as heirs a brother and a sister, and the children of a sister who predeceased him. The brother and sister both died shortly afterward and in 1878 the surviving heirs-at-law, a nephew and several nieces, petitioned the county court for a distribution of the estate. The property involved Gardiner's 530-acre home plantation, as well as a separate tract in St. Mary's County of "several hundred acres." The final outcome of these proceedings was the sale of the St. Mary's County property and a division of the 530acre home plantation. The latter was surveyed and divided in two parts. Lot I, "embracing the dwelling and nearly all [of the] other buildings," containing 288¹/₂ acres valued at \$5,885.00, was assigned to Margaret H., Anna and Catherine Gardiner. The metes and bounds description of Lot I conforms with the 1810 survey of Charles Gardiner's estate, and both are exactly the same for which a survey plat was made and recorded in 1946. It was from this tract that the house and its remaining 40 acres were subdivided in 1965.11

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Margaret H. Gardiner, one of the three sisters assigned Lot I, lived at Truman's Place until about 1901. She then moved to Baltimore where she died in 1905. The house is believed to have been tenanted, or possibly stood vacant, between 1905 and 1938 when Margaret's heirs sold the property, then known as "Tudor Hall" to Harry Currier.¹²

As discussed under the General Description in Section 7, Truman's Place had suffered extensive physical deterioration by the time it was purchased by Currier. As a result the whole of the interior of the house was rebuilt, although this work is thought to have been sympathetic to its earlier spatial arrangement and finishes. The exterior was left essentially unaltered, but new slate roof coverings were used to replace its original wood shingles, and the Greek Revival-style front porch was removed.

(It is of interest that Truman's Place was renovated at this time for it was a period of considerable restoration-rehabilitation activity in Charles County. Between about 1925 and 1945 almost all of the county's major architectural landmarks, some of state and national significance, were purchased and restored by "outside" investors, some for use as "country estates" and others as permanent homes. Most of these properties, including Acquinsicke, Araby, Habre de Venture, Mt. Air, Mt. Aventine, Mt. Republican, Oak Grove, Retreat, Rose Hill, Truman's Place, West Hatton and Yatten, among others, had continued in the ownership of the same families for a number of generations, but had fallen into disrepair when their respective owners could no longer afford to maintain them after struggling more than a half-century against a severely depressed local economy. Construction of Crain Highway (U.S. Route 301) and the Harry Nice Bridge across the Potomac served to "open up" this previously isolated rural area, and properties began to be purchased by land speculators who then advertised them in Washington, Baltimore and New York as investment opportunities. As a result a whole new social and economic strata was created that was to have a profound impact on Charles County's future.)

Harry Currier died before finishing the rehabilitation of Truman's Place, and in 1946 his widow sold the property to Mr. and Mrs. Philip Smith who completed the work. It was during their ownership that the house was renamed "Manor of Truman's Place", and who by a conveyance in 1965 subdivided the house and its remaining 40 acres from the original Gardiner tract.¹³

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NOTES:

- Hall of Records (HR), Annapolis. Patents: L. 10, f. 37. Many of the original transfers were recorded in the Calvert County land records, some of which have since been lost; however, in the Craycroft to Carroll deed of 1735 these conveyances are referenced: Charles County Land Records (CCLR), LaPlata, L. 0#1, f. 96.
- A list of proprietary manors in Charles County can be found in Margaret Brown Klapthor's <u>History of Charles County, Maryland</u>, (LaPlata, 1956), pp. 8,9,31.
- 3. For a history of this part of Truman's Place see J. Richard Rivoire, "Pryor's Cleive." Copies of this unpublished manuscript are filed with the Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, and the Southern Maryland Studies Center, Charles County Community College, LaPlata.
- 4. CCLR: L. O#1, f. 96 (1735); L. G#3, f. 376 (1759).
- 5. Charles County Probate Records (CCPR), LaPlata: Wills: L. B#1,f. 34.
- 6. HR: 1783 Tax Assessments, Charles County, District 3, Land.
- 7. CCLR: Court Proceedings, 1808-1812, f. 418.
- 8. CCPR: Wills: L. WDM#15, f. 431; Inventories, 1829-1833, f. 377.
- 9. CCLR: L. IB#22, f. 218.
- 10. Jack Brown, et al, <u>Charles County, Maryland: A History</u>, (LaPlata, 1976), p. 375.
- 11. CCLR: Land Commission Records: BGS#1, f. 215.
- 12. CCPR: Wills: L. REC#22, f. 133; CCLR: L. 39, f. 349, L. WMA#69, f. 13.
- 13. CCLR: L. TBM#83, f. 247, L. 173, f. 433.





16 PLACE (04-22)

FIRET FLOOR PLAN

J.R. RIVOKE, 6/1081