

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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

William H. Welch House

AND/OR COMMON

935 St. Paul Street

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

935 St. Paul Street

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Baltimore

\_\_ VICINITY OF

3rd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Maryland

02

510

**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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

John George

STREET & NUMBER

937 St. Paul Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Baltimore

\_\_ VICINITY OF

Maryland

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore City Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Baltimore

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

\_\_FEDERAL \_\_STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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# 7 DESCRIPTION

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestored		
	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

935 St. Paul Street, a residence of William H. Welch in Baltimore, Maryland, is a three story brick row house. The date of its construction and its builder are unknown. Although the house is a good example of a Baltimore row house, it does not appear to be of any major architectural importance in itself. The house is characterized by a flat front, a cornice with scrolled bracketing, and a double door entrance with pediment. The interior has been divided into seven small apartments.

William H. Welch lived at 935 St. Paul Street from approximately 1891 to 1908. (He lived at 807 St. Paul Street from 1908 until his death, but this building has been faced with permastone.) Welch, a life long bachelor, occupied the second floor. According to his Dictionary of American Biography biographer, his rooms were, "...overfilled with books, even the chairs being piled with them." <sup>1</sup> He took his meals at the Maryland Club or the University Club and the activities of the clubs were his chief source of entertainment.

The exterior integrity of 935 St. Paul Street is whole. A first floor small balcony with railing may have been added after the Welch period. The interior consists of apartments. The building is well maintained.

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<sup>1</sup>"William H. Welch," Dictionary of American Biography, 19, (New York, 1936), p. 623.

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# 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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 1891-1908

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

William Henry Welch was born April 8, 1850, in Norfolk, Connecticut. Both his grandfather and father were physicians. At first the young William did not want to study medicine. After attending the Winchester Institute, he entered Yale in 1866 to study the classics. He graduated from Yale in 1870. After teaching Latin and Greek for a year, he decided to follow in his father's footsteps and study medicine. Welch first attended Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons and then transferred to the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale to study chemistry for a year. In 1872 he returned to Columbia and in 1875 received a degree in medicine. During his years at Columbia and Yale Welch's teachers stimulated his interest in research. At the time Europe was the center of research in the biological disciplines related to medicine. Like others before him Welch decided to spend several years in Europe studying at the major universities. Between 1875 and 1878 he studied at Strassburg, Leipzig, Breslau, and Vienna and in addition attended lectures in Paris and London. It was a "grand tour" for an aspiring medical scientist. In Germany and France Welch had the opportunity to meet and study with some of the greatest names in 19th century physiology and medicine including Paul Ehrlich and Robert Koch.

After returning to New York in 1878 Welch spent the next five years conducting research and teaching out of a small laboratory at Bellevue Hospital. The small facility was the first pathological laboratory in the United States. Declining an offer to teach pathology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Welch spent these years diagnosing pathological material discovered during autopsies and demonstrating anatomy.

In 1883 on the recommendation of John Shaw Billings Johns Hopkins University invited Welch to join its faculty as professor of pathology. Welch's acceptance symbolized the beginning of a new era in American medicine. Before assuming his new responsibilities, Welch in 1884 traveled to Europe for a second time to study the new advances in bacteriology and immunization being made by Koch, Ehrlich, and Karl Flugge. His exchanges with these men

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so stimulated him that Welch decided to make the study of bacteriology his central research interest. Back in Baltimore he went to work on building a research center on the German model. Among the first scientists he attracted to the school were William S. Halsted and George H. F. Nuttall. As the program grew with the opening of a hospital in 1889 and the beginning of the school of medicine in 1893, Welch helped attract to Johns Hopkins such other outstanding medical figures as William Osler and John J. Abel. By the turn of the century Johns Hopkins was the country's finest medical institution.

Welch served as professor of pathology at Johns Hopkins from 1884 to 1916 and as pathologist to the Johns Hopkins Hospital from 1889 to 1916. When in 1918 the university established the famous Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, Welch became its first director. He served in this capacity until his retirement in 1926. Retirement did not mean the end of Welch's interest in medicine. In 1926 the General Education Board endowed a chair of the history of medicine at Johns Hopkins and Welch was appointed its first occupant. From 1926 to 1931, when he retired for a second time, Welch devoted his energies to developing the William H. Welch Medical Library that housed the department of the history of medicine. After retiring in 1931 he continued to work with the library's collections until he was hospitalized with a terminal illness in 1933. He died in the Johns Hopkins Hospital on April 30, 1934.

In addition to his administrative, teaching, and research duties at Johns Hopkins, Welch also served medicine in numerous other ways. In 1900 when the Rockefeller Institute of Medical Research being created, Welch played an influential role in determining its organization and policies and to the end of his life was chairman of its board of scientific directors. He also served as an advisor to the Carnegie Foundation. He was active in most of the prestigious medical societies and scientific organizations. He served as president of: the Congress of American Physicians and Surgeons (1897), the Association of American Physicians (1901), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1906), the American Association of Pathologists and Bacteriologists (1906), the American Medical Association (1910), and the National Academy of Sciences (1913-16). In 1896 Welch established and until 1906 edited the Journal of Experimental Medicine,

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a new periodical created for the purpose of publishing papers dealing with research related to medical subjects. In 1915 he and other American scientists traveled to China to help draw up plans for the Peiping Union Medical College. Finally, Welch was active in the medical concerns of Maryland. From 1898 to 1922 he served as president of the state board of health and he often advised the city of Baltimore on matters of public health.

In his pioneering history of medicine in the United States, Richard H. Shryock says simply that William H. Welch, "...became the unofficial dean of American medical science."<sup>1</sup> As dean of American medical science Welch is remembered, first, for his work in pathology and bacteriology, and, second, for his contributions to the organization and institutionalization of medical research and education.

When Welch returned from Europe in 1878 after his first period of foreign study he was enthused with the idea of establishing in the United States European research methods and subjects. In his laboratory at Bellevue Welch combined the pathological anatomy of Rudolf Virchow with experimental pathology of Julius Cohnheim and the bacteriology of Robert Koch. Welch did pursue research and taught classes while at Bellevue and published numerous papers on pathological subjects. He did not, however, make any major or important scientific discoveries. In 1885 upon returning from more study in Europe, he turned his attentions to bacteriology. In this field he published many papers and reports and made an important contribution to bacteriology in the discovery of bacillus associated with gangrene. He also published several books of a textbook nature. These included General Pathology of Fever (1885), Bacteriology of the Surgical Infections (1895), and Thrombosis and Embolism (1899). In these works he demonstrated a remarkable knowledge of medical literature and the ability to present the most recent findings in a comprehensive and orderly fashion.

Welch's most significant contributions to American medicine were not the result of research in a laboratory or clinic. His major significance rests in his transmission of European research technique to the United States and in his planning and organization of institutions for both conducting

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<sup>1</sup>Richard H. Shryock, American Medical Research Past and Present, (New York, 1947), p. 62.

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research and educating a cadre of trained medical investigators. At Johns Hopkins he established a system of research and study within which specialized areas of investigation such as pathology and bacteriology became disciplines in their own right. Welch recognized the ever increasing specialization of all scientific research and applied it to the study of medicine. Above all at Johns Hopkins with its school of medicine, and through his work with the Rockefeller Institute, he helped shape the basic institutions for studying and teaching medicine in the United States. Both the introduction of new research techniques and the creation of new institutions marked a very significant qualitative improvement in American medicine.

Welch illustrated the final phase of America's dependence on Europe for scientific stimulation and guidance. From approximately 1860 to 1895 Americans were dependent on Europe and especially Germany for the major advances in medicine. Beginning in 1895 the United States emerged on a cultural level of equality and mutual interdependence with European medicine. William H. Welch began his career during the period of dependence. By the time of his death in 1934 Americans were making contributions to medicine on a par with their European colleagues. As unofficial dean of American medical research Welch helped in a major way to bring about this transformation in the quality of physiology and medicine in the United States.

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