BA-1750

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB | 4 | 1985 date entered MAR | 4 | 1985

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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and or common	Tyrconnell	-					
2. Loc	ation						
street & number	r 120 Woodbr	ook Lane	2		1	n/a not for pu	ublication
city, town	Baltimore		_X_ vicini	ity of	Second Congr	essional Di	strict
state	Maryland	code	24	county	Baltimore	cod	le 005
3. Clas	sificatio	n					
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7.	Description	BA-1750
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Condition _X excellent	deteriorated	Check one X unaltered	Check one X original site	e
good	ruins	altered	moved	date n/a
fair	unexposed			
<u> </u>				

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Number of Resor	urces	
Contributing	Noncontributing	Number of previously listed
6	0 buildings	National Register properties
0	0 sites	included in this nomination: 0
0	0 structures	
4	O_objects	Original and historic functions
10	0Total	and uses: residential

Tyrconnell is a two and one-half story stone house set on 27 acres which contain several significant gardens. The house was designed in 1919, a Colonial Revival style, by the Baltimore firm of Mottu and White. The H-shaped building sits in a raised terrace; it faces south with projecting wings on the west (drawing room) and east (dining room and kitchen). It measures 147' by 57'. The Colonial Revival style is evident in the overall form and details: door surround, Gothic arched dormers, tripartite window under an arched Lunette in the second floor, and the classical detailing and paneling throughout the principal rooms on the interior. In the basement are the foundations of the earlier O'Donnell family house on the site. Several four-panel doors on the second floor appear to be 19th century and to have been re-used from the earlier house. Also on the property are a frame garage (c.1933) converted from the 1919 garage/stables and frame barn which contribute to the property. interior decorative detailing is Colonial Revival in styling and massing. Tyrconnell sits on a twenty-seven acre tract landscaped in the 1920s by the landscape architect Arthur Folsom Paul. The landscaping includes the entrance court, the west vista to Lake Roland, a terrace garden and vista north modeled on the Italian Renaissance garden at Villa d'Este, and a service area. Also on the property is a frame gardiners' house, a grouping of four barns and a shed, a garage, and two stone spring houses, one circular, one rectangular. The spring houses and the garage date from the 19th century and the other buildings from about 1930. The property has a unilinear service road.

8. Significance

BA-1750

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 X 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture X architecture art commerce communications	community plan conservation economics education engineering		e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1919	Builder/Architect	Mottu & White,/Arthur Fo	olsom Paul Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A, C Applicable Exceptions: none Significance Evaluated: local

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

As an estate designed and developed in 1919 as the residence of a prominent businessman, Tyrconnell is significant primarily for association with patterns of suburban development in the Baltimore area in the first third of the twentieth century. Consisting of a mansion in a well landscaped setting, Tyrconnell is typical of the upper-class residential estates built near the northwestern boundary, a region defined generally by York Road on the east and Reisterstown Road on the west. The region is commonly referred to as the "golden triangle." These properties are formally planned estates that consist of a mansion usually of Georgian or Colonial Revival style, the accepted style of the region, and positioned on a hill or another point of prominence with well defined entrance, terrace, garden, open lawn spaces, and service areas. The entrance and terrace areas are generally treated as part of the architectural design of the house providing a transition from the house to the setting. Gardens are usually formal and located in enclosed spaces visible from the house with evergreens and architectural features (balustrades, columns, statuary, etc.) as prominent points. Another important characteristic is the expanse of free open space such as the view from the west terrace at Tyrconnell to Lake Roland and the vista north from the west wing over the garden that is focused on a fountain nestled on the side of an evergreen covered hill. The houses and gardens were planned in tandem as one unit. Tyrconnell with 27 acres is the largest, and one of the best preserved examples of this type of estate in the Baltimore area. The estate achieves additional significance as the product of a collaboration between masters in architecture and landscape architecture. The house was designed by Mottu and White, a prominent Baltimore firm. The landscaping is the product of Arthur Folsom Paul, a Philadelphia landscape architect of national repute.

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See Continuation Sheet No. 8

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Verbal boundar	ry description and ju	stification	,		
See Cont	inuation Sheet No	o. 8			
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state		code	county		code
11. For	m Prepare	d By	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
name/title	Nancy Miller,	Executive עו	irector		
organization	Preservation Ma	aryland	date	1984	,
street & number	2335 Marriotts	ville Road	telep	phone (301)	442-1772
city or town	Marriottsville		state	e Maryl	and 21104
	te Historic	Prese	rvation O	fficer C	ertification
The evaluated sig	nificance of this proper	rty within the sta	nte is:		
		state X	•		
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State Historic Pre	servation Officer signat	ture	FUI KL	2-6-	85
title	STATE HISTORIC	PRESERVATION	ON OFFICER	date	
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Reeper of the Na	ational Register				ladebulut water and a second s
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Chief of Registra	ation -	netale and Make to		Service Service	

United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

BA-1750
For NPS use only
received
date entered

OMB No. 1024-0018

Exp. 10-31-84

Continuation sheet Raltimore

Baltimore County, Maryland

Item number

Page

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Tyrconnell is located on the north side of Woodbrook Lane west of Charles Street just north of the Baltimore City-County border. The nomination consists of a Colonial Revival house in a landscaped setting which includes three major gardens.

The house is a two-and-a-half story H-shaped stone building with a slate roof on a raised flagstone terrace. The principal elevation (south) is nine bays wide: five bays in the central section and two bays in the south elevation of each projecting wing. The wings have hipped roofs. The windows are 6/6 sash with shutters, stone jack-arched lintels and concrete sills. At the first floor in the wings are round arched French doors. The innerfacing walls of the wings contain a window on the second floor with a French door below.

The central section has a gable roof of slate with four dormers each with a Gothic arched window. A stone chimney projects where the central roof joins the roof of the wing.

The centrally placed entrance door has a wooden fan light and a pair of side lights with leaded glass. Ionic pilasters flank the door and the side lights. Above the door on the second floor is a three-part window under an arched fan light.

The east elevation of Tyrconnell consists of the 8-bay wing with a 2-bay (c.1933) kitchen addition on the north end. The eight second floor windows are 6/6 sash with shutters. The fenestration on the first floor consists of moving from south to north, two French doors in arched openings (dining porch), three shuttered French doors with rectangular transoms, and two arched sash windows (kitchen) in recessed arched openings echoing the pair on the dining porch. The elevation is visually divided by a high stone wall at the northern end of the boxwood garden. The garden wall separates the French doors from the dining room from the kitchen doors to the north. The c. 1933 kitchen wing has two casement windows on the second floor over two arched openings on the first floor, the northern most one containing a door and with porch steps. At this point, the kitchen is a full story above the ground.

The north elevation faces the boxwood garden and the north vista. The elevation has two projecting, hip-roofed wings, the eastern one projects further north owing to its extension in c. 1933. A stone wall extends from the western face of the kitchen wing, this wall both separates the garden from the service area as well as defining the boxwood garden. The central section of the north elevation is six bays wide with the second floor window treatment identical to the rest of the house. On the first floor, the eastern and western two bays of the first floor contain a semi-circularbay window. In the center are two

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

BA-1750
For NPS use only
received
data entered

Tyrconnell

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland

Item number

7

Page

2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

French doors with rectangular transoms opening to a flagstone terrace. The west wing which contains a screened porch, follows the pattern of one arched opening with one window above on the inward facing (east) elevation and the north elevation. The north elevation of the wing contains three arched openings with two windows above. The axis of the north vista is centered on the view from the west wing.

The north elevation has three centrally placed dormers with a chimney between the center and west dorm.

The west elevation is seven bays wide with the 6/6 shuttered sash windows on the second floor. The fenestration on the first floor consists of a pair of arched openings in each wing and three pairs of shuttered French doors under rectangular transoms leading from the living room to the west terrace. Three dormers exist in the slate roof.

Stone walls surround the house and work as an important feature to define exterior space. A high circular wall, approximately 10 feet, defines the cobble stone entrance court with two openings: for the entrance drive and to the service area. At the eastern end the wall drops several feet to become the definition of the garden in the east terrace. The northern boundary of the garden is defined by a high wall which also hides the kitchen yard beyond. This separation of kitchen yard from garden is continued by the stone wall which continues the west face of the east wing and defines the east wall of the boxwood garden. A similar high wall defines the garden's western edge as well as the edge of the west terrace to the high wall at the entrance court.

The interior of Tyrconnell echoes the Colonial Revival architecture of the exterior. The H-shaped plan consists of a central stair hall which extends across the three central bays of the south elevation north to the exterior wall. The stair was placed at the southern end of the hall with the landing over the entrance door. A classically detailed arch in the center of the room divides the stair hall. On each side of the hall is a passage which establishes the east-west axis through the house. The passages open into the dining room (east wing) and the living room (west wing). Along the south side of the house a pair of reception rooms (each with a bath) flank the hall access to which is gained at the front door and from the cross passages. On the north side of the house are a study (west passage) and the pantry (east passage).

The 1919 Mottu and White drawings for Tyrconnell indicate that the walls of this five bay wide central section are the walls of the earlier house on the site. The interior plan and detailing are a product of the 1919 design.

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

BA-1750
For NPS use only
received
date entered

Tyrconnel1

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland Item number

7

Page

3

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

The west wing contains the living room which has porches at the northern and southern ends. (The axis of the north vista garden is aligned with the center of the north wing.)

The east wing contains the dining room with a porch on the south side. The northern end of the wing consists of the pantry, kitchen and servants hall. Originally the northern wall of this wing was parallel with the western wing. In 1933, Mottu and White drew plans to extend the wing to the north adding the servants' hall and back stairs. The drawings propose converting the kitchen in the central block to a study. This change does not occur. The kitchen is of interest because it has not been changed and provides an example of a kitchen in a well-staffed household.

The principal rooms of the first floor are paneled and have classical trim: cornice, chair rail, mantels. Elaborate door casings with leaded semi-circular transoms lead from the passages to the dining room and living room. These according to the 1933 drawings, were supplied by the owners and added in the 1933 renovation. Additional work may have been done to the interior trim as a few of the mantels in the seven bedrooms on the second floor appear to be early 20th century, indicating the interest of the Gibbs' in antiques. Unfortunately, efforts to find a source for information on the changes have been unsuccessful.

The second floor contains seven bedrooms with connecting north rooms and a library (added by D. Luke Hopkins in the 1950s). A two-bedroom suite exists in the west wing offering an excellent view of the vista to Lake Roland. The trim on the second floor is simpler than on the first floor and the walls are not paneled. Several 19th century doors exist, possibly from the earlier house. (A similar door was found in the basement.) The third floor contains the servant's room. An elevator connects the third, second and basement floors.

The basement contains storage rooms and the furnace. Stone walls exist in the basement under the five bay central section. Along the western wall of the central section a square water table is evident as well as what appears to be a window opening. This lends credence to the story that the Mottu and White house incorporated an earlier building.

The twenty-seven acres surrounding Tyrconnell was landscaped circa 1920 by the nationally known landscape architect Arthur Folsom Paul. The landscaping incorporates formal gardens and plantings in a wooded setting. The landscape effect come from an architectural rather than a horticultural approach to exterior design. The gardens are created through judicious planting of trees and shrubbery to create vistas or outdoor rooms.

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

BA-1750

United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Tyrconnel1

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland It

Item number

7

Page

4

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

The first element of the landscaping seen by the visitor is the curved drive which terminates in a circular cobblestone court (at the south elevation of the house) surrounded by a high stone wall. Archways in the wall lead to the terraces at the east and west ends of the house. The east terrace (adjacent to the dining room) consists of a formal, walled boxwood garden. A planting bed exists along the eastern edge. A blue and white della Robbia bas relief is located in the north wall of the garden.

On the west side of the house is a terrace with stone steps leading to a sunken 8-sided pool and fountain with stone urns. Beyond this is the west vista, a lawn edged by woods which extends to Lake Roland.

The most noted feature of the garden is the north vista which was inspired by the 16th century Villa d'Este at Tivoli. The vista consists of a series of flagstone steps with cedars which have been pruned to a tall, thin shape to resemble the cypresses of the Villa d'Este. The north vista is reached through a formal boxwood garden.

The formal garden extends across the north elevation of the house and is divided into three spaces edged by box and other green shrubbery. Access to the garden is gained from an opening in the wall separating the kitchen yard on the east and down a circular pair of stairs at the west. The division of the garden relieves the asymmetrical impact of the location of the north vista by providing visual interest in the eastern two sections of the garden. In a few places along the flagstone path, openings exist which lead into small gardens enclosed by trees or which become paths to other parts of the grounds. The north vista is set in a dense woods through which paths have been created.

The plant material in the garden consists largely of native varieties; the pruned cedar trees, boxwood, dogwood, wysteria, mountain laurel, wild flowers and a few ornamental trees such as Japanese Cherry. The effect of the garden comes not from a horticultural display but from the creation of outdoor spaces within a wooded setting.

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

BA-1750
For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland

Item number

Page

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

The landscaping at Tyrconnell is significant as it embodies the leading characteristics of early 20th century landscape design: an interest in an architectonic approach to garden design rather than an attempt to create a natural garden. The leader of this philosophy was Charles Adams Platt who taught the first course in landscape design at Harvard (1900). Platt initiated the revival of interest in Italian Renaissance gardens through an article in Harper's (1892) and a book Italian Gardens (1894). In 1904, on a more popular level, Edith Wharton wrote Italian Villas and Their Gardens which echoed Platt's interest in Renaissance landscaping. Both Wharton and Platt advocated garden design which took an architectonic rather than a "natural" approach. The approach involved creating geometric, usually spaces out of doors using restrained plant lists. Ms. Wharton particularly advocated against prodigious use of multicolored flowers in garden design. The terraces at Tyrconnell and particularly the north vista embody this philosophy.

The designer of the Tyrconnell garden, Arthur Folsom Paul, was a product of this approach to garden design having graduated from Harvard in 1902. Since Paul's degree was in landscape architecture, it is assumed that he studied under Charles Adams Platt. It is known that Paul worked under Charles Sprague Sargent, the first director of the Arnold Arboretum and a leader in American horticulture. After graduation, Paul moved to Philadelphia where he practiced landscape architecture for the rest of his live. His practice included work in the Philadelphia area, particularly at Fairmount Park, as well as in Newport, Rhode Island. Although detailed research on Paul's career is in the formative stages, it is clear that he was an importnat figure in early 20th century landscape design. Unfortunately, Paul's work is disappearing owing to neglect and the expense of garden maintenance. The tyrconnell garden is significant in understanding Paul's contribution as it has been well maintained since its installation 60 years ago.

Augmenting the significance of the garden is the architecture of the house. This Colonial Revival building was designed in 1919 by the Baltimore firm of Mottu and White. Its architecture, based on 18th century precedents, represents the strong preference of Marylanders for the architecture of this period. John Sears Gibbs, the owner who built Tyrconnell, as well as a collector of 18th century Maryland furniture, had the "Victorian excesses" stripped away from the interior and exterior of the 19th century O'Donnell family house on the site.

The architect of the house was the Baltimore firm of Mottu and White, whose practice (c. 1900-1940) centered on Colonial Revival residences principally in Maryland. Many of their houses were constructed in Guildford, a section of

United States Department of the Interior **National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

BA-1750 For NPS use only received date entered

Continuation sheet

Tyrconnell

Item number Raltimore County

Page

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

Baltimore developed in the early 20th century by the Roland Park Company. buildings are characterized by the use of five bay, central door, gable roof forms with classical detailing at the entrance and in the principal rooms. The firm succeeded in creating residences, like Tyrconnell, in a conservative revival style that conveyed the success of their owners. The goal of the firm was an impressive overall concept rather than an exact 18th century reproduction. At Tyrconnell, for example, the window sills are concrete, rather than stone, the second floor has much simpler detailing, and 19th century doors from the earlier house were re-used in several bedrooms. The entrance facade, the wide hall and stair, the detailing in the living and dining rooms - these elements convey the taste and financial success of the occupant desired by both architect and client.

Mottu and White also worked on historic buildings such as All Hallow's Church in Anne Arundel County; Myrtle Grove in Talbot County, the seat of the Goldsborough family since 1730; and Homewood, a Carroll family house in Howard County - all eighteenth century structures. All Hallow's Church and Myrtle Grove are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Henry S. Taylor White (d. 1946) was the principal designer. He was known as an authority on ecclesiastical architecture and was a prominent member of the Episcopal Church. He served as president of the Baltimore Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. White's partner, Howard M. Mottu (d. 1953) began his architectural career in the offices of Baldwin and Pennington. 1904, after the Baltimore Fire, he left that firm and opened a practice with White. The firms first designs were for office buildings. However, by the 1920s their work was chiefly residential.

The person for whom Tyrconnell was built, John Sears Gibbs, Jr., (d. 1953) was a prominent Baltimore business man. He managed the successful Gibbs Canning Company founded by his father, Major John Sears Gibbs, serving as president from 1916 to 1947. The Gibbs Company was located at 2200-2300 Boston Street in Canton. They produced canned fruits and vegables and had a subsidary factory in Cambridge, Maryland. Gibbs served as director of the First National Bank of Baltimore and the Eutaw Savings Bank and as a trustee of the Johns Hopkins University. His membership in the Bachelor's Cottillion may have led him to select fellow member Henry White as his architect. At his death, Gibbs' estate was valued at over \$3 million at the time the second largest estate ever probated in Baltimore County. (The largest was that of Isaac Emerson, Founder of Bromo Seltzer, who lived at Brooklandwood.) A visit to the Villa d'Este in Italy prompted John Gibbs and his wife Ethel Dixon Gibbs to create an Italian garden at their estate.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

Tyrconnel1

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland Item number

BA-1750
For NPS use only

received

date entered

8

Page

7

HISTORY AND SUPPORT (continued)

After Gibbs' death, Mr. and Mrs. D. Luke Hopkins purchased Tyrconnell. Hopkins was a prominent banker ending his career as chairman of the board of the Maryland National Bank. He served on the boards of several Baltimore banks as well as the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company, Johns Hopkins University and Hospital, and the Walters Art Gallery. The preservation of Paul's landscape design is to the Hopkins' constant attention to the maintenance of the garden.

Prior to the Gibbs' ownership, Tyrconnell was the home of the O'Donnell family who established the Canton Company. For a few years in the early 20th century, John Teackle Dennis (d. 1918), a noted Egyptologist and author, lived at Tyrconnell.

The Baltimore County Tax Ledgers provide useful information on the history of Tyrconnell. The 1919 ledger chronicles the demolition, or extensive remodeling of Dennis' House (assessed at \$13,669) and its replacement with Gibbs' "new house" (assessed at \$54,765) which measured $28' \times 60'$, $23' \times 60'$ (this is the kitchen wing prior to the 1933 addition), and $49\frac{1}{2}' \times 44'$.

Footnotes

Norman T. Newton, <u>Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture</u>, Cambridge, 372-380.

²Paula Deitz, "Stately Views," <u>New Yorker Magazine</u>, April 15, 1984, 73-76.

³J. Folsom Paul to Nancy Miller, Pocpopson, PA., June 19, 1984.

The Arnold Arboretum (1878) at Harvard was the first arboretum in America and has been the leading institution for the study of horticulture. It was developed as part of the Boston park system designed by Frederick Law Olmsted.

⁵Paula Deitz, "Stately Views," 73-76.

⁶R.P. Harnes, "The Kingdom of Tyrconnel," <u>Gardens, Houses and People</u>, 1950 Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Maryland.

The Peale Museum has a collection of Mottu and White drawings. Mrs. Hopkins has a set of drawings of Tyrconnell.

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84 BA-1750

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

Tyrconnell

Continuation sheet Baltimore County, Maryland Item number 9 and 10

Page

8

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Baltimore County Courthouse, Towson, Maryland Land Records Tax Ledgers, District 9, 1876 through 1940

Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore
Harns, R. P. "The Kingdom of Tyrconnell." Houses, Gardens and People. June, 1950.
Vertical file for John Sears Gibbs, D. Luke Hopkins, Howard M. Mottu, Henry S.
Taylor White.

Newman, Norman T. <u>Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture</u>. Cambridge, MA,: <u>Belknop Press</u>, 1971.

Deitz, Paula. "Stately Views." New York Times Magazine. April 15, 1984

Paul, J. Folsom, letter to Nancy Miller at Preservation Maryland, Marriottsville, Maryland. Pocpopson, Pennsylvania. June 19, 1984.

Peale Museum, Baltimore
Drawings and renderings of Mottu and White.

Hubbard, Henry Vincent and Theodora Kimball. An Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design. Boston: Hubbard Educational Trust, 1967, pp. 247-274.

Interview with Mrs. D. Luke Hopkins. Tyrconnell. March 12, 1984.

Interview with Mrs. Kenneth R. Higgins, great-graddaughter of John Marshall and Chariman of the Virginia Historic Landmark Commission, Richmond, July 20, 1984. Mrs. Higgins put to rest an attribution that two doors at Tyrconnell had come from the John Marshal House.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Boundary Description and Justification:

The boundaries are delineated on the attached map which consists of Baltimore County Tax Maps Nos. 69 and 79. The property under consideration consists of the suburban lot as acquired and designed in 1919 for creation of the house and grounds.

