

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED	

**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 Ira Remsen House

AND/OR COMMON  
214 Monument Street

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 214 Monument Street

CITY, TOWN	Baltimore	VICINITY OF	3rd	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT	3rd
STATE	Maryland	CODE	02	COUNTY	Baltimore
				CODE	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 checked="" 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 William Wolfson

STREET & NUMBER  
6505 Sanzo Road

CITY, TOWN Baltimore VICINITY OF STATE Maryland

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, Registry of Deeds  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER  
City Hall

CITY, TOWN Baltimore STATE Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE None

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

50

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

214 Monument Street in Baltimore, Maryland, is a three story brick row house. Constructed in the 1880's, it is typical of the row houses constructed during the period and is of no architectural significance.

Ira Remsen moved from 12 East Biddle Street to 214 Monument Street about 1901, the same year he became president of Johns Hopkins University. The house was his home until approximately 1925.

214 Monument Street has been altered. According to the present owner, the original cornice was removed and replaced in 1945 at the time of a general remodeling. At the same time the front was sand blasted and the interior divided up into rental units. At the present time apartments are located on the second and third floors with a commercial establishment on the first floor. Air-conditioners are mild intrusions on a visible side wall.

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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 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Ira Remsen, chemist and educator, was born February 10, 1846, in New York City. When he was eight, Remsen went with his ill mother to the country and attended school there. When she died two years later, he returned to New York and attended the local schools. He entered the Free Academy (later College of the City of New York), but did not graduate. His father wanted him to become a doctor and sent him to a homeopathic medical school. Remsen disliked the school and was allowed to transfer to Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons, where he graduated at the age of 21 in 1867.

Remsen had done well at Columbia and the publication of his senior thesis indicated that a promising career awaited him in medicine. Remsen, however, had made up his mind to study chemistry. Against his father's wishes, but with an inheritance from his mother, Remsen departed for Germany. Upon arriving in Munich he discovered that the venerable Justus von Liebig, a giant of nineteenth century chemistry, no longer accepted graduate students. He was, however, able to study under Jacob Volhard. In 1868 he transferred to Gottingen where he began research work in organic chemistry under Rudolph Fittig. When in 1870 Fittig was called to Tübingen, Remsen went with him and continued his studies in organic chemistry for another two years.

In 1872 armed with a German PhD and intent on devoting his life to research, Remsen returned to the United States. Once home Remsen decided to translate German works on chemistry and write a textbook before beginning a teaching career. After completing the first of many textbooks, Principles of Theoretical Chemistry (1877), he accepted a teaching position at Williams College. Remsen was not happy there. When he received a call from Daniel Coit Gilman to organize a chemistry department on the German model at Johns Hopkins, he accepted immediately.

Remsen spent the rest of professional career at Johns Hopkins. Between 1876 and 1901 he directed the chemistry department, building it into one of the finest in the country. In 1901 upon Gilman's resignation, Remsen became president of the university. Under his presidency Johns Hopkins continued its dedication to pure science research and the training of graduate students. Remsen guided Johns Hopkins until 1913. After stepping down as president Remsen continued as a professor of chemistry and also served as a consultant to Standard Oil of Indiana. He died in Carmel, California, on March 4, 1927, at the age of 81. His ashes were placed in a new laboratory at Johns Hopkins that had been named in his honor.

Although Remsen made important research contributions in chemistry, such as "Remsen's Law" and the discovery of saccharin, he is best remembered as a teacher, synthesizer,

(51)

(Continued)

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- F. H. Getman, The Life of Ira Remsen (Easton, 1940).  
 D. H. Killeffer, Eminent American Chemists (New York, 1924).  
 William A. Noyes and James F. Norris, "Biographical Memoir of Ira Remsen," National Academy of Sciences Biographical Memoirs, Vol. 14, (Washington, 1932).  
 "Ira Remsen," Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. 15 (New York, 1935).

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	3,6,0	350 5,4,0	4,3	5,0	8,4,0	B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING						
C							D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	James Sheire, Historian	DATE	March 1975
ORGANIZATION	Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service	TELEPHONE	
STREET & NUMBER	1100 L Street NW.	CITY OR TOWN	Washington
CITY OR TOWN	Washington	STATE	D.C.

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:  
 NATIONAL X STATE \_\_\_\_\_ LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE	DATE
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FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE
ATTEST:	DATE
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

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Statement of Significance:

214 Monument Street

and institution builder. In his classes and laboratory at Johns Hopkins, Remsen developed pedagogical techniques that were adopted throughout the country. Basically his techniques consisted of lectures explaining chemistry followed by laboratory work on problems raised during the lecture. Remsen was a brilliant lecturer and his daily visit to the work table of each graduate student make him a legend among his students.

As a synthesizer Remsen had the gift to being able to survey the literature of chemistry and then presenting this knowledge in readable textbook form. Although his own basic research discoveries did not rank him as a great experimenter, this ability to bring together the latest findings in organic and inorganic chemistry made him a dominant figure in American chemistry. In all Remsen published eight textbooks and laboratory manuals. As his Dictionary of American Biography biographer notes, "By a series of textbooks both of organic and inorganic chemistry, he extended his influence to thousands of students at home and abroad."

Remsen also made significant contributions to the institutions of chemistry. As already noted, his laboratory and teaching methods became a model. With other leading physical and biological scientists at the end of the nineteenth century, Remsen helped establish the university as a leading American institution for the conduct of basic or pure science research. In addition, in 1879 Remsen founded and for many years edited the American Chemical Journal. Until its incorporation with the Journal of the American Chemical Society in 1929, this technical periodical served an invaluable function of transmitting research results throughout the chemistry community.

Remsen received all the awards and honors open to a chemist. Among his medals were the Willard Gibbs Medal and the medal of the Society for Chemical Industry. He served as president of the American Chemical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the National Academy of Sciences. He belonged to numerous societies at home and abroad and served on many public boards and commissions. He was perhaps the most honored chemist of his day.

Ira Remsen's significance in the history of science in America is that he was a leading American chemist. In their memorial to him, William A. Noyes and James F. Norris, both outstanding chemists, simply state, "Ira Remsen was the outstanding figure in American chemistry for many years."

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