726 NORTH BROADWAY
(Rowhouse)
Baltimore
Baltimore ~~County~~ City
Maryland

HABS No. MD-1034

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

726 NORTH BROADWAY
(Rowhouse)

HABS No. MD-1034

Location: 726 North Broadway, Baltimore,
Baltimore ~~County~~ City, Maryland.
USGS Baltimore East, Maryland Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates
18.4350440.0362960

Significance: One of a block of brick rowhouses in the 700 block North Broadway, 726 North Broadway is a representative example of Baltimore urban vernacular brick rowhouse construction and design during the 1865-1875 period.

Description: This building is located on the west side of North Broadway, a major north-south boulevard in east Baltimore. Measuring approximately 17' by 42', the three-story, three bay rowhouse has brick foundations and walls laid in common bond. The structural system comprises a frame interior support of 5" joists and two tie-rods spanning the masonry bearing walls. One-inch formstone covers the brick on the facade. The facade is capped with a bracketed wood cornice shared with 724 and 728, and the roof is flat and tar-covered. As in four rowhouse buildings to the south, (716 - 722), the entryway to 726 is arched. The front entry features an arched transom with petal ornamentation. There are entries to the basement on the east and west. There are two eight-foot windows on the facade first floor, and three one-over-one light windows on the east side of both the second and third floors. In the rear, there are two brick chimneys on the north wall.

The original plan of this rowhouse, featuring a side staircase, parlor, dining room, reception hall, and rear pantry, is largely intact. The floor plan as well as such details as the curved interior walls near the staircase greatly resemble the characteristics seen in more lavish form in rowhouses built in the Bolton Hill section of Baltimore during the mid-1870s. Other distinctive decorative features include chestnut wood closets, scroll work on the staircase balustrade, and mantels over closed fireplaces with register grills.

History: While deed research indicates that 726 N. Broadway was certainly constructed by 1880, the house may date from as early as 1869, when the Sachse birdseye view of Baltimore depicted a three-house row of three-story dwellings on the sites of 726-730 North Broadway. The house definitely is shown in the 1887 Bromley Atlas as a brick rowhouse situated on a lot of 17.6 feet by 74.6 feet. The 1890 Sanborn describes the house as a brick, three-story dwelling with wood cornice and a partly open small rear one-story area. The three-story portion and the one-story rear part each possessed one chimney. The one-story area was reached from the interior via a single doorway in the house's one interior wall crossing its width. Thus, 728 N. Broadway was generally depicted as identical to its southern neighbor 724 N. Broadway.

Post-1914 maps show one major change to the structure: the raising of the rear area to three-story height, accomplished between 1914 and 1951. It is known that the house served as one of the first local roominghouses for Johns Hopkins Hospital medical students and doctors during the early twentieth century.

Construction of 726 N. Broadway reflected several larger patterns in the nineteenth century northeastward expansion of Baltimore City. Governed by the orderly requirements of Thomas Poppleton's 1822 street grid of Baltimore, yet strongly influenced by the continual need for immigrant housing, the Broadway rowhouse neighborhood which includes the 700 block of North Broadway developed in response to many geographic and economic pressures. Among these, a local factor of considerable historic importance has been the presence of one or more major hospitals in the area since the late 1700s. In particular, the Johns Hopkins Hospital, located in the 600 block of North Broadway since its opening in 1889, has had a key impact on the growth and building usage of the neighborhood.

Although Fell's Point, the southern terminus of Broadway, was a major deep water port between 1750 and 1800, the Broadway region north of current Fayette Street was largely beyond the reach of early mercantile activity at "The Point." Warner and Hanna's 1801 Plan of the City and Environs of Baltimore depicts only the then newly-built "hospital for the care of the homeless sick and the insane" on Loudenschlager Hill, in the vicinity of present Monument Street and Broadway. The Old Joppa or Philadelphia Road crossed this area as well, but did not change its predominantly rural character.

Between 1820 and the Civil War, Baltimore's rigorous adherence to the Poppleton Street plan defined much of the character of urbanization in the North Broadway region. Without regard for topography, the Poppleton plan laid out a grid of 350-foot long blocks with service alleys. The street grid preceded actual housing construction in the 700 block North Broadway by several decades. City maps of the pre-Civil War era show few residential structures north of Pitt Street (modern Fayette) along either side of Broadway. Beyond Pitt and Broadway, antebellum development centered in the Madison Square vicinity after that square's opening in 1853, but generally did not yet extend east of Bond Street. Key streets, however, were already in place. Its boulevard width a legacy of earlier use as a Fell's Point ropewalk, Broadway was opened and paved from Baltimore Street to Gay Street between 1851 and 1854. Monument Street ran eastward from the city center as early as 1830 and, by 1863, was under repair in the North Broadway area. Madison Street was in its present location by 1860.

As immigrant workers and their families arrived in Baltimore in ever-increasing numbers during the 1850-1880 period, neighborhoods bordering Broadway saw

extension of city services, construction of public buildings, and speculative erection of entire blocks of rowhouses. In 1854, the Accommodation Line of horse-drawn omnibuses began running from Fell's Point up Broadway to Gay Street. Public or community-oriented structures in the vicinity of 700 N. Broadway included the Broadway Methodist Protestant Church at the northeast corner of Monument and Broadway (1860), the Hebrew Hospital fronting Ann and Monument Streets (1866-1868; precursor to Sinai Hospital), and the Episcopal Church of Our Savior at the northwest corner of Broadway and McElderry (1869-1871). By 1876, the system of "Broadway Parks" along the center of that street were extended up to North Avenue (then the legal northern limit of Baltimore City) and landscaped with flowers, trees, and fountains. In 1888, Enoch Pratt Free Library opened its Branch No. 5 at Broadway and Miller Street (the 800 block North Broadway). A year later, displacing the Methodist cemetery and several dwellings, the seventeen original buildings of Johns Hopkins Hospital opened on the site bounded by Broadway, Monument, Wolfe, and Jefferson Streets.

The ethnic diversity of the North Broadway neighborhood was reflected by 1890 in construction of the Bohemian Hall at Barnes and Broadway (1000 block) and the new brick First Baptist Church southwest of the hospital (built 1880 to house the oldest black Baptist congregation in Maryland). The twentieth century saw Johns Hopkins attain a dominant position in the community, building Hampton House for nurses (1926-1927), a series of apartment houses and units (1950s-1960s) and the Kennedy Institute (1962-1964) in the surrounding vicinity of the 700 block of Broadway. As early as 1904, residents in the 700-730 block responded economically to Hopkins' influence by opening drug stores for patients and boardinghouses for medical students and doctors. Jane Tydings at 726 N. Broadway pioneered in the latter enterprise and became a major real-life model for Augusta Tucker's best-selling 1939 novel Miss Susie Slagle's.

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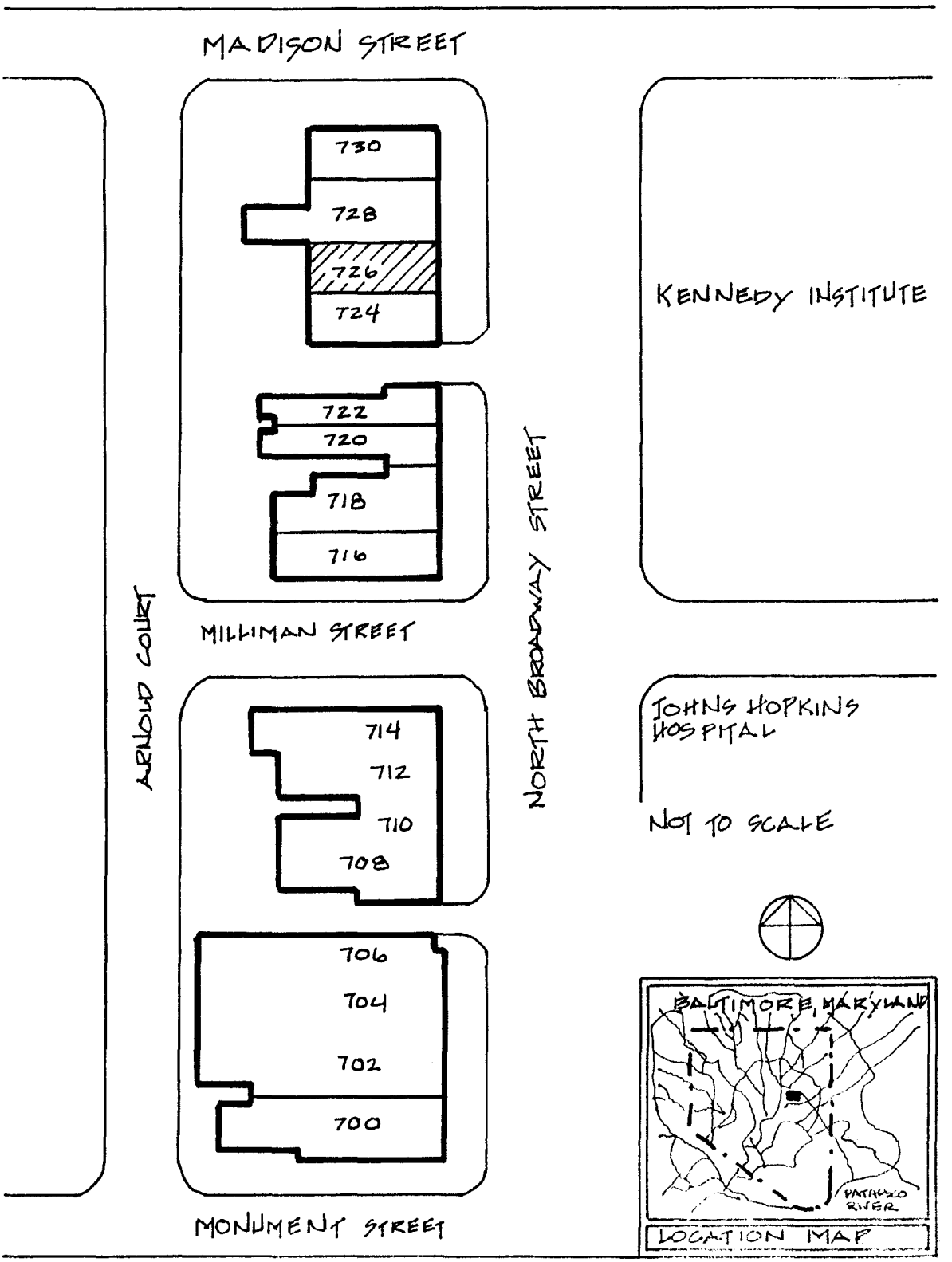
May 14, 1991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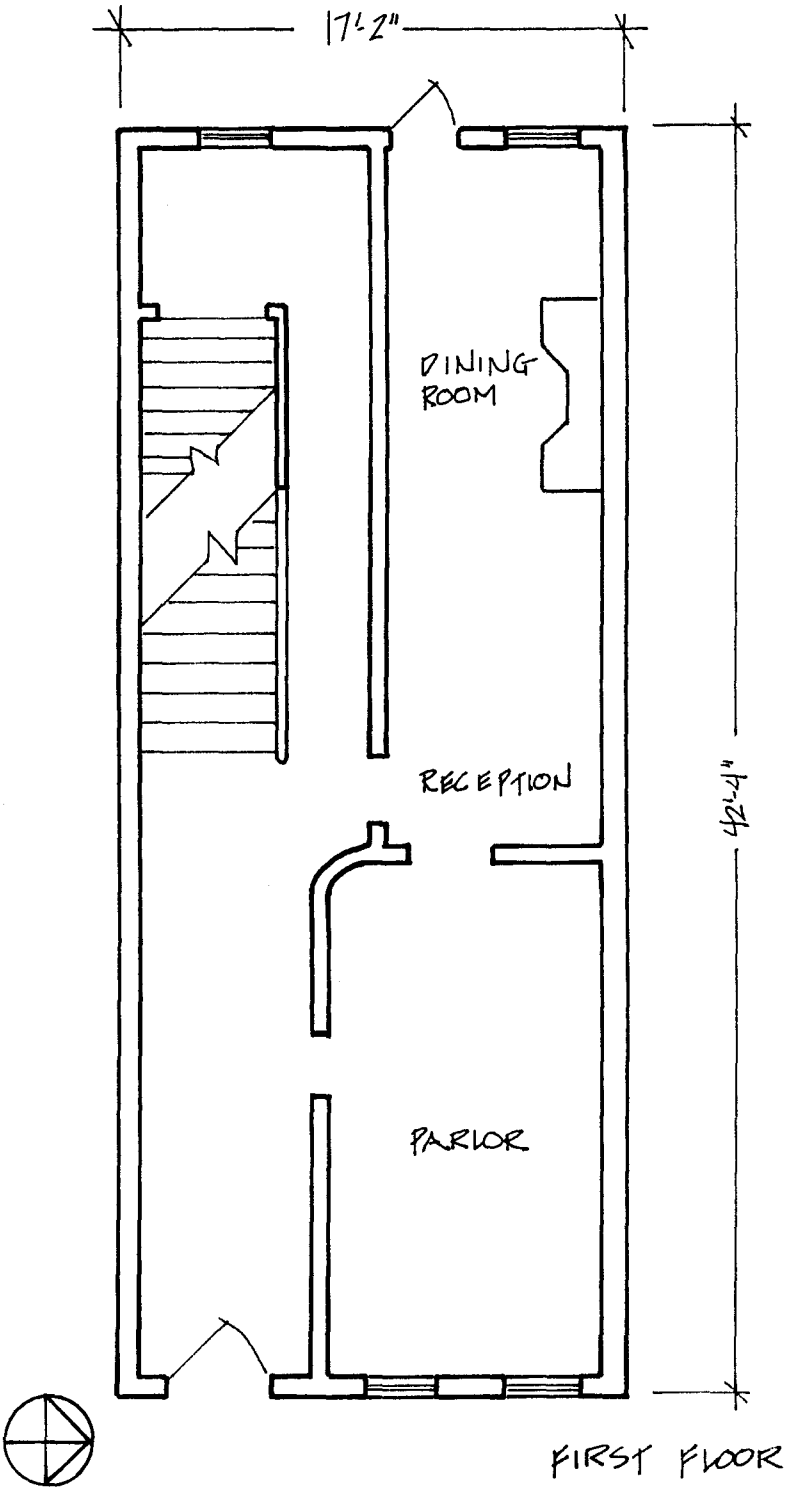
ARNOLD COURT
NORTH BROADWAY STREET
KENNEDY INSTITUTE
JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL
NOT TO SCALE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
PATAPSCO RIVER
LOCATION MAP



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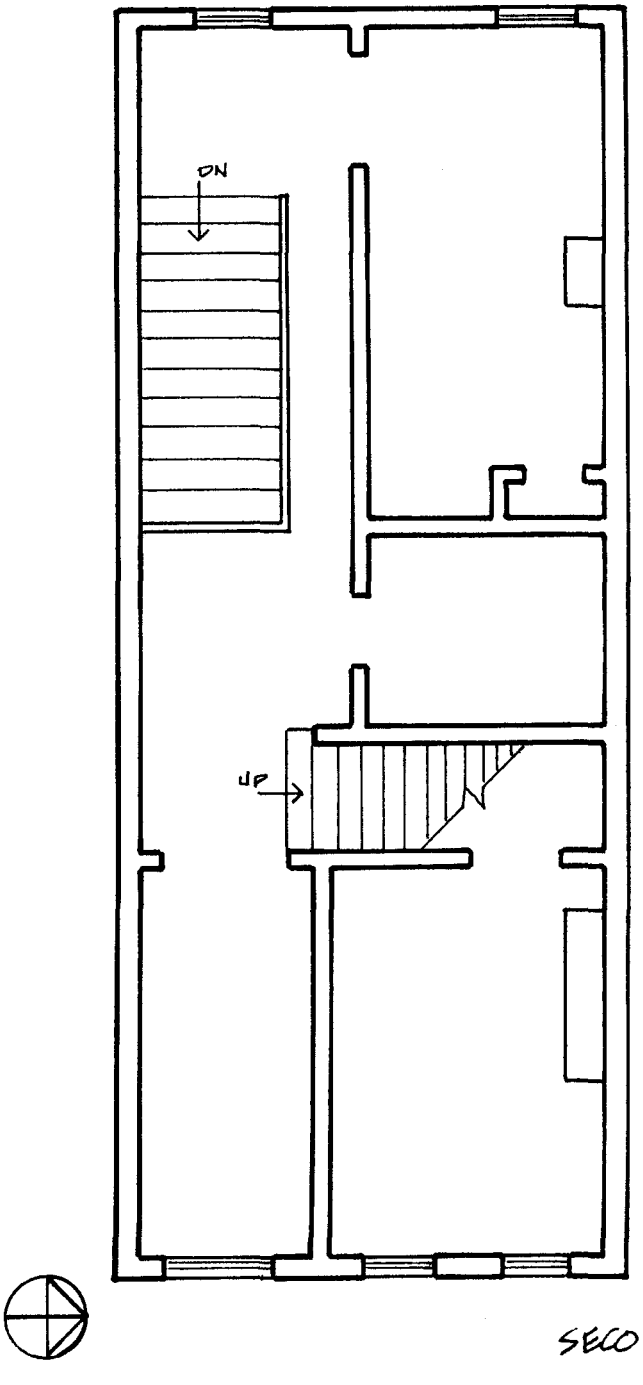

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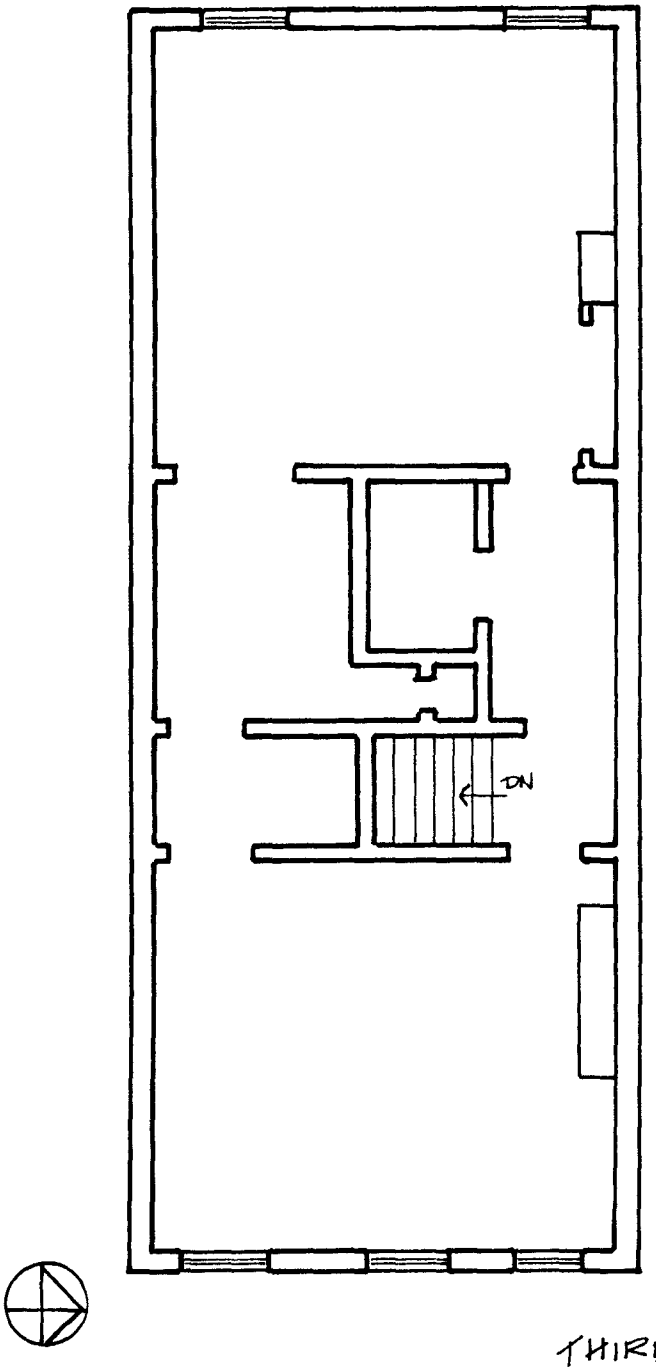

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