

James Monroe Dry Goods Store
140 Main Street (Main and Francis Streets)
Annapolis
Anne Arundel County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-261

HABS
MD,
2-ANNA,
59-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JAMES MONROE DRY GOODS STORE

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Location: 140 Main Street (Main and Francis Streets), Annapolis,
Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

Present Occupant Demolished, December 1964.

PART 1. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: Mid-nineteenth century.

2. Original and subsequent Owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stood. Reference is to the Hall of Records, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, and the Anne Arundel County Courthouse..

1822 Deed June 1, 1822, Liber WSG 8 f591.

Nicholas Brewer

To

Nicholas Watkins.

Conveyance refers to property previously conveyed by J. Wesley White and Jeremiah Hughes to Mary Curran.

1837 Deed, Liber NHG 22 f341.

Nicholas Watkins

To

Grafton Monroe.

1862 Will.

Grafton Monroe

To

Heirs.

1869 Deed, September 8, Liber SH 4 f169.

Ellen Monroe

To

James Monroe and Matilda Monroe.

Boundaries of property are described in terms of Lot A & B.

1898 Deed, January 24, 1898, Liber W 9 f115.

James and Matilda Monroe (executors)

To

Frank Monroe.

Frank Monroe takes mortgage with Annapolis Savings Institution for \$2000.00 on February 18.

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- 1902 Deed, January 30, 1902, Liber GW 23 f428.
J. Wirt Randall (trustee)
To
Frank A. Monroe.
Dealing with back section of present lot. Randall
authorized to sell property for \$255.00 resulting from
equity case No. 163 dealing with vacant lot owned by Brewer
family.
- 1929 Deed, June 20, 1929, Liber FSR 53 f355.
Frank Monroe
Lease to
David Ross and Wife.
For ten years; lease of two apartments and store.
- 1941 Deed, May 3, 1941, Liber JHH 235 f283.
Frank Monroe
To
Ira M. Parsons, Sr.
- 1947 Will, April 6, 1947. Liber RGP 3 f153.
Ira M. Parsons, Sr.
To
Ira M. Parsons, Jr. and Thomas B. Parsons. Apparently
Parsons, Sr. also willed a portion of his estate to the
Kernans Hospital and the Home for the Aged of the Methodist
Church.
- 1948 Deed, November 16, 1948, Liber JHH 503 f134.
Home for the Aged of the Methodist Church (Baltimore)
To
Ira M. Parsons, Jr.
Reconveyance of title to Ira M. Parsons, Jr. to settle title.
- 1955 Will, March 9, 1955, Liber JHH 914 f360.
M. Parsons, and Central National Bank of Cleveland, trustees
Fanny W. Parsons (Hill)
Convey one half of property under will of Thomas B. Parsons.
- 1964 Deed, Liber LNP 1772 f586.
Ira M. Parsons, Jr. and Fanny W. Parsons (hill)
To
Donald E. Wolpe of Washington, D.C.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Built in the heart of the commercial district of nineteenth century Annapolis, this building had a distinguished facade and interesting details.

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2. Condition: The structure appeared sound except for a probable deterioration of first-floor framing. Four months after the field report on this building was completed, the building was demolished.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The three story building is rectangular in form, with a four bay front. It measures approximately 38'x39'.
2. Walls: The building incorporates an older brick wall, laid in English bond, at the west end. It has a brick water table about three feet above grade. The main walls of the building are brick.
3. Chimneys: There is a chimney on the west wall, slightly off-center of the gable. It bears two raised brick panels on the face and one on the ends. The chimney on the east wall is also slightly off-center of the gable.

4. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: The entrance to the upper floors is located in the west bay of the street facade; the wooden frontispiece is applied to the brick wall. Panelled pilasters flank the opening, which is spanned by a high segmental wooden paneled arch. Behind the arch is a rectangular transom. The transom bar is molded to correspond to the impost capitals. The arch has a paneled key-block and narrow archivolt; each spandrel contains one panel with a raised field. Above each pilaster is a large bracket which supports a cornice. Under the impost, on the inside jamb of the opening on each side, is a small console. The door is a double door. Each leaf has two panels with raised field and projecting moldings.

b. Windows: Typical upper floor windows are double-hung sash windows, four-lights-over-four-lights, six-lights-over-six-lights, and two-lights-over-two-lights. They have heavy wooden sills and large ovolo trim set back several inches inside the masonry opening.

The second story windows on the main elevation have balconies and cornices. Each cornice resembles that of the doorway to the upper stories, but is smaller in scale. An ornamental band extends from bracket to bracket. It resembles an enriched dentil course. Each of the four windows on the second floor main elevation has a shallow cast iron balcony. An ornamental square central panel contains tracery radiating from a central medallion with a flower and four trefoils; on each side of the central panel is a simple open pedestal.

5. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof has a low pitch, whose ridge is parallel to the street facade. It is covered with sheet metal.

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- b. Cornice: A large, bracketed wooden cornice extends across the street elevation and the west end. It returns around the southeast corner and terminates. There are ten brackets resembling consoles on the street elevation. At the lower end of the brackets is a torus molding which forms the separation between a plain architrave and frieze. At the top of the frieze is an ornamental band of modified dentils. A box gutter is concealed in the upper part of the cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: There is an entrance to the store between two modern display windows on the main elevation. Two fluted cast iron columns support a transverse girder, while two others support the rear wall of the upper stories. The entrance leads into a rectangular shop. To the left of the store entrance is an entrance to a stairhall which leads to the upper floors.
- b. Second floor: There are two rooms of equal size fronting the street, a short central hall and two rooms behind.
- c. Originally this floor formed part of the same dwelling as the second floor; it is now a separate dwelling. It has a central hall (perpendicular to the street) with two main rooms on each side and a front hall-chamber. There is a small rear modern addition housing a bathroom.

2. Stairways: The stair is an open string, with brackets. There are twelve risers to the landing, eight more to the second floor, and eleven to the third floor. The newel is large, and has both octagonal and turned portions. The hand rail is molded. The treads, risers, and balusters are of yellow pine.
3. Flooring: The original flooring appears to have been of yellow pine boards.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are plaster, applied to brick masonry and painted. The ceilings are plaster, apparently on wood lathe. On the second floor, the walls are plaster, painted above the wainscot. The southeast room has a plaster cornice with a cove bordered by bands of large bead moldings; the ceiling has a molded plaster centerpiece.
5. Doorways and Doors: The inner door of the vestibule has a high rectangular opening framed by a wide molded wooden architrave on a plinth. At the top is a transom light; transom bar and mullion bars carry applied moldings. Below the transom are double doors with side lights. The upper half of each door is glazed, the lower half has two unequal panels. The doors have faux graining.

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On the second floor, a wide rectangular opening ornamented at the top with a row of thin turned beaded spindles, connects the front and rear rooms on the east end. All door and window openings are trimmed with a wide molded wooden architrave above a plinth. The doors are six-panel doors and resemble those of the vestibule except that they are not glazed. The doors on the third floor have wooden architrave trim. They have six panels with moldings and raised fields.

D. Site:

1. General setting: The building faced south on Main Street, just east of the junction with Francis Street. The neighborhood, once largely residential, is now almost entirely commercial.

Prepared by Eleni Silverman
Historian, HABS (4/05/84)

From field reports by
Wirth, Historic Annapolis
8/64
and
Harley J. McKee
N.P.S. Architect (7/30/64)