

NEAR Pleasant Prospect
Woodmore, Md.
Prince Georges County

HABS No.
MD-672 HABS
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2.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Washington, D.C.

Historic American Buildings Survey
Delos H. Smith, District Officer
1707 Eye St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

PLEASANT PROSPECT
(Isaac Duckett House)
12008 Woodmore Road
Mitchellville
Prince George's County
Maryland

HABS NO. MD-672

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Addendum To:
PLEASANT PROSPECT
(Isaac Duckett House)
13008 Woodmore Road
Woodmore
Prince George's County
Maryland

PHOTOGRAPHS

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PLEASANT PROSPECT
(Isaac Duckett House)

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Addendum To: PLEASANT PROSPECT
(Isaac Duckett House)
13008 Woodmore Road
Woodmore

- Location: 12806 Woodmore Road, Mitchellville, Prince George's County, Maryland
- Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Garthoff (also present occupant)
- Present Use: Country residence
- Significance: Pleasant Prospect is an excellent example of the Adamesque Georgian manor or plantation house, and contains fine interior plaster work. It is also significant for its association with prominent families of Prince George's County, that of Dr. Isaac Duckett who built the house ca. 1798, and of the Contee family.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Ca. 1798. The property was purchased by Dr. Isaac Duckett ca. 1788. By 1798 the Federal Direct Tax described the improvements to the property as "a new Two story Brick dwelling...."
2. Original and subsequent owners:
 - 1698 Property, consisting of some 500 acres, patented by Thomas Sprigg on the 1st of August 1698, and refereed to as "Sprigg's Request."
 - 1788 Deed
Thomas Sprigg
To
Isaac Duckett
"Sprigg's Request"
 - 1809 Property repatented as "Pleasant Prospect" in 1809. In addition to the original "Sprigg's

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Request," included in the new patent was "Elizabeth's Purchase" of 244 acres, "Duckett's Addition" of 26-3/4 acres, part "Pye Anne's Grove" of 12 acres, part "Young's Addition" of 26-3/4, part of "Young's Purchase" of 208-1/2 acres and part of "Hall's Purchase" of 81-1/2 acres. Total acreage amounts to 825 acres.

- 1823 Will TT 1:342, signed 4 December 1822, died 1823
Dr. Isaac Duckett
To
Capt. John Contee
"...my most worthy son in Law, John Contee, I devise and bequeath my whole estate, real, personal and mixed to be under his entire control and disposition for the best advantage of my grandchildren...."
- 1839 Will PC 1:123, Administration Docket 1810
Capt. John Contee (signed 31 October 1839),
Date of Death: 15 November 1839
To
"...to my beloved son, John and my beloved daughter, Margaret, and their heirs forever, all the estate of the late Isaac Duckett, consisting for the personalty of negroes; and for the realty of the Plantation called Enfield Chase....also the estate on which I reside called Pleasant Prospect.... I appoint my son, John Contee and my daughter, Margaret, trustees to carry into effect their grandfather, Isaac Duckett's Will..."
- 1844 Deed (appearing in Equity #434) 20 September 1844
Nicholas H. Shipley and Margaret Shipley of Frederick County
To
John Contee of Prince George's County
"Whereas there descended to said Margaret Shipley (Contee) and the said John Contee tenants in common under the wills of their grandfather, Isaac Duckett and their father, John Contee, both of Prince George's County, a large real and personal estate consisting.... of a plantation called 'Enfield Chase' and a plantation called 'Pleasant Prospect' on which

the said John Contee the father resided at the time of his death.... and whereas on or about the 28 of July 1841 it was agreed by and between the said Margaret, then Margaret Contee and the said John Contee her brother for the making partition of.... that the said John Contee should have all the stock, farming utensils, crop and other personal property on the estate called 'Pleasant Prospect'... and the said Margaret... 'Enfield Chase..."

- 1864 Administration #624, date of death: 29 May 1864
John Contee
To
Mary Joliffe Contee, widow; surviving children: Florence Contee Brooke, Mary Lucretia Contee, Eliza Duckett Contee and Sylvia Drayton Contee
- 1864 Death of Mary Lucretia Joliffe Contee; Date of Death: 6 August 1864
- 1865 Equity #434 (consolidated with #432)
Farmer's Bank of Maryland
vs.
Daniel Clark, administrator of John Contee, Mary Contee et al.
- 1868 Deed HB 1:115, 19 February 1868
Thomas G. Pratt of Baltimore City and Daniel Clark of Prince George's County, trustees by decree of the Circuit Court
To
Jonathan T. Walker of Prince George's County
"Pleasant Prospect" of which the late John Contee died seized and possessed.... containing 562 acres."
- 1885 Indenture JWB 4:466, 17 April 1885
Jonathan T. Walker and Jane A. Walker, his wife of Prince George's County
To
Edward S. Walker
"... in consideration of natural love and affection....for their son.... part of the tract known as 'Pleasant Prospect'.... being near Woodmore.... on the road from Bladensburg to the village of Queen Anne.... two hundred

and forty-eight acres and seven perches...."

- 1885 Will, Administration #1291, Will dated 10 November 1885
Jonathan T. Walker
To
Jane A. Walker, wife
"The rest and residue of my estate and property....I give to my wife, Jane A. Walker and appoint her... the sole executrix...."
- 1886 Administration #1520, Will dated 12 February 1886
Jane A. Walker
To
Edward Spedden Walker
"...It is my desire and I so will that my son, Edward Spedden Walker, have the land, it belonging to me at the time of my death, which adjoins his land that he received by deed from my husband, J.T. Walker, in his lifetime, containing 246 acres.... provided that my son pays unto my daughter Alice... \$6,000 at the expiration of 12 months from the time of my death...."
- 1894 Equity #2114, Filed 1 July 1894
Edward S. Walker, plaintiff
vs.
Grafton C.D. Townshend and Alice Amelia Townshend, his wife; defendants
Case intended to settle the dispute between the two parties as to the terms of their mother's will and codicil, and the distribution of the property. It was determined that the property be appraised and Edward pay his sister, Alice, one-half the value of the real estate, and thus become sole heir.
- 1895 Deed JWB 32:43, 6 March 1895
Alice Townshend and G.C.D. Townshend
To
Edward S. Walker
- 1940 Deed 549:162, 13 February 1940
Edward S. Walker and Anne O. Walker, his wife,
of Prince George's County
To

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William Desmond Walker and Nancy P. Roane Walker, his wife

".... in consideration of natural love and affection.... tract... known as 'Pleasant Prospect' located near Woodmore in Queen Anne District... containing seventy acres, three roods and 21 perches.... This is part of my home place property which I acquired by two deeds, one from my father, Jonathan T. Walker and his wife, Jane to me, dated April 17, 1885, JWB 4:466 and the other from Alice Townshend and G.C.D. Townshend... March 6, 1895 JWB 32:43.

1940 Will WTD 6:362, Administration #6945; Date of Death: 13 November 1940
Edward S. Walker
To

".... unto my son, William Desmond Walker, seventy-five acres of land of my home place including the dwelling house where he now lives and barns and buildings there located.... rest and residue to Anne O. Walker, wife.... Ann M. Walker, daughter..... a life estate in farm "Pleasant Prospect" 390.0170 acres to widow, Anne O. Walker with the remainder to my ten children...."

1973 Death of Anne O. Walker, widow; 11 May 1973

1977 Deed 4765:389, 19 May 1977
Lillias W. Hamilton, James Hume Hamilton, Jr.; Naomi C. Walker, Hilda W. Boice et al
To

William D. Walker
"Being part of the same which the parties of the first part obtained from the late Edward S. Walker by Will, February 13, 1940, Administration #6945, Will WTD 6:362

1982 Deed 5570:746, 18 August 1982
John Ponchock and Rose Marie Ponchock
To
Raymond L. and Vera A. Garthoff
5.001 acres being part of the conveyance from Lillias W. Hamilton et al to William D. Walker et ux, 4765:389; \$220,000.

1983 Easement 5622:543,
Raymond L. and Vera A. Garthoff
To
Maryland Historical Trust
An historic preservation easement for
"Pleasant Prospect" 5.001 acres, Being
4765:389.... "created for the purpose of
generally preserving and maintaining
historic, aesthetic and cultural
properties...."

3. Builder, contractor, supplier: Etched in two bricks on the west rear wall to the south of the doorway is the name "John Clarke" who, according to family tradition, is the builder of the house. This, however, has not been documented. The supplier for the lumber and woodwork for the Victorian interior renovations was Thomas W. Smith (corner 1st Street & Indiana Avenue NW, Washington, D.C.), according to receipts among the papers filed in the estate of Jonathan Walker in 1885 (Admin. #1291).

4. Original plans and construction: Original plans are not known to exist. The improvements are, however, briefly described in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax as "a new Two story Brick dwelling, very elegantly furnished with passage 20 by 16, kitchen 19 by 14, all of Brick; a Frame Meat House 14 feet square, Milk House 14 feet square, Lumber House 20 by 16, all new and very well furnished." Although the rooms are not listed in this description, they are in an October 11, 1820 advertisement for the sale of the property which appeared in the National Intelligencer, as follows: "A large brick dwelling 56 feet in length, 34 feet wide, two stories high; three large rooms below, 3 above, wing at one end, milk house, smoke house, meat house, ice house, corn houses and stables... 11 tobacco houses..."

5. Alterations and additions: The house underwent renovation ca. 1885. It was presumably at this time that the Victorian era stairway was added in the main hall and the original stair, believed to have been located in the small northwest room adjoining the parlor, was removed. This is based on receipts in the administration of Jonathan Walker from Thomas W. Smith, dealer in lumber, sash, doors, blinds, moldings, mantels, etc.; corner 1st. Street and Indiana Avenue NW. The receipts, which date from March through May 1885, include a 42 ft. walnut rail, balusters, 3 turned newels, 3 mantels, 13 doors,

numerous rim and mortise locks, hinges, 3 lights (of) glass 18" x 32" and 3 lights (of) glass 18" x 36".

Also, early descriptions list the first floor as having three rooms (parlour, dining room, library and large L-shaped hall), not the current four, as well as three rooms upstairs (later four, currently three large bedrooms and a bath where the former stair hall would have been).

Exterior renovations were also made, probably at the same time. A center gable and a porch running the length of the facade were removed in recent years by the current owners. The kitchen wing was undoubtedly constructed at some point later, replacing the original 19' x 14' kitchen listed in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax. The 1936 HABS photograph of the rear elevation shows a entry porch constructed of what appears to be rock-faced concrete block, with a small room over it on the second floor. This addition, now gone, probably accounts for the added french doorway currently there. Lastly, disproportionate brick lintels appearing in the east front of the hyphen suggest that the current windows are replacements of the original.

B. Historical Context:

Pleasant Prospect reflects the wealth and elegance of the upper class of planters in Prince George's County during the late 18th and early 19th century. The house was unusually large and well appointed for its time, with a large hall or passage, formal parlor, separate dining room and a library in the main block of the first floor. The 1839 inventory of the personal estate of John Contee gives indications as to the use of the rooms. The parlor is referred to as the "drawing room" in the inventory. This is another term for the best parlor where guests were received. Contee's inventory lists all the common accoutrements of the early 19th-century middle-to-upper-middle class parlor including: drawing room carpet, large mahogany sofa, two lounges, one pair of mahogany card tables, mahogany tea table, one dozen mahogany chairs, mantel glass (mirror) and pair of mantel lamps, lot of books in drawing room and a piano (Admin. #1810). This compares well with what Elisabeth Garrett in her book At Home; The American Family 1750-1870 refers to the salient features of the late-18th to early 19th century drawing room which included: a pair of sofas, a dozen chairs, a

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twain of piers glasses (a mirror between two windows usually with a table beneath it) and tandem tables (pg. 47).

Likewise, the dining room at Pleasant Prospect was an indicator of wealth. Garrett points out that a separate room purely for dining was a symbol of economic success during this period (pg. 78). Generally, dining was done in the kitchen or multi-use room where other items (desks, game tables, sofas, etc.) might also be found. Contee's inventory lists a sideboard, one mahogany dining table, one set of mahogany dining tables, eight rush bottom chairs, eight green arm chairs, two knife cases, two large looking glasses, a brussels carpet, hearth rug and a (horse) hair (stuffed) sofa.

Pleasant Prospect was built by Dr. Isaac Duckett ca. 1798 on property he acquired from the Thomas Sprigg family following his marriage to Sprigg's granddaughter, Margaret Bowie. The property then consisted of 500 acres of "Sprigg's Request" patented by Thomas Sprigg in 1698. The Federal Direct Tax of 1798 describes the Duckett home as "a new Two story Brick dwelling, very elegantly furnished..." Dr. Duckett added various new parcels to the property, eventually repatenting what was then 825 acres as "Pleasant Prospect" in 1809.

On the 31st of December 1813 the only daughter of Isaac and Margaret Duckett, Eliza, married John Contee, eldest son of Richard Alexander Contee and his wife, Elizabeth Saunders. John was only nineteen years old, and Eliza, seventeen. They presumably lived at Pleasant Prospect although it legally remained the property of Dr. Duckett until his death in 1823. John and Eliza had four children: Mary Margaret, John Jr., Eliza Jr. and Margaret. Eliza, however, died on the 12th of November 1821 while her children were only one to seven years of age.

When her father, Isaac Duckett, died a few years later he left his entire estate to John Contee for the sake of his grandchildren. As stated in his will, "Item, having the most full and entire confidence in the sound sense and discrete management of my most worthy son in Law, John Contee, I devise and bequeath my whole Estate, real, personal and mixed to be under his entire control and disposition for the best advantage of my grand children" (Will TT 1:342). Contee was given carte blanche to sell

and otherwise disburse any of the property as he saw fit. As stated by Dr. Duckett, "only requesting that he may bestow his utmost care and attention in and about the morals and education of my grandchildren and will procure for them the best teachers and send them to the best seminaries, academies and colleges...." Evidently, Dr. Duckett had such confidence in his son-in-law that he went as far as to state that if either of his grandchildren were to marry without the consent of their father, they would "forfeit all right, title... to any portion or part of my estate" (Ibid.).

In subsequent years John Contee added tracts adjoining Pleasant Prospect to the Isaac Duckett's original estate. John also had other property (including a plantation called Java in Anne Arundel County). Thus, John Contee was a man of great wealth, partly in his own right and partly through his marriages to women of wealth. John later remarried to Anne Louisa Snowden, daughter of Richard Snowden of Montpelier, in February of 1824. Together they had three more children: Caroline Snowden, Charles Snowden and Richard. In addition to being a planter, John Contee also served in the U.S. Navy, acquiring the rank of Lieutenant. He received a sword and metals for his gallant conduct during his service (Bowie, 234-35).

John Contee died on the 15th November 1839. His property passed to his wife, Anne, and the four of his children still living; John and Margaret from his first marriage, and Charles and Richard from his second. Anne received his plantation in Anne Arundel County known as Java. As stated in Contee's Will, John and Margaret received "All the estate of the late Isaac Duckett consisting personally of negroes and for the realty of the plantation called Enfield Chase.... also the estate on which I now reside called Pleasant Prospect...." (Will PC 1:123). John and Margaret were also made executors of their father's Will in order that they might, ".... carry into effect their grandfather's Isaac Duckett's will...." (Ibid.).

As mentioned, Contee was a man of affluence. The inventory of the "Goods, chattels and personal estate" of John Contee lists the furnishings of an elegant home, as well as twenty-two slaves, sixty-five hogshead of tobacco, rye, hay, timothy, cultivators, wagons and other farming implements (Admin. 1810). It had been described previously in an 1820 advertisement for its sale as

"1,095 acres in the forest of Prince George's County, about seven miles from Queen Anne where there is a tobacco warehouse on navigable water; ten miles from Upper Marlboro. A large brick dwelling 56 feet in length, 34 feet wide, two stories high, 3 large rooms below, 3 above, wing at one end...." (National Intelligencer).

On the 28th July 1841 a formal agreement was made between Margaret and John that they divide their estate, John taking Pleasant Prospect and Margaret, Enfield Chase (Equity #434). This decision came upon the occasion of the marriages of each. Thus, Pleasant Prospect, along with a tract called 'The Woodlands,' and with "articles of furniture and plate, and a number of negro slaves.... with all the work horses, cattle, sheep, hogs and all the farming utensils..." (Deed in Equity #434) became the property of John Contee, Jr. John married Mary Lucretia Joliffe, daughter of James Joliffe of Norfolk, Virginia on the 6th of December 1840. Together they had six children, four of whom lived to adulthood (Florence, Mary Lucretia, Eliza Duckett and Sylvia Drayton; Louis and John Jr. deceased). In addition to being a planter, John Contee Jr. also served in the U.S. Navy and was a graduate of the Naval Academy. He served as Captain of the Cavalry Company known as "The Planter's Guard" (Bowie, 236).

John Contee, Jr., died at Pleasant Prospect on the 29th of May 1864. The property was then described as follows: "Upon the premises a brick dwelling house and overseers house, one good quarter, and two inferior quarters, six tobacco houses of which only two are in good repair, one corn house in good repair, and one corn house very much not of repair, a brick stable and carriage house very much not of repair, one frame stable not in good order, and a granary.... The tract of land upon which the mansion house is situated consists of about 600 acres... 20 acres in wood and the rest in arable land" (Admin. #624). The inventory of the furnishings mentions the following rooms: parlour, library, passage or hall, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms (Ibid.). The plantation then became the property of Mary L. Contee, his wife. She, however, passed away soon after, on the 6th of August of the same year.

Following the deaths of both John and Mary Contee, Pleasant Prospect went to equity sale. It was described as follows: "The estate was the residence of the late

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John Contee and is improved by a Large Brick Mansion. Upon the first floor there is a large Hall, with Parlor, Dining room and Library adjoining, and a Back Building and fine portico attached. The second floor contains four commodious chambers. The grounds are highly beautified with fine shade trees, walks, etc. ... garden with choice fruits, two large apple orchards..." A number of outbuildings were also listed, including tenant houses, large barns "capable of holding a hundred hogsheads of tobacco," stables, and corn houses. Growing on the plantation were tobacco, grasses, wheat and corn. The property was described as being in "the Forest of Prince George's County," fifteen miles from Washington and ten from Bladensburg (Equity #434). Pleasant Prospect was sold by the trustees for the Farmer's Bank of Maryland, Thomas Pratt and Daniel Clarke, to Jonathan T. Walker of Prince George's County in February of 1868 (Deed HB 1:115).

Pleasant Prospect remained in the Walker family for an entire century. Jonathan Walker and his wife, Jane Amelia Walker lived here from 1868 until their deaths in 1885 and 1886 respectively. It was during their ownership that the house underwent renovation in 1885, the year of Mr. Walker's death. Numerous receipts for interior finishings among the administration papers of the estate of Jonathan Walker indicate that the current stairway, and possibly other finishings (including three mantels) were added at that time. It was probably at this time also that a gable was added to the front roofline and a porch across the facade (appearing in the 1936 HABS photographs). They may also have been responsible for the finishing of the third-floor rooms.

Upon the death of Jonathan in 1885, Jane received Pleasant Prospect along with "...the growing crop of wheat thereon... all the household furniture and other articles in the dwelling house, carriage and horses, livestock and farm implements and machinery upon the place.... corn and tobacco...." Mentioned in the inventory of furnishings are five bedrooms and a sitting room, presumably the three bedrooms and the former stairhall--now sitting room--on the second floor and the two finished rooms on the third floor. The property was appraised at this time and described as follows: "It is one of the best tobacco farms in the neighborhood. The dwelling house is of brick, large and substantial and in good repair and the other buildings necessary to the said house as a dwelling house are in good order. There are

enough farm buildings upon the place in good repair for the purpose of farming and planting. There are three barns, and a cow house.... all in good order, and a good tenant house" (Equity #434).

Upon the death of Jane Walker, her property passed to eight children. Pleasant Prospect became the property of her son, Edward Spedden Walker, according to her Will: "It is my desire and I so will that my son, Edward Spedden Walker have the land.... which adjoins his land that received by deed from my husband, J.T. Walker....provided that my son... pays unto my daughter Alice....\$6,000... (Administration #1520). He had previously received "part of the tract known as 'Pleasant Prospect'" (248 acres and 7 perches) from his parents by a deed dated 17 April 1885. In a codicil to her Will, Jane Walker requested that the property be divided between Edward and his sister, Alice, but leaving him the option to buy Alice's share. A dispute over the intent of their mother's will as relating to this matter, and her neglect of the other siblings, brought the case to court in 1894. In the end, Edward paid Alice one-half of the appraisal value and obtained full ownership (Equity #2114).

Edward Walker and his wife, Anna, lived out their lives here, farming the land and raising their ten children. The farm produced tobacco, hay, barley and corn, dairy cattle and other livestock. Edward died on November 13, 1940. The Great Depression must have taken its toll on Pleasant Prospect for the appraisal taken at the time of Edward Walker's death described the property as improved by "...a Colonial brick dwelling which has been allowed to deteriorate. All outbuildings are in a poor state of repair.... The land is in a poor state of cultivation" (Administration #6945). According to Edward's Will, "...unto my son, William Desmond Walker, seventy-five acres of my home place.... including the dwelling house where he now lives and barns and buildings there located.... rest and residue to Anna O. Walker, wife and Ann M. Walker, daughter... " Furthermore, a life estate in the farm "Pleasant Prospect" was given to Anna with the remainder to their ten children (Will WTD 6:362). Anna continued to live in the house but due to its continued deterioration eventually only the kitchen wing was inhabited. Anna passed away on the 11th of May 1973. William Walker eventually gained possession of the full 394.017 acres (Deed 4765:389).

In August of 1982, Pleasant Prospect was sold to Raymond Garthoff and his wife, Vera (Deed 5570:746). It has since been restored, including the removal of the Victorian era exterior detailing (the porch and gable front) and a historic preservation easement given to Maryland Historical Trust (Deed 5622:543). Mr. Garthoff has served a number of diplomatic posts for the United States government, specializing in the Russian language and culture. His wife, Vera, is of Russian descent. Their permanent residence is in Washington, D.C.; Pleasant Prospect is their country home.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Pleasant Prospect is of the Adamesque Georgian style. As typical of the style, it is a symmetrically balanced dwelling, five bays across with a central entry with a semi-circular fanlight (both front and rear). It has a side-gabled roof with dentilled cornice. The interior features Federal style detailing including plaster cornices, frontispieces (doorways along the first floor hall) with an urn and garland motif, and Federal-style mantels.

2. Condition of the fabric: The house appears to be in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The main block of Pleasant Prospect is a large, rectangular, approximately 56' x 35' structure, five-bays-by-one-bay and two-and-a-half stories in height. It has entries with semi-circular lights to the center of both the front and rear. There is a side-gabled roof with interior end chimneys. To the south is a one-story, three-bay long hyphen connecting the main block to a two-story, one-bay-by-three-bay kitchen wing with a hipped roof.

2. Foundations: The foundation of the main block is of sandstone as seen in the basement. The foundation of the kitchen wing is stuccoed.

3. Walls: The walls of the main block are brick laid in Flemish bond. Under the molded brick watertable, the

brick is laid in english bond. The walls of the hyphen are also of flemish bond at the east front (note the window heads of the former windows in the wall), and common bond on the rear. The kitchen wing has brick walls laid in common bond (5:1).

4. Structural system: The house is of load-bearing masonry construction.

5. Stoops: There are brick stoops with iron railings at both the front and rear entries of the main block, the rear being enlarged. Steps lead to the entry at the rear of the hyphen. The kitchen entry to the rear is at ground level with a single step.

6. Chimneys: There is a plain, interior brick chimney at both gable ends of the main block. The chimney at the south side is divided into two flues--to serve fireplaces in both the front and rear rooms on the first and second floors--which join at an arch in the attic to form the single stack visible from the exterior. There is one fireplace only on the first and second floors of the north side of the house. There is an interior brick chimney to the center of the north wall of the kitchen wing.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: There are entries to the center of both the east front and west rear of the main block. The east front is more decorative--having a frontispiece--although both have a semi-circular fanlight. The east front doorway has an arched opening cut into the frontispiece which is incomplete due to the fact that the top portion had been removed when the facade porch was added (now gone). It includes flanking, fluted pilasters, flush panelled reveals and a scroll bracket keystone in the arch. There are double panel doors, each three panels. The west rear doorway is similar but without the spandrels around the arched doorway to create a full frontispiece. It also has fluted pilasters, panelled reveals and double three-panel doors. The doorway to the center of the rear wall of the hyphen is without ornamentation, with a plain lintel. It has a modern door with nine lights above. The rear kitchen doorway has a plain wooden surround and a door like that on the hyphen.

b. Windows: The windows of the main block are nine-over-six-light double-hung sash on the first story and slightly smaller, six-over-six-light double-hung sash on the second. There is a narrow wooden surround with an inner bead, and thin muntins. There are narrow wooden sills and flat-arched brick lintels. The rear fenestration is the same with the exception of the second-story center window which has been bricked in (lintel remains) and a double french doorway added at the stairway landing. An iron rail runs across the doorway. The side walls have six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows. At the north side there is a single window on the second floor and two on the third, one to either side of the chimney block. At the south side there are two windows on the second floor and one on the third (chimney stacks run to either side, joining in an arch above the window). The windows of the front and rear of the main block have louvered shutters. The windows of the hyphen are six-over-six-light double-hung sash (replacements in the east front), with plain wooden lintels and sills. The kitchen wing also has six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows with a concrete sill and no lintel.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The main block has a side-gabled roof covered with raised-seam metal. The hyphen has a slightly pitched, but almost flat roof. The roof of the kitchen wing is hipped.

b. Cornice, eaves: In the main block there is a boxed cornice with dentil molding resting on a plain, frieze board with crown molding along the lower edge. A plain, narrow frieze board runs along the gable ends. In the hyphen, there is a narrow boxed cornice with crown molding along the lower edge. The kitchen wing has a similar though larger-scale treatment.

c. Dormers: There are two dormers to the west rear of the main block. They are unornamented, gable front dormers with six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. First floor: The first floor is a basic Georgian plan with a large center hall and four rooms, two to each side of the hall. The northeast living room is somewhat larger than the other rooms. An open doorway to the west wall adjoins it with the former stairhall now a sitting room. There is a fireplace to the center of the north wall with an arched niche to either side. The southeast dining room has a fireplace at the south wall with a built-in china cupboard to the east side of it and a doorway into the hyphen to the west side. The library to the southwest corner also has a fireplace to the south wall with a doorway into the hyphen to the east and a built-in, panelled door cabinet to the west. The center hall has doorways at each end, front and rear. The stairway runs along the north wall. The hyphen has a north-south partition wall forming separate passages from dining room and library into the kitchen which is stepped down. The kitchen is one large room.

b. Second floor: The second floor follows the same basic plan with doorways to three rooms off the center hall (the doorway to the small northwest room, now a bath, is at the landing of the stairway). The southeast and southwest chambers adjoin. There is a fireplace to the south wall of each room, with a window to one side and a built-in cabinet to the other. The northeast chamber also has a fireplace, on its north wall. It adjoins the former stairhall, now a bath, to the northwest.

c. Third floor: There is a large room to either side of a small center hall, with a small room to the front at the head of the stairway. The rooms, north and south, are finished with plaster and wood flooring but are currently being used for storage.

2. Stairway: The stairway is a Victorian-era (ca. 1885) replacement of the original stairway which was located in the northwest room. The large imposing stairway with low risers is an open-string, open-well, two-run stair which rises along the north wall, up nineteen steps to a landing. There is a doorway into the northwest room at

the north wall of the landing and double french doors at the west wall. The second run continues up four steps to the second-floor hall. There is a heavy turned newel post and turned balusters which support a plain, delicately turning handrail. There are scrolling brackets (double wave pattern) in the step ends and spandrel walls. The stairway continues to the third floor in two (shorter) runs.

3. Flooring: There is wooden flooring throughout, mostly finished with a dark stain. The flooring on the third floor is without a finish.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The first-floor rooms and hall of the main block all have plaster ceilings, cornice molding and flush panelled wainscoting. The cornice varies; there is dentilled molding in the hall and parlor, crenelated molding in the dining room, and a simpler stepped cornice in the library. The second floor of the main block also has plaster walls with cornices, but there is chair rail rather than wainscoting. The cornices vary here as well. There is crenelated molding in the hall and the southeast and northeast rooms, dentil molding in the northeast and a stepped cornice in the southwest room (thus following the same basic pattern as the first floor).

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The entries front and rear are round-arched and are flanked with fluted pilasters. The doorways to and from the first-floor hall into the various rooms are quite ornamental. The three doorways at the northeast, southeast and southwest have an architrave top with a frieze ornamented with an urn to the center flanked by garland swags. They also have panelled reveals to match the doors. The doorway into the northwest room (the former stairhall) has a stepped architrave doorway without the panelled reveals (another indication that this was the location of the original stairway and this doorway was added later). The doors are six-panel, cross-and-openible, with porcelain knobs. There are box locks on the front and rear doors. Other doorways on the first floor, and those on the second floor, are all stepped architrave. The reveals are not panelled and there are six-panel doors. The third floor doorways are all simpler and all different, with

transoms to compensate for the lack of windows in the hall.

b. Windows: The window surrounds on the first and second floors are stepped architrave. There are splayed reveals and panelled shutters which fold into them on the first floor (missing from the second) with the exception of the northwest room. The third-floor windows have a simple, narrow coved molding with an outer fillet.

6. Decorative features and trim: Pleasant Prospect contains numerous decorative Federal style mantels, and built-in cupboards and niches. The northeast parlor has a fireplace flanked with fluted colonnades, a frieze with a center panel and a dentilled mantel shelf, stepped at either end over the colonnades. The opening is surrounded with marble. To the center of the wall to either side of the fireplace is a niche, built out from the wall. The top portion is open with an arched opening with keystone. There are panelled spandrels to either side with an architrave top. Below is a double door cabinet.

The dining room has a fireplace flanked by fluted pilasters. There is a raised center-panel frieze, with garland swags to either side. The mantel shelf has dentil molding and is stepped to either side above the pilasters. The opening is surrounded with marble. To the east side is a large, built-in cupboard for china with double glass doors, twelve lights per side. Below is a double-door cupboard. It has a plain wooden surround with an outer bead. The library has a simpler fireplace, flanked with plain pilasters, a plain, single-panel frieze and mantel shelf. The surround is stuccoed and scored to look like brick. To the west side is a narrow, built-in cupboard with double three-panel doors and a cupboard below. There is also a double, paneled-door cupboard over the doorway into the hyphen. Bookcases line the east wall. The woodwork in the library has all been stripped and left unpainted.

The second floor has Federal-style mantels as well. The northeast bedroom has a fireplace flanked by pilasters, a plain raised center panel frieze and a dentilled mantel shelf. The fireplace in the southeast bedroom is similar but with an ornamented center panel on the frieze. The southwest bedroom has a simpler fireplace with a architrave surround and a dentilled mantel shelf. There

are built-in cupboards in the southeast and southwest bedrooms, like that in the library.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Pleasant Prospect is located more than a half mile from Woodmore Road, down a long gravel drive. The house faces the drive to the east, which runs perpendicular to Woodmore Road. It rests on a flat area of land, with the outbuildings to the southwest rear. When built, Pleasant Prospect was "in the forrest of Prince George's County, about seven miles from Queen Anne where there is a tobacco Warehouse on navigable water..." (National Intelligencer, 11 October 1820). Queen Anne is where the Ducketts and Contees would have taken their tobacco crops and other produce for inspection and eventual shipping to market. Queen Anne would have been not much more than a warehouse, wharf, store, blacksmith shop and a couple of houses. The largest town and the county seat of Upper Marlboro was ten miles away.

2. Historic landscape design: To the east front a roadway and circular drive is visible although mostly overgrown and not in use. The gate posts remain which mark the beginning of this drive from the main drive from Woodmore Road. There are a number of large trees along the sides of this overgrown drive, as well as to the north and west of the house. North of the house are boxwoods and to the west rear are the remnants of a sunken garden. To the south side of the house is a roadway to the barns and other outbuildings to the southwest of the house.

3. Outbuildings: There are a number of outbuildings to the southwest rear of the house. They are mostly twentieth century barns and sheds. The only historic outbuilding remaining is a log meat house covered with frame siding, with a pyramidal roof (with a meat locker added inside). There is also an older, board-and-batten carriage house in poor condition. Behind these is a large twentieth century dairy barn, a tenant house, sheds, garage, etc. There is also a shed to the south side of the house. Further to the south is a swimming pool enclosed by a fence.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early views: There are five views of Pleasant Prospect in the HABS collection which were taken by John O. Brostrup in 1936. First is a view from the northeast showing the front elevation including the gable front roof and the porch which once ran the length of the facade. Second is a view from the southwest showing the rear elevation including the two-story addition to the center: a porch on the first floor and a bathroom on the second. The next is a detail of the brick water table. The last two are interior details: one of a doorway off the hall (with the urn and garland pattern) and the other is of a cornice.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Prince George's County Land Records, Prince George's County Courthouse, Upper Marlboro; deeds and equity cases as cited in the text.

Prince George's County Register of Wills, Prince George's County Courthouse, Upper Marlboro; Wills and administrations as cited in the text.

White, Frank. National Register of Historic Places, Inventory-- Nomination Form; Sprigg's Request or Pleasant Prospect. Prince George's County Historical Trust, prepared 31 March 1975.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Bowie, Effie G. Across the Years in Prince George's County. Richmond: Garrett & Massie, Inc., 1947.

Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland. Washington, D.C.: G.M. Hopkins, 1978.

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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation of Pleasant Prospect was undertaken as part of a cooperative project between the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Robert J. Kapsch, chief; and the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission on behalf of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to document select sites throughout the county. Phase I of the project began in January of 1989, and the second phase of which this project was a part, began in March of 1990. Gail Rothrock, director, and Susan G. Pearl, research historian, of the HPC made the selection of sites. They also provided access to their research and information on file with the HPC as well as their extensive knowledge of county history. The large format photography was undertaken by HABS photographer Jack E. Boucher. HABS historian Catherine C. Lavoie prepared this historical report and accompanied the photographer into the field for on site inspection.