

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Van View

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 7714 13th Street, N

City or town: Washington, D.C. State: DC County: _____

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of commenting official:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Title :</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Second Empire

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood and metal (roof)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The stately Second Empire-style farmhouse constructed 1868-1871 and known as Van View is located at 7714 13th Street in the Shepherd Park neighborhood in northwest Washington, D.C. The house occupies an almost half-acre corner lot at 13th and Jonquil Streets, faces 13th Street, and is generally surrounded by smaller, mid-20th-century Colonial and Tudor Revival-style detached dwellings that define the neighborhood today. Van View's date of construction, its position (slightly askew to 13th Street) on the landscape, and its architecture clearly identify it as a farmhouse that pre-dates the mid-20th century suburbanization of the Shepherd Park neighborhood. Though still gracious, the .43-acre lot is a fraction of its historic 18 ¼-acre tract of land, which was itself part of a larger farm owned by John and Mary Van Riswick during the last quarter of the 19th century.

The house is a large, three-story, three-bay wide structure with a rectangular footprint forming the main block and a two-story rectangular wing extending off of the rear. The house is set upon a low foundation and is covered with a steep Mansard roof, sheathed with standing seam metal, and lit by dormers in all four slopes of the roof. A pair of inside end chimneys projects above the cornice line on the south side elevation, while a third chimney rises from off-center towards the north end of the roof. The walls are clad with metal siding, with the historic wood

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

weatherboard beneath. A heavy bracketed cornice visually supports a projecting cornice and the Mansard roof above. The windows are all replacements, but the openings and trim are original.

The lot is grassy with mature shade trees occupying the north side yard. A one-story non-contributing garage is located at the rear of the house.

Narrative Description

Exterior Description:

The front elevation of the house faces east to 13th Street and features a central entry door with windows to either side. The central entry, protected from the weather by a half-round portico, features an Italianate/Second Empire-style wood paneled door with paired leaves and a single-light transom above. Both leaves of the door have raised roundels in the middle above wood paneling in the lower half, and below long and narrow glazed panels above. The half-round portico dates from sometime after 1960. Historic maps indicate that a full-width, one-story porch historically extended across the façade. The windows to either side of the door are long and narrow and extend from the interior floor level to door height. The openings are capped by their original projecting cornice heads and are fitted with replacement wood shutters and 9/6 double-hung replacement sash with 6-light transom above.

The second story of the east façade has three shorter windows, also capped by a projecting cornice and featuring 6/6 double-hung replacement sash. A broad and unadorned wood frieze board rises above the second-story windows. Four wood brackets, placed symmetrically above the solid walls between the windows and thus accentuating the division of the façade into its three bays, support the projecting cornice above. The box cornice has modillions running between the brackets.

The third story, or full-story attic level, is located within the Mansard roof. The mansard is slightly curved on all four slopes. This front façade has three segmentally arched dormers, with 6/6 double-hung replacement sash, set above the window bays of the lower stories.

The south elevation of the house extends along Jonquil Street, though is slightly raised above street level. This elevation is defined primarily by its pair of stucco-clad chimneys projecting well above the roofline to either side of a central dormer. The first story has a single-story polygonal projecting bay on-center. Single windows are located in each of the three sides of the bay with that in the center being slightly wider than those on the narrower side walls. The second story has two, side-by-side single window openings. All of the windows have double-hung replacement sash.

The north elevation of the house faces a side yard with mature trees and is relatively unarticulated. Single windows are located in the front bay on both the first and second stories, while a wide and newer window opens at the rear bay of the house on the first story. A single interior chimney projects above the roofline along this side of the house.

Van View

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

The west elevation has a two-story rear ell extending off of it, and running flush with the north elevation of the house. A lower, two-story addition is located between this wing and the rear wall of the main block of the house on the south side. The mansard roof of the main block of the house rises above the roofs of both of these wings, and exposes its three single dormers. The two-story rear ell that extends flush with the north wall of the house is of frame construction and is covered with a low gable roof. On the first story, the north side of the rear ell has a single door with a small gable-roofed porch protecting it and a single window in the rear bay. The second story has two single windows above.

Interior:

The interior of Van View has a central passage, room-behind-room plan with gracious ceiling heights and room dimensions. The front entry leads directly into the stair hall with a straight flight, closed stringer stair positioned against the north interior wall. The stair features a complex and heavy Victorian-era turned newel with an octagonal base, turned balusters, and carved wood stringer ornamentation. The ceilings are tall, the walls are solid plaster, and the floors are laid with narrow wood boards. The stair hall opens onto front parlors on the north and side of the house. The south side parlor communicates with a rear parlor or dining room through a large double-wide opening, and is the larger and more formal part of the house. All of the rooms have original Victorian stone mantels.

Garage:

A one-story, non-contributing garage is located at the rear of the lot. It is a long, stucco-clad frame structure covered with a gable roof. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There are single windows and a door opening on the long wall facing east, and single windows in the south end elevation, including an attic-level square casement located in the gable end.

INTEGRITY

Van View retains high integrity. The house remains on its original site in what was the former Washington County of the District of Columbia. When the land was platted for residential subdivision with streets and lots in the 1920s, the developers retained the house on a corner lot that was configured to be larger than the typical lots for the subdivision that was platted over the farmland. The house was not moved to conform with the geometries of the new lot and as a result sits somewhat askew on it. The historic setting—farmland—is no longer intact as the former rural area is now a suburban neighborhood consisting of an eclectic collection of mid-20th century revival-style detached dwelling forms. However, the lot with its mature trees and its historic house presents a vestige of this former setting and is an overt visual reminder of the past. The house retains its original design and workmanship. The large farmhouse retains its Second Empire-style building form and details with no major additions. The windows have all been replaced, but the original openings and cornices survive and more appropriate historic windows can replace the existing replacement ones. The interior has a high degree of craftsmanship, including all of its original mantels and stairs. In addition, it retains its original room dimensions, ceiling heights, and circulation patterns. The house retains a high degree of feeling and association as its size and stature within its setting clearly distinguish it from its 20th-century neighbors and thus present the passerby with a palpable sense of the past.

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

The interior of the house features a central-passage, two-room-deep plan with a straight-flight stair in the central hallway.

Van View is one of only a few farmhouses outside of the original federal city limits to survive the suburbanization of the land during the mid-20th century.

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1868-1871

Significant Dates

1871

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Van View is a Second Empire-style country house built 1868-1871 on an 18-1/4-acre tract of land near the northern corner of the District of Columbia and named for its original owners and builders, John and Mary Van Riswick. The Van Riswicks, wealthy Washingtonians with connections to the County of Washington, lived in the city, but operated the property as a working farm and used the house as a country retreat.

Although agrarian Washington County was relatively sparsely populated, small and medium sized farms and their farmhouses were ubiquitous there during the 19th century, occupied by both the small landholder who farmed the land and by wealthy Washingtonians who built second homes in the rural countryside. While many of the country estates built closer to the city limits were preserved as the city expanded, fewer of those that were located further beyond the city survived, and fewer still of the modest farmhouses have endured. These farmhouses and country estates were largely demolished during the early to mid-20th century as the former farmland was subdivided and built upon with detached single family dwellings making up the city's growing residential suburbs.

The Van View property meets National Register Criterion A as a country estate and farm that is directly associated with the city's agrarian past and its suburbanization in the early 20th century. Van View also meets National Register Criterion C, because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a period and type of construction—that is, a country estate whose Second Empire style distinguished it from the vernacular farmhouses of the County, and established it as an avant-garde country house that was home to a wealthy Washingtonian.

The Period of Significance should extend from 1871, the end date of its period of construction until 1964, a point 50 years from the present.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Community Planning and Development: Van View is significant in the Area of Community Planning and Development as a 19th century country house built after the Civil War that survived the mid-20th century suburbanization of the landscape. Van View was built between 1868 and 1871 as the country home and working farm of Mary and John Van Riswick. John Van Riswick (1815-1886) was a prominent businessman in Washington, D.C., serving as president of the Mutual Fire Insurance Company and vice president of the Citizens' National Bank. The Van Riswicks married in 1841 and raised a family of six children, while living downtown on K Street. Between 1868 and 1871, John and Mary Van Riswick built their country house on a 18 1/4-acre parcel of land purchased by them from the estate of Mary's father, Philip Fenwick following his death in 1868. Before the Civil War, Philip Fenwick was a farmer and slave owner

Van View

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

with sizeable landholdings in the County of Washington. His property, shown on historic maps under the designation "P. Fenwick," included a 145-acre farm at the northwest corner of the District boundaries, bordering present-day Rock Creek Park and the historic 7th Street Turnpike. The country estate and working farm of Van View was built on a part of Philip Fenwick's farm shortly after his death continuing the family's legacy of cultivating the Washington County landscape.

Washington County: An Overview

At the time of its establishment in 1790, the 10-mile-square District of Columbia included Washington City, laid out by Peter L'Enfant, the port city of Georgetown on the Maryland side of the Potomac, and Alexandria, on the Virginia side. All that area beyond the L'Enfant City and Georgetown on the Maryland side of the Potomac became Washington County. Established by the Organic Act of 1801, Washington County was a municipality governed by a Levy Court. Initially, the Court consisted of seven justices of the peace appointed by the President. In 1863 it was re-organized to provide for a court of nine members (3 from the city, 1 from Georgetown, five from County). The Levy Court carried out similar duties to those of Maryland County Commissioners, including establishing and collecting taxes, and building and repairing roads. Some of these roads had originated before the District as Indian paths, post roads, and tobacco rolling roads. The Organic Act of 1871 abolished the Washington County Levy Court and consolidated the County, Washington City and Georgetown into the District of Columbia. Despite this political consolidation, Washington County survived as geographic designation into the early 20th century.

In 1790, there was little distinction in the physical and cultural landscape between the newly established federal city proper and the County. The Washington City plan devised by Charles Peter (Pierre) L'Enfant was imposed upon an expanse of land that has generally been described in historical records as being "covered with tobacco and cornfields, orchards and woods." The eighteenth-century farms were a combination of extensive landholdings held by a limited number of proprietors and generally worked with slave labor, and small freeholds and tenant farms. According to the 1798 Federal Direct Tax, the built environment of the County included dwellings (primarily of wood), kitchens, meat houses, stables, slaves and servants quarters, and corn and tobacco "houses." The eighteenth-century dwellings varied in grandeur depending upon the wealth and status of the owner. At one end of the spectrum were the country estates and plantation houses, such as the still-surviving Rosedale Farmhouse; at the other end were the "cabins," rented with a "spot of land" or the "miserable hut formed by rude boards."

As the federal city developed, the difference between the Washington City and Washington County landscape grew profound. During the first half of the nineteenth century, while Washington City was burgeoning into its established role as the nation's capital, Washington County saw a gradual increase in its population and little change in its rural landscape. Of the free population in the District of Columbia in 1850, only 6% inhabited the County's rural landscape (County population in 1850 of free and enslaved was 3,320). Of the free County residents, the majority actively farmed the land either as landowners, or as tenant farmers.

Van View

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

With the antebellum city growing in stature, wealthy members of the fledgling city built large country estates on the outskirts, essentially forming a ring around the northern edge of the original city limits. These estates or “gentleman farms” commanded exceptional views of the city and offered cooling breezes and healthful air, providing the owners and their families a respite from city life and its “bilious fevers.” In Jeffersonian fashion, the owners of these country estates cultivated the landscape, often experimenting with new agricultural techniques and plant varieties, such as did Thomas Main at Whitehaven, and General Henry Hatch Dent at Springland.

While still exclusively agricultural, the once extensive plantations of eighteenth century Washington County had, during the first half of the nineteenth century, progressively decreased in size through both inheritance divisions and land sales. In 1850, the median acreage of cultivated land was 39 acres. An examination of the 1861 Boschke Map, illustrates the tapestry of fragmented landholdings in the County and its still heavily wooded nature.

Although the cultivation of tobacco persisted in adjacent Maryland counties, it had all but disappeared from the Washington County landscape by the mid-nineteenth century. Levi Sheriff on the eastern shore of the Anacostia River is the only farmer to have reported tobacco as a crop during this period. Farmers instead concentrated on the cultivation of grains, fruits and vegetables to supply the city’s markets, while also providing for their own self-sufficiency. Most farms, for instance, had a milk cow and a few hogs, principally for “home use.” The small number of livestock shown on the agricultural censuses (five or fewer were typical) indicate that animals were principally used for personal and farm use.

The County was also socio-economically diverse with small farms and large farms as neighbors. The County’s poorest residents, including slaves, lived next to wealthy landowners. According to research on Levi Sheriff’s plantation along the Anacostia, his nineteen slaves occupied “quarters” at different sites on the farm. These dwellings were described as “distant from each other as well as from the main house. They [the enslaved] maintained gardens, fruit trees, chickens and pigs.” While today’s northwest quadrant of the County had a greater number of large farms (over 100 acres), the largest pre-war slaveholder, George Washington Young, owned the most extensive farms in the southeast quadrant.

During the Civil War, the Union Army requisitioned existing farmhouses and other structures for hospitals and headquarters, and built fortifications, batteries and camps across the County landscape. The military built these structures where it needed them without regard to existing structures or land use. After the War, many of the original owners chose not to return to their County farms, many of which had been left in disarray and even ruin. Some had settled in the city and decided to remain there; others had left the region altogether. The ultimate change in land ownership, the labor shortage induced by the end of slavery, and the expanding urban center, all served as an impetus for transformation in the County. Now open to non-agricultural uses, the County was soon filled with cemeteries, institutions, and residential subdivisions.

By the 1880s, as the population continued to increase and the electric streetcar was introduced providing easier access beyond the city, Washington County began experiencing a significant

Van View

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

real estate boom. Land speculators and real estate developers bought up County land, including its farm complexes and estates, and began subdividing it for residential development. These subdivisions were laid out according to their own established plans, without conforming to the city's street plan, or to adjacent subdivisions. This phenomenon outraged city planners and politicians who dubbed the newly platted areas as "misfit subdivisions" and sought a plan to control them. Following an 1887 moratorium on any new subdivisions that did not conform with the L'Enfant Plan, Congress passed the Permanent Highway Act of 1893. The resultant Permanent Highway Plan created a street plan outside of the original city limits in the former Washington County.

The maps for this street plan, prepared in sections and finalized in 1897, established the basis for the transformation of rural Washington County. Although the plan was progressive in its planning principles (i.e. followed natural terrain, respected landscape features, and existing residential subdivisions and institutional complexes), the Plan straightened existing roads and established new ones with little consideration for the cultural landscape and its built environment. As private real estate developers subdivided the land into residential lots, they similarly did so with little regard for the existing buildings.

Despite that general rule, certain farmhouses and associated buildings that stood at the time of development of their surrounding lands managed to survive into the present. While many of the farms and farm buildings were incorporated into large institutional complexes, namely school and religious campuses, others were simply retained as part of the residential subdivision process. These former farmhouses, albeit on much reduced lots, were fitted (sometimes moved and/or re-oriented) into the new residential street configuration with neighboring houses constructed around them. Often, developers of the new subdivisions celebrated the rural character of the new residential areas even highlighting the former farmhouses in their promotional sales brochures and touting the "bucolic" nature of the landscape. By the mid-20th century, though, the bucolic lands gave way entirely to newly cut and laid streets, new residential neighborhoods, and new single dwellings lining the suburban-sized lots leaving the city's rural heritage behind. The former farmhouses, once common and visible elements upon the rural landscape, are now fewer and harder to detect. Van View is one of these surviving farmhouses.

Philip Fenwick and the Fenwick Farm

Philip Fenwick was born in 1790 within the newly designated jurisdiction of the District of Columbia. In the 1850 U.S. Census, Fenwick is listed as a 60-year-old farmer living on his land "west of 7th Street Turnpike."¹ By then, Fenwick was widowed, as his wife Mary Ann Fenwick had died in 1848 at the age of 49. At the time of the 1850 census, four of the ten children known to have been born to Philip and Mary Ann Fenwick were living with him on his farm. Assessment records for Washington County reveal that in 1855, Philip Fenwick owned 145 acres of land, six slaves (named and valued in the assessments), eight cows, four horses, carts and a wagon. His total property, including land, improvements, slaves, animals and furniture was

¹ 1850 U.S. Census.

Van View

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

valued at \$9,555.00. With such land and slave holdings, Fenwick would have been in the upper socio-economic strata of Washington County.²

The 1861 Boschke Map, which identifies the Fenwick Farm under the name "P. Fenwick," indicates that the partially cultivated land included a cluster of buildings west of present-day 16th Street and near present-day Kalmia Street. Another building located north of this cluster and two other buildings south of this cluster are also shown on the property. A brick and stone springhouse, today located on the grounds of present-day Lowell School is the only extant survivor of these Fenwick Farm buildings.

In 1862, Philip Fenwick officially emancipated his slaves in accordance with the D.C. Emancipation Law approved April 16, 1862. Seven slaves are named in Fenwick's Slave Emancipation Records, dated May 21, 1862. Of these, five are males aged 32, 20, 19, 17 and 15. One is a 20-year-old female. And, one is a 20-month old boy.

In 1863, Philip Fenwick "being of sound mind and memory" filed his will on April 28. The will names as executor, his son-in-law, John Van Riswick (married to his daughter, Mary) and his son, William A. Fenwick. Fenwick's will specified that his property should be evenly distributed among his ten children, and empowered his executors to sell his land. Philip Fenwick died that year. After Fenwick's death and the end of the Civil War, his property was subdivided into four lots.³ Over the course of the several years, The *Evening Star* advertised auctions for the sale of the lots.⁴ Based upon later maps and land records, it appears that John and Mary Van Riswick, and James Fenwick ultimately gained ownership of the majority of the Fenwick farm.

The first auction appears to have occurred in 1865. In July of that year, William Fenwick and John Van Riswick, executors of Philip Fenwick's will, advertised the sale of Fenwick land at an auction: "Executors' Sale of Three Valuable Tracts of Land on Seventh Street Turnpike, Near Silver Spring." Lot number 1 was described as "containing 29 ¼-acres, fronts on the Seventh Street Turnpike, between the beautiful farms of Messrs. Clagett and Blair."⁵ Although the acreage is larger than what ultimately appears on later maps and in assessment records, the lot as described is clearly the land upon which the house known historically as "Van View" and located at 7714 13th Street, NW still stands.

² Of the total assessed value of \$9,550.00 on the property, the "improvements" only accounted for \$500. This assessment conflicts with the 1850 Census which notes that Fenwick lived on the property, and also with the 1861 Boschke Map that shows a collection of buildings on the property. Further research may elucidate this discrepancy.

³ The four lots were listed as having 25, 31, 31 and 123-acres each for a total of 210 acres. This acreage is substantially more than the 145 acres for which Fenwick he was assessed in 1855. Further research may clarify this inconsistency.

⁴ See *The Evening Star*, October 7, 1868 and October 10, 1868. Another auction ad four years later notes that Lot 4 "contains about 123 acres, well wooded and watered, and in a high state of cultivation, borders on Rock Creek, and near the termination of the 7th Street railroad, now in progress of construction..."

⁵ *The Evening Star*, July 7, 1865. The auction advertisement also notes that Lot 1 and Lot 2 were "improved by good Frame Dwellings and other improvements." This "good Frame dwelling" on Lot 1 is likely referring to a building shown on the 1861 located directly on the 7th Street Turnpike and not Van View which would be constructed just west of the turnpike where 13th Street is today.

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

The 1881, the B.D. Carpenter Map shows the former Fenwick property divided into several large lots, though they are not numbered and the acreages do not match up exactly with the lots advertised over the years. The largest parcels include a 126-acre lot and a 12-acre parcel under the name of John Van Riswick. Two parcels, a 20-acre one and a 36-acre parcel are under the name of James Fenwick. In addition, Mary Van Riswick is shown as owning a narrow 18-acre parcel of land that extends as a finger from the former Fenwick farm to the 7th Street Turnpike (this corresponds with today's Georgia Avenue). This is part of the tract identified in 1865 as Lot 1; in addition to showing the house on 7th Street, the 1881 map clearly shows a new house on the property, located just west of the "Pike" and corresponding to present-day 7714 13th Street.

John and Mary Van Riswick and Van View

John Van Riswick (1815-1886) and Mary Fenwick (1821-1896) married in 1841 in Baltimore County, MD. They had six daughters, though only two of them outlived their parents. During their married life together, the Van Riswicks lived in downtown Washington, D.C. where John Van Riswick was a prominent member of the business community. He was president of the Mutual Insurance Society, vice president of the Citizens' National Bank, and president of an ice company. During his life in Washington, John Van Riswick acquired numerous real estate holdings, including several residential properties in downtown, D.C., including his own house at 1413 K Street, NW in the then-fashionable neighborhood around McPherson Square.

By 1871, having acquired much of Mary's father's land in the upper northwest quadrant of the District of Columbia, the Van Riswicks began construction of their country house on a 16 ¼-acre tract that was identified as Lot 1 in 1865 and which extended as a long "finger" east from the Fenwick farm complex to the 7th Street Turnpike (Georgia Avenue). The 1871 assessment records for Washington County show that John Van Riswick was assessed property taxes on the 16 ¼-acre lot of land near 7th Street Turnpike, including \$6,000 in improvements. The high assessment on the improvements indicates that the house, called Van View and located at present-day 7714 13th Street, was built by that date. It follows, then, that the house was constructed between 1868, when Fenwick's estate was in probate, and 1871 when John Van Riswick was assessed for \$6,000 worth of improvements on the property.⁶

In 1874, tax records indicate that John Van Riswick transferred ownership of the land to Mary who for the duration of her life is listed as owner of the property in the assessment records, and is shown as owner on historic maps. The 1880 census records list John Van Riswick twice, suggesting that the Van Riswicks split their time between Van View and their residence on K Street. In the country, John Van Riswick is listed as a 64-year-old broker who was born in DC and Mary is identified as being 59 and keeping house. Three of the couple's children, Mary (33), Eugenia (22), and Martina (18) live with them.⁷

⁶ An entry in the probate records dated July 1, 1868, notes that a lot "on Pike" was sold for \$3,812. This is strong evidence suggesting that the Van Riswicks had purchased the tract from Fenwick's estate by that date.

⁷ The daughter, Miss Mary Van Riswick died in 1888. A death notice in the Washington Post notes her passing: "The death of Miss Mary J. Van Riswick, at her home No. 1413 K Street, February 10, was a great loss to all her

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

In April 1886, John Van Riswick died at the age of 71. His obituary notes the he was “a much esteemed citizen of the District” and “from an early age he has been identified with some of the most prominent enterprises in the city.” The obituary further notes that in 1839, “Van Riswick owned and operated the first planning machine in the District.”⁸

Mary Van Riswick outlived her husband by ten years, during which time she operated the Van View farm, but based on city directories lived at 1413 K Street, NW with her daughter, Martina Van Riswick Carr. Mary Van Riswick died in 1896 at the age of 75, leaving two children, Mrs. Tallmadge (Avarilla) Lambert and Mrs. Martina Carr. In her will, prepared in 1894, Mary Van Riswick left her daughter Martina Carr, the house “owned by me” at 1413 K Street, and she left her grandson, Wilton J. Lambert her country house. In addition, she gave her granddaughters Maud and Mildred B. Lambert, the houses at 1411 and 1413 V Street, respectively, and gave them, as tenants in common, the house at 1519 S Street. All of the rest of her estate she devised equally to her two daughters Avarilla Lambert and Martina Carr in equal shares.⁹ This will, dated February 17, 1894, identifies for the first time, the Van Riswick country house by name: “My country place, known as Van View, containing 18 and one-half acres, situated on the west side of Brightwood avenue near the District line, together with the dwelling house, and all other improvements thereon, I give and devise to my grandson, Wilton J. Lambert, his heirs and assigns forever.” A notice in the *Washington Post* confirms the contents of the will, noting specifically that Mary Van Riswick bequeathed to her grandson, Wilton J. Lambert, “the real property on Brightwood avenue, the family homestead called Van View.”¹⁰

Following the death of Mary Van Riswick, and in typical fashion, Mary Van Riswick’s daughter, Martina Carr, contested her mother’s will.¹¹ Records related to the equity case (Equity Case No 17251), *Martina Carr v. Lambert et al*, (March 1896) provide insight into the farm and its operations. Van View is described as a country place and working farm, managed by an overseer. At the time of Mary’s death, the property included seven cows, one horse, and one mule. One month later, these animals were sold at auction as noted in an advertisement for the livestock auction, published April 16, 1896 in the *Evening Star*: “Latimer & Co. will sell

friends, for all who knew her appreciated the beauties of her character. She was generous and sympathetic, and all worthy objects found her ever ready to aid them to the extent of her ability. She was a woman of great intellectual vigor combined with womanly refinement and dignified simplicity of manner.” *The Washington Post*, February 26, 1888, p. 3.

⁸ See, “Death of Mr. John Van Riswick,” *The Washington Post*, April 28, 1886., p. 2. Also, “Death of Mr. John Van Riswick,” *The Evening Star*, April 27, 1886.

⁹ Of the city residences, 1413 K Street, and 1411-1413 V Street have been demolished. The house at 1519 S Street, a two-story, brick Italianate-style residence still stands, and is located in the U Street Historic District.

¹⁰ “Real Property to Her Children,” *The Washington Post*, March 3, 1896, p. 11.

¹¹ Martina Carr apparently contested the will because she was left the house at 1413 K Street “for life.” Because she did not have children, the property would thus revert to the children of Avarilla Lambert, rather than to her husband, which was presumably Martina Carr’s main objection. Martina Carr contested the will arguing that Wilton Lambert exerted undue pressure on his grandmother in the preparation of the will. See “Real Property to Her Children,” *The Washington Post*, March 3, 1896, p. 11; “Van Riswick Heirs May Compromise,” *The Washington Post*, April 2, 1897; “Heirs are at Peace: the Contest Over the Van Riswick Estate Comes to an End,” the *Evening Star*, April 30, 1897; and “Division of the Van Riswick Estate,” *The Washington Post*, June 20, 1897, p. 4;

Van View

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

tomorrow at 11:30 o'clock nine head of cattle, most of them Jerseys; a bay horse, one mule, chicken, etc., on the farm lately owned by Mary Van Riswick, on 7th Street road, at terminus of Brightwood electric railway."¹²

After a year of hearings and testimonies, the Van Riswick case was finally settled out of court with a compromise to the will agreed upon by all parties. All of the heirs of Mary Van Riswick received the property designated to them in her will, with the compromise that they would all be inherited "in fee," rather than "for life." As a result, in the spring of 1897, Wilton J. Lambert retained his inheritance of Van View and the accompanying 18 ¼-acres. It is possible that Wilton Lambert¹³, who was a lawyer in the city with Lambert & Wilson, continued to use Van View as a country house, as he was involved in the development of Brightwood, serving on several boards and committees to oversee suburbanization of the area. However, according to city directories, Wilton Lambert lived in the city on S Street. By 1906, Lambert advertised the property for rent in the local *Washington Times*: "For Rent—Van View, corner of Brightwood and Park aves., one of the most desirable homes in the District; 16 rooms; all modern improvements; garden and acreage; by season or year."¹⁴

Suburbanization and the Sale of Van View

In 1897, the maps for the city's Permanent Highway Plan were finalized thereby providing a street plan for the area outside of the L'Enfant Plan. The publication of the maps facilitated the gradual subdivision of the former farmland into squares and residential building lots and the construction of houses. In 1903, a Baist real estate map of the area around Van View shows the new street plan superimposed upon the still-existing rural conditions of sizeable properties with associated farmhouses occupying the landscape.

In 1909, Wilton Lambert and his neighbors sold their rural properties to the Lynchburg Investment Corporation in what was noted as "the largest transaction in suburban real estate that has taken place in the District of Columbia for several years."¹⁵ As part of the \$750,000 purchase, the Virginia syndicate bought the 18-acre Van View property; the adjoining 97-acre Claggett farm immediately to its south; and south of that, the more than 100-acre "Bleak House" property that had been the country home of Alexander "Boss" Shepherd.¹⁶ Local press reports noted that the syndicate, composed of "bankers and other businessmen" from Virginia intended to subdivide the land into building lots and then put it on the market. The press further claimed that once subdivided,

¹² "Live Stock at Auction," *The Evening Star*, April 16, 1896, p. 10.

¹³ A 1935 obituary for Wilton Lambert notes that he was general counsel for the American Newspapers, Inc, publishers of the Hearst papers, and a former president of the Washington Times Company. He was a graduate of Princeton University and received his law degree from Georgetown. "Wilton J. Lambert, Attorney, 63, Dead," *The New York Times*, July 23, 1935.

¹⁴ *The Washington Times*, May 2, 1906, p. 13.

¹⁵ "\$750,000 Realty Deal: Virginia Syndicate Purchases Large Suburban Tract," *The Washington Post*, February 28, 1909, p. CA 1.

¹⁶ The individual acreages as listed in "Finch Buys Old Car Barn," *The Evening Star*, March 1, 1909.

Van View

Washington, D.C.

Name of Property

County and State

“...it will practically bring the city limits as far north as the District line, for nearly all of the territory south of the properties is now divided. The purchase of the property emphasizes the rapid growth of Washington and the fact that outside capital recognizes Washington real estate as one of the best investments in the country.”¹⁷

Two years later, the subdivision plat was finished, but it did not include all of the land purchased by the company. The subdivided land included the area from present-day Holly Street south, essentially comprising the former “Bleak House” property, but not the Clagett property or Van View. The subdivision was named Sixteenth Street Heights and was approved by the Office of the Surveyor in May 1911. By 1916, the new suburb was well under construction. As reported by the *Washington Post*, “the historic old home known as ‘Bleak House’ still stands in the center of this tract which is now undergoing a high-class improvement.”¹⁸ The article further noted that, “A number of handsome homes have been erected and several more are now in course of construction.” The Lynchburg Investment Company chose to preserve Bleak House on a 4-acre tract which formed the newly platted Square 2776, while it subdivided the land around it. Ultimately, Bleak House did not survive the development process, however; in 1916, the house and its four acres was sold, subdivided and built upon with new houses over the next ten years.¹⁹ According to historic maps, Bleak House was demolished by 1919.

The Lynchburg Investment Corporation held onto the land comprising the “old” Clagett property and Van View for about 14 years, most likely awaiting the city’s extension of 16th Street and Alaska Avenue. Then, in 1923, it sold the land to the Sixteenth Street Heights Land Company which in 1925 submitted its own subdivision plan for the property. At the time of the sale of land from Lynchburg to Sixteenth Street Heights, the Lynchburg Investment Corporation placed restrictive covenants in the deed, most likely to “protect” the character of its own residential subdivision still being built out to the south. The 1923 deed between the Lynchburg Investment Corporation and the Sixteenth Street Heights Land Company highlights these restrictions (both architectural and racial). As paraphrased from the deed, the restrictions state:

- 1) No dwelling house shall be cost less than \$7,500.00;
- 2) All dwelling houses must be detached or semi-detached;
- 3) No land, or any part of, may be rented, leased, sold, demised, transferred or conveyed directly or indirectly in trust for “any negro or colored person or persons of negro blood or extraction;”
- 4) The above covenants and restrictions shall be effective and remain in full force for a period of fifty years from May 1920 and no longer.

¹⁷ “\$750,000 Realty Deal: Virginia Syndicate Purchases Large Suburban Tract,” *The Washington Post*, February 28, 1909, p. CA 1.

¹⁸ “Suburb is Advancing: Many Detached Homes Planned in 16th Street Heights,” *The Washington Post*, April 23, 1916, p. R2. See also, “City Streets Extended to Northwest Suburbs,” *The Evening Star*, May 20, 1911, and “Activity in Evidence in Near Urban Sections; Hills Being Leveled and Streets Graded in Northern Part of District,” *The Evening Star*, July 6, 1912..

¹⁹ Rambler article on Bleak House, *The Evening Star*, May 7, 1916, p. 7.

Van View

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

In July 1925, the Sixteenth Street Heights Land Company subdivided its newly purchased property into squares and lots extending from Holly Street on the south to Kalmia on the north, and from Alaska Avenue on the east to the alley behind 13th Street on the west. A large parcel designated as Parcel 91/82, was drawn around the Van View house, separating it out from the subdivision. Gustave Loehler, co-owner of the Sixteenth Street Heights Land Company as named on the plat in the D.C. Surveyor's Office, lived at Van View from 1927 until 1937.²⁰ During this period, the company sold its lots to operative developers, but primarily to L.E. Breuninger & Co., who named his development Shepherd Park. In 1926, Breuninger began the construction of single-family detached homes on the lots in a variety of mid-20th-century revival styles. By 1930, Shepherd Park consisted of 120 houses and the entire development was declared "legally safeguarded by covenants from every element that might endanger its value."²¹

As part of the development of Shepherd Park, the former Clagett house was demolished for new houses, while that of Van View survived on its lot then-occupying the full width of 13th Street from Jonquil to Kalmia Streets. This lot would later be subdivided carving out the present-day .43-acre parcel. As Shepherd Park was being developed, Van View was given the address of 1300 Kalmia Road as it occupied the site between Kalmia and Jonquil on 13th Street. However, in 1938, when a new lot at 13th and Kalmia and carved out of the Van View parcel was built upon, this new house took the 1300 Kalmia Road address and Van View was changed to 7714 13th Street.

During the second half of the 20th century, the Van View house and its .43 acre lot passed through several hands. In 1946, then-owners Angela and Sergius Carmen sought a permit to remove the one-story porch and replace it with the current half-round portico. At the same time, the Carmens undertook some interior renovations, namely "constructing and relocating partitions" and installing windows. Despite these noted interior renovations, the historic room configuration and circulation appears mostly intact.

In 1996, present-day owners Mario and Charisse Brossard purchased the house and are currently sponsoring its designation as a DC Landmark.

²⁰ City directories show Gustave Loehler, listed as contractor, living at the house for the 10-year period from 1927 to 1937. Loehler is listed as co-owner of the land company along with Maire F. Loehler.

²¹ 120 ideal Homes in Shepherd Park, *The Washington Post*, June 15, 1930.

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

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Van View

Name of Property

Washington, D.C.

County and State

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Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Maps

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Baist's Real Estate Atlas, District of Columbia, 1903, 1907, 1911, 1919, 1921, 1937, 1965.

B.D. Carpenter, Map of the Real Estate in the County of Washington, District of Columbia, 1881.

G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington, 1878.

G.M. Hopkins Real Estate Plat Book of Washington, District of Columbia, Vol. 3
Comprising West Washington County, 1894.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1928, 1959.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .43 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Van View property at 7714 13th Street, NW occupies Parcel 91/142 in Square 2773.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries include the current lot associated with the historic Van View property. The .43-acre lot is a part of the historic 18-1/4-acre tract upon which the house was built 1868-1871. The former farm was subdivided and developed into a residential neighborhood in the 1920s and 30s.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kim Prothro Williams
organization: D.C. Historic Preservation Office
street & number: 1100 4th Street, SW
city or town: Washington, D.C. state: DC zip code: 20024
e-mail kim.williams@dc.gov
telephone: 202 442-8840
date: May 6, 2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Van View
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of ____.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Van View
Name of Property Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images Page 1



Conext Site Map of Van View property, 7714 13th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.
(USGS Washington Quad West)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Van View
Name of Property Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images Page 2



Site Plan showing Van View property, 7714 13th Street, NW Washington, D.C.



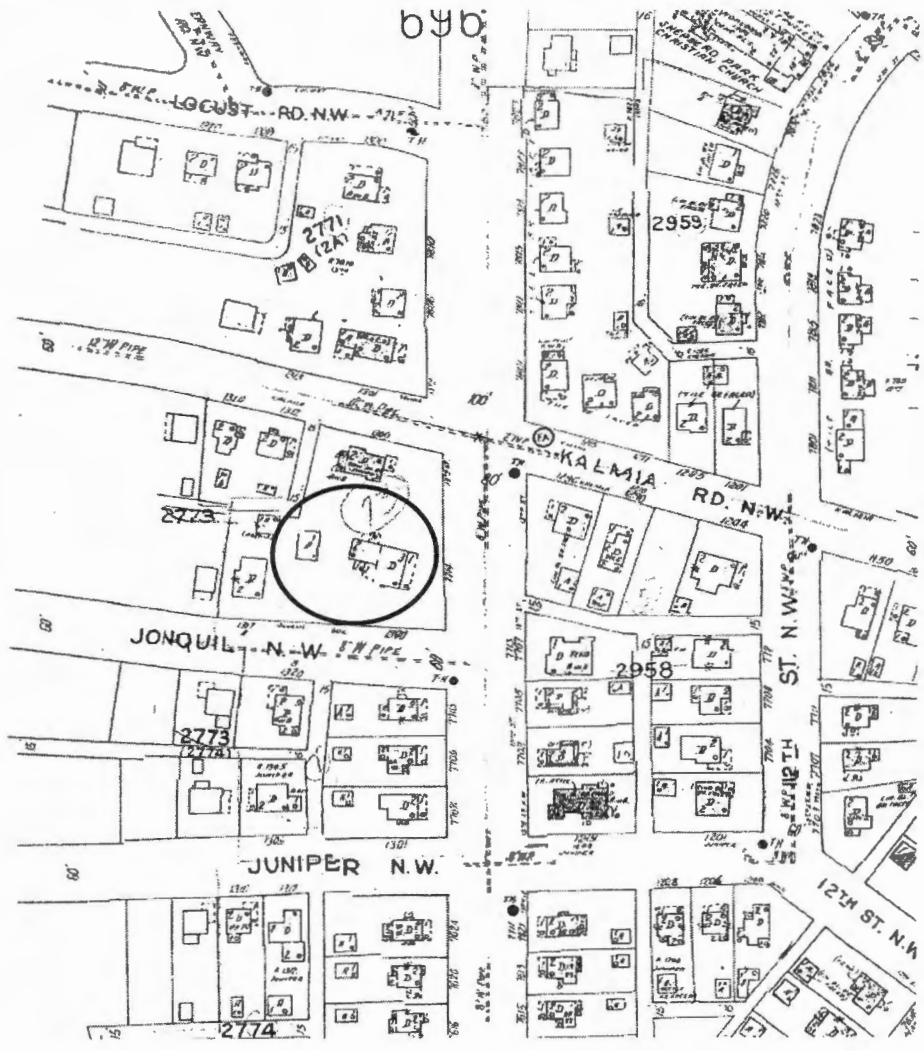
Site Plan showing Van View property, 7714 13th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Van View
Name of Property Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images Page 3



Site Plan showing Van View property, 7714 13th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

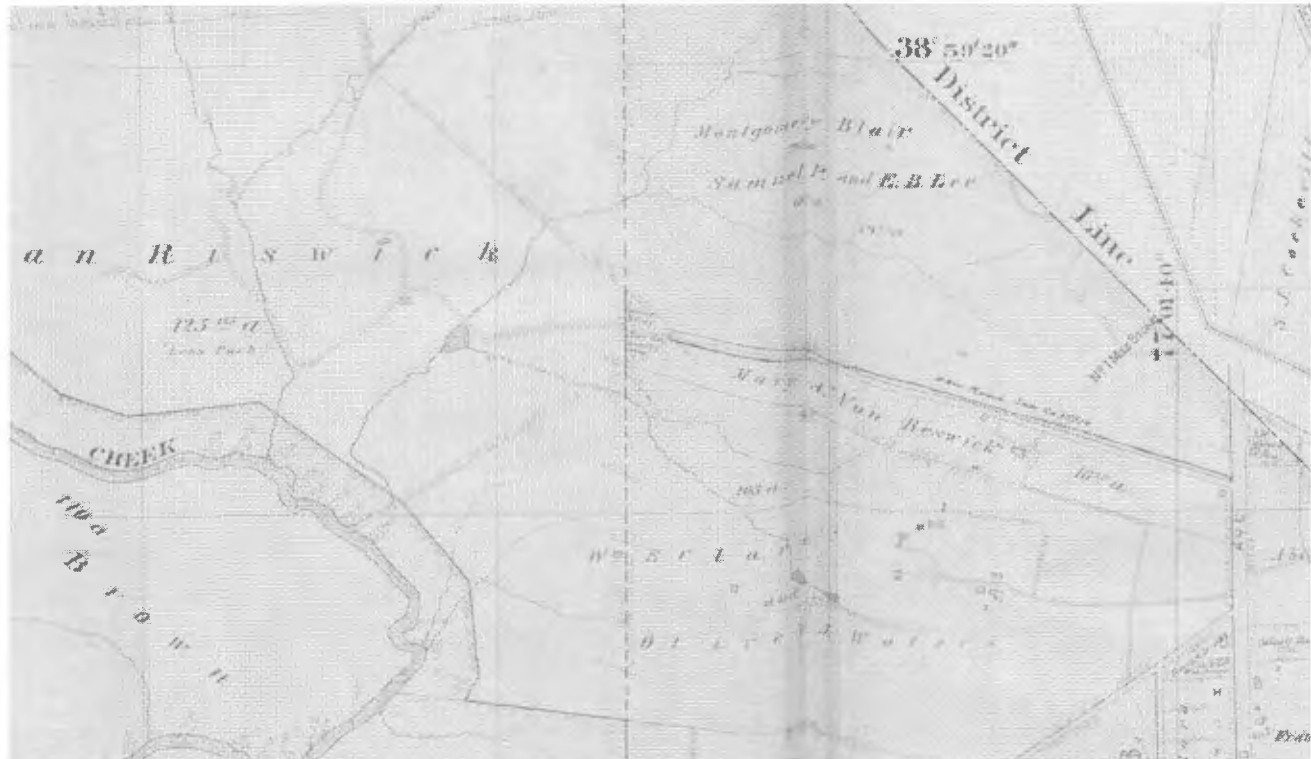
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

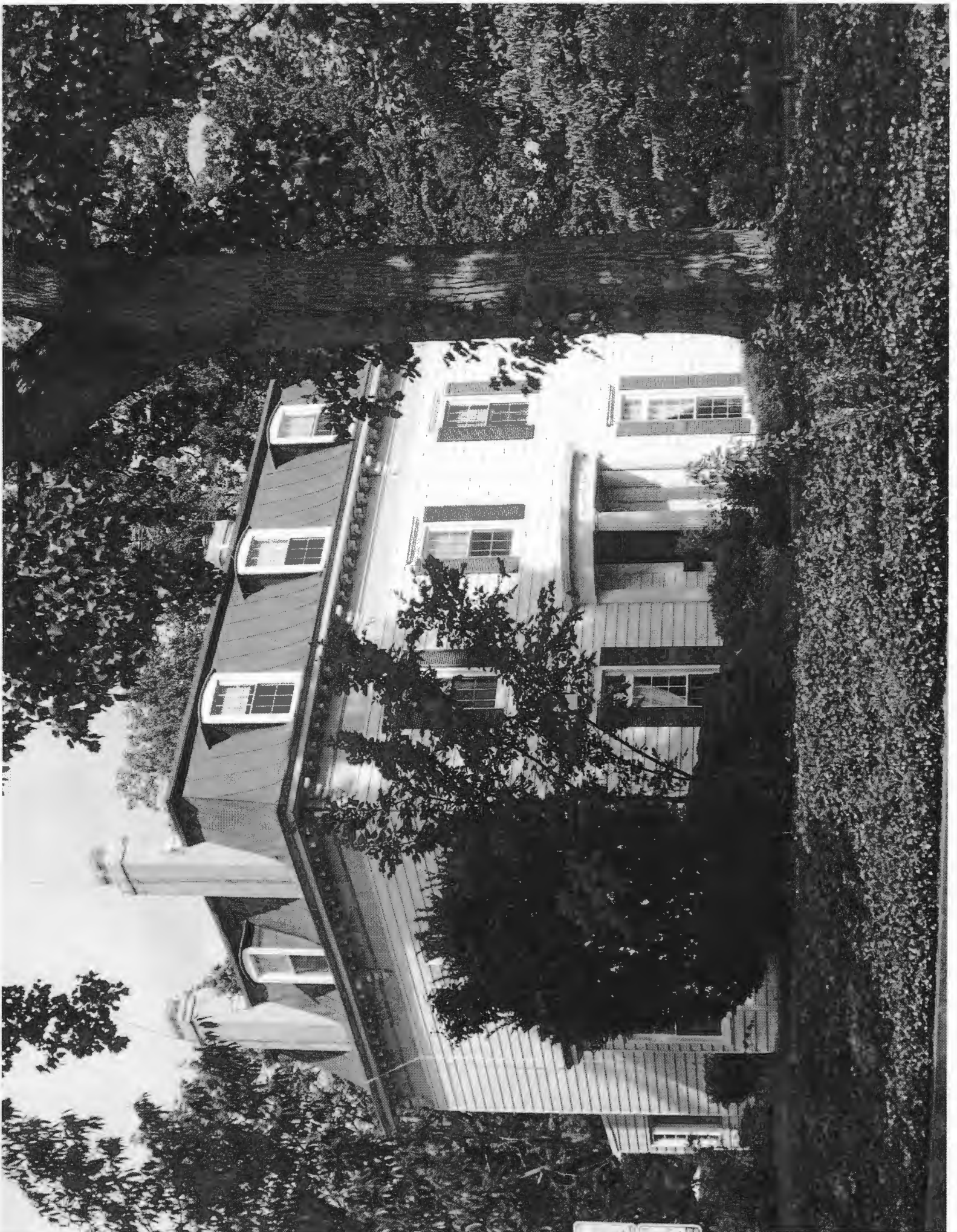
Van View
Name of Property Washington, D.C.
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps and Images

Page 4



1894 G.M. Hopkins Map (Plate 19) showing the Van View property





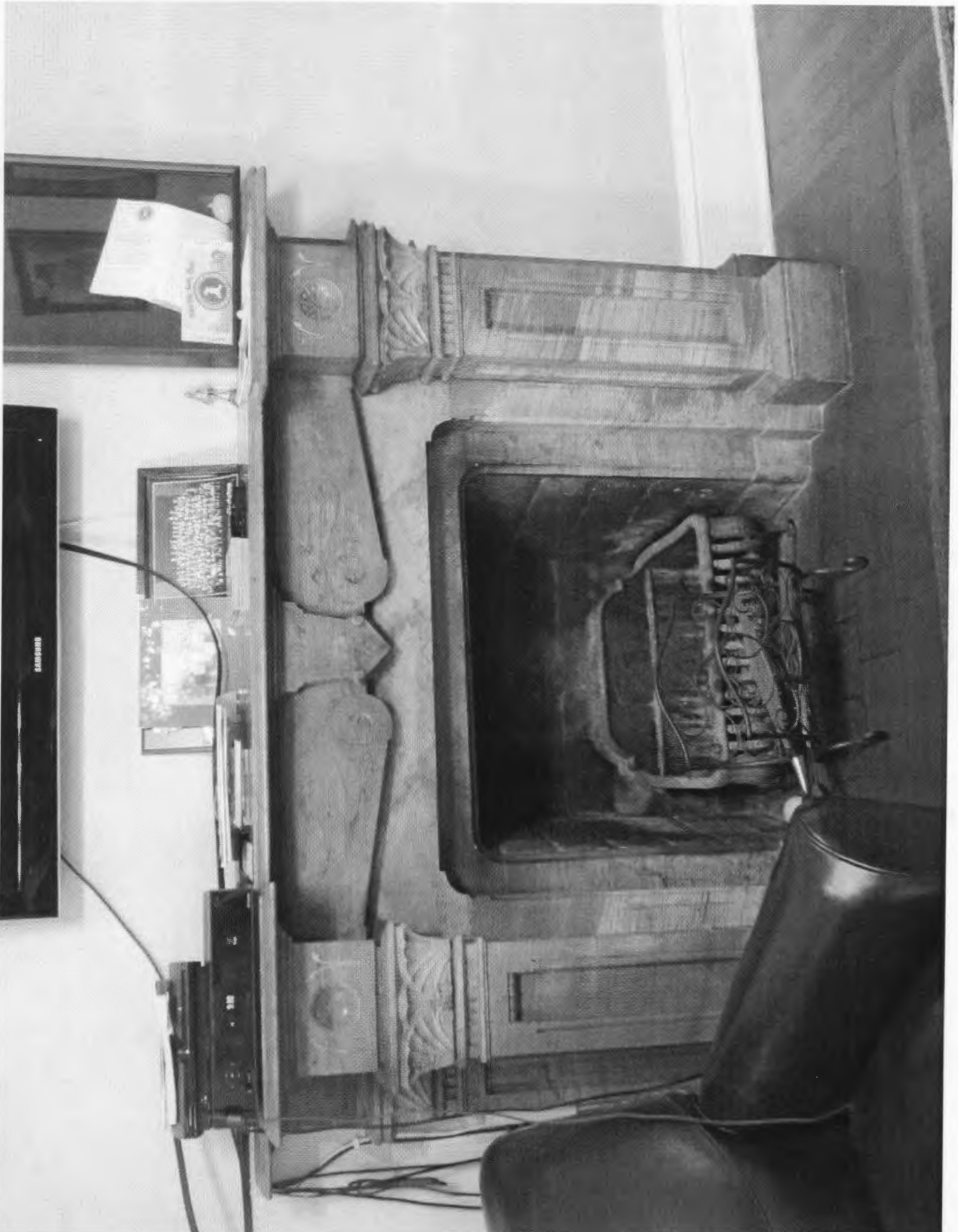


















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