
7. Description

Inventory No. PG: 79-019-23

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Magruder Law Office is located at 14708 Main Street in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The one-story, three-bay building was built c. 1860. The building is sited on the north side of Main Street, east of the intersection between Elm Street and Water Street. The building is located in the downtown area of Upper Marlboro, which is primarily commercial. A concrete sidewalk is located between the building and Main Street. Immature trees and shrubs are located to the south of the building in a brick planting box.

LAW OFFICE

Magruder Law Office was constructed c. 1860.¹ The one-story, three-bay Greek Revival-style building has a rectangular form. Set on a solid concrete foundation, this wood-frame building is covered in weatherboard siding. Set between each opening, as well as at the corners of the façade, are engaged Tuscan wood pilasters. The front-gabled roof is covered in asphalt shingles. The tympanum has prominent cornice returns and overhanging eaves. The entablature features dentil moldings and an ogee-molded cornice with modillions. The delicate dentil work extends across the façade while the modillions are present only on the cornice returns and along the side (east, west) elevations. The gable end of the façade (south elevation) is covered in weatherboard siding and features a centrally located arched louvered vent with cavetto surround. Fenestration consists of 1/1 windows with square-edged wood surrounds. Plain rectangular square-edged wood spandrels are located below each window opening. Circular cut-outs are set in the middle of plain rectangular panels above each opening. The entrance is located in the east bay and consists of an inset single-leaf, paneled wood door with lights. A rectangular-light transom with square-edged surround rests above the door. The inset is complimented by plain panels.

A small alley is located along the west elevation of the building. This alley is entered through a modern single-leaf paneled wood door and was not accessible during the 2007 on-site survey.

The west (side) elevation is not symmetrical. The engaged pilasters found on the façade (south elevation) repeat once more along the west (side) elevation. The window opening between the southwest corner pilaster and the single pilaster on the west (side) elevation was boarded up with plywood at the time of the on-site survey in 2007. The remaining bays of the west (side) elevation are clad in weatherboarding.

The east (side) elevation abuts Marcello's Grill at 14710 Main Street. The overhanging eaves of Magruder Law Office extend over this adjacent building.

The interior of the Magruder Law Office was not accessible at the time of the 2007 on-site survey.

¹ Margaret W. Cook, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Files.

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INTEGRITY

The Magruder Law Office retains a high level of integrity. The building, based on its form and style, maintains its integrity of design. The building's integrity of materials and workmanship are retained due to the retention of key architectural elements, such as the exterior cladding. Magruder Law Office has functioned as a law office in downtown Upper Marlboro since its construction, retaining its integrity of feeling, setting, association, and location.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates	c. 1860	Architect/Builder	Unknown
Construction dates	c. 1860		

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Magruder Law Office was constructed c. 1860 at 14708 Main Street in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The building is an example of the Greek Revival-style architecture that was popular in Prince George's County in the mid-nineteenth century. This building is one of the few examples of the style remaining in the county.² The building started as a law office and still served this function at the time of the 2007 on-site survey. The Magruder Law Office retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as an unusual example of mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival-style architecture in Prince George's County.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Magruder Law Office is located in downtown Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Located in central Prince George's County, the Town of Upper Marlboro was established when the General Assembly of the Province of Maryland passed the "Act for the Advancement of Trade and Erecting Ports and Towns" in 1706 and 1707 in order to establish commercial centers in Maryland.³ Chosen for its location on the Western Branch of the Patuxent River, the area was thought to be a convenient trading location. With its designation as the county seat, Upper Marlboro soon became the social, political, and commercial center of Prince George's County.

As the Patuxent River and the Western Branch silted, the river became unnavigable for large ships transporting tobacco. As a result, Baltimore became the commercial hub of tobacco in Maryland. Even without the tobacco industry, the thriving commercial and political center of Upper Marlboro supported the local economy in the nineteenth century. Martenet's Map of 1861 shows a well-developed small town, mostly centered on Main Street. Most of the residential buildings are located to the west, while the commercial development was primarily located in the east and centered around the courthouse. Upper Marlboro provided a number of shops

² Margaret W. Cook, "Magruder's Law Office," (PG: 79-23) Prince George's County Historic Sites Summary Sheet (1978).

³ Marina King, "The Tobacco Industry in Prince George's County, 1680-1940," in *Historic Contexts in Prince George's County: Short Papers on Settlement Patterns, Transportation and Cultural History* (Upper Marlboro, MD: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1991), 69-71.

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and amenities for its residents and visitors. The town was served by several hotels, multiple law offices, and other stores that included a barber shop, carriage factory, tailor, cabinet maker, tinner, doctor's office, and the offices of the *Planter's Advocate* and the *Marlboro Gazette*. By 1861, at least three churches were constructed within the town for the Catholic, Methodist, and Episcopalian congregations. Just a few years later in 1878, the Hopkins map documents considerable new growth in the town. Many new residences and stores were constructed, along with two new public schools, one for the education of boys, and one for girls.

Started in 1823, the law practice of Caleb Clarke Magruder, Sr. prompted the construction of the law office circa 1860. Caleb Clarke Magruder, Sr., born approximately 1810, is listed as an attorney-at-law at the time of the 1850 U.S. Federal Census and married to Mary Sprigg Belt. The couple had three children: Mary, Caleb, and Edward.⁴ Magruder was also a slave owner at the time of the 1850 Slave Schedule. Magruder owned 18 slaves ranging in age from infancy to 34 years of age.⁵

Caleb Clarke Magruder, Jr. joined his father's law practice in 1864. Magruder's grandsons Caleb Clarke Magruder III and Mercer Hampton Magruder joined the family's practice in 1888 and 1889.⁶ These men were considered to be among the most prominent attorneys in Maryland, each in his time acting as lead counsel in many important cases.⁷

Caleb Clarke Magruder, Jr. received the property from his father, Caleb Clarke Magruder, Sr. c. 1870.⁸ In 1906, the building was transferred again within the Magruder family, being conveyed to Mercer Hampton Magruder, Sr.⁹ At the time of the 1930 U.S. Federal Census, Mercer Hampton Magruder, Sr. is listed as living in Prince George's County and working as a general practice lawyer. Magruder and his wife, Mittie Hall Magruder, have three children at the time of the 1930 census: Mercer Hampton Magruder, Jr., Florence H. Magruder, and Mary B. Magruder.¹⁰ The couple has another son in 1933, Alexander Clarke Magruder, Jr.¹¹

Joseph C. Sauerwein obtained the property in 1986 from A. Clarke Magruder, Jr.¹² Sauerwein is a practicing attorney in the state of Maryland, continuing the functional history of The Magruder Law Office.

⁴ 1850 U.S. Federal Census, Marlborough, Prince George's County, Maryland, Series M432, Roll 295, Page 75, Image 412, Caleb Clarke Magruder.

⁵ 1850 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedule (2), Marlborough District, Prince George's County, Maryland, Caleb Clarke Magruder.

⁶ Margaret W. Cook, "Magruders' Law Office," (PG: 79-23) Prince George's County Historic Sites Summary Sheet (1978).

⁷ Margaret W. Cook, "Magruders' Law Office," (PG: 79-23) Prince George's County Historic Sites Summary Sheet (1978).

⁸ Caleb Clarke Magruder, Sr. to Caleb Clarke Magruder, Jr., Prince George's County Land Records, Equity 1502.

⁹ Caleb Clarke Magruder, Jr. to Mercer Hampton Magruder, Prince George's County Land Records, 30:191.

¹⁰ 1930 U.S. Federal Census, Marlboro, Prince George's County, Maryland, Roll 877, Page 5B, Enumeration District 9, Image 729, Mercer Hampton Magruder, Sr.

¹¹ Margaret W. Cook, "Magruders' Law Office Chain of Title," Prince George's County Files.

¹² Clarke Magruder to Joseph Sauerwein, Prince George's County Land Records, NLP 6438:765.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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1850, 1930 U.S. Federal Census (Population Schedule). Online: The Generations Network, Inc., 2007. Subscription database. Digital scan of original records in the National Archives, Washington, DC. <http://www.ancestry.com>
Margaret W. Cook, "Magruder's Law Office," (PG: 79-23) Prince George's County Historic Sites Summary Sheet (1978). Prince George's County Land Records.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property	<u>0.0229</u>	
Acreage of historical setting	<u>0.0229</u>	
Quadrangle name	<u>Upper Marlboro</u>	Quadrangle scale: <u>1:24,000</u>

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Magruder Law Office is located on a 0.0229-acre parcel in downtown Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Main Street is located to the south of the building, while the First National Bank of Southern Maryland of Upper Marlboro at 4000 Main Street is located to the north. Commercial buildings flank the building to the east and west. A small alley is located between Magruder Law Office and the building to the west. The building has been historically associated with Parcel 178 as noted on Tax Map 101 since its construction c. 1860.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Paul Weishar, Architectural Historian		
organization	EHT Traceries, Incorporated	date	January 2008
street & number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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CHAIN OF TITLE
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY LAND RECORDS

Deed JBB 5:653 May 5, 1849	Horatio C. and Henrietta Scott, and Poly. E. Scott to Thas. G. Pratt and Caleb Clarke Magruder, Sr.
Equity 1502	Upon death of Caleb Clark Magruder "the law office" to Caleb Clarke Magruder, Jr.
Deed 30:191 May 12, 1906	Caleb Clarke Magruder, Jr. to Mercer Hampton Magruder, Sr.
Deed 3659:550 November 19, 1968	Mercer Hampton Magruder, Sr. to Mercer Hampton Magruder, III.
Deed 4493:3 June 10, 1975	Mercer Hampton Magruder, III to Mittie H. Magruder.
Deed 5690:26 April 30, 1983	Mittie H. Magruder to Alexander Clarke Magruder, Jr.
Deed 6438:765 August 26, 1986	Alexander Clarke Magruder, Jr. to Joseph C. Sauerwein.

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Photo: Magruder Law Office, view of the façade (south elevation), looking northeast. (August 2007)

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Photo: Magruder Law Office, view of the façade (south elevation), looking northwest. (August 2007)