

CRIMEA

The country estate of Thomas D. Winans

Architectural Description

This is the text nominating Crimea for the Maryland Historical Trust

It was prepared by the Baltimore architectural firm of Cho, Wilks & Benn

Architect hired by Baltimore City Recreation & Parks Director

Chris T. Delaporte in December, 1986

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CRIMEA'S INDEX NUMBER IN THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST'S INVENTORY IS B-45

DESCRIPTIVE SYNOPSIS:

The Crimea estate was the summer home of the 19th century industrialist Thomas DeKay Winans. Now approximately 300 acres of the property owned by Winans during his lifetime are located within the boundaries of Leakin Park at the western edge of Baltimore City. This portion of the family estate that at one time encompassed almost 1000 acres, roughly corresponds to Mr. Winans' holdings in 1876 shortly before his death. The land retains much of its natural rolling woods and provides a romantic setting for a large, 15 room, stone Italianate mansion and attendant buildings. A two-story, 10 room, T-shaped, stone cottage was constructed west of the mansion for family members. The two-story, banked, stone stable/carriage house has four pairs of wooden doors on the first floor and large wooden shutters above on the upper level. The delightful board-and-batten Gothic chapel is dominated by its steeply pitched gable roof. The two-and-a-half-story, seven room, T-shaped, frame caretaker's house was built in the Shingle style. In addition, the estate retains archeological remnants of a metal undershot water wheel and an earthwork rampart.

Thomas Winans' interests are clearly reflected in his estate to this day. His affinity for Russian culture prompted the use of massive pendants on the boxy Italianate structures. Mr. Winans' engineering training and inventive nature are reflected in the mechanical systems, such as storing the water pumped to the main house in the attic cistern. The passive, convective cooling displays his integration of physics into the architecture of his summer home. The grand house retains both its interior and exterior architectural integrity and those areas of the land developed for recreational park uses do not compromise the integrity of the estate. The cluster of elegant but restrained stone and

wooden buildings around the driveway loop have suffered only minor alterations since their construction during Mr. Winans' life. Along with the collection of utilitarian and whimsical structures on the property, the natural and manmade landscaping still reflect the life and times of one of Baltimore's industrial barons.

DESCRIPTION:

The size of the Crimea estate changed as the Winans/Hutton family acquired and sold parcels of land. Currently, the western half of Leakin Park, encompassing approximately 300 acres, roughly represents the land holdings of the family in 1876 near the end of Thomas DeKay

Winans' life, when the boundaries were recorded in a city atlas. The rolling wooded hills continue to be a natural wonder and environmental retreat within the confines of Baltimore City.

The only vehicular approach to the mansion is now around the loop entering the estate from the northern border. At one time, the path descending the hill to the southwest, now used only by pedestrians, brought carriages up from the Franklinton Road that bisected the estate along Dead Run. The current driveway passes along a low stone wall with regularly spaced trees set behind it. This wall screens the parking lot and tennis courts. Younger trees have been planted in a parallel row on the west side of the drive to create an image of symmetrical shading. The flagpole, the liriopie at the base of the trees and bushes, and the tall vertical evergreens of the Virginia red cedar within the driveway loop are not original, nor in keeping with the historical landscaping character of the property. The large, old oak and tulip trees clustered near the mansion are native and

may have been part of the original plantings. Each May, the one tall paulownia tree to the east side of the house complements the lavender/blue flowers of the wisteria used at the back of the house. This tree was a favorite period plant imported from China, known for its pods used as packing material.

ORIANDA, CRIMEA'S MANSION

The main house is a massive block of random, gray ashlar, subtly defined at the corners with quoins. The 10,000 square foot cube, five bays wide and deep by three stories high, is capped with a shallow, hipped, standing-seam metal roof that projects well beyond the exterior walls. At the apex, a cupola, described below for its natural ventilation purpose, is topped with a corresponding hipped roof and a spiked, and possibly originally gilded ball. There are two pairs of corbeled brick chimneys.

The formalized styling, boxy massing of the mansion's volume, the tall proportions of the double-leaf casement windows, and the wooden caps atop the lintels are all indicative of the Italianate architecture of the building. The massive wooden pendants that hang from the corners of the broad eaves are a most obvious reference to the owner's penchant for Russian architecture.

The paneled front door is surrounded by a multi-pane transom and sidelights and flanked by stone curbs that once supported a pair of cast and wrought-iron lions made in the owner's Russian shops.⁽¹⁾ The design of the one-story porte-cochere is amplified along the east and west sides of the house in the form of long, covered porches. Then on the rear of the house, the veranda is repeated and extended upward to the second floor. The jig-sawn porch brackets and balustrades demonstrate Eastlake-style influence. Russian

wisteria once climbed up across the porches of the mansion and small vines can now be seen among the American Boxwood bushes off the rear veranda. The slow-growing, English Boxwood was planted around the perimeter of the house, perhaps during Winans' lifetime. The American Boxwood bushes, known to be a fast-growing species were added later to create the garden bay at the rear.

The slope of the hill is incorporated into the design by banking the house and by supporting the porches on brick piers that increase in height as the hill drops away. Thus, the rear of the house appears to be a full story taller, as the lowest level here is above grade. The entrances at grade level were for service functions and, although the window outlines can be seen, they have been covered over with stucco. The structural stability of the southern foundation is of concern, because settlement has caused large, vertical and diagonal cracks to open at the corners of the building.⁽²⁾

Inside, the floor plan reflects the formal symmetry of the exterior with corresponding rooms with 14' 8" ceiling heights on either side of the axial hallway of the first floor. The doors leading to the rooms on either side have raised and fielded panels. The size of the individual panels varies within the stack of five in each door, but the top, middle and bottom panels are all shorter than the intermediate ones. Opaque glass has replaced some of the panels in the front door and those two leading to the northern rooms, an alteration probably made by the Department of Recreation and Parks.

The room in the northwest corner is distinguished by its extremely tall closet. During the 1930s, this room was furnished with oak furniture from Scotland.⁽³⁾ This may have been the same "old-fashioned plain furniture" mentioned in a 19th century newspaper account.⁽⁴⁾ The counterpart room in the northeast corner may well have been

the family dining room, entered through double-leaf doors from the hallway. This attribution is based on its location adjacent to the staircase leading to the basement kitchen. The door separating this room from the hallway has been altered; the upper panels of the door cut off and fixed within the frame when a plumbing pipe was installed within the stairway. In fact, the four-panel door now in place, is probably a replacement, since its vertical paneling does not match the horizontal shape of the panels in the first floor's other doors.

Each of the two northern rooms has a rusticated stone mantel, mid-20th century remodelings of the original fireplaces. It is difficult to determine if any portion of the original fireplaces may still be hidden under the rusticated stonework; the mantel shelves have definitely been lost. In each of these two rooms, the four window sills have been raised and the original sash replaced with louvered glass. The result of this interior change is seen on the exterior as random stone infill, not toothed into the original masonry at the base of eight front and side windows on the first floor.

At the intersection of the hallway axis with the second pair of openings can be seen a knob in the ceiling, all that remains of a chandelier. These two pairs of doors off the central hall reveal staircases at each side of the house. The curious feature of these circulation systems is that neither is clearly defined as the primary or monumental staircase. Each broad set of steps ascends with turned balusters and has vertical, recessed paneling, outlined with molding, under the decorated stringer. Each stair offers generous proportions except in its landing at the first floor. The western one, with its octagonal newel vertically ornamented with bead-and-disk molding and topped with a tiered finial, offers a straight run at the first floor. Insufficient room was provided at the bottom,

however, when the double leaf doors, that appear to be original, are closed. This stairhall has a rounded flag holder in one corner and a small water closet is nestled off of the landing half way up to the second floor. The eastern one turns gracefully at the base, yet its bottom steps oddly butt into the doorway to the main hall. These paneled doors that separate the main hall from the staircase are infills that appear to have replaced a section of balustrade. The eastern staircase has a stacked set of steps to the basement with a turned newel post and matching decorative face string.

At the end of the barrel-vaulted central hall is the most grand room in the house. The Drawing Room boasts two massive stone fireplaces and tall, elegant pier mirrors between the pairs of windows at the ends of the room. The depth of the stone walls is evident with the interior shutters that fold back into the reveals or close to cover the windows that extend down to floor level.⁽⁵⁾ An early 1930s description of the room mentions rich crimson curtains and rare rugs covering the polished floor.⁽⁶⁾

On the second floor, the plan is symmetrical along both the north-south and the east-west axes. The large corner rooms each offer four windows and a fireplace with a stone mantel of fairly simple design, the marble and decorative features varying from room to room. In the southwest room, the light-colored marble mantel is devoid of carving with the exception of a two-inch bead around the fireplace opening. Flat corbels with beveled edges appear to hang from the bevel-edged mantel shelf at the top of the piers. One of the other light-colored mantels, made of a different marble with larger patterned veining, has a routed outline in its frieze following the intrados of the cusped arch.

At each end of the central north-south axis, there are three rooms. The two, small,

square ones may have been closets and the larger one a sitting room, accessed through the bedrooms on either side. One has been converted to a bathroom, used by the caretaker's family. The second floor trim is a flat stock, approximately six-inches wide with plain plinths and recessed corner blocks. The tall doors have six raised-and-fielded panels. The high composite baseboard has a gently curved ogee shoemold and beveled cap molding. Historical accounts of the house describe one second-floor bedroom as being furnished entirely in highly ornate Russian style.⁽⁷⁾

On the third floor, there are three rooms on the north and south sides, each accessible from one of the stair landings. Many of these rooms have retained their original, grained woodwork, including double doors leading to each bedroom. When the solid, six-panel doors are shut, the occupant has sound privacy; when left open and the louvered door closed, convection currents can cool the room. The trim on the third floor is simple one-by-five inch casing with plain corner blocks and matching skirt below the window sills. The baseboard has a beveled molding on top, but not the shoe-mold of the second floor. Some of the jigsaw brackets that supported drapery poles still remain. The drapery and the interior and exterior shutters could be operated to minimize summer heat build-up and the double-leaf casement windows could be operated to encourage cooling breezes. The most interesting part of the third-floor plan is the relationship between the three staircases. The two main sets of steps each arrive at a landing that can be visually closed off from the center with grained, double-leaf, louvered doors. In the center, a charming wooden spiral staircase ascends to the cupola. Each step seems to be a wedge that locks into the one above and below and is held in check by the sturdy center pole and the spiral balustrade. Although the stair is creaky and a little rickety, its design and

execution are a testament to the skill of its carpenter/builder. The louvers in the third-floor doors and the access doors to the attic crawl spaces on each of the four sides provide natural ventilation for the heat rising through this summer home, exiting through the operable windows of the cupola.

The mechanical systems are as significant as the styling of the house, as they are an integral function of the building's design. Trained as a machinist, Winans ensured that the plan maximized the natural cooling available through convection currents. Because the house was designed primarily for seasonal use, the heat for the building was originally supplied by the small fireplaces in each of the corner rooms, as mentioned above. On the third floor, there are flue pipes in the chimneys that may once have vented either wood or coal stoves. Knowing that water was pumped up to the house by the waterwheel at the base of the hill, the location of a bathtub just under the metal-lined cistern in the attic's east side makes logical sense. Mr. Winans also saw to it that his house was provided with gas for illumination, once reported to have been produced in a gas-house on site.

As on the second and third floors, the basement plan uses the east-west axis as the primary organization, along with those load-bearing walls that support the secondary cross-axis. The tapering, round spindled eastern stair mentioned above opens to the central hall, while the western stair is enclosed and turns directly into the room at the southwest corner. Historical descriptions of the house make reference to Thomas Winans' study and library. It is possible that this private room may have served this purpose; Winans could have ascended and descended without passing through the more public circulation areas. The southeast room was used as the kitchen; a large old stove remains

tucked in place at the base of the chimney stack.

The symmetry and stiff design formula of the main house, a holdover from earlier architectural periods, contrasts with the more fluid, "romantic" arrangement of the outbuildings around the driveway loop that are described next.

Upon entering the estate from the north, the first building encountered is the two-and-a-half story, T-shaped, frame caretaker's house on the west side of the drive. The main part of the house is the long, single pile, rectangular gable. The building has a wing extending north with a dormer and shallow oriel that break the gambrel-roofed volume. The house is clad in wooden shingles and some of the original eight-over-eight window openings appear to have been covered. The orientation of the building was altered by the addition of a gabled, Bungalow-style portico with masonry piers that spans both the east end of the gable section and the side of the gambrel extension.

Across the road, the delightful, rectangular, board-and-batten Gothic Revival chapel is dominated by its steeply pitched, gable roof. The broad planes of the roof, now clad in reddish composition shingles, probably once were covered in wood or slate shingles. A vestibule entry at the west end of the structure mimics the main gable and its decorative rake boards, while the east end is differentiated by a shallow altar box projecting out under the eaves. A small, low transept extends out to the south from the chancel, perpendicular from the ridge of the roof. The wooden building is painted a somber brown, apparently only its second coat of protective paint in one hundred and twenty-five years. Metal grilles protect the double-leaf, arched windows along the sides. Inside, portions of the roof framing are displayed in the dark structural collar beams. The ornamental pendants and corner braces are accented against the light plaster ceiling. A

center aisle separates the rows of wooden pews. Although the condition of this chapel has suffered for neglect, it seems to have suffered no substantial alterations to its original construction.⁽⁸⁾

Around the west side of the looped drive are the Stable/Carriage-House and Cottage. Both these two-story buildings were constructed of the same stone walls and shallow-pitched, standing-seam metal roofs as Orianda, the stable closely echoing its boxy shape and banked configuration. In addition, the stable has a ventilator and horse weathervane on top of the hipped roof, making reference to the stacking of the cupola and lightning rod atop the main house. The bold wooden pendants used on the main house also hang from the corners of the Stable's deep soffits. The east wall, facing a widening in the drive, opens up across the first floor with four sets of full-height wooden doors for carriages and on the second floor with four floor-to-eave height pairs of wooden shutters for the delivery of hay. The south wall has several windows without shutters, while the north and west walls are solid masonry. Low on the west wall there is an opening once used by the horses to enter the building from the keeping yard. Inside, the rafter framing and stone walls have been left exposed.

The Cottage was named the "Honeymoon Cottage" for its construction for Winans' married children. The building is a two-story, T-shaped structure with two broad chimneys. Repeating the pattern of the main house, the double-leaf windows on the Cottage have exterior shutters. On the south side, the one-story porch with stone piers has been enclosed and a second-story, screened, wooden porch has been added.

Across the expanse of lawn along the east side of the drive is a small wooden gazebo placed near the picnic area. No evidence has been identified of the bowling alley

noted on the 1876 map, but a bridle path of unknown date meanders under a curving path of overhanging trees. Although the architecture around the driveway loop is the most significant, there are other notable structures on the estate, the artifacts of the waterwheel and the fort being of the greatest interest historically.

At the base of the hill below the house, the remains of the narrow waterwheel can be seen from the Franklinton Road. Steps lead down to level of the undershot wheel from the hill above and continue down into the L-shaped stone wheel pit. At a diameter of approximately 20 feet, the perimeter of the metal wheel is about two feet wide and is held in place by eight pairs of bowed spokes. All of the operating parts have been removed and the wheel has been fixed in place. Also the curved blades that once caught the water have been lost with time. Portions of the circulation piping still can be seen protruding from the ground.

The remains of a broad path, partially lined with stone, gently sweep up the hill from Franklinton Road, past the waterwheel to the main house. Traces of an early stone curb or gutter can still be found along its route. It now passes a large expanse of grass on one side and a small clearing with modern stone fire pits on the other. This connection from the Franklinton Road to that part of the estate north of Dead Run appears to have been the original driveway up to Orianda. There are only a few stately trees lining the driveway. As one would expect just teasing glimpses of landscaping and the mansion from the drive, according to the traditional picturesque landscaping guidelines of the third quarter of the 19th century, the sweeping vistas now seen while ascending the hill may have been cleared at a later date. These alterations have not significantly compromised the landscaping, but the careful pruning of selected trees to re-establish those glimpses of

the mansion could enhance the original landscaping concepts.

A large, possibly original, Norway Spruce stands sentinel at the Franklinton Road entrance to the estate. A low metal and concrete bridge with stone abutments spans Dead Run. Because the chamfered piers of the iron rail of the bridge appear to be 19th century, it is likely that the existing structure, using the original railing, replaced an earlier bridge, probably lost in a flood. Off to the northwest side at the base of the hill, there is a short footpath leading to a modern stone restroom building tucked inconspicuously behind plantings.

Nearby at the base of the same hillside is a banked stone structure with a barrel-vaulted ceiling that was probably a root cellar. At one time two metal-edged trap doors opened in the ceiling, but they have been filled with concrete. Possibly this structure was the "dungeon" once rumored to exist as part of the mock fort located halfway up the hill toward the house. Just above on the hill are terraced retaining walls with large blue-stone caps. Integrated into these walls is a random-coursed ashlar structure. Only the walls remain of this diminutive gabled house; Although it may have served a utilitarian purpose once, the structure now seems to be a whimsical Victorian folly of a scaled children's playhouse.

There is a series of mysterious views that unfold as one ascends the hill via footpath to Orianda. Horizontally layered features, set among the historically appropriate violets and vinca minor (periwinkle), reveal themselves as the footpath cuts back and forth across the hill. Halfway up the hillside, one discovers the "mock fort". The remaining earthwork is only an echo of the fort that once overlooked the Dead Run valley. Even in 1894, the rampart had decayed to the point of falling apart, when it was

described then as approximately a dozen five or six-pound guns set in ships' carriages. A large section at the middle of the curved retaining wall has given way. Up toward Orianda, there are two small curved retaining walls that pond small streams. The water may pass under the path through culverts that allow the continuation of the path without interruption. Also, one can find stones piled in a swale, another conscious effort to adapt the ravine drainage patterns, minimizing erosion. Near the top of the path is what appears to be a round brick pool. A pipe feeding one side implies a pond or fountain, but the axial slots around the rim suggest the structure may on once have had columns, creating a gazebo.

Since Winans bought the property before it had been developed, most of the land has retained its forest. The family later sold off large portions of the estate for residential and commercial development. The character of the remaining densely wooded property has been changed in the northwest corner of the park. This area has been cleared and is kept mowed for playing fields. Located off a separate entry drive that once led to a tenant farm are the model train rail, another modern stone restroom structure, and the City Farm Building. This one-story, stone outbuilding is U-shaped and has small, high windows. These features have changed the character of the landscaping, but do not significantly alter the integrity of the property.

In conclusion, the west end of Leakin Park, the 300-acre Crimea estate, still retains much of its natural rolling woods and provides a romantic setting for the large stone Italianate mansion and attendant buildings. The cluster of elegant but restrained stone and wooden buildings around the driveway loop have suffered only minor alterations since their construction during Mr. Winans' life. Along with the collection of

utilitarian and whimsical structures on the property, the natural and manmade landscaping still reflect the life and times of one of Baltimore's industrial barons.

(1) The cast iron lions were moved adjacent to the lions' cages in Druid Hill Park where they remain today.

(2) A structural engineer's report is being undertaken.

(3) "Estate Recalls Old Russia." *Baltimore News-Post*, January 5, 1932.

(4) "A Day at the Crimea." *The Sunday Herald*, Baltimore, April 22, 1894.

(5) These shutters correspond to louvered ones around the exterior of the building.

(6) "Estate Recalls Old Russia," *Ibid*.

(7) Giza, Joanne, and Black, Catharine, F., "Great Baltimore Houses: An Architectural and Social History." Maclay Associates, Inc., Baltimore, 1982, p. 67.

(8) On 23 May 1987, an event was being held on the grounds of the Crimea to raise funds for the restoration of the chapel. While a group of people gathered inside the frame structure for a lecture, a thunderstorm began. Lightning struck the building. Although a professional staff member the City of Baltimore's Planning Department was killed and several people were hospitalized, damage to the structure was limited to holes burned in the roof.

SYNOPSIS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

In 1857, Thomas Winans used the money he had acquired constructing and maintaining the Russian railroads to build his country estate, Crimea. Just several miles from his city residence, this property was his family's escape from urban development to picturesque rolling woodlands, until it was purchased by the City in the 1940s. The estate still represents a refuge for city dwellers in a relatively undisturbed mesophytic forest, located in a municipal park within Baltimore City limits. The natural beauty of the landscaping was at one time enhanced with features such as arbors and gardens, prompting Frederick Law Olmstead III to describe its "high state of perfection". Both the collection of five primary buildings around the driveway loop and the remains of features such as the waterwheel and mock fort retain sufficient historical integrity to evoke a clear image of the life of a 19th century industrial baron. The architectural integrity of the structures is enhanced by their continued relationship with the well-preserved romantic landscaping so essential to the character of this mid-19th century upper-class country retreat. It is the combination of these distinctive features that make Crimea so important.

The significance of the estate lies in its architectural integrity and in its association with the Winans family. Thomas DeKay Winans and his father, Ross, were well known for their contributions to the transportation, mechanical, and musical industries. These inventive and generous businessmen, who influenced both the Civil War locally and industrial history beyond the Baltimore region, were well known in their day, as was the Crimea estate during their residence through the mid-1870s.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Thomas DeKay Winans was born on 9 December 1821 in New Jersey. He was a child when his father, Ross Winans, an inventor and entrepreneur, moved his family to Baltimore to take charge of the Mt. Clare machine shops for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Ross Winans is credited with the invention of a wheel that helped trains negotiate curves successfully, the small “Crab” with horizontal pistons, the “Camelback engine”, a locomotive having enough power to conquer the Allegheny mountains, and a locomotive whose maximum speed could not even be measured at the time.

Trained as an engineer, Thomas-Winans made his money and developed his taste for Russian culture when he went to work abroad. His father, Ross Winans, sent two of his four sons to Alexandroffsky, four miles from St. Petersburg, in 1844 to establish shops and execute a five-year contract for 200 locomotives and 7000 cars. The eldest son, Thomas, his brother, William Louis, and their American partners also were responsible for the construction of stone and iron bridges and the feat of laying of the railroad from Moscow to St. Petersburg in a remarkably straight line. Their shops, working eleven-and-a-half hour days, six days a week produced Czar Nicholas I's dream a year ahead of schedule.

When Thomas Winans left Europe in 1848 home-bound for Baltimore, his personal worth was estimated at \$2,000,000. Thomas left his brother in Russia to execute additional government contracts for the maintenance of the rolling stock, although he returned in 1865 for a couple years to operate the railroad and train Russian engineers and conductors. These lucrative contracts with the Russian government enhanced their wealth to the extent that when Thomas Winans died in 1878, his fortune had grown to

\$20,000,000.

Winans and Celeste Revillon, his Russian wife of French and Italian descent, erected a city villa on West Baltimore Street between Fremont Avenue and Calendar Alley. This gray stone mansion was not only patterned after the summer palaces of Russian nobility, but it was named "Alexandroffsky" after the site of the Winans' shops. The millionaire's home was the first place in Baltimore to have a central heating plant and was also the source of scandal. Set among the shrubs, tree mazes, and rose trellises were semi-nude statues. The classical Greek and Roman replicas offended Baltimore's prudish citizens, prompting the construction of a high brick wall around the estate.

To escape the summer's heat, the Winans built on the Crimea estate in 1857 to take advantage of the cooling hillside breezes. Just five miles apart, the settings of the two homes were vastly different; Alexandroffsky was an urban dwelling while Crimea was a country estate. One of their similarities, however, was that each estate was designed to shield the family from the prying eyes of their neighbors. In the city, the protection came in the form of a stone wall and, in the country, the buildings were constructed at the center of a very large tract of land. Also, each property had an iron eagle cast in Winans' Russian shops. This symbol of the eagle was said to represent the Russian coat-of-arms. When Alexandroffsky was sold, and, shortly thereafter demolished in 1928, the two birds of prey were brought together once again and were set atop the gateposts at the northern entrance to Crimea. At the same time, the statuary was also transported from the city to Crimea. "The Discus Thrower," "Mercury," "The Gladiator" and "Diana" clothed only in a marble scarf graced the grounds. "Pandora" rested just inside the back of the Drawing Room.

Thomas Winans may have chosen this part of Baltimore County as the site for his summer home, not only because of its beauty and natural states, but also because many of his and his father's business associates had settled in this area. Their homes were generally a little farther east toward the city. This area, called "The Mansions," included the homes of such prominent men as Joseph P. Ellicott at Grantly, A.S. Abell at Woodburne, Colonel Hugh Gelston at Gelston Heights, James Carey at the Mount, and U.S. Senator Reverdy Johnson—all situated along the Gwynn's Falls. These other estates have been integrated into the urban development of the city, leaving the Crimea estate alone as an example of a by-gone era.

Orianda, the mansion house completed in 1857, was named after a huge resort park in Crimea on the Black Sea. The Italianate style main house was nestled within the confines of a tract that at one time covered almost a thousand acres and was most notable for its natural landscaping. The relatively undisturbed woodlands are described as a mixed mesophytic forest. The informal plantings, typical of the period, and the picturesque qualities of the estate were heightened by wild flowers, a fountain near the house, a rustic bridge, gardens, orchards, arbors, bowers, seats under trees, rolling meadows and heavy woods. Writers waxed poetic about this landscaper calling it “a perfect paradise” and describing “the exceptional beauty and interest of the landscape which already exists in a high state of perfection.” Although the “exceptional natural landscape beauty” remains, some of the man-made features that enhanced the terrain are mere echoes of their former grandeur.

On the grounds were tenant houses, stables for the thoroughbred horses, and the residence of their caretakers within easy walking distance from the mansion. A Gothic

Revival, board-and-batten chapel, built for the people working on the estate, is said never to have been consecrated because Mrs. Winans died just after it was finished. The fact that the building has no glass in its windows may reflect its unfinished stature. The bowling alley north of the mansion, shown in the 1876 atlas, and the playhouse (a miniature replica of the main house) seen in a 1948 newspaper photograph, seem to have been lost with time.

The Crimea property is noteworthy, not just for its size, but also for the features on the estate that have deteriorated through decades of neglect. A mock fort “protected” the property from “invaders” on the Franklin Turnpike. Some say the rampart was built to make the name Crimea more appropriate to the place, while others believe that since the Winans were Southern sympathizers and financial supporters, the dummy cannons were installed before Winans left for London during the Civil War, with the intent to intimidate the Northern troops. Although Union soldiers were stationed nearby, the troops largely left the estate alone, limiting their destruction to cutting down fruit trees and fencing.

The large waterwheel down near the Franklinton Road once was powered by the small stream called Dead Run. From there, water was pumped up to the house. Of interest is the newspaper report that gas once was produced on-site to illuminate the house. These early amenities reflect Thomas Winans' engineering background and the affinity he and his father shared for inventing. In the late 1850s, they were credited with the creation of the first “cigar” steamer, designated as such for its streamlined shape and designed to reduce rolling and seasickness. This stream-lined hull served as a prototype for many modern vehicles. Thomas Winans obtained patents for slide valves on steam engines and

improvements to the buggy wagon, organ, pianoforte, and ventilation systems.

The man's extremely generous nature manifested itself in the soup kitchen he started to feed thousands of city residents daily in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Following another trip to Russia after the conclusion of the Civil War, Thomas Winans went into retirement, but continued his interests in inventing.

After the death of Ross in 1877 and Thomas in 1878, the family receded into an era of aristocratic isolation—no inventions, no business enterprises, no political controversy. The Crimea land passed down through three generations of the family through the builder's children: Ross Revillon and Celeste Marguerite, and her husband, Gaun M. Hutton (whom she had met in St. Petersburg on a trip with her father); the Hutton's son, Reginald; and finally, his daughter Celeste Winans Hutton. In 1896, the family sold-off 80 acres of the estate to the developer of Windsor Hills, a residential community to the east. Thomas Winans' descendants preferred to live in the third house he built in Newport, Rhode Island, returning to Crimea for only a couple weeks each fall. When they were in residence, “old Glory” flew from the flagpole atop the cupola.

The family owned the remainder of the estate until the 1940s, when 300 acres were sold to the city in two transactions for a park. The acquisition of the 60 acres surrounding the buildings in 1948 for approximately \$150,000 complemented the purchase of 243 acres for \$108,000 in 1941. The funds for the park were provided by the estate of J. Wilson Leakin (1857-1922) through the sale of city properties. Circumstances, such as the collapse of the Stock Market in 1929, delayed the choice and acquisition of park land. Finally the publication of a report by the Olmsted brothers praising Crimea as a choice site swayed the decision to purchase Crimea for Leakin Park.

A controversial era of the site's history occurred when the construction of a highway link between Interstate-70 and downtown was proposed. The road would have bisected the length of the park, consuming ten percent of the its land for the roadway. This road would have passed directly in front of Orianda and would have necessitated the removal of the Chapel and the large oak grove too. Although opponents squelched this plan and another one to use a portion of the site for a landfill, official public recognition of the historic and architectural significance of the estate did not take place until 1982 when Orianda, the Chapel, and the Stables were designated as Baltimore City Landmarks. Currently, the estate is used for park offices and recreational programs.

In conclusion, the significance of the estate lies in its association with the Winans family and in its architectural integrity. Thomas Winans and his father, Ross, made contributions to the transportation, mechanical, and musical industries. These inventive and generous businessmen, who influenced both the Civil War locally and industrial history beyond the Baltimore region, were well known in their day, as was the Crimea estate during their residence through the mid-1870s.

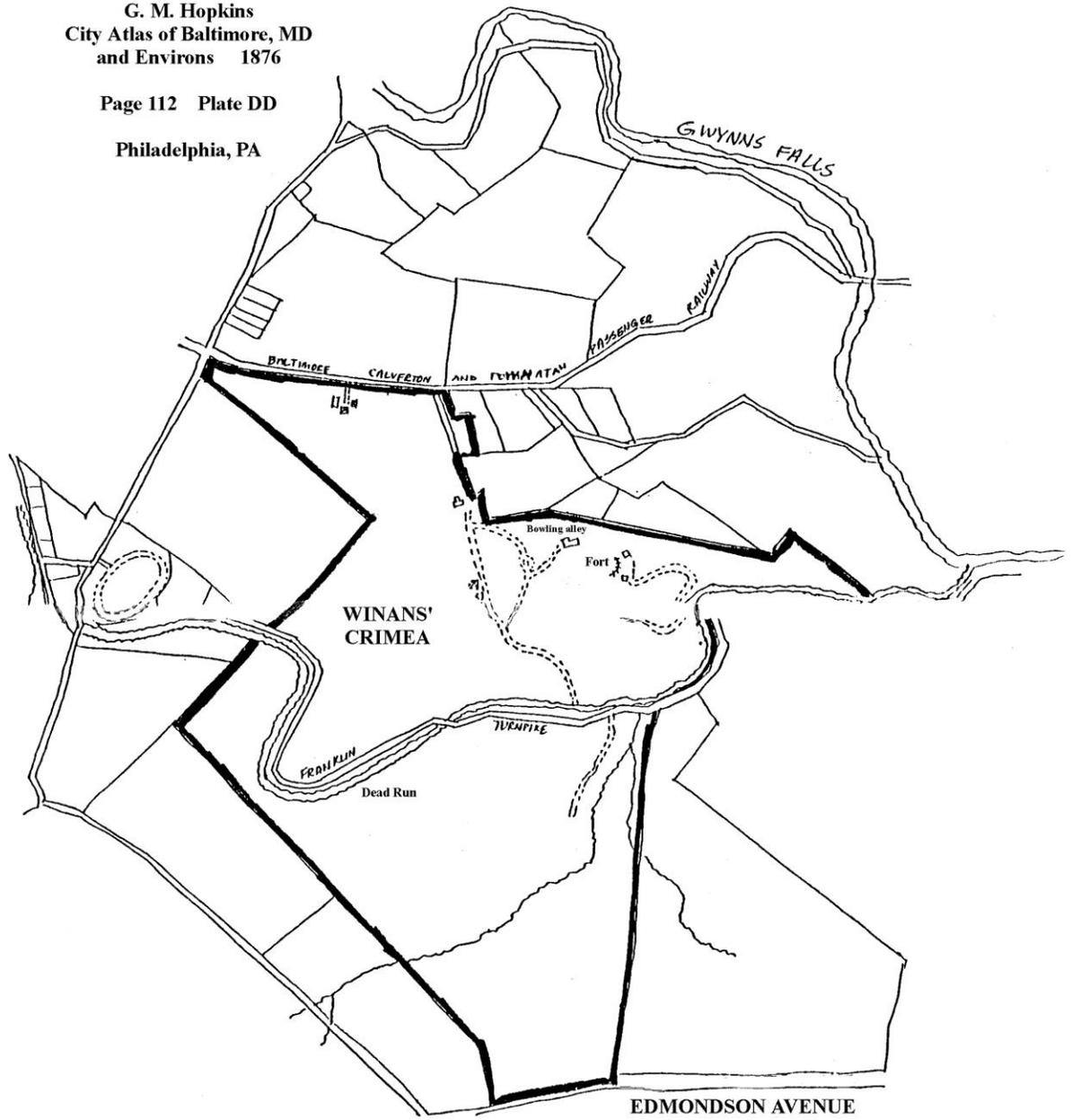
The cluster of stylish buildings around the driveway nestled into such a large tract of private land bespeaks a time and a lifestyle representative of the industrial barons of the 19th-century. Winans had returned from Europe a man of staggering wealth and foreign tastes, and these are reflected in his estate. The property still retains its graceful, rolling, wooded landscape. From the numerous clues found throughout the structures and the surrounding formal and informal landscape, Thomas Winans' estate can be imagined clearly as it once was. Crimea represents a 19th-century time piece of architecture and technology carried forward into the present. The property is one of the few large land

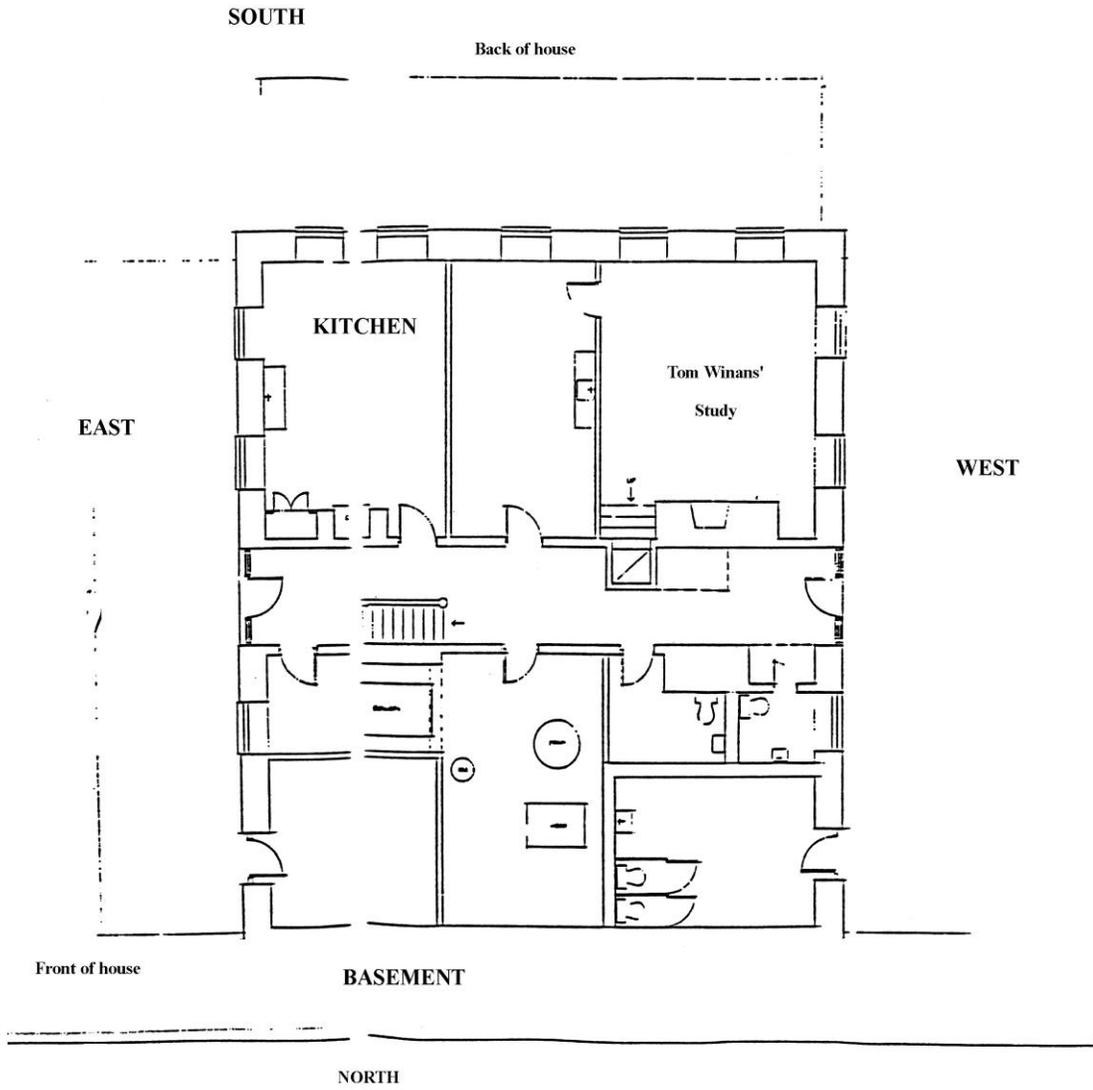
tracts in Baltimore that retains its original collection of structures in relationship to its well-preserved natural landscape. This integrity of setting contributes to the estate's architectural significance, as a rural picturesque environment was essential to the concept of a country estate in the mid-19th century. The estate's public ownership under the municipal park system now offers an opportunity for all to enjoy the gracious surroundings once reserved for its wealthy owners. The Winans family controlled as far as the eye could see, but only enjoyed its beauty for several months each year, a concept of wealth few can envision today.

G. M. Hopkins
City Atlas of Baltimore, MD
and Environs 1876

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Philadelphia, PA





CRIMEA MANSION
LEAKIN PARK
Baltimore Maryland

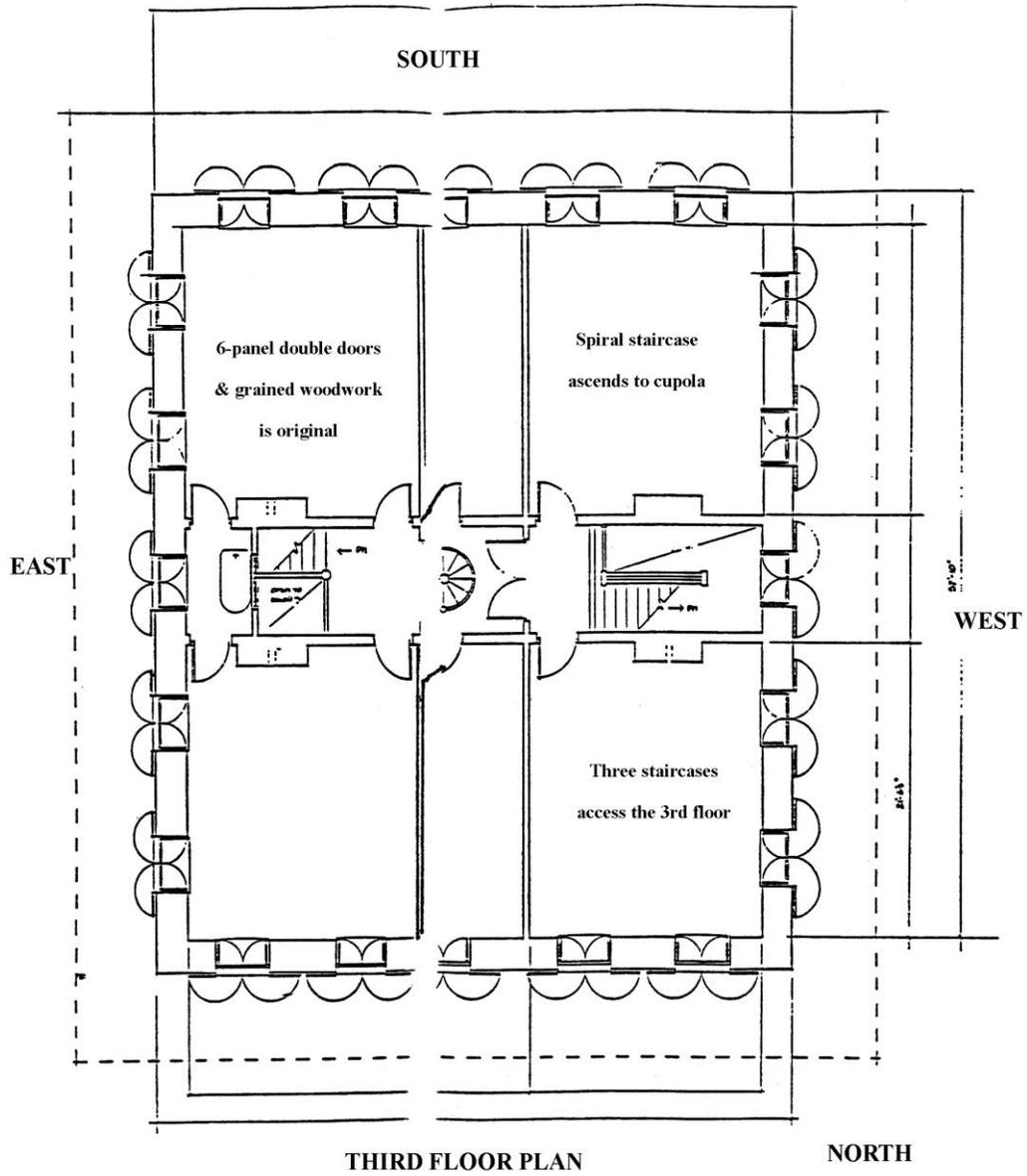


ARCHITECTS

PROJECT NO.:
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Basement Floor As-Built Plan

AB-1



PROJECT NO.:	3043	SCALE:	AS SHOWN	DATE:	12/15/11
<p>CRIMLEA MANSION LEAKIN PARK Baltimore, Maryland</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ARCHITECTS</p> <p>315 North Charles Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201 (410) 516-0400</p>					
<p>3RD Floor As-Built Plan</p>					
<p>AB-4</p>					