

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. M28-91

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Notley  
other John A. d'Epagnier, A.I.A. residence

### 2. Location

street and number 14201 Notley Rd not for publication  
city, town Silver Spring Drumeldra Hills vicinity  
county Montgomery

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name See Continuation sheet.  
street and number telephone  
city, town state zip code

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse liber 1025 folio 236  
city, town Rockville tax map JR343 tax parcel P881 tax ID number 5-1-257364

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Current Function                             |   | Resource Count   |                 |
|---|---|--|---|--|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture         | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape          | Contributing   | Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade      | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture | 1  | buildings       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input type="checkbox"/> defense             | <input type="checkbox"/> religion           |  | sites           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic | <input type="checkbox"/> social             | 3  | 2 structures    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 |   | <input type="checkbox"/> education           | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation     |  | objects         |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary            | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress   |  | Total           |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> government          | <input type="checkbox"/> unknown            |  |                 |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> health care         | <input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use  |  |                 |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> industry            | <input type="checkbox"/> other:             |  |                 |
|   |   |  |   | Number of Contributing Resources<br>previously listed in the Inventory |                 |
|   |   |  |   | 0  |                 |

## 7. Description

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### Condition

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> altered      |

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

Montgomery County, Maryland-based, self-employed architect, John A. d'Epagnier, A.I.A., captured the American design movement and designed the mid-century modern Notley home by intermingling design, nature, and a communal lifestyle. Built in three phases, beginning in post-World War II in 1946, and set on five acres of rolling hillside in the Drumeldra Hills section of Colesville, the five-bedroom, 3 bathroom, Cherokee Red-colored, frame construction Notley house with cantilevered roof, then groundbreaking post-and-beam architectural design, and a wall of windows is representative of a significant historical mid-century modern movement at the time of its construction. The second phase was built in 1949-50 and the third phase in 1956. Additional structures on the property include a pump house (1946), workshop/studio (1961, 1970), storage barn (early 1980s), greenhouse (1975), and tennis court (1975).

### Comprehensive description:

Notley is an 1,850 square feet (SF) single-story, mid-century modern, ranch-style, private residence designed in 1945 by Montgomery County, Maryland architect, John A. d'Epagnier, A.I.A., that captures the American design movement by intermingling design, nature, and a communal lifestyle. The home combined elements of Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie home style and Usonian style with influences from the Bauhaus/ International era-inspired social philosophies, contemporary architect, Richard Neutra, and Montgomery County architect, Charles M. Goodman.

Not unlike some Usonian-style homes, the original floor plan for phases I and II mimicked the shape of a polliwog. The tail of the polliwog is represented by the bedroom wing, with each bedroom opening off into a long, narrow hallway. The hallway leads into 'the body' of the house, which consists of a bright and expansive living room or Great Room, alongside a kitchen and foyer. The configuration allowed for additional rooms to be added to the bedroom wing in the future.\* As intended with the Usonian style, at Notley, the original polliwog shape gave way to a more U-shaped structure with the third phase which was built off the opposite side of the long hallway and included two bedrooms and a bathroom with laundry area.

The frame-construction Cherokee Red-painted house with a front wall of windows, sloped, cantilevered roof, block construction foundation with walk-in half basement and crawl spaces, is situated on 4.86 acres of rolling hillside in Colesville, MD. In 1945 the land was accessible via a dirt road, R.F.D #1, which later became Notley Road.

In 2016, a modified bitumen roof, which is a mix of asphalt and rubber with a layer of gravel on top that is used for built-up roofs (BURS) was added. This type of roof is used to support a slag roof. The cantilevered overhangs offer passive solar heating and natural cooling (air conditioning was not used in the Notley home until the 21<sup>st</sup> century because there was "always a breeze on the hill," according to Mrs. R. d'Epagnier). The long overhangs of the roof shade the heat from the summer sun as it climbs higher in the sky, creating a flow of air from the cool side to the warm side. Natural lighting was captured with clerestory windows. There are approximately 37 windows varying in style and include louvered, casement, vented clerestory, and a window wall. Passive solar design is seen on the south side of the house that is shaped as a chevron to catch the heat of the sun as it travels the sky from morning to midafternoon. The large stone fireplace located in the center of the Great Room retains the heat, as does the stone flower box under the window wall. The cinderblock foundation includes the basement consists of a partial walk-in space with concrete floor, two-sectioned utility tub, furnace, built-in shelving and racks, electricity, utility boxes, and two crawl space areas.

In the five-bedroom (one includes a folding partition), three-bathroom home, the open floor plan of the house includes walls of windows and strong horizontal lines that hug the ground, broad overhanging eaves, prominent central hearth and chimney of mixed stone from local quarries and a bluestone keystone above the fire box, the outside of which is sealed with a clear stone sealer; and a brick fireplace, built-in planter, exposed beams, and built-in closets. There are 8-foot ceilings throughout the house and in the bedroom wings, with 10-foot ceilings in the Great Room (266.4 SF) and dining area (137 SF) due to the sloping cantilevered roof. Natural materials of various woods and stone were used throughout.



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The house was built in three phases, the first two of which were built by Mr. d'Epagnier and masonry and carpentry subcontractors, beginning in 1946 through 1957.

In 1946-7, the first phase consisted of a 4-bay, hardwood maple-floored Great Room for dining, socializing, and originally sleeping. The details of the Great Room include a centrally placed, large floor-to-ceiling Maryland bluestone fireplace and hearth, the wall of which wraps around into the dining area and becomes a glazed brick wall on the kitchen side; checkerboard-panel walls of finely ribbed plywood in Douglas fir, three expansive bookshelves, built-in seating, a wall of glass on the west side consisting of four 8' x 6' double-paned insulated windows, two large casement windows with cranks on the north and south side, baseboard hot water heating, built-in stone flower box with running water, four sets of copper-capped louvered windows, a built-in china closet, and two built-in storage cabinets, a wooden bar with storage on the dining room side and separate storage on its kitchen side, and a wood-framed entryway with an open transom to the kitchen. Also, in phase one in keeping with mid-century design, a small kitchen (@ 125 SF; 8' ceiling with exposed beams) was added and included a laundry area, furnace area, which is now in the basement, and built-in cabinetry. Additionally, in this phase, a tiled bathroom with ceramic-tile floor, built-in closet, and casement window; an outdoor storage closet, which is now a kitchen-accessible pantry; a carport, now a porch; and a pump house.

Today, the redesigned kitchen also has an eat-in nook with kidney-shaped custom-designed table with Nassau-design Formica top and banquette bench with Naugahyde upholstery; a built-in large fan housing for cross ventilation, a large, walk-in pantry, built-in cupboards, a utility closet, a small grotto-shaped wall niche with electricity, an L-shaped Formica-covered counter top with large stainless steel sink and L-shaped Pella windows above, tiled windowsills, hardwood cabinetry, a single casement window, commercial sized appliances, electric stove-top burners, double oven, built-in broom closet on tiled wall, second counter or wet bar along brick-glazed wall with a second stainless steel sink, three glass shelves, two built-in storage cabinets, and a door to the porch.

The second phase, built in 1949, consisted of a reconfigured main entrance in a courtyard (originally, the main door had faced west) and a serpentine-shaped vestibule (@ 79 SF with 8' coffered ceiling, the beams of which extend beyond the walls as a cantilever support for the long eaves) that provided access to the Great Room, kitchen, and bathroom, which were built in the first phase. The vestibule or foyer had finely ribbed plywood walls in Douglas fir, a popular motif in the 1950s; oak parquet flooring, an oversized front door, and a center ceiling light, and two small coat closets. The second building phase also added a doorway from the foyer, hardwood white oak flooring to the long hallway (82.5 SF), the tail of the polliwog shape, with an exposed-beam ceiling, ceiling-line clerestory venting windows facing the courtyard, and a partially recessed wall; one large, southwest-facing Children's Room, later partitioned to become two bedrooms (140, and 147 SF, respectively), each with solid white oak flooring, exposed-beam ceilings, large louvered windows with sidelight windows on either side, converted baseboard hot water heating, two closets (30 SF and 10 SF, respectively), one with access to HVAC unit return; and a wood-paneled master bedroom (168.6 SF). The master bedroom includes a brick fireplace with stone mantel and raised hearth with a chimney with a full 2" mortar cap, not sealed; built-in shelving and storage cabinet, large louvered window with sidelight windows on either side, closet with electrical lighting, converted baseboard hot water heating, and a ceramic-tiled bathroom with shower, window and built-in storage cabinet.

The repositioned front entrance faced northeast and was nestled in a courtyard, another feature of the Usonian homes; namely, to not have the main entrance be on the public side. The main entrance no longer faced Notley Road. A main entranceway was added with an oversized wooden front door with double-paned side light windows and air vents on either side. Today, a flagstone walkway leads to the front door with a flagstone landing to the portico with a self-designed ornamental ironwork and flagstone-topped stone planter boxes on either side of the main entrance. A landscaped, courtyard (@ 480 SF) surrounded by a stone wall with an old, large, berry-bearing holly tree, azalea, and rhododendron bushes goes from the top of the driveway to the front entrance.

The third phase, built in 1957, added two bedrooms (169 SF and 162 SF, respectively) with solid white-oak flooring, exposed-beam ceiling, and large walk-in closets (25 SF and 26 SF, respectively), built-in bookcases, a ribbon of clerestory windows and a partial recessed wall, built-in lighting, three built-in bookshelves, and a large walk-in closet in one bedroom; additionally, the other bedroom

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has large L-shaped Pella windows, one large walk-in closet and one smaller closet with access to plumbing for shower; access to plumbing for laundry is behind framed-out doors. A bathroom with shower, built-in storage, a tiled laundry area with built-in cabinetry and another full-length built-in closet were added. This phase also included converting the carport to a three-sided screen and stone porch with flagstone floor and half stone wall with wooden, vertically louvers on the wall on the west side. Electrical outlets are included. The porch leads outside to a flagstone ramp surrounded by stone walls and a lamppost. The original W-shaped support beams of the carport, another Frank Lloyd Wright influence, remain.

A long, paved, circular partially-fenced asphalt driveway on the north side of the property with parking at the top for multiple cars ascends the first hillside on the property and veers in a southerly direction to the top, where there is access to the house. The driveway loops around a circle of sugar maple trees separated from boxwoods by a free-standing stone wall.

In 1945, the property had a 50+-tree apple orchard, 10 peach trees, and a small cinderblock storage structure. The structure (@240 SF) remains at the back of the property today. Added to it in the mid 1980s is a two-level wood plank--sided storage barn (@ 720 SF-1<sup>st</sup> level; 384 SF-2<sup>nd</sup> level) with a cinderblock and concrete foundation, dirt floor for the first story, and a shingled "teepee"-style roof and plywood floor on the second story, which is accessible via a railed wooden ramp.

On the property also and built in the first phase is a hip-style, slate-roofed cinderblock construction pump house (@ 81 SF) with a red-brick topped wall in a concrete-floored drainage area. It also has a louvered, wooden vertical screen on its northern side, which is similar to the wooden louvers on the western side of the porch. It contains a water conditioner system, reserve tank, shelving for garden tools, electrical outlets, and an outside spigot.

Additionally, in the early 1970s a two-sectioned workshop/studio (@594 SF) of frame construction with a pitched tin roof, center-opening barn doors, wooden floors, six windows, electricity, a standard door, a wood-burning stove, built-in shelving and tool benches were added as was a greenhouse (@ 63 SF) with electricity, dirt floor, workbench, shelving, and plumbing; and a paved, fully fenced, regulation-size tennis court.

\*[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald\\_B.\\_and\\_Beverley\\_Tonkens\\_House](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_B._and_Beverley_Tonkens_House).



## 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering                  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999 | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/<br>recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000-                | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage              | <input type="checkbox"/> law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> science             |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/<br>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 Phase I, 1946-7

Architect/Builder John A. d'Epagnier, A.I.A.

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.)

The Notley property (John A. d'Epagnier, A.I.A. residence) is an historic home because it represents an historical era in architectural design; namely, mid-century modern. Notley meets the following significant criteria to warrant designating the house "historic": associations with contemporary mid-century architects in the 1940s through 1960s in Montgomery County who together brought the historic mid-century modern style of architecture to Colesville, MD, including the Dean of the Catholic University of School of Architecture, Dr. Paul Goettlmann, Richard Collins, A.I.A., William O'Neil, A.I.A.; also, incorporated the design style and philosophies of Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra and Charles Goodman in private residences. Mr. d'Epagnier designed numerous commercial and residential properties for Dr. Laszlo Tauber in the Washington Metropolitan area. Secondly, the work began on the home in 1946 and has remained in the family for 74+ years. Notley's design includes replications of design elements from Taleisin, Kentuck Knob and other mid-century modern homes, including the use of a slanted post and beam, large open-space structure in the living/dining area, passive solar design captured the heat through use of a chevron design to a portion of the structure, arc-shaped and massive stone wall, cantilevered roof, Cherokee red paint; wall of windows, ribbons of clerestory windows and built-in stone-walled interior flower box area, all of which brought nature inside; cabinetry, bookshelves, and closets; small kitchen with banquettes, Frank Lloyd Wright's carport turned porch, solid wood flooring, parquet woodwork, large louvered windows with sidelights. Thirdly, the post-World War II era and economy ushered in new possibilities including a suburbia of open, one-with nature, elegant mid-century modern home design.

### History of the resource:

From 1913 into the 1920s, while being raised on a Far Hills, New Jersey estate as the son of caretakers, John A. d'Epagnier, A.I.A., dreamt big as he tended to manual chores; namely, to someday design and build his own unique home. With a high school teacher's encouragement and financial support from his two siblings, he studied architecture in New York City, Washington, DC, and the U.S. Navy during World War II. A few years later, Mr. d'Epagnier and his native Capitol Hill bride, Rita Walsh d'Epagnier, purchased five acres in Colesville's Drumeldra section of Silver Spring, MD. The land sold for \$5K in 1945 and was accessible via a dirt road that became Notley Road. On the rolling hillside, a 50+-tree apple orchard, 10 peach trees, and a one-acre garden plus a small cinderblock structure that remains at the back of the property, was adjacent to a neighbor's two-bedroom colonial and farmland on the three other sides. The property became the actual drawing board on which Mr. d'Epagnier's dream, but now one envisioned with experienced imagination, became a reality.

During studies at Pratt Institute, department of Architectural Construction, Brooklyn, NY, and in the School of Architecture at the Catholic University of America (CUA, 1936) and Cornell University, Mr. d'Epagnier became intrigued by modern architecture, which incorporated open floor plans, walls of windows to coexist visibly with nature, strong horizontal lines that hugged the ground, and



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fluidity of movement throughout the home. Mr. d'Epagnier also worked for several years in the office of John Russell Pope on the development of the National Archives Building, the National Art Gallery, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial following work in the Navy Department at the Bureau of Yards and Docks in the early and mid 1940s.

The works of Frank Lloyd Wright were inspirational, and Mr. d'Epagnier included all of the above-mentioned elements at the Notley Road site as well as a low-lined roof with broad overhanging eaves, prominent central hearth and chimney and a brick fireplace, ribbons of windows, built-in planters, the use of Cherokee Red, Wright's signature color, exposed beams, many built-in closets, seating, cupboards, and bookcases, and the use of natural materials, mostly stone and wood, modeled after elements from Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Period and his Usonian designs. Elegant simplicity was intended and achieved in the design.

A Usonian home was typically a small, single-story dwelling without a garage or much storage. They are often L-shaped to fit around a garden area on unusual and inexpensive sites. They are characterized by native materials, flat roofs, and large cantilevered overhangs for passive solar heating and natural cooling (air conditioning was not used in the home until the 21<sup>st</sup> century because there was "always a breeze on the hill"); natural lighting with clerestory windows. Another distinctive feature is that they typically have little exposure to the front or "public" side (at the Notley Road site, the front doorway was originally in the living room and later moved to a less "public" side), while the rear, private sides are completely open to the outside. A strong visual connection between the interior and exterior spaces is an important characteristic. The word carport was coined by Frank Lloyd Wright to describe an overhang for sheltering a parked vehicle. (The current porch at Notley was originally a carport.) The Usonian design is considered among the aesthetic origins of the ranch-style home popular in the American west of the 1950s.

Outside of the mainstream colonial revival styles in the Washington metropolitan area, Mr. d'Epagnier's vision of home brought together his belief that architecture, landscape, and community were intertwined. The creation of a beautiful house, the reverence for family life, the open spatial plan found in the works of Wright and Bauhaus/ International era-inspired social philosophies and duplicated at the Notley Road site, intermingled design, nature, and an invitation to a more communal lifestyle

At the same time that Mr. and Mrs. d'Epagnier were purchasing the land, several other architects from the CUA Architectural School bought acreage nearby. Examples include the Richard Collins, A.I.A., residence on Randolph Rd., the Dr. Paul Goettelman, A.I.A., (former Dean of the CUA Architecture School) residence on Vierling Dr., and the William O'Neil residence on Homecrest Dr. Each was located in the Colesville area and incorporated similar design elements of individuality alongside the freedom of truly modern living. A sense of community was built as the rural area became home to these designers who espoused Frank Lloyd Wright's belief that community living or suburbia could include unique, clean design. These architects sought community and shared materials, such as crops, trees, gardening expertise, and building supplies, tractors, and certainly, consultation with each other and interactions among the family members.

After a brief partnership with Fred E. Taylor, who sold his firm to Mr. d'Epagnier, In the mid-1950s, Mr. d'Epagnier opened his own architecture firm in Silver Spring, MD, employing 4 draftsmen. Some of his major projects included post World War II suburban developments in Silver Spring, Kensington (Garret Park Estates, Parkwood Homes), Wheaton (Connecticut Ave. Park, Inc., Housing Corp. of America), and Beltsville, MD (Montpelier Village Apts.); Transfiguration Episcopal Church, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, rectory, and school, both in Colesville; Ohev Shalom Talmud Torah Congregation Synagogue in NW, D.C., Holy Family Catholic Church in Prince George's County, MD, St. Brigid's School in Peapack, NJ, and St. Mary of the Lake rectory in Lakewood, NJ, and Jefferson Memorial Hospital in Alexandria, VA. With knowledge of design and construction technique, the architect's job broadened to the extent that designing a good-looking building was but one phase of the work, as witnessed in some commercial design work by Mr. d'Epagnier, which included the former Health and Human Services headquarters in Rockville, MD, Buzzard's Point's government-leased buildings, the Gramax and Wilste Buildings in Silver Spring, the D.C. Medical Association building



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upgrade, Westwood Shopping Center, nursing home, garden-style and high-rise apartments and condominiums; the Springbrook Nursing and Rehabilitation home in Colesville, Chevy Chase Nursing Home, Silver Spring, MD, and several bowling alleys in the Metropolitan area for Bowl America. The L. Tauber residence in Potomac, MD and numerous other private homes were other projects. It has been noted by other architects and builders, namely the deceased N. Brisker, A. Campitelli, Laszlo Tauber, M.D., that although many of these commercial works have been renovated in more recent years, Mr. d'Epagnier's original structures and overall designs have been untouched in these facilities due to the structural integrity and elegance of design. Examples include the newly renovated commercial Westwood area in Bethesda, MD. A list of Mr. d'Epagnier's projects from the early 1950s through 1977 is available for reference, many of which were built in Montgomery County and the greater Washington Metropolitan area.

Mr. d'Epagnier's Notley, as the home came to be called, was built in three main sections. The family moved into the first phase of the house in January of 1948. In the mid-1950s, Notley, was bustling with five children. Now, versed in not only the aesthetic and the functional, Mr. d'Epagnier pursued a cost-conscious approach to building the second and third wings. Much of the first section was built by Mr. d'Epagnier himself with the help of friends; for the later sections, construction firms were hired.

Wood panels were used to effect design in simple ways. A semi-circular main entranceway gives access either to the communal living/dining area or to the bedroom area. In the living room and dining area that form one uninterrupted space, a large Maryland bluestone fireplace brings together a peaceful setting for conversation, play, and family life, a gathering place. An entire front wall of glass allows for nature and the inhabitants of the home to interact with one another. The living area incorporates a dining area where conversation and meal-taking were combined. A built-in planter with plumbing runs half way across the front interior of the house. A small kitchen, later redesigned with an eat-in area, includes a large pantry, built-in cupboards, a closet, and commercial-sized freezer and refrigerator with built-in oven and stove top.

On the other side of the front door, a long hallway extends the length of two bedrooms, ending in a master bedroom with a fireplace, closet, and bathroom.

The long hallway takes a turn to a third wing that consists of two large bedrooms with built-in bookcases, lighting, and desks, large closets, and a bathroom with a laundry area and storage closets.

There is a partial walk-in basement and crawlspace.

Additionally, the property includes a tennis court, a pump house, a greenhouse, a studio or shop, and a large, two-level, storage barn beyond the copse to house supplies, possibly animals, a tractor, or other large equipment.

At the back of the property on the northeast corner, a small area is designated wetlands.

Following Wright's belief in harmony with nature rather than a domination of nature, Mr. and Mrs. d'Epagnier planted and grew numerous trees and shrubbery around the house and property, including some specimen trees, such as the Brewster spruce and an expansively canopied dogwood at the northeast corner of the tennis court, Deadora cedar, Siberian elms, a Willow Oak near the porch, White Oaks in the copse, several Sugar maples, American elms, yews and junipers. A gardening enthusiast, Mr. d'Epagnier planted an extensive vegetable garden yearly, which extended from the greenhouse east to the copse on the hill and north to the studio/shop, along the slope to the tennis court. Melons, corn, tomatoes, squash, berries, and more were tended to as he watched his children and others enjoy the tennis court.

Last fall (2019), in the Book World section of the *Washington Post*, a book titled, *The Yellow House*, by S. M. Broom was reviewed. In the review, *Washington Post* writer, Nneka McGuire explored various meanings of home; namely, intangible aspects, such as

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sounds and scents, or the very tangible aspects, such as the concrete in the Yellow House's construction, or the wood used in Notley's construction.

For Mr. and Mrs. d'Epagnier's eight children, the Notley home is nostalgic. Individually and collectively, the memories and histories of Notley "gave witness to our lives," as Broom recalls about her own house. Notley tells a story of a dream that evolved and was shared among its ten immediate family members, with numerous collies, boxers, dalmatians, mixed-breed dogs and pet cats over the years. Most importantly, however, this very contemporary home in the D.C. metropolitan area built in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century was, by its natural, open design, a gathering place for many casual and formal gatherings, from impromptu weekend parties to weddings and other tented celebrations. It was intended that way. Its design was most successful in that way.

The family held onto the home for 10 years after Mrs. d'Epagnier passed. The home tells the story of the family, the three generations that followed, and their many gatherings at Notley. Mr. d'Epagnier's dream became what Broom referred to as a "tethered place," a home, for so many new and old family members, friends, and cousins. Notley was home. Its design that blended nature and openness was about that kinship, which evolved into a true community, about which F.L. Wright philosophized in the early 1900s.

The hope is that the design of Notley, the beautiful land it hugs, and the communal space it affords will also provide for its new owners a multidecade history.

### **Context of surrounding area:**

Historic points about Colesville include the following:

**Drumeldry:** Patented in 1715 and containing 225 acres, it extended from the Northwest Branch, near the Indian Spring Country Club, across Notley Road to Shannon Drive.(18)\* 14201 Notley Rd. is in Drumeldry, now known as Drumeldra Hills.

**Coalsville or Colesville:** The name "Coalsville" is first found in the 1804 Montgomery County tax assessment records, a 2 ¾ acre rectangular plat located at the intersection of New Hampshire and Notley Road. That it was "Coal" and not "Cole" is insignificant because the two spellings of the family name were used interchangeably in records. How the tiny tract received its name is a mystery. No record of early settlers in the Colesville area with the name Cole or Coale has been found, yet someone with the name must have run a store there for some years to have the site assume his name.(80)

A 20<sup>th</sup>-century resident of Colesville has said that her grandfather, Michael Peter, lived in the original Cole house, a log-cabin structure originally, with a joist outside the entrance to the cellar where the letters C-O-L-E are chiseled. The "Cole House" once stood on the northwest corner of today's Notley Road and Paula Lynn Drive.(80)

**Notley Road (West):** Notley Road (west) was a private roadway at least as early as 1855 when it ran from Bonifant's road to the farm of William O. Neal, to John Sharretts' dwelling house on Drumeldry, and then to the north-south road, which today is New Hampshire Avenue. It is likely that when John Berry owned Drumeldry during the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, he used a portion of today's Notley Road as a private roadway.(89)

Notley Road (West) is significant for several historical reasons. A girls' finishing and boarding school operated at the site of Drumeldry in the 1830s. The first Colesville Elementary school was located at the site of Colesville Manor Park and the Pumping Station. The house of Michael Peter, the above-mentioned "Cole House," stood on Notley Road, just north of Paula Lynn Drive. Where Notley Road currently intersects with New Hampshire Avenue, a tract of land called Coalsville existed in 1804.(89)



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**The 20th Century:** Despite social and economic changes caused by the Civil War, Colesville continued to be a rural community of farmers and storekeepers, blacksmiths, millers, and others who provided services to farmers. Except for taxes, markets and prices of farm products, the community was affected very little by events around it. Violent labor riots and rapidly changing industries of Baltimore were primarily topics for conversation among Colesville people. Baltimore remained a market to some extent, but Washington, D.C. was the most important factor influencing changes and growth in Colesville. Jobs, markets, land use, and cultural interest became more oriented to development in the neighboring capital city. Especially after the 1930s, when activities in Washington mushroomed and new technologies affecting transportation and living in suburban areas became readily available, farming in the Colesville area declined rapidly, residential land use intensified, and the character of the community changed permanently.(113)

**Development and Subdivisions:** In 1725, no more than nine patents covered the entire area of today's Colesville, and they were held by only five absentee owners. The breakup of these tracts occurred slowly throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1930s, development for residential and commercial lots began in earnest and increased exponentially. Governor Blair Lee and his family resided 3.5 miles south on New Hampshire Ave., the area of which became known later as Springbrook. By 1987, the nine original tracts had been subdivided into 29. Each subdivision contained lots of a few acres or less. Nearly every lot had a different owner.

**Colesville today:** In the four-century account of the development of the Colesville community, it was stated that there was no plan for the community's development; rather, there was an evolution through the interaction of people, their natural resources, their economic and social environments, and time. An increase in population has been the most obvious change over the centuries in the area. History shows an ever-increasing quality of life in the Colesville area.(162) Colesville today is truly a community. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, continued growth of this sense of community can be the most important future influence on quality of life for residents, opportunities for business, and management of natural resources.(165)

Notley in the Drumeldra Hills section of Colesville in Silver Spring is located in the south-central portion of the county, north of the Capital Beltway (I-495) and the Intercounty Connector (I-200) and between New Hampshire Ave (MD Rte. 650) and Georgia Avenue (MD Rte. 97).

Source: Bayley, N., Colesville, Willow Bent Books, Division of Heritage Books, 1997. (Numbers in parentheses are page #s.)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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## 10. Geographical Data

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|                               |                       |                                  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Acreage of surveyed property  | <u>4.86</u>           |                                  |
| Acreage of historical setting | <u></u>               |                                  |
| Quadrangle name               | <u>Kensington, MD</u> | Quadrangle scale: <u>unclear</u> |

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Notley site consists of 211,702 square feet or 4.86 acres of land, improved with a 1-story, single-family dwelling plus a studio/shop, a storage barn, a pump house, a tennis court, and a greenhouse. The site is a regular-shaped area of land that is located on the east side of Notley Rd., just south of Bonifant Rd., in Silver Spring, MD. A boundary survey, shows the site with the following dimensions: starting from the frontage on Notley Rd. and continuing clockwise, 320' x 860' x 180' x 810' to the point of beginning. The site is rolling overall with a gentle slope from the center toward the front of Notley Rd. and also toward the northern perimeter. It slopes also from the central and southern portions of the site toward the eastern perimeter where wetlands exist.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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|            |                            |
|------------|----------------------------|
| name/title | Louise d'Epagnier Mullican |
|------------|----------------------------|

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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  
410-697-9591



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