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ADAM J. YOUSSI

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Alexandroffsky, The Crimea and Orianda

Thomas Winans in Baltimore County

John McGrain

Orianda house at the Crimea estate - now Baltimore City's Leakin Park. *(Courtesy John McGrain.)*

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For decades, local books provided neither the correct construction date nor the architect of the great stone villa in Leakin Park commonly referred to as *Crimea,* or *Crimea Mansion* - originally named *Orianda.* Yet, those facts can be found in less than one hour in the Maryland Historical Society's (MHS) manuscript collection. The exact day and month are available in the property owner's account book which is indexed and has been available to the public since 1968. While the dogged pursuit for the exact date of one of Baltimore County's former and innumerable Italianate villas may seem pedantic, the results add to our knowledge of architectural evolution in the region, inform us whether a structure was built before or after another of similar style, and, in this case, provide insight into the Russian influence of some former Baltimore County - now Baltimore City - landmarks.[1]

Two small diaries at the MHS house an expense ledger and vast details of the Crimea estate. The diaries were commercially printed memorandum books, one for each year from 1851 to 1856. These tall, slim booklets house Thomas Winans' records for his household expenses, business travel, payments to material suppliers, and architectural services for two of his numerous notable homes. But before exploring Orianda further, allow us to first briefly investigate Thomas Winans, what he did before developing Alexandroffsky and Orianda, and from where his Russian influence derived.

Thomas deKay Winans (1820-1878) was the son of Baltimore engineer and railroad equipment manufacturer Ross Winans. Early in his career, Thomas Winans traveled to Czarist Russia to plan and construct the Moscow-St. Petersburg railway, a venture that paid handsomely. In 1847, Thomas Winans boasted he was building 134 locomotives and 1,200 cars, and completing "a mile of cars a month!" Describing the project in 1858, travel writer Bayard Taylor claimed the route was "as straight as a sunbeam."[2]

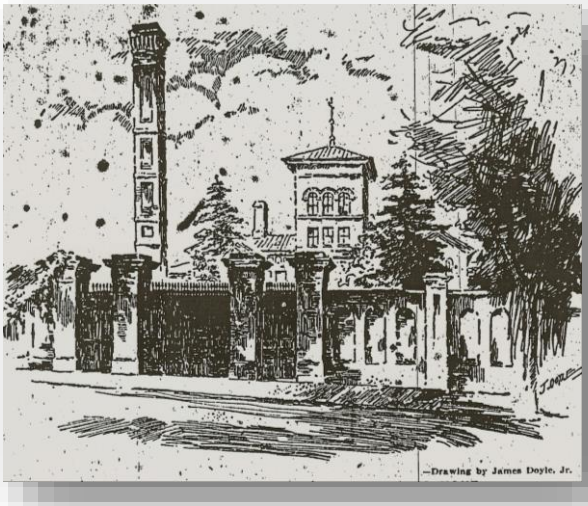
Returning to Baltimore in 1850, Thomas Winans acquired a block square property formerly owned by the McHenry family on Hollins Street; by 1852, Poppleton's map of the city exhibited a nameless, cruciform-plan house at that location, and Slade's 1853 water supply map shows the same cruciform footprint marked with Winans' name. The memories of architect George A. Frederick reveal the property's name when Frederick recalled that Niernsee and Neilson were architects of the large townhouse named *Alexandroffsky,* a home Winans' built prior to Orianda.[3]

Alexandroffsky was described as a "palatial residence" on July 5, 1855, when Winans and his wife, Celeste, threw a party for Russian dignitaries celebrating the Czarist victory over the British and their allies in the Crimean War. The *Daily Baltimore Republican* noted that Winans "brilliantly illuminated" the grounds and house for the affair.[4]

Alexandroffsky's Backyard. *(Courtesy Friends of Orianda House.)*

Diaries survive from 1851 and 1852 that establish the construction date of Alexandroffsky. The first clue appears on January 3, 1851, when Winans "paid Freight from New York for the two lions," statues intended as yard decorations. Its Russian name, Alexandroffsky, appeared for the first time on April 26, 1851 in connection with stonework performed by Samuel Emery. On July 16, 1851, Winans recorded "freight on Marble Statues and Vases from N.Y." Later that month, Winans' diary reports, "topping out the two north chimneys and building up between the arches of lookout." Roofing took place about September 10, 1851, the tin supplied by E. L. Parker & Company. Some of the craftsmen paid were John Colly for woodwork, Fowble & Forman for plastering, and John W. Maxwell for stonework. On September 29, A. & W. Denmead was paid "for cast iron girders for Alexandroffsky," while Paul G. Macomber was paid "for hoisting iron girders and columns" on October 30, 1851. In November there were charges for paint and glass, and on December 1, purchases of lightning rods.

Alexandroffsky's lion statues - now located at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. *(Courtesy Friends of Orianda House.)*



Alexandroffsky. *(Drawing by James Doyle, Jr., Baltimore News, July 7, 1913.)*

Winans himself revealed the architects of Alexandroffsky when, in a diary entry dated November 17, 1851, a payment of $700 in professional services went to architects Niernsee and Neilson.[5]

Local papers discovered the mansion project after it was well under way when the *Republican and Argus* reported in the autumn of 1851:

> *At Home Again* -- The Baltimore Correspondent of the Washington National Intelligencer, sends that paper the following paragraph respecting the son of Ross Winans, Esq., the famed machinist and engine builder of this city: Young Mr. Winans, after an absence of several years in Russia, has returned to Baltimore, his native city, having, as I am reliably informed, amassed a very large fortune, entitling him to the enviable position of millionaire. He has also brought with him an accomplished and beautiful wife, of French nativity, whom he married while in Europe. Mr. Winans is now building a magnificent villa in the western part of the city, between Baltimore and Hollins streets. It is to be enclosed with three acres of ground, superbly ornamented. This is the same property that was occupied by the late Col. Ramsey, of revolutionary fame. When completed it will be one of the most elegant residences in or around Baltimore. The cost of its construction will be very great. I learn that Mr. Winans has still large contracts in progress with the Emperor of Russia; and, in connection with his father, has an immense establishment in Baltimore, for the manufacture of engines and other machinery to supply the various wants not only of this country, but of Europe. Mr. Winans is one among our most enterprising citizens. None has more deservedly won the reward of his labors. He has exhibited great skill and ingenuity in his vocation, as is clearly manifest by his successful and very extensive operations.[6]

The great house was built at a brisk pace, and on February 24, 1852, Winans recorded he "Slept in Alexandroffsky for the First Time." Only a week later, on March 2, 1852, he recorded the birth of his son, Billy.

Throughout 1852 there were on-going expenses. The diary entries reveal Niernsee and Neilson were paid another sum of $500 on May 21, 1852. Sometime later, nine chandeliers costing a total of $2,138.50 were purchased from Tiffany, Young, & Ellis.

Alexdranoffsky enjoyed city water, city gas, water closets, and central heating.[7] Its heating system was, in the words of Ferdinand C. Latrobe,

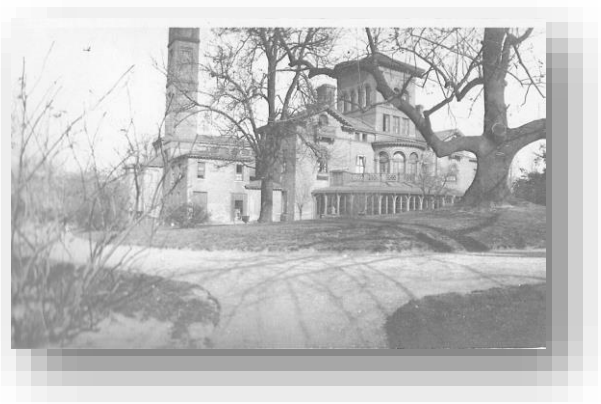
"revolutionary," especially when most citizens retired to unheated bedrooms in the winter:

> The estate was supplied with many conveniences of the family's invention, including the revolutionary heating system, built by Hayward, Bartlett & Company, which connected with some 20,000 square feet of coils in some twenty buildings with a cubic content of "half a mile." The heating coils were placed between the floors of the rooms, and fresh air was drawn over them through holes in the floorboards. The current of air, which passed finally through ceiling ventilators, was created by a prominent tall stack, the whole arrangement constituting an exhaust draft system quite the opposite of the modern blower system.
>
> The plant operated most efficiently, with a daily consumption of some 800 pounds of coal. But the powerful draft created in emergencies sometimes proved embarrassing, particularly upon the occasion of a famous ball when the stack draft was abruptly thrown wide-open to change the air in the ballroom during the supper intermission. When a Victorian-petticoated lady, returning with her escort to retrieve her fan, reached the middle of the ballroom floor, she made the screeching discovery that her voluminous skirt and petticoats were fluttering over her head, blown up by the air suddenly rising from the holes in the floor![8]

In 1859, the *Sun* noted that the same heating contractors Winans' used were working at the Baltimore post office and Custom House.

The first known illustration of Winans' mansion appeared in 1856 on the cover of the sheet music of *Alexandroffsky Schottisch* by James Deems, "dedicated to Mrs. Thomas Winans." The stone lions he ordered early in 1851 flanked the main steps in the lithograph.

The diary for 1855 recorded expenses for a stable at Alexandroffsky.[9] The labor ledger mentioned building a "Swan House" for the black swans acquired in New York.[10] The festivities mentioned in the *Republican* were noted on July 5, 1855 in Winans' ledger: "Had Illumination and Music, $35."



Alexandroffsky. *(Courtesy Friends of Orianda House.)*

Alexandroffsky Interior. *(Courtesy Friends of Orianda House.)*

Alexandroffsky was not all-new construction, but was tacked onto the existing McHenry-Thompson house. Michael F. Trostel discovered a part of the starter house was built in 1800 as a boarding school operated by H. Boisseau.[11] However, the school block was added onto a house shown on the 1801 Warner and Hanna map as that of James McHenry, Esq.

The earliest owner of the building which became Winans' Alexandroffsky was Dr. James McHenry, George Washington's surgeon during the revolution who served as the third Secretary of War under both Washington and Adams between 1796 and 1800. Long before it was Alexdranoffsky, McHenry named the place "Fayetteville" in honor of his wartime colleague LaFayette.[12]

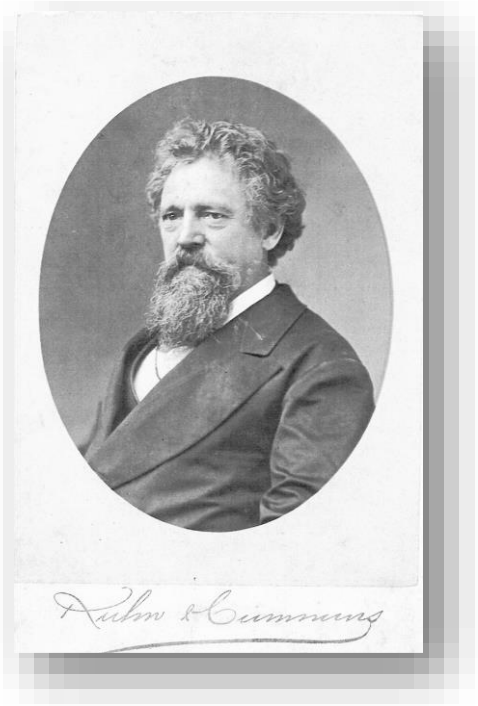
The original McHenry house existed in the 1790s when the grounds and greenhouse were leased to William Booth as a nursery.[13] A drawing made in 1813 by Thomas Middleton of St. Mary's Seminary showed the school fronting on Baltimore Street; it was a large, squarish, hip-roofed house in Neo-Classical or Federal style with a projecting semi-octagonal entrance bay facing what was then the turnpike road to Ellicotts Mills. The same architectural features were listed in the Baltimore Equitable Society's insurance policies issued to James McHenry in 1802 and 1805; the descriptions clearly demonstrate that the improvements were two distinct blocks.[14]

Shortly after Alexdranoffsky's completion in the early 1850s, it was home not only to Winans, but also to James Adams McNeill Whistler. Whistler stayed with the family rather than with his own half-brother, George Whistler, Jr., who lived in West Baltimore. When George Whistler married Thomas Winans' sister, Julia, and was an investor in the Winans' locomotive works and shipyard, his brother James became an artist.

In 1863 Thomas Winans purchased some of James Whistler's early paintings during a trip to Europe. One such painting was a dramatic view of the River Thames entitled "Wapping." James Whistler's painting was the American contribution to the Paris exhibition of 1863 that launched what is still called modern art and impressionism.[15] The same painting hung at Alexandroffsky until 1925 when the house was emptied of its contents just before its sale for new development.

In the summer of 1855, Winans' diary contains his first use of the name "Crimea." An entry of June 23, 1855 listed $150 paid to Niernsee and Neilson for "professional services." In mid-1855, mentions of a farm appear, and on August 8, the ledger records, "Commenced walls of dairy." Ten days later, J. M. Wampler was paid "for surveying at the Crimea." That entry established the name of Winans' soon to be developed estate as the Crimea. An entry of August 23 linked the dairy project to the Crimea. Two purchases of gold fish appeared in November with one lot costing $19, the second costing $22. In early December, an ice house and wagon shed were started at the Crimea.

On the last day of 1855, Winans was ready to plan construction of a new house on his Crimea estate. A diary entry dated December 31 logged $250 paid to "Messrs. Niernsee & Neilson for Proposed House." The diary of 1856 reported buying cornerstones for a chicken house on June 14, while on Friday, June 27, Winans reportedly, "Laid the cornerstone of Orianda."[16] The labor ledger reveals a crew was building the house on June 20, 1856, and worked through the autumn, winter, and into the summer of 1857.



Thomas Winans. *(Courtesy Friends of Orianda House.)*

Orianda Interior. *(Courtesy Friends of Orianda House.)*

Winans commonly referred to his estate as *the Crimea*, while referring to the large house he was building on it as *Orianda*. The Orianda represents Winans' third name of Russian connotation, derived from a resort town on the Crimean peninsula west of Yalta, now spelled "Oreanda."

Various projects for Orianda at the Crimea included acquiring tin for the stable roof, a windmill, drainage tile, a suspension bridge, flood gate, and gymnasium. Other expenses were awnings and a purchase of $353.59 from Hayward, Bartlett & Company, ornamental iron manufacturers and furnace suppliers. A "pair of eagles" was listed on September 23, 1856; they are possibly the ornamental eagles on the Windsor Mill Road gateposts at the present park entrance. Tradition holds they were cast at Alexandroffsky in Russia, but the diary merely reveals the cost, a modest $10.[17]

Orianda Eagle. *(Courtesy John McGrain.)*

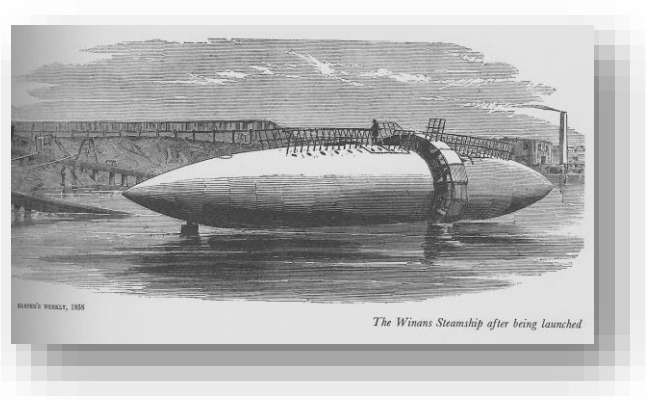
Some of the stone work on the house was performed by John Wolfender, carpentry by John Colley, plastering by Fowbell & Forman, awnings supplied by Buck and Sons, tin roofing metal from Pratt Brothers; hauling of chestnut fence posts was performed by Caleb Hoope. Such modern amenities as wire fencing and a garden hose also appeared in the diaries. There was also a gas manufacturing system in the estate's own gas house because city gas lines were hopelessly far away. All told, the house cost $9,170.69 according to a "recapitulation" in the labor ledger. Its assessed value in 1859 was $12,000.

Orianda at the Crimea. *(Vignette of unknown origin.)*

There remains a myth about a fort being built at the Crimea for the purpose of the Civil War. The 1876 Hopkins city atlas shows a "Fort, 6 Guns," southeast of the villa. Surely, a fort was built there, but apparently it had little to do with the Civil War. The labor ledger shows that the "fort at Crimea" was constructed in August 1857 and cost $36.27. Thus, it was constructed far too early to be connected with the war. In fact, an 1894 newspaper account of the estate claims that the fort was inspired by the Russian redoubt at Balaklava and commemorated the "Valley of Death" described in "The Charge of the Light Brigade," with Thomas Winans picturing himself on the side opposite the heroic Britons.[18] But by 1935, some of the family had forgotten the history of the fort, and Winans' grandson, Reginald Winans Hutton, also believed that that fort was related to the American Civil War.[19]

Always interested in new projects, Thomas Winans, his father Ross, and George Whistler (brother of artist James Whistler, Jr.), laid plans to build a "cigar boat" in the late 1850s. The boat was a steamer, shaped much like a submarine or aircraft wing-tank, its hull designed to penetrate the waves with a missile-like prow, supposedly capable of a four-day Atlantic crossing. The ship was launched at Winans Cove on October 6, 1858, eased into the water sideways by a mechanical system making increments of 1/32 inch at each stroke. With 60 tons of coal, the steamer drew about six feet of water, leaving about ten feet of superstructure above water.[20] The ship was 180 feet long by 16 feet wide. On its trials in January

of 1859, the vessel performed, in spite of having its paddlewheel designed to revolve around the hull at a location amidships. The Winans papers contain many pages of data and drawings. The family's shipyard had an illustration of the Cigar Boat on their printed checks, and various papers concerning the project were labeled "C.B." Winans built two more such vessels; one, the *Ross Winans*, launched in England, and one in Russia.[21] Unless their sleek configuration inspired the future builders of submarines, the experiment was a blind alley as the ship provided very little cargo space. In 1878, on obituary of Thomas Winans noted the "Cigar Steamer" was rusting away at the Winans pier at Spring Gardens on the Patapsco. The cost of the project likely made little dent in Winans' finances - local papers in 1858 reported Winans settled accounts with the Russian government for about $17 million dollars, while some $20 million was mentioned at his death.[22]



Thomas Winans' Cigar Steamship. (*Harper's Weekly,* 1858.)

In addition to his work on the Crimea, Winans kept detailed accounts of his philanthropy. His diary showed various sums for charity, including a $3 gift "To a colored man to assist him in purchasing the freedom of his wife" in 1855.[23] An ongoing project he funded was the "Soup House" that began in January of 1858, serving almost 600 poor people daily, a project of Mrs. Celeste Revillon Winans.[24] The "Soup House" actually appears after Winans' town house address in the 1864 city directory at 630 West Baltimore Street.[25] Scharf's history of city and county reported that Mrs. Winans purchased the Fourth Presbyterian church building on Baltimore Street opposite her mansion and installed 10 cauldrons. Admission to the free meals was by ticket, and up to 1862, some 1,246,000 "rations" were served at a cost of $70,000.[26]

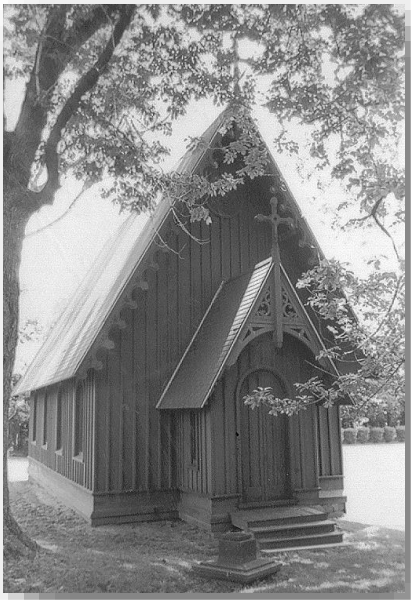
Mrs. Winans' obituary praised her highly for charitable works and added that her "sudden death has cast such a general gloom over our community." Fifty-five hacks and private carriages formed her funeral procession from Alexandroffsky to the Cathedral and thence to Greenmount Cemetery. Her pall-bearers were figures whom are still noted in Baltimore's economic history: John H. B. Latrobe, Osmund Latrobe, John White, H. O. Eaton, George S. Brown, William H. Graham, Dr. Armitage, and L. F. Barry.[27]

The construction of the Winans' chapel was apparently an afterthought, as it was not mentioned by the county assessor in 1859, and never appeared in the diaries in the years encompassing the mansion's construction. Neither was it assessed in the 1876 tax ledger.

The Winans church is a gothic revival structure in board and batten, much like the frame churches designed by Richard Upjohn for poor congregations of rural Episcopalians. But Mrs. Winans intended the chapel to be Catholic because she, along with most of the grounds crew and household staff, were apparently recent refugees from the famine in Ireland.[28] Mrs. Winans died at age 33 on March 19, 1861, which would suggest that the chapel was probably constructed within the 1859-1860 time frame. It was never entirely finished or officially consecrated, and apparently never used for family services. Yet, the chapel still stands.

On May 23, 1987, a service, possibly the first ever, took place inside the chapel to raise funds when its roof finial was struck by lightning.[29] A number of persons were knocked unconscious, and Carl Ruskin, a Baltimore city planning office employee, died after being hospitalized.[30] The services' plan was to raise funds to repair the chapel with a sale of herbs grown on the premises by volunteer gardeners. The recent book titled *Niernsee and Neilson Architects of Baltimore: Two Careers on the Edge of the Future,* by Randolph W. Chalfant and Richard Belfoure, credits Niernsee and Neilson as the chapel's architects.

The Chapel. (*Courtesy John McGrain.)*



The Chapel. c. mid-1970s *(Courtesy Baltimore County Public Library Legacy Web.)*

Two of Thomas Winans' children lived to maturity, and the daughter, Celeste M. Winans, married Gaun M. Hutton and lived on the great estate even though the Hutton family regarded Newport their chief residence. The Crimea estate took a beating in the flood of 1866, but the grounds were restored and were a place of beauty in the Hutton era when the only reliable newspaper account of the property was published. The *Gazette* gave the following account of the 1866 flood:

> *The Late Flood -- Further Destruction . . . .* Still further down, the structure known as Swann's bridge was entirely destroyed and the road so much washed that it is difficult to tell without close examination where the bridge stood. For nearly half a mile on either side of the bridge the road is utterly destroyed and the fences entirely gone. At a point about fifty yards distant from the bridge the stream enters the enclosure of Crimea, the country seat of Mr. Winans, to the wheel from which the premises were supplied with water, all of which were destroyed. The bath house, a wooden structure which stood partly over the run, was carried away and broken to pieces, and the large water wheels and pump were removed from their positions and thrown down. Near the principal entrance to the place was a beautiful bridge, the floor of which alone remains upheld by the abutments. On each side the road is washed away, and for a considerable distance, the road and beautiful meadow which attracted the admiration of all who saw it is now but a desert of sand, left there by the subsiding water. A little lower down, only about a year ago, a dam was constructed for an ice pond, and that, too, is gone with only a dense mass of rocks to mark the spot. A short distance below Dead Run leaves the property of Mr. Winans and enters that of Hon. Reverdy Johnson, whose ice pond was located a little south of the stream . . . .[31]

Thomas Winans was left a widower at about age 41, and thereafter lived to 58. He died at Newport Villa, Shamrock Cliff, on June 10, 1878.[32] His life was filled with interests, his letter books reveal a wealth of unsolved engineering puzzles he was still grappling with. In spite of having a walled-in city block for elbow room at 30 Hollins Street, he used the Crimea to get respite from urban bustle. The hilltop villa, Orianda, was a half mile from a public road, and the *Herald* correspondent noted that the Powhatan horse-car passed the property only once an hour, with perhaps two carts or carriages an hour on the Franklintown Turnpike Road. Visitors thought the Crimea estate was close to a thousand acres, but the 1876 tax ledger showed 386 acres in all.[33]

Orianda mansion is more interesting than beautiful. It is a rather heavy handed design, an

Italianate house, supposed to be Russian in atmosphere, built in dark fieldstone, almost square, 55 by 58 feet, three stories high, with a practically flat roof, and a square central cupola that disappears close up. The whole design is set on a high basement of the walk-in sort in front so that the house seems to be four stories on the main facade. The overhanging eaves are much wider than those on other Niernsee and Neilson houses, each corner decorated with a gigantic carved acorn-pendant or boss, almost the size of a fire hydrant, upside-down. The main facade has full-width double-decker porches with elaborate scroll sawn screens and rails, giving almost the effect of houses in India designed to keep the ladies in purdah as well as in cool breezes. The house is difficult to photograph because the hill slopes away sharply without providing a stance for straight-on pictures. One-decker porches flank the two sides of the house.

In 1894, the *Herald*'s reporter found the balconies further screened with Russian wisteria. There were 16 large rooms, apparently designed for summer living, but each one equipped with a fireplace too.

> The stairways are large, and the steps in them broad, so that one floor is reached from another without the effects of the climb being felt. The walls are thick in the extreme, so that if a hot breeze eludes the sentinel shade trees which stand guard against the building and reaches the interior it is cooled by the time it arrives there. The house is supplied throughout with water pumped from a well in the grounds, and during Mrs. Winans' lifetime was lighted with gas manufactured on the premises. In fact, there is everything that can be had in the city, and the *rus in urbe* existence must be one of the most pleasant phases of a stay there. A flag-pole is at the top of the house, surmounted by a gilded ball, and when the family-- that of Mr. Gaun M. Hutton, son-in-law of Mr. Winans and who owns the place--is making a visit to it "Old Glory" waves in the soft zephyrs which find their way into the grounds. The house is furnished with old-fashioned plain furniture, and everything betokens good taste and breeding. It is said several of the rooms have not been entered since Mr. Winans' death, being held sacred to his memory.[34]

The anonymous writer of 1894 made it clear that the public was not being invited to view the place for themselves. Quiet as it was in the Hutton era, great times had been had in pre-Civil War days:

> Neal Hasson, the gardener of the place, has been connected with it ever since the mansion-house was built, 37 years ago. He was seen by the visitors, but did not prove communicative. In fact, he was darkly mysterious, and, like an old sexton in a cemetery, was full of hints of secrets concerning the place, but evidently considered it best not to reveal them. While not regaling his interlocutors with stories of the place or its former occupants, he did regale them with his Copenhagen snuff, which was of the finest quality and which he tendered from an antique snuffbox with the air of a Chesterfield or a Beau Brummell. The old estate had seen some fine times, he said, and none greater than on each Fourth of July when the former owner was alive. The anniversary was made an occasion of especial rejoicing and display of patriotism. There were suggestions of bands of music, feasting and other pleasures there which were delightful to contemplate....
>
> Mr. Winans is said to have been very fond of fine horses, and their quarters are situated a quarter of a mile or so to the north of the house, near the residence of the men who had charge of them. Some of the horses driven by Mr. Winans are said to have been the finest in the country, and doubtless were, as he liked them and had the means to secure them. Before the visitors left the place the other day they were shown a thoroughbred Russian stallion which has been on the place for a great many years. Zynock, as he is called, was brought over to this country by a Russian nobleman, and purchased by the owner of The Crimea. He is a fine-looking animal, pure white, and bearing in every limb the evidence that he is a thoroughbred. Although he is now 26 years old, he does not seem more than a quarter of that age, and is apparently as full of life as ever. He has the record of trotting a mile in 2.31.[35]

The oft told story of the statuary at Alexandroffsky appeared in Winans' obituary; the *Gazette* was unflappable in retrospect:

> Some of the latter [the statuary] was exceptionally fine, but a few of the nude pieces gave offense to the too sensitive modesty of some residents in the neighborhood. As a result, a complaint was made to the City Council, and that body requested Mr. Winans to remove the objectionable pieces. He retaliated by building a high wall around his entire lot, which shut out not only these, but all the beauties of his grounds from the public and although the Council in a spirit of repentance revoked its former request, he declined to remove or lower the walls.[36]

The statuary incident is probably linked to the Alexandroffsky account in the 1858 ledger where J. W. Colley was paid $400 "on a/c of wall &c.," and a Mr. Ewing was paid $287 "for bricks for wall &c."[37] In fact, 1858 was the year that Gobright and Torsch's city directory urged all tourists to visit Alexandroffsky:

> This beautiful structure, with all its extensive appurtenances is situated on Hollins street, above Fremont street, its rear wall being on Baltimore street. Multitudes of visitors from far and near come to visit it, and gaze upon its beauty and magnificence. There is not to be found in the whole country a private establishment which can equal it in extent and grandeur. The mansion, a view of which is given on the opposite page, is adorned with the most exquisite specimens of American, European and classic art, embracing rare subjects in paintings, sculpture, &c.; while the spacious grounds surrounding it, are beautifully laid out and adorned in a style that would do credit to the home of a European prince. The extensive range of green houses, conservatory, &c., upon the premises, are filled with the rarest production of nature from this and other climes, while statuary, bowers, fountains, foliage, birds, &c., impart to the whole an effect well calculated to excite the wonder and admiration of the visitor.
>
> Fronting on Fremont street are the stables connected with the grounds. These exhibit a degree of beauty, order and cleanliness rarely to be met with, and in their arrangement, remind the visitor of the far-famed Hanoverian stables, a glowing description of which some months ago appeared in one of our standard magazines.
>
> No stranger who visits Baltimore, should leave it without taking a glance of this, one of the most beautiful attractions of the Monumental City.[38]

Alexandroffsky was famous again in 1923 when Mrs. Hutton opened the house for a card party to benefit South Baltimore General Hospital.[39] Then, in the spring of that year the rotogravure section of the Sunday paper presented the first known photograph of the statue of Mercury which disturbed the public in the previous century.[40] In 1925, it was announced the house was going-to-sale for development, and many furnishings of the house were disposed of at an auction lasting several days, leading one paper to state "Crowds Storm Alexandroffsky."[41] The wall was demolished in June 1926, and the house was expected to be torn-down at any time.[42] Yet, it was 1929 before the 135-foot chimney was brought down by contractor J. T. McNulty.[43] Nothing came of the development plans, and in 1947 there was only a truck terminal office on the premises.[44] The area was described in 1950 as a rubble-strewn lot.[45] The 1947 story followed the fate of some of the statues, noting that J. Henry Hoffman, a Charles Street antique dealer, had purchased them at auction and kept them in stock until the 1930s when parties whose names he forgot bought them for destinations unknown. The Hoffman statues were bronzes, purchased in Naples by Mr. Hutton, duplicates of the Vatican Museum's Apollo Belvedere and Minerva.[46] Katherine S. Daiger reported in 1926 that Reginald W. Hutton installed the marbles of the Discus Thrower, Mercury, and The Gladiator on the Crimea grounds, along with one Russian iron eagle and two iron lions that had stood at the city house.[47] Most of the stories of this period, misquoting Scharf's *Chronicles*, claimed that Thomas Winans bought the grounds, then known as Fayetteville, in 1835--but he was only 15 years old at that time.[48]

Baltimore City bought the Orianda mansion and 200 acres of the Crimea in 1941, using the J. William Leakin bequest left for acquiring parkland; thus, the name of Leakin Park. In earlier city plans, Leakin Park would have developed around the city's disused reservoir at Lake Roland, a site that fulfilled another citizen's will by being named Robert E. Lee Park.

The year after the chapel fire, the city selected the architectural firm of Smeallie, Orrick, and Janka, Ltd., to perform the restoration initially expected to cost $100,000 and more. The work was completed in 1989.[49]

A photo of the Winans house on Ocean Drive at Newport, Rhode Island, appeared in the definitive history of that town by Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr. Those authors called it "Bleak House" rather than "Shamrock Cliff," and estimated its construction date at 1865. The house, demolished in 1894, was elegantly denounced by the joint authors:

> Totally inappropriate on its flat and windswept site, it gloried in that inappropriateness, even in its name. A great wooden barn with a high Mansard, it was split in half by a mountainous cross volume thrust through the house above its entrance porch, and was without doubt one of the most awkward structures ever raised by man. Yet despite or because of all that, it was the perfect acme and burlesque of a mansion by the sea, a child's dream of grandeur.[50]

The second and surviving Shamrock Cliff was built for Gaun M. Hutton and Celeste Marguerite Winans Hutton in 1894, designed by Peabody and Stearns of Boston. It currently serves as the Oceancliff hotel and restaurant on Ridge Avenue, Newport, advertised as a "19th century castle" of granite.[51] Gaun M. Hutton died there in 1916.[52]

Notes

[1] The 1918 Baltimore City land annexation placed these former County landmarks within the City's boundaries.
[2] "American Mechanics in Russia." Baltimore *Republican & Argus*, August 7, 1847. "The Railroad from Moscow to St. Petersburg," *Sun*, November 3, 1858.
[3] George A. Frederick, "Recollections," typescript of talk before the American Institute of Architects, Baltimore, 1912, Maryland Historical Society library, p. 19 (hereafter cited as MHS).
[4] *Daily Baltimore Republican*, July 6, 1855.
[5] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS, Box 22, Daily Journal for 1851, dates mentioned in text.
[6] Baltimore *Republican & Argus*, November 4, 1951.
[7] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS, Special Collections, Box 22, Daily Journal for 1852.
[8] Ferdinand C. Latrobe, *Iron Men and Their Dogs* (Baltimore, 1941), pp. 12-14. Also, John C. Gobright, *The Monumental City or Baltimore Guide Book* (Baltimore, 1858), p. 162.
[9] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS, Special Collections, Box 22, Daily Journal for 1855, July 9. The lions are currently on display at the Baltimore Zoo.
[10] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS, Box 23, Labor Ledger, 1857, folio 207.
[11] Michael F. Trostel, F.A.I.A., Baltimore, to author, December 22, 1992, personal communication.
[12] *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v., James McHenry.
[13] Barbara Wells Sarudy, "Nurserymen and Seed Dealers in the Eighteenth Century Chesapeake," *Journal of Garden History*, 9 (July-September 1989): 114.
[14] Baltimore Equitable Society Records, Book 8, pp. 66-69.
[15] Jean Jepson Page, "James McNeill Whistler, Baltimorean, and *The White Girl*: A Speculative Essay," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 84 (Spring 1989): 10-38. Thomas C. Corner, "Private Art Collections of Baltimore," *Art & Archaeology*, 19 (June 1925): 239. In 1992, *Wapping* belonged to the John Hay Whitney Collection, New York.
[16] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS, Box 22, Daily Journal for 1856, on dates mentioned in text.
[17] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS, Daily Journal for 1856, September 23.
[18] Daily Journal for 1857, f. 190, "A Day at the Crimea," *Baltimore Sunday Herald*, April 22, 1894.
[19] Carroll Dulaney, "Crimea," Baltimore *News-Post*, February 8, 1935.
[20] *Daily Baltimore Republican*, October 7, 1858.
[21] Robert C. Keith, *Baltimore Harbor* (Baltimore, 1982), pp. 58-59. "The Winans Steamer," *Harper's Weekly*, October 23, 1858. *Illustrated London News*, March 3, 1866.
[22] *Daily Baltimore Republican*, February 4, 1858.
[23] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS, Daily Journal for 1855, July 6.
[24] J. Thomas Scharf, *Chronicles of Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1874), p. 563. Sherry H. Olsen, *Baltimore, The Building of An American City* (Baltimore, 1980), pp. 122-123.

[25] *Wood's Baltimore City Directory*, 1864, p. 431.
[26] J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Baltimore City and County* (Philadelphia, 1881), pp. 151, 593. The Winans Papers contain a ledger labeled "soup," showing expenditures of $26,970.69 as of June 3, 1861, MS. 916, Vol. 70.
[27] "Funeral of Mrs. Thomas Winans," *Daily Baltimore Republican*, March 21, 1861. The paper described Mrs. Winans as "the daughter of a French merchant of the Baltic." She had met Winans at St. Petersburg, and their marriage took place August 23, 1847, *Sun*, June 11, 1878.
[28] Jacques Kelly, "Leakin Park Chapel Has Rescuing Angel," *Evening Sun*, May 21, 1987.
[29] Kathy Lally, "Lightning Hurts 13 at Old Chapel in Leakin Park," *Sun*, May 24, 1987.
[30] Jacques Kelly, "Ruskin: 'Purist, Dreamer, Free Spirit, Challenger of Policies,'" *Evening Sun*, May 27, 1987.
[31] *Baltimore Gazette*, October 15, 1866.
[32] "Death of Thomas Winans," *Baltimore Gazette*, June 11, 1878. Also, Baltimore *Sun*, June 11.
[33] Baltimore County Tax Ledger, District 1, 1876, n.p., MSA.
[34] "A Day at the Crimea."
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Baltimore Gazette*, June 11, 1878.
[37] John C. Gobright, *The Monumental City or Baltimore Guide Book* (Baltimore, 1858), pp. 92-93.
[38] Winans Papers, MS. 916, MHS,Special Collections, Box 24, "Ledger," October 30, December 14, 1858, folio 1.
[39] "Alexandroffsky Will Be Thrown Open to the Public," Baltimore *Sun*, February 11, 1923.
[40] *Sunday Sun*, Rotogravure Section, May 13, 1923.
[41] "Crowds Storm Alexandroffsky As Auction Opens at Old Estate," *Sun*, November 6, 1925.
[42] "Alexandroffsky's Fall Saddens Appolo," *Evening Sun*, June 15, 1926.
[43] "Another Symbol of Yesterday Falls in the Path of Progress," *Sun*, August 2, 1929.
[44] *Evening Sun*, May 8, 1947.
[45] Jacob Hay, "Alexandroffsky Revisited: A Rubble Strewn Lot," *Evening Sun*, March 15, 1950. Margaret McCampell and Lance Gifford also reported on the lost house in "Grand Estate on Baltimore's West Side, Alexandroffsky," *Maryland Magazine*, 12 (Winter 1979): 26-31.
[46] "Part of Alexandroffsky's Walled Art Now Exposed to the Public," *Sun*, June 4, 1926. The bronzes were cast by Angelis and Fils, Naples.
[47] Katherine S. Daiger, "Hoax of Baltimore Fort Still Persists," *Sun*, June 27, 1926. The fort data is entirely erroneous in this feature story.
[48] J. Thomas Scharf, *Chronicles of Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1874), p. 490.
[49] Jacques Kelly, "Leakin Park: Hope Reviving After Lightning Strikes," *Evening Sun*, May 12, 1988.
[50] Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island* (Bramhall House: New York, 1952), 2 ed., 1967, pp. 142-143, 172.
[51] Anne Randall, *Newport, A Tour Guide* (Catboat Press: Newport, Rhode Island, 1970), p. 86.
[52] "Gaun M. Hutton Dies at Newport," Baltimore *News*, July 7, 1916. Mrs. Celeste Winans Hutton lived until 1925.

Editor's Note

Presently, the second and third floors of Orianda are home to Baltimore's branch of Outward Bound, "a non-profit educational organization and expedition school," while the Friends of Orianda House occupy the first floor of the building and offer a small museum and ballroom for rent. For more information about visiting Orianda house, please visit the Friends of Orianda House website, or contact them at 410.299.7613.

Submissions

While *History Trails'* subject matter has traditionally focused almost entirely on local concerns, we are interested in expanding its scope into new areas. For example, where one article might focus on a single historic building, person, or event in the county, others may develop and defend a historic argument, compare and contrast Baltimore County topics to other locales, or tie seemingly confined local topics to larger events.

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Attn: History Trails Editor
9811 Van Buren Lane
Cockeysville, MD 21030