



**Baltimore City Landmark Designation  
Castalia  
200 Tuscany Road  
Baltimore, Maryland**

**January 8, 2008  
March 11, 2008**

W. Edward Leon- City Planner, HAP Division

## **Historical Significance:**

Castalia is historically significant for its association with the men who had it built and who designed it, Virgil M. Hillyer and Laurence Hall Fowler.

Hillyer was a Harvard graduate and the first headmaster of the Calvert School for many decades. Outside of the confines of the Calvert School he is mostly renowned for his development of the first homeschool curriculum that was successfully introduced in the nation and used throughout the world. His thought was that the curriculum of the Calvert School could be sold to families that couldn't afford or were not near enough for their children to attend the Calvert School. These families received their Calvert School education through the "classroom in a box" method as it was called. Hillyer believed in a strong foundation in the fundamentals of writing, spelling, reading, and mathematics. He believed that students should be taught art, geography, music, science, and history. His goal was to develop well-rounded students, familiar with many aspects of their world. In fact by the 1930s the curriculum developed by Hillyer had spread to all of the soon to be 50 states and was used by the U.S. Government to teach the dependent's of soldiers stationed throughout the world.

Castalia was named by the Hillyer's because there were two natural springs in front of their house below the trees. They named the house "Castalia" after the famous fountain at the base of Mount Parnassus, where weary travelers would stop and have a drink of the health-giving waters before moving up the mountain. In Greek mythology, Castalia, was a nymph who evaded the pursuit of the god Apollo who then transformed her into the fountain. Hillyer had the building designed by his close personal friend Laurence H. Fowler who also designed the second Calvert School next to his new residence. Sadly, Hillyer lived in the home only a handful of years before passing.

Laurence Hall Fowler, the son of a Maryland judge was born in Catonsville in 1876(77). He graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1896 and proceeded to study architecture at Columbia University, which at the time was the foremost school of architecture in the country. By 1902, Fowler was at the head of his class and left in 1904 to study at the L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Fowler received his training in classical architecture and was one of last Baltimore architects to work in this mode. Returning to Baltimore, he worked briefly in the office of Wyatt and Nolting and then left to set up his own practice. His long career was acknowledged in 1937 when he was made an Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

Fowler is perhaps best known for his design of the War Memorial in front of City Hall and the Hall of Records building in Annapolis. His sketch of the War Memorial was chosen in a nation-wide competition. It was erected and dedicated by the State and the City to commemorate the citizens of Maryland who gave their lives in World War I. Designated as a City landmark, the War Memorial is rather austere on the exterior but richly ornamented on the interior in the Neoclassical style. His Hall Records design reflects its surrounding buildings on St. Johns campus with a Georgian style design. Fowler of course has many notable buildings throughout Baltimore some of which have achieved landmark status: Greenwood, Cedarwood, Garrett Library at Evergreen House, and Blythwood to name a few. And of course there are the innumerable residential designs he completed in Roland Park, Guilford, and Homeland. By the time he passed in 1971 his portfolio of work and his contributions had become highly acclaimed.

## **Architectural Description:**

Castalia is designed in the “Period” style of design popular with many conservative architects in the years between World War One and the Great Depression. The house exhibits elements strongly associated with the Tudor style of architecture. The Period style houses were designed to replicate old world houses while at the same time incorporating modern utilities within the design.

Castalia is a stone structure standing three and half stories tall on the principal facade which faces Tuscany Road on the South and two stories high on the rear extension. The Plan of the building is roughly a T-shaped building mass.

The front/south façade is composed of both rough cut masonry and wood siding on two projecting window bays with front gable dormers flanking the central entry bay with high set third story windows. This façade features a diamond pattern within the dormer end above the third story window. The roof of the main building section is a standard pitch side gabled roof and clad with slate tile.

The façade of the east elevation contains the large stone chimney for the second and third floors and the projecting 2 story tall dining room before returning to the remaining rear addition with its cross-gabled roof. The dining room has projecting window bay.

The north elevation/façade is the gable end of the rear addition and holds the laundry room, kitchen and rear staircase. There is also an original terraced deck that is now covered with a later shed porch enclosure. On this elevation you can see a pair of shed dormers over the dining room and a raised wall dormer on the main building end over a doorway that leads from the music room to the west terrace.

The west elevation has two smaller cross gables that project from the second story and look out onto a terrace. A side door and windows are found on this side that mark the locations for the kitchen and central hall. This elevation also has a smaller fireplace/kitchen chimney. There are steps leading down from the terrace deck that lead to the main entry level and the large garage doors.

The main building sits on an elevated base that contains a unique built-in car garage. While this feature is not uncommon with later 20<sup>th</sup> century designs it is highly unusual for the late 1920's when the majority of garages were detached structures. This lower level also contain the entry room, the boiler and storage rooms in the house. The lower levels has a low height wall that looks out over the front gardens and playfields of the Calvert School.

**Staff Recommendations:**  
**For Baltimore City Landmark**

Castalia meets the following criteria:

- 2) *is associated with the life of an outstanding historical person or persons*

Virgil Hillyer- First Headmaster of Calvert School and developer of Calvert Home School Program used throughout the world.

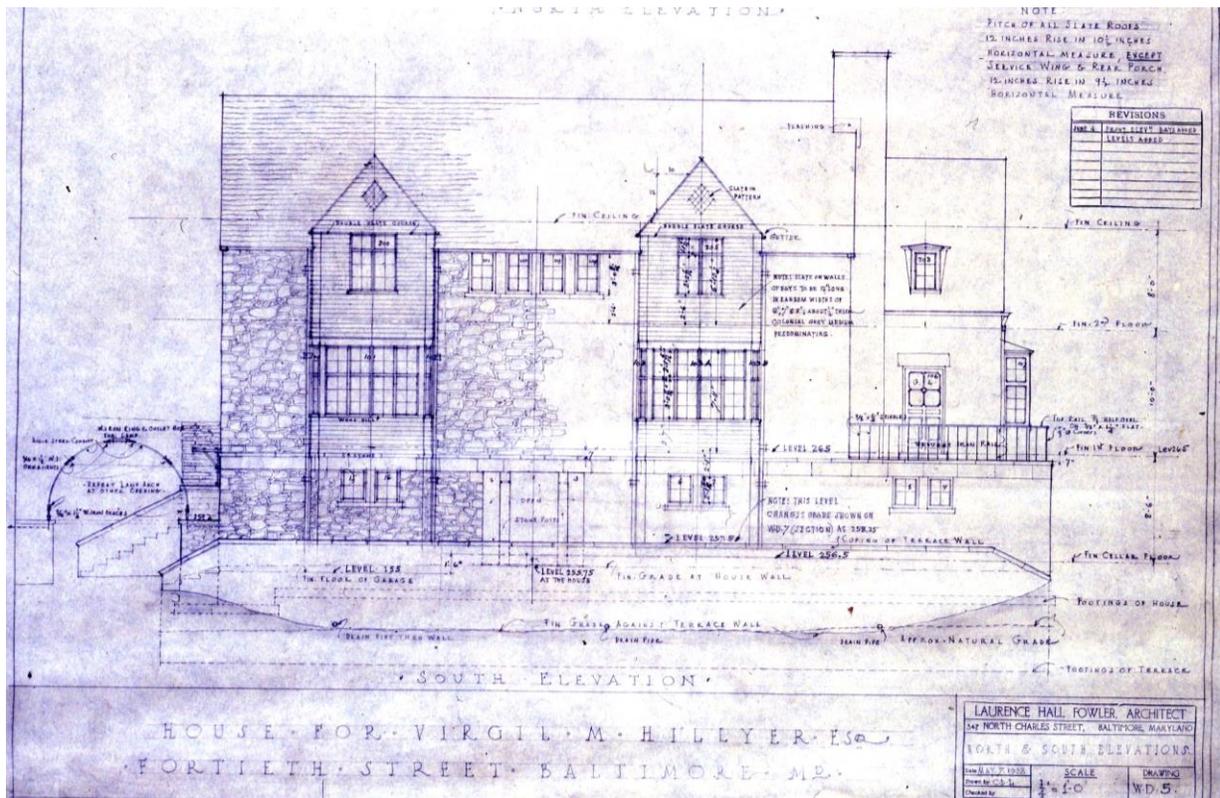
- 4) *is significant of the architectural period in which it was built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, method of construction, or engineering, or is the notable work of a master builder, designer, engineer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age;*

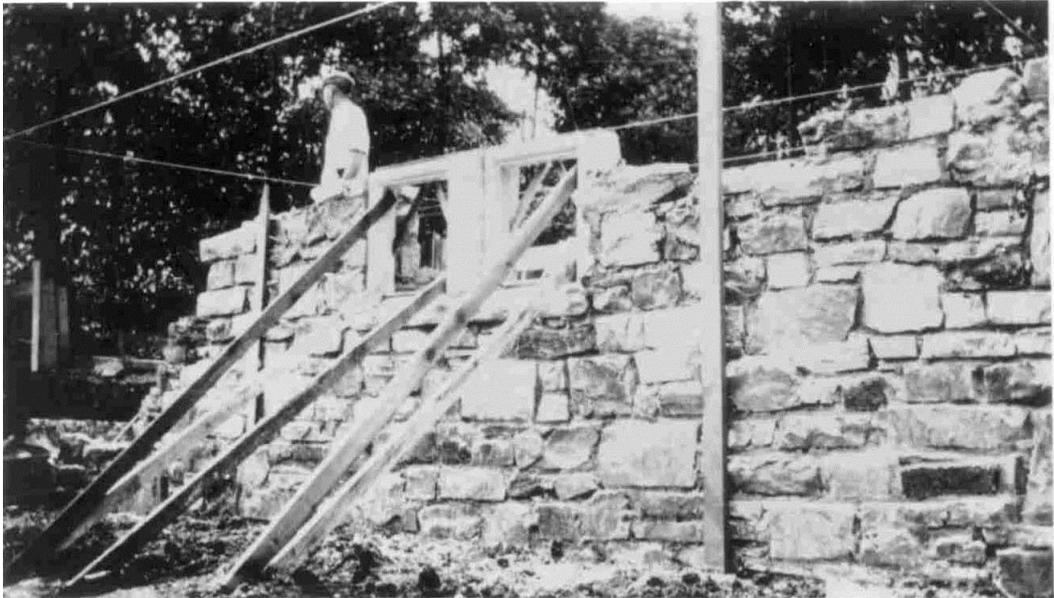
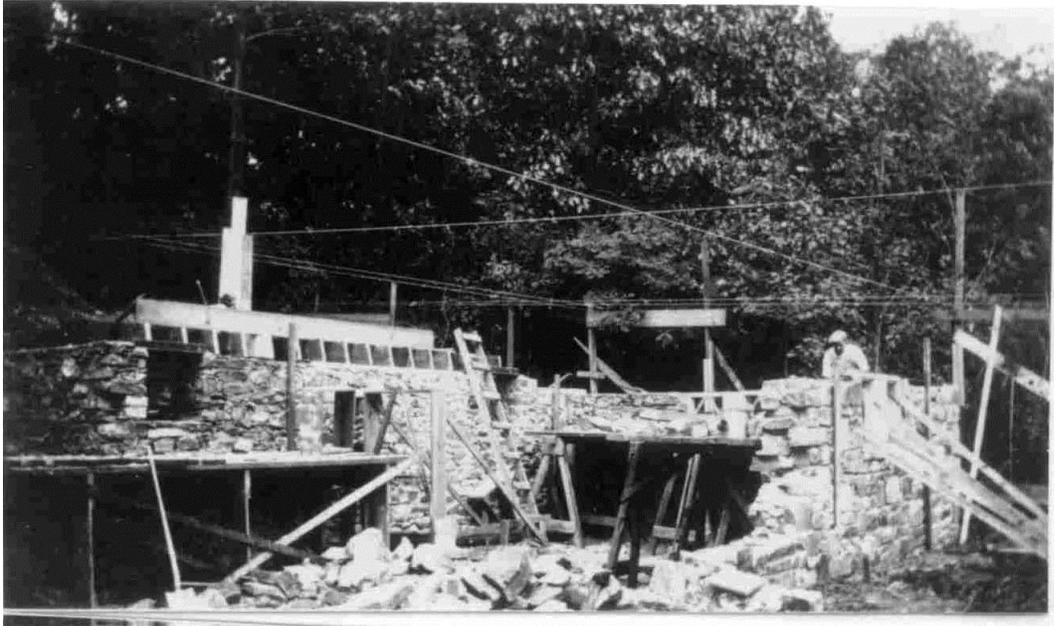
Prolific and significant architect Laurence H. Fowler.

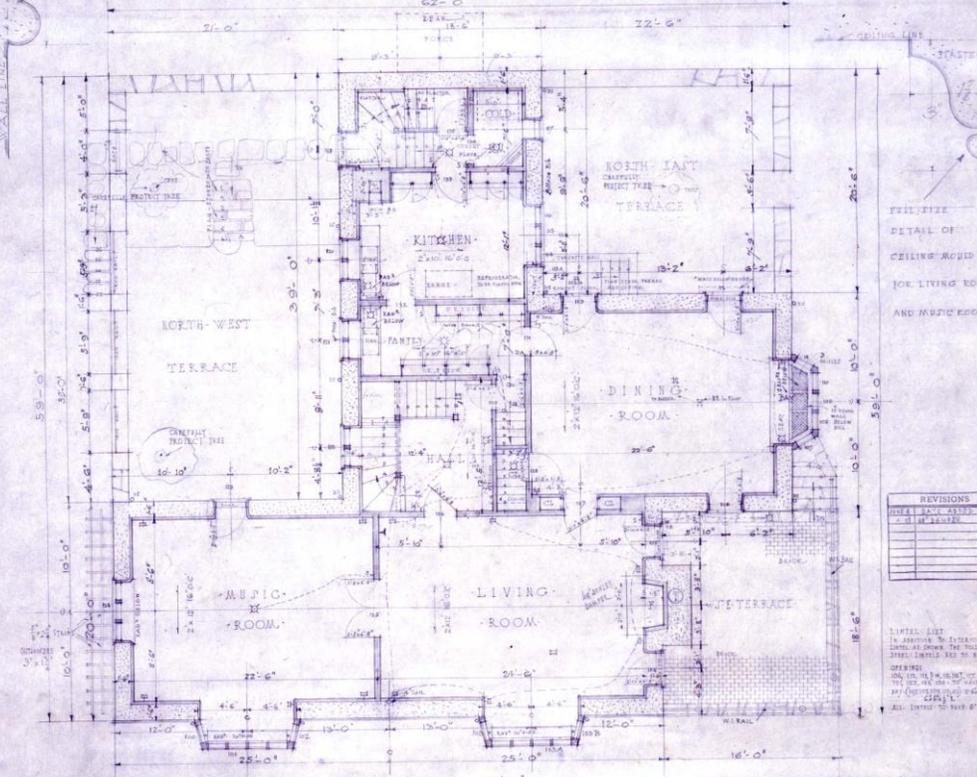
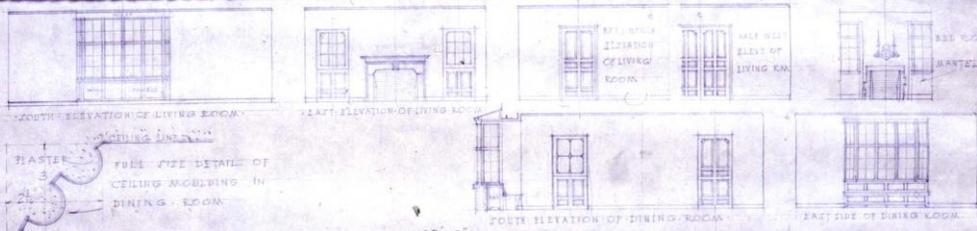
**Highlight List of work by Laurence Hall Fowler**

See Attached List.

# Historic Images and Maps:







REVISIONS	
NO.	DESCRIPTION

LIMITED LIST  
 IN ANSWER TO INQUIRY FROM  
 CONTRACTOR THE FOLLOWING  
 SPECIFICATIONS ARE TO BE USED  
 OFFERS  
 MAY BE MADE FOR THE FOLLOWING  
 TO BE MADE BY THE CONTRACTOR  
 ALL LETTERS TO BE MADE BY MAIL

INDICATION OF MATERIAL  
 STONE  
 BRICK

PLAN OF FIRST FLOOR

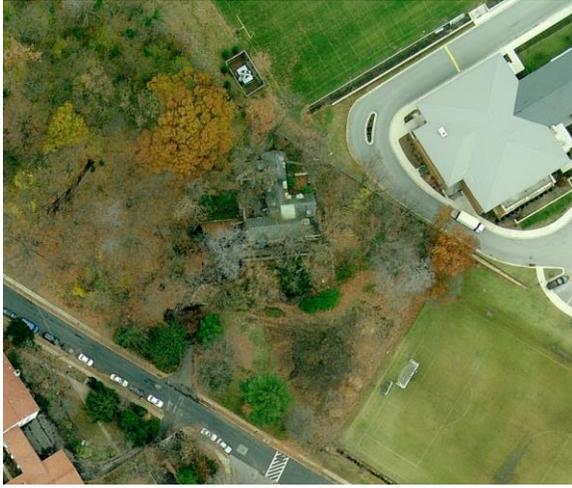
HOUSE FOR VIRGIL M. HILLYER, ESQ.,  
 FORTIETH STREET BALTIMORE, M.D.

LAURENCE HALL FOWLER ARCHITECT  
 147 NORTH CHARLES STREET, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

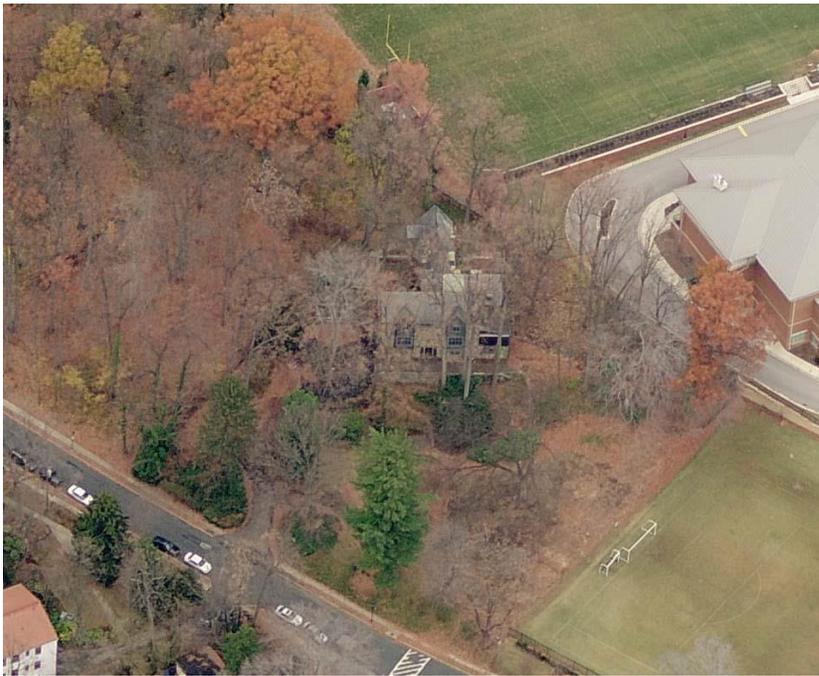
PLAN OF FIRST FLOOR

SCALE	1" = 8'-0"
DATE	NOV. 1903

**Site Plan and Aerial Views:**



Site Plan View



South Elevation



West Elevation

East Elevation

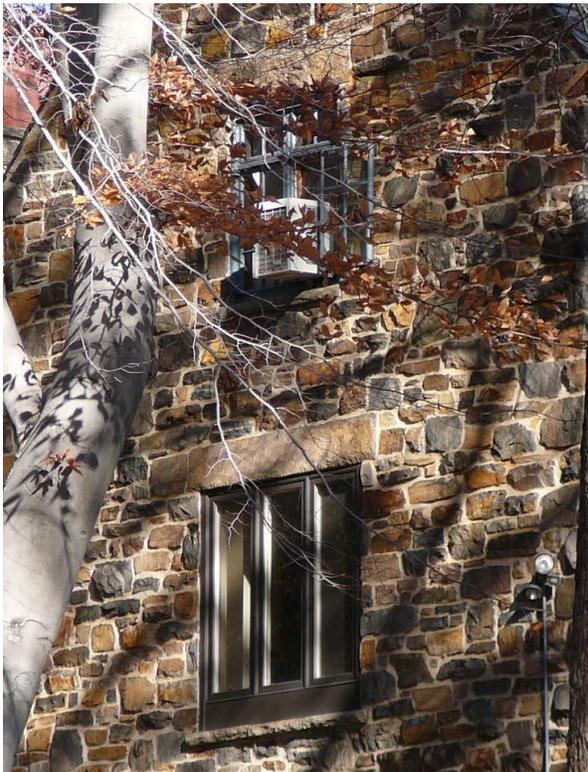
**Architectural Details:**



Main Building Window Bay



Main Building Entrance



West Elevation Windows



West Elevation Rear Section



West Elevation Windows



Main Building Terraced Entrance



East Elevation-Dining room



South Elevation