

PILGRIM'S REST
Built in 1750

Samuel Hayward, heir to Nicholas Hayward, one of the original proprietors of the 30,000 acre Brent Town Tract, conveyed to Henry Fitzhugh (1687-1758), of Bedford in King George County, 1000 acres of the Hayward quarter of the Tract lying on Cedar Run east of Catlett. It was on this plantation, three miles east of Catlett, that Fitzhugh, in 1750, built Pilgrim's Rest. He may have lived here for a time though his sons, John and Thomas, certainly lived on the tract; the present house having been identified as the home of Thomas (1725-1768). The property then passed to Henry Dade Hooe and continued to be listed as his estate until 1843, when it passed to Alexander S. Grigsby. Acquired in 1849 by the Reverend Mr. Levi H. Hazen, a Methodist minister, it was renamed Mount Wesley. Melvin Colvin Hazen, President of the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia and a grandson of the Reverend Mr. Hazen, restored the original nomenclature.

The house is a two and one-half story frame with a double chimney, sixteen feet wide and fifty feet high, of Flemish bond masonry. The framework of the house is oak, and the extra wide siding is applied in ship-lap style. Brick and mortar between the studding to the second floor level served as insulation. The house contains the original flooring, plaster, mantels, panelling and the eight by ten window panes. The entire first floor is panelled to chair rail height; the ceilings eleven and one-half feet high, and, until 1850, the kitchen was in the yard. Bars of virgin timber are still used to lock the doors. An old story is told that the master of the house would send his family out; place the bars across the doors, then leave through a secret passage which still exists. At the end of the thirty-three foot hall is a concealed stairway, which is relatively rare in colonial architecture. The purpose of this enclosed staircase was to keep the hall unobstructed to prevailing winds in summer. Due to sturdy construction and the fact that the house has been continuously occupied for 228 years, it is in a remarkable state of preservation.

In 1956 Pilgrim's Rest was completely restored and a one story wing was added by the present owners, Dr. and Mrs. H. Lynn Colvin. Mrs. Colvin, now a widow, still occupies the house.