

Site: M:26/10/60

Dawson / Nicewarner House

215 Harrison Street

Built: 1889, Moved and Altered 1930 by Walter Nicewarner  
Private

The Dawson / Nicewarner House was built in 1889 by one of the Beall-Dawson heirs on part of the subdivision of the 67- acre Beall estate. It was relocated in 1930 from its original site on Commerce Lane to make way for the new Presbyterian Church. At the time of its move, owner Walter Nicewarner changed the orientation and entry porch and applied a pebble-dash coating. The Nicewarner family continues to occupy the house.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. M 26/10/60Magi No. 1650765604DOE   yes   no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic The Dawson/Nicewarner Houseand/or common The Nicewarner House

## 2. Location

street & number 215 Harrison Street    not for publicationcity, town Rockville    vicinity of congressional district 8state Maryland county Montgomery

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u>  </u> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<u>  </u> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>  </u> private	<u>  </u> unoccupied	<u>  </u> commercial
<u>  </u> structure	<u>  </u> both	<u>  </u> work in progress	<u>  </u> educational
<u>  </u> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>  </u> entertainment
<u>  </u> object	<u>  </u> in process	<u>  </u> yes: restricted	<u>  </u> government
	<u>  </u> being considered	<u>  </u> yes: unrestricted	<u>  </u> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<u>  </u> military
			<u>  </u> museum
			<u>  </u> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<u>  </u> religious
			<u>  </u> scientific
			<u>  </u> transportation
			<u>  </u> other:

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

name Walter S. Nicewarner, et. al.street & number 215 Harrison Street telephone no.: 762-2462city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery Co. Land Records liber 6352street & number Montgomery Co. Courthouse folio 641city, town Rockville state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Nonedate    federal    state    county    localdepository for survey records   city, town    state

# 7. Description

Survey No. <sup>M</sup>: 26/10/60

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move <u>1930</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The subject house faces south on Harrison Street at the intersection of Upton. It sits on a large landscaped lot shaded by a number of mature trees. A cinder-block garage faces the west facade of the house and is accessed by a graveled driveway from Harrison.

This 2-1/2-story, side-gabled with rear two-story gable house is covered with pebble-dash masonry. It has a brick and cinder-block foundation and an asphalt shingle roof. There are two interior brick chimneys.

Built ca. 1839 on Commerce Lane (now W. Montgomery), new courthouse construction in 1930 prompted the relocation of the house to the Harrison Street site. In its new location, the south gable end became the principal facade, the lower half of the two-story bay was removed, and Colonial Revival features were added to create a new entrance.

The four-bay south facade is highlighted by an off-center, tripartite projecting bay on the second story supported by a one-story portico. Slender, square Doric columns -- paired near the house, tripled at the front -- accent the portico which provides a cover for an elliptical fanlight doorway with multi-paned sidelights. A decorative railing and railposts similar to the columns are atop the portico. The second-story bay has a 2-over-2 window flanked by wooden shutters; an asphalt-shingled roof covers the bay. Two-over-two windows are in the fourth bay, second and 1/2 stories. The first and second bays have 2-over-2 windows on the second story that extend into the cornice frieze and 1-over-1 windows with wooden top and bottom panels on the first story. A single 2-over-2 window occupies the third bay, first floor. All of these windows have louvered wooden shutters and flat, unadorned lintels.

The west gable facade has a central projecting wooden porch with pedimented gable supported by four square columns embellished with simple capitals. Two-over-two windows are on the second and 1/2 stories.

The north facade has an asymmetrical arrangement. A two-story, tripartite off-center bay window projects from the side gable end. This bay is similar in material and appearance to the second-story bay on the south facade. Single 2-over-2 windows occupy the first bay, second story, and 1/2 story. A projecting one-story porch with four square columns with simple capitals covers an exterior door and 2-over-2 windows at the northwest corner. A narrow 2-over-2 window is to the left of the porch; a second-story 2-over-2 window extending into the cornice is above the porch. Louvered wooden shutters flank most windows.

- Continued on attachment 7.1

# 8. Significance

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<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

LOCAL HISTORY

**Specific dates** ca. 1889 alt. 1930 **Builder/Architect** Walter Nicewarner, 1930 alteration

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
 and/or  
 Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  
 Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This house is significant as one of the houses actually built by a member of the Beall family in Margaret Beall's subdivision of the lands around her Federal era mansion. At the time of its relocation from its original Commerce Lane (West Montgomery Avenue) site to Harrison Street it received minor alterations and a coating of pebble dash, but is otherwise unaltered. The Nicewarner family has owned the property for the 55 years since its relocation.

### History & Support

Margaret Beall subdivided her 67 acre estate west of the Beall mansion in 1875 and deeded several of the building lots to her relatives. Her cousin Priscilla Somerville received Lot #5 fronting on Commerce Lane.1/ Priscilla died in 1879 and the lot reverted to the Beall estate and eventually her Dawson family heirs. The subject house was referred to as the John L. Dawson house 2/ and was built sometime before 1890.3/ John Dawson owned the property until his death in 1926 at age 77.4/

In 1929-30 the construction of an addition to the County Courthouse forced the Presbyterian Church to seek a new location. Attorney and Church activist Harold Smith arranged the purchase of Lots #5 and #6 on Commerce Lane for the new Church, along with the purchase of Lot #9 in Block 17 on Harrison Street as a new site for the Dawson House.5/ The Talbott house on Lot #6 was demolished, but the Dawson house was sold to builder/contractor Walter Nicewarner, who moved the house one block north to its new lot.

In its new location the house was turned to face Harrison Street and given a more fashionable classical style entry porch; the whole house was covered in pebble-dash masonry. Mr. Nicewarner died in 1958, but the Nicewarner family still owns and occupies the nearly 100 year old house.6/

Continued on attachment 8.1

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. 26/10/60

Histories of Presbyterian Church/ Interview with Mrs. Nicewarner  
Montgomery County Land, Plat, and Will Records /Real Estate Atlases  
Montgomery County Sentinel

# 10. Geographical Data

26,383 square feet

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Fronting on Harrison Street at northwest corner with Upton.  
Parts of lot 7&8, and all of lot 9, Block 17 of Beall's  
Subdivision as per Plat Book 1, p. 10 and Book 4, p. 396.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Anne W. Cissel and Dwayne Jones, architectural description		
organization	Peerless Rockville	date	January 1985
street & number	P.O. Box 4262	telephone	762-0096
city or town	Rockville	state	Maryland 20850

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

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The Dawson/Nicewarner House  
Attachment 7.1

The east (original main) facade is a symmetrical three bays with 2-over-2 windows in each bay, both floors. All windows have louvered wooden shutters. A full-width porch was removed at the move.

The large cinder-block garage at the northwest corner of the lot has three gabled dormers with twelve-light windows. A pair of multi-light French doors and another wooden exterior door with clear side panels are on the principal facade of the garage. Two overhead garage doors are on the gable end that opens to Harrison Street. The garage appears to be used for residential office purposes.

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M:  
The Dawson/ Nicewarner House  
Attachment 8.1

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Footnotes:

1. Montgomery County Land Records BBP18/93 (1878). Lot #5 occupied the full width of the block, stretching north to include the south side of Harrison Street.
2. The 1929 Deed at Land Record 494/425 refers to the house on Lot#5, "commonly known as the John L. Dawson house".
3. Plat 23e of Montgomery County Historical Society Plats shows silhouettes of houses on Commerce Street. The 1890 Plat shows the house with a full width front porch. No Tax or other record of construction date exists.
4. Montgomery County Sentinel Obituary of John L. Dawson, Oct 26, 1926
5. Harold Smith was a member of the Edwin Smith family who had donated the land for the Presbyterian "Manse" on Forest Avenue. Both the Smiths and the Nicewarners were active in the Church as officers, organist, etc.
6. Interview with Mrs. Nicewarner, March 1985.



RICHARD H. ANDREWS  
424-8282  
1608 FARRAGUT AVE.  
ROCKVILLE, MD 20851

068512-1

215 Harrison St.  
South Facade

6/85  
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