



Robertson House

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purchased and platted the former farm in an attempt to capitalize on the housing boom in Rockville, and to compete with the developing West End subdivision. The platting plan for Rockville Heights called for wide boulevards, large circles with radiating avenues, parks, and lakes, intended to attract wealthy families. Judge John T. Vinson purchased lots 1 and 2 in Block 2 of Rockville Heights in June 1890. The undeveloped property then sold to others until Clifford H. Robertson purchased the land in 1902. Robertson hired local architect T.C. Groomes to design and build his home, and in 1904 Robertson and his wife moved into the home. While the Robertson House land was among the first lots purchased, overall lot sales in this subdivision were slow and in 1914 a foreclosure sale was held for the 296 unsold acres in Rockville Heights.

The Rockville Heights subdivision is located in the City of Rockville. Rockville seemed to develop because it was a day's journey from the port of Georgetown, along the road leading west through Frederick. Initially, the settlement was identified by the businesses that supported travelers. It developed as a crossroads community and also supported the surrounding tobacco farmers. Then, in 1776, Montgomery County was separated from Frederick County and Rockville became the County Seat. Rockville became a courthouse village surrounded by agriculture, and many people connected with the courthouse settled in the area. In 1860 the city was incorporated, however, it remained small until 1873 when the Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad dramatically altered the town. The arrival of the railroad brought summer and weekend visitors to Rockville, and as a result of the resort trade, the town rapidly expanded in size and population. In addition, the increase of the Federal Government workforce together with improved roads and streetcar systems helped transform Rockville into a hometown for commuters. The growth of Rockville did stabilize and during the Depression it even fell. Then, with the enactment of the New Deal programs and World War II, Rockville experienced a second major development boom and the city flourished as a satellite city of Washington DC; later becoming a self-sustaining community.

The predominant house type within Rockville Heights was a two-story, vernacular house form with Colonial Revival and/or Folk Victorian elements. The Robertson House is an example of an American Foursquare executed in the Colonial Revival style.

As a house plan, the American Foursquare developed in the 1880s and grew in popularity through the early 1900s, with only a few built after 1930. Popular literature and house catalogs promoted the Foursquare plan and highlighted its versatility. Americans seemed attracted to the lack of highly decorative ornament, the lower construction and maintenance costs, the efficient use of interior space, and the flexibility associated with the plan. The American Foursquare is characterized by a four-room floorplan, a cubical shape (generally two or three bays wide and two stories tall), a hipped or pyramidal roof, prominent dormers, and prominent front porches. Even with such elements, the Foursquare proved to offer unlimited design versatility. Variations on the play/layout as well as style elements appeared throughout the country.

One of the popular styles applied to the Foursquare was the Colonial Revival style. This style developed as a renewed interest in early English and Dutch architecture – especially the Georgian and Adam styles as well as Postmedieval English and Dutch Colonial houses. While Colonial Revival was a dominant style for domestic architecture during the first half of the twentieth century, these structures often combined details from a variety of precedents, making eclectic mixtures instead of pure colonial copies. Some of the common features of the Colonial Revival style include an accentuated front door, a pedimented entry porch supported by slender columns, an entry fanlight or sidelights, symmetrically balanced windows and center door, double-hung windows with multi-pane glazing, and paired windows.

The Robertson House was designed and built by T.C. Groomes, a local architect who advertised and worked in the Rockville area from the 1870s through the early 1900s. His ads in the Sentinel identified him as a carpenter, builder, contractor, architect, and undertaker. He is credited with providing a general scheme for two-room schools in Montgomery County. He designed, built, remodeled, or repaired twenty-two houses in the Rockville vicinity as well as twelve other buildings, including schools, churches, and banks. Groomes designed and built the

Robertson House

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neighboring Hege House (M: 26-36); an American Foursquare with Colonial Revival elements, located on Monroe Street, catty-corner from the Robertson House.

## National Register Evaluation:

While the Robertson House, as an American Foursquare structure designed in the Colonial Revival style and constructed in a subdivision that developed during a period of dramatic growth in Rockville, is associated with the development of Rockville and a particular architectural style, it is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Properties. The property was previously surveyed by the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, however, it does not appear on the Locational Atlas for Historic Properties in Montgomery County, nor was it determined eligible for inclusion in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation in Rockville.

The Robertson property is associated with a neighborhood/subdivision that developed during a boom period for Rockville. However, recent street and modern office construction, and the fact that the subdivision never fully developed have diminished the subdivision as it was implemented and can't convey the intended plan. Therefore, the property does not possess an association with significant events or trends, and is not eligible under Criterion A. The property was designed by architect T.C. Groomes, a local architect and builder. However, he is not individually significant with the historic context. Given this and the fact that research into the tenants of the Robertson House did not identify any known association with significant persons, the property is not eligible under Criterion B. The Robertson House does embody distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction. The house characterizes the American Foursquare plan with Colonial Revival features and as such, it represents local and national trends in domestic architecture. While this supports significant under Criterion C, the residence is not eligible for the National Register because modern additions, change in use, and city development have compromised the structure's design, setting, materials, feeling, and association.

## PRESERVATION VISION 2000; THE MARYLAND PLAN

## STATEWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXTS

**I. Geographic Region:**

- Eastern Shore (all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
- Western Shore (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
- Piedmont (Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
- Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

**II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:**

- Rural Agrarian Intensification A.D. 1680-1815
- Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870
- Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930
- Modern Period A.D. 1930- Present
- Unknown Prehistoric
- Unknown Historic

**IV. Historic Period Themes:**

- Agriculture
- Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
- Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
- Government/Law
- Military
- Religion
- Social Educational/Cultural
- Transportation

**V. Resource Type:**Category: BuildingHistoric environment: SuburbanHistoric Function(s) and Use(s): Domestic-Single DwellingKnown Design Source: T.C. Groomes

Site: M:26/22/4

The Robertson House

Built: 1904

107 Fleet Street

Architect: Thomas C. Groomes

Public

Rockville architect Thomas C. Groomes designed this 2-1/2 story Colonial Revival residence in the Rockville Heights development in 1904. It was constructed for the newly married, young attorney Clifford Robertson and remained the Robertson family home until 1969. Much of the fine detailing shown in the extant architectural drawings is still present on the building, although it has been adapted for use as a medical clinic by its present owner, The Montgomery County government.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic The Robertson House

and/or common The Rockville Free Clinic

### 2. Location

street & number 107 Fleet Street  not for publication

city, town Rockville  vicinity of congressional district 8

state Maryland county Montgomery (RV Planning Area 1)

### 3. Classification

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

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

name Montgomery County Government

street & number 101 Monroe Street telephone no.: 279-1900

city, town Rockville state and zip code Maryland 20850

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Land Records liber 3897

street & number Montgomery County Courthouse folio 737

city, town Rockville state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

state  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. M: 26/22/4

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

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

The subject house faces north on Fleet Street at Monroe and is situated on a large corner lot. An off-street parking area is behind the house, accessed from Monroe Street. Now functioning as a public building, the house has minimal landscaping and is painted like its neighbors, also owned by Montgomery County, giving the block a uniform but utilitarian appearance. Foundations of two outbuildings are located at the southwest corner of the lot.

This frame, three-bay by four-bay, 2-1/2 story house has Colonial Revival detailing. It is basically square with a Rockville Bay, wrap porch, and rear porch extension. The low-hipped composition shingled roof is gabled over the bay and rear porch, and is broken in front by a gabled pediment dormer. The original rooftop tin covered board gutters remain on the roof, directing water to downspouts at the corners. The house rests on a rough coursed fieldstone foundation and is clad in German siding. There is one wide brick multi-flue chimney on the rear hip.

This house was designed in Colonial Revival style, featuring details such as wide paneled pilasters replacing cornerboards, 1/1 windows with fully architraved lintels and Doric columned front verandah with dentilated architrave.

The four-bay north (front) facade has a central pedimented front gable with a rectangular window (now boarded over) set in a plain surround with a broken pediment top. Paired windows are in the east and west bays on the second story, with a keyed oval tracery window in the center. The first story has one larger window in each of the two east bays, an exterior wood, one-light door in the third bay, and one window in the west bay. The one story front verandah wraps around the east side and has a seamed-tin, low-hipped roof supported by seven Doric columns; it is connected with a plain stick and rail balustrade, and rests on brick piers infilled with lattice panels.

The three-bay east facade is highlighted by a gable-roofed Rockville Bay on the south. A round window is centered in the gable with two windows on the east and a keyed oval 4-light window in the north side of the square second story. The three-sided first story bay has one window in the south section, another in the center section and an exterior door with transom above in the north section. An original spool and spindlework screen door remains on this entrance. The north bay of the main block has single windows aligned first and second story. Four steps lead to the verandah on the east side. A rectangular basement light opening in the foundation under the Rockville Bay has been boarded up.

Continued on attachment 7.1

M: 26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.1

The south facade has an irregular massing created by a gabled rear porch extension. The main block has single windows aligned first and second story at the southeast corner. The rear extension is gable topped with a round window in the gable and two evenly spaced windows under the gable portion of the second story with a smaller window on the east covered by the extended roofline. The first story has a one story back porch, the west side open, the east side enclosed. The west open porch roof is supported by one turned post with plain stick and rail balustrade. On the facade behind the porch is a window in the west bay and an exterior door to its right. The east enclosed porch has an exterior door on the west side opening onto the open portion of the porch. There is one window on the south, and a cellar door at the extreme east in the porch facade. Two boarded-up basement light openings are in the foundation.

The three bay west facade has one window in the north and south bays, both stories. The center bay has a story-and-a-half opening aligned with the second story windows, filled by a rectangular Queen Anne window at the top, a decorative moulded panel below, then a regular 1/1 window at the bottom. A boarded up basement window is in the foundation.

See photo, attachment 7.2 and plans, attachments 7.3 through 7.10

# 8. Significance

Survey No. M: 26/22/4

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<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/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1904 **Builder/Architect** T. C. Groomes (architect/builder)

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.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Rockville architect Thomas C. Groomes used Georgian architecture themes to design this 1904 house. It was occupied by the Robertson family for 65 years until its adaptation by the Montgomery County government for use as a medical clinic and office.

### HISTORY AND SUPPORT

The 1889-90 platting of "Rockville Heights" on the old Carter farm attracted real estate investors from Washington City as well as several of the local elite families of Rockville who built houses there. 1/ The plan called for wide boulevards, circles, parks and lakes, similar features to those planned for the competing West End park development.

Judge John T. Vinson purchased the site of the subject house (Lots 1 & 2 of Block 2) from agent Frank Higgins in June, 1890. The property changed hands twice more that year, lastly to Mr. and Mrs. Lee Offutt who held the property undeveloped until 1902. 2/

In 1902 Clifford H. Robertson, a young attorney and junior partner in Frank Higgins' law, insurance, and real estate practice, purchased the lots. Shortly afterwards, he married Lilian Keiser of Alta Vista in Bethesda, and the newlyweds moved into their new home in 1904. 3/ Local architect Thomas C. Groomes designed and built this home in a style based on the revival of colonial architecture. The Robertson home imitates the late Georgian period with classical vocabulary such as full entablatures on the columned porch and corner pilasters. The front facade features a Georgian tracery window on the second story, and moulding of a broken scroll pattern outlining the attic light in the pedimented gable. However, elements of the late 19th century styles linger with the airy verandah, and in the shallow two-story bay on the east side. The large one-over-one windows area also carry over from the late Victorian vocabulary, although here they are surrounded by a full architrave with cornice.

Continued on attachment 8.1

M: 26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 8.1

The large homes built by the Vinson, Peter, Warfield and Bouic families were located in the most northern blocks of the Rockville Heights development, and until the second quarter of the 20th century, most of the Heights remained open fields and meadowlands bordering both sides of Cabin John Branch. 4./ Monroe Street and Maryland Avenue ended abruptly at these vacant lands, and the gradual abandonment of the planned 32 block subdivision is documented in six Equity cases. 5/ The Robertson family added lot 3 to its holdings (on which was laid out a tennis court) which gave their property the dimensions of 200 feet along (then) Maryland Avenue by 240 feet along the east side of Monroe Street. 6/

Mr. Robertson prospered in his legal and business activities. His interest in Rockville history sparked a newspaper quiz on the subject that ran for several weeks in the Montgomery County Sentinel in 1938, arousing discussion about the people, events and physical characteristics of the Town during its first 150 years. 7/ The Robertsons occupied the house until its sale by Miss Elizabeth Robertson to the Montgomery County government in 1969.

In the late 1960s the needs of both City and County government for expanded office space and parking facilities resulted in the demolition of several of the Rockville Heights houses, and the purchase of the four houses on the north side of Block 2. Maryland Avenue was rerouted, and the Robertson House became number 107 on Fleet Street. 8/ The house was unaltered at the time of its sale, and was gradually rehabilitated by Montgomery County for use as a medical clinic and office.

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Footnotes:

1. Robert Carter was Register of Wills for Montgomery County. Three of the Carter sons had died of typhoid fever before 1880. His only living daughter was married to hotelier-businessman J. Maury Dove who at various times owned the Shoreham, Raleigh and Willard Hotels. Washington investors included Malcolm McConihe of the William Corcoran Hotel Co., who owned whole blocks of the Heights until after the 1930s. (Proctor, Washington Past and Present, Vol. IV, p 707-708, Tax Assessments, 1930 City Plats, and newspaper abstracts.)
2. Montgomery County Land Records, JA 19/265 (1890), JA 27/204 and TD 22/169 (1902).
3. Interview with Elizabeth Robertson, January 1986.
4. Memoirs of William F. Prettyman, Albert Bouic, Barney Welsh.
5. Montgomery County Plat A56 and undated "Prettyman Plat" #90 in Montgomery County Historical Society Collection.
6. This lot was later sold to the Hurleys who constructed the present house on Monroe Street (Miss Robertson).
7. Montgomery County Sentinel issues of 1938 from April to July.
8. Plats, Maps and Drawings - City of Rockville 1972-1980.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. M: 26/22/4

Robertson family information from Miss Robertson, newspaper abstracts, tax records, Washington Past & Present, Vol. IX (1930), County Plats, Real Estate Atlases, City Plats and Drawings, Plans for Robertson House by T. C. Groomes, photographs.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 30,214 square feet

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

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

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 1 and 2 of Block 2 of "Rockville Heights."

### 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 Cissel	Judy Christensen, Arch. Description
------------	-------------	-------------------------------------

organization	Peerless Rockville	date	January 1986
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street & number	P. O. Box 4262	telephone	762-0096
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city or town	Rockville	state	Maryland 20850
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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.

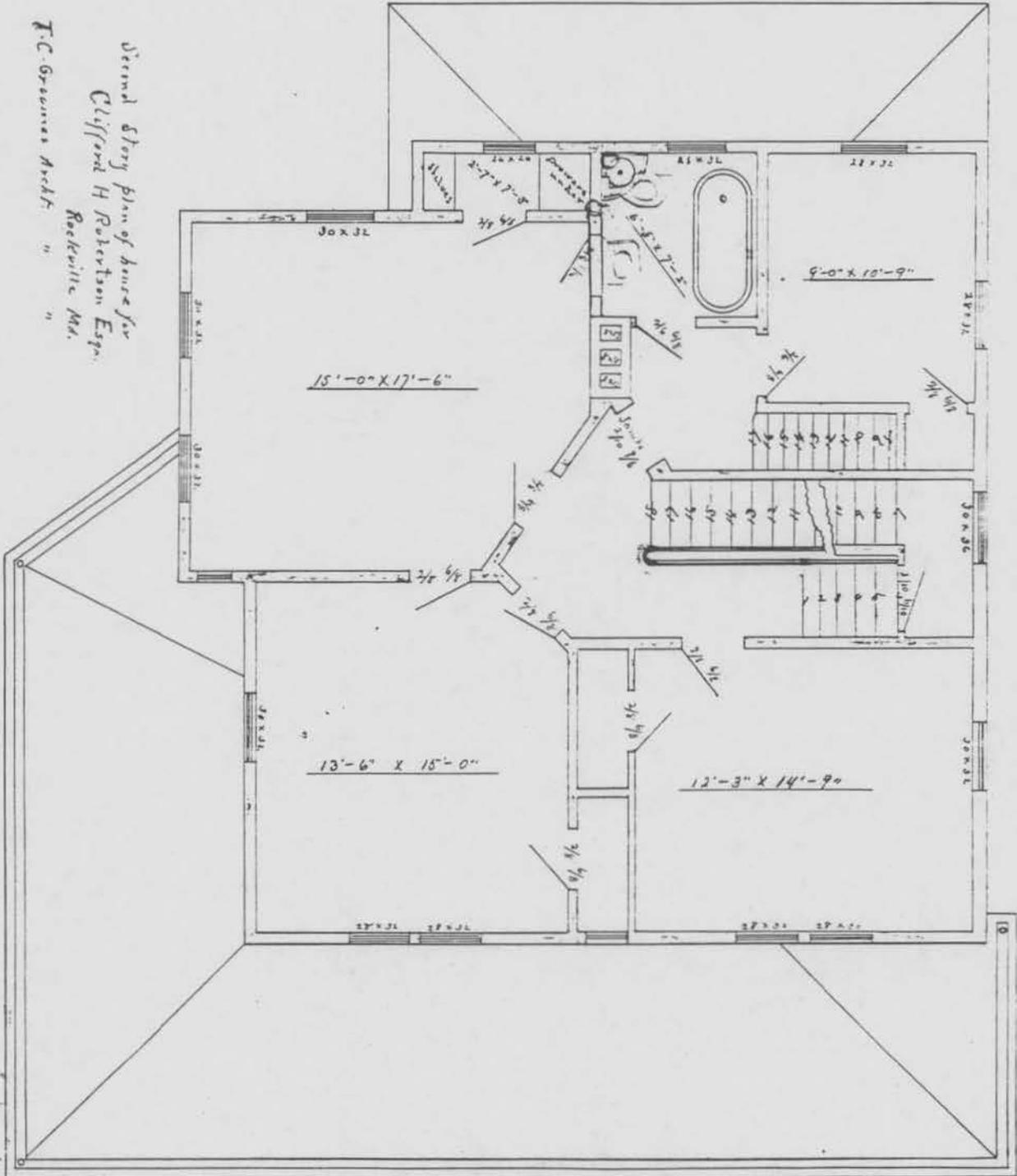
The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438



M:26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.4

Second Story plan of house for  
Clifford H Robertson Esq.  
Rockville Md.  
T.C. Greenlee Archt. " " "



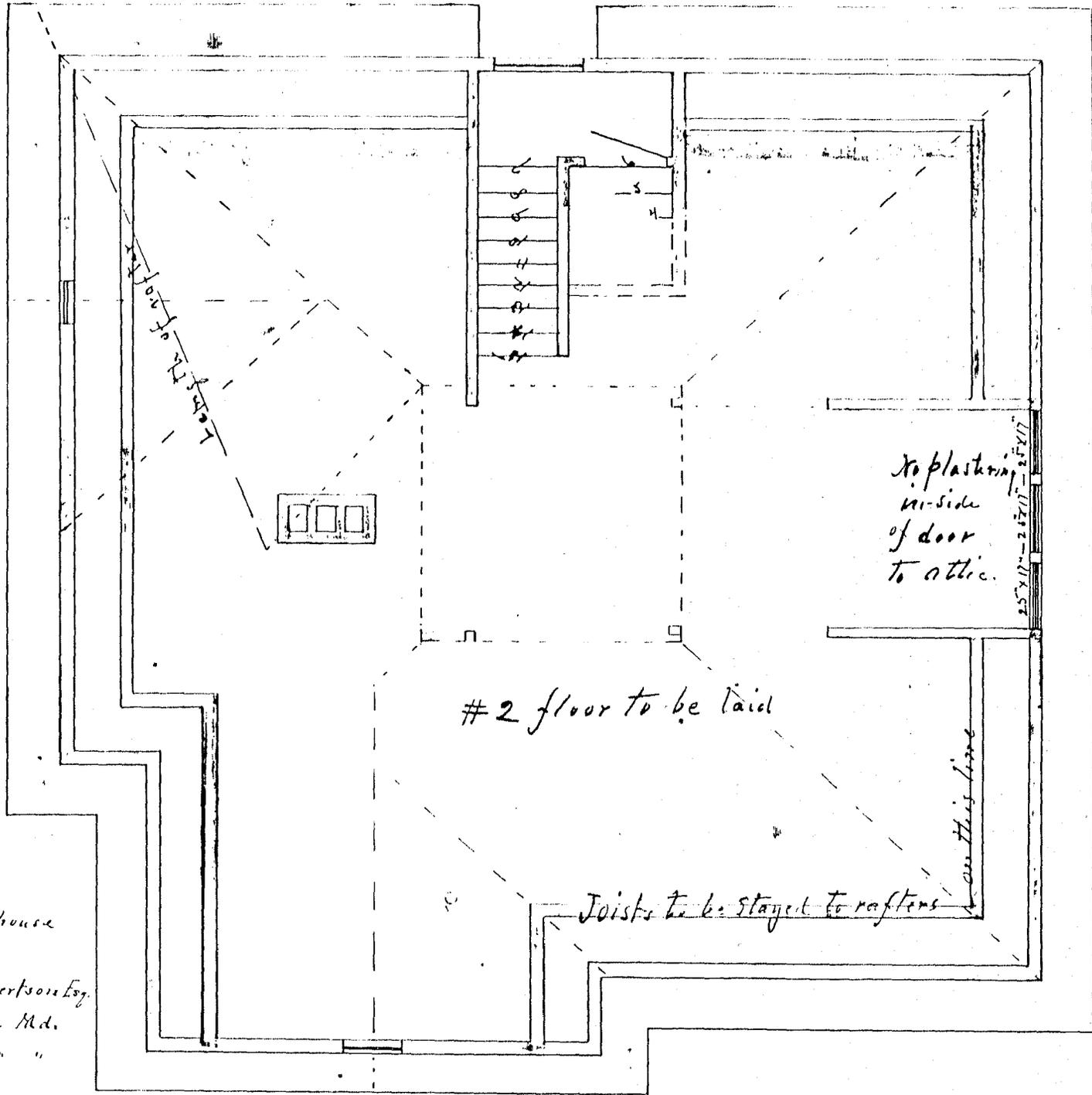
M:26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.5

Attic plan of house

for

Clifford H. Robertson Esq.  
Rockville Md.

T. C. Groves Archt. " "



M:26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.6



Front Elevation of house for  
Clifford H. Robertson Esq.  
Rockville Md.

T. C. Groomes Archt.

M:26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.7

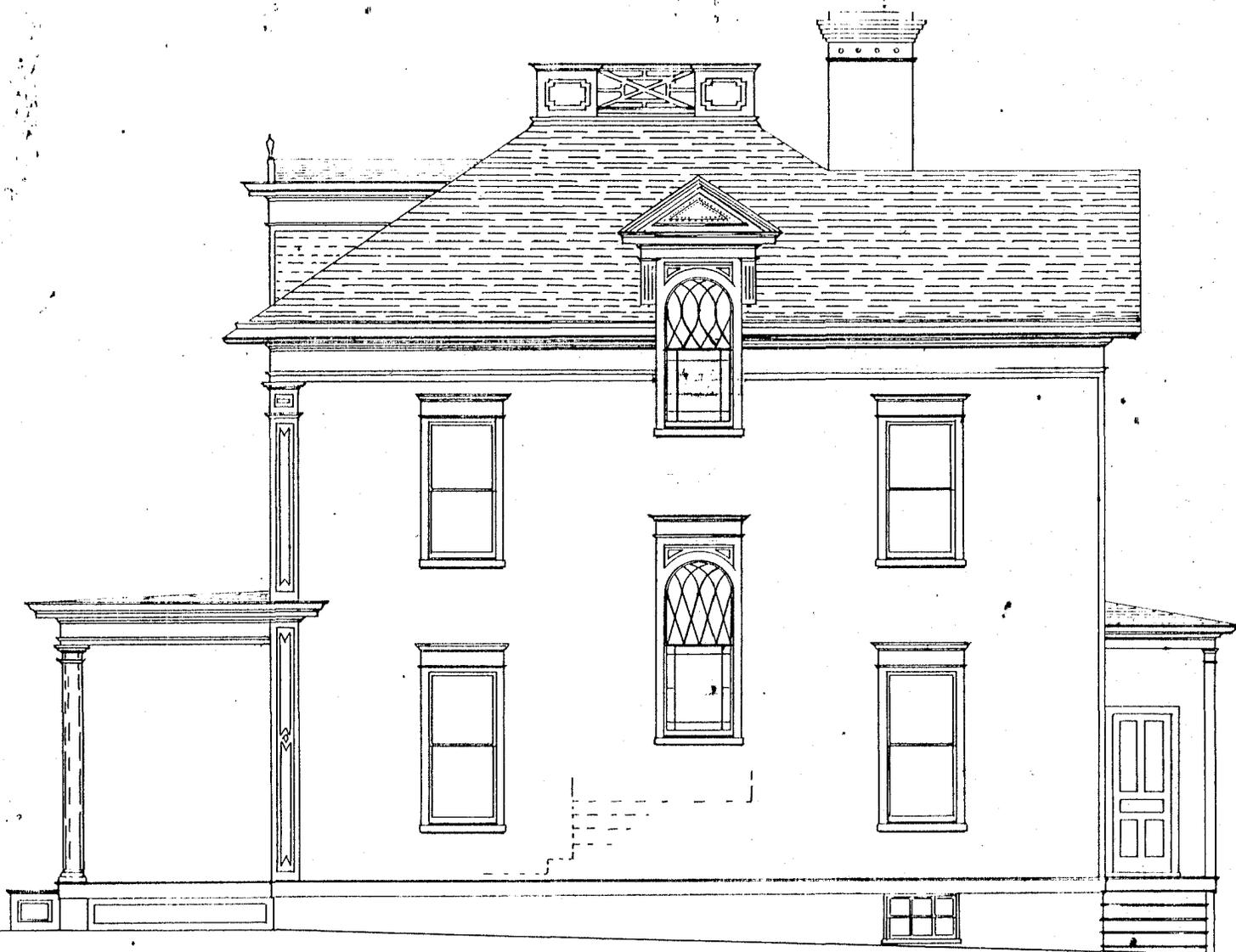


Rear Elevation of house for  
Clifford H. Robertson Esq. Rockville Md.  
T.C. Groomes Archt. " "

M:26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.8



East Side Elevation of house for  
Clifford H. Robertson Esq.  
Rockville Md.  
T.C. Groome Archt.



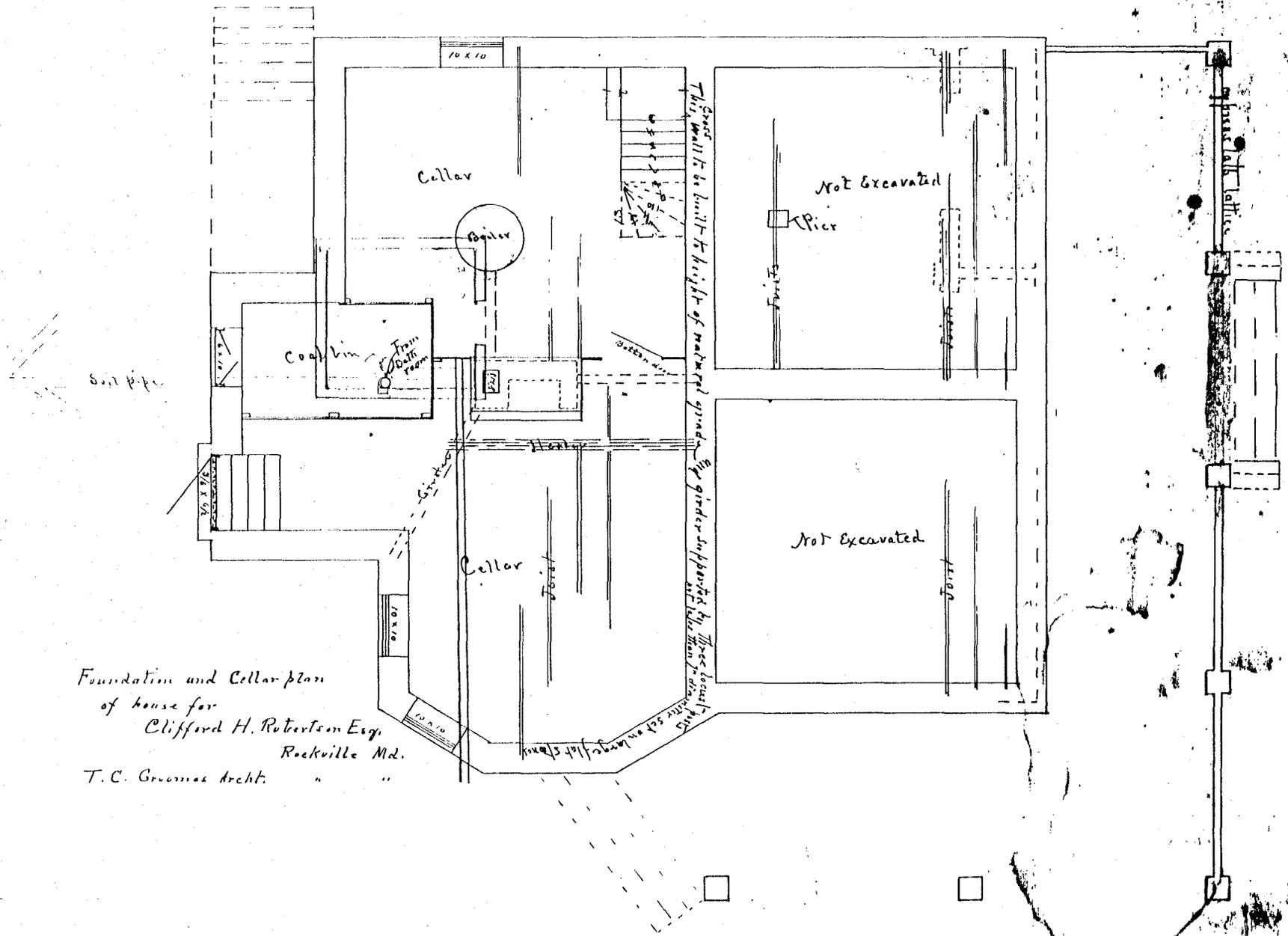
West Side Elevation of house for  
Clifford H. Robertson, Esq.,  
Rockville Md.

T. C. Groomes Archt. " "

M:26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.9

M:26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.10

Foundation and Cellar plan  
of house for  
Clifford H. Robertson Esq.  
Rockville Md.  
T. C. Groome Archt.



1982

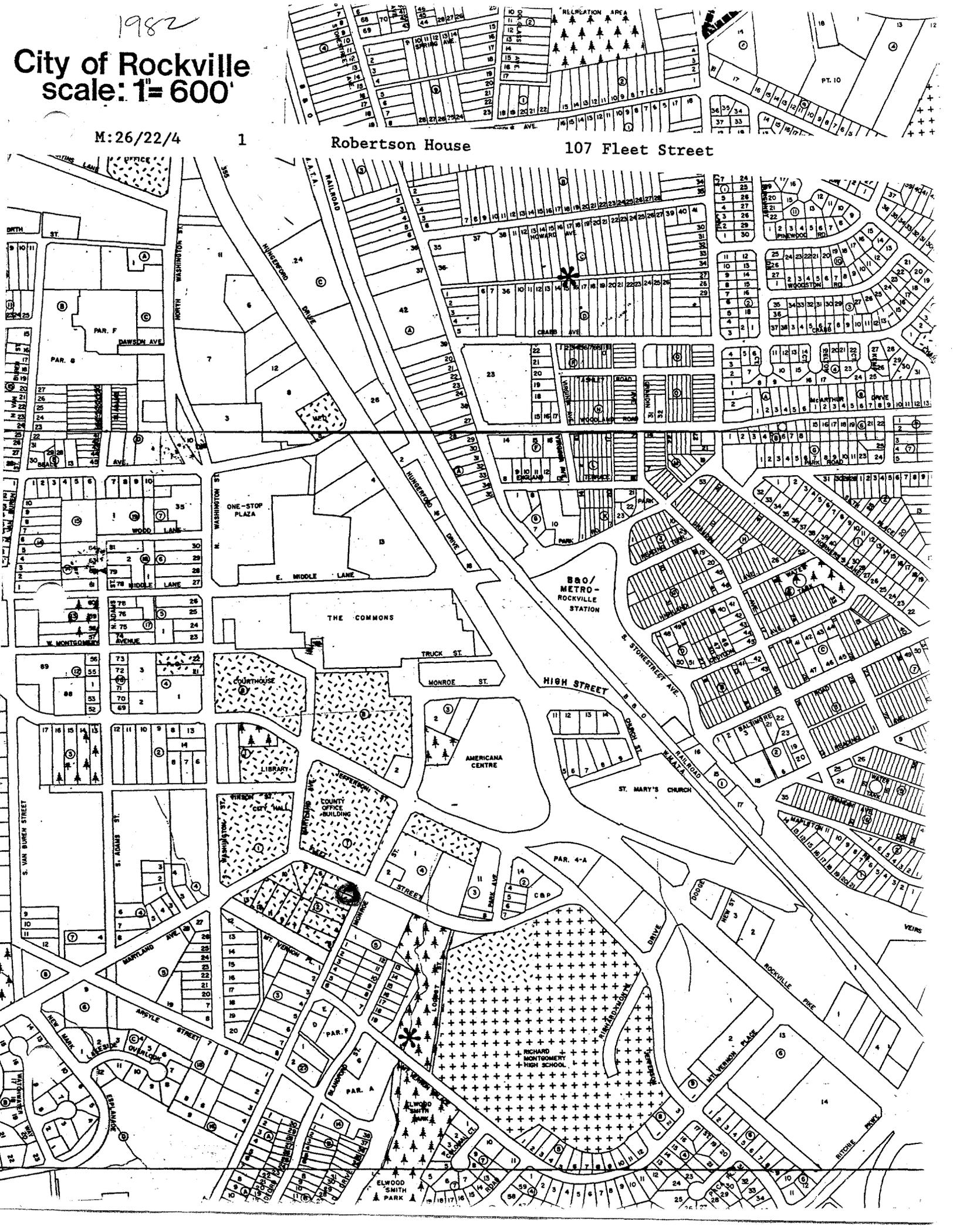
# City of Rockville scale: 1" = 600'

M:26/22/4

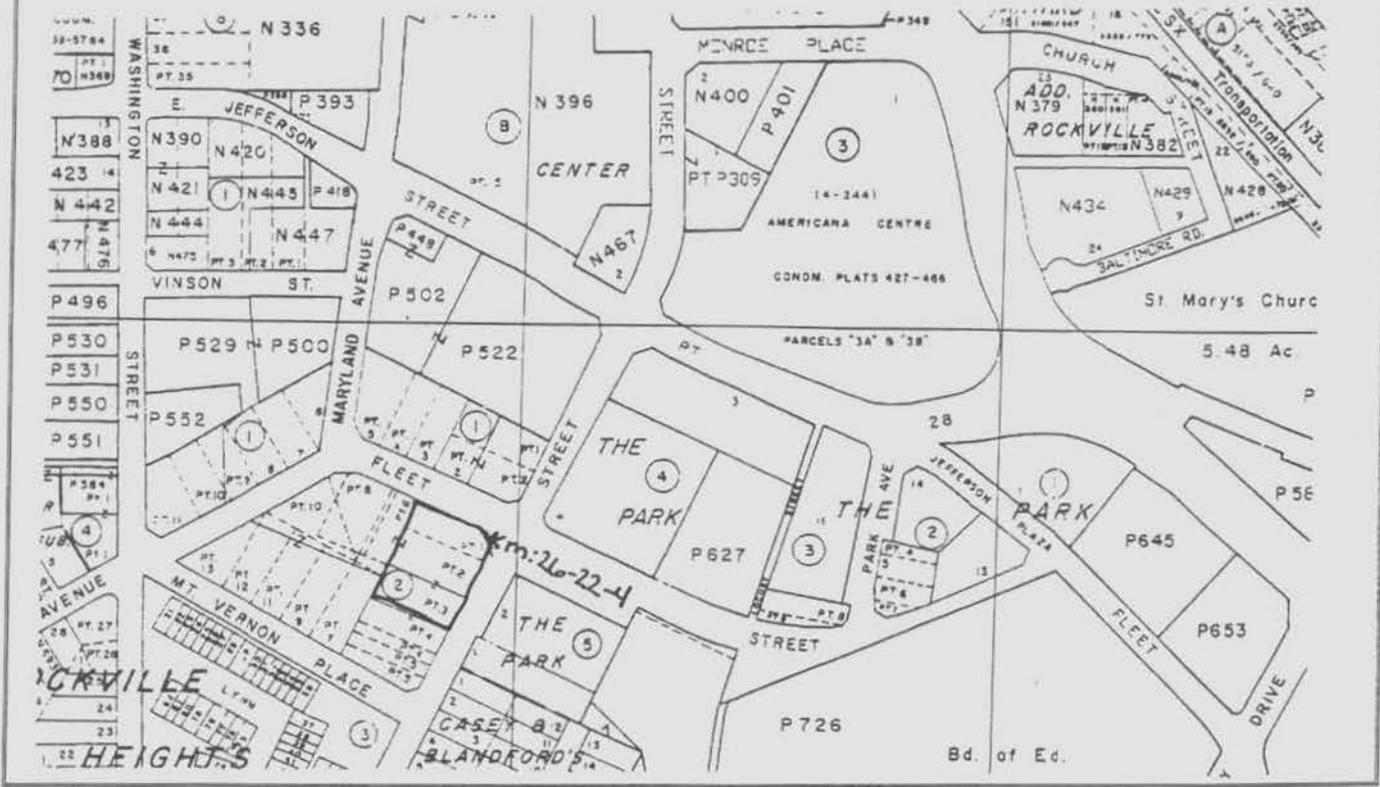
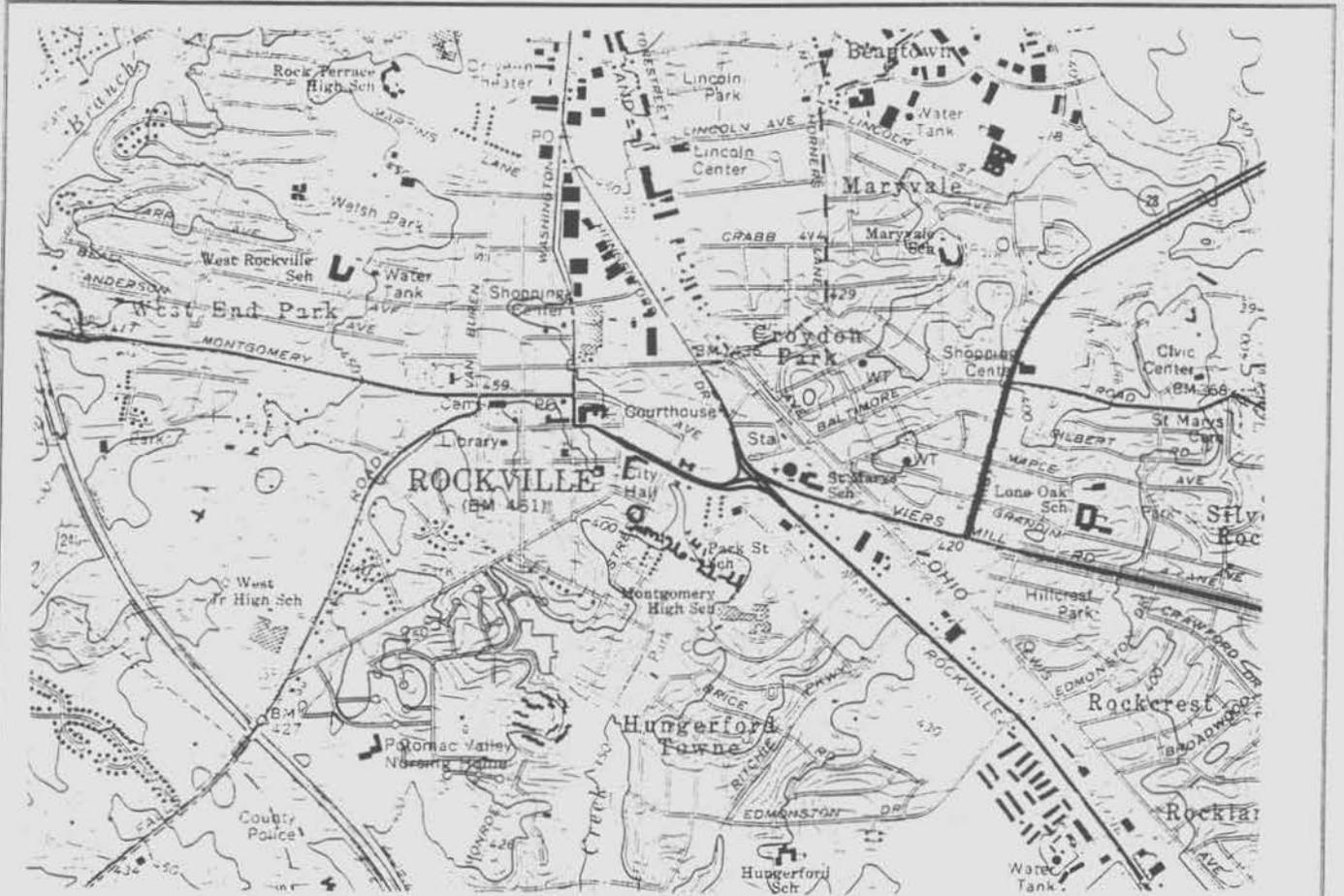
1

Robertson House

107 Fleet Street



Survey No. M: 26-22-4  
 Resource Name Robertson House  
 Town/County Rockville/Montgomery County  
 Quad Map Rockville, MD





1. m: 26-22-41
2. Robertson House
3. Montgomery County, Maryland
4. Kelly Steele
5. 11/8/99
6. MID SH70
7. main, north facade
8. 1 of 6



1. m: 26-22-41
2. Robertson House
3. Montgomery County, Maryland
4. Kelly Steele
5. 11/8/99
6. MD SHPO
7. northwest corner, taken from Fleet Street facing  
Southeast
8. 2 of 6



1. m: 26-22-4
2. Robertson House
3. Montgomery County, Maryland
4. Kelly Steele
5. 12/9/05
6. MD SHPO
7. northwest corner - detail
8. 3 of 6



1. m: 26-22-41
2. Robertson House
3. Montgomery County, Maryland
4. Kelly Steele
5. 12/9/99
6. MD SHPO
7. Northeast corner, taken from Fleet Street + Monroe Street intersection, facing southwest
8. H of C



1. m: 26-22-41
2. Robertson House
3. Montgomery County, Maryland
4. Kelly Steele
5. 12/9/99
6. MD SHPO
7. Rear or South elevation, taken from Monroe Street facing northwest
8. 5 of 6



1. m: 26-22-41
2. Robertson House
3. Montgomery County, Maryland
4. Kelly Steele
5. 12/9/99
6. MD SHPO
7. Rear, south elevation + lot, taken from east side of Monroe Street facing west
8. 6 of 6

M: 26/22/4  
The Robertson House  
Attachment 7.2



1.07 Fleet Street before 1936



107 Fleet Street 1946

Photographs courtesy Elizabeth K. Robertson



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

04P61405

M: 26/22/4  
Robertson House  
107 Fleet St.  
Rockville  
5-86