

7. Description

HA-2-3

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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 date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This is a 2½-story frame house with a shed addition to the south and an ell to the west is located on the west side of Main Street at 30 North Main in the Town of Bel Air, Harford County, Maryland. The siding is shiplap on the front (east) elevation and on the shed. All other elevations have clapboard. The gable roof has asphalt shingle on it, while the shed is covered in a tin imitation of shakes. A large chimney straddles the gable ridge inside the south elevation and must serve the fireplaces in the drawing room and upstairs southeast room. There are indications of masonry in the west room downstairs and up, and the floor in the downstairs west room shows patching where a hearth would be. There were probably fireplaces in both rooms downstairs and possibly in both rooms upstairs. The placement of the attic window in the south gable end is intriguing in view of the probable fireplace locations.

The front facade shows a raised plastered stone foundation with a flight of six wooden steps rising parallel to the foundation. A late 19th century photo shows the house with a small front yard and a flight of stairs perpendicular to the front elevation. These were lost when Main Street was widened. The stairs and landing have wrought-iron lusters and rail. The three-bay main section has double-hung 6/6 windows set in simple grooved wooden surrounds and framed with louvered shutters, the bottom halves of which are adjustable. The plain entry is in the north bay on the first floor.

As the entry indicates, the main portion is built on a side hall plan, two rooms of equal size up and down. The stair is enclosed today to provide a private entry to the second floor flat. It may not be the original staircase; indications in the first floor hall show the stair projecting over what was the original back (west) wall. The rail and balusters resemble those built at 18 Office Street in 1930. A small bathroom and another bedroom up and down have been added to the house in an ell to the west. A bay containing two double-hung 6/6 windows projects from the south elevation of the ell, and the bedroom has a separate entrance with a shed roof over it. There are no windows in the north side of the house, which butts against the next building.

There is no record of when the shed was built to the south side of the house. The interior woodwork is plain, and the windows in the south elevation of the shed are casements, but the east and west windows have double-hung 6/6 sash. The rooms in the shed were one room (the kitchen) as late as the period when Berthenia Crocker and Clara Graham ran a tea room closed during World War II. The shed could have been an early kitchen. The old photo shows the shed with side windows matching the front one and an entrance between the two windows.

There is a variety of woodwork in the house. The exterior, drawing room, and first and second floor apartment six-panel doors are clearly newer. The door surrounds in the drawing room have plain corner blocks with deeply fluted trim. In the hall, the door surrounds to the east and

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Graham-Crocker house
Harford County
Maryland

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DESCRIPTION, continued

west room are much plainer with an outside flat rim and three lines of reeding. The mantel in the drawing room is curious. A pair of vase-shaped vaguely Federal pilasters on blocks support the mantel shelf. One of the two (or possibly both) is not original for the shelf lacks a quarter inch on each side of being long enough to fit. The frieze has carved rosettes in the corners connected by a two-inch rectangle of reeding. The fireplace has a brick surround currently painted black, which shows signs of having been made smaller. It now holds a coal grate. The mantel in the east chamber upstairs is very plain with flat, undecorated timbers, framing a plain frieze. The plain shelf has been bricked up, this was never a working fireplace for it has no flue opening. The brick hearth is in poor condition.

The current division of the house is into two flats. The first floor flat has hall, drawing room, two bedrooms--one in the ell with the bathroom--and dining room (east) and kitchen (west) in the shed. The kitchen has a built-in cupboard and dresser. The second floor flat has a drawing room with fireplace, dining room with built-in cupboards flanking what may have been a fireplace, a bedroom and bath in the ell (with three steps up from the landing into the bedroom), and a small kitchen over the first floor entry hall.

The attic story has one large room with fixed basin and two small attics. There is a cellar under the original part of the house. Local tradition has it that there are cedar shavings between the walls for insulation.

The Graham-Crocker house is an interesting and well-preserved example of early 19th century domestic architecture. The house has been altered several times, and the interior clues to date the changes are only vaguely diagnostic..

8. Significance

NA-213

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/
<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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates circa 1825 Builder/Architect Henry Foy

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SIGNIFICANCE

The Graham-Crocker house is the third oldest house in Bel Air (after the Van Bibber and Hays houses). It is the only remaining example of early 19th century domestic architecture in the downtown area to retain its residential use. The Town of Bel Air, Harford's county seat founded in the late 18th century has since World War II destroyed many of its historic buildings in the downtown area. This particular house is a typical example of early 19th century residential architecture in form--a two-story, three-bay structure with side hall and double parlor plan. Although it has experienced interior alteration, it is a very important building in Bel Air, where so much has already disappeared.

HISTORY

The date of construction of this house is unknown. It is not listed on the 1798 tax list and the return for Buckler Bond, the owner during the 1814 enumeration, is missing. There was a house on the lot in 1814 enumeration, is missing. There was a house on the lot in 1814, however. In a letter written in 1879 describing Bel Air in 1814, Mrs. Eliza Rogers mentions the Vincent Jeffery House as being shaded by the White Oak Tree marking the northern town limit, placing the house on Lot #1 of the town plat. There is little about the architecture of the house that would prohibit the Jeffery House being the Graham-Crocker house, although the size of the windows suggests a later date. Its dimensions (without shed and later addition) of 24' x 26' is large, but not unduly large for the two-story frame houses in Bel Air as described in the 1814 tax list. Fairly convincing evidence that these are two different houses, however, appears in the title. In February 1824 Joshua Bond sold the whole of Lot #1 and buildings to Henry Foy (7/249) for \$57. In March 1831 Foy, after having sold the western half of the lot, sold the remaining half and the house "where Foy now resides" to Henry Dorsey and James Moores for \$300. Admittedly 1824 was a bad economic year nationally and 1831 was a boom year, but that much improvement in real estate prices is not to be expected. Probably Henry Foy pulled down the old house and built anew. There is nothing in the architecture of the house to prohibit this date. Neither the exterior nor the interior details are diagnostic enough to date the house precisely, especially given the tendency of older styles to linger in areas away from the Metropolis.

The history of the property becomes clouded after 1831. The title cannot be traced from Henry Dorsey and James Moores to the next owner, William Mc Jeffery. Jeffery was living in the ouse when the 1858 map

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2.

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Graham-Crocker house
Harford County

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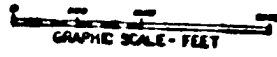
SIGNIFICANCE, continued

was drawn, and he devised it (1883, WSF 9.389) to his son, William V. Jeffery. The younger Jeffery left it to his wife, Hortense Rice Jeffery (1883, WSF 10/40). She was living there as late as 1887 (see the lease 58/341, which describes Lot #1 in Bel Air as having been the property of William Mc Jeffery at the time of his death and as her residence at the time of the lease). It is possible that the property came into Jeffery's hands by marriage. James Moores, one of the last known owners, left his property to his brother and partner, Aquila Moores, for life and then to Aquila's son James, (1853, 6/349). Aquila died the same year, leaving the real estate to his wife, Apphia, for life and then to his son John. Aquila's four daughters: Sarah R., Mary P., Ann Lee, and Laura P., were to receive his personal property, but Apphis could transfer property to the girls if she wished. William Mc. Jeffery's wife's name was Mary, maiden name unknown. If she was Mary P. Moores, she might have acquired the property from her mother. Even if that were so, Henry Dorsey's half interest cannot be traced. His property passed to his daughter Mary D. Farnadis. No family connection between Mrs. Farnadis and the Jefferys can be traced and no conveyance appears.

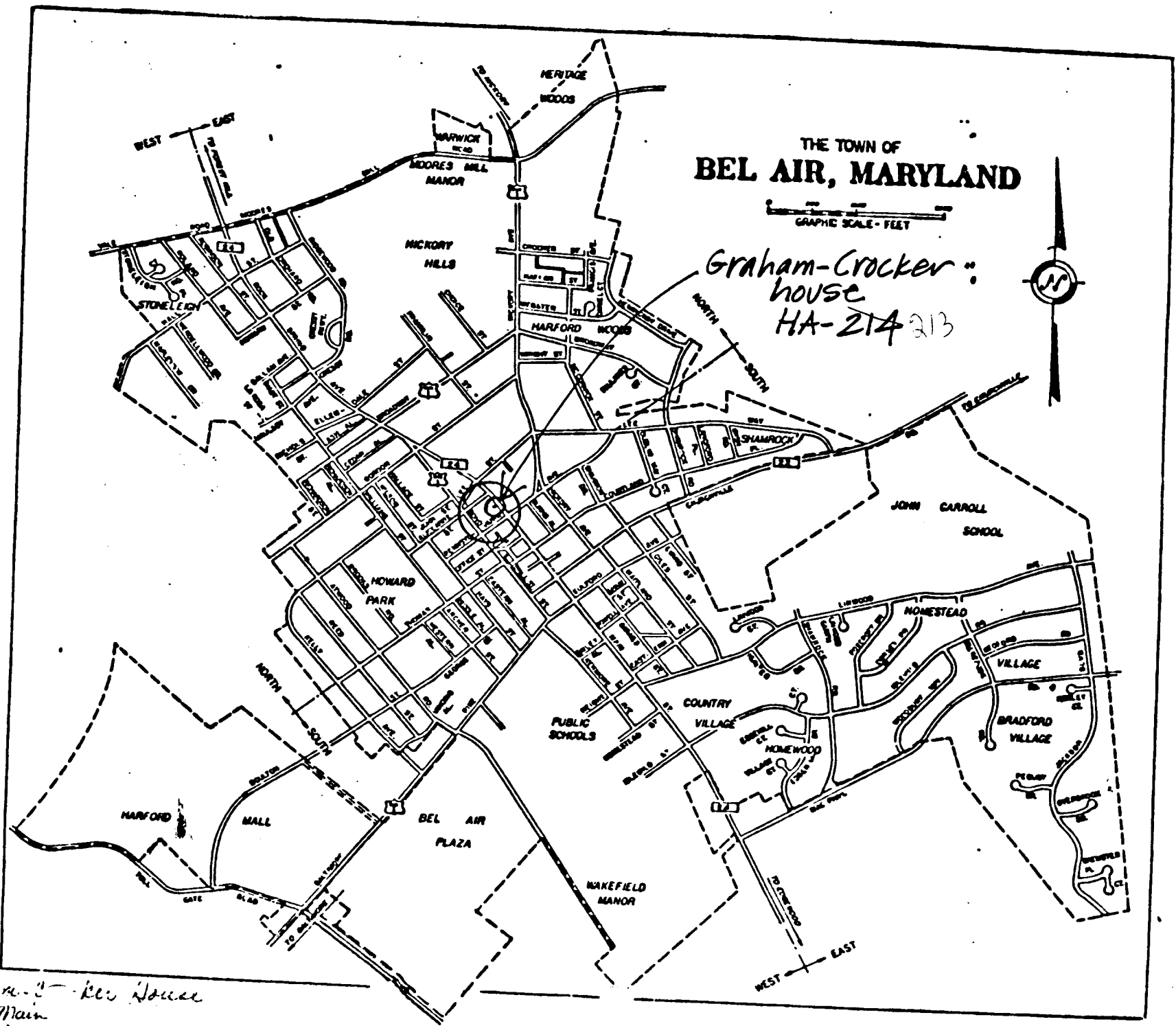
Mrs. Jeffery's executor sold the property to Agnes E. Carter in 1919 for \$2000. She held it until 1935 when she sold it to Judge William H. Harlan, who conveyed it on the same day to his son, Edwin H. W. Harlan. In August Edwin Harlan sold it to Clara Pue Graham and Berthenia Pue Crocker. These ladies lived upstairs and ran a tea room downstairs in the east and west chambers with the whole shed being the kitchen. People are said to have come from as far away as Philadelphia to lunch there. When the war started both supply and travel became difficult, and the tea room closed. The house was been rented as two flats for some time.

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THE TOWN OF BEL AIR, MARYLAND



Graham-Crocker
house
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Graham-Crocker House
30 N. Main
Bel Air

HA-213



Graham-Crocker house
(HA)