

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**DATA SHEET**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 15 1975

DATE ENTERED

MAR 16 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Graham, Col. James, House; ~~Graham's Fort; The Graham Mansion~~

AND/OR COMMON The Old Log Mansion at Lowell

**2 LOCATION**

*SW of Lowell on*

STREET & NUMBER W.Va. Route 3, between Pence Springs and Talcott

CITY, TOWN

Lowell

VICINITY OF

---NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

West Virginia

CODE

54

COUNTY

Summers

CODE

089

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis E. Barickman

STREET & NUMBER

7 West Fern Road

CITY, TOWN

Charleston

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

West Virginia

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Summers County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Ballengue and 1st Streets

CITY, TOWN

Hinton

STATE

West Virginia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

---FEDERAL ---STATE ---COUNTY ---LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Constructed around 1770-72, the James Graham House must be described as large, stout and fine for its location and day. Dimensions are outstanding for a frontier log home, the exterior being approximately 28' x 25' and the interior having two floors and attic or loft. The twelve feet ceiling height is unusual, and the attic provides about 432 square feet of usable floor space. Its stoutness is apparent in the construction of yellow poplar logs based on walnut sill timbers and stone footers with the additional support of large oak sleepers which still retain their bark. Logs are about eight inches thick and vary in width from 14 to 18 inches. At each side of the structure are huge chimneys made of river stone carried from a location a short distance away on the Greenbrier River. Fineness is striking in the hewn logs which appear quite smooth, in the straightness of the open ceiling beams which have beaded detail and in the size of the main fireplace which was originally six feet wide and five feet high. Additional refinement is evident in the well-placed joinings of the logs which form dove-tailed corners.

There was probably only a single door and few, if any, windows in the house when it was built. Presently, however, the structure reflects changes likely made in the first half of the nineteenth century. The front door is of heavy vertical boards and has a four-sectioned, rectangular overlight. Another door was at the back of the house, but this is now an open entrance into the recently constructed addition. The south (front) elevation now has two windows on each floor, while the east side has one on the first floor and small openings in the attic on each side of the chimney and the west has two openings in the attic. The rear has only one window toward the east elevation, but it apparently had another near the center at one time. All windows, except those in the attic, are 6/6, double-hung sash.

Massive chimneys of river stone were built on each side of the house and present an impressive appearance of size and strength. Each is approximately 10 feet wide and 4 feet deep and has drip courses at the top and on the shoulders where the chimney starts to taper. The west chimney now houses a fireplace somewhat diminished from its original six-foot width and five-foot height. The east chimney contains two smaller fireplaces on the first floor, but this may have been the result of dividing an originally larger opening when the area was partitioned. The east chimney also has a fireplace in the south room of the second floor which may also have been added later.

A description of the house written in 1899 calls attention to the construction of the rafters used to support the gable roof. There are three pairs of principal rafters, one on each end and one in the middle (all of 7" x 7" timbers), with purlins (also 7" x 7") running the length of the house. This framing supports the large common rafters which stretch from roof tree to rest on the pole plates. All of these timbers are fastened with locust pins. The framing is given added strength through the kingpost and tiebeam on each end (often called a "wind beam"). The roof for many years was of riven oak shakes but, since about 1971 when the house was reroofed and the attic "finished," now has asphalt shingles.

The interior presently consists of one large room on the first floor, three rooms on the second and an open-space attic. At times the first floor was partitioned into three rooms (it was so laid out in 1899 and remained this way until recently), each having its own fireplace. The second floor seems always to have been divided into three rooms. There presently are stairs to the second floor and attic, but it is believed that these are not original and that a wall ladder formerly was used to reach the second

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1770-72, 1777

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Graham House is an outstanding example of log construction in a sparsely populated settlement. It is unusual to have combined such fineness of feature, stoutness of design and greatness of dimension in a first house on the frontier. The structure holds additional significance as the site of an Indian attack in 1777 which caused the death of three settlers and the capture of a seven-year-old girl.

James Graham, his wife Florence and their children settled along the Greenbrier River in what is now Summers County, West Virginia, about 1770, having come from the vicinity of the Calf (Cow) Pasture River in Virginia. This section had been nearly abandoned after Indian problems in 1763, and the Grahams and families like them were aware of the dangers still present on this frontier in the late 1760s. They were willing, nevertheless, to start clearing land and establishing farms away from the increasing population to the east.

Graham built what was probably the first permanent homestead in present Summers County. With this distinction goes the added significance of his having constructed a large and fine log dwelling where normally one would have expected a small house which would serve until prosperity allowed replacement or enlarging. This structure was so superior in construction and size when compared to most other pioneer log houses in the Greenbrier Valley that it was often called a mansion.

The large yellow poplar logs of the walls were placed on a sturdy foundation which incorporated a stone footer, walnut log sills and oak log sleepers. To create what was somewhat of a fortress, Graham apparently placed only one door and few, if any, windows; then he bored several holes in the walls through which a gun could be extended. Both first and second stories were about twelve feet from floor to ceiling, and the attic was high enough to allow the tallest to stand upright. Local materials were used in construction, of course, and each side of the house featured a massive river stone chimney in which was housed a large fireplace.

The Graham home was probably completed by 1772, and the family, along with others who had settled in the area, pursued a regular life of farming. The little community even erected a stockade for protection against the occasional threat of Indian troubles. There was some stirring on this frontier in the spring of 1777, and the families gathered in the fort. During one incident, James Graham and others were in the stockade for several days, but when sign of immediate danger disappeared, Graham moved his family back to their dwelling across the river. Shortly afterward, Indians attacked his home.

James and several others were sleeping in the main house while two of the children and a young Negro boy slept in a nearby outbuilding during the early morning hours of that dreadful day. The main house withstood the onslaught, but the slave and Graham's ten-year-old son, John, were killed. Seven-year-old Elizabeth Graham was taken captive.

The despair of the tragedy was increased later when the Graham's made several unsuccessful attempts to ransom their daughter. In 1785 they finally succeeded and

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Blizzard, William C. "The Old Log House at Lowell." Gazette-Mail (Charleston, W.Va.), Nov. 9, 1969. State Magazine Section.
- Donnelly, Shirley. "Grahams Withstood Indian Raid in 1777." Beckley (W.Va.) Post-Herald, July 27, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Graham Reunion to be at Historic Site." Beckley (W.Va.) Post-Herald, July 28, 1970.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	52,372,0	4,16,70,2,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

C.E. Turley, Research Assistant and James E. Harding, Research Analyst

ORGANIZATION

West Virginia Antiquities Commission

DATE

April 9, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Old Mountainlair, West Virginia University

TELEPHONE

(304) 292-1527

CITY OR TOWN

Morgantown

STATE

West Virginia

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Leonard M. Davis*

TITLE

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

May 12, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

3/6/96

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3-17-76

Acting

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

and top levels. Lumber for floors was whip-sawed and put down with wrought iron nails, and these are still in good condition.

One-story additions at the north (rear) eventually replaced the original log outbuildings. The present addition was built in 1971-72 and is a lodge-type unit which will weather or be stained to blend with the log house. It contains bath, kitchen and living-dining-recreation areas. On its west side is a covered patio about the size of one which once extended to the south end of the log house. The covering has been removed from the log section to allow for an open patio area.

8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

brought Elizabeth back from near present Maysville, Kentucky. The story is that the fifteen-year-old girl had adjusted quite well to the life of the Indians and did not especially like the prospects of returning to white society. She eventually married, however, and raised nine children along Hans Creek in the Monroe County area.

Life for the Graham's at their home along the Greenbrier River seemed to go fairly well after the incident. The family had always held prestige among their friends and neighbors and became leading members of the community. In 1799 James Graham was commissioned a colonel in the Virginia militia on the recommendation of the Monroe County court, a position which he retained until his death in 1813.

The log house remained in the Graham family for about 90 years, but since 1860 it has had several owners. One occupant was Colonel Wilson Lively whose son, Frank, became a supreme court judge in West Virginia. Today, the structure is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Lewis E. Barickman and is used as a second home.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

Graham, David. History of the Graham Family. Clayton, W.Va.: by the author, 1899 (?).  
(pp. 40-45, 88-99)

Miller, James H. History of Summers County. Hinton, W.Va.: by the author, 1908.  
(pp. 43-44)

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

During the years 1971-72, the Graham House was stabilized. The old roof had deteriorated, so it was strengthened with new gable lumber and additional roof supports and was then shingled. Neither chimney was rebuilt, but when an old patio roof (a former addition) was removed from the west elevation, it was noted that some of the mortar had chipped or fallen out. Sections were then repointed, but the chimneys were not rebuilt. The north addition was made to preserve the old building, and it includes all wiring and plumbing. Its construction allowed the fabric of the lower level of the north facade to continue in original condition, the old doorway being the only entrance between units. The second floor on the north was changed sometime in the nineteenth century when a window was added, but it was not altered during the 1971-72 refurbishing. In essence, the work of those years has reduced the "wear-and-tear" on the old structure and insured continuation of the original fabric as much as possible. Only the roof and gables are new to the house, and these were necessitated by deterioration.