

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 18 1977

DATE ENTERED NOV 14 1978

**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 Griffith House

AND/OR COMMON

Wright House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

SW of Aberdeen at

1120 Old Philadelphia Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Aberdeen

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

VICINITY OF

CODE

24

COUNTY

Harford

CODE

025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Howard (Helen J.) Wright

STREET & NUMBER

1120 Old Philadelphia Road

CITY, TOWN

Aberdeen

STATE

Maryland 21001

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Clerk of the Circuit Court, Harford County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

40 South Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

Maryland^{STATE} 21014

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7- DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" 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

Dating from the eighteenth century, the Wright House is a frame house measuring approximately 18½ by 38 feet, three bays in length, one room in depth, one and one-half stories in height, with a gambrel roof; shed-roofed porches extend across each long (east and west) facade. A one-story shed-roofed wing stands against the north end. Exterior walls are covered with asbestos shingles and roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. The porches are enclosed, largely with windows. The northerly half of the west porch has been extended to form another room. Porch ceilings are covered with random-width beaded boards indicating the porches to be early if not original to the house.

A brick chimney with two flues rises internally at the south end of the house, its first story formerly exposed, nearly flush with the siding (and now covered uniformly with asbestos shingles). Another brick chimney rises externally against the north gable, its first story exposed within the shed-roofed wing at that end. The rough and unfinished character of that brickwork does not suggest that it was meant to be exposed to viewing or the weather; either a utilitarian room --perhaps the present wing or an earlier one not unlike it-- where appearances and weather were unimportant, or a framed chimney breast enclosure within a more finished room-- now missing-- always existed here. There is no fireplace facing north and the stack above contains but one flue.

Two shed-roofed dormers, each with 6/6 sash, are in both the east and west roofs.

Principal entrances are in the middle bay of the east and west facades, slightly south of center, and a large 6/6 window is in each of the flanking bays, except for the west facade's north bay where a door gives access to the room which has replaced the porch there.

The east door is in place but the west door has been removed, stored elsewhere on the premises. The east door is of six fully-raised panels, lined internally with vertical beaded boards fastened to the stiles and rails of the paneled door with rose-headed wrought nails. Long strap hinges and driven pintels remain in use but the large rim lock has been replaced with a late nineteenth century one. Pintels remain at the west door, indicating its former similarity.

In the south gable a six-light casement lights the stairwell in the second story, in the southeast corner of the house.

A door is in the east end of the north wing and two 6/6 windows are in its north side.

Internally each story is divided into two rooms, the southerly one being the larger, occupying two bays and containing the principal entrances.

See continuation sheet #1

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wright House was the dwelling of a moderately successful eighteenth century farmer or planter. Its frame construction, its gambrel roof, its porches and its interior detailing are all typical of Maryland's eighteenth century tidewater architecture.

It is strikingly similar to Poplar Hill (listed on the National Register), although smaller: Poplar Hill contains two rooms separated by a hall with an open straight staircase while the Wright House contains two rooms, an enclosed winding staircase and no hall. The earliest ownership histories of the two houses are similar and they stand on opposite sides of a very early road, a little more than a mile apart.

Most of Harford's County's tidewater lands are within the Aberdeen Proving Grounds (and Edgewood Arsenal, now administratively a part of A.P.G.). The Wright House is between this large military reservation and the industrial development lying along nearby US-40, like Poplar Hill, on a virtual pocket of unchanged farmland. The corridor containing US-40 and the Penn-Central Railroad (and these two historic structures) is slated for industrial development.

While the Wright House has seen some superficial change, most of its details remain, even if hidden by modern finishes, and as the house is untouched by the modern restorer, its details of all periods are wholly honest, identifiable and believable.

The Wright House and surrounding acreage was part of the 1547-acre tract called Cranberry Hall which was owned by John Hall (1658-1737), one of the first settlers in Harford County. The land was passed from one generation to another. It is likely that the elder Hall's grandson John, who received the tract in 1742, may have built the Wright House. Upon his death in 1779, the land was left to his sons, Edward and John Beadle. The Wright House lies on that portion of land left to John Beadle. Upon John Beadle Hall's death, he left one-sixth of his estate to his daughter Martha, and from a search of the land transactions, it is evident that the house was located on the land that she received.

The Halls were a prominent family in Harford County history. It is likely that many of the Hall family lived on the Cranberry Hall tract. Both Poplar Hill and the Wright House are surviving examples of the domestic architecture on this large estate. John Hall, who died in 1779, was one of the commissioners

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Forman, Henry Chandlee. Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland.
 Easton, Md.: By the Author, 1934. Page 131, Dr. Forman notes this
 as the Griffith House, and his photograph, probably ca. 1932, from
 the southeast, shows the house before the addition of asbestos shingles
 and before the enclosing of the porches.
 See continuation sheet #4

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	39,7	37,0	4,3	7,1	5,1	0	B	1,8	39,7	2,7	0	4,3	7,1	3,6	0	
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING					
C	1,8	39,7	1,6	0	4,3	7,1	3,9	0	D	1,8	39,7	2,3	0	4,3	7,1	5,3	0

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 James T. Wollon, AIA/Patricia Massey Reveley bjn

ORGANIZATION Harford County Committee of Md. Historical Trust DATE 1/10/76

STREET & NUMBER 600 Craig's Corner Road/722 Ridgewood Road TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN _____ STATE _____

Harford de Grace/Bel Air Maryland 21070/21010

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE John N. Pearce DATE 1/14/77
 TITLE SHPO

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ATTEST: <u>William J. Dougherty</u>	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER <u>Nov 13, 1978</u>
DATE <u>11/14/78</u>	DATE <u>Nov 13, 1978</u>

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION (continued)

In the second story a hall leads from the staircase in the southeast corner to the north room, its area subtracted from the south room.

The south end wall of the south room is fully paneled while other walls are plastered, with baseboard and chair rail. The ceiling is plastered. The upper rails of the paneling are dramatically out-of-level, sloping down from the centered chimney area and they apparently were built to that condition; rails at about chair rail height and bottom rails are approximately level. Panels are fully raised and quirked ovolo moldings are integral on stiles and rails, a profile characteristic of the late eighteenth century.

A large cavetto backband surrounds the large fireplace; it is flanked by plain pilasters supporting fluted blocks in the frieze, matching a similar but wider center block in the frieze. An extended bed-molding supports a shelf with a cavetto molded edge. Above the mantel there is no paneling and the chimney breast is plastered.

West of the chimney is a large closet with a single six-panel door, formerly hung on HL hinges, now replaced with butts. East of the chimney is the staircase, enclosed and winding, to the second floor. Several straight steps, without a rail, lead up to a six-panel door, its head at the ceiling. Its plane is slightly forward or north of the chimney and closet paneling to the west and an area of paneling, containing a four-panel door to the closet beneath the stair, is set on a slight angle to meet the plane of the staircase door.

There is no cornice. The top wall plates project into the rooms, encased, and the corner posts project into the stairway and closets. Posts flanking the two exterior doors are cased with beaded boards and a pair of fully-raised panels fills the space above the door, all slightly forward of the plastered surfaces elsewhere. An ovolo backband applied to the post casing and to the paneling above trims the door.

The beaded chair rail has an ogee molding supporting a plain board cap, its exposed edge simply rounded.

The windows probably are enlarged from the original: their sills are below the chair rail, their panes are considerably larger than the 8"x10" panes typical of the period and their plain trim with raked head all indicate a later date. Irregularities in the glass suggest that these changes are not

See continuation sheet #2

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DESCRIPTION (continued)

especially recent, however.

In the stud and plastered partition separating the two rooms of the first story is a six-paneled door slightly east of center. The architrave trim has an ovolo backband and all elements match comparable work elsewhere in the room. Formerly hung on wrought HL hinges, the door is now hung on butt hinges.

Architectural embellishment of the north room is simple: there is neither paneling nor chair rail; the mantel consists of plain pilasters supporting an un molded frieze containing a single panel with an "X" raise, topped with a plain shelf supported by a vertical echinus molding, all suggestive of the 1840's or 1850's. The window is trimmed as described in the south room. The door to the west room (described above as an extension of the porch) is of four un molded panels but its architrave surround has an ogee-with- astrigal backband, suggestive of ca. 1815-1830. The six-panel door leading to the north wing is typical of the earlier work described in the south room but it is now hung upside down. Its head is dramatically out-of-level, recalling similar conditions in the south room.

The interior finishes of the north wing and west wing (or extended porch) are plain.

In the second story a short section of rail encloses the stairwell above the triangular lower steps, toward the east. The plain square newel supports a plain square rail, its rounded end projecting slightly beyond the newel. Balusters are plain, square.

The south room has a small fireplace with an architrave surround matching door trim throughout the house. A small closet west of the chimney has a six-panel door, like the doors to both rooms from the hall, all retaining their wrought HL hinges.

The north room has no fireplace.

The attic is inaccessible and there is no cellar.

All outbuildings are of the twentieth century. One, about ninety feet north of the house and approximately aligned with it, has a stone-walled cellar with an east-west dimension less than that of the frame structure above, accessible via a stone-walled stairwell within the outbuilding, entered through a door in the east facade at the southeast corner. It was probably a root cellar or an ice house, originally.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

appointed to buy land to build a courthouse and prison for newly-formed Harford County in 1773. John Beadle Hall served the county as a member of the militia during the American Revolution. He was second Lieutenant of Company #1, authorized by the duly elected War Committee of the County, and later saw action in the skirmish of White Plains, New York where General Howe and General Washington's forces met. Harford County sent a battalion of two militia companies to assist the Continental Army. John Beadle Hall was captain of one of these companies.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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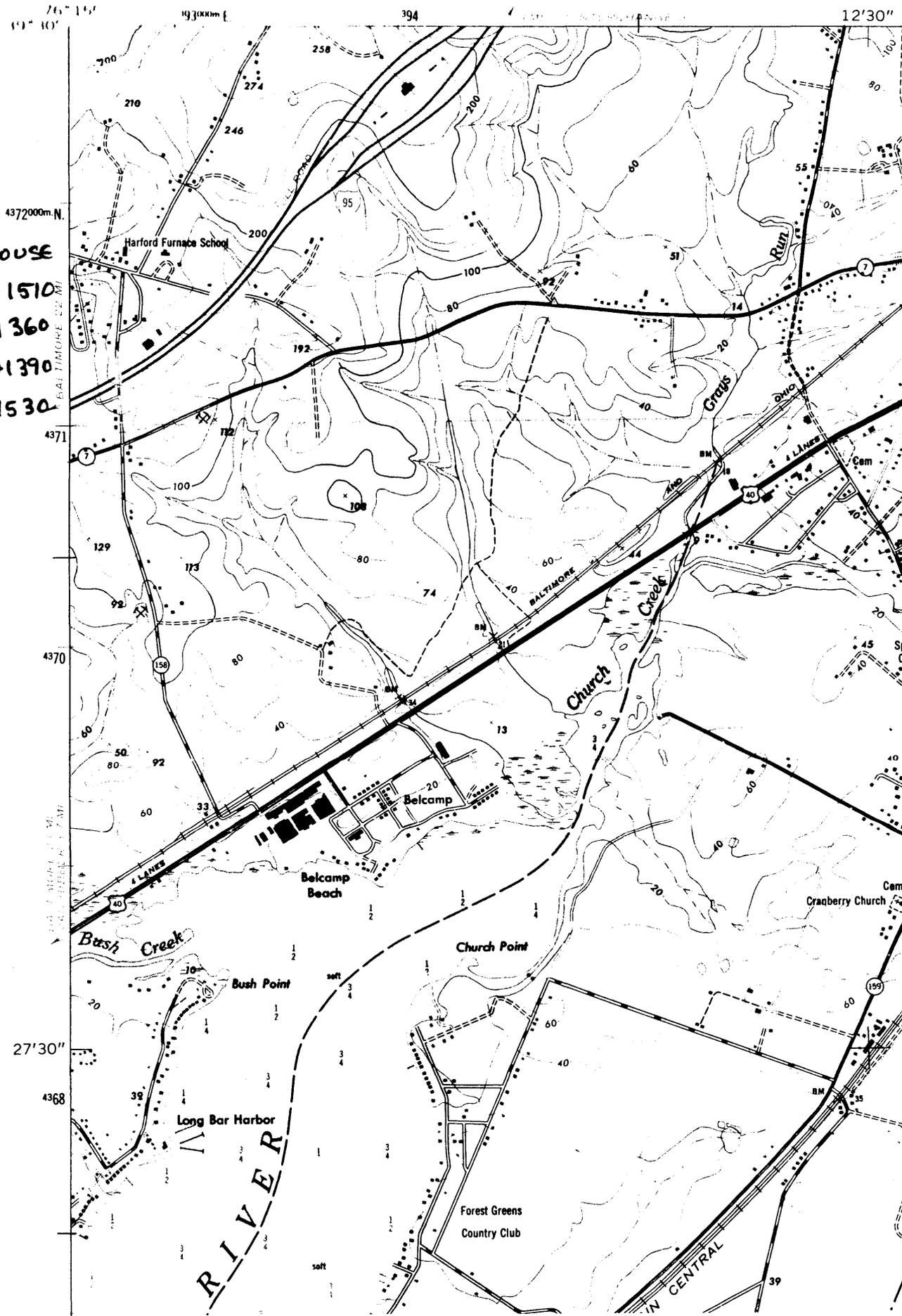
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continuation)

Preston, W.W. History of Harford County, Baltimore: Press of Sun
Book Office, 1901.

Wright, C. Milton. Our Harford Heritage. Baltimore: French-Bray
Printing Co., 1967.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

REPLACEMENT



GRIFFITA HOUSE

- A 18/397370/4371510
- B 18/397270/4371360
- C 18/397160/4371390
- D 18/397230/4371530

BALTIMORE 22 M
4371
4370
4368

RIVER