

VLP 10/3/13  
NRHP 2/11/14

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

Historic name: HARRY W. GRAY HOUSE  
Other names/site number: (VDHR File Number 000-0515)

**2. Location**

Street & Number: 1005 South Quinn Street [ ] Not for Publication  
City or town: [ ] Vicinity  
State: Virginia Code: VA County: Arlington Code: 013 Zip Code: 22204

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [X] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 12/23/03  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- [ ] entered in the National Register.  
( ) see continuation sheet
- [ ] determined eligible for the National Register  
( ) see continuation sheet
- [ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
- [ ] removed from the National Register
- [ ] other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**HARRY W. GRAY HOUSE**

**ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA**

Name of Property

County and State

**5. Classification**

| Ownership of Property                       | Category of Property                            | No. Resources within Property |                    |
|---|---|-------------------------------|--------------------|
|   |   | Contributing                  | Noncontributing    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building(s) |                               |                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Local       | <input type="checkbox"/> District               | <u>1</u>                      | <u>1</u> Buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public-State       | <input type="checkbox"/> Site                   | <u>—</u>                      | <u>—</u> Sites     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public-Federal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Structure              | <u>—</u>                      | <u>—</u> Structure |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Object                 | <u>—</u>                      | <u>—</u> Objects   |
|   |   | <u>1</u>                      | <u>1</u> Total     |

Name of related multiple property listing  
N/A

Number of contributing  
Resources previously  
listed in the National  
Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories  
from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/ SINGLE DWELLING

Current Functions (enter  
categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING

See continuation sheet

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/ Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: BRICK  
Walls: BRICK  
Roof: METAL  
Other: WOOD

**Narrative Description**

Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets

See continuation sheet

**HARRY W. GRAY HOUSE**

**ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA**

Name of Property

County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark x in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

**A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

**C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark x in all the boxes that apply.)

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or grave.

**D** a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Ethnic Heritage: Black

**Period of Significance**

1881-1913

**Significant Dates**

1881, 1913

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

GRAY, HARRY W.

**HARRY W. GRAY HOUSE**  
Name of Property

**ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA**  
County and State

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)

previously listed in the NR

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

State SHPO office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify repository:

Arlington House

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property 0.129 Acres

UTM References Alexandria VA, - MD, - DC USGS Map

1) 11/8/ 13/1/9/9/7/6/ 14/3/0/3/6/1/5/

Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The property at 1005 South Quinn Street in Arlington County, Virginia, is located on Map 074-03. The property is described in the Arlington County Land Records as Lot 50B in Gray's Subdivision.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries for the property at 1005 South Quinn Street in Gray's Subdivision of Arlington, Virginia are described as Lot 50B, located on Plat Map 074-03. This lot has been associated with the Harry W. Gray House since a resubdivision of the property as recorded in Deed Liber 1338, folio 208 in the Arlington County land records. The lot is a portion of the original ten-acre tract purchased by Harry W. Gray from J.R. Johnson in 1880. The Harry W. Gray House has been associated with this portion of the tract since its construction in 1881.

See continuation sheet

**HARRY W. GRAY HOUSE**

**ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA**

Name of Property

County and State

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title Jennifer Bunting Hallock, Architectural Historian  
 Organization EHT Traceries, Inc. Date May 2003  
 Street & Number 1121 5<sup>th</sup> Street, NW Telephone (202) 393-1199  
 City or Town Washington State D.C. Zip code 20001

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Philip Cefaratti  
 street & number 1005 South Quinn Street telephone 703/892-1818  
 city or town Arlington state Virginia zip code 22204

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of the Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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1005 SOUTH QUINN STREET, ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA (000-0515)**

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**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

The Harry W. Gray House, located at 1005 South Quinn Street in Arlington, Virginia was constructed in 1881 in the Italianate style. The masonry dwelling, constructed of five-course American-bond brick, presents a rectangular footprint and freestanding rowhouse form typical of urban settings. Standing two stories in height, the three-bay-wide dwelling, which faces north, sits on a solid brick foundation. Capped by a standing-seam metal shallow-pitched shed roof, the dwelling also features 2/2 wood windows, two interior-end brick chimneys with corbeled caps, and a full-width one-story porch, which stretches across the façade. A highly decorative Italianate-style entablature caps the facade. A small wood-frame porch on the southeast corner of the L-shaped dwelling was enclosed circa 1960.

The dwelling is located in Gray's Subdivision of the Arlington View neighborhood, a middle-class community with an historically African-American heritage. The Harry W. Gray House is located on a 0.129-acre sloping lot with a grassy yard, brick driveway, and landscaping. A wooden fence partially encloses the property. A small, non-historic shed is located on the northwest corner of the site. The property is in excellent condition and has had little exterior alteration since its construction.

**EXTERIOR**

The symmetrically fenestrated primary façade faces north toward South 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Measuring three bays in width, the two-story dwelling is accessed by an off-center single-leaf entry. The raised six-panel wood door, located in the easternmost bay, features a brick segmental-arch dog-eared lintel and an inset single-light transom. The flush wood surround is further detailed with chamfered edges and a splayed cap at the juncture of the brick lintel, suggestive of a pilaster. A single-light plate-glass wooden storm door has been added. The first story is further pierced with two 2/2 double-hung wood windows with square-edged wood sills, chamfered wood surrounds, segmental-arch dog-eared brick lintels, and operable louvered wood shutters. Three similarly designed windows illuminate the second story. Crowning the façade is a full-width entablature designed in the Italianate style. This decorative embellishment, typical of late-19<sup>th</sup>-century townhouse dwellings, includes a molded cornice, paneled modillions, a single-panel fascia, and

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three supporting scroll-sawn foliate brackets. Sheltering the first story is a full-width porch measuring two bays wide and capped by a half-hipped standing-seam metal roof. Detailing on the porch includes a molded wood cornice, Tuscan-column-on-brick-pier supports, a solid concrete deck, square balusters, and side elevation entries.

The side elevations are minimally fenestrated, typical of townhouse design. The west elevation, which presents a flush wall plane, is composed of the main block and rear kitchen ell. Located on the first story of the west elevation is a centrally placed double-leaf ten-light wood door, featuring a brick rowlock sill, a three-light transom, and a square-edged wood surround. This door appears to have replaced an original window opening during a circa 1979 renovation. Flanking the entry are two 2/2 double-hung wood windows. One features a rowlock sill, square-edged wood surround, and segmental-arched soldier-bond brick lintel. The other, which is smaller in size and added circa 1979, is located in the southernmost bay and features a square-edged wood surround. Rowlock brick coping edges the shed roof along the entire elevation. The only fenestration on the east elevation of the main block is a small 6/6 wood window, which appears to have been added circa 1979. The window features a square-edged wood surround.

The south, or rear, elevation of the main block is pierced with a small, off-center 2/2 wood window with a rowlock sill and square-edged wood surround. A wood-frame porch, which was enclosed circa 1960, is located at the juncture of the main block and rear ell, creating the building's rectangular footprint. The enclosure features wood-shingle cladding, a brick-pier foundation infilled with poured concrete, and a flat roof with a balcony and boxed wood cornice. The rear elevation is illuminated by a pair of centrally placed 6/6 double-hung wood windows with a square-edged surround, mullion, and projecting sill. A pair of off-center 6/6 and 4/4 double-hung wood windows is located on the east elevation of the enclosed porch. Featuring molded surrounds, the windows are joined by a shared square-edged projecting wood sill. A set of poured concrete steps remains on the east elevation, once accessing the now-enclosed porch. The rooftop balcony is enclosed with square balusters and a wood-post frame with triangular brackets. The balcony is accessed from an added double-leaf ten-light door with square-edged wood surround and large one-light transom, which is located on the rear elevation of the main block. Two 2/2 double-hung wood windows with segmental-arched brick lintels, square-edged wood surrounds, and rowlock sills mark the second story of the ell on the east elevation.

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**INTERIOR DESCRIPTION**

Constructed as a side-hall plan with rear kitchen ell, the two-story Harry W. Gray House retains its original spatial configuration. The main block includes a hall, living room, and dining room on the first floor. Additionally, a kitchen is located in the ell and a bathroom was added when the rear porch was enclosed. The second floor includes a side hall, three bedrooms, and a bathroom, similar in plan to the first floor. A renovation dating to circa 1979 included the replacement of much of the original floorboards, the stair, plaster walls, baseboards, and molded surrounds.

The entrance hall, which runs the full depth of the main block, is dominated by a straight-flight open stair. Detailing includes wood treads without risers, a metal rail, a metal stringer, and alternating twisted and square metal balusters. The hall is accessed by the primary off-center entrance, which includes a single-leaf raised six-paneled wood door with a single-light transom and stock molded surround. Four-inch wood baseboards with a rounded cap and quarter-round shoe mold, and three-inch oak floorboards further define the hall. The living room and dining room open onto the hall via square-arched openings in the wallboard. The living room, or parlor, is illuminated by two original 2/2 double-hung wood windows on the primary elevation. Detailing of the space includes four-inch wood baseboards, three-inch oak floorboards, stock molded surrounds, drywall, and a stock three-inch ogee-molded chair rail. An original wood stove was replaced with a conical metal fireplace set on a brick hearth, dating to circa 1979. A square-arched opening leads to the rear dining room.

Detailed similarly to the living room, the dining room features oak floorboards, drywall, a stock ogee-molded chair rail, and four-inch baseboards with a rounded cap and quarter-round shoe mold. The west wall is pierced with double-leaf ten-light doors with a one-light transom, and an original 2/2 double-hung wood window. Both are detailed with stock molded surrounds. A portion of the south wall features an exposed brick wall and portions of the original trim, including an eight-inch baseboard with a beaded cap and a thin ogee crown molding. The ductwork has been enclosed at the ceiling.



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Opening from the south wall of the dining room, the kitchen is housed in the small rear ell. The space contains vinyl floors, stock moldings, drywall, modern appliances, granite countertops, wood cabinets, and modern exposed ceiling beams. Two 2/2 double-hung wood windows with stock molded surrounds illuminate the room.

Originally an open rear porch, the bathroom was enclosed circa 1960. Updated in 1979, the small space includes tile flooring, drywall, modern appliances, a 4/4 wood window, and stock three-inch ovolo crown molding. A double-leaf louvered closet houses the washing machine and dryer, while a six-paneled hollow-core wood door accesses a rear closet with access to the small basement. A 6/6 double-hung wood window lights the utility closet. Accessed by an original exterior bulkhead stair, the basement is located under the ell. The small room, which houses the mechanical equipment, has a poured concrete floor, circular sawn ceiling joists, and whitewashed exposed brick walls.

The second floor of the Harry W. Gray House features a side hall with flanking bedrooms. The layout is similar to the first floor although the rooms do not internally adjoin. Each is accessed via the hall. A modern bathroom was added at the north end of the hall, located over the primary entrance. The floorboards, baseboards, casings, and windows are consistent with the first floor.

**OUTBUILDING**

A circa 1980 one-story prefabricated shed is located on the northwest corner of the property. The wood-frame structure rests on a wood-block foundation and features pressed vertical-board cladding, a shed asphalt-shingle roof, and a double-leaf wood door.

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Located at 1005 South Quinn Street in Arlington County, Virginia, the Harry W. Gray House was built by Harry W. Gray (c.1851-1913), a former slave on General Robert E. Lee's Arlington House estate. Constructed in 1881 in the fashionable Italianate style, the dwelling represents the monumental shift from slaves to freedmen for African Americans in the years following the Civil War. Gray and his family, also slaves at Arlington House, established themselves at the government-sponsored Freedman's Village on the Arlington House property and the associated rural Arlington Tract, while assimilating into their newfound societal roles. In 1881, Gray and his wife, a freed slave from James Madison's Montpelier plantation, purchased a nine-acre tract in Johnson's Hill just to the south of the Freedman's Village. Incorporating masonry skills learned at Arlington House and at the local brickyards, coupled with an appreciation of the mid-to-late-19<sup>th</sup>-century residential architecture he saw in Washington, D.C. while working for the U.S. Patent Office, Harry W. Gray constructed a rare example of the brick rowhouse in Arlington County.

With a period of significance extending from 1881 to 1913, the property, which remained in the Gray family for nearly one hundred years, continues to reflect its original use as a single-family dwelling. The Harry W. Gray House retains sufficient integrity of design, workmanship, materials, location, and feeling despite the tremendous mid-to-late-20<sup>th</sup>-century growth in Arlington County. The Harry W. Gray House is recognized for its association with the settlement patterns of African Americans following the Civil War and for its architectural merit, reflecting a fashionable mid-to-late-19<sup>th</sup>-century urban design that was rare in rural Arlington County at the time it was built.

**Criterion A: That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.**

The Harry W. Gray House meets Criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places as a representative example of the historic, economic, and cultural contributions of African Americans

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in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century history of Arlington County, reflecting the theme of ethnic heritage. Harry W. Gray and the Gray family represent the rise from slavery to middle-class citizenship in the decades following the Civil War.

After the war, many former slaves, including the Gray family, became associated with the government established Freedman's Village. As residents became assimilated into the work force, many families relocated to nearby communities, such as Nauck, Green Valley, East Arlington, South Washington, and Johnson's Hill, areas of Alexandria County (now Arlington County) that began to cater to former African American slaves. After gaining employment at the U.S. Patent Office circa 1872, Gray left the Village environment after purchasing a nine-acre tract from J.R. Johnston in 1880. The following year, Gray constructed a masonry rowhouse dwelling on his property in Johnson's Hill. The disbanding of Freedman's Village by the federal government in the 1890s forced residents to look to surrounding areas for settlement opportunities, further expanding these early African-American neighborhoods, which were originally settled by pioneers such as Harry W. Gray.

**Criterion C: That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.**

The property is also eligible under Criterion C for its architectural significance as a rare example of a freestanding masonry rowhouse in Arlington County. Constructed in 1881 in the Italianate style, the Harry W. Gray House is one of the first and the only surviving example of this building type documented in Arlington County. The house is also noteworthy because it was constructed by Harry W. Gray and is representative of the work of an amateur builder. The dwelling was constructed with skills and workmanship Gray gleaned during his tenure as a slave at Arlington House and as a freedman working in local brickyards and in downtown Washington, D.C.

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**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

**The Gray Family**

Harry W. Gray was born into slavery circa 1852 at Arlington House, the prominent estate overlooking the Potomac River in Alexandria County (now Arlington County). Arlington House was constructed by George Washington Parke Custis, step-grandson of President George Washington, and later occupied by Custis's son-in-law, General Robert E. Lee. A third generation slave on the property, Harry W. Gray was born to Thornton and Selina Norris Gray. A significant figure in the history of the Arlington House property, Selina Norris Gray was Mary Lee's trusted household slave and personal assistant for nearly thirty years.

An inventory of George Washington Parke Custis's slaves at Arlington House in 1858 includes thirteen members of the Gray/Grey and Norris families, including "Harry Grey."<sup>1</sup> Documented in *Harper's Weekly* in 1886, it was said that "Negroes born into slavery on the old estate still tell of their extraordinary well-being."<sup>2</sup> This was in part due to the forward thinking of George Washington Parke Custis, who experimented with the education and independence of slaves and stated in his will that any remaining slaves be freed upon his death or five years afterward if the estate was found to be in good financial standing. However, numerous slaves, including the Gray family, continued to serve at Arlington House until the Civil War (1861-1865) because General Robert E. Lee determined slave labor was still needed to improve the property.<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Lee afforded the slaves numerous freedoms, including tutelage in reading and writing, despite Virginia laws that prohibited the education of slaves. Selina Norris and Thornton Gray were also allowed to be married at Arlington House by an Episcopalian minister, again against the law, and raised six of eight children in the South Slave Quarters. Born circa 1852, Harry W. Gray, the sixth child of Thornton and Selina Gray, was documented to have been a mason's assistant on the property. He was responsible for carrying bricks and water while he "worked to build a wall around the Lee Mansion."<sup>4</sup>

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With the onset of the Civil War, the Gray family remained at Arlington House after the Lee family fled the property on May 15, 1861. Mrs. Lee entrusted Selina Gray with the keys to Arlington House upon her departure, symbolically naming her house slave as the Arlington House authority figure. Under Selina Gray's supervision, the daily activities continued as usual until the property became the headquarters for the commander of the Department of Northern Virginia, Brigadier General Irvin McDowell. Understanding the national importance of the Arlington House collections, which included Washington and Lee family artifacts, Selina Gray is considered an important early preservationist for her efforts to keep the collections intact for six months during the occupation of the property by Union troops.<sup>5</sup> Selina Gray surrendered her authority to General McDowell in December of 1861. However, her important early preservation-minded concerns for the collection were heeded and the artifacts were transferred to the U.S. Patent Office for safekeeping as property of the U.S. Government.<sup>6</sup> Officially freed from slavery in 1862, the Gray family remained on the Arlington House grounds as residents of the Freedman's Village.<sup>7</sup>

**Freedman's Village**

In March 1865, the Congress of the United States established the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands to help African American citizens make the transition from servitude to freedom and from wartime to peace. Beyond the provision of assistance to African Americans, the Bureau maintained a number of settlements throughout the South and bordering states. These settlements began under the wartime supervision of the Union army and were managed by the Quartermaster Department.

Perhaps the most famous of the Freedman's Villages was the community founded in 1863 on the grounds of Arlington House in Virginia. After the Arlington estate was confiscated by the U.S. government, the Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton set aside a portion of the property to create a Freedman's Village, while a 210-acre portion of the tract became Arlington National Cemetery at the request of Quartermaster General Montgomery Meigs. Freedman's Village became

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Arlington County's first government housing project and superseded several temporary camps, including Duff Green's Row and Camp Barker in the District of Columbia. As a model camp, which incorporated fresh air and spacious lands, Freedman's Village attracted widespread attention and support from both the federal government and 19<sup>th</sup>-century reformers.<sup>8</sup> The village proper is presently the site of Arlington National Cemetery, the Navy Annex, Henderson Hall, and the complex system of roads that transverse the area.

The village originally consisted of approximately 100 whitewashed wood-frame houses that were to temporarily house African Americans for the rent of \$3.00 per month. The freedmen were required to work for their wages and housing, an effort used to promote relocation of the citizens to permanent housing elsewhere. However, many villagers tended to permanently reside in the community, thus forcing the government to expand the boundaries and purchase additional acreage outside of the village proper. Known as the Arlington Tract, the additional land circumscribed Freedman's Village. Services within the village included a public school, two churches, and a hospital for the elderly and infirm. The first school began with 150 students and peaked with 900 students. A trade school was also established, training residents as blacksmiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, tailors, and shoemakers, an effort to assimilate residents into the local workforce.

Over the years, the U.S. government made several attempts to close the village as the land became increasingly desirable. On December 7, 1887, the village residents were given ninety days to leave. Despite these attempts to disband the original village, approximately 148 families were documented as residing in the area in 1890. With the eventual phasing out of the village in the 1890s, residents relocated to nearby communities, such as Nauck, Butler-Holmes, East Arlington, South Washington, and Johnson's Hill.<sup>1</sup> These communities were among the oldest African American settled communities in what became Arlington County.

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The Gray family spent a few years in the Freedman's Village on the Arlington House property before settling in the expanded Arlington Tract.<sup>9</sup> In *Arlington County, Virginia: A History*, C.B. Rose describes the Arlington Tract: "In 1866, in an effort to promote the independence of the residents of the Village, surrounding land was partitioned into nine and ten acre lots that could be rented for nominal sums, those closest to the water source bringing the highest rates."<sup>10</sup> Thornton Gray and his family rented a fifteen-acre rural plot on this tract, located in Green Valley. Harry W. Gray, who began to work for pay as a free man at age twelve, farmed the land with his family and worked at local brickyards, using the masonry skills he learned at Arlington House.<sup>11</sup> The Arlington Magisterial District Register of Voters circa 1870 lists Thornton Gray as a laborer at age forty-five and resident of the Arlington Tract.<sup>12</sup> Historic maps show also Thornton Gray as a landowner/resident by 1878 in the Green Valley-Nauck area.<sup>13</sup> The family rented a produce stand in Washington, D.C. at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Louisiana Avenue, N.W., where they sold produce farmed from their property.<sup>14</sup>

**The Harry W. Gray House**

Harry W. Gray, again drawing upon the skills he learned at Arlington House, was employed at a brickyard along the Potomac River until age twenty. He was later employed at the U.S. Patent Office on 7<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W. in downtown Washington, D.C. During his almost forty-year tenure as a government employee at the Department of the Interior's Patent Office, Gray worked as a messenger and clerk. In 1878, Harry W. Gray and Martha M. Hoard were married.<sup>15</sup> The couple were introduced by Columbus Delando (1870-1870), Harry Gray's sister who worked as a nurse for the Secretary of the Interior. Martha Madison Hoard, also a Department of the Interior employee, was a freed slave from James Madison's Montpelier estate in Orange County, Virginia.

A deed dated October 6, 1880 records the purchase of nine acres of land by Harry W. Gray from W.C. Johnston along the Arlington Turnpike for \$800.00.<sup>16</sup> The area, which became known as Johnson's Hill (the t in Johnston was dropped), was located just to the south of the Freedman's Village along what is now Columbia Pike. Gray constructed a masonry dwelling by hand with the

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help of a bricklayer named Alexander, utilizing the skills he learned as a mason's assistant at Arlington House and as an employee of the Blick-West Brickyard, one of thirteen Potomac River brickyards. Familiar with the vast numbers of Victorian-era Queen Anne- and Italianate-style rowhouses being erected in Washington, D.C., particularly those along 7<sup>th</sup> and F Streets, N.W. near the Patent Office where he worked, Gray erected his house in a similar manner. This was a significant shift in the architectural precedents of rural Alexandria County. The Harry W. Gray House was finished in 1881 as denoted on a hand-etched brick on the rear of the dwelling, which reads "May 1, 1881—Harry Gray."<sup>17</sup> Harry Gray's daughter, Martha Gray Gillem later described the industrious nature of her father; she stated:

"Yes, papa worked and bought a ten-acre [sic] farm, then over the years almost brick by brick he built the two-story brick house, at that time the only one for miles around. He always wanted a brick house. Since he built it like the city row house in Washington, there are no windows on the sides and the house is narrow and tall. But it was a brick house for his family. Papa worked as a messenger in the Interior Department in Washington, and farmed on weekends and evenings. He was proud that all four of his children finished high school at old M Street High in Washington. He had to room and board us in town for the winter. And two of his children finished normal school. That was something in those days."<sup>18</sup>

An undated sketch of the property reveals that the original nine-acre property was enhanced with cultivated fields, orchards, grazing fields, a brick patio, and landscaping. A barn, carriage house, privy, well, chicken coop, and piggery were also located to the rear of the main dwelling.<sup>19</sup>

The Harry W. Gray House reflects the modern architectural fashions and standards as evidenced in the nation's capital during the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is significant that Gray witnessed the architectural changes in Washington, D.C. during this period where large numbers of residential buildings were being erected and designed by local builders and architects for speculative developers. The form, massing, and siting of these buildings was shaped by the municipal building codes first enacted in 1871, and the mass production of building elements



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available to the speculative builder. The greatest boost to the physical composition of the city was in February 1871, when Congress passed a bill establishing a new government for the District of Columbia that was composed of a legislative assembly, a five-member Board of Public Works, and a governor. Immediate and rapid improvements were targeted. One of the first projects undertaken by the Board of Public Works was the enactment of new building codes. George Washington's original 1791 prohibition against wooden buildings had been relaxed in 1796; thus, wood-frame houses became dominant in both type and number. The new 1872 building regulations still allowed wooden structures to be constructed within the city limits, although not within twenty-four feet of any house built of brick or other non-combustible material. Eventually, the construction of wooden buildings was forbidden within an area called the "fire limits," defined as the limits of the City of Washington and the southern part of Georgetown. Although existing wooden buildings were not demolished, the building regulations essentially required that after 1877 all new dwellings would be of brick and/or stone. This regulation had a dramatic influence on the architectural development of Washington, D.C. Consequently, during the late 1870s and 1880s, rows of attached brick houses were built along the main public streets. Larger and presenting more architectural embellishments than the wood-frame houses, the brick buildings reflected contemporary architectural trends in residential design and featured elaborate cornices, metal, stone or molded brick window surrounds, and other applied ornamental elements. Harry W. Gray incorporated these modern standards and stylistic fashions into his Italianate-style masonry dwelling, which stands as a rare example of this type of architecture in Arlington County.<sup>20</sup>

In 1900, census records indicate that Harry W. Gray was forty-eight years old and was married to Martha H. Gary. The records indicated that they had three daughters, a son, and a servant.<sup>21</sup> By 1910, only one daughter, a seamstress, is listed in the census records as living at home.<sup>22</sup> Harry W. Gray died on November 3, 1913 and was buried in the St. Stephens Lodge Odd Fellows Cemetery at the corner of Columbia Pike and Arlington Ridge Road. In 1964, the majority of the graves in this cemetery were moved to the Coleman Cemetery in Fairfax County near Mount Vernon when the site was developed. Martha Gray, who died on March 1, 1930, was also moved from St. Stephens Cemetery to Coleman Cemetery. Additionally, a marker was placed in Coleman

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Cemetery by Gray relatives, commemorating the lives of Thornton and Selina Gray. The will of Harry W. Gray bequeathed the property at South Quinn Street, which became known as Gray's Subdivision, to his wife and four children.<sup>23</sup> Martha honored her husband's legacy by naming two of the streets, Gray and Hoard (now Quinn and Rolfe Streets), when she subdivided the property. Gray's Subdivision was the first planned subdivision of the Johnson's Hill property. The Harry W. Gray House remained in the Gray family until 1979, almost one hundred years after it was constructed. It was designated as an Arlington County local historic district in 1983.

**Development Along Columbia Pike**

After the disbanding of Freedman's Village, the nearby neighborhoods such as the Butler-Holmes subdivision, Nauck, Johnson's Hill, East Arlington, Queen City, and South Washington, formed the majority of the communities populated by the former residents of the Freedman's Village. These rural tracts attracted residents due to their proximity to the village and lack of restrictive covenants applied to many other communities. Despite this increased growth, the rural nature of the community was retained, featuring open green space, reminiscent of the farming community that historically sustained the area. The open landscape was further accented by the rural nature of adjoining Arlington National Cemetery adjoining the Arlington House property. The area along the Columbia Turnpike underwent increased development, as it was a major transportation route. By the mid-1800s, a large influx of New Yorkers settled in the area, spurred to relocate there by the mild climate, proximity to the nation's capital, and increasing land values tied to the soon to be established streetcar lines.<sup>24</sup> One such pioneer was Sewell B. Corbett of Corbettsville, New York, who purchased large tracts of land along Columbia Pike and constructed a substantial freestanding dwelling at the corner of South Fillmore Street. Nearby development in the area included the Columbia Schoolhouse, a one-story wood-frame circa 1850 building constructed on the corner of what is now South Wayne Street. The building served the congregation of the Hunter Chapel, which was decimated by the war, until 1893. In 1871, the schoolhouse was became a public school and served the community until the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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The *G.M. Hopkins Map of 1878* documents development along the turnpike, including the expanding intersection at Arlington Ridge Road. A sampling of landholders in this area included N. Vorse, N.S. Wright, T. Waters, Munson, and J.R. Johnson. The maps also reveal that the area was still considerably rural. Concentrations of dwellings were beginning to develop along the main roadways. Near the tollgate at the intersection of Georgetown-Alexandria Pike (now South Arlington Ridge Road) and Columbia Pike, a small village center developed with several houses, two stores, a post office, and a blacksmith shop, as noted on the 1894 Hopkins map.<sup>25</sup> Located in Johnson's Hill, the Harry W. Gray House was just to the west of this intersection. Johnson's Hill, named for J.R. Johnston who owned eighty-five acres, was subdivided into four parcels, three of which were sold to former slaves, including Harry W. Gray, Harrison Green, and Emmanuel Jackson.<sup>26</sup> Currently known as Arlington View, Johnson's Hill grew from rural farmland, located on a hill overlooking the Arlington estate, to a middle-class neighborhood populated by numerous other freed slaves who became important leaders in the development of Arlington County.

Historic maps also reveal that two railroads transversed the county by 1879. The Washington and Ohio Railroad ran along the western edge of the county line, continually criss-crossing Four Mile Run. The Alexandria and Washington Railroad extended from the City of Alexandria north along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal to Washington, D.C. Because of the commercial nature of the ports and the canal, the railroad tracks were flanked by industrial businesses, such as Adamantine Brick Company, Potomac Brickworks, and Smitson's Brickyard. Most of the brick and stone produced in the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was manufactured in Arlington County along the Potomac River.<sup>27</sup>

The county experienced increased growth and access to Washington, D.C. with the opening of the Aqueduct Bridge as a free bridge in 1886 and the establishment of the electric streetcar in the 1890s. The streetcars ran from Rosslyn to Nauck, Rosslyn to Falls Church, and Mount Vernon to Washington, D.C. Real estate developers, many investors in the streetcar companies, were promoting new neighborhood communities along these rail lines. Areas developed by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century included Addison Heights, Johnson's Hill, Queen City, Nauck, Butler-Holmes, Corbett, Glencarlyn, Bon Air, Fostoria, High View Park, Hall's Hill, Cherrydale,

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Clarendon, Ballston, Fort Meyer Heights, and Rosslyn.<sup>28</sup> Increased dependability of the streetcars allowed residents of the Arlington area to work in the District of Columbia and thus, Alexandria County began to be marketed as a commuter suburb. Developers and real estate agencies advertised that the county allowed both convenience to Washington, D.C. and a healthy, bucolic setting for family life. The 1907 publication, *A Brief History of Alexandria County*, touted the advantages of the Arlington area's proximity to Washington, D.C.:

A person living in Alexandria County enjoys, free of cost, all of the Government institutions of Washington city, its libraries, its colleges, schools, museums, art galleries, and public buildings and at the same time enjoys the health of country life and escapes all the discomforts of a crowded city.<sup>29</sup>

As all these changes were occurring, the demographics of Arlington were also rapidly changing. In 1870, the majority of the county was African American, but by 1900, most of the residents were white.<sup>30</sup> Between 1870 and 1900, the number of residents grew from 3,185 to 6,430. By 1910, the population nearly doubled, growing to 10,231. The growing number of residents was due not only to the increasing number of jobs available through the federal government because of the First World War (1914-1918), but also due to the growth of supporting service industries and retail establishments. Arlington was well on its way to becoming "the fastest growing county in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and indeed, for a time, in the United States."<sup>31</sup> By 1937, Arlington County was touted as "the smallest in area in the state and the fastest growing in population and telephones."<sup>32</sup>

Because of its accessibility to Washington, D.C., desirable suburban location, and proximity to commercial and civic facilities in Arlington, the entire area along Columbia Pike grew steadily in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The houses erected during the early part of the community's development included a number of vernacular, Queen Anne-, and Italianate-style dwellings constructed primarily of wood frame. The Harry W. Gray House and two dwellings in the nearby Penrose neighborhood (originally the Butler-Holmes Subdivision) just off Columbia Pike are the only three documented extant masonry dwellings in Arlington County dating prior to 1885. Of these three

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documented dwellings, the Harry W. Gray House stands as the only example of the Italianate rowhouse, which ultimately symbolized the inevitable growth of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. Although Harry W. Gray's vision of Arlington as an extension of the federal city was soon realized, it never was expressed through architecture. During the 1910s and 1920s, the houses in Arlington County consisted of mainly wood-frame bungalows and vernacular dwellings. A common building practice in Arlington County was the kit or mail-order house, which became the quintessential suburban house type throughout the nation.

**ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Arlington House Archives. Vertical Files.

<sup>2</sup> "To Arlington" *Harper's Weekly* 30 (May 29, 1886): 347.

<sup>3</sup> The slavery were eventually freed on December 29, 1862.

<sup>4</sup> "Notes on Thornton Gray" Arlington House Archives. Folder 3.

<sup>5</sup> Karen Byrne. "The Remarkable Legacy of Selina Gray." *CRM Magazine* 21, No. 4 (1998): 21.

<sup>6</sup> The Lee family reclaimed the items in 1929.

<sup>7</sup> During the restoration of Arlington House by the U.S. Park Service, two of Harry Gray's older sisters were consultants on how the furniture was arranged and what the daily operations of the estate were like. They also returned furniture given to Selina Gray by Mary Lee to the museum. Arlington House Files.

<sup>88</sup> "Freedmen's Village Museum: The Black Heritage Museum." (Arlington, VA: Arlington Community Foundation, n.d.), brochure.

<sup>9</sup> An 1874 Voter List includes Thornton Gray, age 45. He is listed as settling on the Arlington Tract. Reprinted in *Freedman's Village: Arlington's First Free Neighborhood* The Black Heritage Museum of Arlington County, VA, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Rose, op.cit., 124.

<sup>11</sup> Gray Family Papers. Interview with Martha Gray Gillem, daughter of Harry Gray. Arlington House Archives. No date of interview.

<sup>12</sup> Reprinted in "Some Black History in Arlington County: A Preliminary Investigation." *Arlington County Historical Magazine*. Vol. 5, No.1, 1973: 15. The article states that the Register was undated. However, U.S. Census records in 1880 list Thornton Gray as a fifty-five-year-old farmer.

<sup>13</sup> G.M. Hopkins, *Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington Including the Counties of Fairfax and Alexandria, Virginia* (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins), Plate 4, 1878.

<sup>14</sup> Gray Family Papers. Interview with Martha Gray Gillem, daughter of Harry Gray. Arlington House

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Archives. No date of interview.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. 1910. Special Collections. Alexandria City Library.

<sup>16</sup> Alexandria County Deed Books Liber E4, folio 310. October 6, 1880.

<sup>17</sup> The inscribed brick was covered when a small wood-frame addition was added to the rear circa 1960.

<sup>18</sup> Arlington House vertical files. Interview with Martha Gray Gillem. No date.

<sup>19</sup> Harry W. Gray House Site-plan, Undated. Arlington County Vertical Files.

<sup>20</sup> The Harry W. Gray House is the only documented extant masonry townhouse in Arlington County.

Historic Maps of Alexandria do not include the rural portions with building footprints until the 1920s. Therefore, it is uncertain if there were any similar dwellings constructed during that period. It is likely that the Harry W. Gray House was the first of its kind.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Census Records, 1900. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census. Volume 3. Enumeration District 1, Sheet 5. Line 32. Microfilm, Alexandria Library, Special Collections.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Census Records, 1910. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census. Volume 3. Enumeration District 1, Sheet 5. Line 32. Microfilm, Alexandria Library, Special Collections.

<sup>23</sup> Alexandria County, VA, Will Book 12, page 186, recorded 1914.

<sup>24</sup> Eleanor Lee Templeton. *Arlington Heritage: Vignettes of a Virginia County*. (NY: Avenel Books. 1959), 82.

<sup>25</sup> G.M. Hopkins *Map of the Vicinity of Washington, D.C.* 1894. Plate 2.

<sup>26</sup> Louie Estrada. "Arlington View: A Sense of History." *The Washington Post* June 1993: 18 pars.

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<sup>27</sup> Templeton, op. cit., 142.

<sup>28</sup> Rose, op. cit., p. 140.

<sup>29</sup> Crandal Mackey, M.E. Church, and others. *A Brief History of Alexandria County, Virginia: Its Wealth and Resources. Great and Growing Industries, Educational and Social Advantages, Future Outlook Promising* (Falls Church, VA: The Newell Printing Company, 1907), 19.

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. 1870 and 1900. Census numbers from Alexandria County (VA) Census Microfilm. Reel 1632, and Reel 1698. Special Collections, Alexandria City Library.

<sup>31</sup> Rose, op. cit., p. 144.

<sup>32</sup> Oliver Martin. "Virginia's Fastest Growing County," *The Transmitter*, Washington, D.C., Vol., 25, N 6, June 1937, p. 1.

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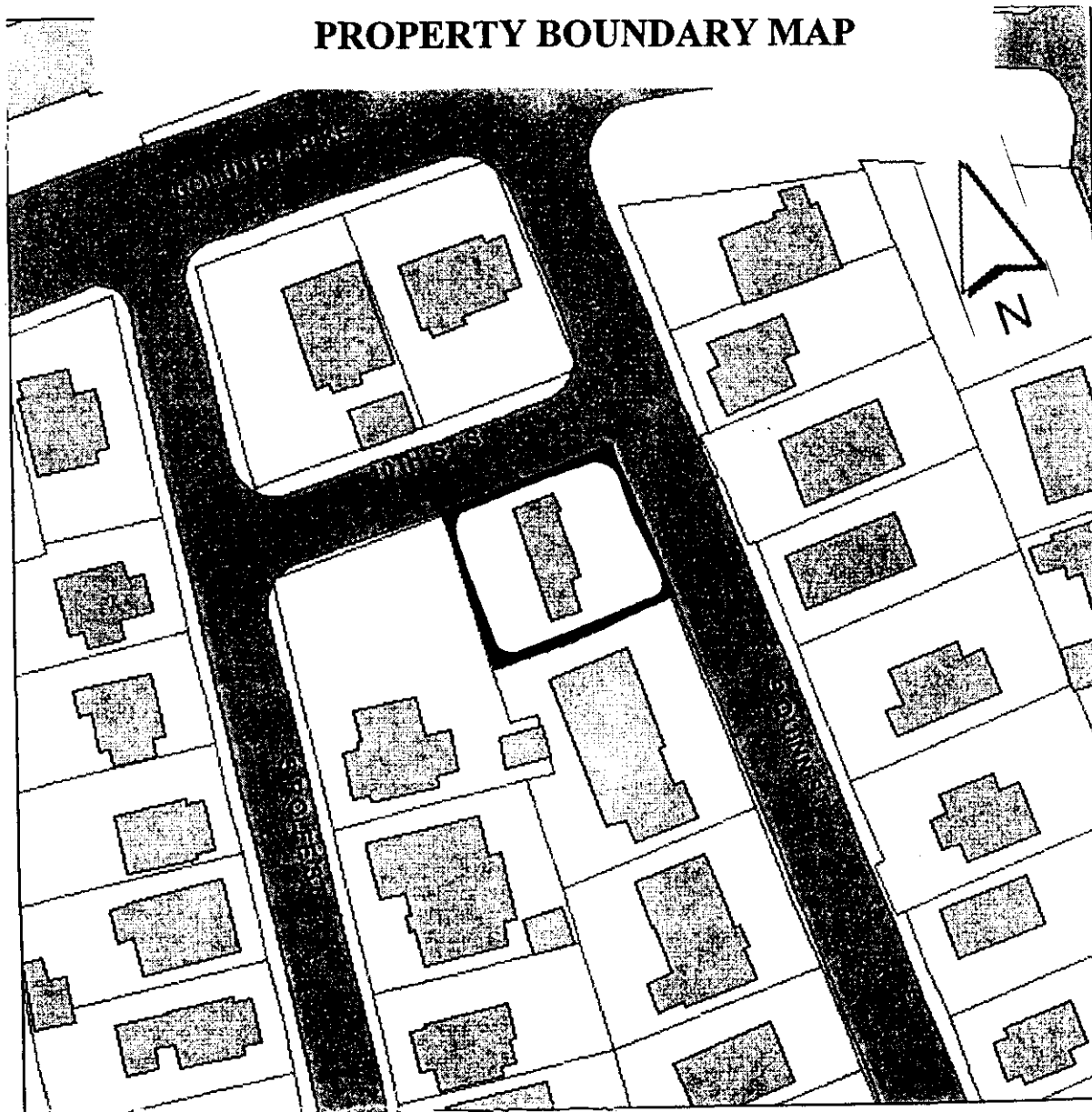
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Harry W. Gray House (Arlington, VA)  
Library of Congress, Maps Division (Washington, D.C.)

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**Harry W. Gray House (000-0515)**  
**1005 South Quinn Street**  
**Arlington, Virginia**

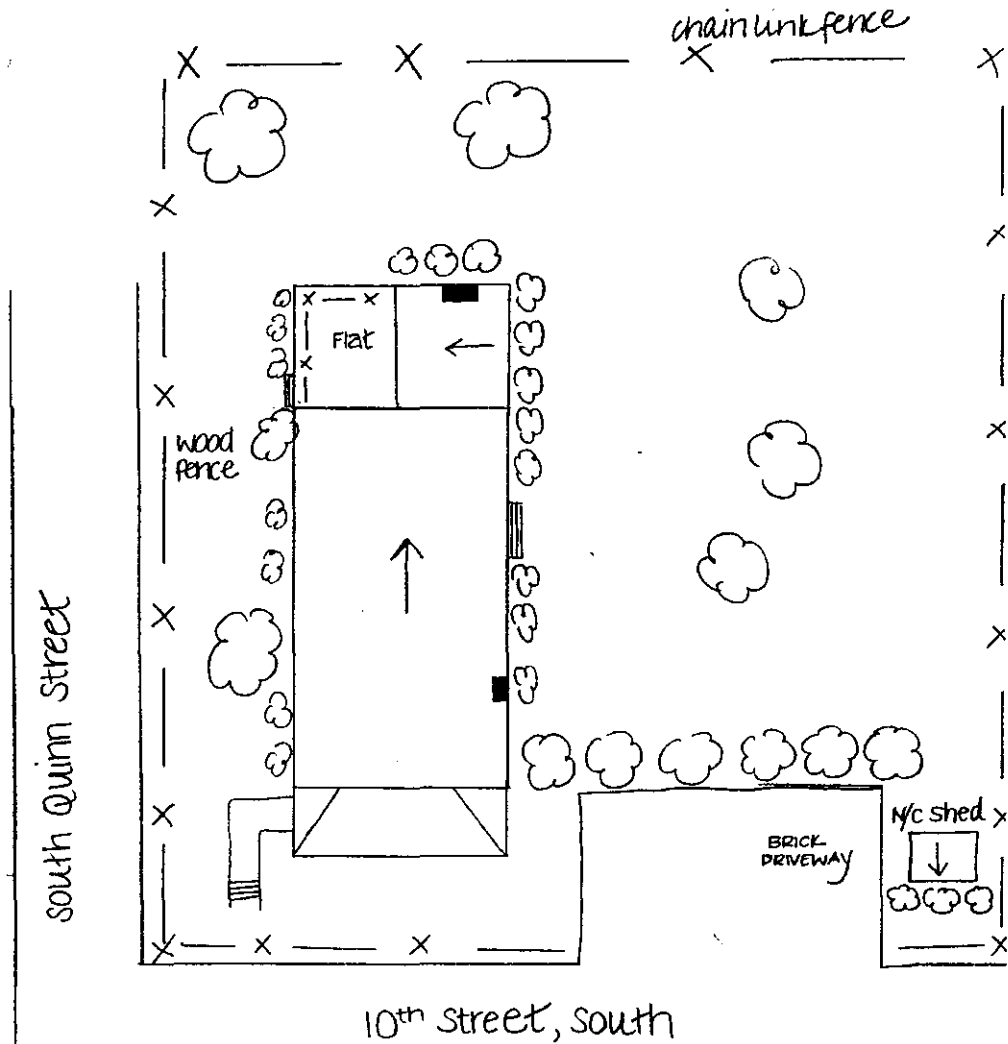
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SITE PLAN



to Columbia  
Pike  
↓

site plan  
Harry W. Gray House (000-0515)  
1005 south Quinn street  
arlington, virginia

NOT TO SCALE

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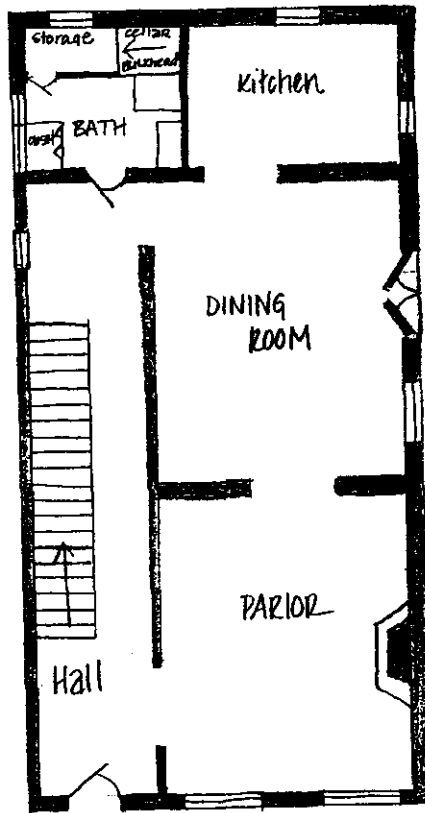
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**FLOOR PLAN**



Harry W. Gray House  
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(078-5015)

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



NOT DRAWN TO SCALE

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
Continuation Sheet**

**HARRY W. GRAY HOUSE,  
1005 SOUTH QUINN STREET, ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA (000-0515)**

Section number Photographs Page 26

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All photographs are of:

**HARRY W. GRAY HOUSE  
VDHR File Number: 000-0515  
E.H.T. Tracerics, Inc., photographer**

All negatives are stored with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources:

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: Northwest Corner  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 1 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: Interior, Front Parlor  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 6 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: West Elevation  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 2 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: Interior, Dining Room  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 7 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: Southeast Corner  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 3 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: Interior, Kitchen  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 8 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: East Elevation  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 4 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: Interior, Second Floor Stair Hall  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 9 of 9

DATE: May 2003  
VIEW OF: Interior Stair Hall, Looking South  
NEG NO.: 20577  
PHOTO: 5 of 9

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

77°07'30" 16"E 1 280 000 FEET (MD) 18 19 5' 20 21  
38°52'30" N



Harry W. Gray House,  
Arlington County, VA

UTM Reference: 04N

18/319976/4303615

ALEXANDRIA  
VA

03

430 000 FEET  
(MD)

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