

McCleery House.
1068 30th Street, N.W.
Washington (Georgetown)
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-162

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
801 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

MCCLEERY HOUSE

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Location: 1068 30th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
West side of the street, lot beginning 195 feet south
of M Street; 22.5 ft. wide.

Present Owner: Donald H. Shannon

Present Occupant: Mr. & Mrs. James F. McGuirl

Present Use: Private residence

Statement of
Significance A Georgetown residence of about 1800 with many fine
interior details, reputedly designed by James Hoban.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: The following information is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which this house is built. The site is Square 1197, lot 846 (old square 27, old lot 23, south part), original area of Georgetown. The references are all to the Recorder of Deeds, District of Columbia.

1801 Deed May 18, 1801 recorded May 19, 1801 in
Liber G folio 88
Thomas Beall et ux Ann
Elijah Beall et ux Nancy
To
Henry McCleery

"All that part of lot 23 on Washington St. in Beall's addition and the alley of 2 feet, the said part containing 24' in width fronting Washington St., and for depth extending 120' next to the adjoining lot 22 in same addition. Also on alley on south side and adjacent to the said house, of 2' in breadth and 34' in depth." Thomas Beall contracted to sell to Elijah Beall and Jonathan Jackson two lots in Beall's first addition, Nos. 23 and 24. They built on lot 23 a 2 story brick house and appropriated to the same 24' of the width and 124' of the length of the lot together with 2 feet in front and 24 feet in length of the same lot and adjoining the south side of the house for an alley which they agreed to build between them jointly, and agreed to divide the residue of said lots between them. Jackson since died.

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- 1805 Deed October 11, 1805, recorded October 15, 1805 in
Liber N folio 299.
Thomas Beall
Agnes Jackson
William Jackson
Trustees for the sale of real estate of Jonathan
Jackson, deceased
To
William Morgan
Conveys parts of 23 and 24 beginning at southeast
corner of that part of lot 23 heretofore conveyed
(above) and running with Washington (30th)St.
fronting thereon for 47', thence westerly parallel
with line dividing lots 23 and 24 120' to end of
said lots, thence northerly to southwest corner
of lot 23 conveyed above, and thence east with
the south line of said property.
- 1816 Deed June 25, 1816 recorded June 25, 1816 in
Liber AL folio 536
William Morgan
To
John Bowie
Same as above, 47' on Washington (30th) St.
- 1816 Lease for 5 years June 25, 1816 recorded June 25,
1816 in
Liber AL folio 533
John Bowie
To
William Morgan
Right to purchase for \$4000 within said period.
- 1833 Assignment of Debt and mortgage of September 11
recorded October 24, 1833 in
Liber WB 46 folio 455
Thomas I. Bowie
To
Allen Bowie Davis
T. I. Bowie purchased this property at a trustee
sale (made by virtue of a decree of circuit court
of D.C.) December 21, 1830. John Marbury appointed
to sell the lot by court order. (Thomas Bowie
was administrator of John Bowie.)
- 1833 Deed May 22, 1833 recorded October 24, 1833 in
Liber WB 46 folio 459
John Marbury
Thomas I. Bowie
To
Allen Bowie Davis

Conveys the two story brick house on west side of Washington Street, with piece of ground appurtenant, late property of William Morgan beginning at southeast corner of McCleery lot (above) running with Washington Street south to the south corner of the said house, westerly with south gable of said house and parallel with dividing line between lot 23 and 24, 120', then north to southwest corner of lot 23 parcel of McCleery, then with south side of said property to beginning. (Does not say how long the 30th Street side is.)

1847 Deed January 20, 1847 recorded February 1, 1847 in Liber WB 132 folio 10

Allen B. Davis et ux Hester A.

To

Timothy P. Anderson

The two story brick house on west side of Washington St. with land on which it stands, late property of William Morgan. (Description same as above.) Consideration \$4000.

1863 Deed December 12, 1862 recorded June 3, 1863 in Liber NCT 6 folio 129

Timothy P. Anderson et ux Emily R.

To

William Hance

The lot (above) south of the McCleery lot; also, the lot from that south gable wall, 69' on Washington and 120 deep, "to the south gable wall of another house which formerly stood on the southern extremity of said lot." Consideration \$1850.

1872 Deed February 13, 1872 recorded February 15, 1872 in Liber 670 folio 402

William Hance et ux Isabella

To

Michael C. McGowan

Riley A. Shean

That part of land "supposed to front 69' on Washington St. more or less and lying immediately south of an adjoining the two story brick house now owned by the said Hance, and extending to the south gable wall of another house which formerly stood on the southern extremity of said lot" (i.e. 24).

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- 1875 Deed January 11, 1875 recorded January 20, 1875 in
Liber 773 folio 172
William Hance et ux Isabella
To
Richard A. King
"Part of lot 23, beginning at west line of
Washington St. 26' south of southeast corner of
lot 22; southerly 25' westerly parallel to Bridge
St. 125', northerly parallel to Washington 27',
easterly 2', easterly 34' to beginning." Consideration
\$1100.
- 1882 Deed February 25, 1882 recorded March 1, 1882 in
Liber 997 folio 333
Richard A. King et ux Mary A.
To
Frank Thompson
Same lot as above; consideration \$900.
- 1899 Deed January 31, 1899 recorded February 3, 1899 in
Liber 2390 folio 81
Frank Thompson et ux Elizabeth M. F.
To
Rose W. Cash
Same as above. "Also, all that piece of land
in Georgetown known as the southern part of lot
23 in Beall's 1st addition, lying next to and
adjoining lot 22, and fronting 25 feet more or
less on west side of Washington Street, and running
back at the width west 120'." Now all the street
face of lot 23 is united in one owner for 50'.
Deed Liber 2716 folio 52 (February 13, 1903)
rerecords this.
- 1907 Deed December 27, 1906 recorded January 29, 1907 in
Liber 3042 folio 297
Rosa W. Cash, widow
To
Herbert A. Davis
Same land as above.
- 1925 Herbert A. Davis, died February 21, 1925 intestate
and unmarried.
Administration #32, 916
(Shows he owned 1068 and 1070 30th St.)
Subdivision Liber S.O. 80 folio 9
"I hereby subdivide original lot 24, and the
southern 10 feet, front, by full depth of original
lot 23, sq. 1197, into lots 63-67 as shown above."
Henry B. Pease
22 September 1925

1926 Deed July 19, 1926 recorded July 27, 1926 in
Liber 5831 folio 69
Walter G. Moyle
John H. Nelson
To
M. Frank Ruppert
The lot 23 (and 61): 51' on 30th St., west 125
ft, north 27 feet, east 5 feet, north 24 feet,
east 120 feet sale under decree S.C.D.C., passed
March 31 1926 Equity Cause #43, 946, Gaines et
al vs. Davis et al, \$5,000. Sale ratified May 13,
1926.

1952 Deed March 10, 1952 recorded March 14, 1952 in
Liber 9669, folio 592
Olga Ruppert May
Milton Frank Ruppert
Raymond R. Ruppert
Trustees under will of M. Frank Ruppert
To
Eleanore A. Basso
Lot 23, (plus other property); specifies "premises
1068, 1070, 1072 and 1074 30th St., N.W."

2. Date of erection: Apparently before 1800. Henry McCleery obtained the property in 1801 (Liber G, folio 88). This deed mentions a "two story brick house" of 24 ft on 30th St., but this included a 2 foot alley. Whether this is the house in question or not needs further investigation. Recorded measurements for this property are not always in agreement. The assessment records for 1800-07 (National Archives Microcopy 605, group 351, roll 7) (second assessment) list under 'Henry McClary', '1 improved lot on Washington St. [30th] \$2000.'
3. Architect: A letter of November 14, 1964 to Mr. Donald Shannon, present owner of the house, from Margaret Ide, a former tenant, reads in part: "We had a visit today from one James Hoban, a great great grandson of the architect of the White House.... He feels the fine Adam mantels and arch detail are like Hoban's work.... [He] has also worked on the White House book, sponsored by Jacqueline Kennedy, as he had much material which filled in gaps caused by various fires here in D.C.... The National Trust is going to verify the architectural authorship." This attribution is doubted by Mr. Shannon, however.
4. Original plans, construction, etc: None known.
5. Alterations and additions: When the road was raised about 1831 to make a level crossing of the canal, the first floor

was below street level, and a rearrangement of the interior may have been made at that time. The building was restored by Mr. Shannon after he bought it in 1952. The basement floor was turned into a kitchen and the two rooms on that floor combined into one; on the third floor a rear dormer was added, and partitions introduced to make bedrooms. Otherwise the house was kept as original as possible.

6. Important old views: Mr. Shannon possesses several photographs of the building before and after restoration. These were not available, as Mr. Shannon is now living in Tokyo, and the photographs are stored in Paris (1967). Some were published in the Evening Star in 1953.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

1. Jonathan Jackson:

The Georgetown assessment records of 1800-1807 (National Archives, group 351, Microcopy 605, roll 7) have the following entry:

Jonathan Jackson Heirs

1 lot on the Causeway [eastern end, K St.] 400

1 lot on Washington [30th] St. 380

2. The Bowie family:

The Bowies were well known in Georgetown, and it is not surprising that their name appears in land records. The property at 1068 30th Street was acquired by John Bowie in 1816. In 1833 the property was transferred to his cousin Allen Bowie Davis by Thomas Bowie (brother of John) after John Bowie's death. Allen Bowie Davis held the "two story brick house" from 1833 to 1847.

Washington Bowie (brother of John and Thomas Bowie) was born August 12, 1776, and early prospered in trade. "While still a mere boy, Washington Bowie entered the shipping house of William Deakins in George-Town. There he gained the practical business training that fitted him to join in establishing the firm of Bowie and Kurtz, in 1799, while still a very young man. This firm of shipping merchants prospered and became widely known to mercantile houses in London, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Bremen, Cadiz, Gibraltar and the West Indies, as well as in America." (Harold Donaldson Eberlein, and Cortland Van Dyke Hubbard, Historic Houses of George-Town & Washington City, Richmond, The Dietz Press, 1958, p. 120) He was married in 1799, built a house in Georgetown at 3124 Q St, N.W., in 1805 and eventually had 4 sons and three daughters. They were soon friends with

the notables of Washington, for in the diary of Mrs. William Thornton for 1800 we find the following note for January 11th: "Mama and I went to George Town to call on Mrs. J. Mason & Mrs. W. Bowie who were not at home." (Records of the Columbia Historical Society, v. 10, p. 94.)

His brother, Dr. John Bowie (1769-1825) did not live in Georgetown; Thomas Bowie was yet another brother. His sister, Elizabeth Bowie, married Thomas Davis, and their son Allen Bowie Davis (February 16, 1809 to April 17 1889) received the property mentioned in 1833. He, like Washington Bowie, seems to have been active in public affairs: he was president of the Brookville Academy, President of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Agricultural College, and held other such posts. He lived in Baltimore, and at Greenwood, Montgomery.

"As early as 1810, the Annapolis Gazette describes 'Colonel' Bowie as 'one of the wealthiest and most public-spirited citizens of George-Town' and refers to him as a 'merchant prince.' His reputation for public spirit and devotion to the interests of George-Town was well deserved; as a vestry-man of St. John's Church he was also concerned with the moral welfare of the community." (Eberlein and Hubbard, p. 120).

The Georgetown assessment records of 1800-07 (National Archives, group 351, Microcopy 605, roll 7) provide the following information about Washington Bowie's property:

1 lot and small house on Falls (M) Street:	600
2 negroe women	180
4 small negroe children	100
1 horse	80
1 cow	10
furniture	1600
	<hr/>
	\$ 2570

3. John Marbury, trustee: See HABS No. DC-154.
4. For biographical data on early owners of this land see HABS No. DC-168.
5. Washington directories supply the following tenant information:

1915 Mrs. Maggie A. Walker
1917 vacant
1919 William Wyatt
1921 William Wyatt, and William Smith
1923 Alice Booth
1925 Theodore Green
1927 Everett J. Taylor
1929 vacant
1931 Peter J. Riley

1933 vacant
1935 Charles Rector and Allen Babber
1937 Walter Anderson, James Newman, & Edward T. Offutt
1939 George W. Banks, Hattie Jackson, Mrs. Mamie Offutt
1941 Herbert Lucas
1943 Clarence E. Rhodes
1948 Thomas Offitt
1954-56 Donald H. Shannon (owner)
1960 Charles Demetrio
1962 Donald H. Shannon (owner)
1965 Bernard Norwich
1967 James McGuirl

Prepared by Daniel D. Reiff
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
September, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This small Federal house retains much of its original woodwork.
2. Condition of fabric: The exterior is in good condition, though a few small shear cracks are evident. Inside, alterations and remodeling have taken place but much of the original wood work and trim remains.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Rectangular structure measuring 22'5" (east side) by 36' 3"; three bay facade. With the present street level the house has one and a half stories with a full basement exposed to the west, and with an areaway across the entire front on the east.
2. Foundations: Flemish and common bond red brick painted white to the foot of the basement on the east and west sides.
3. Wall construction: The walls are red brick in Flemish bond and common bond (with irregular headers) which are painted white on the east and west elevations. To the north is a brick party wall.
4. Framing: The structural system consists of brick bearing wall and wooden floor structure. Wooden rafters are evident in the dormered attic.

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5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: In front of the present entrance is a modern iron stoop with 10 inch treads and four 8 inch risers with a steel plate platform. (This was the second floor until the street was raised about 1831.) A retaining wall of rough rubble masonry with slate coping forms an areaway on the east side of the basement, originally the ground floor. Crowning this revetment is a balustrade of square steel balusters and a flat handrail painted black.
6. Chimneys: Two large rectangular brick chimneys in common bond are located inside the north edge of both slopes of the gable roof. Atop these are steel mesh ash catchers.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance, located on the east side near the south corner, has wooden jambs and a flat brick arch (reinforced by a steel lintel) and a six paneled wooden door under a three light rectangular transom. The basement door, below and slightly to the left, has a modern screen door and 20th century glazed wooden Dutch door with six lights over two panels. In the west elevation are two French windows of twelve lights each (six lights per leaf) behind aluminum screen doors. A very small wooden Dutch door (4'4" x 2'6", six lights over two panels) appears at the basement level in the rear. All openings seem to be reinforced with steel lintels.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Six/six light double hung wooden sash windows with flat brick arches and brick sills occur on both elevations. Double paneled fixed louver wooden shutters painted flat black flank all windows except the French ones, a small six/six light double hung one at the basement level on the east elevation, and the dormer windows.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The gable roof (north-south ridge) is covered with standing seam metal roofing painted red.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Simple strong cornices crowning both elevations consist of a metal cyma recta shaped gutter, a wooden box fascia, and cyma recta and astragal mouldings. It is bordered on the bottom by a narrow wooden strip.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Two gabled dormers, sheathed and roofed in metal, with six/six light double hung windows are symmetrically placed, two on each slope. A large rectangular skylight is located near the ridge

on the east slope.

C. Detailed Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: Divided into halves, the east side contains the kitchen and the west (connected by an enlarged doorway) the dining room and stair hall.
- b. First floor: Along the south wall runs the stair hall with an arch dividing it in two. The living room is against the east wall, the den against the west with a widened doorway between them.
- c. Second floor: The eastern half consists of a bedroom, with a bath built into the southeast corner; the western half contains the stair hall, a closet, and second bedroom.

2. Stairs: In the southwest corner are the dog-leg stairs, 2'8" wide. The treads are 9 3/4 inches and risers are 7 inches. Simple extended square newels with no caps and rectangular balusters support well carved wooden handrails.
3. Flooring: A five and seven inch wide wooden planking (which appears to be original) covers all floors except the basement (which is tiled).
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls and ceilings are plaster; molding occurs at the base, chair height, and ceiling.
5. Doorways and doors: Two apparently original tall four paneled wooden doors appear in the basement. The other doors are wooden with simple trim.
6. Decorative features and trim: A wooden arch, consisting of a well articulated keystone and mouldings, is located in the middle of the entrance hall. It has finely carved convex reeded pilasters with diagonally and vertically reeded reveal. Base, chair, and ceiling molding appear through the house.
7. Notable hardware: The original lock boxes appear on the tall interior basement doors. Exterior hardware consists of a metal fire insurance plaque, not original, with clasped hands above the date 1794.
8. Lighting, type fixtures: Incandescent lighting.
9. Heating: Gas heated forced hot air, and fireplaces. Two finely carved wooden mantels appear on the first floor. Both have reeded friezes below a small dentil-like strip

and molded mantel shelf. A second small dentil-like molding extends across the mantels just above the pilasters. One mantel is supported by reeded pilasters and the other has chamfered and molded pilasters.

D. Site:

1. General Setting and Orientation: This building is located on the west side of 30th Street, N.W. between M Street and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, in a predominantly residential block.
2. Enclosures: A modern iron fence crowns the retaining wall on the east side. In the rear at the basement level, a wooden fence encloses a brick court.
3. Outbuildings: None.
4. Walks: The house is on a herringbone red brick public walk lined with trees.
5. Landscaping: Three stone planters sit on the east retaining wall. The rear fence has an abundant ivy covering.

Prepared by William R. Gwin
Student Assistant Architect
National Park Service
September, 1967

ADDENDUM TO:
McCLEERY HOUSE
Georgetown
1068 30th Street, NW
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-¹⁶²~~807~~

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20001