

Grafton Tyler Double House
1314 30th Street, N.W.
Washington (Georgetown)
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-178

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101-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

GRAFTON TYLER DOUBLE HOUSE

Location: 1314 30th Street, N.W., (Georgetown), Washington, D.C.
The residence is located on the west side of 30th Street (formerly Washington Street) midway between N Street and Dumbarton Street. This data book concerns only the northern half of a double house.

Present Owner: Mrs. Ronald Osnos

Present Occupant: Same

Present Use: Private Residence

Statement of Significance: This double mansarded residence is an example of a particularly formal treatment of a mid-Victorian dwelling. It is conceived sculpturally with the heavy hood molds, cornice and mansard carried around on each side. The facade is axially symmetrical.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The building is located in Square 1233, lot 826 (formerly Square 63, lots 4, 72, and 73). The following is an incomplete chain of title to the property. The references are to the Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C.

1811 Deed April 6, 1811, recorded April 19, 1811 in
Liber AA folio 36

Henry Suttle, Trustee
To

George C. Washington

"Be it known that said Beall [Thomas] did bargain and convey the said lots [part of 72 and all of 73] to a certain Peter Cassanave of Georgetown but said Cassanave has never complied with the contract or paid for legal title so that no conveyance was made to Cassanave...Thomas Beall brought suit in Chancery

Court of Washington Co. and D.C. and judgement was that said lots should be sold to the highest bidder and Henry Suttle was appointed trustee to sell. Sale was made 5-19-10. George Washington was the highest bidder paying Beall \$316.94. The said sum was held as a lien on the lots."

Deed April 9, 1811, recorded April 19, 1811 in
Liber AA folio 36
Thomas Beall and wife Nancy
George C. Washington
To
Robert Beverly

Deed April 19, 1811, recorded August 8, 1811 in
Liber AB folio 56
Robert Beverly et ux Jane
To
George Clarke

1854 Deed December 29, 1854, recorded January 15, 1855 in
Liber JAS folio 306
William B. Clarke
To
Maria Clarke

1868 Deed April 25, 1868, recorded April 27, 1868 in
Liber ECE 32 folio 406
Robert B. Clarke
Roberta A. Clarke,
Heirs of Maria Clarke
To
Grafton Tyler
Consideration: \$10,000

Deed in Trust September 11, 1868, recorded
September 11, 1868 in
Liber 568 folio 372
Grafton Tyler et us Mary
To
William D. Cassin
Frederick W. Jones
"Beginning on West side of Washington Street 122'
n. of Gay Street thence west parallel to Gay Street

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80' to a 10' wide alley, thence north parallel to Washington Street 26' thence east parallel to first line through the center of the division wall of the house hereby conveyed and house next adjacent on north (said houses being now in course of erection) to west line of Washington Street. Thence south 26' to beginning..."

1875 Deed May 10, 1875, recorded May 10, 1875 in
Liber 783 folio 283

Grafton Tyler

To

William Tyler

"...beginning 148" north of Gay Street thence parallel to Washington Street 26'..."

Deed July 15, 1875, recorded July 16, 1875 in
Liber 794 folio 83

William Tyler

To

Edward W. Whitaker

"...beginning 122' from Gay Street by 52' on Washington Street..." (both lots)

Deed July 15, 1875, recorded October 10, 1875 in
Liber 803 folio 164

Edward W. Whitaker et ux Theodocia

To

William Tyler

1876 Trustees Deed January 26, 1876, recorded January 28, 1876
Liber 807 folio 391

Robert P. Dodge

Philip A. Darneville, Trustees

To

James R. Young

William T. Keenan

Sold for default under trust of William Tyler...
beginning 148' from Gay Street and running 26' on
Washington Street

1877 Deed June 26, 1877, recorded June 27, 1877 in
Liber 859 folio 236

James R. Young

William T. Keenan

To

Charles Wheatley

- 1884 Deed September 11, 1884, recorded September 11, 1884 in
Liber 1098 folio 77
William A. Gordon, Trustee of Charles Wheatley
To
Samuel E. Wheatley
- 1903 Tax Sale, April 4, 1903
- 1920 Deed May 10, 1920, recorded May 12, 1920 in
Liber 4346 folio 248
William J. O'Donnell and wife Mary
To
Charles Lusby and wife Nancy
- 1956 Deed May 21, 1956 recorded May 29, 1956 in
Liber 10666 folio 169
Mary Lusby
To
Samuel Carter
- 1959 Deed July 7, 1959, recorded August 9, 1959 in
Liber 11303 folio 486
Samuel Carter
To
Ronald Osnos
- 1968 Deed April 5, 1968, recorded May 28, 1968 in
Liber 2885 folio 348
Ronald Osnos
To
Alice H. Allen
- Deed April 5, 1968, recorded May 28, 1968 in
Liber 128885 folio 350
Alice H. Allen
To
B. L. Osnos
2. Date of erection: 1868. The construction of the double residence is mentioned in the Trust of September 11, 1868 (see page 3). In 1871 Grafton Tyler was assessed \$5000 for the improvements on lots 72 and 73. (Georgetown Assessment Records, National Archives Microcopy 605, Group 351, roll 13)
3. Architect: Unknown

4. Original plans, construction, etc: None known.
5. Alterations and additions: The western section of the house was extensively remodelled in 1960. This block is said to have been in existence prior to the eastern Victorian section. However, because of the remodelling, this cannot be corroborated. As part of the 1960 alterations two sets of stairways at the western wall of the rear block were removed.
6. Important old views: None known.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

1. Washington city directories provide the following tenant information:

1883-1901	Samuel Wheatley
1904-18	William O'Donnell, wholesale and retail druggist
1922-56	Charles Lusby
1960	Barbara J. Nahigian Samuel F. Cortel
1962	Ronald Osnos

2. For biographical information on early owners of the property see the following:

The Beall Family	HABS No. DC-154
Peter Cassanave	HABS No. DC-168

3. Dr. Grafton Tyler was a very respected and prominent citizen of Georgetown. He was born November 21, 1811 in Prince George's Country, Maryland. In 1845 Dr. Tyler moved to Georgetown and according to the 1853 city directory established his residence at the corner of Gay (now N) and Washington (now 30th). In 1846 he was appointed professor of Practice of Medicine at the Columbia Medical School. A few years later he became professor of Clinical Medicine at the Washington Infirmary. He resigned from both positions in 1859.

Dr. Tyler was president of the Board of Council of Georgetown, a member of the American Medical Association and vice-president of this association in 1855. He was an incorporator and director of Childrens' Hospital in Washington, and consulting physician to Providence Hospital.

He was married to Mary M. Bowie in 1836. Their home at Washington and Gay Streets also served as his office where he held office hours from "8 to 9 1/2 a.m., 1 p.m., 4 to 5 1/2 p.m." (History of the Medical Society of D. C., 1817-1909, p. 237)

Prepared by Ellen J. Schwartz
Architectural Historian
Commission of Fine Arts
August, 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: 1312 and 1314 30th Street are a pair of mid-Victorian town houses which represent the comfortable living standards of the upper middle class. Both the interior and the exterior display a desire for richness of texture and heaviness of detail typical of the period. They are a good example of the Victorian desire to clearly differentiate and discriminate one portion or item of the design from another through the use of ornamental features.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in good to excellent general condition on both the interior and the exterior. There has been a 1960 renovation of the interior throughout. The major part of this was the removal of two flights of stairs from the kitchen section. At the present time 1312 is having an extensive interior remodelling and therefore all following remarks about the interior refer to 1314 30th Street.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The structure faces East onto 30th Street between N and Dumbarton Streets with the party wall approximately 115' South of the centerline of Dumbarton Avenue. Each 2 1/2 story unit composed of entry and large bay front is 22' wide and approximately 75' deep.

2. Foundations: The brick foundation is exposed approximately 5' at the front (East) elevation and approximately 6" at the rear (West) elevation.
3. Wall construction: The red brick wall bearing structure is of common bond with header rows every eight courses. 1314 30th Street is now painted yellow with wood trim painted black.
4. Framing: The 19th century interior partitions of the house appear to be of stud wall construction.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: At the East elevation there is a cast iron entry stoop of five risers and entry platform supported at the ground by two red-gray sandstone steps. The stair is edged by a pair of cast iron railings with two floral ornamental balusters per tread and terminated by heavy floral newel posts.

The rear elevation has a wood framed porch 9' deep with decks at both the second and third floor. It is screened at the second floor but open at the first and third floor levels.

6. Chimneys: The brick chimneys are a major feature of the exterior of the houses. The three that are evenly spaced along the North wall of 1314 and the South wall of 1312 have blind arches just above the level of the roof cornice, and above this, a dentil band and corbelled brick cap. A fourth chimney occurs at the center of the East wall of the smaller western block of the house.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The entry doorway has a shallow (approximately 3') projecting pedimental hood supported at the party wall by a gigantic sheet metal scrolling bracket approximately 10' high and on the bay side by a metal pilaster. The entry doors open into a vestibule and consist of a pair of 2'-0" wood doors with large rectangular single pane lights 1'-0" x 7'-1". Over the doors is a segmental headed jeweled glass transom. The five panel wood vestibule door matches the scale of the party wall bracket being 4'-0" wide and 8'-3" high and having a 3'-0" x 4'-0" single pane glass light. Over this door is a single light rectangular transom.

- b. Windows and shutters: At the East elevation all windows are 1/1 light double-hung wood sash with rounded heads. Those on the third floor are dormer windows with the dormer over the entry door being differentiated by having two narrow 1/1 windows rather than one larger 1/1. The first floor windows are floor-ceiling length.

At the North elevation of 1314 and the South elevation of 1312 the windows of the eastern block are round headed but with 2/2 light double-hung wood sash.

All of the major North and East elevation windows of 1314 have interior folding shutters. Each has an upper and a lower pair of two part folding vertical panels with adjustable vertical louvered portions. The units fold back against the jamb but do not fit into wall pockets.

The masonry window openings at the first and second floor are bridged by segmental brick arched bands projecting from the wall face, punctuated by a sheet metal keystone, and ending in a molded brick impost block. The second floor window over the entry is distinguished by having a sheet metal lintel with end brackets and a center acroterion over a flat headed opening. Each window has a stone sill and at the first floor there appear plinth-like vertical brick bands at the sides of the windows in the projecting bay.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof is a mansard with asphalt roofing on the upper slopes and with alternating bands of hexagonal and triangular slates covering the steep lower slope. The vertical and horizontal corners of the roof are edged with simple moldings.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The cornice band is supported by large wood brackets. These are arranged in an alternating pattern of paired and single brackets. Down the North elevation of 1314 and the South elevation of 1312 these take the pattern of 2-2-1-2-1-2-2.

- c. Cupolas, dormers, towers: The East elevation polygonal bay terminates in a vertically segmented baroque roof tower ending in a finial with polygonal ring blocks.

The several dormer windows on the East, North and South elevations of the buildings each has an eared segmental arch cornice supported on consoles.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: 1314 30th Street is made up of two units, a western (rear) section with one major room per floor and a wider eastern section with three major rooms per floor and with a stair hall and corridor along the South (party) wall.

The first floor plan has two front parlors separated by a low arch, and a rear dining room in the eastern block and a kitchen plus a bath in the western block.

The second floor has three bedrooms in the eastern block and one bedroom plus bath in the western block.

The third floor is now rented apartments with two bedrooms and a rear kitchen in the eastern block and a single bedroom plus bath in the western block.

There is a basement under the western section housing the heating equipment and a crawl space under the eastern section.

2. Stairways: The one stairway at present is the original main staircase opposite the entry door. It presents a directness characteristic of the Victorian period with a straight run of twenty-one risers running up East to West from the first floor to the second. The upper flight is also a straight run from East to West of nineteen risers up to the third floor. Details of this stair include a carved wood newel post, turned wood balusters, a wood railing and wood curvilinear stringer appliques under each tread.

During the renovations of the house in 1960 the sets of stairs at the West wall of the kitchen that extended to the basement and to the second floor were removed. These stairs rose one above the other up from South to North in straight runs to the first and second floors respectively. These were replaced by a trap door in the kitchen floor at about the center of the West wall with a set of simple wood steps descending from North to South to the basement.

3. Flooring: Most of the flooring on the first and second floors is 20th century refinishing with narrow oak strips running North - South. On the third floor however the original pine flooring running East - West still remains.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls and ceilings are of painted plaster throughout.

At the North and South walls of the front vestibule there is a glazed tile wainscot of 6" x 1/2" tiles capped by a red colored wreath band and a green leaf pattern cap band. Above this the plaster is scored to form of a large scale fern pattern.

5. Doorways and doors: There are several varieties of wood panel doors throughout the house. The second and third floors have as typical 2'-0" six panel wood doors with two light horizontally pivoting wood framed transoms. The first floor hall is differentiated by a 3'-0" x 8'-3" six panel wood door between the dining room and the hall. In the dining room on the West wall the door to the kitchen is a 2'-8" x 7'-0" six panel door.

There are in addition three sets of 19th century wood sliding doors. On the second floor there is a set of two six panel wood sliding doors in a 7'-5" opening in the North - South wall between the front and the middle rooms of the eastern block. On the first floor a 8'-1" opening to the hall from the front living room is fitted with two six panel wood sliding doors with two large 1'-0" x 4'-0" stenciled lights per door. A similar set of doors closes the 7'-1" opening in the North - South wall between the living room and the dining room. Each door has a pair of 8" x 4'-0" stenciled lights.

6. Decorative features and trim: One special feature of the first floor is a series of over-doorway screens. The screens are typically approximately 2' deep and of three panels. The center panel in each case is of turned vertical wood members with alternating large and small diameter ring moldings. The side panels are a woven pattern of twisted horizontal and vertical wood members. These three panel units appear over the two sets of sliding doors in the living rooms and also act as a visual stop in the hall between the entry and the stairway. Finally, a transom screen similar to the central panel of the screen appears over the hall doorway to the dining room.

Further space demarcation devices on the first floor are two shallow curved plaster arches; one in the living room between the West and the East portions of the space, and one in the dining room running West - East between the body of the room and the corridor connecting the hall and kitchen doors. The living room arch is supported by two large heavy floral ornamented brackets, has a repeating circular flower motif on the intrados, and an intaglio vine feature in each spandrel. The arch in the dining room is much simpler with no floral ornaments and supported by two simple plaster brackets.

Additional ornamental notes on the first floor are provided by several molded ceiling features. One is in the entry hall before the stair, two are in the living room, and one is in the dining room. These originally served to surround the point of attachment of the hanging gas light fixtures.

On the second and third floors there is simple 19th century wood trim. An 8 1/2" molded top wood baseboard is the major element of wall trim as there is no chair rail, cornice or wainscot.

On the first floor the living room is trimmed with a 10 1/2" molded top baseboard, a large ogee cornice mold and a 6" wide door trim with plinth blocks. The dining room is further differentiated by having a 3'-8" wood panel wainscot, no cornice, but a picture mold at approximately 6" from the ceiling.

7. Notable hardware: There is a variety of 19th century hardware present, including both porcelain and brass doorknobs and brass keyhole plates.
8. Lighting: Three 19th century metal hanging gas lighting fixtures remain in the house on the first floor. Two four-armed central stem fixtures remain in the living room and one six outlet tubular fixture remains in the dining room.

All three of these have etched glass globes. The six in the dining room fixture have patterns of cameo faces, maidens, and flowers with birds. The two fixtures in the living room with four globes each exhibit the following patterns: birds, flowers, deer, hunting duck and deer, and fishing.

9. Heating: Several 19th century ornamental mantelpieces remain on fireplaces along the North wall. On the second floor, fireplaces in the two front bedrooms have been bricked up but an early 20th century mantelpiece and heating grill are present in the back (West) room of the eastern block. A 5' wood mantelpiece with mantel shelf and mirror surrounds a glazed tile facing and hearth for a 10" x 1'-2" heating grill. Heat is supplied by a coal stove in the dining room fireplace below.

On the first floor two paint covered stone mantelpieces are 5'-1" wide and approximately 4' high. Both are fitted with 1'-2" mantel shelves and both have glazed tile facing surrounding a fireplace opening with cast iron fireback embossed with circles of three sizes. The mantel shelf is supported by baroque outline pilasters topped by simple projecting blocks each having four vertical grooves. The mantel towards the west has a fireplace opening with a semicircular headed opening and projecting keystone. The vertical outer edges of the mantel are chamfered and the spandrels are carved into single panels.

As in the bedroom above, the dining room mantelpiece is of wood with a 4'-9" mantel shelf. The mantel surrounds a coal stove with a facing of colored glazed tiles between it and the mantelpiece.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The structure is located in a neighborhood of single family houses and walk-up new type apartment buildings in the heart of residential Georgetown.
2. Enclosures: The rear yard is surrounded by a brick wall approximately 5' high.
3. Outbuildings: None
4. Walks: The East elevation fronts on a brick public sidewalk while the rear yard is almost completely covered by a brick patio.
5. Landscaping: The rear yard is surrounded by a strip of small trees and shrubs.

Prepared by William P. Thompson
Architect
Commission of Fine Arts
July, 1968