

BIRD-BRADY HOUSE
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
Camp Hill
Harpers Ferry
Jefferson County
West Virginia

HABS WV-304
WV-304

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
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1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BIRD-BRADY HOUSE

HABS No. WV-304

NOTE: Please see the following historical reports for additional information regarding the history of Storer College:

Addendum to Storer College, Anthony Hall	HABS No. WV-277-A
Addendum to Storer College, Lewis Anthony Library	HABS No. WV-277-C
Addendum to Storer College, Cook Hall	HABS No. WV-277-E
Addendum to Curtis Freewill Baptist Church	HABS No. WV-278

Location: Camp Hill, Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia

Present Owner: National Park Service, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Present Occupants: National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center

Present Use: Offices, Harpers Ferry Center

Historian: Mark Barron, University of Maryland, College Park

Significance: Built between 1895 and 1897, the Bird-Brady House served as a private residence for teachers and families associated with Storer College, a historically black school founded in 1867 by missionaries of the Freewill Baptist Church. Though spatially linked to the school for most of its history, architecturally the building presented a living space separate from the school's academic buildings and dormitories and embraced the natural setting of area. Early occupants of the house included members of the Lightner and Newcomer families, descendants of Storer College founder, Reverend Nathan C. Brackett. The building's namesake occupants, Elizabeth Bird and Mabel Brady, were sisters and both graduates of Storer who later worked there in administrative capacities in the 1940s and 1950s.

The change in ownership of the Bird-Brady House, from white families associated with the founding of the school to two African American women, is reflective of significant changes throughout the Storer College campus in the mid-twentieth century. From the mid 1940s until the school closed in 1955, African Americans began assuming a more active role in how the school was being administrated. Declining numbers of Freewill Baptists combined with the ambitions of African American educators to take more control in guiding the daily activities of the school substantially altered the academic and racial landscape of the college. The Bird-Brady House helps convey the history of domestic life for faculty members at Storer College and the changing roles African Americans played in affecting academic education at the school.

After the National Park Service acquired the property in 1962, Elizabeth Bird and Mabel Brady remained in the house as lessees until at least 1970, the year that renovations began. In spite of being converted from domestic use to office space, the National Park Service has continued to recognize the building as the Bird-Brady House.

Description: The Bird-Brady House is located approximately ten feet south of South Cliff Street next to the Interpretive Design Center of the Harpers Ferry Center. The building rests along a steep embankment, where the grade drops approximately ten feet from the house's north elevation to its south elevation. To accommodate the sudden change in grade, a shale foundation encloses two interior levels, a basement and a first floor. The frame structure above the foundation contains the building's second and third floors, and attic. The exterior of the frame building is covered in stucco, while the shale foundations remain exposed. Approximately fifteen feet south of the building's southern foundation wall, the grade level begins a dramatic drop of four hundred feet southwards down to Shenandoah Street.¹ At the building's north elevation, a porch provides access from ground level directly into the frame portion of the house. The basement, first, second, and third floors each have a separate, centrally located door opening on the south elevation, all connected by a metal fire escape. A low, dry-set shale wall borders the building's historic parcel. A garage with structural shale walls, a sheet metal shed roof, and rolling wood doors is located approximately forty feet west of the Bird-Brady House.

The north and south elevations have a symmetrical arrangement of door and window openings, vertically aligned in three bays. The central doors indicate the presence of a center through passage from north to south on each level (the basement only has rooms on the south).² The house avoids stylistic categorization and is not heavily decorated. The pedimented windows and the use of paneled sidelights and transoms at the door openings, and two-over-two double hung sash were common Late Victorian elements in domestic design.

The north elevation is arranged in three bays with a door at center of the second and third floors; the door openings on the north elevation are bounded by sidelights. A two-story porch with rails constructed out of 2" x 4"s extends outward from the north elevation. The south elevation retains the same three-bay design found on the building's north side; however, due to the grade separation between elevations, the south side of the house has four floors and associated doors. The door opening for the basement has no lights and is capped by a wood lintel. The door opening to the first floor has a tri-partite light detail consisting of transom and sidelights inset into the shale wall with recessed wood paneling. The door opening on the second floor does not utilize recessed paneling, but retains the use of transom and sidelights.

The window openings for the Bird-Brady House feature two-over-two divided lights set into double hung frames. All window sash, muntins, and glass were replaced in 2004; the glazing is double pane "E" glass. Each window opening located on the frame structure is capped by a

¹ United States Geologic Survey, "Harpers Ferry Quadrangle: West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland" 7.5 Minute Series, 1996.

² The attic space houses some of the mechanical systems for the building.

decorative wood pediment detail. Two interior chimneys rise from the ridge-line of the house's hipped roof.

Since acquiring the house, the National Park Service has altered portions of the interior space, while retaining the original central passage.³ In many portions of the house, gypsum board has replaced lath and plaster interior walls. Metal doors with metal door surrounds mark interior passageways. A small number of interior door openings, however, retain their transom lights. The floors throughout the building are covered in carpet. Though two chimneys rise from the hipped roof, only one fireplace remains extant in the room in the southeast corner of the second floor. The best surviving material from the house's historic era is the trim work, characterized mostly by typical late-nineteenth-century bead and ogee details. At least once on each level of the building, bead board is affixed to a wall to close-off former openings. The ceiling treatment, light fixtures, restrooms, and sprinkler system are among the notable modern changes to the building.

History:

Camp Hill—The Bird-Brady House is located on what was known prior to the establishment of Storer College as “Camp Hill.” As the highest point on the Harpers Ferry peninsula, Camp Hill once offered a commanding view of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers. By the early nineteenth century, the hill also provided a view of the rifle factories and armories that once lined the rivers. Originally constructed in 1799 with substantial additions and upgrades made between 1803 and 1810, and again between 1840 and 1855, these factories utilized the rivers' currents to power the machinery used to manufacture armaments for the United States government.⁴ Following the manufacturing process, finished goods were stored in various armory buildings for safe-keeping. From a vantage point above the manufacturing process, Camp Hill was a natural location for the United States Department of War to construct housing and offices for military personnel charged with overseeing the maintenance of Harpers Ferry's armories.⁵ During the 1840s, the government erected a series of two-story, brick, domestic-scaled buildings on the hill.⁶

³ The National Park Service purchased the house and parcel in 1964. Renovation of the house for office use did not occur until 1971. Jefferson County Deed Book 266 Page 282, County Clerk's Office, Charles Town, West Virginia; Building history file for the Bird-Brady House, Classified Structure No. 69, Harpers Ferry National Park, West Virginia.

⁴ A detailed study of the armory's factories is David T. Gilbert, *Water Power: Mills, Factories, Machines, and Floods at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, 1762-1991* (Harpers Ferry Historical Association 1999).

⁵ Until the Civil War, Harpers Ferry was one of two primary armories for the government, the other being Springfield, Massachusetts. Factories in Harpers Ferry produced rifles, which were then stored in armory buildings along with ammunition and other military accoutrements. Additional information on Harpers Ferry's armory can be found in Teresa S. Moyer and Paul A. Shackel, *The Making of Harpers Ferry National Park: A Devil, Two Rivers, and a Dream* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2008): 1-6. An even more intensive look at the creation of the Harpers Ferry Armory can be found in Merritt Roe Smith, *Harpers Ferry Armory and New Technology: The Challenge of Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980).

⁶ Philip R. Smith Jr., “Research Report History of the Commanding Officer's Quarters, Camp Hill, Harpers Ferry, 1847-1867,” Folder HF-71, HAFE. The brick buildings erected on the hill in the 1840s are still extant.

Due to its geographic location between Virginia and Maryland, and because of its strategic importance as an arms manufacturer, Harpers Ferry witnessed a great deal of destruction during the Civil War as Union and Confederate forces continually fought to control its resources. Periodically throughout the war, soldiers from both Union and Confederate armies bivouacked on the grounds of Camp Hill depending upon which army controlled the peninsula at any given time.⁷ When the war ended in 1865, the hostilities had effectively destroyed much of the town's industrial infrastructure. With factories no longer supplying the armory, the federal government decided that the installations on Camp Hill were no longer needed by the War Department.⁸

Parcel Formation—Approximately two years following the close of the Civil War, in order to sell federal land once occupied by armory personnel to private parties, a government surveyor platted Camp Hill into land blocks with subdivided lots. The plat method used by the surveyor transposed an imagined street grid pattern onto the surface area of Camp Hill. Each street intersection held a specific land block that was then subdivided into rectangular lot parcels. Interestingly, parts of the street grid plan proposed for Camp Hill often defied the physical limitations of the hill's geography. Streets, designed to connect Camp Hill with pre-existing streets bordering the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, for example, were impossible to build due to the dramatic grade separation between Camp Hill and the land below—a separation that, in some cases, exceeded four hundred feet. Despite the geographical incongruities of the plat, the County Clerk of Jefferson County, West Virginia, filed the map, where it became officially entered as the “1869 S. Howell Brown Survey.”⁹

Concurrent to the platting efforts undertaken by the government surveyor, a group of newly arrived missionaries from the Freewill Baptist Church in New England began negotiations with the War Department to procure the empty armory buildings on Camp Hill for use as a school for freed men and women. Dedicated to educating newly freed slaves, Freewill Baptist missionaries believed that Harpers Ferry could become the headquarters for their recently planned Shenandoah Mission. After gaining the consent of the government and the newly formed Freedmen's Bureau to occupy parts of Camp Hill, what became Storer College began holding its first classes with students and faculty members having to share living spaces within the former armory buildings.¹⁰

Owned and operated by the National Park Service, they are identified as the Lockwood House, Brackett House, and Morrell House. In 1881, Storer College incorporated a fourth building into Anthony Memorial Hall, the school's main campus building. The original 1840s building, though heavily altered, is the south wing of Anthony Memorial Hall.

⁷ For more detailed information regarding Harpers Ferry's role in the American Civil War, please see Chester G. Hearn, *Six Years of Hell: Harpers Ferry during the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999).

⁸ Moyer and Shackel, *The Making of Harpers Ferry National Park*, 17.

⁹ 1869 S. Howell Brown Survey Map. Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County, West Virginia, Plat Room.

¹⁰ More information concerning the beginning and growth of Storer College can be found in Heritage Landscapes, LLC, for the National Park Service, “Camp Hill Cultural Resource Landscape Report, Harpers Ferry

The “1869 S. Howell Brown Survey” reflects that the newly created Storer College owned the former armory buildings and the land between bordering streets. Because the buildings and land were transferred to Storer before the final plat survey was filed by the county clerk, none of the school’s land is given a block or lot designation. Within the 1869 survey plat map, areas owned by the school are marked simply as “Storer.”

The combination of the War Department’s selling the buildings and property to Storer College and the production of the 1869 survey plat map help explain why there are privately owned houses located between Morrell House and Anthony Memorial Hall, two of the former armory-related buildings ceded to Storer College. To this end, the school’s campus was, historically, spatially discontinuous with privately owned houses and buildings either directly abutting the school’s property or physically separating the school’s buildings from one another. In some cases, the privately owned houses and buildings came to be owned by persons associated with the school.¹¹

The Bird-Brady House is illustrative of a private residence being built adjacent to the school. Located in Block H Lot 7 of the 1869 S. Howell Brown Survey, the house is bordered by lots one through six to the north, Shenandoah Street to the south, Taylor Street to the west, and Hall Street to the east.¹² Lots one and three of Block H bordered South Cliff Street. The locations of Taylor and Hall Streets adjacent to the Bird-Brady parcel are indicative of the spatial anomalies found in the 1869 survey map. Though shown to connect to Shenandoah Street to the south, the change in grade elevation according to USGS topographic maps is approximately four hundred feet from the edge of the Bird-Brady parcel to the street below.¹³

Parcel information on file at the Jefferson County Courthouse in Charles Town indicates that the first grantee for Block H Lot 7 was George Koonce, who purchased the property from the United States government on December 15, 1868.¹⁴ There is no indication of any building or structure

National Park,” unpublished report, Harpers Ferry National Park, June 2009. See also: Horizon Research Consultants, Inc., Gloria Gozdzik, Principal Investigator, “A Historic Resource Study for Storer College, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia,” unpublished report, Morgantown, West Virginia, 2002; and Dawne Raines Burke, “Storer College: A Hope for Redemption in the Shadow of Slavery, 1865-1955,” diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, 2004, 406. This work was later edited by Michael Slaven and privately published as: *An American Phoenix: A History of Storer College from Slavery to Desegregation, 1865-1955*.

¹¹ The Bird-Brady House is, of course, one such example. Another is the Lightner residence located on Lot 7, Block GG of the 1869 S. Howell Brown Survey. Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 106*, page 57 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Hall and Taylor Streets also appear on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Harpers Ferry beginning in 1933. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, “Harpers Ferry May 1933 with Addenda” (Accessible in digital format via Proquest, University of Maryland).

¹⁴ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 6*, page 264 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

being extant on the parcel. On April 28, 1882, George Koonce sold the parcel to William H. Bell, a former major of ordinances at Harpers Ferry during the 1850s.¹⁵ In 1895, William H. Bell and his wife Sarah Bell sold the parcel to Josiah Stoddard and Addison DuBois.¹⁶ The first mention of a house in the deed records occurred on July 27, 1897 when Stoddard and DuBois sold the “lot and parcel of land improved by a dwelling house and other buildings” to Mary A. Cavalier.¹⁷ Less than two years later, in 1899, the parcel and house were sold to Lura B. Lightner, a teacher at Storer College.¹⁸ On February 27, 1929, a group of persons listed in deed records as Trecartin, Brackett, Robertson, Costello sold the parcel to Celeste Newcomer, another teacher at the college.¹⁹ The house and parcel stayed with Newcomer until 1944 when two African Americans who also worked for Storer College, Elizabeth Brady Bird and Mabel S. Brady, purchased the property.²⁰ Twenty years later in 1964, Bird and Brady sold the house and its parcel to the United States, where it became a part of Harpers Ferry National Park. Despite having sold the property, Bird and Brady were allowed to remain in the house as lessees.²¹ The occupation of the house by Bird and Brady at the time of the National Park Service’s acquiring the property is the reason for why the building is recognized by that name. It is unclear when Bird and Brady vacated the house, but NPS maintenance records indicate that renovation work did not begin until 1971; it is assumed that both women left the house prior to that date.²²

Occupants—The Lightners and Newcomers, along with Bird and Brady were all affiliated with Storer College. In addition to being faculty members at the school, the Lightners and

¹⁵ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book K*, page 436 (Charles Town, West Virginia); background information on William H Bell can be found in Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places, *Harpers Ferry National Historical Park*, National Park Service, National Capital Region (October 15, 1966).

¹⁶ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 80*, page 254 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

¹⁷ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 83*, page 374 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

¹⁸ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 86*, page 508 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

¹⁹ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 90*, page 132 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

²⁰ A 1959 land status map prepared by the National Park Service identifies the residence as being occupied by “2 elderly colored woman.” Department of Interior, National Park Service. “Land Status Map for Harpers Ferry, June 17, 1959,” folder HFM-00365, library and archive of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia (hereafter **HAFE**); Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 266*, page 282 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

²¹ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 266*, page 285 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

²² Building History Files,” Bird-Brady House, Classified Structure No. 69.

Newcomers were also related. The Lightner family was headed by Lura and Scott Lightner.²³ Lura Lightner, the sister of Nathan C. Brackett, one of the founders of Storer College and its president from 1867 to 1897, first arrived at Storer in 1870. She served the next fifty years as an instructor for the school's domestic arts program and as the college treasurer.²⁴ According to an oral history interview with her niece, Mary Louise Newcomer Moore, Lura Lightner was considered by many to be the "lady principal" for Storer's high school program, and was noted for helping numerous college students with their financial plans.²⁵ Her husband, Scott Lightner, a former private in the Union Army during the Civil War worked as teacher in Bolivar around 1880 and as "cashier/banker" in Harpers Ferry from 1900 onward.²⁶ Celeste Newcomer was the daughter of Nathan Brackett and the niece of Lura Lightner. Like other members of her family, Newcomer also taught classes at Storer College. Her husband John Newcomer, an ordained Freewill Baptist minister, also taught at the school before joining Scott Lightner as a cashier at the Bank of Harpers Ferry.²⁷ Recalling her time at Storer College, Celeste Newcomer's daughter noted in an oral history interview that her family "lived in the house that is down just off the edge of campus...it was my mother's house after Aunt Lu died."²⁸

The selling of the lot to Bird and Brady constituted not just a transfer in ownership, but a change in association between the house and the descendants of Brackett. The point of the sale, in the mid 1940s, is notable for it speaks to a dramatic change within the administration of Storer College. By 1944, Storer College had completely disbanded its high school curriculum and, having secured regional accreditation to award bachelor's degrees in arts and sciences, focused more on expanding its undergraduate programs.²⁹ That year also marked the retirement of Storer President Henry T. McDonald (active 1899-1944) and the hiring of an African American educator, Dr. Richard I. McKinney, to assume his place (active 1944-1950). From the mid-1940s to the time the school closed in 1955, Storer College was, for the first time in its history, being headed by African American administrators.

It is unknown when Elizabeth Brady Bird began working at Storer College, but by the time she acquired the house in 1944 with Mabel S. Brady, Bird was serving as the school's counselor and

²³ In the 1910 census, she is identified as "Laura," and in the 1920 census, she is identified as "Louise." In both instances, however, she has the same occupation and husband. West Virginia, Jefferson County, schedules for "Bolivar-Harpers Ferry," 1910 and 1920 U.S. decennial censuses.

²⁴ Jared Maurice Arter, *Echoes from a Pioneer Life* (Atlanta: A.B. Caldwell Publishing, 1922): 24.

²⁵ Transcript, Mary Louise Newcomer Moore interviewed by Patricia Chickering, 10 Oct. 1991, 23-25, folder HFD-00542, HAFE.

²⁶ West Virginia, Jefferson County, schedules for "Bolivar-Harpers Ferry," 1880 and 1920 U.S. decennial censuses.

²⁷ "Biographical Sketches of Storer Faculty," folder HFD-1099, HAFE.

²⁸ Interview transcript, 10 Oct. 1991.

²⁹ "A History of Storer College, Harpers Ferry," Storer College Collection, Box 98-1, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Manuscript Division, Howard University (hereafter **Moorland-Spingarn**), Washington, D.C.

house director. A graduate of Storer College's Normal Department and the Jamestown School of Nursing, Bird also headed several of the school's committees including social events, religious life, and student health.³⁰ Mabel S. Brady was also a graduate of Storer College's Normal Department and later served as the head of the Alumni Association where she was instrumental in soliciting donations that eventually led to the construction of the 1953 Lewis Anthony Library addition.³¹ The exact relationship between Bird and Brady is not verifiably known, but it is assumed that they were sisters with Elizabeth marrying and taking the name "Brady Bird" and Mabel remaining single and keeping the surname "Brady."³²

Domestic Use—Given the sheer size of the Bird-Brady House, consisting of three habitable levels, it is likely that either specific rooms or certain floors of the house were rented to other faculty members from Storer College, or possibly even to students. As was typical of many small colleges catering to black populations, faculty members at Storer can be assumed to have been mostly young and possibly unmarried.³³ While Harpers Ferry may not have fully embraced *de jure* Jim Crow as seen in areas within the Deep South, the rules of *de facto* segregation were certainly expected of the African American population, meaning that rental houses and rooms either outside of the campus or that were not owned by college-affiliated persons, would be extremely limited by a social adherence to Jim Crow.³⁴ With only a limited amount of housing available on Camp Hill and around the Storer College campus in general, it is highly plausible that the occupant families of the Bird-Brady House rented extra living space to boarders. This is even more possible given that the Lightners did not have any children and that the Newcomers only had two, one boy and a girl. In her oral history interview, Mary Louise Newcomer Moore notes that when the family lived in the Brackett House, prior to moving into Bird-Brady, they had students who performed domestic work and received board in return.³⁵ There is no reason to believe that the employment of students to perform household chores in return for board changed once the family moved to the Bird-Brady House.

³⁰ Elizabeth Brady Bird is referred to as an "Administrative Assistant," *Storer College Bulletin Catalogue, 1952-1953*, Storer College Collection, Box 98-1, Moorland-Spangarn.

³¹ Background information on Mabel S. Brady can be found in *Storer College Bulletin Catalogue, 1952-1953*, Storer College Collection, Box 98-1, Moorland-Spangarn.

³² Bird and Brady lived in the house from the 1940s onward. The last population census released by the Bureau of the census is 1930.

³³ An excellent discussion of the kinds of problems faced by young African American academics is Kenneth Robert Janken, *Rayford W. Logan and the Dilemma of the African American Intellectual* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 201-203.

³⁴ Many of West Virginia's formal Jim Crow laws involved education, health care, and miscegenation. Rules governing who could live where were often set and enforced at the local level. These could be either by ordinance or by social agreement, the bases for Jim Crow. For more information regarding West Virginia in the Jim Crow era consult *The Jim Crow Encyclopedia, Volumes I & II*, ed. Nikki L.M. Brown and Barry M. Stentiford (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 2008).

³⁵ Interview transcript, 10 Oct. 1991, 2-4.

Another possible use for the Bird-Brady house was as surrogate classroom space. Following a massive fire in 1927 that gutted Anthony Memorial Hall, college records indicate that classes were moved into other buildings as well as into private houses.³⁶ Given the physical proximity between the school and the Bird-Brady House and the enormity of space located within its walls, it is possible that classes were held in the house until Anthony Memorial Hall was rebuilt. Though conjecture, the possible use of the house as temporary classroom space may explain the presence of bead board enclosures in parts of the building's interior.

Orientation and Design—Knowledge of the physical orientation of the house and its spatial relationship to Storer College's campus helps place Bird-Brady within a proper historic context. Though Storer College teachers, their families and possibly boarders occupied the house from 1899 to the school's closing in 1955, the building and its parcel always remained private from the school. A general understanding of the private nature of the house helps explain the landscape design of the parcel.

In contrast to the Bird-Brady House's present physical orientation, where the front elevation faces South Cliff Street, deed records identify the building and parcel to its relationship with Shenandoah Street. As noted in the county deed records, the "dwelling house" is identified by its border with Shenandoah Street – a curious notation given that no direct access route ever existed between the house and the street below.³⁷ This information, in addition to the architectural entranceway details found on the first floor opening of the south elevation, seem to indicate that the house's south façade facing Shenandoah Street was most likely the historic front entrance. Indeed, historic photographs dating to before 1927 show the Bird-Brady House with a two story, full width porch on its south façade.³⁸

Another reason for the difference in street identification may rest in changes to other lots in Block H. A review of a 1959 land-use map prepared by a landscape architect illustrates that the National Park Service planned for South Cliff Street to be relocated to the south of its historic location.³⁹ The historic site of South Cliff Street bordered property containing Storer College's Lewis Anthony Building (occupying Lots 1 and 2 of Block H). Prior to the National Park Service acquiring the land and buildings of Storer College, the Bird-Brady House did not have street access along its north elevation. Hall Street, however, is shown on the 1959 map as stopping at Bird-Brady just before the topography drops suddenly towards Shenandoah Street.

³⁶ Henry T. McDonald, "President's Report," 7 May 1928, Storer College Trustees Minutes Book 1913-1944, A&M 1322 (Reel #130, HAFE).

³⁷ Office of the County Clerk, Jefferson County Courthouse. *Deed Book 83*, page 374 (Charles Town, West Virginia).

³⁸ Historic Photographs of Storer College can be found at West Virginia University Libraries, West Virginia and Regional History Collection. Historic Photographs are also viewable online through a web-based exhibit created by Beth Jane Toren and Alisha Myers, <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/exhibits/storer/>. The photograph is known to predate 1927 because the cupola located on Anthony Memorial Hall was destroyed in the fire of that year. A smaller cupola was placed on the roof following the rebuilding of the hall.

³⁹ Department of Interior, National Park Service. "Land Status Map for Harpers Ferry, June 17, 1959," folder HFM-00365, HAFE.

While there is no door opening on Bird-Brady's east elevation facing Hall Street, the impossibility of accessing the house from Shenandoah Street indicates that residents of the parcel used Hall Street as the main access route leading to the house. Furthermore, occupants could only access the historic garage from what was known historically as Taylor Street.⁴⁰

Landscape features associated with the former parcel of the Bird-Brady House include the presence of several low dry-set shale walls. The wall running parallel to the northern elevation of the house, for example, in addition to delineating the sudden change in grade from the north façade to the south façade also provides a physical barrier from the Storer College campus. Taking this grade change into account, the wall creates an even more private space when viewed from the historic south entrance, as the landscape wall, in effect, rendered Storer College invisible.

The placement of the house at the edge of the Camp Hill overlooking Shenandoah Street and the Island of Virginius offered impressive views of the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. Jefferson Rock, located approximately one half mile east of the house is where, in 1783, Thomas Jefferson stopped to marvel at the natural scenery. Years later in his book *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson remarked that the view itself was "worth a voyage across the Atlantic."⁴¹ In this setting, the placement of a house with a front entrance facing the Shenandoah River offered both privacy and a scenic overlook. In this regard, the Bird-Brady House was certainly not unique. Throughout the late nineteenth century, numerous other houses and hotels were also constructed on the high ridges of Camp Hill.⁴²

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⁴⁰ Folder HFM-00365, HAFE.

⁴¹ Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Richmond, VA: JW Randolph Publishers, 1853, reprint), 18.

⁴² The ca. 1890 Hilltop House Hotel is just one example.

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Project Information—The documentation of the Bird-Brady House was undertaken in 2010 by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) under the direction of Richard O'Connor, Chief, Heritage Documentation Programs. The project was cosponsored by HABS, Catherine C. Lavoie, Chief, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (HAFE), Rebecca Harriet, Superintendent; and the Harpers Ferry Center (HFC), Don Kodak, Director, all of the National Park Service (NPS). Project planning coordinated by Catherine C. Lavoie and Michael Alvarez, Deputy Associate Manager, HFC. The project leaders were architect Mark Schara and historian James A. Jacobs. Mark Schara and architecture technicians William Cooper Koning (University of Colorado) and Shane Gibbons (Northeastern University) produced the measured drawings; the project historian was Mark Barron (University of Maryland); and the large-format photography was produced by HABS photographer Renee Bieretz. Assistance provided by Peter Dessauer, historical architect, HAFE, and Doug Hicks, exhibit specialist, Historic Preservation Training Center, NPS.

ADDENDUM TO:
BIRD-BRADY HOUSE
Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
Camp Hill
Harpers Ferry
Jefferson County
West Virginia

HABS WV-304
HABS WV-304

PAPER COPIES OF COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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