HA-1754

Lewis J. Williams House Ca. 1910

Bel Air, Maryland

Private

The Lewis J. Williams House is a two and a half story frame house of the four-square type with an enclosed side porch and a rear ell with a second floor sleeping porch. The house displays Colonial Revival details in its full pedimented entrance porch, balustrade on the roof of the side porch and narrow clapboard siding. All reveal the renewed interest in American architecture which was common in the early 20th century. The Williams House is located in the first addition to the town limits of Bel Air, Major Dallam's Addition, platted in 1884 as a direct result of the coming of the railroad to Bel Air.

Survey No. HA-1754

Magi No. 1317545704

DOE ___yes _x_no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Lewis J. Williams House (preferred)

and/or common Judge Stewart O. Day House

2. Location

street & number 555 Rock Spring Avenue ___ not for publication

city, town Bel Air ___ vicinity of congressional district 2nd

state Maryland county Harford

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	_X_ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
_X_ building(s)	_X_ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	_X_ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	_X_ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	_x_ not applicable	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Patrick and Debbie Cassilly

street & number 144 Hickory Avenue telephone no.: (301) 838-7474

city, town Bel Air state and zip code MD 21014

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harford County Court House liber CGH 1405

street & number Courtland Street folio 939

city, town Bel Air state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. HA-1754

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Lewis J. Williams House is a two and a half story frame house built about 1910 on an approximately 3-acre lot on the northeast side of Rock Spring Avenue (Maryland Route 924) at the intersection of Howard Street in Bel Air, Maryland. The house and a frame shed built approximately the same date are set back from the road about 350 feet at the end of an unpaved looping driveway. The house has a three-bay main elevation with a pedimented entrance porch and an enclosed one-story side porch on the southeast elevation. A rear ell extends from the northeast corner of the main section and features an enclosed sleeping porch above a recessed rear porch. A mid-twentieth century bedroom addition is located in the south angle created by the ell. The slate gable roof contains two hipped roof dormers and an interior end chimney on the south. The shed is covered with vertical flush siding and has a standing seam metal roof and an open shed on the southeast. The interior of the house is notable primarily for its simple woodwork and an Adamesque mantel in the living room which may pre-date the house. Some upper story bathrooms contain apparently original fixtures.

See Continuation Sheets for General Description

8. Significance

Survey No. HA-1754

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	X community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates Ca. 1910 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: __A __B X C __D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national __state Xlocal

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The Lewis J. Williams House is representative of the early twentieth century expansion of the town of Bel Air as a result of the coming of the railroad and of the four-square house with Colonial Revival details, a type of domestic dwelling whihc became increasingly popular in the United States during the period 1870 - 1930 and in Bel Air primarily in the early twentieth century. The house is located in "Major Dallam's Addition", the first expansion of Bel Air, platted in 1884, one year after the arrival of the Maryland Central Railroad in the town. The Dallam Addition was one of two subdivisions of Dallam property, the other occurring in 1885 and located north of and adjacent to the first. Both are just north of the railroad line, a proximity which stimulated their growth. Although the Williams House was built about 25 years after the subdivisions were established, its architectural details, materials, and siting suggest the continuing popularity of the revival of historical styles in the development of the town.

See Continuation Sheets for Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data and Historic Context

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. HA-1754

Evening Sun, April 6, 1960, Judge Day's Succession as Chief Judge, Third Judicial Circuit.

Harford County Historical Society. Obituary, undated, unsourced, on Frederick R. Williams.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 10-1

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3.56

Quadrangle name Bel Air, Maryland **Quadrangle scale** 1:24000

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary includes the two parcels purchased in 1914 and 1920 by Lewis J. Williams, grandson of the probable builder of the house, Lewis J. Williams. Parcel 1 contains the house and shed.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janet L. Davis, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization **date** May 1989

street & number 5632-C Loch Raven Blvd. **telephone** (301) 323-3852

city or town Baltimore **state** MD 21239

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Lewis J. Williams House is a two and a half story frame house built about 1910 with a one-story shed outbuilding. The two buildings are located on the northeast side of Rock Spring Avenue, the main route into Bel Air from Rocks, continuing on to Bush on the nineteenth century turnpike route from Baltimore to Philadelphia. The lot is deeper than those on the north and south and the house is set back about 350 feet overlooking a lawn dotted with large evergreens and deciduous trees. An unpaved driveway enters the property from Rock Spring Avenue at the south property line and continues toward the house, crossing to the north just in front of the house and circling to the shed. A second driveway enters the lot from Howard Street on the north, connecting with the main entrance drive at the north side of the house.

The house is a four-square type with Colonial Revival details in its pedimented entrance porch. The main section of the house faces southwest, with three bays and a central entrance. The entrance porch has Tuscan columns and a complete pediment. The door surround is simple, without sidelights, and the door has a nine-light glazed upper panel. The exterior covering is narrow clapboards. The first story windows are eight-over-one and the second story windows are six-over-one. Green louvred shutters flank most windows in the house. The slate gable roof has two hipped dormers, each with a pair of six-light windows. The eaves are extended. A single brick chimney rises from the south end of the main section.

The north elevation reveals a double gable, with a projection from the northwest corner. The gables return, emphasizing the projection. In the projection, both the first and second stories have paired six-over-one sash. The rest of the fenestration is less regular in placement, but unified by the same six-over-one sash and shutters. The ell is also revealed on the north elevation, extending northeast and terminating in a sleeping porch with casement windows on the second story over a recessed rear porch. The ell also has extended eaves, cornice returns, and a slate gable roof.

The south elevation of the main section has a one-story enclosed sun room which was probably once an open porch. It is placed on brick piers, while the main part of the house has a stone foundation. Pairs of casement windows with 15 lights are centered on two sides and flank french doors leading from the porch to a modern wood stoop and brick terrace on the south. A balustrade lines the flat roof of the sun porch. Above it are two sets of french doors opening on the roof of the sun porch from the second story chambers. Small six-over-one windows light the half-story under the eaves of the gable end.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 7-2

The angle of the main section and ell apparently had a small shed porch. The present arrangement includes a one-story bedroom addition with wood siding and a bay window, partially enclosing the former shed porch which now contains a bathroom. The alteration appears to date from about the early 1970's. The addition has a raised concrete foundation. A second chimney rises from the roof of the ell.

The interior plan of the house belies the center hall plan indicated by its main facade (see Floor Plan). One enters directly into the living room with a wall directly left of the door with french doors leading into the dining room. The walls are plaster over lath. The simple dog-leg staircase is directly ahead of the entrance, but is open to its first landing. The living room has a fine Adamesque-inspired mantelpiece which may have been relocated from an earlier house. Its detail and craftsmanship are distinctly of a higher skill level than the rest of the woodwork in the house. The fireplace surround is red brick. The window and door frames are simple and unadorned by moldings. The twin newels of the staircase have plain walnut caps and simple recessed panels. The balusters are square. The dining room and living room floors are narrow oak. The dining room has two large corner china cupboards which are not original to the house and are free-standing from the wall. The sun porch has an oak floor and a tongue-and-groove ceiling, indicating its original open construction. A brick fireplace with a simple shelf mantel supported on ogee brackets backs up to the fireplace of the living room.

The upper floors of the house contain three chambers or bedrooms on the second and two rooms in the top half story. Each upper floor has a bathroom with clawfoot porcelain tubs and early twentieth century fixtures. The ell contains a fourth chamber and the sleeping porch.

The shed to the rear of the house may have served as a combined carriage house and stable. The standing seam metal roof extends into an open shed on the south. A pair of sliding doors on the north close off a central passage. The exterior is covered with vertical flush siding.

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Industrial/Urban Dominance, A.D. 1870 - 1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Themes:

Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Functions/Uses: Domestic/Single dwelling/Residence

Known Design Source: None

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 8-2

HISTORIC SETTING

The creation of Harford County from Baltimore County in 1773 was accomplished primarily to facilitate travel and communication between the agriculturally developing upper regions of the county with its seat of government. Since the original county seat at Baltimore took a great deal of time to reach, the new county seat was placed first at Bush on the Baltimore - Philadelphia turnpike route. This location was in turn thought to be still too far from the northern parts of Harford County and, in 1782, the government was moved to Scott's Old Fields, a tract on which the town of Bel Air was laid out. The town was planned essentially as a linear corridor roughly centered on the court house and jail lots, arranged on both sides of the northwest-to-southeast road from Rocks to Bush. Throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, Bel Air grew gradually into a small town of residences, small shops, and law offices, with much of its livelihood connected with the presence of the government. In the mid-nineteenth century, the population declined somewhat, for reasons undetermined, but probably linked to the town's lack of rail transportation. As business opportunities broadened in the already bustling port of Baltimore with the development of railroads, the small-town life of Bel Air, remote from the main turnpike route and with no industries of its own became less attractive. The intervention of the Civil War years did not significantly decrease the town's population, but neither did it increase.

The beginning of the canning industry in Harford County after the Civil War and the arrival of the Maryland Central Railroad in Bel Air in 1883 were the two most important boosts to Bel Air's prosperity. Businesses were founded and developed based on the availability of transport which in turn led to population growth. The Reckord Mill (HA-1470, HA-1473) was built in 1886 and expanded in 1891. This was the town's major industry until World War II. Located on the rail line which passed north of the original town limits, it helped foster growth along Rock Spring Avenue, the extension of Main Street into the route toward Rocks. Mrs. Mary Dallam laid out the first addition to the town in 1884, called "Major Dallam's Addition". It included the land east of Rock Spring Avenue from the railroad line to the present Howard Street. A second addition in 1885 extended the town to Vale Road. The lots in the first addition were quickly sold and built upon. The Gorrell House (HA-1479), built in 1888 at 551 Rock Spring Avenue, exemplifies the type of house: two stories with a rear ell, often a central gable and a front or side porch. Architectural elaboration was usually confined to cornices, brackets, and porch columns, although interior woodwork could be very fine. The owners of these houses were the small business owners, bank employees, lawyers, and others of the town's growing middle class. The lot just north of the Gorrell House remained larger than the rest of the Addition's developed lots and no evidence of previous buildings now exists. The house on this lot was built about 1910 by Lewis J. Williams during the peak of building activity and economic expansion just prior to World War I.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 8-3

RESOURCE HISTORY

The Lewis J. Williams House was built about 1910 by Williams, a physician in the U. S. Navy who died in 1913, leaving his property to his children, Stevenson A. Williams, an attorney, Frederick Williams, and Mary Williams. Another Lewis J. Williams, the son of Stevenson, purchased the approximately two-acre lot which contained the house and shed in 1914 and the remaining acre lot, bordering Rock Spring Avenue, in 1920. In 1936, Stewart O. Day, a local attorney, bought the two lots, retaining ownership until his death in 1985.

Stewart O. Day was born at Rocks, Harford County, in 1898. Educated in the public schools of the county and at Mercerburg Academy, he worked for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company prior to attending the University of Maryland Law School. After graduating, he practiced alone in Harford County until 1933 when he joined the firm of Tydings, Walsh, Levy, and Archer. This association enhanced his professional career and gave him the financial means to purchase the prpoerty on Rock Spring Avenue. Day held the post of referee in bankruptcy cases in Harford County from 1928 to 1946, and the same post in Baltimore City in 1946-47. He was a member and president of the Harford County Board of Education, counsel to the County Welfare Board, and chairman of the Board of Zoning Appeals in the mid-1950's. His wide recognition in the county's legal and municipal affairs undoubtedly was a factor in his election as associate judge in the Third Judicial Circuit in 1954. He became chief judge automatically in 1960 upon the retirement of his predecessor. Judge Day retired from the bench in 1967. Mrs. Day, the former Lorraine Price, who married Day in 1929, died in 1983. Judge Day died October 7, 1985.[1] The ground floor bedroom in the house is probably an addition made during Judge Day's retirement. The house and lot were purchased in 1987 by Patrick and Debbie Cassilly and it has been occupied by relatives of the Cassillys since that time.

[1] Obituaries, Baltimore Sun, Oct. 8, 1985, and Harford Record Democrat, Oct. 9, 1985.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 8-4

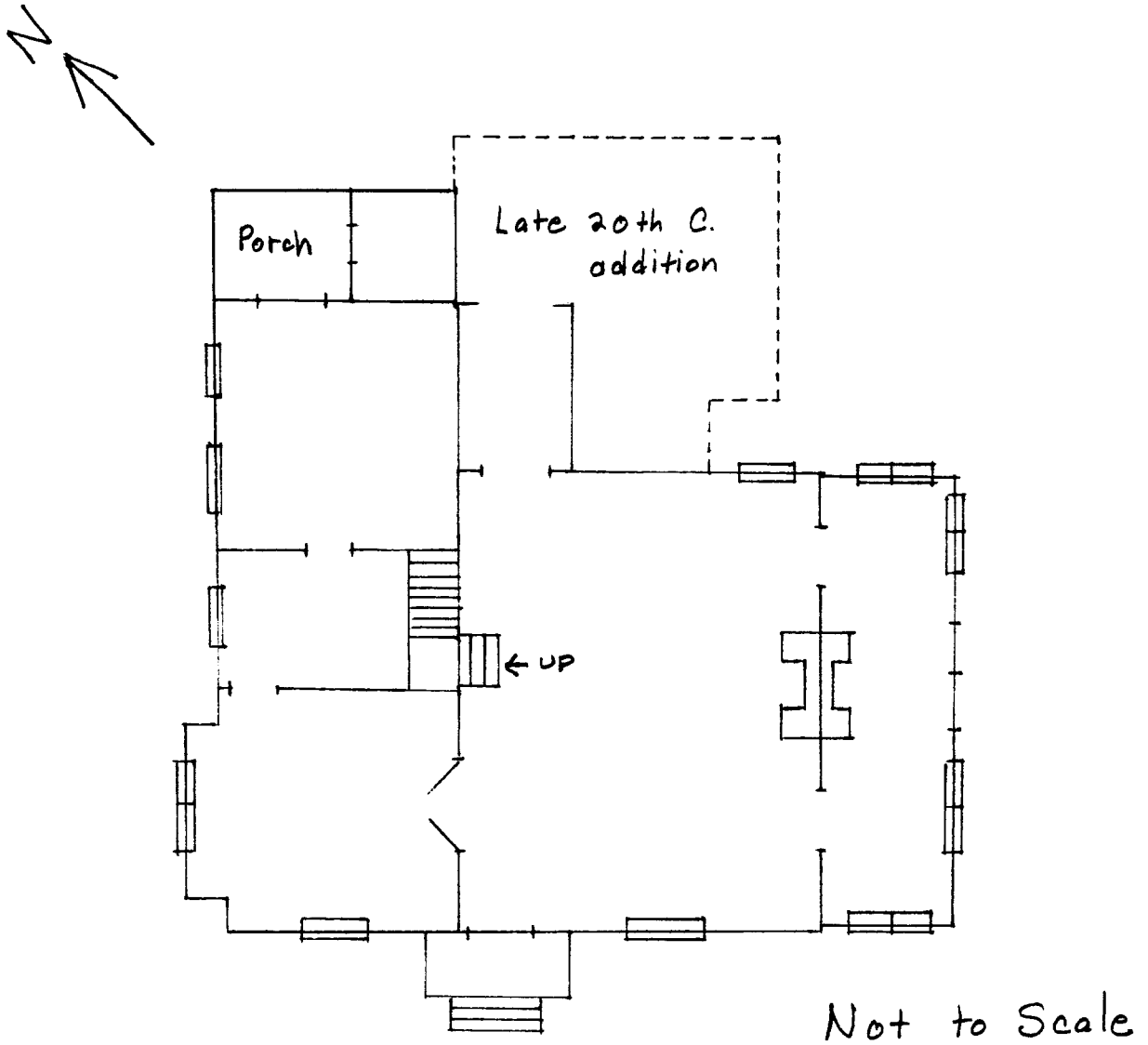
RESOURCE ANALYSIS

The Williams House represents the early twentieth century domestic architectural development in Bel Air during the period 1870 - 1930. Its basic exterior form of three bays and a central entrance with an entrance porch and rear ell are typical of the late nineteenth century in the town and in Harford County as a whole. However, the Williams House has applied details which identify it as a product of the period of renewed interest nationwide in American colonial and Federal architecture. These are the full pedimented porch roof, the balustraded side porch, and the narrow clapboard siding. The hipped roof dormers with paired windows also identify the building technology of the early twentieth century; these were features found on four-square houses well into the 1920's. The most nearly similar houses in Bel Air are the Forsythe House (HA-1422) and the General Reckord House (HA-1364), both built about the same time as the Williams House. Both of these have the hipped roofs more typical of the four-square, and different plans, but the Williams House retains its original siding and much of its interior plan, primarily because it has also remained a residence since its construction and has had only two family owners until 1987. The Williams House is not unique as a type or as an example of an architectural style. Its significance lies in its integrity of materials and plan and in its siting. The deep, set-back location on its large lot sets the house apart from the surrounding houses of both earlier and later dates. The feeling thus conveyed is of a small country estate house later engulfed by development. Although this tends to underscore the association of the house as the long-time home of a prominent jurist, the facts point to its being on a lot left undeveloped for reasons as yet unknown. The road opposite the secondary driveway on Howard Street is named Old Orchard Street, suggesting a possible agricultural field in the vicinity, although there is no known vestige of an orchard on the lot.

Harford Record Democrat, October 9, 1985. (Obituary, Judge Stewart O. Day)

Larew, Marilynn M. Bel Air: The Town Through Its Buildings. The Town of Bel Air and The Maryland Historical Trust, Edgewood, Md., 1981.

Sun, October 8, 1985. (Obituary, Judge Stewart O. Day.)



Lewis J. Williams House
HA-1754
Bel Air, Harford County
Maryland

May 1989
Janet L. Davis

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754

Harford County

Bel Air, MD quad

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
View of house from Rock Spring Ave.
1/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
West elevation
2/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
South elevation
3/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
Detail of south elevation and addition
4/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
North elevation
5/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
East elevation and ell
6/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
General view, entrance and dining room
7/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
Entrance to dining room
8/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
Main staircase
9/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
Mantelpiece in living room
10/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
General view in Sun room
11/12

Lewis J. Williams House HA-1754
Harford County, Maryland
Photographer: Janet Davis
May 1989
Neg. loc.: Maryland SHPO
Shed, south elevation
12/12