

Site Name:	Joseph Crawford House
CRS Number:	N-4036
Location:	2327 Pleasant Valley Road Glasgow vicinity Pencader Hundred New Castle County, Delaware
Date of Fieldwork:	March 2000
Type of Documentation:	Level II: Partial Intensive Annotated field notes (2 sheets) Measured drawings (1 sheet) 35mm color slides (1) Architectural data narrative

Threat: The Joseph Crawford House is suffering from neglect and deterioration and is threatened by encroaching development along Route 40. The current owners occupy the house only for storage purposes.

Significance: Constructed ca. 1855, the Joseph Crawford House is an unusual survivor as a log dwelling that retains a high degree of its architectural integrity. The Period I section is entirely intact and features a hall-chamber plan with the interior walls completely exposed on both the first and second floors.

Description: Located on the west side of Pleasant Valley Road, the Joseph Crawford House sits on a slight rise, approximately twenty-five feet from the road. The house is accessed by an asphalt drive to the south, and is surrounded by residential buildings to the south and east and a wooded area to the west.

The dwelling is a two-story frame and log building with a modern frame enclosed porch on the south elevation and a small shed-roofed addition off the north elevation. The house sits on a concrete and rubble fieldstone foundation and the gable roof is covered with asphalt. The main block has two interior end chimneys with concrete skins, and one-over-one replacement

windows. The structure is divided into two distinct sections: a Period I log section on the west and a Period II frame section on the east. The main entrance is on the north elevation of the east block; it has a single modern wood and glass door.

The log section is constructed of fairly uniform rough-hewn logs approximately nine inches thick joined at the corners with V-notching. On the interior the log walls are exposed and finished with whitewash. Mortar and scrap wood chinking, in poor condition, fills the space between the logs. Cut nails with square heads are visible. Ceiling joists are mill-sawn and whitewashed, measuring roughly six by two inches on two-foot centers.

The door on the north elevation of the Period II block opens into a ground-floor room with lath and plaster walls and random-width wood floors. The east wall of this room contains a narrow winder stair in the north corner, with a closet underneath. The stair box has a door with vertical wood battens. To the south of the stair stand a chimneystack and a cupboard. The lath on the walls appears to be mill-sawn. The floorboards in this room vary between seven and eight inches wide. Single windows on the north and south walls light the room. A door on the south wall leads into the shed addition and one on the west wall leads to the Period I section.

The second floor of the Period II (frame) section is divided into two small bedrooms and a narrow hallway. There is a small bedroom on the west side of the block and a second one in the southeast corner. A small hallway fills the northeast corner with the stair box. The west bedroom has wide floorboards, walls covered in drywall, one window on the north wall, and a closet at the northeast corner of the room. A window in the north wall lights the stair landing. The south bedroom is small with narrow planked wood floors and a plaster ceiling and walls. The room contains only one window, on the south wall.

The floorboards in the Period I first-floor room are narrower than in the Period II section and many have been replaced. An opening on the south wall leads to the shed addition, with a small one-over-one window directly to the west. There is a fireplace centered on the west wall with a closet to the south of the chimneystack. The closet door is constructed of vertical wood battens. An opening at the west end of the north wall leads to the modern shed addition. There is also a closet to the north of the stack, with a door similar to the one on the south closet. The

stair box is located at the northwest corner of the room; it is a corner winder stair with a vertical batten door.

The second floor of the log portion contains a single room, with its log walls exposed and whitewashed. The room has wide wood floorboards and a closet in the southwest corner with a wood batten door. The chimneystack jogs out at the center of the west wall. An entrance with a batten door located at the center of the east wall leads to the Period II wing.

History: Though not constructed until the mid-nineteenth century, the Joseph Crawford House stands on land owned by Samuel Guthrie, a yeoman, during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Guthrie owned four separate parcels of land in the Glasgow vicinity; the parcel on which the Joseph Crawford House now stands contained 170 acres. Though the site of the present-day house was designated “cleared land,” a frame dwelling house was located on the south side of the “road leading from Glasgow to Elkton,” or present-day Route 40.

When Samuel Guthrie died in 1826, the New Castle County Orphans Court took jurisdiction over his property. In 1833 the court conveyed two of the four tracts to Guthrie’s son, William, while the remaining two were sold at a public auction. Eldad Lore and his wife, Priscilla, paid \$885 for Tract No. 2.⁶⁶ Eldad and Priscilla retained the property until April 1836 when they sold it to Frederick Racine for \$1,050. Though the house had not yet been constructed, the transaction between Lore and Racine contains an interesting stipulation. Eldad and Priscilla conveyed all of their holdings to Racine, save for a ¼-acre parcel of land.⁶⁷ This small parcel was conveyed for \$1 to “a certain society of coloured people for the special purposes of erecting a house for religious worship.”⁶⁸ Historic maps indicate this was likely the origin of the St. Thomas African Church, which still stands just half a mile south of the Joseph Crawford House on Frenchtown Manor Road.

Frederick Racine and his wife, Susan, retained the property until September 1843. At this time they divided the 170 acres, conveying approximately 18 acres to Alexander Crawford

⁶⁶ Delaware State Archives, New Castle County Orphan’s Court, Samuel Guthrie case file.

⁶⁷ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Book X4, Page 107.

⁶⁸ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, BookY4, Page 170.

and his wife, Annie.⁶⁹ Alexander and Annie held the property for just over a decade, conveying it to Joseph Crawford for \$300 in April 1855.⁷⁰ Though visual inspection of the property indicates a construction date during the mid-nineteenth century, an 1849 map does not depict the building, suggesting that the house was not constructed by Alexander and Annie Crawford.⁷¹ The house is shown, however, on an 1868 map.⁷² It seems, then, that Joseph and Susanna Crawford constructed the log dwelling following their purchase of the property in 1855.

Joseph Crawford died intestate and left the property to his wife, Susanna, and their sons, William, Daniel, Charles, Andrew, and George. Susanna and her sons occupied the property until January 1890, when they sold it to Moses Webster for \$500.⁷³ A 1909 tax assessment for Webster indicates his holdings as 22 acres of land, 12 of which contain “FH,” likely meaning frame house. The total value of his real estate equaled \$825.⁷⁴

After Moses’ death, the property was willed to his sons Lewis W., Isaac E., John, and Charles H. and his wife, Annie. In July 1920, Annie and her sons conveyed the property to Jacob Guy of Wilmington for \$800.⁷⁵ Jacob Guy sold the property, now containing approximately 11 acres, to Edna Money in June 1941 for \$5.⁷⁶ In November 1998, Money sold the property to the current owner, Tambra Evans, for \$10.⁷⁷

⁶⁹ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Book N5, Page 415.

⁷⁰ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Book V6, Page 270.

⁷¹ Rea & Price, Map of New Castle County, Delaware (Philadelphia: Rea & Price, 1849).

⁷² D.G. Beers, Atlas of the State of Delaware (Philadelphia: Pomeroy & Beers, 1868).

⁷³ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Book D15, Page 405.

⁷⁴ New Castle County Tax Assessments, 1909, Moses Webster.

⁷⁵ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Book U28, Page 596.

⁷⁶ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Book O42, Page 258.

⁷⁷ New Castle County Recorder of Deeds, Book 2537, Page 78.

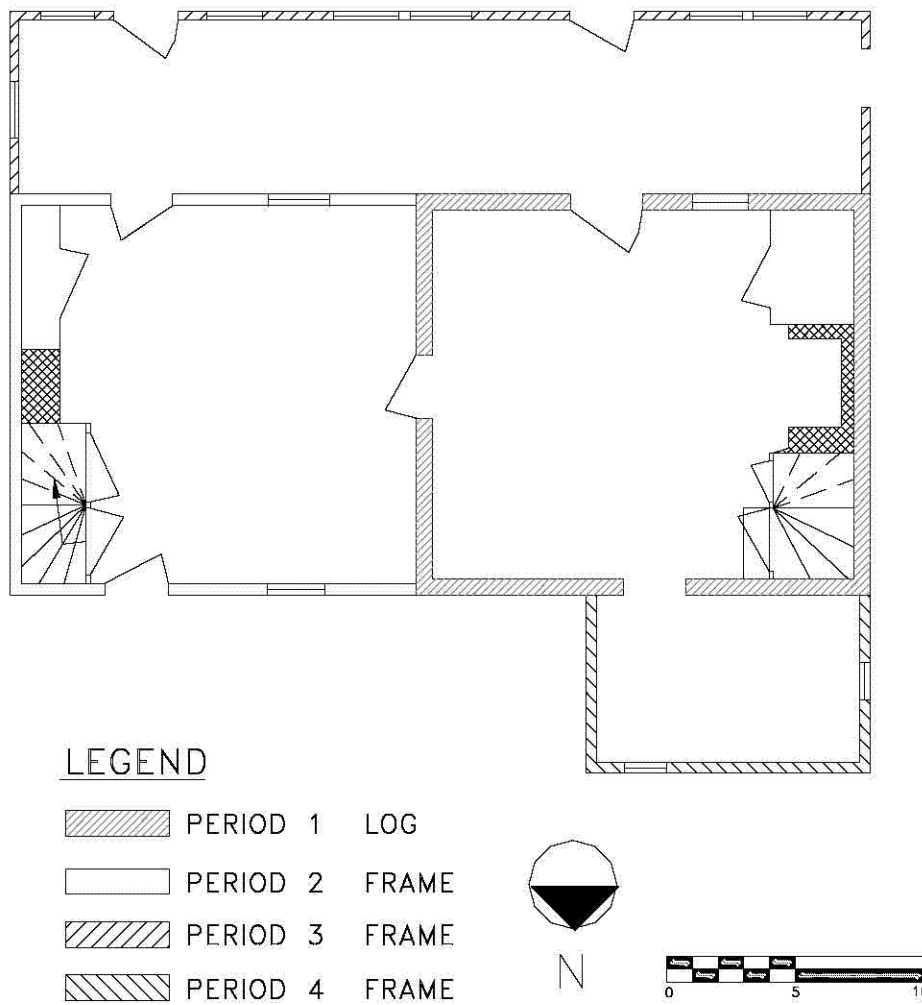


Figure 75: Joseph Crawford House, first floor plan.

MID-ATLANTIC HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY**INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS**

Joseph Crawford House
2327 Pleasant Valley Road
Glasgow vicinity
Pencader Hundred
New Castle County, Delaware

DE CRS # N-4036

Photographer: Rebecca J. Sheppard

March 2000

N-4036-1 Perspective view of the south and east elevations, looking northwest



Figure 76: Joseph Crawford House, view of south and east elevations looking northwest.