

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Morehead Hill Historic District – Additional Documentation

Durham, Durham County, DH1339ad, Listed 07/13/2017

Nomination by Gary Kueber

Photographs by Gary Kueber, January, February and May 2017



803 and 807 Vickers Avenue



803 Vickers Avenue



Original location in blue, and new location in red

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NOMINATION AMENDMENT

1. Name of Property

Morehead Hill Historic District, Additional Documentation

2. Location

Street and Number: 803 and 807 Vickers Avenue

City or Town: Durham

State: North Carolina code: NC County: Durham Code: Zip Code: 27701

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other,(explain:)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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7. Description

The houses at 803 Vickers (Franklin House) and 807 Vickers (Brame House) were constructed ca. 1901 at 505 and 507 Yancey Street respectively.¹ Yancey Street is an east-west street in Durham, Durham County, North Carolina. Until the 1960s, the neighborhood surrounding Yancey Street was residential in character, with housing extending east to the American Tobacco Company and north to the North Carolina Railroad.² The rectangular lots on the south side of the street sloped downward from north to south, with a tributary of Third Fork Creek at the bottom of the slope. In the 1960s, the area east of South Duke Street was razed by Urban Renewal, and the Durham Freeway (NC 147) was constructed in the 'valley' formed by the tributary to the south of the houses.³ The 500 and 600 blocks of Yancey Street were severed from the 700+ blocks of Yancey Street by the freeway. Private commercial infill occurred to the north of the houses. At some point thereafter (but prior to 1997) the land was zoned commercial / office.

In 1985, the portion of the neighborhood south of the Durham Freeway was designated as the Morehead Hill National Register Historic District.⁴ Due to separation by the freeway from the remainder of the neighborhood, the houses north of the Durham Freeway, including 505 Yancey Street and 507 Yancey Street, were not included in nomination.

As of 2015, the Brame and Franklin houses were two of five remaining one-story triple-A workers' cottages on the south side of the 500 and 600 blocks of Yancey Street. Adjacent to the north was a 1980s commercial office development.⁵ To the east was a 1970s law office and parking lot, to the south was the Durham Freeway, and to the west was 601 Yancey Street, a small folk Victorian triple-A cottage of similar vintage to the Brame and Franklin houses.⁶

Each house sat on a 0.2 acre parcel, set back approximately 15 feet from of the street curb. A concrete 15 by 10 foot driveway at the western property line was located at the northwest corner of the 507 Yancey Street lot. A concrete walkway extended from the back of the curb to two precast concrete steps at the mid-point of the front porch. Several mature trees and bushes were located at the front of 803 Vickers and along the western and eastern property lines. The land sloped gradually back such that while the front porch was approximately two feet above grade, the finished floor elevation at the rear of the house was approximately 8 feet above grade.

A crushed stone and dirt driveway was located at the northwest corner of the 505 Yancey Street lot. A broken concrete walkway led from the back of curb to the midpoint of the front porch. Mature trees were located in front of the house and along the western and eastern property lines. The lot sloped minimally from front to back.

From December 2015 to March 2016, steel beams were placed underneath the houses to support sills and girders. A ca. 1990 deck was removed from the Franklin House. The brick and CMU foundations were demolished, as were the main chimneys in both houses. A small chimney that sat on the ceiling joists was also removed from the Franklin house. A small chimney on the Brame house was supported on steel beams. The steel beams sat atop larger steel beams, which were temporarily supported on wooden 'cribbing' while the foundation rubble was cleared.

¹ Durham City Directories for 1903/1904, 1905/1906, 1907/1908 and Durham County Deed Records

² 1913 and 1937 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

³ Durham Urban Renewal Valuation/Appraisal Records

⁴ Morehead Hill National Register of Historic Places Inventory

⁵ Durham County Tax Records

⁶ Durham County Tax Records and 1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

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Small houses stood on 803 and 807 Vickers Avenue, a north-south street, in the early 20th century.⁷ These were destroyed in 1966, and the land was vacant thereafter. Prior to the house move, the lots at 803 and 807 Vickers were overgrown with a mixture of hardwood trees and grasses on the front 1/3 of the lot, an open area in which the owner grew fruits and vegetables in the middle 1/3, and hardwood trees overgrown with vines in the rear 1/3. The lots sloped steeply from west to east. To the west and south of the lots are early 20th century single-family residential structures. To the north and east is the Durham Freeway. The front 2/3 of the lots were cleared and partially graded prior to the house move. Footings for new foundations were dug and poured prior to the house move.

In March of 2016, the Brame house was moved by truck to 807 Vickers Avenue, where the steel was supported on wooden cribbing directly over the poured footings. In April of 2016, the Franklin house was moved by truck to 803 Vickers Avenue, where the steel was supported on wooden cribbing directly over the poured footings. The new location of the buildings is within the boundaries of the Morehead Hill Historic District, making them contributing resources to the district.

The Franklin House sits approximately 15 feet back from the right-of way on a block foundation. There is a concrete sidewalk along the front of the lot, and a dry-laid brick walkway connects the front porch to the sidewalk. There are two trees and various shrub plantings in the front yard. The lot slopes steeply back from the front to the rear. The northern side of the house is landscaped, with a privacy fence along the northern property line and a treated lumber deck built to finished floor height. The southern side of the house has multiple, stepped three foot tall, 6 x 6 wood planters as well as a concrete driveway, shared with 807 Vickers Avenue, leading to a 'tuck-under' garage underneath the house. The front of house finished floor is approximately one foot above sidewalk grade. The rear of the house is approximately 15 feet above grade. The rear of the lot slopes down to several mature trees with the Durham Freeway along the northern and rear property lines.

The Brame House sits approximately 15 feet back from the right-of way on a block foundation. There is a concrete sidewalk along the front of the lot. The front yard is raw dirt and broken concrete. The northern side of the house has a concrete driveway, shared with 803 Vickers, leading to a 'tuck-under' garage underneath the house. The southern side of the house is raw dirt, and a treated lumber deck exists at finished floor level. The front of house finished floor is approximately one foot above sidewalk grade. The rear of the house is approximately 15 feet above grade. The rear of the lot slopes down to several mature trees with the Durham Freeway along the northern and rear property lines.

Franklin House - 803 Vickers Avenue, ca. 1901 Contributing Building

The Franklin House is a single story triple-A gable-and-wing cottage that sits on a concrete block foundation which is brick veneered at the front and parged on the sides and back. From sill to the roof peak, the house is 21 foot 6 inches tall. It is 35 feet 5 inches wide along the front pile and 46 feet 10 inches deep.

The nearly full-width front porch roof is standing seam metal, painted red, while the remainder of the roof is asphalt shingle. Four turned wooden posts support the front porch roof with a turned wooden baluster railing on the front and sides of the porch. The front porch had been enclosed in ca. 1970, and these posts and balusters were added when the front porch was re-opened in 2003. Siding is 1x5 lapped wood weatherboards. The house is three bays wide. Windows on the front pile are wood, two-over-two divided light double hung windows, while those on the wing are one-over-one paired wood double-hung windows. The central wooden front door consists of two 24" Italianate leaves with glass in the top, arched panel and a squared chamfered wood panel below. Outside of these doors is a single 48" wooden storm/screen door with four screen panels and removable Lexan panels that was added in 2005.

⁷ Ibid. and Photographs of 803 and 807 Vickers from Milo Pyne

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The ca. 1990 shed ell has two 18" x 18" wood casement windows and a fixed 30" x 60" horizontally oriented glass window. The wooden rear door, off of this ell, has a fixed glass upper panel and 3 horizontal wood panels below. A new treated lumber deck was constructed behind the front pile in 2016, accessed by the rear door, with treated lumber stairs leading down to the garage.

The CMU foundation is brick veneered on the front façade and parged on the side and rear façades. Two 9' x 8' paneled painted metal garage doors with two top rows of glass panels and three rows of metal panels are directly below the wing portion of the house, facing south towards the shared driveway.

The house was built ca. 1901. Residents were predominantly employed by Liggett and Meyers Tobacco Company.⁸ In 1921, it was purchased by Minnie and Otho Franklin.⁹ They lived in the house with their daughter until 1971.¹⁰ The house was subsequently converted to a duplex, with partial enclosure of the front porch. In ca. 1990, a new kitchen-and-bathroom ell was constructed in the area between the front pile and rear wing.

In 1997, Gary Kueber purchased the house, reverting it to owner-occupancy, and restored the front pile and rear wing to their original single family configuration and original finishes, while retaining the ca. 1990 kitchen and bathroom ell.

Brame House - 807 Vickers Avenue, ca. 1901 Contributing Building

The Brame House is a single story triple-A gable-and-wing cottage that sits on a concrete block foundation which is brick veneered at the front and parged on the sides and back. From sill to roof peak, it is 20 foot 6 inches tall, 35 feet 5 inches wide along the front pile, and 68 feet deep. There are two nine foot x eight foot openings on the north side of the foundation underneath the house.

The nearly full-width front porch has four wood Tuscan columns supporting the front porch roof, which is galvanized 5v10. The remainder of the roof is asphalt shingle. Siding is 1x5 lapped wood weatherboards mixed with cementitious siding. The house is three bays wide. Windows throughout the house are wood one-over-one double hung windows. The wood front door consists of two pegged shaker panel leaves joined with a 3 inch strip to make a 40 foot door, with three-light sidelights on each side. The front door was rebuilt in 2011.

The rebuilt kitchen has a three door (one fixed) wooden French door exit on the southern façade leading out to a pressure-treated lumber deck which was added in 2011. The deck sits between the rear wing and the 1920s ell, which is sided with wooden German siding and has a single light over three panel wooden door leading from the deck into the former kitchen for one of the apartments.

A bedroom/bath addition was added to the rear of 807 Vickers in 2016, accomplished by extending the rear gable wing an additional 17 feet back/east. The addition is the same width as the existing wing: 14 foot 2 inches, with no setback. The effect is of an extension of the rear wing to be longer without otherwise changing the roofline. At the time of this nomination, the addition is sheathed only and has no windows. It will be distinguished from the original footprint by a vertical transition board in the siding.

The Brame House was built ca. 1901. Residents were predominantly employed by Liggett and Meyers Tobacco Company.¹¹ In 1926, the house was purchased by John N. and Clara Brame.¹² The Brames likely added a shed ell to the rear of the front pile of the house in the 1920s or 1930s. The Brames lived in the house until 1966.¹³

⁸ Durham City Directories
⁹ Durham County Deed Records
¹⁰ Ibid.
¹¹ Durham City Directories

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The house was subsequently converted to a duplex, with partial enclosure of the front porch, and the addition of two more shed ells on the rear of the house. The entire house was vinyl-sided. In January 2010, the Brame house burned, destroying the roof and rear-most room of the wing. Gary Kueber purchased the house in March 2010, rebuilt the roof, reopened the front porch, partially restored the front door and restored the original window configuration on the front pile during 2010-2011. The two shed ells added in the 1960s were removed entirely.

¹² Durham County Deed Records

¹³ Ibid.

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8. Statement of Significance

Both the Brame and Franklin houses were typical of the houses built for employees of the tobacco factories by independent developers that characterized much of the northern portion of the original West End / Morehead Hill neighborhood.¹⁴ These small, one-story, frame workers' cottages with triple-A, hipped, or gabled roofs are common in the northern portion of the Morehead Hill Historic District, including houses in the 700 and 800 blocks of Shepherd Street, the 600 and 700 blocks of Arnette Avenue, the 700 and 800 blocks of Yancey Street and the 700 and 800 blocks of Parker Street. These houses are predominantly simple in form and detail, but exhibit some custom detailing that distinguishes them from more simple and repetitive mill housing. Both the Brame and Franklin houses had double-leaf front doors (2 x 24" for the Franklin house and 2 x 20" for the Brame house).

The houses that originally stood at 803 and 807 Vickers Avenue (and in the 700 block of Vickers Avenue, demolished for the Durham Freeway) were single-story, cross-gabled structures of similar design and massing to the Brame and Franklin houses. Those houses were demolished in 1966.¹⁵ The Brame and Franklin houses, prior to the construction of the Durham Freeway, were in the same physical block as 803 and 807 Vickers and part of the same contiguous neighborhood of houses built between the 1880s and 1930s.¹⁶¹⁷

Increasing high-density development and pending sales of single-family land in the area around the 500 and 600 blocks of Yancey Street in the period of 2012-2015 portended a further decrease in the single-family residential character of the adjacent neighborhood, and the owner feared that demand and zoning would result in the demolition of the Brame and Franklin houses at their Yancey Street location.

The Brame and Franklin houses contribute to the significance of the Morehead Hill National Register district by providing additional examples of the predominant transitional Victorian / cross-gabled / triple-A houses that exemplified housing for workers affiliated with the tobacco industry in Durham. They remain a part of the historic neighborhood in which they were developed in 1901, having only later been separated by the Durham Freeway.

¹⁴ Durham Architectural Inventory

¹⁵ Photographs of 803 and 807 Vickers from Milo Pyne

¹⁶ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

¹⁷ 1891 Birds Eye View of Durham

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9. Bibliographic References

1960s photographs of 700 and 800 blocks of Vickers Avenue, personal collection of Milo Pyne.

Aerial Photographs Durham, NC April 1959. Originals held by Durham County Library.

Brown, Claudia; Lea, Diane; Leary, Robert. Durham Architectural and Historic Inventory. City of Durham, 1982.

Durham County Deed Records.

Hill City Directory for Durham: 1903/4, 1905/6, 1907/8, 1909/10, 1915/1916, 1917, 1919/1920, 1922, 1927, 1933, 1943, 1948, 1952, 1955, 1959, 1962.

"Morehead Hill Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1985. North Carolina Historic Preservation Office

North Carolina Historic Preservation Office – survey photo for 505 and 507 Yancey Street. ca.1980.

Sanborn Maps for Durham, North Carolina: 1907, 1913, 1937, and 1950.

United States Federal Census: 1930, 1940.

Urban Renewal Appraisal Records for Durham, NC. May be viewed at <http://www.digitalnc.org/exhibits/durham/>

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10. 803 Vickers : 8274 sf / 0.189 acres ; 807 Vickers 10,359 sf / 0.237 acres

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Morehead Hill Historic District Additional Documentation

City or Vicinity: Durham

County: Durham

State: North Carolina

Photographer: Gary Kueber

Date Photographed: January, February and May 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1. Streetscape showing 803 Vickers Avenue and 807 Vickers Avenue, view southeast.
2. 803 Vickers Avenue, view northeast.
3. 807 Vickers Avenue, view northeast.

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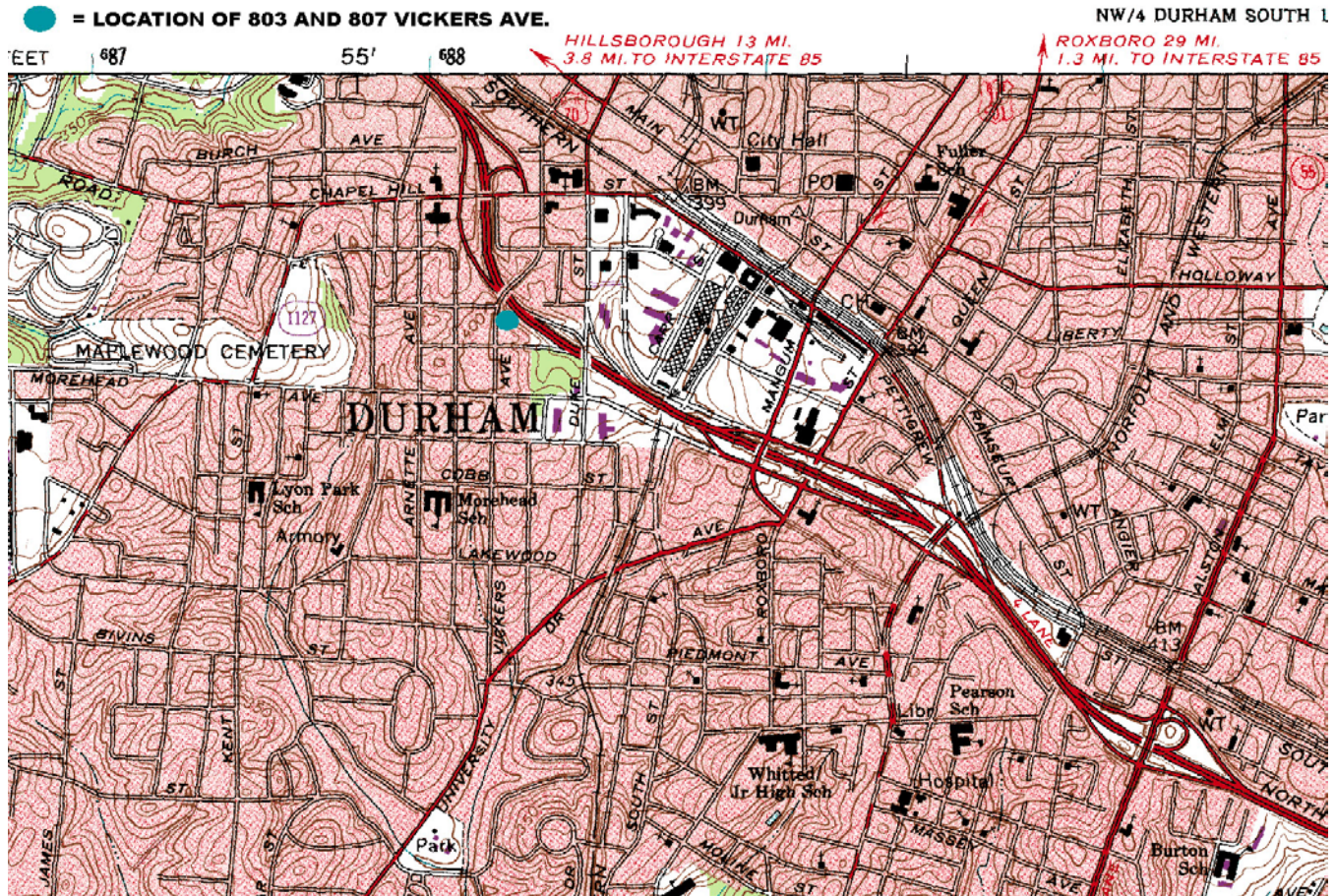
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