

history  
~~Emory's House~~  
Groves House

A The estate on which this house was built ~~1840~~ consisted of two tracts of land, one on Little Creek, one totaling 164 acres and the other 15 acres, <sup>that Henry Groves</sup> purchased ~~by~~ around 1824-26 from Thomas Triplett and his wife Margaret. Land tax books ~~show one from 1839~~ <sup>in 1840 for the first time show</sup> an improvement worth \$180 on the property. ~~beginning in 1839~~ Groves also owned property in Dumfries and may have resided there from 1832 to 1838 or 39, when it is supposed that his house there was destroyed by fire. Groves' will of 1850 leaves everything he owned to his wife, Mary, and his children, William H., Margaret E., John W., Mary C., and Jane R. At Groves' death in 1865, he was buried in the public cemetery <sup>in some of their</sup> Triangle where Groves' two wives and <sup>children</sup> are also buried. William H. Groves acquired the property from his sisters, co-heirs, and in 1900 transferred it to W. H. Keys, in exchange for Keys' caring for Groves until his death. The tract, 191 acres was described in the Transfer as being adjacent to Graham Park.

In 1903, R. B. Abel purchased 28 3/4 acres of the Groves estate from W. H. and Annie Keys. The <sup>deed's</sup> attached plat shows a house in the center of the tract. In ~~1903~~<sup>1940</sup>, Abel sold the property to James ~~William~~ Kerr Edwin Kerr. The present owner, Ethel D. Kerr, is the widow of James E. Kerr.

Tradition and the WPA guide to Prince William County have associated this house with Richard Ennis, Sr., a Dumfries saddle maker. According to the guidebook, p. 95, the <sup>site of the</sup> old Ennis House was east of Triangle and north of the "Government Road" <sup>(Fuller Road)</sup>. A graveyard near the <sup>Ennis</sup> house site contained the graves of Mary and Sarah, two of Ennis' wives, and that of C. B. Browner, d. 1817. According to the same guidebook, the site of the Luskett house and another old graveyard were ~~also~~ in the same area as the Ennis home. ~~Though Ennis never owned the house Groves House, it is possible that he~~

mentioned in the WPA guide, are also gone.

The similarity of the Groves House with the long-demolished Merchant House, for which HABS drawings exist, suggests that the Groves house may in part have been built earlier than the suggested date of construction, 1840. An archeological survey and closer inspection of the thick-walled 20' x 34' stone and brick basement may support a 1700s date of construction for the basement.