

The History of the Brumbaugh Property

By Tina Barton, July 2024



Introduction

The address of the Brumbaugh House is 5825 Main Street, Elkridge, Maryland. It is the headquarters of the Elkridge Heritage Society, and contains documents, photographs, artwork, maps and other artifacts pertaining to Elkridge history. It is best known as the home and office of Dr. Benjamin Bruce Brumbaugh (1890 to 1985). The doctor's office and waiting room have been preserved as Dr. Brumbaugh left them, but they need some renovation to remove hazardous materials and fix water damage. The house is well-named, as Dr. Brumbaugh lived in the house

the longest, and was a much loved doctor in Elkridge from 1918 until his retirement around 1980. The house is more fully described in “Analysis of the Brumbaugh House by a Couple of Amateurs” co-written by the author and Drew Roth. In this document, we focus on historic maps, documents in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, land records, wills, census records and court records. The author is most grateful to Drew Roth for his very thorough deed searches and other analyses instrumental in the writing of this document.

According To The Old Maps

According to the 1860 Martenet map below, the Brumbaugh property was owned by Joseph D. Pettit, circled in red. The Pettits owned several properties in the village of Elkridge Landing, but in this document, we only care about the one that became the homesite of Dr. Brumbaugh.



In the 1878 Hopkins map below, the Pettit property (again circled in red) was inherited by Thomas Pettit, his father having died in the 1860s.

Without the court documents, we could not confirm that the Pettits actually owned the property, much less figure out how they got it. We spent some weeks theorizing and going down rabbit holes until we got the documents.

A little genealogy shed some light about the Pettit family, which was inspired by a deed which Drew Roth found through an index search of the land records. The 1865 deed was in Howard County deed book 24, page 126, and in it, Charles Talbott conveyed land to Anna Pettit for \$5.00. At first, this was how we thought the Pettits came to own the Brumbaugh property. However, upon further inspection, the deed described the land as being near the 8-mile mark of the Washington Turnpike, and near the “Hanover Switch” of the B&O Railroad. According to the 1860 Martenet Map, that switch is close to Hanover Road and, in fact, the map shows “A. Talbott Heirs” on a piece of property just south of Hanover Road on the eastern side of the Turnpike. There is a mention of other deeds and so paging back, we saw that it was Joseph Pettit who started this whole set of transfers by deeding the land to his wife Anna, or Annie. But it still did not explain why Joseph owned the land. The older deeds referenced in these deeds indicated that Alan (or Allan) Talbott owned this particular property. A theory was that Joseph Pettit was somehow related to “A. Talbott” and inherited it. Thus began the genealogy.

Joseph was married to his wife Ann Pettit and had several children, but apparently only Thomas and Annie survived to adulthood. According to her gravestone, Ann Pettit died in 1847. So how did she get involved in the deed transactions in 1865? In fact, the 1860 census shows Joseph without a wife. Well, Joseph married again, to another Ann, or Anna, or Annie. Thank you very much Joseph! This Anna was previously Anna Talbott, wife of Alan Talbott. Tada! Charles was her son from her first marriage. Because in those days a woman’s property became her husband’s upon marriage, and this wasn’t fair to her children, an arrangement was made whereby some of this land went to Anna, and some to her children. But this was one of our rabbit holes because this land had nothing to do with the Brumbaugh property! So Anna or Annie Pettit, from around 1865, was the stepmother of Thomas and Annie. Furthermore, Annie, the stepdaughter, married Robert Milling, though Robert Milling apparently died or was away from home a lot, being a military man. This exercise did make some things clear to us.

For example, a big clue about the Pettits was in HO-509, a document in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties about the “Mrs. Mills Double House”, which described some of the history of the case. It mentioned the 1877 court case of Thomas Pettit vs Annie Milling. Now we know that Annie Milling was Thomas’s sister. The “Mrs. Mills Double-House” property was put up for auction in 1889 as a result of yet another court proceeding in 1889, which was brought by Anna Pettit against her stepchildren Thomas Pettit and Annie Milling (but at first we thought Anna Pettit was their own mother). According to the document, Equity case LJW 19 folio 155-194 resulted in the court deciding that the properties were not well-cared-for and should be sold at auction, and the proceeds divided among the Pettits, but it is not clear if the Brumbaugh Property is part of that case. HO-509 (since demolished) was supposedly sold at auction as Lot 3 north of the railroad tracks and bought by John Wyatt for \$900 according to HO-509, but this is an error. A 1906 deed says there were no adequate offers, so the sale was called off, and in

1906 the land was conveyed to the Toomey family. This is a rabbit hole, and not relevant to our story, except to brook confusion as will be shown. Unfortunately, the Maryland State Archives did not have, or could not find, the court documents for the 1889 case so we still don't know if the Brumbaugh property was one of those not-well-cared-for properties.

The Archives did have the 1877 case documents. Thomas Pettit took his sister Annie Milling to court regarding the land they inherited from their father Joseph, who died in 1873. The result of the court case was that the various parcels of land owned by Joseph were divided up between the siblings. This led us to earlier deeds which showed how the Brumbaugh property came to be owned by the Pettits.

The Hanover Tract, The Hammonds and The Hopkins

It all started with the Hammonds, a very large and wealthy family in early Maryland, and a tract called Hanover that came into the hands of the Hammonds. In the 1700s, Hanover encompassed all of what became the town of Elk Ridge Landing, and much more besides. Imagine a rectangle that includes all of Lower Elkridge to the Patapsco, along Furnace Avenue to include Deep Run, running down Deep Run to Hanover Road, and then up Loudon Avenue and then cutting back along Old Washington Road to Main Street. The Hammonds helped lay out the town of Elk Ridge Landing and were involved in the furnaces as well. There's a bigger story here, but to stay focused on the Brumbaugh property, we will be brief. Colonel Charles Hammond died in 1777 and in his will, he left tracts of Hanover to his sons Philip, Charles and John. The bulk of it went to Philip. To his daughter Hannah, he left Bachelor's Hall (which is near where Ducketts Lane is now) and something called Hammond's Discovery. See Anne Arundel County Will Book 33, page 25 (which you can view in FamilySearch for free). However, in Philip's 1822 will (AACo Will Book 39, page 129) he never mentions Hanover. He divided up something he called Hammond's Connection among his children. Somehow his sister Hannah ended up with the Hanover tract. We don't have deed records for that but it is worth investigating as part of the larger story.

What we do know is that Hannah Hammond and her husband Dr. Richard Hopkins obtained some tracts of Hanover and divided them up between their children in 1824. See Anne Arundel County deed book 10, starting with page 59 where Richard vests his wife with an estate. Following that, the two of them sold property to their children Rezin, Thomas, Charles, Richarda, Mary, Hannah, Sextus and Septimus, and each got a piece of property for \$1.00. Richarda Hopkins is granted a part of the Hanover property in deed book 10 page 66. This property extends all the way from the Patapsco River to the 8 mile marker of the turnpike (which we believe to be at Hanover Road). Thomas got Bachelor's Hall and Charles got some other parts of Hanover closer to Deep Run. Dr. Richard Hopkins' oldest son, Rezin, died in 1839 without issue, and left his property to his siblings. It was through his will that we found out that Richarda had relocated to Cecil County as the wife of a Mr. Dawson. Further research finds her in the 1850 census with Robert Dawson in Cecil County with several children. According to the 1850 census, Sextus lived with his sister Hannah shortly before his death in Elkridge, and Hannah

married a Cole and had offspring. She also died in Elkridge. Septimus had a family and appears to have stayed in Elkridge as well.

As an interesting aside, Dr. Richard Hopkins and Dr. Joel Hopkins (whose home appears on the 1860 map above) were likely first cousins, grandsons of Gerrard Hopkins II. Dr. Richard's father was Johns Hopkins, the uncle of Johns Hopkins, the founder of Johns Hopkins Hospital. Dr. Joel Hopkins was some 20 years younger than his cousin Richard, and his house still stands (See HO-505). Dr. Joel was about 20 years younger than his cousin Dr. Richard, the latter having died in 1832. Dr. Joel is said to have been a popular doctor who lived into his 80s much like Dr. Brumbaugh. We tried to trace the deeds to the Hopkins House just to see if the Hopkins Family sold the land it is on to Dr. Joel, but lost the trail. According to HO-505, it was built in the 1830s, so if Dr. Joel came to Elkridge when Dr. Richard died, it would make sense that he built the house.

A Piece of Hanover becomes Dr. Brumbaugh's Property

To return to the fate of what is now called the Brumbaugh Property, you might have guessed by now that in 1824, it was a small part of the property of Richarda Hopkins. Richarda Hopkins sold a portion of property to Eliphalet Parsons, according to the Anne Arundel County Deed in Book 10, Page 349. This deed describes the land as across from James Hill and mentions a meeting house, and land also previously owned by Dr. Richard Hopkins and already conveyed to Eliphalet Parsons.

In 1836, Eliphalet Parsons sold the land to John and Emily Butler of Elk Ridge Landing in Anne Arundel County, according to Book 21, page 389 of Anne Arundel County land records. The Butlers leased the land to Elijah Conrad, also in 1836, which is documented in the land record in book 21 page 515 (AACo).

Ken Short, who works for Howard County, performed more research about the Butlers and Conrads. He found that John Butler, apparently acting as a developer, created a ground rent the following year so that Elijah Conrad could build on the lot without having to put up the cash for the land. Conrad had to pay only \$9.00 a year in ground rent and could redeem the ground rent by paying Butler \$128 for the land. Conrad was assessed for a new house worth \$200 in the County transfer books in 1844, suggesting he probably built the house in 1843. This is likely the core of the Brumbaugh House, though one can never be absolutely certain, since Conrad could have built more than one house. Only one shows up in the tax records. Conrad then mortgaged the property for \$400 in 1845 to Joseph Pettit, and was required to insure the buildings, thus confirming that something had been built by this time. By 1848 Conrad owed Pettit \$668.42 ½ and apparently could not meet his debts, so to settle, he sold the buildings on the lot to Pettit for \$742.

Genealogical research on Elijah Conrad (sometimes spelled Conrod) indicate he was a shoemaker, born in Maryland, and married in Maryland. His father was from Germany, and his

mother was from Maryland. After he sold his lot to Joseph Pettit, Elijah moved to Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. The 1870 census is the first to indicate that Elijah was a shoemaker. The earlier records indicate he was in manufacturing but do not say what kind. It's likely he was always a shoemaker. Elijah eventually moved to Camden, NJ and died at the ripe old age of 87. He had several children.

In 1848, although Howard County was still just a district in Anne Arundel County, the Howard County deed book 8, page 175 shows that John and Emily Butler, now living in Columbus Ohio, sold the land to Joseph Pettit. This latter deed ID is the one we found in the court documents of the 1877 case in which Thomas Pettit took his sister Annie Milling to court to divide up the parcels of land owned by their father Joseph, which allowed us to discover the above deeper history about the Hammonds and Hopkins.

In the 1850 census, Joseph Pettit is listed as a farmer, and in 1860, he is listed as a superintendent.

Before we had the court documents for the 1877 case, the earliest deed that we confirm documented the sale of the Brumbaugh Property is in the 1889 Howard County Deed book 54, page 394. The property is described as across from the former Hill home and bounded by John A. Ellicott's land. This description is a relic of the past because all of that Ellicott and Hill property was then owned by the Earecksons or others. The grantee is John Wyatt. The grantors are trustees Daniel M. Murray and Reuben D. Johnson. The property is described as Lot 3 bought at auction by John Wyatt for \$900 which is exactly what HO-509 said about the Mrs. Mills House. This presented a conflict with HO-509, hence the aforementioned confusion which we cleared up by tracking the deeds of the Mrs. Mills House, finding the error in HO-509.

The next deed is in the 1893 book 60, page 279. John Wyatt, having defaulted on his mortgage (there was a huge financial crash in 1893: coincidence?) the property was then bought by Charles A. R. Earp via attorney John G. Rogers for \$1654.

Charles A. R. Earp was an undertaker/embalmer, according to census records and his death certificate. Earps had other property in Elkridge in 1860 according to the Martinet Map and the 1878 Hopkins Map. In 1880 he lived in Elkridge with his father and was a farm laborer, so we don't know how he got into the mortician business. There is one more interesting note about Charles A. R. Earp. According to his son Carlyle, as quoted in Sun Magazine in 1953, Charles razed the Elkridge Furnace to salvage the bricks. Whether any of them made it to the Brumbaugh House remains to be seen!

In 1896, Ellen Eareckson, having been widowed since 1891, and her son Dr. William R. Eareckson and his wife Bessie G. Eareckson, sold a small strip of their property adjacent to the Pettit property to Charles A. R. Earp for \$110.00. See book 66 page 580. We think perhaps the driveway was built on the Eareckson land and so the Earps bought the land rather than move their driveway.

According to Dr. Brumbaugh's "Find-a-grave" entry, he went to assist Dr. Eareckson who had a stroke in 1918. This is when Dr. Brumbaugh first moved to Elkridge. Indeed, according to the 1920 census, Dr. Eareckson had passed away and Dr. Brumbaugh boarded with the Earecksons (he is listed as Bruce B. Baughbal). In 1921, Dr. Brumbaugh bought his own house from Mr. Earp's widow Mary V. Earp. The sale is recorded in the deed book 113, page 310. Charles A. R. Earp died intestate. It would have been interesting to see what he owned and if there was any evidence that he owned or ran his business out of the Brumbaugh House.

Other deeds related to this property are as follows. In 1926, book 137 page 126, Dr. Brumbaugh extended a right of way to the Howard County Commissioners for Elkridge Heights Road. In 1937 Dr. Brumbaugh Conveyed the property to Anna S. Curran and in the very next deed (book 157 page 483) she conveyed it right back. This "straw deed" transaction was probably to get the house in his wife's name as well as his own, to protect her. In 1986, the Rotary Club of Elkridge, in partnership with the Elkridge Heritage Society, bought the house from Dr. Brumbaugh's heirs with an agreement for the creation of a rental apartment (1465/405). In 2011, the Rotary deeded it over to the Elkridge Heritage Society (13320/172).

Dr. Henry and Dr. Eareckson's Property

To be thorough, and because we are interested in Dr. Henry and the Drs. Eareckson as predecessors of Dr. Brumbaugh, we will now talk about how the Earecksons got the strip of land they sold to the Earps, forming the second parcel in the Brumbaugh deed of 1921.

In 1860, the land shown in the map above which belonged to Dr. S. H. Henry was conveyed by John A. and Mary Ellicott to their only child, Frances Ellicott. She married Dr. Samuel Handy Henry. In particular, in 1837, John and Mary Ellicott deeded land to their daughter Frances Ann Ellicott for \$1.00, with Mary Ellicott receiving a life's interest in it. (See Anne Arundel County Deed in book 22 page 38.) The deed states that the property was "lately conveyed" to the Ellicotts by Robert Dawson and his wife. That is, it was part of Richarda Hopkins' Hanover tract. Recall that she married Robert Dawson and lived in Cecil County. This makes sense based on the description of Richarda's Hanover tract in her deed.

This land appears to be all on the south side of the turnpike (now Main Street) opposite the Hill home, and running to the railroad tracks, excluding the lot where Grace Episcopal Church once was, and the public burial grounds which must be the old part of the cemetery behind 5811 Main Street. It appears to have included the land where Grace Episcopal is now, the old church being closer to the road, before it burnt down.

In the 1878 map, note that the Henry property extended across the street. This is because in 1860, Howard County Deed book 21 page 29 shows that Frances Henry and husband Doctor Henry also bought property from Anna Hill, which we believe includes the land where 5834 and 5828 Main Street currently stand. The Henrys then sold one of the properties, now 5828, to the Linebergers, and you will see the Linebergers next to the Henrys in the census records.

According to tradition passed down by Helen Voris, former president of the Elkridge Heritage Society, Dr. Henry, and his successors, the Earecksons, lived in her childhood home at one time, but sadly the house burned down in 1929 when she was about 12. The Society has a picture of the old house near 5841 Main Street. She said that before it burned, her father spent a lot of time removing old doctor offices and waiting rooms as each doctor had his own idea on how things should be. In fact, tracing the deeds down, it is as she said. She claimed the Henry house was originally built by one of the Ellicotts in the early 1800s. We have no reason to doubt that the doctors lived there, but we don't believe the Ellicotts owned the property until the Dawsons sold it to them, probably around 1837. It is not out of the realm of possibility that Dr. Richard Hopkins built the house and lived there. We don't know exactly where Dr. Richard Hopkins lived.

In 1877, Ellen Sophie Eareckson, wife of Dr. Roderick Winchester Eareckson bought the Henry property from Frances Ann Henry (nee Ellicott) and her husband Dr. Samuel Henry for \$4250. They also took over his practice. See Howard County deed book 37 page 601. Ellen and Dr. Roderick Eareckson were the parents of Dr. William Rose Eareckson, the direct predecessor to Dr. Brumbaugh.

The 1877 deed mentions two parcels totalling over 3 acres. You can see from the 1878 Hopkins map that the Henry land still encompassed the plot where Grace Episcopal Church is currently, as well as land across Main Street (which was actually the Washington Turnpike in those days.) Since by the time the map was completed, Dr. Eareckson should have owned the property, we can only conclude that the sale was not completed in time to update the map.

Incidentally, in 1903, Dr. William R. Eareckson, perhaps tiring of the faulty layout of the Henry House as described by Mrs. Voris, bought the house at 5834 Main Street, known as Elkridge Springs (deed book 77 page 563). According to a Maryland Historical Trust document about Elkridge Springs, Dr. Eareckson lived in the house before 1903, so maybe the sale just wasn't formalized until 1903. He lived next door to Dr. Arthur Williams (who lived in the house now called the Williams House at 5828 Main Street) and they quickly resolved a dispute about the property line between their homes in another deed. As we saw above, in 1896, the Earecksons sold the small strip of land to the Earps, completing the Brumbaugh property as we know it today. In 1920, Bessie Eareckson sold the property to Sally Beasley, as recorded in Book 110, page 342.

Conclusion

It was tricky finding this chain of deeds from the Hopkins family to the Brumbaughs, and we had to do some detective work. This work included deed searches, genealogy, researching documents in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties for nearby houses, and obtaining court documents from the Maryland State Archives. While investigating, we learned a bit about the former owners of both the Brumbaugh Property and other nearby lots.

None of the deeds or wills we have found led to a description of the house itself, and when it was built. We see that there were structures on the land from looking at the 1860 and 1878 maps. At one time, there were two structures, but one has been demolished, approximately where a large magnolia now reigns. We know that the Brumbaugh House was not always the charming, if haphazard, cross-gabled Victorian and Mid-century Modern inspired house. That didn't stop us from using some logic and some fantasy in "Analysis of the Brumbaugh House by a Couple of Amateurs," which we hope you enjoy reading next, if you haven't already read it.