

RECORD NUMBER: 9

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HISTORICAL STRUCTURE FORM

Site 8 _____

X original
update

FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE

SITE NAME: Edward J. Harper House

HISTORIC CONTEXTS: Post-Reconstruction

NAT. REGISTER CATEGORY: Building

OTHER NAMES OR MSF NOS:

COUNTY: Putnam OWNERSHIP TYPE: Private, individual

PROJECT NAME: Survey of Crescent City: S+P DHR NO.

LOCATION:

ADDRESS: 15 South Lake Street

CITY: Crescent City

VICINITY OF/ROUTE TO: See attached map

SUB: Crescent City BLOCK 18 LOT 2.1

PLAT OR OTHER MAP: Putnam County Property Appraiser Maps

TOWNSHIP: 12S RANGE: 28E SECTION: 30 1/4: 1/4-1/4:

IRREGULAR SEC? y X n LAND GRANT: None

USGS 7.5 MAP: Crescent City 1970 PR 1980

UTM: ZONE: EASTING: NORTHING:

COORDINATES: LATITUDE: D M S LONGITUDE: D M S

HISTORY

ARCHITECT: Unknown

BUILDER: Unknown

CONSTRUCTION DATE: c. 1883 RESTORATION DATE(S):

MODIFICATION DATE(S):

MOVE: DATE: ORIG. LOCATION:

ORIGINAL USE (S): Residential

PRESENT USE (S): Residential

DESCRIPTION

STYLE: Frame Vernacular

PLAN: EXTERIOR: Irregular

PLAN: INTERIOR: Unknown

NO. STORIES: 2 OUTBLDGS: 0 PORCHES: 1 DORMERS: 0

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM(S): Wood, balloon frame

EXTERIOR FABRIC(S): Wood, drop siding

FOUNDATION: TYPE: Piers

MATERIALS: Brick

INFILL:

PORCHES: W/entrance/shed roof, square posts/1 bay

ROOF: TYPE: Gable

SURFACING: Metal, 3-V crimp

SECONDARY STRUCS: Gable and shed extensions

CHIMNEY: NO.: 0

MATERIALS:

LOCATIONS:

WINDOWS: Double-hung sash, 2/2 lights

EXTERIOR ORNAMENT:

CONDITION: Good

SURROUNDINGS: Residential

NARRATIVE:

See continuation sheet

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS AT THE SITE

FMSF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FORM COMPLETED? y X n
ARTIFACTS OR OTHER REMAINS: None observed

RECORDER'S EVALUATION OF SITE

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

ELIGIBLE FOR NAT. REGISTER?	y	X	n	likely, need info	insf	info
SIGNIF. AS PART OF DISTRICT?	X	y	n	likely, need info	insf	info
SIGNIFICANT AT LOCAL LEVEL?	X	y	n	likely, need info	insf	info

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

See continuation sheet

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* * * * DHR USE ONLY * * * * * DHR USE ONLY * * * * *
*           DATE LISTED ON NR _____ *
*  KEEPER DETERMINATION OF ELIG. (DATE):  _YES _____ _NO _____ *
*  SHPO EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY (DATE):  _YES _____ _NO _____ *
*  LOCAL DETERMINATION OF ELIG. (DATE):    _YES _____ _NO _____ *
*  OFFICE _____ *
*
* * * * DHR USE ONLY * * * * * DHR USE ONLY * * * * *

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RECORDER INFORMATION: NAME: Stephen Olausen
DATE: 04/10/95 AFFILIATION: Historic Property Associates

PHOTOGRAPHS

LOCATION OF NEGATIVES: Historic Property Associates
NEGATIVE NUMBERS: Roll 13, fr. 6

PHOTOGRAPH M A P

See Attachments

Architectural Description: This two-story wood frame residential building is located at 15 South Lake Street. It is an example of Frame Vernacular architecture. It has an irregular plan consisting of a gable roof main unit and gable and shed extensions. The exterior wall fabric is wood drop siding and fenestration consists of double-hung sash windows with 2/2 lights. An entrance porch with a shed roof and square post supports extends from the facade. The building sits on a brick pier foundation.

Architectural Context: Frame Vernacular refers to the common wood frame construction technique employed by lay or self-taught builders. Before the Civil War, house construction was local in nature and dependent upon the building materials at hand. Builders adapted to the materials and developed individual methods and designs. The Industrial Revolution permitted standardization of building materials and exerted a significant change in vernacular house design. Popular magazines helped to make architectural trends universal throughout the country. The railroad provided cheap and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, individual builders had access to a myriad of finished architectural products from which to create their own designs.

Frame Vernacular houses are typically one or two stories in height, with wood balloon frame structural systems and brick pier foundations. Plans are usually rectangular, though L-shaped plans were often used to maximize cross-ventilation. Gable or hip roofs usually have steep pitches which accommodate attic space. Horizontal drop siding and weatherboard are the most common exterior wall surface materials. Wood shingles were often used to cover the roofs, but they have nearly always been replaced by composition shingle. Porches, most commonly simple entrance or end porches, are common features of the style. Fenestration is regular, but not always symmetrical. Windows are generally double-hung sash with multi-pane glazing and doors contain recessed wood panels. Exterior decoration is sparse and limited to ornamental woodwork.

Statement of Significance: This house was probably constructed shortly after Judge Edward James Harper and his wife, Edgenora, purchased the property from Hiram Benham in 1883. The building remained in the Harper family throughout the remainder of the historic period. The Harper House is locally significant for its association with the residential development of Crescent City during the community's early years.¹

Historical Context: The first permanent white settlers in the immediate vicinity of Crescent City arrived in the early 1850s. Following the Civil War the pace of settlement increased significantly. In 1875 Charles R. Griffing acquired most of the land within the present boundaries of the city and had the townsite laid out the following year. The primary route to the area for early settlers was on the St. Johns River by steamship from Jacksonville. Rail service to the community, inaugurated in 1886, facilitated the transport of local goods and increased traffic to the area. The early economy was based on agriculture in the form to truck crops and citrus and tourism. Intensive advertising by Griffing's Crescent City Real Estate Company in the northeast and midwest attracted a significant number of winter residents to the shores of Crescent Lake. A movement to form a municipal government was begun in 1883, and two years later Crescent City was formally incorporated. By 1890 the population had grown to 554. The "Great Freeze" of the winter of 1894-95, however, effectively wiped out the area's citrus groves and caused many of the city's residents to abandon their holdings.

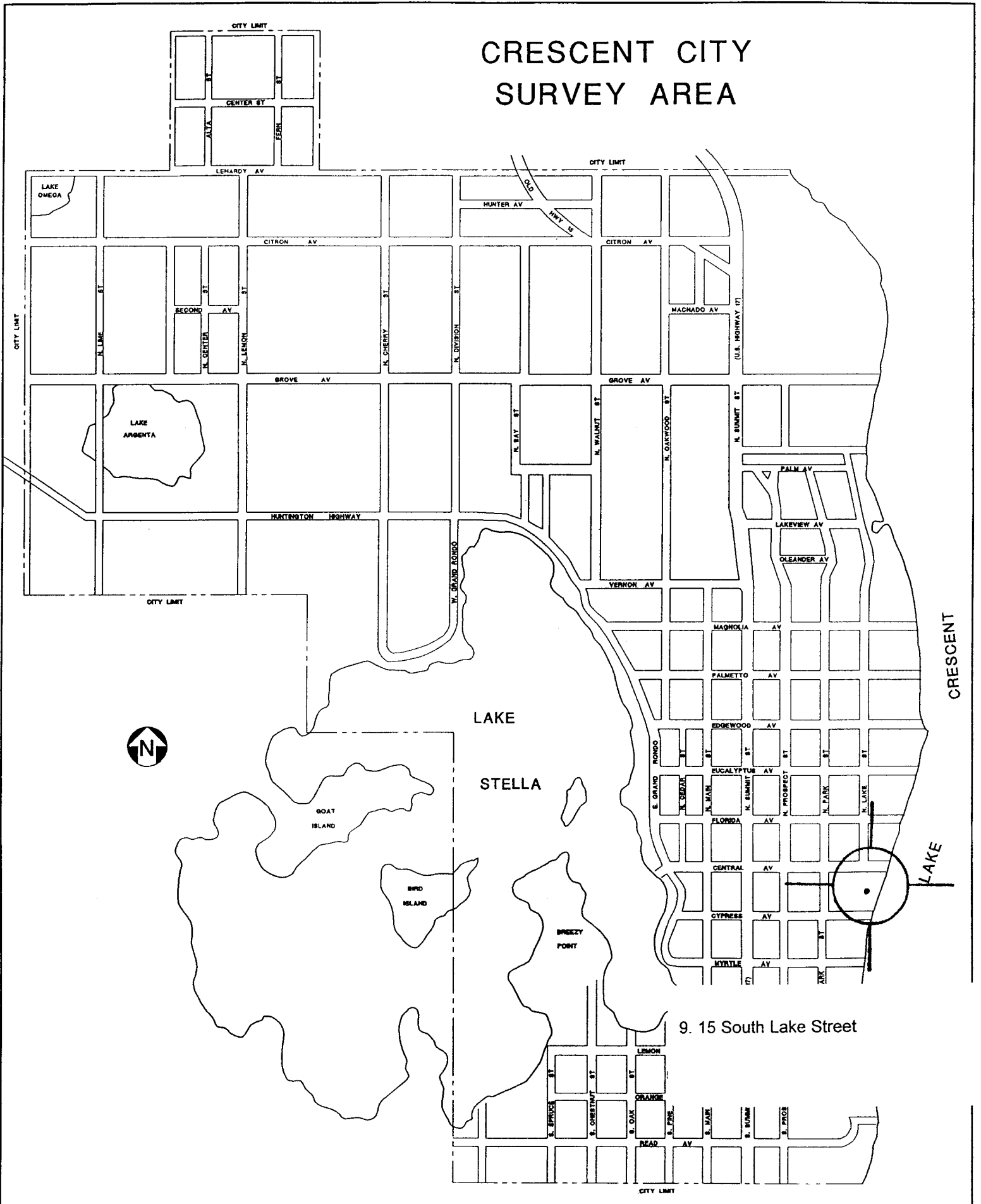
During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the town council initiated a variety of internal improvements. A waterworks, gasworks, electric light plant, and telephone exchange were established and greatly improved the quality of life in the town. The Village Improvement Association, forerunner of the Crescent City Woman's Club, was formed in 1890 and was a significant force in promoting beautification and improvement projects during the remainder of the historic period.

Crescent City experienced significant development during the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s. The construction of State Road No. 3 through the community in 1924 provided a valuable addition to the town's transportation system. The City Council continued to make additional improvements through large bond issues for road paving and the expansion of the waterworks and electric plants. The estimated population of the town at the height of the boom in 1926 was 1,200.

The collapse of the land boom in 1926 threw much of Florida into an economic depression three years in advance of the rest of the nation. The effects of the bust in Crescent City were moderated by the area's strong citrus industry. A Mediterranean fruit fly infestation in 1928, however, damaged area groves. During the Great Depression little in the way of new construction occurred in the city. Both of local banks failed and many residents were forced to seek relief through government sponsored programs. It was not until after World War II that Crescent City fully recovered from the effects of the depression.

¹Putnam County Deed Book W, p. 83; *Courier-Journal*, May 12, 1939.

CRESCENT CITY SURVEY AREA



9. 15 South Lake Street