

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
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DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
**Charles Richard Drew House**  
 AND/OR COMMON  
**Charles Richard Drew House**

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
**2505 First Street, South**  
 CITY, TOWN  
**Arlington**  
 STATE  
**Virginia**  
 VICINITY OF  
 CODE  
**51**  
 COUNTY  
**Arlington**  
 CODE  
**13**  
 NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
**10th**

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
**Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Drew**  
 STREET & NUMBER  
**2505 First Street, South**  
 CITY, TOWN  
**Arlington**  
 VICINITY OF  
 STATE  
**Virginia**

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
**Clerk of the Court, Arlington County Courthouse**  
 STREET & NUMBER  
**North Courthouse Road, Room 400**  
 CITY, TOWN  
**Arlington**  
 STATE  
**Virginia 22201**

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
**None Known**  
 DATE  
 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL  
 DEPOSITORY FOR  
 SURVEY RECORDS  
 CITY, TOWN STATE

# DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Charles Richard Drew House at 2505 First Street, South Arlington, Virginia is a two story clapboard house with gabled roof. The house has been slightly altered with the construction of a two story section in the rear of the house making the structure a six rather than four room dwelling. These additions were made while Dr. Drew was residing in the house. Otherwise, the character of the structure has not changed drastically since 1920, when the house was acquired by the Drews. (Shown on an original photograph of the house taken in 1920.)

The Drew house sits on brick pillars. The porch which circles on the south and east facades is connected to a small addition. The Drew house, which Dr. Drew maintained as his permanent address between 1920 and 1939 at which time he married, is typical of the houses of blacks of that period. The windows of the house have changed and are now double-hung single sash lights except on the first floor where sashes are two over two. Each of the windows on the south side has board shutters. There are two interior chimneys on the east side of the house.

Making entrance from the southwest corner of the house, one enters a small hallway from which a straight stairwell rises to the second level. To the east is a small livingroom which presently contains its original carpeting laid by Richard Drew, Dr. Drew's father. To the north of the livingroom is a dining area and continuing north the kitchen. On the second level of the house are two bedrooms and a small den in which are located numerous articles of family provenience including medals won by Dr. Drew while a student at various schools. In the possession of the family are numerous articles which would enhance the interpretation of the house as a memorial to Dr. Drew upon designation of landmark status.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

Afro-American History

SPECIFIC DATES Charles Richard Drew (1904-1950)  
Residency (1920-1939) BUILDER/ARCHITECT Not Known

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Through the efforts of Charles Richard Drew, thousands of American lives were saved on the battlefield as well as millions since who have needed lifesaving transfusions of blood plasma. Drew had the distinction of being the first Afro-American to receive the Doctor of Science in Medicine degree. He received international recognition as both a humanitarian and scientist providing the leadership for the Plasma for Britain Program. It was Charles R. Drew who personally initiated the program which ultimately led to the large reserves of plasma at the outbreak of American involvement in World War II. A man of conscience, when the policies of the Government were shown to be racist (only the blood of whites could be used for plasma used by white soldiers), Dr. Drew resigned, but only after the program was clearly successful. Dr. Drew headed the Department of Surgery at Howard University producing the doctors that would eventually lower the barriers of prejudice in the medical profession. Drew also served as a surgical consultant for the military, travelling internationally to investigate the medical services which were provided by the Armed Forces. A sought after lecturer, Dr. Drew was the pioneer researcher who provided the basis upon which numerous advances in science have been made.

## BIOGRAPHY

Charles Richard Drew was born in Washington, D. C. on June 3, 1904 to Richard and Nora Drew. As a child, Charles was most active and by age eleven had won a first place medal in a city wide swimming meet. Educated in the primary schools of his neighborhood, Drew proceeded to Dunbar High where he excelled as both a scholar and as an athlete.

Charles Drew added much to campus life while a student at Dunbar. He participated in the school's various athletic programs including football, basketball and track. Not only a good athlete, Charles was an all around good student. Because of his active secondary educational background, Drew won an athletic scholarship to Amherst College, which had long accepted Dunbar graduates of high recommendation and good academic achievement.

Drew's years at Amherst were by no standards easy. Being from a poor family, money was but one of the myriad of problems which he faced. At one point, Drew was confronted by the Dean of the College about the many athletic activities in which he participated and his objectives as a scholar. It was at this point that he decided upon a career in medicine rather than sports.

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Graduating from Amherst, Drew was without the financial resources to enter medical school. Consequently, he went to Baltimore, Maryland where he became an instructor of Biology and Chemistry as well as athletic coach of Morgan College. For two years Drew remained at Morgan saving his money to attend medical school. His first application to Howard's medical school was rejected. This rejection did not, however, deter him in his efforts. He then made application to scores of other universities across the country and Canada. He shortly received a positive response from McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

The depression years, 1928-1935, were especially difficult for Drew. Summer jobs, on which he based much of his support, were non existent. He was able to acquire some support from his occasional jobs as a referee or umpire and a limited allowance sent him by his father. Fortunately, Drew was saved from dropping out of school after receiving a fellowship from the Rosenwald Fund.

It was at McGill that Drew was first acquainted with Dr. John Beattie, the renowned English researcher in blood chemistry. It was the influence of Dr. Beattie that affected Drew's decision to enter research and teaching rather than the more lucrative field of private practice. These years at McGill were spent in the concentrated effort of Drew to achieve. His trials were rewarded in 1932 when he graduated ranking number two in his class with membership in Alpha Omega Alpha, a scholastic honor society for medical students. He received the degree Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery. Unlike black students in the United States during the mid-thirties Dr. Drew had no problem in obtaining an internship. This affected his outlook and made him more conscious of the inadequacies of medical education for blacks in America. Being placed at Montreal General Hospital, a hospital recognized as one of the best in Canada, he found time for concerted efforts in blood research.

Blood transfusions had long been practiced. As early as 1900, Karl Landsteiner had discovered the four basic blood groups, A, B, AB and O. However, in transfusions there was still a mysticism as per the remarkable recoveries of some patients and the slow agonizing death of others. Transfusion at this point was little more than "medical Russian Roulette."

As a result of the discoveries of Landsteiner, it became possible to match particular types of blood and eliminate the disastrous results of mix-matched blood types. Though medicine had made tremendous advances by the 1930s the availability of blood for transfusions became the major problem. Having no system of preserving blood, donors had to be relied upon when blood was needed, thus transfusions became a race with death.

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The concept of a blood bank was fascinating to Dr. Drew. Blood, being the product of a living organism, was found to decompose rapidly when removed from the parent organism. Dr. Drew began experimenting with the preservation of whole blood. Experiments had been conducted using refrigeration and sodium citrate. Refrigeration processes used in the 1930s only slowed decomposition a matter of hours and citrated blood lasted only a few days and lacked the capacity to ward off infection.

After a years residency at Montreal General, Dr. Drew was named Diplomat of the National Board of Examiners being then certified as a surgery specialist. Moving then to the Washington area, he lived with his parents at 2505 First Street, Arlington, Virginia. Dr. Drew had accepted a position as instructor of pathology at Howard University. These years showed rather dismal promises for young black doctors as they "would never be fully admitted into the medical fraternity."<sup>1</sup> It was the goal of Dr. Drew to change this outlook.

Dr. Drew began immediately to demand nothing less than excellence of his students. He progressed rapidly in the admiration of both students and fellow doctors. In 1938, the Rockefeller Foundation sponsored a scholarship for a Howard doctor to study for two years at Columbia University. Having risen in only two years from a position as instructor to assistant professor of surgery, Drew was chosen for the position.

At Columbia Drew first met Dr. John Scudder who would have a tremendous influence upon his career. Dr. Scudder had been working on blood transfusion as a treatment for shock. After only a period of a few months, working in the laboratory in research as well as maintaining a full class load, that Dr. Scudder, so impressed with Drew's work, made him his assistant sharing the director's office. Research progressed rapidly as did the coming conflict in Europe and it was only "a few months before war broke out in Europe, that "he (Dr. Drew) and his aids conclusively proved that plasma could be kept almost indefinitely."<sup>2</sup>

The war resulted in the Blood for Britain Program organized under the direction of Dr. Drew's former professor at McGill, Dr. Beattie. The first months of the program were an abject failure. Plasma arrived in Britain spoiled and inconsistent. Realizing that the only recourse for the success of the program was dependent upon a sound knowledge in both administration and organization, Dr. Beattie resigned and recommended the appointment of Dr. Drew as director. Drew accepted and immediately set forth uniform procedures for the collection of blood. The small scale laboratory operations using centrifugies to separate the blood elements was replaced with a system introduced first in England using a modified version of the cream separator. These machines

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were imported by Dr. Drew who had others built. After the planned invasion of England by Germany was thwarted, the program was disbanded. After the collapse of France and the non-necessity of the Blood for France Program, Dr. Drew wrote the National Blood Transfusion Committee proposing immediate attention be given the acquisition of blood plasma for use by American forces. Also at this time, Dr. Drew began investigating the possibilities of dried and frozen plasma.

In 1940, Dr. Drew graduated from Columbia University becoming the first black in the history of the nation to receive the Doctor of Science degree in surgery. Shortly after receiving his degree, response was received by Dr. Drew as per his proposal to the National Blood Transfusion Committee. Under the auspices of the American Red Cross the program was set in motion. Because of Dr. Drew's effective operation of the Blood for Britain Program, he was chosen to head the drive for plasma in the United States. The program commenced, and as had been expected the United States entered the war. However, unlike some military leaders, Pearl Harbor did not catch America's doctors unaware or unprepared. Through the efforts of Charles Drew, life sustaining plasma was available to the victims at Pearl Harbor and on the battlefields thereafter. The efforts of Dr. Drew were not without complication. After the start of the war, the government established the policy that only the blood of whites could be used, and if black person's blood was to be collected it was to be segregated for use by only black soldiers. This policy enraged Dr. Drew. He vehemently protested to the military hierarchy to no avail. A man of deep conviction and racial pride, Dr. Drew realized he could not direct an operation with such overt racist policies and was forced by these convictions to resign. Upon leaving he issued the following comment at a press conference:

. . .The disservice that has been done, has been done not only to the Negro people but to the cause of truth itself. How have we, in this age and in this hour, allowed once again to creep into our hearts the dark myths and wretched superstitions of the past . . .In the laboratory I have found that you and I share a common blood; but will we ever, ever share a common brotherhood? As repugnant as this scientific fact may appear to some, their quarrel is not with me, but with the Giver of Life whose wisdom made it so.<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Drew returned to head the Department of Surgery at Howard as a full professor.

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The efforts of Dr. Drew were then turned to the education of black doctors. It was under the direction of Dr. Drew that the surgery department at Howard rose to a position of national prominence in medical circles. Under the inventorship of Dr. Drew, two Howard students took the admissions exam to the American Board of Surgery and finished one and two, respectively

Dr. Drew likewise was active in the opening of white hospitals to black interns and residents. It became less difficult for blacks to obtain medical internships throughout the country.

By 1949, Dr. Drew's reputation as an outstanding physician and educator had come to national attention. The United States Armed Forces appointed him surgical consultant. By this time the Army had recognized the error of its ways and had revoked its earlier policies of segregating blood. As surgical consultant, it was Dr. Drew's function to travel throughout Europe visiting U. S. bases to investigate military health care and to make recommendations for improvement.

Dr. Drew was in constant demand as a lecturer and speaker. It was in connection with a conference at Tuskegee that the life of Charles Drew was lost. While driving to the conference with three other Howard physicians, tired from an exhausting day, Dr. Drew dozed-off at the wheel. The car overturned injuring the occupants. Though efforts were made to save him, Dr. Charles Drew died on April 1, 1950.

Dr. Drew's life ended, however, the contributions of this man of science to the betterment of all mankind lasts. The thousands saved during the 2nd World War and those who have been spared from death subsequently are living memorials to Charles Richard Drew's work. Senator Hubert H. Humphrey memorialized Dr. Drew on the floor of the Senate:

Mr. President, on April 1, Dr. Charles Drew, an outstanding Negro physician and a member of our District of Columbia community, was killed in an automobile accident. Dr. Drew was a pioneer in the field of blood plasma and, as a result of his brilliant research in that field, saved thousands of British and American lives during the war. In 1943 he won the Spingarn Medal for the highest and noblest achievement by an American Negro. In 1940 he was awarded a Doctorate in Medical Science by Columbia University and was most recently professor of surgery at Howard University and chief surgeon at Freedmen's Hospital.

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Dr. Drew's tragic accident is a profound loss to the whole American community. It is fitting that we in the Senate of the United States give his achievements due recognition and express to his family, to his friends, and to the members of the Negro race our sorrow at the loss of this great American.<sup>5</sup>

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One (Reference Notes)

1. Aaron E. Klein, The Hidden Contributors: Black Scientist and Inventors in America (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1971) p. 161.
2. "Blood Against the Blitz" Ebony, Vol. 1, January, 1949, p. 33.
3. Aaron E. Klein, The Hidden Contributors: Black Scientist and Inventors in America (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1971) p. 164.
4. ibid. p. 165
5. Robert Lichelle, Pioneer in Blood Plasma: Dr. Charles Richard Drew (New York, J. Messner, 1968) pp. 178-179.

# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Blood Against the Blitz". Ebony, Vol. 1 January, 1949, pp. 31-33.

Cobb, W. Montague. "Charles Richard Drew". Reprint from The Journal of The National Medical Association, Vol. 42, July 1950, pp. 238-246.

(Continued)

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	31,819,3,0	4,310,415,1,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Charles R. Drew House is located on property, composed of three lots, numbered 2505 First Street, South in Arlington Virginia. Beginning at the southwest corner of the property proceed north 100 feet, then east 147 feet, then south 100 feet then west 147 feet to the point of beginning. This lot contains 14,700 square feet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Lynne Gomez Graves, Historical Projects Director

ORGANIZATION

Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation

DATE

2 February 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1420 N Street, Northwest

TELEPHONE

462-2519

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D. C. 20005

## STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Lichelle, Robert. Pioneer in Blood Plasma: Dr. Charles Richard Drew. New York:  
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"Life of Charles Richard Drew," Our World. Vol 5, July 1950, pp. 23-29.

