

A fully illustrated,
carefully
documented
account of the
building of
dwelling houses
in Richmond
from 1737 to 1860

Houses of Old Richmond

by Mary Wingfield Scott



5/4/23

HOUSES of Old Richmond

By MARY WINGFIELD SCOTT



THE VALENTINE MUSEUM
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
1941

*Cover design: Jack Amos, Inc.
Cover photo: The Woman's Club*

Editorial Notes

Recent Changes

Each page now has buttons at the bottom that will take you directly to the table of contents, index, previous and next page.

Jack Amos has now come up with a new cover design.

We now have a Table of Contents and an Index which operate as bookmarks and page numbers that you can click on.

I have all of the text from the book except for things like Publisher's Note, List of Illustrations, Foreword, etc.

Goals, Ideas and Thinking Outside the History Box

I have filled the book with notes in red where we need descriptions or modern photographs.

I have filled the book with essentially all of the photos that I could find. I began by scanning the photographs in the original book and then did Google searches for each house, and that's how I came up

with the photos. I basically wanted to see what these look like in the book, and I've already weeding some of them out.

Of course, we need to get permissions where applicable.

I originally thought that it would be important to go back to the original photographs and scan them again, and I've met with Bill Martin and Ty Toepke on this. Scanning those photographs is a tedious process for someone, and initially I thought it would be important to do this. However I've been very happy with the photos that I've scanned from the book and I question whether the scanning will be worth the effort. You can see more detail in the photos that I've found on the Internet and it certainly makes a big difference on the book and makes the book come alive.

My first priority on this book is to create an accurate and more useful copy of Winkie's book, and then enhance it with modern photographs, website links, and anything else we can do to bring this book into the modern era.

Perhaps we should have Google Earth links in this for the location of each building. Clicking on these would take you to Google Earth or a mapping app on your iPad.

If you see a typo or something that might need changing, please try to describe where it is in the book by house, paragraph beginning with..., and line number. I am changing the book on a daily basis so using the page numbers in the book will be helpful for about one

day and then will create problem for me to locate the errors.

Be on the alert for errors from optical scanning for word confusion like born/horn, be/he, member/number, etc. I've been reading this over and over and find errors on each reading. It's just plain hard, grinding work.

In putting the photos in the book, as a general matter I'm putting the oldest photos first, and I have not filled the book with notes on the later, color photographs since it must be obvious to everyone that these are recent additions and not part of the original book.

Winkie's books tell the history of the buildings up to the point when they printed the books, but there is a lot that has happened with many of the houses since then, and that's an important part of the history as well. In the Bolling-Haxall house, I found some information on the Internet about Haxall Mills burning and how the man was destroyed financially. I think this sort of thing should go in the book but it should be plain that this is an addition to the book and not part of the original.

In thinking about this, I'm reminded that Mary Wingfield Scott and Elizabeth Bocoek were both of the 'never ask permission' frame of mind, and when they got their minds on something, woe betide anyone who got in their way. I'm made of the same stuff so I have no reservations about making these books more interesting by adding things like this.

I hope everyone will see the possibilities here and will take the time to review this for errors and to offer suggestions for words and descriptions. There must be a lot more photographs out there that I haven't seen yet.

Please send any comments or suggestions to me by email, and please share this book with anyone you think might be interest in this.

Thanks to everyone for your interest and help on all this. This is just one of those things that should be done, and when we finish, Winkie's books will be available to the world. When finished, we plan to have the books available on the websites for the Valentine Richmond History Center, Library of Virginia, Historic Richmond Foundation, Preservation Virginia, and anyone else who is interested.

Thanks again, and I look forward to getting feedback from any and all of you.

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Introduction

WHEN *HOUSES OF OLD RICHMOND* was published in 1941 there were only a limited number of photographs that could be included in the book due to availability and the limitations of printing a book.

No such limitations exist for this digital copy of the book, so we have included a large number of additional photographs, some old and also many more recent ones. The original book was the history up to that time, but the history of these buildings now includes all that has happened since then and including these gives a fuller and more interesting look at the history over a much greater span of time.

Also included are links to websites, and within the book itself so you can quickly search and find things.



MARY WINGFIELD SCOTT was born in Richmond on July 30, 1895, went to school at “Miss Jennie’s”, grew up in the city’s traditions, and loved its familiar atmosphere—the old red brick and gray stucco, the white porches and shaded streets—which it retained until after the World War. The era of Progress and More Smokestacks, in the 1920’s, accomplished for the residential part of old Richmond what the Evacuation Fire of 1865 had for the business district. After studying at Bryn Mawr and Banard and receiving her Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, she returned to

Richmond and with increasing indignation watched the old houses of her childhood disappearing one by one. Gradually she made saving them an avocation. Since 1930 she has been photographing Richmond houses, collecting notes on their history, lecturing and writing articles about them. Her organization of the William Byrd Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities in 1935 mobilized other interested men and women and at once resulted in the purchase and restoration of the Craig House, one of the few eighteenth-century dwellings left in Richmond.

In *Houses of Old Richmond*, published in 1941 Miss Scott describes many buildings that have been replaced by filling stations, but she also includes a large number that are still standing, a challenge to the energy and imagination of present-day Richmonders to save and utilize them.

Miss Scott published *Old Richmond Neighborhoods* in 1950. These books are still the bibles of Richmond architectural history. She was instrumental in the preservation of Linden Row, Oregon Hill and Church Hill, and she has been an inspiration for generations of preservationists who have followed in her footsteps.

While recovering from a stroke that left her paralyzed on the right side, she wrote an autobiography as therapy and distributed this to friends and family. She died on August 9, 1983.

In 2011 her family created a book *Winkie* which was privately published which was based on her autobiography and articles published about her.

Now, *Houses of Old Richmond*, *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, and *Winkie* are available as digital books available as free downloads from the websites of the Valentine Richmond History Center,

Preservation Virginia, Historic Richmond Foundation and as many other library and historical societies that choose to keep these books available to the public long into the future.

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I. Village Into Capital 1737-1789

Richmond Houses before 1790

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ALTHOUGH RICHMOND was laid off (on paper, at least) in 1737 and incorporated as a town in 1742, it remained a village even after it became the capital of the state in 1779. Only two buildings have come down to us from this first stage of the town's existence: the Old Stone House and St. John's Church, the latter much enlarged since it was first built in the 1740's. Since the former was called "the Stone House" at least as early as 1789 (see [below](#)), we infer that its material was exceptional: most of the houses were built of wood. Stone has remained a little-used building material in this part of Virginia.

The earliest description of Richmond has to be quoted, it would seem, in every book on the city's past, since it is indispensable as an evocation of what Richmond looked like in the year when it became the state's capital. Moving here in 1779, Mrs. Edward Carrington wrote:

It is indeed a lovely situation, and may at some future period be a great city, but at present it will afford scarce one comfort of life. With the exception of two or three families, this little town is made up of Scotch factors, who inhabit small tenements from the river to the hill, some of which looking—as Colonel Marshall (afterward Judge Marshall) observes—as if the poor Caledonians had brought them over on their backs, the weaker of whom were glad to stop at the bottom of the hill; others a little stronger proceeded higher; while a few of the stoutest and boldest reached the summit, which, once accomplished, affords a situation beautiful and picturesque. One of these hardy Scots has thought proper to vacate his little dwelling on the hill; and though our whole family can scarcely stand up all together in it, my father has determined to rent it as the only decent tenement on the hill.¹

Two years later, when Richmond was declared a city, “it was yet a city in embryo,” writes Burk. “It scarcely afforded sufficient accommodations for the officers of Government, of which it had but recently been made the seat.”²

But the drawing together of these very officers of government, the meetings of the legislature, the courts with the galaxy of lawyers that soon found the state capital a profitable place of residence—these inevitably led to Richmond’s growth. William Byrd had chosen it as a suitable site for a town not only on account of the beauty of the hills and river, but because the falls of the James made it a logical cross-roads of trade. And so it became, most of the business prior to 1790 being that of the “factors” or commission merchants, who were at once wholesale and retail buyers and sellers

for Richmond and for rural Virginia and were at the same time bankers, with tobacco notes serving as currency.

By 1789, when Jedidiah Morse saw Richmond, the effects of these various stimuli had begun to take tangible form. Richmond, he reported, had about three hundred houses. “The new houses are well built.”³ Although brick was gradually being substituted for wood, up to 1790 and later many prominent citizens had frame houses. Among them we may mention Colonel John Harvie and Colonel Edward Carrington. The Craig and Call houses are examples of the medium-sized dwellings built in the neighborhood of 1790. Among smaller houses characteristic of the same period we might mention the four little gambrel-roofed cottages still standing.

Brick buildings were coming, however. That they were the exception is evident from the fact that Main Street was often called “the Brick Row” in deeds and insurance policies of the ’nineties. Business men were the first to learn a lesson from the disastrous fire that swept lower Main Street in 1787. Nine years later the more substantial material was sufficiently in evidence for a visitor to write, “At present there are few wooden houses in Richmond.”⁴

1. Meade, *Old Churches ... of Virginia*, vol. 1, pp. 140-41 (note).

2. *The History of Virginia from Its First Settlement to the Present Day*, vol. 4, p. 456.

3. *The American Gazetteer* article on Richmond.

4. La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, *Travels through the United States . . .*, vol. 3, p. 64.

The Old Stone House

Lot 32¹—1916 East Main Street

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AN IRONIC CONTRAST might be drawn between the number of facts actually known about this little stone cottage and the amount that has been written about it. Without attempting to add anything new, let us at least summarize the legends and then the known facts.

A mysterious *IR* cut in one stone of the front has been thought to stand for *Jacobus Rex*, which would date the house from before 1688, the year of James II's dethronement. In that case the Stone House would have been a fortress-trading-post on the large tract at Shacco's belonging first to Thomas Stegge and afterwards to his nephew William Byrd I. Another interpretation of the house's history is that it was built shortly after 1737 by Jacob Ege, often called a German tailor, though one deed refers to him as a cooper. Among those supposed to have visited the cottage are Washington, Jefferson, Patrick Henry, and Lafayette. Monroe is reputed to have stayed there as a schoolboy, and again during the Convention of 1788. Mrs. Samuel Ege is said to have stood on the doorstep and watched Benedict Arnold's cavalry swoop up Main Street. Some time after the Civil War the legend sprang up that Washington had had his headquarters there. All old post-cards of the house bear the caption "Washington's Headquarters." Then some iconoclast realized that Washington had not been in Richmond during the Revolution, and that claim was hastily discarded.

Now for the known facts. On Byrd's map of Richmond (thought to date from 1737) lot 32 is put in the name of J. Gringet. (This name



OLD STONE HOUSE
Built before 1783

is written elsewhere *Gringuet and Gringrette*.) In 1741 William Byrd II acknowledges Gringrette's title to some piece of property, but we have no proof that it refers to this lot, since the deed is lost. In 1749 Jacob Ege sold George Sherer the eastern half of the two half-acres numbered 32 and 46 (the latter being north of 32, and running to the present Franklin Street). This part of the property passed through a well-defined series of owners, but we have no certain knowledge as to when Ege acquired the property from Gringet, how he came into possession of Lot 46, or even whether he owned the western half of the two lots, the site of the Stone House, at the time he sold Sherer the eastern half.

Jacob Ege's will, now lost, is referred to as being dated November 2, 1762: whether it was probated or merely written on that date, we



do not know. In a partition among his children dated July 31, 1784 the two lots 33 and 47, which are east of Twentieth, are referred to as the place where Jacob Ege lived at the time his will was made. From this it would appear that Jacob did not live in the Stone House, but on the lot (no. 33) which is in his name on then Byrd plan and where his widow, Maria Dorothea, and his son, Jacob II, continued to live.

The Stone House property first definitely appears in two different records in 1783 as the home of Samuel Ege, one of Jacob's two sons. It is given in the Land Book of that year as the property and residence of Samuel Ege, inspector of flour, who was then thirty-five years old. Whether he had bought it or inherited it is not now known. From February 20, 1783 to shortly before April 30, 1784 Ege rented it to William Rose, who was apparently in charge of the guard over the prisoners in the nearby Henrico jail. The first actual description of the house itself occurs in April, 1789, when "The Stone House lately occupied by Samuel Ege" was advertised for rent. Apparently



Samuel Ege was no longer living in that neighborhood, as those interested are directed to Jacob Ege (his brother), “who is living near the premises”—probably on the block below at the old family home.²

The first mention of the property in a transfer occurs in a deed of partition dated February 11, 1811. Samuel Ege had died in 1807, “one of the oldest inhabitants of this city.” (He was under sixty!) “As he lived universally respected, so he died generally regretted.”³



His land was divided among his six children, the three lots on Franklin going to Ann Ege (afterwards Mrs. Dove), Jacob L. Ege, and Sally L. Ege (afterwards Mrs. John Enders Sr.), and the three on Main to Elizabeth Ege Welch, Samuel H. Ege, and Polly Ege Weymouth. Mrs. Elizabeth Ege, widow of Samuel, continued to live in the Stone House until 1816 and probably until her death in 1829, together with her daughter Mrs. Welch or Welsh (the name is spelled both ways). In 1815 Samuel H. Ege died, and as he left no children another division was necessary.



The partition of his lot, which was the middle one on the Main Street side, was done with more attention to logic than to practical considerations. The result was that Mrs. Welsh owned part of the Stone House while the other part belonged to her sister, Mrs. Enders. In 1854 John Enders II sold to his aunt Mrs. Welsh, for \$450, ten feet on Main, “the front of which is now covered by a Stone House.” By “half of a Stone House” would have been more exact, since the house is about twenty feet in width. Mrs. Welsh was living in Philadelphia at the time this sale took place, but by 1855, when she mortgaged the property, she had returned to Richmond.

Whether Mrs. Welsh spent most of her long life in the Stone House is hard to say. After 1818 the land books do not give the names of occupants, and early Richmond directories seldom list women. Lossing, in his *Field Book of the Revolution* (1850), says definitely that she was living there when he visited Richmond. Mordecai, Little, and other contemporary writers are vaguer. When she died in May 15, 1864, “Jeb” Stuart had just been killed, and



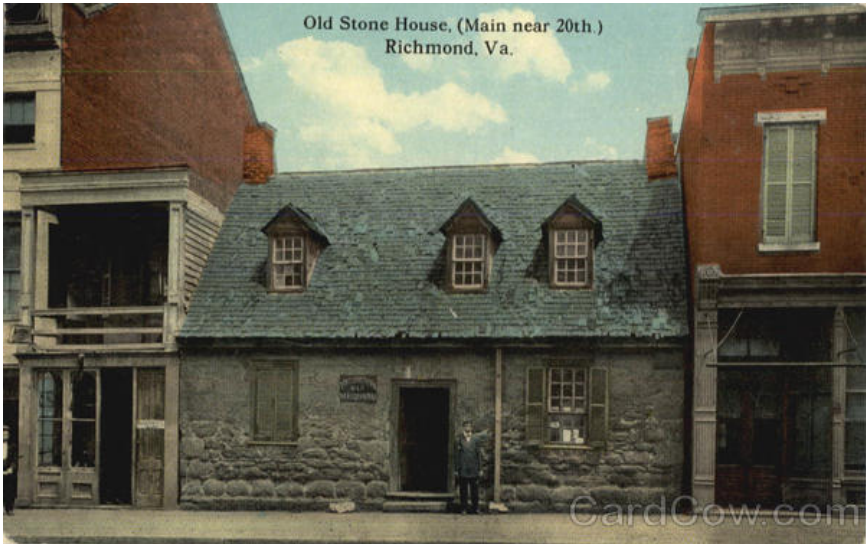
even the chatty *Dispatch* had no thought or space for where she was living. Like most of her forebears and kinsfolk, she was buried in St. John's churchyard.

Since her time, no member of the Ege family has lived in the Stone House. Mrs. Welsh left it to her sister, Mrs. Dove, who only survived her a year. Then children of Dr. and Mrs. Dove's daughter, Mrs. Julia L. Isaacs, owned the property down to 1911.

The name of Ege has practically disappeared in Richmond, though many have the blood of Jacob Ege in their veins. We refer those interested in the family, both the descendants of Jacob and the collateral lines scattered all over the United States, to the *History and Genealogy of the Ege Family* by the Reverend Thompson P. Ege, trusting that his genealogical statements are more accurate than what he says of the Ege holdings in Richmond.



After a lawsuit, the Stone House was auctioned on December 5, 1911. Threatened with demolition, it was purchased, thanks to the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Granville G. Valentine, by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. For several years it was rented as an antique shop. Then, after it had been vacant for some time, Mr. and Mrs. Archer Jones conceived the idea of making a Poe Shrine out of it. This was organized in 1921 and opened to the public in the following year. A beautiful garden was laid off where piles of rubbish had been, and when the building which had housed the *Southern Literary Messenger* was torn down, a summer-house made out of the bricks from the Messenger building was erected at the north end of the garden. The Poe Shrine, its name now changed to the more formal one of Poe Foundation, has collected a valuable library and museum of books and mementoes



relating to Poe. With these, with the little house itself, and the “enchanted” garden, the Stone House has become a Mecca for visitors to Richmond.

The Poe Foundation has not added to the legends connected with the house by attempting to prove that Poe ever lived there! He no doubt was acquainted with it as a local landmark—that is all. During his last visits to Richmond the stories about the house were evidently beginning to take shape. They are mentioned in a number of guides and books of travel published between 1849 and 1856, several of which are listed in our bibliography. These traditions must go back to Mrs. Welsh, who was over seventy years of age in 1850. Lossing’s account is the most restrained and also the most circumstantial, since he reports an actual conversation with her. She remembered Monroe’s boarding with her mother in 1788, though how anyone could have boarded in a house so small, already occupied by a large family of children, is hard to understand. She



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

The Old Stone House is now home for the Edgar Allan Poe Museum
www.poemuseum.org

must have told Lossing about the visits of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, all of whom he names.

Suffice it to say that the old lady's memory may have been excellent. All we know with certainty about the age of the house is that it was apparently built by 1783, probably earlier, and that its rough stone fireplaces, wide muntens and generally primitive appearance are the best support to its claim of being the oldest house now standing in Richmond.

1. The lot numbers, given for most of the houses, refer to the divisions in Byrd's original map of Richmond and in subsequent early additions to the city.
2. *Virginia Gazette*, April 2, 1789.
3. *Virginia Argus*, Feb. 13, 1807.

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Richard Adams House

Lots 70-80.

Grace Street between Twenty-second and Twenty-third Streets

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ON APRIL 26, 1769 Richard Adams bought from Isaac Coles ten lots, including the four on which the house known as the old Adams house, or Coles house, was built. There has been great dispute as to the age of this house, Mrs. Stanard and Mrs. Robins both being of the opinion that it was already standing when Coles sold the land. That Colonel Adams was living there at least by 1784 would slim to be decided by a passage in J. F. D. Smyth's *Tour in the United States of America*, published in that year, in which he says:

The most commanding and excellent situations about Richmond are, the seat of a Mr. Adams, on the summit of the hill which over-looks the town; and Belvidere, an elegant villa belonging to the late colonel William Bird, of Westover . . .

However, according to the land books from 1783 to 1788 the site of the house was unimproved up to that time. The explanation lies, it may be, in the fact that the square immediately north of this one, bounded by Broad, Grace, Twenty-second, and Twenty-third Streets, which was classed as improved property at that same period, was the site of Richard Adams's earlier home, the one described by Smyth. Whether this burned, or whether Adams decided that a view over the James River was preferable to one overlooking the



Cook

RICHARD ADAMS HOUSE
Built before 1790—Demolished 1928-29

town (then in Shockoe Valley), it would seem that about 1788 or '90 he built this house on the fine eminence just south of his former dwelling. The first actual record of the house itself is the insurance policy of 1796, in which a deduction of \$500 for decay is allowed on the dwelling and kitchen, both of wood.

Richard Adams was born in 1726 and moved to Richmond probably about the time he bought the ten lots from Isaac Coles. From 1752 to 1775 he was a member of the House of Burgesses, first from New Kent and afterwards from Henrico County. He was a member of the House of Delegates from 1776 to 1778, amid from the latter year until 1782 was a member of the Virginia Senate.

Throughout the Revolution he was an ardent patriot. By his wife Elizabeth Griffin he had ten children, among them Colonel Richard Adams II, who lived in this house after his father's death; Dr. John Adams, builder of the Adams-Van Lew house; Sarah, who married the Governor Smith who lost his life in the Theatre Fire of 1811; Alice, who married the brother of Chief Justice Marshall; and Ann, who married Colonel Mayo Carrington. Of the houses which his children built near his own, all are gone save a tiny house, No. 2705 East Grace, which Samuel G. Adams built, and No. 2306, the home of Mrs. Mayo Carrington.

Colonel Richard Adams believed that the future of Richmond lay to the east, and he acquired enormous tracts of land, not only within the city limits but on the northeast end of what we now call Church Hill, on Union Hill, and in the valley, which was then called Adams Valley. He had mills and various other business enterprises. So extensive were the Adams holdings that the estate of Richard Adams II was estimated to be worth \$1,200,000, even in the low ebb of real estate in 1821.

Richard Adams I died in August, 1800; his son and namesake in 1817. The latter left no children and directed that his property be divided as his executors saw fit between his nieces and nephews, "provided that the old mansion house, and two lots immediately attached thereto and the four lots now used and enclosed as my garden he assigned at a valuation of twenty thousand dollars to Richard Adams the son of my brother Samuel G. Adams," Evidently he had sufficient family pride to wish that the family home should continue to be the home of a Richard Adams, third of the name.

In 1817-18 Samuel G. Adams, father of Richard III, was living

in the house. On June 21, 1825 Richard Adams sold to Loftin N. Ellett Lots 79 and 80 “on Richmond Hill,” for the small sum of \$3,040, pitiable when compared with the valuation set on them by the second Richard but explicable by the depression of 1819 and its disastrous effect on the Adams fortune.

Loftin N. Ellett, clerk of Henrico Court, lived in the Adams house until his death in 1862. Four years later his executor sold the two lots on the hill, numbers 79 and 80, together with parts of the adjoining lots 65 and 66 (which Mr. Ellett had only acquired in 1861) to Bishop John McGill, Roman Catholic Bishop of Richmond, for \$15,000.

In 1877 Bishop James Gibbons (afterwards Cardinal Gibbons) conveyed the church property to the Nuns of the Academy of the Visitation of Monte Maria, who had opened a school there in 1866. This school was discontinued in 1927. Bishop Dennis O’Connell, the then Bishop of Richmond, had told Mrs. E. Randolph Williams, a descendant of Richard Adams, that the little house would be preserved as long as he lived. He died about the time the school was discontinued. The house was pulled down in 1928 or 1929, and a dormitory for the nuns was erected on its site.

The loss of this house was a particularly sad one, for it had not only been the home of one of the leading men of the city’s early years, but was unique architecturally in Richmond. An insurance drawing of 1803 shows four chimneys: whether these ever existed or whether the imagination of the artist supplied the other two, we do not know. It was otherwise unchanged. The bricks set flat on the splays of the chimneys would seem to indicate an earlier date than the Craig house, with which the records make this one almost

contemporary, as would the broken line of the roof. Originally the roof was shingled but this was changed to tin in modern times, as were the roofs of most early houses. Remains of the garden running down the hillside were still there in recent years.

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The Craig House

Lot 86—1812 East Grace Street

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ALTHOUGH THE DATE of the Craig house is undetermined, it was probably built between 1784 and 1787 by Adam Craig. The deed for the western end of the square between Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Grace, and Broad Streets was not actually signed until 1790, but in the Land Books Craig is called the owner as early as 1784, and the loose description of property-lines makes it probable that this first part of the block that he acquired ran east of the present alley and included the site of the house.

Our first knowledge of what the buildings included comes from Craig's insuring all his property in 1796. On the four lots were, first, a one-story "Dutch roof" cottage, the "Office of County Court," at the northeast corner of Eighteenth and Grace. East of that was the present house, which on the plat looks just as it does today, with its ell, two stories, and three porches. Behind it was a one-story wooden kitchen, replaced before 1815 by the present brick kitchen, which doubtless utilized from the earlier building the chimney with its big fireplaces and iron cranes. East of these, facing on Nineteenth Street, was a one-story wooden house, used as a lodging-house, with a wooden kitchen back of it, on Nineteenth also. These last were on a lot which Craig had purchased from Joseph Simpson in 1791, the north line of which, if we may trust this policy, ran between these two Nineteenth Street buildings and Craig's own house.

Adam Craig had come to Richmond from Williamsburg about



CRAIG HOUSE
Built 1784-87

1782. His marriage in 1787 to “Polly” Mallory of York County would seem a probable moment for him to have built or acquired this house. During the succeeding years, until his death in 1808 at the age of forty-eight, he was clerk of the Richmond Hustings Court, the Henrico County Court, and the General Court, so that innumerable legal documents of that day are signed with his name. His obituary gives a remarkably frank estimate of his talents and limitations:

He was a man of unblemished character and integrity, and equally respected in every walk of life.—Altho far from being a man of luminous talents he possessed a clear and solid understanding, actively devoted to his country and the cause of humanity; the happiness and improvement of his fellow men.¹



Dementi

CRAIG HOUSE STAIRWAY

The best-known of his six children was Jane Stith Craig, who was born in 1793, probably in this house. She certainly lived there until her marriage to Judge Robert Stanard. At the time Poe addressed to her his immortal lines, “To Helen,” she was living in the Hay-Stanard house on Ninth Street, hence there is no reason to think Poe ever actually visited the Craig house.

After Adam Craig’s death his widow continued to live in the house, at least as late as 1817. In 1822 it was purchased by Sterling J. Crump (who lived nearby on Nineteenth Street) and Thomas Cowles, and was rented out to various people until, in 1844, it was bought by Wilson Williams. Williams had a grocery business at Eighteenth and Main Streets and lived in the Craig house until his death. It must have been he who modernized the two front rooms and front hall on the first floor, the only part of the interior that has been changed since Adam Craig’s day. Probably he also pulled



down the two wooden buildings on Nineteenth and extended the garden to its present size.

In 1872 his sons sold the place to James W. Shields, who made his home there for the rest of his life. Living there during part of those years was his little granddaughter, afterward Mrs. John L. Newcomb. Her recollection of the old gentleman, with his “black satin stock with a turn over white collar, long black coat, and always all embroidered waistcoat . . . long white hair,” going to the nearby Seventeenth Street Market, with his basket on his arm, is no less vivid than her recollections of the garden. Her delightful evocation of the latter has enabled those restoring it to bring back some of its former charm:

The side yard was beautiful with a tall box hedge and brick walk from the 19th street side all the way to the house. The walk was bordered with cowslips, snowdrops, violets and forget-me-nots. There was a luscious grape



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

arbor in the yard—a cherry tree . . . apple and pear trees and loads of currant bushes. There was a white picket fence around the whole place with little swinging gates that had old tinkling cowbells on them. From the Grace Street side to the front steps there was a box-bordered walk also bordered with snowdrops, pinks, old-fashioned and sweet-smelling violets . . . from the 19th Street side there was an English dwarf box hedge . . . and that part was really the flower garden with all kinds of old fashioned roses, especially remember the hundred leaf rose, as big as a saucer, a gorgeous pink and Oh so fragrant. There were moss roses, malmaison, a profusion of white roses, lilies of the valley—sweet shrub, snowballs, mock orange—two mimosa trees and a huge oak tree.



Historic Richmond and Jeff Saterthwaite





In 1911 Mr. Shields's executrix sold the house. In the following year, it was purchased by the Richmond Methodist Mission Association, the beautiful garden was destroyed, the mighty oak cut down, and a large brick building, the Methodist Institute, erected on the corner of Nineteenth. By 1935 this building had ceased to be useful to its owners, while the Craig house, stripped of all its trees save one magnolia, looked ready to collapse. Led by the enterprising young pastor of Trinity Institutional Church, a small group set to work to save the house. From this effort sprang the William Byrd Branch of the A.P.V.A., formed to save the Craig house and then every interesting old house in Richmond! The first part of this program was more successful than the second. The whole property was bought in 1935-36, the Methodist Institute torn down in 1937, and the house, kitchen, and garden gradually restored.

The Craig house, which Mordecai described as “the pleasant and rural-looking residence of Adam Craig . . . with its line trees

and hedges of box”² is unique in Richmond in that it sits kitty-cornered to the street. It is an unpretentious house, of white beaded weatherboard, with very plain trim around the windows. While the three porches date back to 1796, it seems possible that the columns on the front porch are more recent. Perhaps it originally had square pillars like those on the east porch. The chimneys are rather tall and thin, not an uncommon trait in early Richmond houses.

Inside, the most striking feature is the graceful stairway, with slim balusters and mahogany rail. Except for the front rooms downstairs, the trim and the six-panelled doors are what one would expect in a late eighteenth-century house. The mantels are mostly dark marble, plain, and certainly later than the house. The floors are of random-width pine and remarkably well-preserved, considering that the house had been used to store damaged furniture for over twenty years. An interesting detail is the tiny closets on each side of the chimney in the big room downstairs in the ell.

1. *Enquirer*, May 14, 1808.
2. *Richmond in By-Gone Days*, 1st ed., p. 140.

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The John Marshall House

Lot 786—402 North Ninth Street

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BOTH BECAUSE it was for forty-five years the home of John Marshall and because it is the handsomest and best-preserved eighteenth-century house still standing in Richmond, the Marshall House deserves special study.

Its actual history, in terms of ownership, is only less brief than that of the Governor's Mansion, for until it was purchased by the City in 1907 it had never passed out of the hands of Marshall's descendants. Though the deed for the quarter-square on which the house stands was not signed until July 7, 1789, Marshall had evidently come to an agreement with the owner, Philip Turpin, some time before, as the house was started by October, 1788. We are fortunate



JOHN MARSHALL HOUSE
BUILT 1788-90

Cook, ca 1890



enough to have, in an account-book of Marshall's, a list of those who worked on the house, with the amounts paid to each. They include Mr. Sydnor, Keeling and Smith, W. Goode, W. Duke, and W. B. Lewis. The total cost of the house was 1211 pounds, 1 shilling and threepence. The last payment was in November, 1790, but in July, 1791, work was still being done on fences and outbuildings. It would seem that Marshall was living in it by January, 1791: a deed to Marshall from James Hayes refers to the lot at Ninth and Clay as being "on the same square on which the said John Marshall now resides." However, according to a tradition in the Marshall family, Marshall lived in a wooden house, about where the front door of the John Marshall High School now is, while his new house was being built. This was, perhaps, the wooden laundry shown on the first insurance policy (1796). This policy shows that Marshall then owned the whole square, with the house as it now is except for the little wing, and with a wooden office on Marshall Street, a wooden



Historic Buildings Survey

MARSHALL HOUSE STAIRWAY

kitchen on Ninth, and the laundry. These buildings were on lot 786. The stable was at the extreme northwest corner of the square, and all of the buildings were valued at \$5500, with no deduction for decay. The wing was added some time before 1810. The policy of 1810 also shows the three porches, but this does not necessarily mean they were not there in 1796.

Many picturesque memories of Marshall's life in Richmond may be gathered from different authors. His going to market himself, even after he was Chief Justice, and bringing home a brace of ducks over one arm and a string of chitterlings, generally despised by "the quality," over the other; his mighty quoit-throwing and good fellowship with the Barbecue Club at Buchanan's Spring; the welcome he received after his return from France on August 8, 1798. Of his public career it is not necessary to speak here. He did



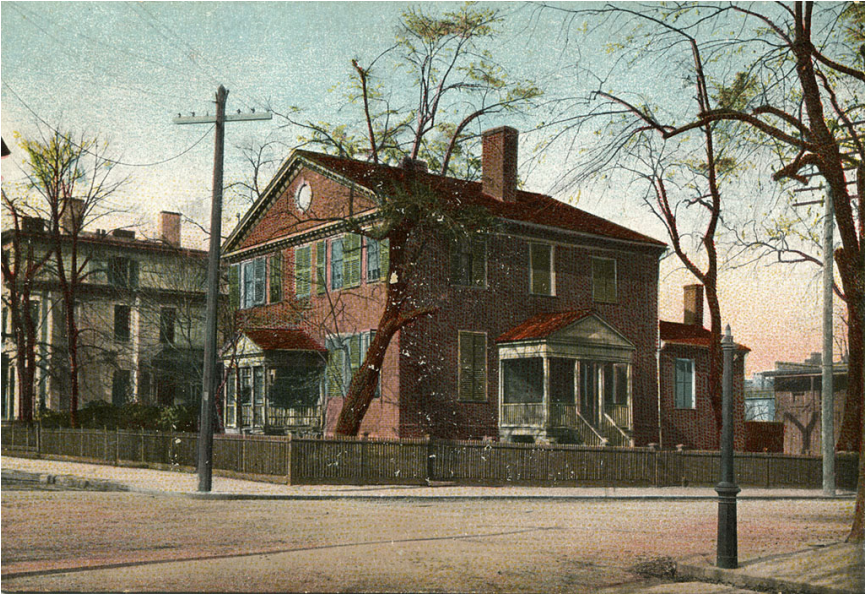
not die in the house (where his “Polly” had died in 1831, after years of invalidism) but passed away while in Philadelphia in 1835, his remains being brought back to Richmond to be interred in Shockoe Cemetery. After his death the house, which then belonged to his daughter Mary, wife of Jaquelin Harvie, was rented for a long time. For a brief nod the Misses Harvie, Marshall’s granddaughters, lived there. Among the tenants before the Civil War were Thomas B. Bigger and Robert Gwathmey. Professor Charles H. Winston lived there during the War; Henry A. Wise in 1866; and for a long time in the ’seventies and ’eighties, Mrs. Mattie Paul Myers. It was during Mrs. Myers’s residence there, in 1877, that her cousin, Miss Rebecca Myers, who had come to call, missed the last step, fell, and broke her neck. “According to the orthodox custom, it being the Sabbath, the body was placed on a stretcher and carried by hand to her late



residence on Broad Street just opposite the Monumental Church.”¹

In 1907 the lot, by then reduced to 64 feet on Marshall and 154 feet on Ninth, was purchased from the Misses Anne and Emily Harvie by the City of Richmond to form, with the rest of the square, the site of the new high school. The Council was determined to tear the house down—in the words of one member, it would be a menace to the new school—but women’s organizations united to save the Marshall house as they had done nearly twenty years before to save the White House of the Confederacy, and again their fight was a successful one. While shorn of its outbuildings and grounds, and too crowded by the John Marshall High School, the home of the greatest Chief Justice stands, for the delight of historians and lovers of architecture. In 1911 the City handed the house over to the perpetual care of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, whose headquarters it now is and which maintains it.

Since no brick house of contemporary date has survived in Richmond, the Marshall house is of especial interest to students of



architecture. In general appearance the house is unpretentious—small compared with Dr. Brockenbrough’s two mansions, not to mention those of the ’forties or ’fifties—simple in outline and detail when seen from without. Inside, the hand-carved woodwork is of the elaborate kind often used in small houses in the eighteenth century, and gradually reduced, up to 1819, when it disappeared altogether. The library and parlor are each panelled all across one end, with a small cupboard beside the chimney. All of the rooms on the main floor have dadoes except the little addition. The dining-room has no panelling but has a particularly beautiful cornice. The mantels in parlor and dining-room are alike, ornamented with an urn in the centre and genii on either side. Both of these rooms are bright and well proportioned. The stairway is particularly charming. Only in one feature is the Marshall house subject to criticism: the arrangement of the rooms is haphazard and does not show them



off to best advantage. One enters by a tiny vestibule, whence one may either turn right to the library or left to the parlor. There is no approach to the stairs, parlor, or dining-room that exhibits their beauty to full effect: one has to be well into each room before seeing its best feature. The legend that Marshall expected the house to be turned around differently and that his plans were spoiled while he was in France is disproved by the dates the house was finished by 1791 and he was in France in 1798. It took the genius of Robert Mills to plan a logically arranged house, with most effective use of stairs, entrance, and porches, and the influence of that genius was felt in most of the fine houses erected in Richmond after 1812.



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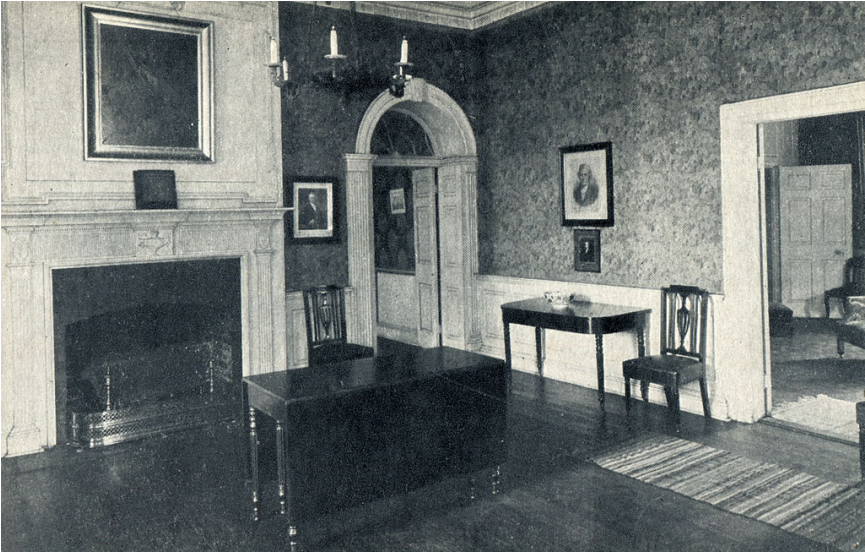
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*The **John Marshall Foundation** supports the John Marshall House which is owned and managed by **Preservation Virginia***













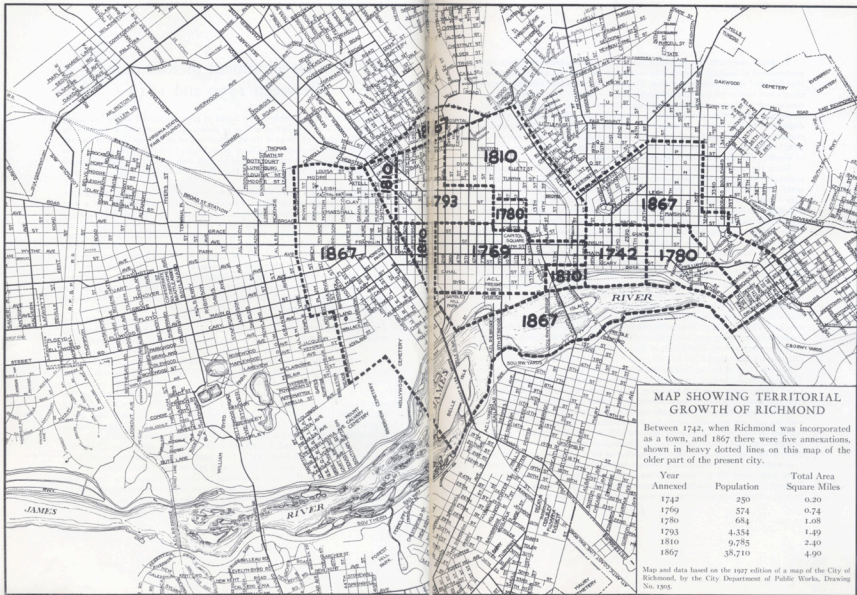
II. Richmond Becomes a City 1790-1819

The Development of Richmond Between 1790 and 1819

page 27

During the three decades that began in 1790, Richmond slowly but surely became a city in fact as well as in name. As we have said, it became the seat of the regular meetings of the legislature and of all the machinery of government. Its courts attracted a brilliant assemblage of lawyers, such as few cities of equal size have ever known, headed by such men as John Marshall, Edmund Randolph, John Wickham, Daniel Call, Benjamin Watkins Leigh, and many more.

From the earliest times Richmond had been a centre of trade, based on the system of commission merchants who exchanged the raw-materials of a new country for the manufactured products of an old one. The invaluable manuscript Memoir of Thomas Rutherford gives a vivid picture of the activities of the young men from the British Isles who were sent forth by British firms to get as much as they could out of Virginia and who often stayed to trade for themselves, buy up western lands, open factories, and carve out



their own fortunes, building up the country they had been sent to exploit. Like these men, the new country did not content itself indefinitely with furnishing tobacco and corn for Britain: instead of continuing to trade, the country began to make its own finished products. It was not the legislature nor the law courts alone that turned Richmond from a village into a city: it was the growth of manufactures.

In 1789 seven miles of the canal that George Washington had dreamed of as a link between Tidewater Virginia and the valley of the Ohio were completed. While this failed for many years to open an easy route to the new frontier, it served a valuable purpose in furnishing Richmond with power to turn the wheels of industry. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, mills for corn and wheat began to multiply in the vicinity of Richmond. Pioneer mill-owners were David Ross, Joseph Gallego, and John A. Chevallié.

Ross's mills were bought in 1809 by the Haxall brothers and the Gallego Mills continued for generations to be run by Chevallié and Warwicks. While these two were the largest mills in Richmond, with a big South American trade, there were many others in the first decades of the nineteenth century, among them Thomas Rutherford's, which were bought in 1811 by Edward Cunningham.

Both Rutherford and Cunningham also operated cotton manufacturies. Other products made in Richmond in these early days included coaches and soap and candles. The fact that the great era of ante-bellum in Richmond was in the 'fifties should not make one underestimate the amount of tobacco manufactured there in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. The Directory of 1819 lists eleven tobacco factories in the city.

To keep pace with this industrial expansion and the increased trade that accompanied it, banking began to take form after the chaotic financial conditions that followed the Revolutionary War. For many decades the commission merchants had conducted a system of barter and credit with tobacco-notes as the medium of exchange and London as the ultimate hank. This primitive and awkward makeshift could not continue indefinitely in a nation politically independent, with cities of growing industrial importance. The first bank actually established in Richmond was the Bank of Virginia, which was chartered in 1804 and survived until the fall of the Confederacy. In 1812 the Farmers' Bank of Virginia, with branches all over the state, was established.

With the growth of trade and manufactures, the growth in Richmond's population kept pace. In 1790 the city had a population of 3,761. In 1800 there were 5,737; in 1810, 9,785; and in 1817, 14,328

inhabitants. As to area, the City Fathers had always been sanguine about the amount of space Richmond was shortly going to require: in 1769, with a population of 574 souls, the boundaries of the sprawling village were extended as far west as First Street! In 1793 the large L-shaped area known as Coutts's Addition was annexed on the north, and in 1810 strips were added on every side except the east, bringing the city limits up to where they remained until after the Civil War. From 1810 to 1867 Richmond was bounded, roughly, by the James River on the south, by a line parallel to Belvidere Street but about two blocks east of it on the west; by Federal Street running northeast to about where the Seaboard tracks now are, and then following Broad Street on east from Eighteenth to Thirtieth Streets, the line then turning to Nicholson Street and thence to the river. These boundaries are important to visualize if we would understand how many old houses now in the heart of town were suburban or farm houses when they were built. Particularly is this true of the northeast end of Church Hill, Union Hill, and even the north side of Broad east of Eighteenth Street, which was not taken into the city until 1867.

Within these generous boundaries, where did building actually take place during the years between 1790 and 1819? Started in the valley near Shockoe Creek, the growing town had begun by 1790 to move up on to the hills to the east and west. Whether progress to the east was slowed up by the huge real estate holdings of the Adams family on what was then called Richmond Hill whether progress west was inevitable in any American town; or whether the opening of the State Capitol on Shockoe Hill in 1787 determined the trend westward, we shall not attempt to say. The region known as the "Court End" north of the Capitol was the most popular section for

fine houses erected between 1790 and 1819. More venturesome builders were going still further west, houses being built along Fifth Street at least as early as the 1790's. After Thomas Rutherford in 1794 bought a farm that ran from First to Belvidere Streets, he sold off lots to his friends, and a number of fine houses were built in the vicinity of Franklin and Jefferson Streets in the first fifteen years of the new century. Of course many smaller houses were built in such outlying districts as Coutts's, Duval's and Price's additions on the north, and on land bought from the Adams family all over Church and Union Hills.

While the houses and stores on Main Street seem to have been almost as crowded together as they are today, those in the strictly residence part of town occupied anywhere from a quarter of a city block to a whole block. Not only did they have the "orchards, gardens etc." so often mentioned in deeds: those with any pretension to size were surrounded by a bevy of outbuildings. The Michael Hancock house, for example, had, besides a kitchen-wing, an icehouse, an office, a summer-house, a smokehouse, servants' quarters, a well, and a stable and carriage-house, as well as the primitive outside plumbing arrangements that characterized Richmond's finest houses down into the eighteen-forties. The Marx, Allan, and first Brockenbrough houses were equally well supplied with outbuildings. Not one of these plantations-in-town has survived. Gradually the land has been sold off, so that even where the original house is standing, there is seldom a single outbuilding left. This is a pity, as the preservation of at least one such ensemble would have been intensely interesting for the study of Richmond's early life.

Dwellings on smaller lots were completed by an outside kitchen

or a smokehouse. A handful of these little buildings has survived, and they are often less altered and more picturesque than the dwelling proper.

Obviously the same activity in building operations was not continuous during all of the thirty years we are considering. While the crests and troughs are difficult to determine, the dates not only of the houses studied in this book but of forty-six from this period described recently in the *News Leader* by this writer correspond strikingly with a graph of English Commodity Prices between 1791 and 1825 which is found in R. W. Habson's *Business Barometers for Anticipating Conditions*. Peaks both on the graph and in the number of houses built occur, roughly, in the years 1799-1800, 1809-10, 1813-14 and 1817-18. The chief difference is that the amount of building in Richmond in the last two years is proportionately much higher than the price level at that same date.

To know what manner of houses the builders of early Richmond erected, it will be more practical to turn to the succeeding pages than to linger in abstract discussion. Unfortunately some houses disappeared so long ago that no photograph may be had. Thanks to some beautifully drawn policies of the Mutual Assurance Society, we can imagine what the Gamble house, the Munford house, and the home of Peter Chevallié were like. In this book we have omitted houses of which no photograph could be obtained. Nor have we included several interesting ones that were so altered in the course of the years that their original character had disappeared before they were photographed. Among these are the Thomas Rutherford house, the Myers-Crump house (both of them are described in R. A. Lancaster's *Historic Virginia Homes and Churches*) and the Hay-

Stanard house on Ninth Street.

The substitution of brick for wood in houses of the more prosperous citizens had begun as early as 1790, when John Marshall's house was almost finished. Smaller houses, however, continued to be built of wood. Remains of this type may be seen in the four gambrel-roofed cottages which we have grouped together. The brick houses were of very varied character, the most experimental being those with some sort of polygonal plan, which we have called "Octagon Houses." Though porches were used as early as the Craig and Marshall houses, they became more frequent towards 1810-16. The first great portico, that on John Brockenbrough's earlier home, was only the beginning of such porticoes, which were copied down to the late 'forties.

While it is dangerous to say that certain architectural features determine the date of a house, since many a builder no doubt imitated some home of his childhood, still there are certain details of building much more commonly met in the period before 1819 than at any later date. Panelled interiors had begun to disappear just about when Richmond began to expand into a city. The Marshall and Archibald Freeland houses are almost solitary examples left in Richmond of that type of interior ornament, so frequently found in houses of colonial Virginia. Instead, we find in these early Richmond dwellings gracefully ornamented doors; delicate if simple stairways, often with slender mahogany handrails and occasionally panelled; carved mantels, sometimes enriched with plaster ornament; chair-rails; wide wainscots; six-panelled doors with raised panels.

On the outside, there are a few traits that mark houses as being of this period. Before 1810 houses were never stuccoed; those built

after that date were sometimes stuccoed and frequently not. Triple windows, introduced about 1812, were used down into the 'fifties. Chimneys grew progressively smaller and were built after 1819 for use rather than as a vital part in the design of the house.

Several traits are more dependable in dating houses between 1810 and 1819. Along them are rather fancy cornices made of brick (later ones being invariably of wood); belt-courses separating the stories of a house and agreeably breaking the wall space; oblong panels between the first and second floor windows: bricks set at right angles to the lintel of a window and forming a keystone in the middle. These were generally covered with plaster. Recessed arches above either a single or a triple window are also characteristic of this period.

One must be on one's guard against taking any of these details too seriously as tests for the date of a house. It has often been said that houses with beaded clap boarding or those with "witches' doors" were surely eighteenth-century buildings. As we shall see, houses were built as late as 1838 with both these characteristics of eighteenth-century construction. We must remember, too, that of the few old houses left in Richmond, all have been altered in some way with the passage of time. Slate or marble mantels of today often replace wooden mantels that had been injured or were considered out of style. Scarcely an early house, save perhaps the Wickham, Marshall, Archer Anderson, and both Brockenbrough houses, retains its original porch.

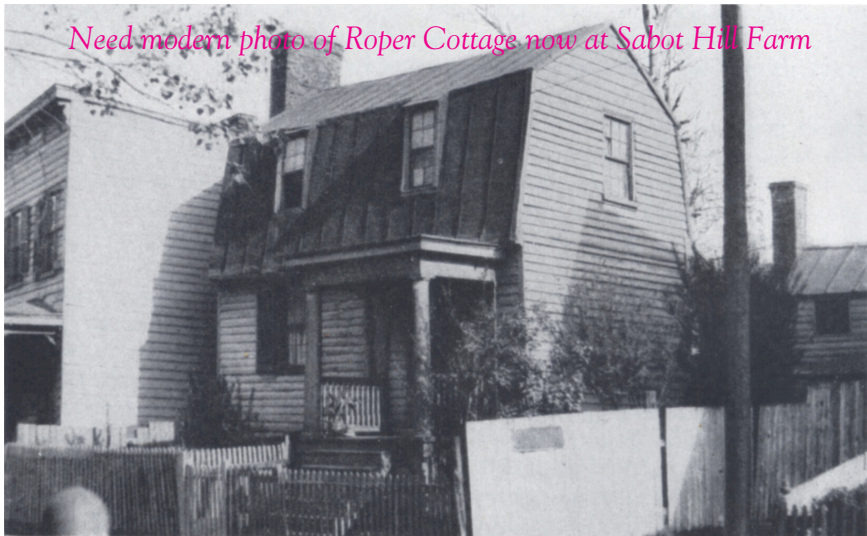
With many allowances for all the types of dwelling that have vanished and for the changes in those that remain, let us examine the infinite variety of the houses built between 1790 and 1819.

Four Gambrel-roofed Cottages

page 34

To judge by early insurance policies, there was a very large number of what were then called “dutch roof” houses in early Richmond. For example, on the south side of Franklin between Third and Fourth Streets were at least four houses of this type. In recent years only six such houses have remained standing, and these have now been reduced to four.

Two of these are reasonably possible to date. At 612 North Third Street is a tiny cottage, unfortunately covered with stucco and masked on the street side by a ramshackle porch. This seems to have been built by Joel Tucker in 1800 or 1801. Seen from the west, its original character is much more obvious. No stucco hides the headed clapboards, and there is an enormous chimney, far larger than the house could have needed.



ROPER COTTAGE

Built 1793-97—Demolished—rebuilt at Sabot, Goochland County.



WILLIAM GRAY COTTAGE
Built before 1800—Demolished 1947

The other cottage that we know the history of is equally small. It is at 400 Duval Street and has a very interesting history. In 1793 Abraham Skipwith, a free Negro, bought the land; in a will written four years later he left it to his wife, whom he had meanwhile bought, together with a granddaughter. His will is a picturesque document in the life of the emancipated Negro. The granddaughter, Maria, became the wife of one Peter Roper, and the house remained the property of their descendants down to 1905—a longer tenure in one family than almost any in the history of Richmond.

The Gray cottage, 610 Decatur Street, is considerably larger than the two previously mentioned.¹ It was built probably by James Lyle, but at what date it is hard to say. The site was bought in 1773 by James Lyle, who married Sally Goode of “Whitby.” Their son, James Lyle Jr., was living in the house at the time of his death, in 1806. The executors of the elder Lyle sold it in 1817, and after two

changes of hands it was purchased in 1835 by William Gray. Gray added the wing in the rear sometime before 1851. The property has been in the Gray and related Garnett family from 1835 until it was sold by a descendant of the Garnetts in 1941.

The Gray or Lyle cottage probably dates from just before 1800 and may be even older than that. Although the porch is modern and the front windows have been changed, it appears very ancient. This is due partly to the wooden shingles which still cover the front part of the roof and partly to the immense chimneys, the only ones we have discovered in Richmond of today which have the bricks on the splay laid flat, in eighteenth-century style, and not corbelled.

The fourth of these gambrel-roofed cottages may be the oldest of all, as it bears the date 1790 cut into one corner. This house is very attractively located, at the entrance of Shockoe Cemetery. It



*1013 North Third Street
Built 1790*

has not, however, always been at this place. Originally it stood at the northeast corner of Fourth and Marshall Streets. Records carry the house as far back as 1798 at least. From 1813 to 1823 it was the property of Ellis and Allan, the firm in which Poe's foster-father was a partner. After that it remained for over half a century in the possession of the Bray family. In the lawsuit that led to its removal, one witness described it as "an old and delapidated wooden building, erected in 1780." This was in 1874. The next year the house was sold to be moved, the "Old Dutch roof wooden building" bringing \$30 and the bricks \$76. Whether it was taken down and put up again, or rolled, we do not know.

These four cottages give more idea than any other houses left in Richmond of how the city must have looked in the years just after the Revolution.

1. In this book will be found three houses in what is now South Richmond, that part of the city which lies south of the James River. When they were built they were in the town of Manchester, which only became a part of Richmond in 1910.

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Need modern photo of William Gray Cottage

Need modern photo of 1013 North Third Street

Daniel Call House

217 West Grace Street

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If a house that has been rolled nearly a mile and later on has been taken down and put up again may be called “still standing,” the Call house is one of the oldest still standing in Richmond. The earliest record we can find of it is an insurance policy of May, 1796, when it was owned by John Hopkins and occupied by “Monsieur Chevilee.” At that time it stood at the southeast corner of Broad and Ninth Streets. John Hopkins was Commissioner of Loans, whose own home was at the northwest corner of Seventh and Broad. Mordecai evidently confused this latter house with the Ninth and Broad property when he wrote that Hopkins retired his house at



*Daniel Call House
Built before 1796*



Seventh and Broad to Chevallié—an easy mistake to have made, since Mordecai was only a boy when Hopkins sold the house further east and probably did not remember that he ever owned two houses in the same neighborhood. It is interesting to know one home of that significant person, Jean-Auguste-Marie Chevallié, agent of Beaumarchais and later one of the founders of milling in Virginia, whose name is generally Anglicized to John A. Chevallié.

In 1798 Hopkins sold the house he was renting to Chevallié to Daniel Call, who lived there until 1820 and owned it until his death twenty years later. Daniel Call, brother-in-law of John Marshall, was one of the most distinguished lawyers of his day and is still remembered as the author of *Call's Reports*. Of his appearance, his great-grandson says that he had such a large mouth that the saying was, “If he yawns, you’re gone, by God!” At the time of his death we find under the caption “Death of one of the Patriarchs of the City!” the following notice:

We announce with deep regret the death of Daniel Call, Esq.... one of the oldest inhabitants—and the oldest lawyer at the Richmond Bar. He was distinguished as an eminent lawyer, as a gentleman of fine judgment—of much literary taste as well as profound legal lore—

universally respected in the walks of private life—the beloved associate, the intimate friend, and the brother-in-law of Chief Justice Marshall.¹

In 1820 Call had purchased what was afterwards called the Pelouze house, at Eighth and Marshall Streets, where he spent the last twenty years of his life. The little wooden Broad Street house was rented to various people, among them John Fox, John G. Williams and L. Sutherland. In 1844 Call's daughter, Mrs. Cameron, sold the square off in lots, the one where the house stood being bought by Valentine and Breedon. Mann S. Valentine I soon bought his partners share, and he notes that he rented the wooden house and kitchen for \$300 a year. In 1849, when he was about to erect his big dwelling and store (see [Mann S. Valentine House](#)) he sold the former Call home to Alexander Brooks, who paid him \$169 for "one wooden house" and \$1.25 for the paling fence! The house was rolled up the street to its present location at Madison and Grace. The fact is mentioned in Walthall's *Hidden Things Brought to Light*, and the late Mr. E. V. Valentine told me that as a boy he followed it up Grace Street.

The second phase of the Call house now began. Until 1870 it belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Brooks, after which it was the property and home of Wilson C. Thomas, a tobacco manufacturer. In 1883 it became the property of All Saints Church. Until the first church building was erected, on Madison Street just south of the house, services were held in the Call house. During the years between 1888 and 1936 it was rented, chiefly to various private schools, so that it is a familiar spot to several generations of Richmonders. Among these schools were Miss Mary Johnson's in the 'nineties, the Richmond

Art Club in the early 1900's, and Mrs. Benson's Tutoring School for about twenty-five years following that. In 1907 the trustees of All Saints had sold the property to Mr. Peter Mayo, one of the leaders in building both the old and the newer All Saints. Mr. Mayo was dissuaded from pulling down the Call house by Mrs. Benson's pleas that he repair it instead. She sublet parts of the house to other schools, among them Miss Ella Binford's dancing-class and Miss Susie Slaughter's school for boys.

In 1936 the heirs of Mr. Mayo sold the property for \$25,000 to Frank A. Bliley. After long negotiations with the Building Inspectors department, Mr. Bliley was allowed to carry out his wish to fire-proof the old house and use it as an undertaking establishment. The house was practically taken down and rebuilt. The most radical changes that have been made are the addition of a fence too imposing for the house, the marquee added to the west side, and the substitution of a small porch for the long one with Doric columns that formerly ran the full length of the house. Of course the inside is entirely altered, but it probably bore little resemblance to what it looked like in Call's day even before Mr. Bliley's restoration.

It is difficult to tell, even from a series of insurance plats, just what the house looked like when it stood at Ninth and Broad Streets. The wing does not appear before the policy of 1836 and then is said to be one story, not two. In only one policy is any porch indicated, that of 1822, when the house is shown with a small square porch, probably similar in shape to the entrance made in the restoration. Perhaps Mr. Brooks put the long veranda on when he erected it at Madison Street.

In spite of all the changes that have passed over it, the Call



We need description of current state of the house

house is charming and serves is an example of how an old dwelling can be adapted for business purposes if there is sufficient will to preserve it.

1. *Enquirer*, May 22, 1840. Call is buried beside Marshall in Shockoe Cemetery.

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Patrick Gibson House

Lot 23 (Coutts's Addition)—706 East Leigh Street

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It seems probably that Mordecai was correct in saying that this house was built by Joseph Jackson. Jackson bought the square on January 3, 1795 from the administrators of Patrick Coutts, and while the deed mentions “all Houses, buildings . . .” the price, 36 pounds, could hardly have included a two-story brick dwelling. As the value of the property was increased the following year it would seem that Jackson built the house almost immediately. He soon put a mortgage on the property, and in May, 1798 it was purchased at auction by Thomas Rutherford. The greatly increased price, 1075 pounds, again confirms the hypothesis that Jackson built the house.

In his unpublished memoir, Rutherford gives a curious sidelight on this transaction. Jackson had come to his assistance when Mr. Rutherford broke his leg while crossing what is now the square between Main, Franklin, Sixth, and Seventh Streets on a dark night. He returned Jackson's kindness by buying this house and the land later called Jackson's Addition but was eventually disillusioned about the young man and tried to save something from the wreck of his affairs for his children. Rutherford held the house only two years. In April, 1802 it was first insured, the owner at that time being Bartlett Still, who sold it the following year to Patrick Gibson.

Mordecai describes Patrick Gibson “as respectable merchant, connected in business with a nephew of Mr. Jefferson.” This seems unflattering for the ancestor of some of Virginia's most distinguished citizens, until one remembers that the word “respectable” was



PATRICK GIBSON HOUSE
Built about 1796—Demolished 1931

purely laudatory in connotation until long after Mordecai's book was written.¹ In the Theatre Fire of 1811 not only Gibson's first wife but a girl who lived with the Gibsons, Nancy Green, whose parents were actors, perished. Nancy's mother was playing the role of the Bleeding Nun on that fatal night and rushed from the theatre still in costume to seek her daughter. According to tradition, a fortune-teller had predicted to the girl, "O Nancy, Nancy, Nancy Green, You'll die before you are sixteen." And so it was.²

Gibson, who had just returned from a trip abroad, escaped the fire and lived to marry again and have a number of children by his second wife. She had also been at the Theatre on that memorable night but had escaped being trampled by hiding behind a pillar. Patrick Gibson died in 1827. His obituary bears quoting in part as an expression of contemporary attitudes:

Died on . . . the 15th [of December] of a most painful and lingering disease, Mr. Patrick Gibson, one of the most respectable and oldest citizens of the city, in the 53rd year of his age. For upwards of 20 years he knew not what it was to have a well day; and during that long and trying period, he ... bore his sufferings, which were indescribably great, with superhuman resignation and fortitude... He lived and died a christian, in the true meaning of the term.³

In 1823, when Gibson's affairs were embarrassed, the house had been bought by his second wife's aunt, Mrs. Martha Jones. That Mrs. Jones was revered as the good angel of the household is evidenced by the fact that two of the Gibson children were named for her two successive husbands! After Patrick Gibson's death she sold the

property, in 1828, to Nicholas Mills.

Born in Hanover County in 1781, Nicholas Mills was the owner of what was one of the important coal mines of eastern Virginia, the Midlothian mine in Chesterfield County. The first railroad in the vicinity of Richmond, opened in 1831, was built to bring this coal to the docks below Manchester. It operated by gravity, the cars being hauled back to the mine by mules. Nicholas Mills was one of the wealthiest men in Virginia: at the time of his death he is said to have had \$800,000 in gold in his vault. When the Tredegar iron works were reorganized in 1842 and a name that would inspire confidence was needed, Mills was made president. He called his new home “Spring Hill” from the City Spring just north of it. Early deeds all call for free public access to this spring, which the City acquired title to in 1832, following a lawsuit.

Nicholas Mills was a staunch Union man. According to Marion Harland, whose father, Mr. Hawes, lived nearby, the last American flag to fly in Richmond in April, 1861 was in the garden of the Mills house:

Sunday came . . . Such a strange, sad Sunday as it was!

In the length and breadth of the town but one Union flag was visible. Nicholas Mills, a wealthy citizen of high character and fearless temper, defied public opinion and risked popular wrath, by keeping a superb flag flying at the head of a tall staff in his garden on Leigh Street....

On Monday, the mutterings of rebellion waxed into a roar of angry revolt over the published proclamation of the President, calling for an army of seventy-five thousand men....

That afternoon, the flagstaff in the Mills garden was empty.⁴

Mills died in September, 1862 and is buried in Shockoe Cemetery beside the wife with whom he lived fifty-one years. On his monument is the word "Paterfamilias."

Immediately after his death the whole block from Seventh to Eighth was sold to William Allen of Surry County for \$76,244 (Confederate). During the 'seventies the house was occupied by J. W. Cringan and later by the St. Paul's Church Home for aged women. In 1882 William J. Johnson, who had meantime bought a part of the property, including the house, sold it to Everard B. Meade. During Mr. and Mrs. Meade's occupancy, which lasted until 1898, the old house had another renaissance as the centre for a lively group of young people, who called themselves Mrs. Meade's "chickens." The gay foolishness centering around the house at that time has recently been recalled in a pamphlet written by one of those who enjoyed it.

In 1898 the house was sold to Mrs. Ellen G. Kidd. In a building in the rear Mrs. Kidd began her experiments in cookery which resulted in the famous "Mrs. Kidd's Pin-Money Pickles." She owned the house up to 1922, though the pickle-factory had long since moved to larger quarters. After that the property was very run down and was rented to a low class of Negroes. In 1931 the house was demolished.

The many outbuildings which had belonged to the place in Gibson's day had long since disappeared, the block being closely built up. The house itself was probably very little changed. It had a wing which was added sometime before 1811 and a charming two-

story porch, unique in Richmond, of which the date is unknown, since it is not shown on the insurance policies. The interior woodwork, which was bought by the Richmond Art Company, was beautiful, especially the mantels and an arch across the hall.

1. The word is used in this same sense in the obituary of William Barret in the *Daily Whig*, Jan. 21. 1871.
2. Another version of this legend is that Nancy dreamed his jingle the night before the Fire.
3. *Enquirer*, Dec. 20, 1827.
4. Autobiography pp. 378-79.

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“Moldavia”

Lot 565-3 South Fifth Street

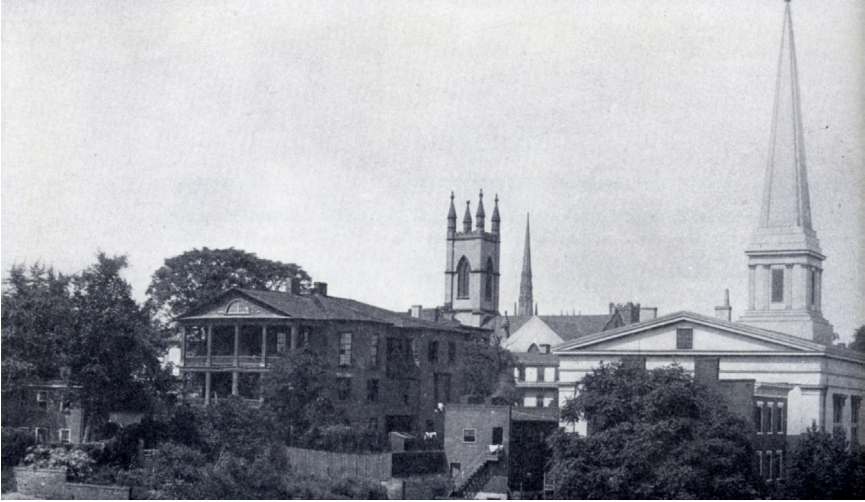
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“Moldavia,” generally called the Allan house, got its nickname from the names of those who built it, Molly and David Meade Randolph. In the deed for the land Randolph is called “Gentleman,” while the distinguished man from whom he bought it, John Wickham, is merely “Counsellor and Attorney at Law.” The house was built in 1800, and two years later Randolph offered it for sale, describing it as “that very commodious, finely situated, two-story Brick *Dwelling House* . . . (more eligible in



“MOLDAVIA”

Built 1800—Demolished 1890



point of situation perhaps, than any in the city) and completely arranged offices....”¹ Mordecai’s unflattering picture of Randolph explains why he was forced so soon to part with his new home. He was “Marshall of Virginia until the election of Mr. Jefferson, and being one of those federal office-holders who would neither ‘die nor resign’ the only alternative was to remove him.”²

The Randolphs did not actually sell the house until 1804. Afterwards the indefatigable Molly opened a boarding-house that was famous for its hospitality. The cook-book which she compiled became as much the *vade mecum* of old Virginia housekeepers as Marion Harland’s cook-book was for a later generation. David Meade Randolph, “soldier of the Revolution,” lived until 1830, when he died near Yorktown.

The succeeding “Elector of Moldavia,” Joseph Gallego, was a native of Spain but had lived in Richmond at least since 1784. In 1798 the mills bearing his name were built. With David Ross and J. A. Chevallié, Gallego was a founder of the milling industry, which



became second only to tobacco in Richmond's economy. Gallego and Chevallié married sisters, and Mrs. Gallego perished in the Theatre Fire of 1811. Her husband never recovered from this blow and died in 1818. Says a contemporary writer:

Though born a foreigner, he became a most ardent citizen of our country, which he loved as his own. Though very rich, he was unassuming and unostentatious in his manners: he was warm towards his friends, kind to the needy, unaffected in his intercourse with others, candid in his conversation, honorable in his dealings, respected by all who knew him.³

How much of "Moldavia" was built by the Randolphs and how much by Joseph Gallego is hard to determine. Unfortunately the



first insurance policy taken out with the Mutual Assurance Society dates from 1820, when house and outbuildings were complete. From the increase in valuation for taxes during Gallego's ownership, from \$4000 in 1804 to \$18,000 in 1810 and \$36,000 in 1813, it is evident that he must have made changes. That these all consisted in added outbuildings (of which there were eight) is improbable. What seems likely is that he added the wing on the north with its triple window, and possibly the portico overlooking the river.

In 1825 John Allan, the foster-father of Edgar Allan Poe, inherited a fortune from his uncle William Galt, and in July of that year he bought Gallego's late home. There Allan's first wife died, there he quarreled with the youthful Poe when the latter contracted debts at the University of Virginia. To this house Allan brought his second wife, and in it their three sons were born. There, in 1834, "Jock" Allan, as Mordecai calls him, passed away. Mrs. Allan lived on there until her death, long afterward, in 1881.

The house had been little changed except that another room with a three-sided bay had replaced a porch in the rear of what was probably Gallego's addition. After Mrs. Allan's death it was rented to various people. Many Richmond women remember attending the art classes held there by Miss Lillie Logan. The young ladies from Miss Mary Johnson's school marched down from the Call

house to have their art lessons. The “very door” where the Raven had perched on the bust of Pallas was pointed out by some lively imagination! The house was full of that haunting presence. When my own grandfather rented it (briefly) about 1882, his daughters would cower beneath the covers, hearing the ghost of Poe on the stairs—“though it might have been mice!” Finally, in 1890, eight years after Mrs. Allan’s estate had sold it, the house was demolished.

1. *Virginia Gazette*, March 20, 1804. It had been first advertised for sale in February, 1802.
2. *Richmond in By-Gone Days*, 1st ed., p. 96.
3. *Enquirer*, July 3, 1818.

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Beveridge House

812-14 Brook Avenue

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Some time between 1799 and 1803 this quaint old grocery and dwelling was built by one John Mills, on land which he had bought in 1799 from Parson John Buchanan, for “33 pounds, 2 shillings and 6 pence current money of Virginia.” At that time Brook Avenue was merely “the main road leading from Richmond to the Brook,” Mills sold the house and lot in 1803 to Charles Mills, and after another change of hands it became in 1812 the property of John Mosby, who is described in the 1819 directory as inspector of tobacco, on Bacon Branch Street.

In Mosby’s day the house consisted in a brick foundation, one wooden story, a shed in the rear and a long porch in front. When it was first insured, in 1818, Mosby was living there, but later on it was rented to various people. In 1841 it was purchased by John W. Beveridge who, three years later, enlarged it by adding an upper story. The extraordinarily tall tops of the striking chimneys show how they were changed from their original height.

Mr. Beveridge lived there and had his grocery business there also, the latter being described in the 1876 directory as “Family Grocers and dealers in grain, hay and Mill Feed, Lime, Laths etc.” At the time of his death in 1896 John W. Beveridge was considered probably the oldest grocer in point of service in the city. A Richmonder born and bred, he was eighty-one years old when he died, and had only retired from active business six years previous to that time. A devoted member of St. Mark’s Church, his chief interests were his family and his church. Though long a member of



BEVERIDGE HOUSE
Built 1799-1803—Demolished 1945

the School Board, “he was modest and retiring and never cared for any political office.” His business had occupied this same building for more than half a century.

Two years before his death Mr. Beveridge sold the old house to his partner, W. G. Mahone, to whose widow it still belongs. Up to a few years ago there were several other “storehouses” as well as the dwelling on the property.

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Conversation with Mrs. W. G. Mahone.

John Woodward House

Lot 199—3017 Williamsburg Avenue

page 53

An interesting use of chimneys occurs in the clapboard house at the southwest corner of Elm Street and what was formerly called Bloody Run Street, now Williamsburg Avenue. This house was built between 1799 and 1802 by one John Woodward, described in the directory of 1819 as a sea-captain. “Woodard,” as his name is there spelled, built his house on an eminence near Rocketts,



WOODWARD HOUSE
Built 1799-1802

the busy port of Richmond, and lived there until his death in the early 1820's. From 1825 to 1826 it belonged to William H. Burke, who was a clerk with the firm of R. O. Haskins, ship-chandlers in Rocketts. In 1863 it became the home of Jefferson Powers, of the firm of Powers and Crump, brick manufacturers. Powers's family owned it until 1903. The house is now (1940) in poor condition.

The three large chimneys on the eastern side, together with the fine brick wall, make a striking picture of an otherwise rather ordinary frame house. The shed in the rear was only one story originally, and the mark where the smaller chimney was raised to go with a second story is very apparent. One curious feature is that the closet (similar to that on the Bott house of the same date) is between this rear chimney and the one next it, rather than between the two main chimneys.



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WE NEED TO SAY SOMETHING HERE

Octagon Houses

page 54

Writing of Richmond in 1850, John P. Little called attention to a style of architecture prevalent there which he found very singular:

. . . it seems to have been an imitation of the English bay window style. Many squarely built houses have this bay window style added to them; part of the wall bulging out in the form of a half hexagon on one side. Others appear to be triangles made of three two story hexagonal towers, with a portico filling up the open space at the base of the triangle, and pointed roofs joining one another . . . This style seems to have affected a large number of the houses of the city of any great age, giving them and it a singular appearance.¹

Little was evidently unfamiliar with the many houses of various polygonal forms that had been constructed in Virginia ever since the Revolution. Such experiments appealed particularly to the inventive and daring mind of Thomas Jefferson, and we find him designing houses as varied and unusual as “Monticello,” “Poplar Forest,” and “Farmington.”

The wide popularity of such experiments in Richmond is attested by early insurance policies. Several of these houses were still standing when the Atlas of 1876 was made: many more must have been in existence at the time Little wrote. As he says, the majority were simply square or rectangular buildings with a bay,



Macfarlane House
Built before 1796—Demolished 1903

either three-sided or five-sided, added to the rear or at one side. Among them may be cited the house of Colonel Edward Carrington, built before 1799, which stood at Eleventh and Clay; that of Philip Norbonne Nicholas, 1803, just east of the Carrington house; and Lewis Burwell's home, across Clay from that of Nicholas, which was built in 1796. Other houses with such bays were "Moldavia," built in 1800, and William McKim's dwelling, at Third and Franklin, 1812. That these bays were sometimes added long after a house was built is evident from the dwelling of James Lyons. This was erected in 1810, but the bay was not added until sometime between 1815 and 1822.

To call such an addition an octagon is obviously absurd, but that they were thought of as such is evident from the name "Octagonal Hall" given to a wooden house in Brunswick County, which had

such a bay and was insured in 1805.

Of greater interest are the houses actually conceived as a sort of polygon. Only one plan of this kind seems to have been used in Richmond in more than a single building. That is the plan still represented by the Michael Hancock house (see [Michael Hancock House](#)). In earlier times there were several houses in Richmond of almost exactly this same design. These included the Benjamin J. Harris house on Fourteenth Street north of Franklin, said to have been built in 1815, John Robinson's house on the east side of Sixth near Franklin, built in 1810, and one on the east side of Eighth near Grace, built by David Bullock about 1811.² These houses had two identical bays, with a porch between. In the Hancock house the room to the left of the entrance is an octagon, three sides of which are formed by the projecting bay. All the other houses disappeared too long ago for us to know how far the octagonal motif was carried out in the interior arrangement.

At least two houses still standing in other parts of Virginia are good examples of this same plan. One is "Violet Bank," on the north side of the Appomattox River as one approaches Petersburg. This curious frame house was built about 1814. "Point of Honor," the Cabell house in Lynchburg, is a fine brick dwelling of this same shape and is said to date from 1806.

Three other houses unique in Richmond, so far as we know, exhibit even more original plans. The earliest (see [MacFarland House](#)) is that of Joseph Boyce, built some time before 1796. The plan of this building, a square core with three pentagonal wings, is so curious that one cannot but wonder whether it was not the idea of the owner, which he induced some carpenter to carry out.

Originally the house was of one story, but a second floor was added to the central part, probably about 1802. This house was long the home of William Macfarlane and his family, and was torn down in 1903. It stood at 500 East Leigh Street.

Unlike the Boyce (or Macfarlane) house, which was of wood, those of Edmund Randolph and Alexander McRae were of brick, stuccoed probably some time after they were built. Both were connected with such interesting personalities that they deserve separate treatment (see [Edmund Randolph House](#) and [Alexander McRae House](#)). Here we shall simply mention their plans, which represent the only true octagons among the many so-called octagonal houses. That of Edmund Randolph, built about 1802, was elongated, the front and back being much longer than the six other sides. This is similar to the main part of "Farmington," which dates from almost the same year. McRae's house was an aggregation consisting of three octagons, ten feet on each side. He began building an octagonal office in 1805 and four years later connected it with two buildings of similar shape to make a dwelling.

The houses in Richmond which used these various types of polygonal design all seem to date from between 1795 and about 1815. By the latter year the passion for experiment died out. While there is considerable variety in the houses built between 1815 and 1819, as the following pages will show, nothing was tried which was as startling as the Boyce, Randolph, or McRae houses, or even that of Michael Hancock.

Without the insurance policies, all memory of most of these polygonal buildings would have perished. The only one still standing is the Hancock house. Few survived even to the period

when they could be photographed. The study of the policies has, therefore, not only explained Dr. Little's paragraph, but has opened up a picture of what was probably the most curious experimental phase of Richmond's architecture.

1. *History of Richmond*, p. 173.

2. Due to variations in the insurance policies, it is not certain whether the Bullock and Robinson houses were originally of this shape.

Edmund Randolph House

Lot 768—1002 Capitol Street

page 57

The home of Edmund Randolph, which stood in the middle of the block where the City Hall now is, was built either in 1800 or in 1802—there is evidence to support both dates. Randolph owned the whole square, and in 1798 he was occupying both a wooden house on this lot that faced Broad Street and a house belonging to Samuel McCraw on the northeast corner of Broad and Eleventh Streets. Probably he used one as his home and the other as his office.

To sum up briefly the career of Edmund Randolph we can do no better than to quote the inscription on his monument at Old Chapel, Clarke County:¹

Edmund Randolph, born Tazewell Hall, Williamsburg, August 10, 1753

Died Carter Hall, near Millwood, September 13, 1813.

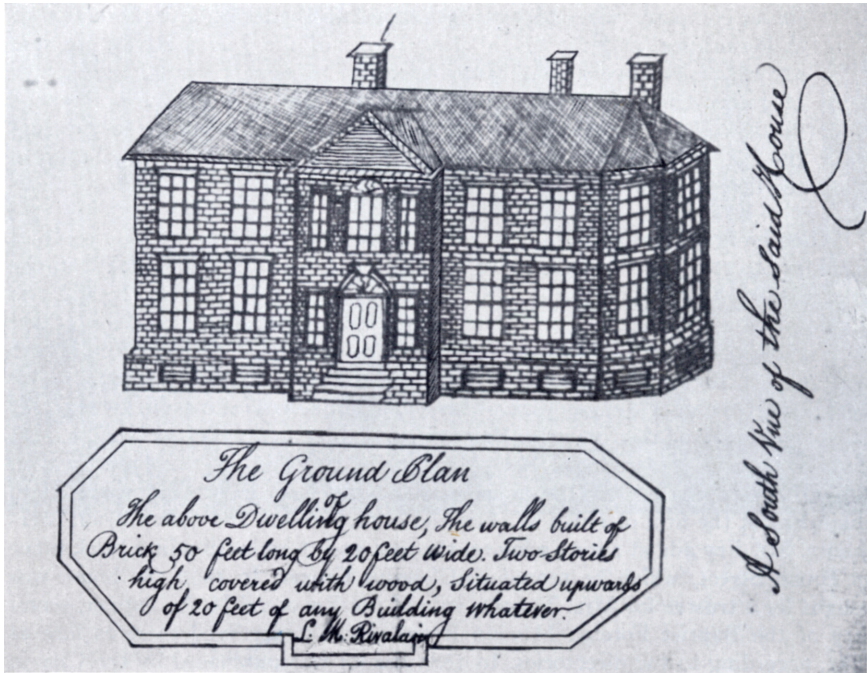
Aide de camp to Washington	1775
First Attorney General of Virginia	1776
Member of the Continental Congress	1779
Governor of Virginia	1786
Grand Master of Masons in Virginia	1786
Member of the Constitutional Convention	1787
First Attorney General of the United States	1789
Secretary of State of the United States	1794



EDMUND RANDOLPH HOUSE
Built 1800-02—Demolished 1884

This brilliant record came to a sad close when, in 1795, Randolph was accused of improperly communicating to the French Ambassador, Fauchet, the views of the United States government. Randolph immediately resigned and returned from Philadelphia to “Spring Farm,” near Richmond. His disgrace ironically meant wealth after poverty, for he had never received more than \$3500 a year in public office, and on returning to Richmond he took up a lucrative private practice as a lawyer. Finding the pressure of business too great for him to live out of the city, he moved to town. His most famous case during these years in Richmond was the defence of Aaron Burr in 1807, which he led, assisted by John Wickham.

Although his wife was severe and strait-laced, he was devoted to her. On returning from her grave (in March, 1810) he went to



EDMUND RANDOLPH HOUSE
 Insurance Policy of 1803

call on his friend Dr. Adams and at his house was paralyzed. After this illness he evidently rented either all or a part of his house to Louis H. Girardin, who advertised in July of that year that he would open a school “in the house of Mr. E. Randolph near the Capitol” on September 1st. Randolph may have continued to occupy a part of the house, as he advertised on October 19 that on November 1 he would begin the lectures on the Theory and Practice of Law announced before his illness, and he gives no other address than the one which must have been familiar to his readers.² In 1812 Mr. and Mrs. Gorlier of Norfolk advertised a French Boarding School for Young Ladies in the house recently vacated by Girardin.

The following year, while Edmund Randolph was visiting his

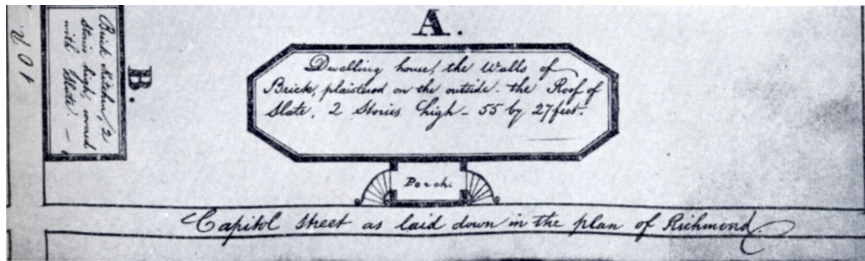
wife's relatives, the Burwells, at Carter Hall in Clarke County, he died, and was buried in an unmarked grave at the Old Chapel. In 1814 the Richmond house was sold by his daughters, and the following year it was purchased by Robert Greenhow.

Greenhow's career is sketched in an obituary curiously frank even for that day of extraordinary obituaries:

Mr. Greenhow was born in the city of Williamsburg, in the year 1761. Owing to extreme youth, and the position of his father's family, he took no active part in the Revolutionary struggle, but joined with another in procuring the services of a substitute. He nevertheless served in a junior company, whose duty was confined to the immediate protection of Williamsburg, and the neighboring banks of the James River. He was several years Mayor of Williamsburg, and twice represented the county of James City in the Virginia Legislature. He took up his permanent residence in Richmond in the year 1810, and was mayor of the city during the last war, when, by his firmness and energy, he greatly contributed to the defensive preparations of the day.³

When he first came to Richmond, Greenhow owned a house at Madison and Franklin Streets. There he was living when his wife was burned to death in the Theatre Fire, from which his son Robert barely escaped. After he bought the Randolph house, Greenhow probably had it stuccoed and undoubtedly added the shallow porch with steps leading up to it on either side. The stucco is first mentioned in the insurance policy of 1815 and the porch in that of 1822.

Robert Greenhow died in 1840 at his son's home in Washington.



EDMUND RANDOLPH HOUSE
Insurance Policy of 1822

In 1846 his heirs sold the Randolph house to Valentine and Breedon, who had bought most of the square west of this one (see [Mann S. Valentine](#) and [Mann S. Valentine House](#)). In 1851 the lot, by then reduced to sixty-two feet (the house was fifty-five feet in length), was sold to Hugh Fry of the firm of Hugh W. Fry and Sons, Grocers and Commission Merchants. Mr. Fry added a long wing on the east end, terminating in a brick office on Broad Street, which he rented to Claudius Crozet. In 1872 the house was bought by a trustee for Mrs. Tupper, wife of the Reverend H. A. Tupper, secretary of the Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Dr. Tupper lived there as late as 1881, according to the directories. In 1883 the lot was purchased by the City in order to erect a new City Hall, and by July, 1884 the square that had once held the old City Hall, the First Presbyterian Church, and the home of Edmund Randolph was “bare of buildings.”⁴

The Randolph house was as interesting architecturally as it was for its associations with one of the founders of our country. As we have seen in the chapter on Octagon Houses, this house and that of Alexander McRae were the only true octagons among all the houses called octagonal. In spite of the resemblance between

Randolph's house and "Farmington," which Jefferson is said to have designed, it seems hardly probable that Jefferson furnished the plan for the Randolph house, as he and Randolph, after having been close friends, were on far from pleasant terms at the time this house was built. It is hard to believe that the man who has made Randolph go down in history as "the chameleon" would have designed a house for him!

A yet unsolved problem which suggests itself to anyone comparing the insurance policies on the Randolph house with several photographs that were made of it is, Was the western end ever octagonal? It certainly does not appear to be so in the photographs. A possible answer to this question is that the western end of the building may have been cut off when, in 1851, Mr. Fry bought only half of Lot 768, the other half being purchased by the First Presbyterian Church, which erected its building just west of the Randolph house. The policy taken out at that time, which shows the wing running out toward Broad Street, still represents the house as an octagon, so this may not be the correct answer to the problem.

As examples of new tastes in building between 1810 and 1819, the addition of stucco and a porch are significant. Many houses built before 1810 had unsheltered doorways. Among them may be cited the Gamble house and the George Hay house on Ninth near Franklin. By 1815, porches were *de rigueur* on dwellings of any size. Luckily, that added to the Randolph house harmonized perfectly.

1. Tablet dedicated by Masons, Sept. 13, 1929.
2. *Virginia Patriot*, July 26-Sept. 18; October 29, 1810.
3. *Enquirer*, July 3, 1840. The "last war" was, of course, the War of 1812.
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Miles Bott House

216 Cowardin Avenue

page 62

This house was built by Miles Bott shortly before 1802. The deed to the property—then consisting of thirty-two acres in the suburbs of Manchester—has never been located, but no mention is made of the place or of Bott’s ownership of it in the land books of Chesterfield County before 1800. The first record of the actual house occurs in December 1802 when Bott insured “my land called Sparta.” As there is no deduction for decay, the house must have been almost new, a rapid deterioration on wooden houses being



MILES BOTT HOUSE

Built about 1802—Demolished 1941



generally allowed at that date.

Miles Bott, who seems to have been the son of another Miles Bott, had a grocery store on what was then “the Main street” of Manchester, now Hull Street, South Richmond, as early as 1801 and as late as 1829. He was also part owner in the coal fields on Falling Creek in Powhatan County known as the Creek Pits. He had been in business from 1811 to 1813 with John Cunliffe, the firm being called Bott and Cunliffe, which was altered in the latter year to Mills, Bott and Cunliffe, Nicholas Mills having joined the partnership. Bott’s financial difficulties apparently began in 1815, when he sold out his share in this enterprise to Mills. In 1819 he mortgaged his home to Richard and William Archer but may have continued to live there. He also mortgaged the coal mine, other business interests, two slaves, and a good deal of farming equipment. He died in 1835 at the age of seventy-three. His widow,



CHIMNEYS OF THE BOTT HOUSE

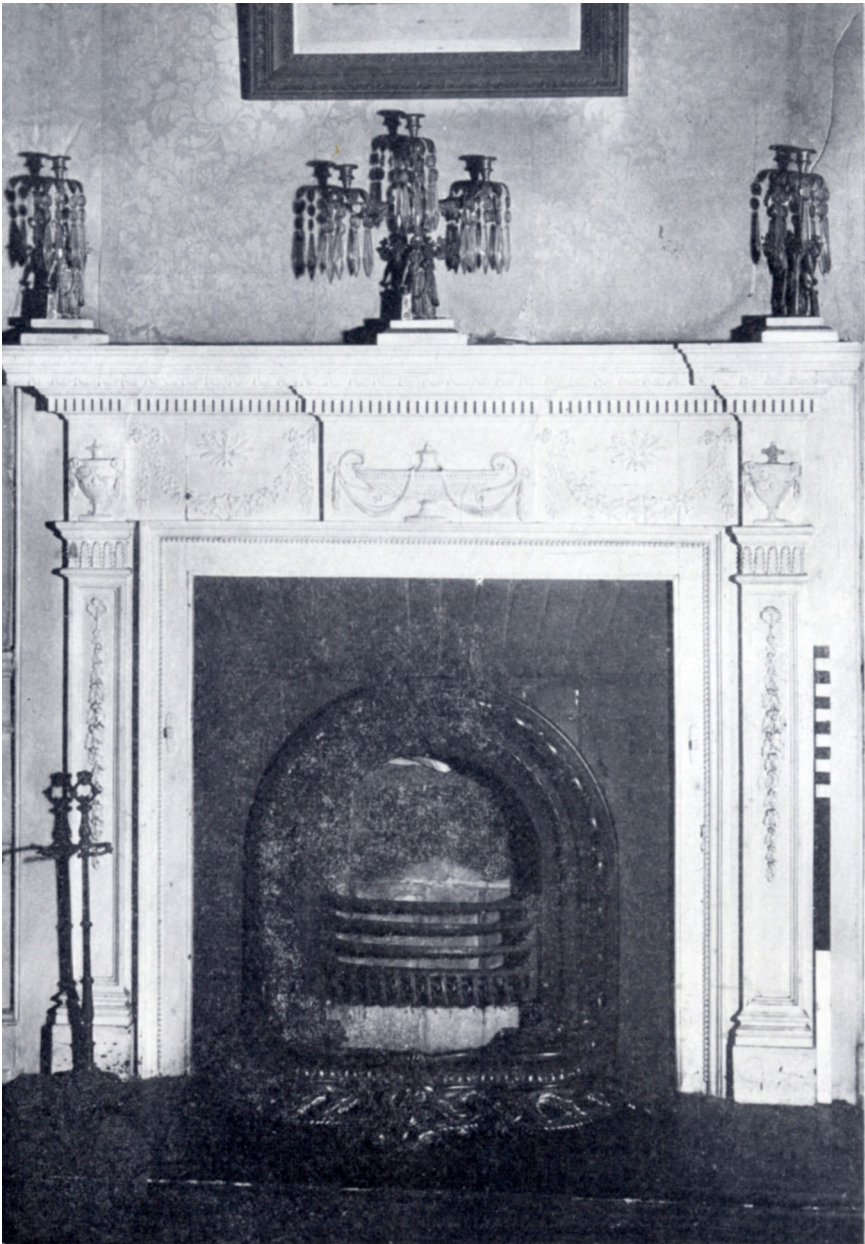
Mary Bott, only survived her husband three years, after petitioning the legislature to incorporate her share in the Creek Pits, which consisted in three-sixteenths of the land.

In 1841 Richard Archers sold twenty-six and a half acres, including the house where Bott lived, to Green Hall for a paltry \$1500. Hall died soon after, and the place went through a bewildering series of loans and foreclosures until, after a division into lots by George Snellings (who lived in the house), it was bought in 1867 by Mrs. Elizabeth Baird. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1810, Elizabeth Wight had come to America at the age of eleven, and in 1830 had married Robert Baird, also born in Scotland.

Mrs. Baird was a lady of manners. She was a most delightful companion, and her graces of character were heightened and embellished by her genuine piety and Christian living. The sweetness and beauty of her soul beamed in her lovely face, and in her age her countenance shone with the lustre of her clear and beautiful spirit.¹

Mrs. Baird's daughter Charlotte married Walter Gill, and their daughter, Miss Bessie Gill, continued to live in her grandmother's home until her death in 1938, leaving no will and many heirs-at-law, some of whom had never before set foot in Richmond.

An effort was made to have the City buy the beautiful place as a recreation centre and eventual branch library for South Richmond. The Ordinance Committee of the City Council passed a resolution to this effect, but the heirs were frightened at the prospect of condemnation proceedings, and sufficient pressure was brought to bear for the Finance Committee to defeat it. In the summer of



MANTEL IN THE BOTT HOUSE

1940 the Bott place was purchased by a slot-machine salesman, who planned to make of it a tourist home, since it was located on the road from New York to Florida. This did not materialize, and in 1941 it was again sold and demolished.

This was a real calamity, as the Bott house was unique in Richmond both in architectural character and in setting. It occupied a large yard filled with fine old trees, covering a full city block in depth and over half a block in frontage. The house was of beaded clapboard. Its most striking feature was the enormous chimneys with a brick closet between them at each end of the house. The front view was somewhat marred by a porch of the gingerbread period which replaced the simple little porch represented in the insurance policy of 1802. Inside, the house was spacious and well proportioned, with a broad central hall and two rooms on either side. The basement dining-room had big exposed beams. The only detail of the interior which was at all elaborate was the exquisite Adam mantel in the parlor on the right of the entrance. Otherwise the building was a fine but simple farmhouse.

1. David L. Pulliam, "The Old Bott House," in *Saturday News Supplement*, Dec. 1, 1900.

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Archibald Freeland House

1015 Bainbridge Street

page 66

Whether this handsome house was built by Archibald Freeland or before he owned the property, it is thus far impossible to say. We know that he bought the lot, then numbered 133, from John Murchie in or before 1805, but the deed was in the records of the Richmond District Court, which were burned in the Evacuation Fire. That the house was by no means new in 1805 is evident from the first insurance policy, taken out by Freeland in that year. The four buildings—house, kitchen, stable, and smokehouse—are valued at \$8900, a depreciation of \$500 being allowed, which would suggest that they were at least five years old.

Archibald Freeland, ancestor of many Virginians of today, was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1757. Emigrating to Virginia about 1780, he owned tobacco warehouses at Warwick, one of which was burned by Benedict Arnold. He was in the tobacco exporting business and also invested heavily in lands both in Chesterfield County and in Kentucky. His affairs became involved, and in 1819 he mortgaged his house to his son-in-law, James Scott, of whom we shall hear again in connection with the house he built long afterwards on Fifth Street (see [Scott-Clarke House](#)). Meanwhile Scott lived in the Freeland or Murchie house.

In 1853 he sold it to the trustee for Mrs. S. S. Walke. It was owned by the Walkes down to 1889. In 1907 it was purchased by Manchester Lodge Number 843 of the B. P. O. E. and was an Elks' Club for nearly thirty years. In 1938 its present owner acquired for \$3100 the only



ARCHIBALD FREELAND HOUSE
Built before 1805

mansion still standing in Richmond on the south side of the James River.

An exterior view of this house is deceptive, since it has been spoiled by the long veranda and by the large panes of glass in the windows. The outbuildings are all gone; so is the balustrade around the top. Its location on an eminence and the proportions are all that suggest how handsome it could easily be made. The windows on the Eleventh Street side have curious keystones, made of bricks set in relief and not covered with plaster. Inside, one is much more immediately impressed. The staircase is a very unusual one, with a low-swung curve quite different from the long curve of the Wickham house stair, but no less beautiful, though the balusters and newel-post seem to have been changed in Victorian times. The small room to the right of the door seems an afterthought also.

The most magnificent feature is the panelling in the rooms to the left of the entrance, which extends across that end of the building

WE NEED A MODERN PHOTO OF THIS HOUSE

and can be compared only with that of the Marshall house. The back room originally extended all the way across the back of the house. A graceful arch between the two halves has recently been filled in. All the doors, practically, are of the six-panel “witches’ door” type. The mantels are varied and interesting, three having a curious pattern that looks like the “shelf-paper” formerly used for kitchens and pantries. In spite of some alterations necessary to make it into a two-family dwelling, the interior on the whole is well preserved and in fairly good condition.

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Adams-Van Lew House

Lots 81-82—2311 East Grace Street

page 68

In 1792 Richard Adams, for “natural love and affection which he bears his son,” gave John Adams six lots, four of them comprising the square later occupied by Dr. Adams’s home. Though not taxed until 1810, the house was built by 1802 when Dr. Adams first insured it and was already living in it.

John Adams was born in 1773. An M.D. of the University of Edinburgh (1796), he began practice in Richmond as the partner of Dr. Cringan at the beginning of the new century. Later on, he was a partner of Dr. Micajah Clarke, advertising his services in the papers as was customary with doctors in that day. Though he continued his practice until his death, he was deeply involved in both business and politics also. He served in the House of Delegates in 1803-4 and was Mayor of Richmond from 1819 until his death in 1825. George Wythe Munford wrote of Dr. Adams’s service to Richmond:

No man possessed greater influence or wielded more energetic authority. . . . He secured an extremely efficient police, and became the terror of evil-doers in the mayor’s court. He undertook the thorough grading of the streets, leveling hills, filling up valleys, and giving it the appearance of a live city. He gave an impetus to the docks . . . and commenced those wonderful improvements in its buildings in all the eastern portion of the city He was the proprietor and builder of the Union hotel, and many of the largest warehouses and manufacturies,



ADAMS-VAN LEW HOUSE
Built 1801—Demolished 1911

and inaugurated lines of stages to every part of the State. Few men ever exhibited, for his means and opportunities, more enlarged views and greater enterprise.¹

John Adams had married Margaret, one of the daughters of Geddes Winston, by whom he had eight children. In 1818 his financial affairs became very involved, due to loans which he had made to others, and he was forced to mortgage both the Union Hotel and his own home. In 1822 the latter was bought at auction by the United States Bank, which held it until 1836, when it was sold to John Van Lew.

Born in 1790, Van Lew had come to Richmond from the North by 1816, by which year he was a member of the hardware firm of Adams and Van Lew. In 1818 he married Eliza L. Baker,

probably a sister of Hilary Baker, first treasurer of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad, whose house, 2302 East Grace, is still standing, across the street from the site of the Adams-Van Lew house.

As early as 1829 the Van Lews were living in the John Adams house. When Van Lew bought it seven years after, the improvements were only valued at \$2000, which became \$5000 in 1839. A study of the successive insurance policies explains the changes which Van Lew effected in the house. He suppressed the three-sided bay on the south and added the magnificent portico on that side and the graceful front porch on the north. He is also said to have laid off and developed the exquisite garden that ran down the steep hill, a riot of shrubs, fruit-trees, box, and old-fashioned roses. He may truly be



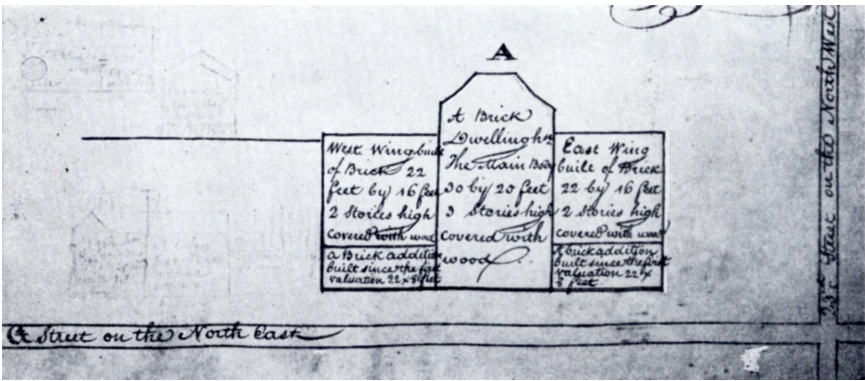
ADAMS-VAN LEW HOUSE
Garden side, overlooking the river



ADAMS-VAN LEW HOUSE

called the second builder of the house.

John Van Lew had little time to enjoy the beauty he had created, for he died in 1843. Like his wife and daughter, he is buried in Shockoe Cemetery. Among the several children of John and Eliza Van Lew, it was “Miss Lizzie” who made the house famous, or perhaps notorious, in Richmond. Born in 1818, she acquired the “Mansion house property” in 1876 after her mother’s death. During the Civil War she made no attempt to conceal her Union sympathies. The question of how effective or far-reaching her activities as a spy were, or whether she concealed prisoners escaped from Libby Prison or from Belle-Isle, is one that has never been finally settled. It is conceded that she directed the removal of Dahlgren’s body from its first place



ADAMS-VAN LEW HOUSE
Insurance Policy of 1813

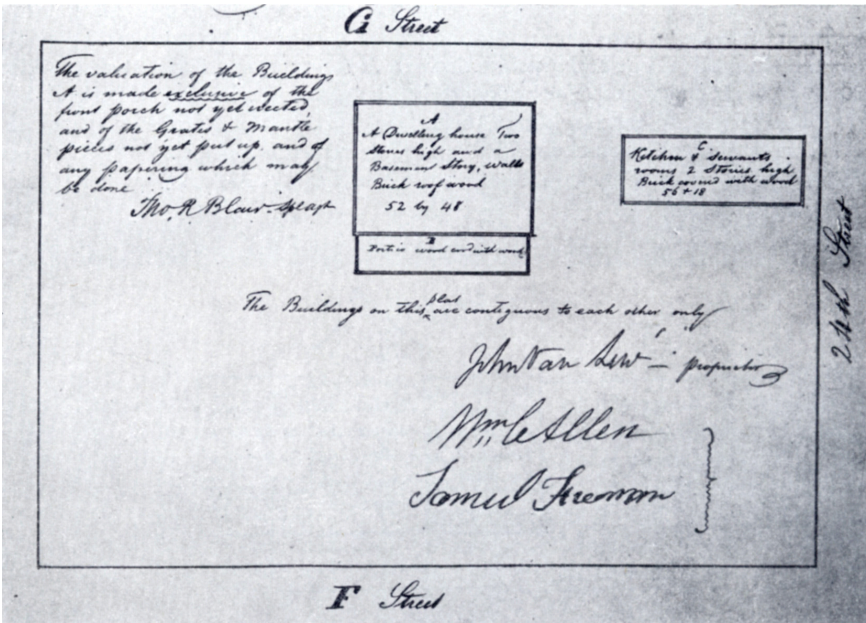
of burial, to the bewilderment of everyone including his father, who was demanding it of the Confederate government. Though a recent writer in the *News Leader* says that the secret room where Miss Van Lew concealed escaped prisoners was pure invention, since neither the architect nor the contractor present during the demolition saw it, still I have talked with two people who had seen it. Miss Van Lew herself showed it to Miss Florence Peple and a group of young people who called on her. When Mrs. R. D. Garcin asked the old lady, Miss Van, is it true you hid Yankee soldiers here?" she replied, "Child, don't believe everything you hear, but I *will* show you one thing." On which she unscrewed the top of the tall andirons and showed her visitor where she concealed dispatches.

General Grant's respect for Miss Van Lew's services, whatever they were, was evidenced by his sending his aide, Colonel Parke, to protect her during the Evacuation. Scarcely had Grant been made president when she was appointed post-mistress of Richmond, a position which she held during his two terms of office. Afterward she received a small place in Washington but soon returned to Richmond and spent the last years of



her life in the old mansion. Though in greatly reduced circumstances, she retained her pride in the house and garden her father had beautified, and delighted to show them to visitors. These were none too many, as she had become a legendary figure, a bogey to frighten children with in that generation still smarting with defeat and poverty. Children on the street would hiss “Witch! witch!” as she passed, and little boys destroyed her fruit-trees ruthlessly. She told Miss Peple how she had scotched this latter persecution by inviting the whole “gang” to an ice-cream party. Mrs. Littleton Fitzgerald recalls being taken by her father, much against her will, to call on Miss Van Lew. As she approached the door, another wave of resentment rushed over her. “I *won’t* go to see that Yankee!” When they rang, Miss Van Lew herself opened the door with the strange greeting, “And I’m *not* a Yankee!”

At the time of her death a writer surmised that local dislike of her was due less to her conduct during the War than to what he calls her “negroism.” Probably the eccentricities of age had much



ADAMS-VAN LEW HOUSE
 Insurance Policy of 1838

to do with the aura of mystery that surrounded her. She kept forty cats, for which she ordered large quantities of meat. She objected to paying taxes without the privilege of voting, and every year sent in a formal protest when she paid them. Some remember her singing “Kathleen Mavourneen” so that she could be heard a block away. All who saw her remark on the peculiar, almost unearthly brilliance of her dark eyes. The death of a niece who lived with her was a great blow, from which she did not recover. When she died, on Sept. 25, 1900, the Christmas decorations put up the preceding year by this niece had never been taken down.

The boulder from Capitol Hill in Boston which marks Miss Van Lew’s grave in Shockoe Cemetery bears this inscription:

She risked everything that is dear to man—friends—fortune—comfort—health—life itself—all for the one absorbing desire of her heart—that slavery might be abolished and the union preserved.

One thing which Elizabeth Van Lew also sacrificed to her devotion to the Union cause is not enumerated on this impressive monument: her beautiful house. After her death it was bought by the Virginia Club, which sold it in 1908 to Dr. William H. Parker, who ran a sanatorium there for several years. In 1911 it was condemned by the City as the site for the proposed Bellevue School. No one came forward to offer effective opposition to this vandalism, as they had done when the Marshall house and the White House of the Confederacy were similarly threatened by that enlightened body, the School Board. No, Miss Van Lew was a spy—let her house go. Thus a beautiful building with the loveliest site and setting in Richmond was sacrificed to blindness and prejudice.

In spite of the help afforded by the successive insurance policies, this house remains a difficult one to analyze architecturally with any degree of certainty. It would appear that in its main lines it resembled the Howard house (see [Howard House](#)), at least after Dr. Adams had put two additions on the Grace Street side. But it had an octagonal bay on the garden side similar to that on “Moldavia” and on a number of other contemporary dwellings. The porches, though Greek Revival in character, did not alter the main lines of the house, so that the general effect was more like the Cunningham-Archer house than like that other composite of two periods, the Hayes-McCance mansion, which was really Greek Revival after

alterations contemporary with those of the Adams-Van Lew house were made. As to the interior, the mantels were certainly changed by Van Lew, according to his first policy after altering the house. The only photograph I have seen of the interior would indicate that it was considerably altered at that time.

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Alexander McRae House

Lot 780—311 North Ninth Street

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On June 4, 1802 Alexander McRae bought the site of this house from Philip Turpin. About eight years were consumed in the construction of the house, which evolved from an octagonal office, built in 1805, to a dwelling composed of three octagons, which was begun in 1809 and only completed in 1813.

The builder of this curious house was for two decades one of the outstanding lawyers and citizens of Richmond. Son of a Scottish clergyman who barely escaped hanging during the Revolution for his Tory sympathies, Alexander McRae moved from Petersburg to Richmond about 1797. Ten years later he married as his second wife Ann Dent, sister of Dr. John Hayes. With William Wirt and Benjamin Botts, he prosecuted Burr in his trial that same year. An ardent follower of Jefferson, his home was such a rallying point for his party that it was called the “Republican Watch Tower.” Among the offices which he held were those of Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia and President of the Mutual Assurance Society. In 1809 he went on a secret mission to England, with the purpose of introducing manufactures into the United States. This was the first of his trips to Europe. During the next fifteen years he was appointed to or applied for several positions of a semi-diplomatic character. Finally, about 1823, he left Richmond permanently, spending the rest of his life abroad. He died in London at the end of 1840. Moncure Robinson, who met him in London and Paris, described him as “certainly a very intelligent Man and an interesting Companion.”¹ Thus far his role in the Jeffersonian party and in the beginnings of American

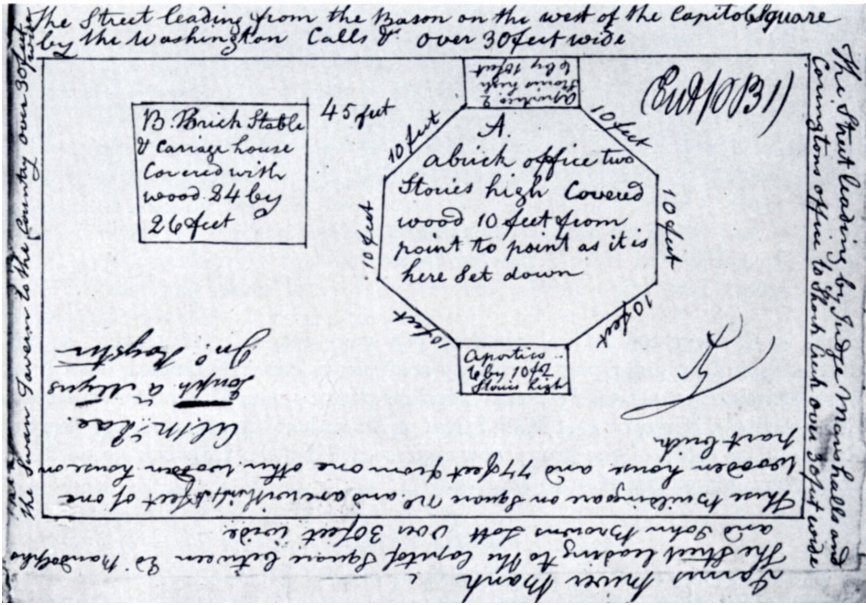


*ALEXANDER McRAE HOUSE
Built 1805 and 1809—Demolished 1929*

manufactures has received too scant attention.

In 1818, while McRae was still living in the house he built, he was forced to sell it at auction. The purchaser was John Preston, who paid \$17,500. Preston lived there briefly but sold the property in 1821, again after an auction, to the Mutual Assurance Society, for \$7,554.78—a contrast in price that is an interesting example of the deflation following on the panic of 1819.

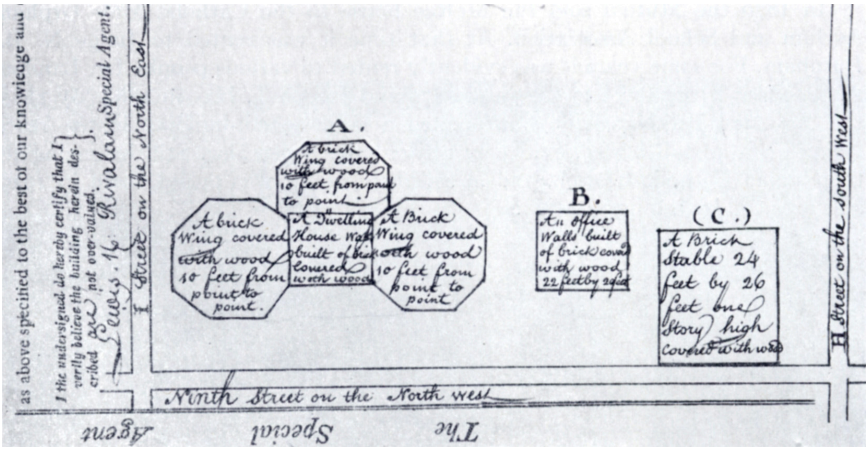
The Mutual owned the house until 1870. During a part of that time it was the home of Colonel John Rutherford, president of that Society, who in 1841-42 had been acting Governor of Virginia. Mr. Munford tells an amusing story of an old servant of the Rutherfoords, fleeing before a cavalry raid near the family home in Goochland County and arriving with all the horses before the house on Ninth



McRAE HOUSE
Insurance Policy of 1805

Street, whence Mrs. Rutherford had to conduct the cavalcade personally back to “Rock Castle,” as there was no room at the town house.² Colonel Rutherford died in 1866, after having been for twenty-nine years president of the Mutual Assurance Society.

In 1870 the Mutual sold the McRae house to the Catholic Male Orphan Asylum and School Association. At that time it was rented to Judge N. B. Burnham. For some years it was evidently rented to various people, Dr. Landon A. Woodson living there in 1875 and 1879 and Joseph T. Hay in 1881. By 1885 the Xaverian Brothers, who had erected a large school-building in the rear, facing on Marshall Street, evidently utilized the house also. Still belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, and in sad disrepair, it was pulled down in 1929 and replaced by a filling-station.



McRAE HOUSE
Insurance Policy of 1814

Architecturally, this house was one of the most interesting in Richmond. The insurance policies of 1805 and 1809 show its gradual development. Fiske Kimball attempts to prove that this curious design was probably furnished McRae by his political chief, Thomas Jefferson. He cites not only the comparable plans of “Farmington” and of “Amphill” in Cumberland County but a series of drawings made by Jefferson probably between 1808 and 1810. In reply to this one might object, first, that the beginnings of the McRae house (which Jefferson could have suggested an enlargement of), were made in 1805, and second, that houses of irregular plan were very common in early Richmond, even if few were complete octagons. It seems possible that octagonal summerhouses like that of Micajah Crew on east Main Street or the rather different house of Edmund Randolph or those of the group now represented by the Hancock house might have suggested such a plan to McRae.

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granddaughter of McRae.

Cole Diggs House

204 West Franklin Street

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When Thomas Rutherford bought a hundred-acre farm to the west of Richmond from Alexander Buchanan in 1794, it is said that the only building on it was an overseer's house made of wood. Rutherford built his own home at what is now the northeast corner of Adams and Franklin Streets and sold off lots to his friends in order that he might be surrounded by pleasant neighbors. Of the many houses built in what was called "Rutherford's Addition," only one survives in anything like its original condition. This is the house which was apparently built in 1809 by Cole Diggs.

A deed from Alexander Stuart to Diggs dates from 1808, but the



COLE DIGGS HOUSE
Built about 1809



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

The Cole Diggs House is now home for [Preservation Virginia](#)

description of that property is so indefinite that one cannot be sure whether it refers to this piece of land. As Rutherford's Addition was not made a part of the city until 1810, the land books prior to that year do not record the house. Consequently we must fall back on the first insurance policy, dated November 8, 1810. As no deduction is made for decay we might safely assume that the house was not over five years old at that time. Further discoveries may confirm the opinion of a high authority¹ that the house dates from the end of the eighteenth century, an opinion based on its early type of interior trim.

Cole Diggs was a Revolutionary officer, who lived in the house for a short time and died in 1817. He had sold this house to David Bullock, who had for two terms been mayor of Richmond and who lived there from about 1810 until in 1827 he bought the Mutter house,



on the site of the present Commonwealth Club. Strangely enough, his earlier home continued to be called the Bullock house, down to the last years of the nineteenth century. During all those years, Diggs and Bullock were the only owners who ever lived there: from 1827 to 1903 the house was rented first to one person and then another.

Among these tenants, in the period preceding the Civil War, were Richard F. Cunningham, James J. Binford, Dr. Lewis Chamberlayne, Andrew Stevenson, and Dr. Robert Archer. It was during the occupancy of Dr. Archer, about 1858, that an important change was made in the building. The porch, which had been on the east side of the house, was moved around to the Franklin Street side. Two magnolias on Jefferson Street still mark the site of the old entrance. A wing was added in the rear of the house at this time. It seems probable that it was stuccoed at about the same period. The rear of the building is still without stucco, leaving the fine keystones over the windows exposed. The stucco could not have been applied

at any earlier date, as the present rear was then the side, and one side would hardly have been left unstuccoed.

Tenants in the years following the War included Mrs. Susan V. Joynes, John S. Wise (in 1885), C. H. Read, J. F. T. Anderson, and, at the end of the century, Stanhope Bolling and his sister, Miss Mattie Bolling.

In 1903 the house, by then shorn of all but one of its outbuildings, was purchased by Mrs. Frances Archer Christian, granddaughter of Dr. Robert Archer and daughter of Mrs. Robert S. Archer, so long the mistress of the Cunningham-Archer house. Mrs. Christian took down a small one-story wing to the east of the house and erected a two-story wing in its place. The changes which she made in the interior were largely in connecting this wing to the house, and did not detract from its character. Since her death the Cole Diggs house has been the home of her daughter, Mrs. Herbert A. Claiborne.

When the two-story verandah is covered with wisteria blossoms, this is one of the most charming spots in Richmond. Of the interior, one room, the library, retains its early woodwork intact. This includes beautiful overdoors with plaster ornament, bookcases built in on either side of the fireplace, and a rich mantel, also with plaster ornament. The mantel looks as though it had been substituted for a higher one, the mark of the earlier shelf remaining on the wall





HOUSES OF OLD RICHMOND

Tell story of the block being saved by Historic Richmond Foundation...

above. On the second floor are chair-rails and raised-panel doors. The front room and hall on the first floor have been restored in keeping with the library, and the house is in the most perfect condition throughout.

1. Mr. Fiske Kimball, in conversation with Mrs. Herbert A. Claiborne.

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How to Save a Block

BY ALFRED SCOTT

Around 1976, all of the buildings on both sides of the 200 block of West Franklin Street were put up for sale when the Tucker Psychiatric Clinic decided to move to a new location in Chesterfield County.

Mac McCullough and I had bought the Chesterfield Apartments at 900 West Franklin Street, and we were operating it when the Tucker's hospital block was put up for sale. The Historic Richmond Foundation (HRF) wanted to save the historic buildings on the



COLE DIGGS HOUSE
Built about 1809



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

block. I've never understood why he did it, but Charlie Reed then president of HRF came to me and asked me to negotiate the purchase of the block. I suppose he saw something entrepreneurial in me.

I asked Charlie if he just wanted me to buy it or to do some business analysis. He said he would like to do the analysis.

There had been a \$10,000 study by an architect at Glave, Neuman and Anderson paid for by one of my aunts, Isabell Anderson or Mary Ross Reed. The plan was that HRF was going to buy the block, put preservation easements on the buildings, and then sell the buildings.

So I asked the appraiser Bill Chewning to go through the buildings



and tell us what the value of the buildings would be if this was done. A logical question. What would we have to sell? We had a tour of the buildings, going through all of them with Bill Chewning, Charlie Reed, Joe Stettinius, Jake Huffman, Alan Heyward (the contractor who had just restored the Ironfronts downtown) and myself.

The study was all based on a phone call with Joe Stettinius who said the buildings would be worth about \$7 a square foot (as I recall), but in touring the buildings we realized Joe was talking about net rentable interior space for the first and second floors, and the architect was using this value for the exterior dimensions including the attics and basement furnace room! This was a real shock to us all when we realized the magnitude of the consequences.

Then in his appraisal, Bill Chewning explained that the city would

be required by law continue to appraise and tax the buildings at the market value of the existing R8 or R9 high rise residential zoning and the value of the buildings we would have to sell would be based on the value of the usable office space less the taxes that must be paid to the city. If the city downzoned the block, there could not be a tax deduction for the donation of the easement to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, or it would be tax fraud.

The values of the buildings were very low under the burden of such taxes, and I remember that he put the value of one of the buildings at zero. That was for the large red brick building at the northeast corner of the block.

So I explained to Charlie Reed that their goal was to save the block, but then the issue was how to save the HRF from making a disastrous purchase!

So Charlie Reed changed course and met with Jake Huffman at Morton G. Thalheimer to get an option to buy the buildings, Charlie would find purchasers for the buildings, and there would only be one real estate commission on each sale.





There remained the question of what to do with the white elephant of the hospital building itself. Its best use was as a hospital, for which you had to have a certificate of need, but it was being abandoned. Then blind luck came our way when a nursing home operator (Mrs Stanley, no kin to my wife Meredith) appeared on the scene and agreed to buy it. That made it all work.

Then Charlie Reed went to work finding purchasers for the buildings. And he got the city to declare it a historic neighborhood. (It was never clear to me if there were tax deductions for the easements or maybe nobody told the IRS!)

Instead of a financial disaster, Historic Richmond made about \$750,000 with only a nominal cost of the option.

Everyone predicted that the Cole Diggs house would be the first to sell, in fact it was the last.

It was quite an experience, and all credit should go to the unbelievable resourcefulness of Charlie Reed.

Anthony Turner House

Lot 138—2520 East Franklin Street

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In 1803 Richard Adams sold Anthony Turner lots 130 and 138, on what is now Twenty-sixth Street, running from Grace to Franklin. The present house was built some time between then and 1810. Of Turner, we know only that he is called “gentleman magistrate of the City of Richmond,” and that in his obituary he is given the title “Captain.” He died in 1819, less than forty years of age, but was evidently a man of some substance, judging both from the fine house he built and from the fact that among his effects were six Negroes, a handsome carriage, and valuable furniture, including an “elegant mahogany sideboard.”

All of Turner’s property was offered at auction a few weeks after his death, but apparently the house was not actually sold until 1829. For many years the place belonged to J. B. Colton and to his estate. During all this time it was rented, among the tenants being George Booker, William J. Clarke, and “Mr. Waddle.” In 1856 it was purchased by William Sinton, trustee for Rebecca Sinton, and from then until 1904 the property, much reduced in area, belonged to members of the Sinton family. The Sintons lived there as late as 1885, but in the ’nineties it was rented out. Since 1904 it has changed hands five times. From 1920 to 1939 it was the home of Mrs. Margaret Fagan and her family.

This house is architecturally a charming relic of the early nineteenth century. The porch and front windows have unfortunately been altered, but the basement windows and those on the side



*Anthony Turner House
Built 1803-10*

We need modern photograph of 2520 East Franklin Street

show the small panes and keystones which have disappeared from the front. An original feature is the arch, now bricked in, which supported the big double chimneys. Arches were also used beneath the wing to the west, an addition which was not put on until after 1851. Inside, the house is very little altered. Practically every room has a chair-rail, and there is great variety among the mantels. An unusual detail is the reeding around the deep frame of the door into what must have been the parlor. The stair is very simple. While not large, the house has four floors if one includes the full basement and big attic. The grounds have been cut to seventy-six feet in depth, which makes the setting a little constricted. The commanding location at the top of a steep hill and the double chimneys make this one of the most attractive old houses on Church Hill.

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Michael Hancock House

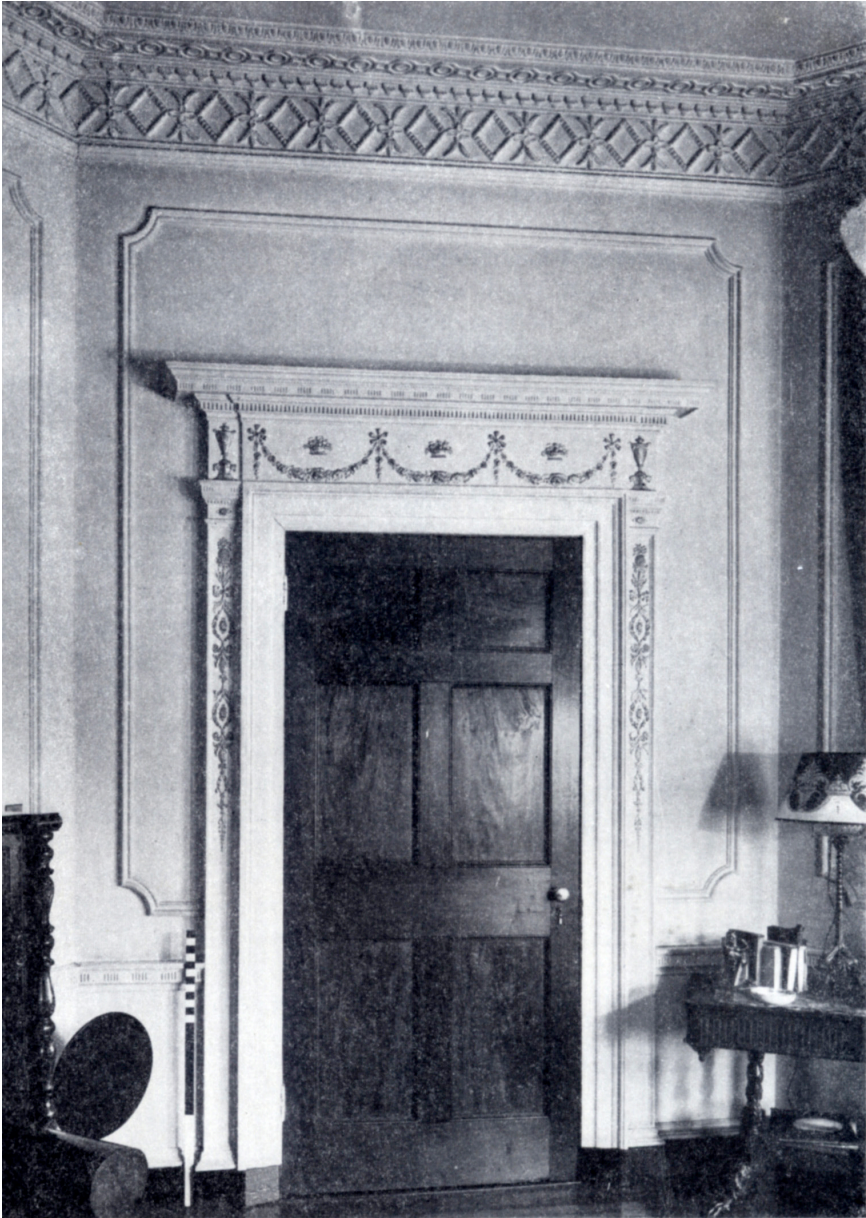
Lot 585—2 North Fifth Street

page 85

The house long known as “Mrs. Caskie’s” and still longer as the Palmer house was built in 1808-09 by Michael Hancock. He had bought the site from Lawrence Muse, who, in turn, had bought it from Landon Carter, “it being a prize to ticket no. 1525 in the lottery of the late Col. Wm. Byrd.” Of Hancock we know little. His great-granddaughter, Mrs. H. C. Land, says that he lived in



*Michael Hancock House
Built 1808-09*



Doorway in the Hancock House

Chesterfield County and was much addicted to gambling, losing most of his possessions in that way. Mrs. Land owns a curious pier-table the claws of which represent human feet, an heirloom that belonged to her great-grandfather. After selling the house on Fifth, he lived near "Elba." Hancock Street recalls his memory.

In 1814 Hancock sold the house for \$17,000, and two years later it was bought by William Wirt for \$24,000, the rapid increase in value being characteristic of those "flush times" before the depression of 1819.

William Wirt is the most famous person who has lived in this house. During his brief ownership of it he completed his *Life of Patrick Henry*, which was published in November, 1817. Wirt was born in Maryland in 1772, of German and Swiss parentage, but spent most of his life in Virginia up to the time when he was appointed Attorney General of the United States. He lived in Richmond from 1799 to 1802, and again from 1806 to 1817. During this longer period he carried on his private practice of law, serving as one of the prosecuting attorneys in the trial of Aaron Burr. As his second wife he married Elizabeth, daughter of Colonel Robert Gamble of "Gamble's Hill." While living in Norfolk (1803-4) he wrote for the *Virginia Argus* the *Letters of the British Spy*, in which prominent Richmonders were described under thin disguises. In 1812 he wrote his "Old Bachelor" series for the *Enquirer*. Meanwhile his public service kept pace with his practice and with his literary activity. In 1808 he was elected member of the House of Delegates for Richmond. In 1816 he was named Attorney General of Virginia, and in the following year Attorney General of the United States, a post he held for twelve years. Moving from Richmond in January,

1818, Wirt remained Attorney General until the close of John Quincy Adams's administration, when he retired and went to live in Baltimore. He died in 1834.

When Wirt moved to Washington, his house was rented by Judge Cabell but was bought after a few months by Benjamin Tate, the price, \$25,000, showing that the real estate boom was still in full swing. The Tates, father and son, have the unusual distinction of having both been Mayors of Richmond. Benjamin Tate, who was Mayor at the time of the Theatre Fire, died in 1821, leaving the Hancock house to his son Joseph. The latter was Mayor from 1826 until his death at the age of forty-three in 1839. "No public officer, perhaps, ever performed his laborious task more conscientiously, or with greater satisfaction to the public; and we are sure we speak but the general sentiment, when we say it will be difficult to supply his place," says the writer in the *Whig* of May 29. The various public bodies attended his funeral, and the City erected an imposing obelisk over his grave in Shockoe Cemetery.

In 1846 the heirs of Joseph Tate sold the house to Hall Neilson for \$7000, a pittance compared with the prices it had brought in 1816 and 1818. In 1852 Neilson sold it to William Palmer. Mr. Palmer had come to Richmond from Baltimore County about 1820, and had begun business in an agricultural implement store. This he continued until his death in 1870. Calling him one of Richmond's best citizens, a writer in the *Dispatch* says:

His reserve, gentleness, sincerity, warmth of friendship and kindness of heart . . . won him the respect and esteem of all. He had a wide reputation in the State from his

intercourse with the farmers, and they, who know so well how to appreciate men, will hear testimony to his great integrity. A man to be trusted in any position, and yet he filled no public office. . .¹

After the death of Mr. Palmer's widow, their daughter, Mrs. Emma Palmer Caskie, made her home in the house now generally called either by her father's name or by that of her husband, James Caskie. In September, 1941 she died in that same home where she had been born eighty-eight years before.

This is one of the most beautifully preserved houses in Richmond. While often called an octagon, it is not a true octagon in the sense that the Edmund Randolph and McRae houses were, but is rather a rectangle having two three-sided bays with a porch set between them. As we have seen, this design was formerly represented by several houses in Richmond, and may still be seen in "Violet Bank" near Petersburg and in the Cabell house in Lynchburg. Unlike the contemporary McRae and Wickham houses, the Hancock house appears never to have been stuccoed, and the beautiful keystones above the windows show to full advantage. That the porch is contemporary with the house is fairly evident from the delicate reeding of its arches. The fence, no doubt much later, is identical in pattern with that which surrounded the Gibbon house that stood across Fifth Street.

The interior, photographed by the Historic Buildings Survey, has much of the delicacy and richness of the Wickham house without its imposing proportions. The octagonal motif is carried out not only in the shape of the sitting-room to the left of the entrance

but in the design on the ceiling. The shape of the sitting-room leaves odd little passages and closets between it and the rectangular dining-room back of it. The stairway, like that of the Hawes house, is unobtrusive, placed at the extreme rear of the central hall. Only the mantels have been changed to marble ones, which look as though they dated from the time when Mr. Palmer bought the property. The mantels and the Victorian furniture contrast oddly with the delicately plastered cornices, walls, and door frames. But a house which has been continuously lived in and cherished has an atmosphere that no restoration or unity of period furniture can possibly achieve, and such is the charm and beauty of the Hancock-Palmer-Caskie house.

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First Brockenbrough House

Lot 761—1100 East Clay Street

page 89

In 1810-11 Dr. John Brockenbrough, at first cashier and later president of the Bank of Virginia, built a mansion at the northeast corner of Eleventh and Clay Streets. It was a two-story dwelling, sixty-three feet long, with a two-story portico in front, and numerous outbuildings, including a long wing on Eleventh in which the kitchen, laundry, and carriage-house were located.

Here Dr. Brockenbrough entertained Richard Channing Moore, who had come to Richmond to be rector of the new Monumental Church and at the same time Bishop of Virginia. Of the hospitality there Bishop Moore wrote in June, 1814: "I am at present at the house of my valued friend Dr. B. St. Paul, in his excursions, was never better received, nor more affectionately treated."¹

Why Dr. Brockenbrough was dissatisfied with this handsome dwelling, whether he desired a better view over nearby Shockoe Valley, or whether he was tempted by the architectural genius of Robert Mills, who had come to Richmond to design the new church, we do not know. But in 1816 Brockenbrough sold this house, purchased a lot one block away, and built the mansion we call the White House of the Confederacy. Between 1816 and 1835 the first Brockenbrough house changed hands a number of times before being purchased by John Caskie. The Caskies lived there until 1862 and were so identified with the property that it was called by older people "the Caskie house."

Just after that family moved out, the house was occupied for at



Brockenbrough-Caskie House
Built 1810-11

least one session by the Richmond Female Institute, whose large building on Tenth Street had been taken over by the Confederate government as a hospital. One of the pupils of that day remembered the beautiful mansion with its terraced gardens where she studied during the session of 1862-63.

For fifteen years the Brockenbrough-Caskie house belonged to Lewis Hyman, a Jewish jeweler, who moved to New York during the Civil War. Many occupants succeeded each other during these years, the best known being (around 1873-74) Dr. Minnigerode, rector of St. Paul's, who had preached to the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII), delighting him with his strong German accent, and had baptized Jefferson Davis. In 1882 the Brockenbrough house was bought by John A. Lancaster. Mr. Lancaster himself lived in the former Bruce mansion at the eastern end of the block. Buying a strip between the two, he erected in 1883 the long wing east of the Brockenbrough house, taking pains to match the details with the

We need modern photograph of 1100 East Clay Street

old part of the house. This wing made a double house out of the building, the two parts being occupied in the 'eighties by the Luckes and the John S. Elletts.

Under the leadership of Dr. Hunter McGuire, a new medical college was chartered in Richmond in 1893. Finding that city water could not be had at "Duncan Lodge" (see [Duncan Lodge](#)), where the institution was expected to be, the College of Physicians and Surgeons bought the whole block from Eleventh to Twelfth on Clay. Classes and administrative offices were in the Bruce-Lancaster house, the hospital in the Brockenbrough-Caskie house. The growth of the institution was phenomenal; the corresponding changes in the Brockenbrough mansion were no less so. The Virginia Hospital, as it was called, was enlarged in every direction, including skyward. A third story and several wings were added. Gardens and outbuildings, the circular bay in the back, all disappeared in the ever-expanding hospital. The interior was even more changed than the exterior. Of its former beauty only three fine doors opening on the high-pitched entrance hall remain. Outside, it is much easier to imagine the house as Dr. Brockenbrough built it, in spite of the disfiguring third story and the not unpleasing wing added by Mr. Lancaster.

The portico is imposing, and may be the genesis of the one at the White House of the Confederacy and the inspiration of the many porticoes erected during the late 'thirties and the 'forties. The house was stuccoed from the beginning. That this was an innovation is evident from the detailed description in the first insurance policy, where the walls are said to be "covered with a mixture of sand, lime etc." The frames of the windows are pleasing, and the large wall-spaces are broken by the oblong panels that were popular from this time until about 1817. Altered as it has been, the house retains its dignity and is a not unworthy neighbor to the Wickham house, diagonally across the street.

Since the medical school combined with the Medical College of Virginia, the former hospital has been used for various purposes, including an out-patient department of the college and a W. P. A. headquarters.

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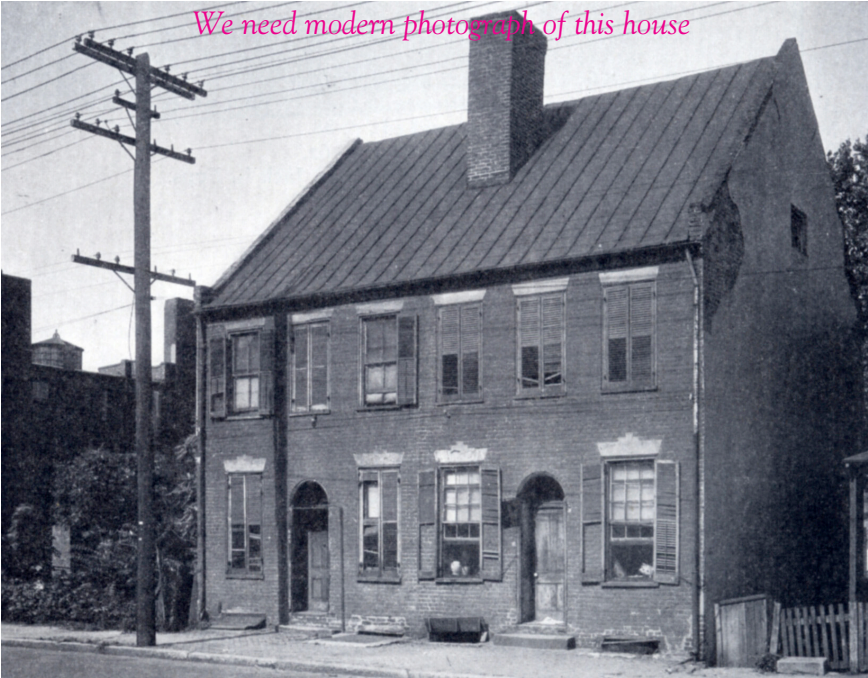
Brick Double Houses

1810-1818

page 92

A TYPE OF DWELLING popular among those who built to rent or sell was the double house of two-and-a-half stories, with peaked roof and a chimney made to serve both parts of the building. That these houses were inexpensive to build and intended for people of modest means is evidenced by the fact that John Adams insured one half of such a building for \$1300 in 1813 and sold it the next year for \$1400.

A number of these pairs of houses are still standing in Richmond.



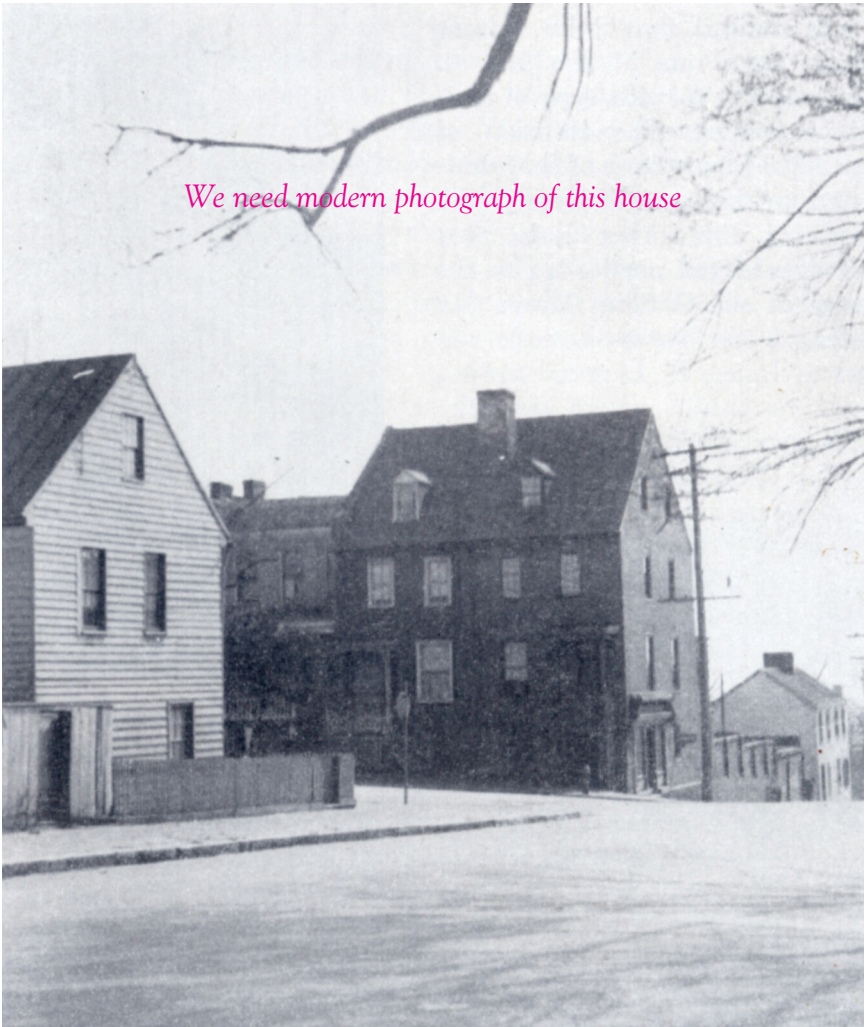
WHITLOCK DOUBLE HOUSE
Built 1818

We need modern photograph of this house



CRUMP DOUBLE HOUSE
Built 1818-19

Three will suffice for study. The earliest of the three was built by Dr. Adams at the southeast corner of Grace and Twenty-fifth Streets in 1809-10. Of the two such pairs that he built here, only the corner ones have survived. With the immense holdings of the Adams family on Church Hill, it was natural that John Adams should have been one of the first to utilize his property for this type of real-estate development. The location of these little houses, just back of St. John's Church and on the brow of a steep hill, is very striking. The corner house, 2501 East Grace, belonged until 1844 to the descendants of one William Mann (*not* the builder of the Hawes house), and after that to James R. Lamkin and his heirs until 1902. Oddly enough, the other half of this pair of Siamese twins also remained for a large part of its career in the hands of only two families. Thomas Cowles bought it from Dr. Adams in 1814, and until 1877 it belonged to his heirs. From then until 1908 it was the



*JOHN ADAMS DOUBLE HOUSE
Built 1809-10*

property of Frank H. Lafon and his family.

Almost equally picturesque is the location of a similar pair of houses built in 1818-19 by Sterling J. Crump at the southwest corner of Nineteenth and Grace. These were erected in Crump's side yard,

his own house (still standing) facing on Nineteenth Street. They also have the advantage of being on a corner, and are surrounded by old houses and shadowed by a beautiful tree. Their history is less interesting than their appearance. Unlike the Adams pair, they have generally belonged to a single individual and have been rented to many tenants. Like the earlier pair, they have lost their original small windowpanes (except on the sides and in the dormers) and have stoops and shelters over the entrance-doors that are obviously not contemporary with the houses.

The third pair, 626-28 North Seventeenth Street, built by Charles Whitlock about 1818 in what was then called “Butchertown” or Adams Valley, are in far worse condition than the Adams and Crump houses but are in a sense better preserved because they have been less altered through the ages. The front windows retain their small panes, the bricks laid to represent keystones have kept some of their plastered covering, and, best of all, one can see what the doors of such houses originally looked like—a round arch, with no shelter over the entrance. A few years ago one of these doors still had a charming fan-light, with an eagle made of lead. This pair differs slightly from the other two in that there are no dormers, and the end walls have only a tiny window in the attic half-story. Each belonged for many years to one family—No. 626 to Benjamin Stetson and his daughter Mrs. Joseph Allen, and No. 628 to Patrick Brannan and his heir.

While these three groups of houses differ in size (the Adams pair being only 32 feet in width and the Crump pair 50 feet) their general outlines are almost identical. The fact that the Adams and the Whitlock and Crump houses were erected nearly nine years

apart shows how the type persisted, being found simple, pleasing and inexpensive for those wishing to develop their large holdings of real estate by building small dwellings to rent or sell.

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The Governor's Mansion

Capitol Square

page 96

Before the present Mansion was built, the governors of Virginia lived in a small frame house approximately on the site of the one we know. In May, 1780 the Legislature enacted that “a house for the Governor shall be located on Shockoe Hill.” When this was completed we do not know, but by 1791 it was in need of repair to





GOVERNOR'S MANSION
Built 1811-12

the extent of two hundred and seventy-five pounds. In December, 1810 Governor Tyler sent the following message to the Legislature:

The governor's tenement is going fast to destruction, having been originally badly built and is too small for a family. The patch-work which has adorned it for twenty years has cost greatly more than a good durable brick building would have done The present situation is intolerable for a private family, there being not a foot of ground that is not exposed to three streets, besides a cluster of dirty tenements immediately in front of this house, with their windows opening into the enclosure.¹

John Tyler's words were effective: on February 1, 1811 a bill was passed appointing Matthew Cheatham, Nathaniel Selden, Abraham



B. Venable, David Bullock, William McKim, William Wirt, and Robert Greenhow commissioners, “to contract for the building of a house for the use of the governor of the commonwealth on the lot on which the governor’s house now stands.”² It was to cost not over \$12,000. A dwelling that the governor might occupy while the new one was under construction was to be rented for a year. Monroe, who succeeded Tyler, preferred Mr. Moncure’s house because it was near the Capitol.

On February 17, 1813 the report of the Commissioners was presented to the House of Delegates. They had had the building finished “in a style rather superior to that originally contemplated” and had added “two plain porches on the north and south fronts of said building,” changes which had produced “a deviation from the plan entered into with the undertaker, Christopher Tompkins.” Undertaker is obviously the old term for contractor. It is possible that the architect of the Governor’s Mansion was William McKim, “whose services the commissioners thought it necessary to command

during the year 1811 and 1812, for the superintendence, planning etc. of the work.”³ McKim, not to be confused with the referee Alexander McKim, was paid \$300 for his services—the only one of the commissioners to be compensated. While the report nowhere uses the term “architect,” such may have been the nature of his services.

The cost of the house was \$15,000. A good deal of grading was done and the stable was added after the dwelling itself was completed in the winter of 1813, which brought the cost of the whole up to \$19,000. The work of adding a stone wall (probably the one on Governor Street) and of sodding and planting trees was not completed until 1819. Furniture had to be purchased by the State, that in the old Mansion proving quite inadequate. The itemized list of furniture used by earlier governors includes such quaint objects as two “sophas,” thirteen “stick chairs” (Windsor chairs?), a jack for turning the spit, and eight mirrors, though there were only two beds!

The first governor to live in the present Mansion was James Barbour, who moved in in 1813. A history of all those who have followed him would be the history of nineteenth and twentieth century Virginia. We shall only tarry to mention some of the noted people who have been entertained there. Among them were Edward VII when he visited Richmond as Prince of Wales, President and Mrs. Hayes, Presidents Cleveland, McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson, Lord Balfour and Marshall Foch.

The house has had one important alteration, one near-disaster, and one real disaster. During Governor Swanson’s administration the beautiful dining-room was added on the east. Being a polygon on the outside, it is in keeping with the period when the house was



Historic Richmond and Jeff Safferhwaite

built, when, as we have seen in the chapter on Octagon Houses, such bays were common. The oval interior makes one of the most charming rooms imaginable.

During the Evacuation Fire both the house and kitchen caught fire repeatedly and were only saved by having people stationed on the roof. What the burning of Richmond's business section failed to accomplish was almost brought to pass seventy-one years later by a Christmas tree sparkler in the hands of a small boy! The disaster which nearly destroyed the Mansion was a fire which took place on January 4, 1926. The wife and older son of Governor Trinkle were almost burned to death, and the house suffered an estimated damage of \$30,000, not counting the destruction of three eighteenth-century portraits and of three card-tables that had belonged to Governor Barhour. The rooms that suffered most from the fire were the two which, thrown together, form the large reception room across what is now the centre of the house.



To our taste today the Mansion has just the dignity and simplicity without pretentiousness that we would wish for the Governors of Virginia. Our forebears in the 'fifties, dazzled by the large houses recently erected by tobacco millionaires, were apparently a little ashamed of the old house. The writer in the Directory of 1858-59 says:

It is a plain brick building, not half so handsome as the dwellings of many of the citizens. Indeed, it is a shame to Virginia that her legislators should suffer her chief magistrate to live in a house which is so poorly arranged throughout, and without any regard to style, convenience or comfort.⁴

Fortunately, the legislators seem not to have read this outburst, and the State survived the 'fifties without having the Mansion replaced



by a duplicate of the James Thomas or William Grant houses.

An old print of the Governor's Mansion reproduced in Lutz's *Richmond Album* shows three details of the exterior the restoration of which would probably beautify it. One is the rectangular panels between the first and second floors, the outlines of which can still be easily traced. Between the chimneys appears a balustrade of the type sometimes called a "captain's walk." Around the eaves is a second balustrade, probably removed when a roof was replaced. That the outer balustrade was not merely the imagination of the artist seems to be proved by a recommendation of the commissioners charged with building the house, where they say that "the exterior view of the building, the comfort and conveniency of its inhabitants would (in their opinion) be greatly increased by the superstructure of a terrace surrounding the eaves of the building. . . ."⁵

The most interesting parts of the interior are the entrance-hall



and the rooms to right and left of it. The two latter have charming mantels with plaster decoration. A delightful cornice and frieze of Greek amphorae enriches the hall. Originally there was but one stair, narrow and inconspicuous, in the cross-hall, which in recent years has been duplicated on the opposite side of this transverse passage. The reception-room, while ideal for entertaining, has been so much restored that it has lost much of its earls' character.

Before the addition of the oval dining-room the governors of Virginia dined in the basement, like countless other Virginians long after the day when the Mansion was built. Meals were brought in by a covered outdoor corridor which connects the house proper with the charming kitchen and servants' quarters to the south of it. This building, restored in recent years, is one of the most pleasing parts of the ensemble and is almost the only outbuilding of its period that is left in Richmond. Situated as it is between a large garden

and a small one, its existence is hardly perceived from outside and its discovery adds pleasure to a visit to this fine old home of the Governors of Virginia.

1. *Journal of the house of Delegates*, 1810-11, p. 9 (Dec. 3, 1810).
2. *Acts Passed by the General Assembly*, 1811, p. 7.
3. *Journal of the house of Delegates*, 1812-13, p. 169. The fact that on another occasion McKim was requested to investigate the prices of articles sold by the Penitentiary would suggest that he was only called on to represent the State's interests.
4. *Richmond Business Directory for 1858-59*, p. 150.
5. *Journal of the House of Delegates*, Feb. 1, 1813, pp. 169-70.

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Lutz, *A Richmond Album*, p. 21.
Mordecai, *Richmond in By-Gone Days*, 1st ed., p. 59.
Governors' Letter Book, 1810-11, pp. 162-63; p. 291.
Letter from Col. V. Griffith Dodson.

Wickham-Valentine House

Lot 766—1015 East Clay Street

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ALTHOUGH HE HAD BOUGHT the site from Colonel John Harvie in 1795, John Wickham did not build this remarkable house until 1812. Before then he lived in a wooden building which had been Harvie's former home, on Tenth Street between Marshall and Clay, and it was there that he entertained his most famous client, Aaron Burr.

John Wickham was born at Southold, Long Island, in 1763. Although his family had been in America more than a hundred years, they were Tories in sympathy. An uncle, Colonel Edmund Fanning, procured a commission in the British army for young John, then aged nineteen. Stationed at Portsmouth, Virginia, he started to pay a visit to another uncle, the Reverend William Fanning, in Brunswick County, and was clapped into jail! After the Revolution Colonel Fanning sent his protégé to Arras to study and have the advantages of travel. In 1785 Wickham returned to Virginia, studied law with Judge Henry Tazewell in Williamsburg, and shortly after being admitted to the bar moved from Williamsburg to Richmond. In 1800 he married as his second wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. James McClurg.

The most famous law cases in which Wickham took part were those of *Ware vs. Hylton*, involving the liability of American debtors to their English creditors (1791-93); *Martin vs. Hunter*, concerned with the boundaries and title of the Fairfax grant (argued in 1796 and again in 1809); and, third and most famous, the trial of Aaron Burr for treason in 1807. In this last case Wickham assisted Edmund



WICKHAM HOUSE
Built 1812

Randolph in the defence of Burr. On his talents and method as a lawyer we quote William Wirt:

This gentleman . . . unites in himself a greater diversity of talents and acquirements than any other at the Bar of Virginia. He has the reputation . . . of possessing much legal science. He has an exquisite and highly cultivated taste for polite literature; a genius quick and fertile; a style pure and classic; a stream of perspicuous and beautiful elocution; an ingenuity which no difficulties can entangle or embarrass; and a wit, whose vivid and brilliant conversation can gild and decorate the darkest subject. . . . Praise is too faint for the man who possessed more jury power than any man of his day in Richmond. With all the adroitness and ingenuity granted him, there was besides a degree of native pith and power unequalled

either in extent or cultivation by any man at that Bar.¹

Wickham's social gifts were no less striking than his legal talents. Tom Moore, the poet, who visited Richmond in 1803, called him fit to adorn any court, while Mordecai described him as "the elegant, the witty, and the graceful, . . . a gentleman of the most polished and easy manners; full of wit and repartee, and whether at the bar or the festive board, always distinguished, profound as a lawyer, brilliant as a companion."²

Beverley R. Johnston recalled Wickham as:

. . . strolling in his garden at a ripe and still intellectual old age, tall and not corpulent, with a countenance marked by strong features, a large Roman nose, large mouth, and bright gray eyes. I think his gray hair was bound in a queue, a very picture of the majestic simplicity and unconscious dignity of . . . the ancient bar of Virginia.³





John Wickham died in 1839. His funeral sermon was preached by his old friend and neighbor, Bishop Moore, and he was buried in Shockoe Cemetery, his epitaph being composed by his distinguished son-in-law, Benjamin Watkins Leigh. In 1854, after the death of Mrs. Wickham, the house was sold to John P. Ballard, proprietor of the Ballard and Exchange hotels. Ballard immediately had it done over, with frescoed ceilings and marble mantels. Four years later he sold it to James G. Brooks. During the Civil War Brooks wined and dined members of the Confederate Congress, to the disgust of the “Rebel War Clerk,” who comments of the host, “He made his money at trade.”⁴

In 1882 the executors of Brooks sold the property, by then reduced to 77 feet on Clay Street, to Mann S. Valentine II, who lived there until his death ten years later. Mr. Valentine was an enthusiastic collector of books, manuscripts and Indian artifacts.



DINING-ROOM OF THE WICKHAM HOUSE

At his death he left the house, with an endowment of \$50,000, to serve as a museum for his various collections. In 1928 Granville G. Valentine, acting for the Museum, purchased the three nondescript dwellings to the west of the Wickham-Valentine house and had all the collections moved into them. The Wickham house, restored to its former beauty and furnished as an example of an old Richmond dwelling, remains an essential part of the expanding Valentine Museum.

Even more can be said about the house itself than about the personality of the distinguished lawyer who built it. Without written proof, the plan for the building has long been attributed to Robert Mills. The date of the house, 1812, corresponds with Mills's visit to Richmond to design the Monumental Church. As we shall see in studying the White House of the Confederacy (known to be Mills's



WINDOW OF THE WICKHAM HOUSE

work) there are many points in common between that mansion and John Wickham's. The Wickham house was certainly handsomer, or at least more costly, than any of its predecessors: it was valued for taxes in 1813 at \$33,000 where the first Brockenbrough house was valued at \$22,000 and the Gallego house, with twice the amount of ground, at \$36,000. (All these include the land.)

The Wickham house marks the beginning of many innovations. The small front porch flanked by columns may have been used in the Craig house, though as we have seen those could have replaced square pillars. Adaptations of the Wickham house porch, smaller and more shallow, with a more conscious use of neo-classic detail, continued to be built even after the Civil War. This house has the



first use that we are familiar with in Richmond of triple windows. These graceful windows were very widely employed from 1812 on, the most exaggerated example being the Nolting house, where they occur on all four floors (see [Hobson-Nolting House](#)). The recessed



arches over the windows, here seen for the first time, were much copied in houses built before 1819; among other examples we may cite the Union Hotel and the house of Samuel Myers Jr. (see [Brander House](#)). The general proportions of the Wickham house, low and broad, are characteristic of mansions of this period as contrasted with the taller, squarer outlines of the Barret house and its contemporaries. The curved bay on the garden side had already been used in the first Brockenbrough house. How much porches facing the garden had already been used is hard to say: we know that Thomas Wilson's home, built several years before, had such a porch, but it was in the years following the erection of the Wickham house that the combination of a small front porch and a large portico, generally two-storied, opening on the garden, became almost a rule in Richmond houses with any pretensions to size.

Within, the house is of a magnificence unapproached up to that date. The decoration around the doors and windows has a puzzling



*Now home to the **Valentine Richmond History Center***

resemblance to the Hancock house, so much so that the latter has sometimes been attributed to Mills. The original mantels were replaced in 1854 by Victorian marble. In the 1930 restoration these in turn were removed and wooden mantels made, using designs from the original trim of each room. The two most striking innovations in the interior of the house are the lavish use of curves and the arrangement of the rooms. The hall is elliptical, with niches in the walls. The back wall has a curved bay, necessitating curved panes in the windows, just as the elliptical hall required a curved doorframe. Carried to an extreme, this would have become an affectation and was apparently too expensive to imitate. The most magnificent feature is the “palette” stairway, its bold sweep making it by far the most beautiful stair in Richmond. While never equalled it was frequently followed, some examples being the Dill house (1832), the



Barret house (1844), and the Bolling Haxall house (1858). To see how logically the rooms and hall were arranged, so that they might be appreciated at a glance, we have only to contrast the Wickham



house with that of John Marshall. The three rooms across the back look out on a lovely garden, the best preserved of the old gardens of Richmond. A few years ago the former carriage-house of the Hayes-



Historic Richmond and Jeff Saperhewze

McCance house, used for many years as a studio by the sculptor E. V. Valentine, was moved to this garden, where it harmonizes well with the setting, besides giving the Museum an auditorium.

1. *Letters of the British Spy*, p. 214.
2. *Richmond in By-Gone Days*, 2nd ad., pp. 89-90.
3. *Richmond Times*, Feb. 8, 1895.
4. Jones, *Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, vol. 1, p. 167.

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Parson Blair's House

Lot 21 (Coutts's Addition)—612 East Leigh Street

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It would be difficult to find a piece of property that remained longer in the same family than did the lot on which stood the home of John D. Blair. The Reverend Mr. Blair bought two and a half acres from the trustees of Patrick Coutts in 1793; his grandson sold what remained of it, including the house, in 1903—a hundred and ten years later. The house we know as Parson Blair's was not built before 1812: insurance policies of an earlier date show that Mr. Blair was living in a wooden dwelling on the corner of Seventh and Leigh. Behind this were the kitchen and schoolhouse. In 1812 he built a brick house immediately west of the wooden one, facing on Leigh Street. The new house measured twenty by thirty feet, and was valued for insurance at \$2500.

No more beloved person has ever lived in Richmond than John Durbarrow Blair. The son of a Presbyterian minister, he followed the calling of his father and supplemented his meagre income by teaching school. Many leading men of early nineteenth-century Richmond had their education from him.

His system was founded on the idea of moral suasion, leading the boys to obedience by kindness and patience. . . . He possessed the rare faculty of interesting the youthful mind upon the subjects before it, and inducing inquiry and investigation under the hope of discovering for itself something new. He delighted in leading the mind to

analyze every question. . . . and to open up to inquisitive youth new thoughts and suggestions, connecting them together in a chain of argument for logical deductions.¹



PARSON BLAIR'S HOUSE
Built 1812—Demolished 1915

One of his pupils, Joseph Tate, afterwards Mayor of Richmond, recalled his school days with “peculiar pleasure,” saying that “there was no teacher in his day who, when he saw a boy did not understand a subject or a word, would take more pains or could make him understand it more thoroughly. His explanations were full, explicit, plain, and covered the entire ground. . . .”²

As a pastor and friend Mr. Blair was no less beloved. His brother-in-law, Thomas Rutherford, speaks of him in his memoir in terms of warmest affection. Of his friendship with the Reverend John Buchanan, Episcopal clergyman in Richmond, so much has been written that it is futile to repeat. George Wythe Munford has left a genial and picturesque record of these two beloved servants of the Lord and of their fellow-man in *The Two Parsons*. Until eleven years before Mr. Blair’s death, there was no building belonging to the Presbyterians in Richmond, and the Episcopal Church, now called St. John’s, was so far away from the new centre of population that the two ministers held service in the Capitol, on alternate Sundays, the same congregation following the Presbyterian or the Episcopal rite, apparently with equal satisfaction to themselves! It is amusing to see how distressing this state of affairs appeared to a later and stricter generation of Presbyterians, as we read what the biographer of the Reverend John Holt Rice has to say about Parson Blair:

In either phase, the great body of those who attended the service appeared to have no idea of vital religion . . . the sacrament, I believe, was never administered in the Hall, and the rite of baptism, which had got to be the mere ceremony of christening (as it was called) to give the child a name, was performed only in private houses.

To finish the picture, I am sorry to be obliged to add that the ministers themselves, though both very worthy and able men, were yet most insipidly lukewarm in their public services, and, in their private manners and habits . . . were not exactly the best *examples to their flock*. They partook, at least, without scruple, of the pleasures of the table, and winked at all the *innocent amusements* of the gay and fashionable circles in which they moved. . . . It is due to the memory of both these worthy men . . . to add here, that the gross impropriety of their clerical deportment was owing, in some measure at least, to the times in which they lived . . . Mr. Blair particularly, who was a man of real piety, and greatly esteemed by his brethren, confessed his fault publicly to the Presbytery to which he belonged, even with tears.³

This paragraph is no reflection on the beloved memory of Parson Blair; it is rather the nineteenth century condemning the eighteenth. Parson Blair had married Mary Winston, of Hanover, and when he died, on May 31, 1823, he left all his property to her. She died in 1831, leaving the major part of her estate to her sons, Walter and Thomas. In a division between the two brothers in 1840, Thomas Blair received the wooden house on the corner and Walter the later brick house. In 1886 Louisa E. Blair, Walter Blair's widow, left her property to her children, Henningham Claiborne and Walter Blair. Mrs. Claiborne long lived in this house which had been her grandfather's. On December 5, 1903 Walter Blair, to whom Mrs. Claiborne had conveyed her half of the land, sold it to E. C. Folkes. After passing through several hands it was torn down in 1915 by the Rennie Dairy Company.

The house is of course chiefly interesting as having been built by one of the outstanding personalities of early Richmond. Although it remained unchanged in size, it is difficult to tell whether the ends originally had the high stepped-gables. The [smaller Marx house](#) had the same type of gable, and though no house of this early period which has this style remains standing it is perfectly possible that there were many others. Nor can we tell whether the house was originally stuccoed. Since no early policies mention stucco, it is more likely that it was put on later.

1. Munford, *The Two Parsons*, p. 168.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
3. Maxwell, *John H. Rice*, pp. 55-57.

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Gosden House

Lot 13 (Coutts's Addition)—214 East Leigh Street

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This lot came into the hands of one Joel Tucker in 1802. He built two “dutch roof” cottages, one of which is still standing (see [Roper Cottage](#)). By 1808 he was dead, and his wife had married James Gosden. In 1814 the value of the two-acre lot with improvements was increased from \$1200 to \$10,000, from which we may assume that this house was built in 1813. In Gosden’s will (1818) he leaves all his real estate to his wife for her lifetime, and afterward “to my daughter Ann Abner [sic] I give . . . the House and lot I at present occupy 66 front and 188 ft. back. . . .”

Ann Gosden, evidently (from the dates) the stepdaughter of Mary (Tucker) Gosden, had been married at the end of 1817 by Parson Blair to Thomas H. Abney. Her step-mother must be the person called “Mary Gordon” in the 1819 directory (which is full of such errors), said to live on L between 2nd and 3rd. The land book references to this house are equally inexact: from 1817-19 it is said to be at L and 2nd, and yet in the 1819 land book Mrs. Gosden is said to be living at L and 3rd—with no improvements! A comparison of the deeds of 1826 and 1832 with Gosden’s will and with the more correct land book for 1821 makes it reasonably certain that this house and lot at Third and Leigh is the one occupied by the Gosdens and subsequently by the Abneys.

In 1826 Thomas Abney and his wife sold the house “in which said Abney at present resides” to Joseph Allen, a large holder of real estate, who in 1832 sold it to Daniel Trueheart. Trueheart lived there longer

than any other owner, only selling it in 1865. The insurance policy he took out in 1847 (the first Mutual policy on this house) shows that it already had the back porch with a room in the upper part, as at present, and also had a wing on the west, traces of which are still visible on the wall of the house. After Trueheart sold it, it changed hands rapidly for a number of years until, in 1889, it was purchased by the Negro Y. M. C. A., to which organization it still belongs.

By 1939 the Negro Y. M. C. A. had fallen on evil days, and the house was in wretched condition. In that year a number of forward-looking Negroes, realizing the need for an active Y. M. C. A. for the youths of their race, determined to revive it. James E. Poindexter, one of their number, who had some years earlier charmingly restored the Samuel Jordan Blair house on Seventh Street, appreciating



GOSDEN HOUSE
Built 1813



We need a modern photo of this building

the possibilities of this house, persuaded the others in the group to restore it. After a campaign for funds, this was done in 1940, so that the house is now beginning to recapture much of its original charm.

Run down as it was, it retained many characteristics of the period when it was built. The panelled stair has a mahogany rail, the windows on the back retain their original panes (those on the front had been changed), it has attractive mantels, especially in the attic, where the random-width floor boards are extremely wide. The most unusual feature is a beautiful built-in cabinet in the west room on the main floor.

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“Hanover House”

Lot 563—101 South Fifth Street

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“Hanover House” was built in 1813-14 by Joseph Marx and was so called because the builder’s father had been court physician to the Elector of Hanover. Joseph Marx was born in that German city in 1773. By 1796 he was living in Manchester, his business being that of practically every other merchant in the vicinity of Richmond at that period—importing manufactured goods and taking tobacco or other produce in exchange. In 1807 he advertised German Oznaburgs, Ticklenburgs, Dowlas and Towelling, which he would sell for cash, tobacco, or approved paper.

That Marx was held in high esteem is evident from his obituary:

An eminent merchant, a public spirited citizen, and an excellent man, his career presents . . . an encouraging example of the success that may be achieved . . . by probity, prudence and industry. Commencing business on the narrowest scale, poor and amongst strangers, he has died a merchant of the first class, opulent and universally respected.¹

Marx had married the sister of another Jew distinguished in the life of early nineteenth-century Richmond—Samuel Myers. Joseph and Richea Myers Marx had nine children, some of whom became the ancestors of many well-known Virginia families. Like other Jewish families of this period in Richmond’s history, the children married Gentiles, and their descendants practically all drifted away from any connection with the Jewish community in Richmond.



MARX-FREELAND HOUSE
 Built 1813-14—Demolished 1891

Joseph Marx died in 1840 and his house was sold almost immediately. Until 1854 it was owned and occupied by George Taylor. In that year he sold it to John Freeland, who thus joined the ranks of tobacconists who at that time owned most of the fine houses on Fifth Street. The Freelands lived there for nearly two decades, and older people in Richmond still call it the Freeland house. In 1872 John Freeland died, and his house was purchased by William C. Mayo, whose mother had been a daughter of the builder. During the brief years that the Mayos owned it two of the Mayo children were born in the house their great-grandfather had built. In 1876 Mrs. Mayo's father, General Henry A. Wise, died at his daughter's home. He had been Governor of Virginia from 1856 to 1860, and a gallant Confederate soldier.

In 1877 the house was purchased by Major Frederic R. Scott, whose large family added to the liveliness of the neighborhood, both

during their tenure of the Marx house and while they were living in the nearby Barney and Allan houses. Their most spectacular exploit occurred one Christmas morning in the Marx house. It seems that the boys kept an earthenware jug of gunpowder on the mantelpiece. Before their parents were out of bed, the house was shaken by a terrific explosion, and Jim dashed down to his mother's room, covered with blood! While he was playing in a corner and Fred lying quietly on his bed, Tom had thrown a lighted firecracker, which had unfortunately landed in the jar of gunpowder. The house was not burned down, nor were any of the boys killed, but that Christmas the doctor had a busier time than Santa Claus, sewing up the cuts made by that jug!

Major Scott sold the Marx-Freeland house in 1881, and the purchaser, Wilson C. Thomas, who had just sold the Daniel Call house, lived there for some time. In 1890 it was bought by Major Ginter, who pulled the house down the following year to erect a row of small dwellings on the site.

When first built this must have been one of the handsomest houses in Richmond. It was valued for insurance at \$23,000, which was more than the valuation of the Wickham house. The property extended to Sixth Street, the outbuildings (coal-house, bath-and-smokehouse—an odd combination—laundry and icehouse) running down Cary, and the big carriage-house and stable being at the southwest corner of Sixth and Cary. John Freeland pulled down this latter and put up a tobacco stemmery in 1859—the factory area was creeping up and he had sealed the doom of his house.

From the beginning the Marx house had entrance-porches on the east and west sides and a two-story portico on the south. It is

noticeable that both here and at “Moldavia” the portico was on the side rather than in the rear, where it invariably was in later houses. “Hanover House” seems to have been stuccoed from the time it was built. The proportions of the exterior are similar to those of the Wickham house—low and broad compared with its height. The chimneys, however, were placed on the outer walls, where those of the Wickham house were closer together, near the centre of the roof. The triple windows on the first floor recall those of the Wickham house, and all the windows seem to have retained their early mouldings. The cornice, however, is evidently of later date than the house. Like the smaller dwelling next door (see [Smaller Marx House](#)) the Marx house had a belt-course and rectangular panels under the second-story windows, the two crowded rather close together for beauty. Since few people remember the interior, it is difficult to say whether the tradition among the descendants of Joseph Marx that the house was designed by Robert Mills is well-founded or whether it is only a legend.

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Curtis Carter House

Lot 718—100 East Main Street

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On June 12, 1805 Charles Carter, surviving trustee of William Byrd III, sold lot 718 to Curtis and John Carter. Evidently there was some sort of house on the lot during the next decade, as Curtis and John are both represented as living there, but in the Land Book for 1815 we find the notation “new brick building,” with the improved value of the property jumping from \$3000 to \$8000, and in October, 1815 Curtis Carter insured what is obviously the present house, already occupied by himself, for \$7500. At that time the building consisted of an ell, with a porch in the rear, where the present east wing stands. It had two brick outhouses—a smokehouse and a stable and carriage-house.

Carter, who is described in the Directory of 1819 as a “bricklayer” would probably be called today a brick contractor, judging from the amount of property he owned and the beautiful house he built to live in. He sold this house in 1822, and after being the home of Mrs. Ann Randolph it was purchased on November 7, 1828 by its most famous owner, Claudius Crozet.

Born in France in 1789, Crozet had served Napoleon from Wagram through Waterloo, only missing the last battle because he had been sent to bring up more powder. After the Emperor’s downfall he emigrated, in 1816, to the United States, and with his training in the Ecole Polytechnique quickly found a position as Assistant Professor of Engineering at West Point. He remained there until 1823, when he was appointed engineer of the State of Virginia.



During the eight years he held this position he did great service to the State in mapping watercourses and planning highways. He left in 1831 because he believed that the future lay with railways, while his superiors could see no further than developing the James River and Kanawha Canal to connect Richmond with the Ohio Valley.

That he actually lived in this little house is evident from the insurance policy of 1829 and from the deed of sale, where the house is described as “now in the occupancy of the said Claudius Crozet.” It was probably there that his beloved little daughter, Adele, died, in March, 1830, at the age of twelve. In the spring of 1832 Crozet was appointed State Engineer of Louisiana, and leaving Richmond, his headquarters for nine years, he sold the house on November 5 of that year.

Several rapid changes of hands occurred before the place was bought in 1836 by Mrs. Sarah A. Hendree, widow of George Hendree, the well-known cabinet-maker, who owned it for nearly a quarter of a century. Although Mrs. Hendree was living there in 1844, she afterwards moved to Tuskegee, Alabama, and rented the house. One occupant, during the 'fifties, was Judge J. D. Halyburton of the United States Court. In 1860 Mrs. Hendree sold it, and again its career was chequered, with foreclosed mortgages and frequent changes of ownership, until in 1873



CURTIS CARTER HOUSE
After Restoration—Built 1814

it was bought at auction by Dr. William B. Gray.

Dr. Gray, a prominent physician, himself living at Ninth and Clay Streets, owned a great deal of Richmond real estate, and after his death in 1902 this house remained in his estate until 1940. During all these years it has been rented to a large number of people. Between 1881 and 1885 (to judge by the directories) it must have been divided into a double house, the spacious entrance hall being cut in two. Mrs. Brockenbrough Lamb recalls going to a sort of “dame school” there in the late 1890’s. In recent years it has been an antique shop. In June, 1940 it was purchased from Dr.



INTERIOR, CURTIS CARTER HOUSE

Gray's estate by his great-niece, Mrs. Malcolm Perkins, by whose care it has been beautifully restored.

The house is remarkable not only for its connection with Crozet but for its interesting brick-work and the rich trim of the interior—doors, mantels, wainscot and charming built-in book-cases. Considering the fact that it had been used as rented property for nearly a hundred years, the woodwork was singularly uninjured. The “false front”—cornice, “eyebrows” over the front windows, and the trivial porch—have all been removed in the present restoration, and the house now shows its original beauty of exterior as well as interior.



We need a description of what has happened to this house.

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Couper, *Claudius Crozet*, pp. 5-67.

Conversation with Mrs. Brockenbrough Lamb.

Cunningham-Archer House

Lot 530—101 North Sixth Street

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In 1813 John McEnery sold Edward Cunningham all of lot 530 and part of lot 511 (to the east of lot 530), “subject to the privilege granted to Samuel G. Adams to take water from a Spring on said Lott.” A reminder of this curious provision occurred recently when, during excavations, workmen found wooden water-pipes that had led from this spring.

Edward Cunningham built his mansion in 1815-16. Born in County Down, Ireland, in a house called “Church Hill” which is still in existence, Cunningham and his brother John emigrated to Virginia sometime before 1790, when he was made a citizen of the Commonwealth in Petersburg. In 1796 he married Ariana Gunn McCartney, by whom he had six children. His son, who was afterward the distinguished physician, Dr. John A. Cunningham, was given his excellent medical education on the condition that he would promise never to sue an Irishman! Edward Cunningham had moved to Richmond by 1811, having already been in business there in 1803. His enterprises were numerous: he owned flour-mills and a cotton manufactory, and was one of those who launched the Tredegar Rolling Mills in 1837. He also conducted a chain of stores extending to the borders of the Ohio River. A close friend of his was John Randolph of Roanoke, who often visited him in Richmond and in 1817 spent weeks at his house, having been taken seriously ill there.

In 1825 Cunningham sold the house in town and spent the rest of his life at “Howard’s Neck” in Goochland County, which he had built and where he and his wife are both buried.



CUNNINGHAM-ARCHER HOUSE
Built 1815-16—Demolished 1927

The new owner of the Cunningham house was Dr. George Watson, a distinguished physician, whose family lived at “Ionia” in Louisa County. There Dr. Watson died in 1854. His family continued to occupy the house in Richmond, which was purchased in 1882 by his son-in-law, Major Robert S. Archer. Major Archer, a son of Dr. Robert Archer, for a second time linked the house with the Tredegar. His father had been president of the Armory Iron Works, and Robert S. Archer was an officer of that company and afterwards of the related Tredegar for most of his life. He had married Ann Virginia Watson, youngest daughter of Dr. Watson. After her husband’s death in 1901, Mrs. Archer continued to make the house her home. She died there in 1920, having never lived anywhere else during the ninety-three years of her life. In 1927,



CUNNINGHAM-ARCHER DOORWAY

when this same family had owned and occupied it for a hundred and two years, it was sold, demolished, and replaced by a garage.

No house in Richmond was more full of atmosphere, both of the era when it was built and of the years following the Civil War. According to a long tradition the house was designed by Robert Mills: architects were constantly coming to see it as an example of his work. While not a scrap of paper has been found thus far to substantiate this claim, the date of the building corresponds to Mills's coming to Richmond to design the old City Hall. The house had very little in common with either the Brockenbrough or the Wickham house, except the recessed arches over the windows and the two porches, which had a certain resemblance to those of the Wickham house. Besides having



no triple windows, there were several features markedly different in the Archer house from either of the others attributed to Mills. Most noticeable of these is the way the chimneys were used in the design, making a gable-end rather like that of the composite Adams-Van Lew house. The balustrade along the crest of the roof is a feature not used in any other Richmond house with which we are familiar. Another characteristic of the Archer house was the panelled effect of the two belt-courses, the chimneys, and the wall spaces on the front. The frieze windows we have not found elsewhere until the much later Westmoreland Club (see [below](#)). Since Mills was an architect full of inventive ideas, and since his style in domestic architecture has never been really defined, it is perfectly conceivable that he did design this house.

Within, the Cunningham-Archer mansion had been very little changed, the most noticeable alteration being a heavy Victorian



dado around the hall. This hall ran straight through the house, and was broken in the middle by a beautiful shuttered screen, with a semi-circular arch at the top. This arrangement is more suggestive of the contemporary Hawes house than of the Wickham or Brockenbrough houses, though the stairway of the Archer house was at the back of the hall, unlike the Hawes house. On the landing was a beautiful fanlight. The front door also had a fanlight above it, circular and not elliptical like those of the Haxall mansion. Like “Columbia,” it had marble mantels downstairs, evidently contemporary with the house.

The setting was as charming as the house itself. Two huge trees grew in the middle of the sidewalk. A section of one of these great sycamores, now in the State Museum, measures five feet in diameter. The garden was of the rambling and informal nature characteristic of early Richmond. Surrounded by a high wall, it had in it two immense

magnolias, crêpe-myrtles, figs and pecan-trees, together with such old-fashioned flowers as snow-drops, calycanthus and old roses. The last of the pit greenhouses in Richmond was there, sheltering such exotic plants as a camellia and an orange-tree. House, garden, and sycamore had been used by Ellen Glasgow as a typical Old Virginia setting in her novel, *The Romance of a Plain Man*.

The demolition of the Archer house was indeed the beginning of the end of that gracious life of old Richmond which centered on Franklin and Grace Streets from Monroe Park to the Capitol Square.

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MS belonging to Mrs. Richard E. Cunningham.

Conversation with Mrs. Herbert A. Claiborne.

Benjamin Watkins Leigh House

Lot 773—1000 East Clay Street

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Contrary to Mordecai's statement, this house was built not by Dr. McClurg but by John Wickham. Whether Dr. McClurg furnished the money for his son-in-law's enterprise is another question, but the property was in John Wickham's name from the time he bought it from John Harvie on June 12, 1795. His stable was on this block, probably at the lower end. For what purpose he started building a house at the same time he was building his handsome mansion across the street at Clay and Eleventh is not known: in any case it was left unfinished from 1812 to 1816. By 1817 it was completed and was rented in 1818 to William Lambert. By 1826 Wickham's daughter Julia and her husband Benjamin Watkins Leigh were living there, when the first insurance policy was taken out in Leigh's name. This policy shows that the house proper was similar to its present appearance, though a greenhouse on the east side may have made it look less uncompromising than it does now. The outbuildings ran out behind along Tenth Street. All have disappeared except the office, which was incorporated into the house about 1858.

Benjamin Watkins Leigh, one of the most distinguished lawyers, jurists, and politicians of his day, was born near Petersburg in 1781. He was the son of the Reverend William Leigh and grandson of Benjamin Watkins, first clerk of Chesterfield County. His first public office was as member of the House of Delegates from Chesterfield County in 1811. In 1819 he was chosen to supervise the revision



BENJAMIN WATKINS LEIGH HOUSE
Built 1812-16

of the state laws. In 1822 he was sent as commissioner to represent Virginia in her claims of the Indian lands. Henry Clay was the representative of Kentucky in this conference, the decisions of which were rejected by Virginia. In 1829-30 Leigh was elected a member of the Constitutional Convention to determine a new basis of representation. Consistently a conservative, he opposed granting a larger representation to non-slave-holding western Virginia as opposed to the large landholders of the east. When South Carolina declared the tariff acts of 1828 and 1832 null and void, Leigh was sent as commissioner to South Carolina.

Though he now wished to retire from public life, he was chosen to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate. This was during the crisis over the United States Bank, which Congress had rechartered, only to meet the veto of President Jackson, who thought the Bank



a monopoly. Leigh's term as senator expired in 1835, but he was re-elected by the slim majority of two. He and his colleague John Tyler were instructed to vote for the Expunging Resolutions, in connection with the vote of censure of Andrew Jackson which Congress had passed. Leigh, always an ardent advocate of the instruction of senators and at the same time believing Jackson a tyrant, was caught in the trap of his own oft-expressed principles. He compromised by making a speech against the Expunging Resolutions, and in 1836 resigned his seat in the Senate. In 1839 he was mentioned as a candidate for the vice-presidency; had he rather than Tyler been nominated, he would have been President of the United States. Leigh was "too conscientious to be a politician." From 1829 to 1841 he was reporter of the Virginia Supreme Court, his reports being published in twelve volumes. He was a fervent states' rights man,



who “loved his country devotedly but his State more.” “All through his life he was a devoted Christian. Having inherited a love for the Episcopal Church, he died in its arms on February 2, 1849, at his home in Richmond.” He is buried in Shockoe Cemetery, together with his wife and his son and namesake who fell at Gettysburg. Leigh Street is named for him.

In his will John Wickham left the house to his daughter Julia Leigh. Mrs. Leigh was living there in 1850, but in 1851 she sold it to John M. Gregory. In 1842 Gregory, who was lieutenant-governor, became acting governor of Virginia, Thomas Walker Gilmer having resigned. In the directories of 1856 and 1860, when he was living in the Leigh house, he is described as United States Attorney. Mr. E. V. Valentine said he remembered going there dressed as a girl during



We need to say something about current state of the house.

“Governor” Gregory’s occupancy.

In 1860 Gregory sold the house, which he was still occupying, to G. A. W. Taylor, who owned it for twenty-one years. For a long time it was rented property, with a different set of tenants in every City Directory. Beginning in 1906 it belonged for more than twenty-five years to Mrs. Julia M. Spratley, who made her home there. In 1932 Mrs. Spratley sold it to the Sheltering Arms Hospital, thanks to a gift from Fred W. Scott. The Sheltering Arms restored it and uses it as a nurses’ home.

This house is more interesting for its associations with a prominent Virginian than for any architectural merit. It is, however, representative of a type of house fairly common in the early nineteenth century—big and square, built right up to the street, made for use rather than with any interest in novelty or charm of outline. Whether it was stuccoed even in Governor Gregory’s time

is a question: none of the insurance policies mention the fact, and the way the stucco comes out to the level of the fine keystones would lead one to think it a later addition. Other examples of this sort of house would be those of Spencer Roane (q. v.), of Chevallié (at Third and Cary, much enlarged), and of Major Gibbon, the latter having stood at Fifth and Main Streets. It was probably such houses as these that Little had in mind in his *History of Richmond*, a type which he considered no ornament to the city.

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Hawes House

Lot 19 (Coutts's addition)—506 East Leigh Street

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For several reasons it seems probable that this house was finished in the autumn of 1816. William Mann advertised that on October 1 the house (at the corner of Fifth) where he had been living would be for rent; in November he insured the brick house for the first time; and, finally, in 1817, two occupants of the property, John Bell and Mann himself, are named where there had never been but one previously. Both Mann and Bell are listed in the 1819 Directory also, where Mann is called "Deputy Marshall of Virginia." Though



HAWES HOUSE
Built 1816—Demolished 1968-69



DOORWAY AND STAIR, HAWES HOUSE

he had purchased the square in 1810, he evidently lived up to 1816 in the curious octagonal house, afterward called the Macfarlane house (q. v.).



In 1832 William Wren, to whom Mann had mortgaged the whole property, sold the brick house to Herbert A. Claiborne, who lived there until his death in 1841. When his son sold it in 1850, it was occupied by John M. Gregory, once governor of Virginia, who soon after bought the former home of Benjamin Watkins Leigh. The new owner, James H. Cox, sold the house in 1851 to Ann Clap, whose son, Samuel P. Hawes, for whom she was buying it, was already living there.

Samuel P. Hawes had been born in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1799. At sixteen he had followed his employer to Richmond. His mother, who had remarried after his father's death, continued to live in New England, but she was comfortably off and Samuel was her only child. His early experiences in Richmond were inauspicious: his partner cheated him, and for some years he had a store in the country. In 1844 he moved back to Richmond. His daughter Virginia, who



wrote under the name of Marion Harland, describes the neighborhood as “quietly, but eminently aristocratic. There were few new houses, and the old had a rural, rather than an urban, air.”

Marion Harland is responsible for the repetition of the ghost-story connected with this house, the only one now standing in Richmond to which a ghost has ever been attached, so far as I can find. Various members of the Hawes family saw over and over a small woman in grey flitting about the house. Mr. Hawes, a hard-headed business man and a deacon in “Dr. Hoge’s church,” saw it more than fifty times, according to his daughter. The older members of the household never mentioned the apparition either to the younger children or the servants. According to the writer, when alterations were made, workmen found the skeleton of a small woman buried in a shallow grave, with no coffin, at a distance of less than six feet from the drawing-room window.



In 1875 the widow of Samuel P. Hawes sold the house to St. Paul's Church Home, an orphanage which had been incorporated in 1861. The wing to the east was built to accommodate more children. The Home occupied the Hawes house (as it was always called) until 1919, when, being entirely surrounded with Negroes, the trustees sold it to the Elks and moved the children out to the west end. Three years later it was bought by the present owners, the Salvation Army, which has its Richmond headquarters there.

In spite of the fact that this house has been used by institutions for sixty-five years, the remarkable interior woodwork is very well preserved. The fireplaces, it is true, have been bricked up, but the lovely mantels, doors, chair-rails and panelled wainscot, the wide floor boards of random width, the plaster cornices—all are admirable. The two most attractive features of the interior are the



graceful stairway and the screen with shutters in the front hall. Such a screen is not found elsewhere in Richmond today. Outside, the building has been much spoiled by the addition of the wing already mentioned, a store to the east, and a hideous and unsuitable fence



*We need to say something about current state of the house
and we could also use a modern photo*

recently erected. Its atmosphere when the Haweses lived there is well captured in this unusual photograph.

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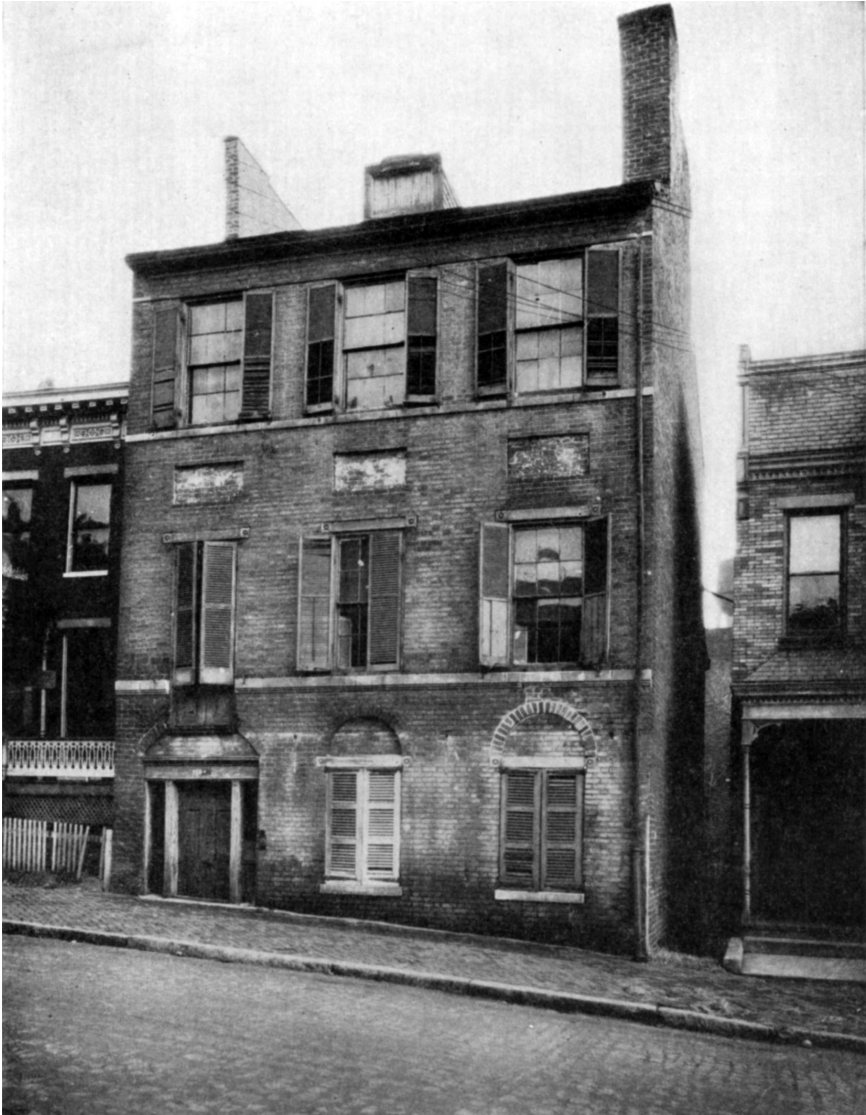
Smaller Marx House

Lot 562—119 South Fifth Street

page 129

In 1816, two years after building his own mansion, Joseph Marx bought a strip of land to the south of it and erected a three-story dwelling for his mother, Mrs. Fanny Marx. After her death in 1819 he gave it to his daughter Judith, who had married Myer Myers and who was living there in 1829. After leaving Mrs. Myers's hands in 1851, it belonged to several successive owners before it was acquired in 1872 by W. H. Sutherland. The directories of the 'seventies and early 'eighties name James L. Sutherland, of the undertaking firm of W. H. Sutherland, as the occupant. In 1890 it was purchased by the Tredway family, which owned it almost up to its demolition, about 1933.

As this house represents an architectural type rare among the houses standing in Richmond in recent years, it is important to determine its date. It has been stated that it was the home of Anthony Singleton, who died about 1795.¹ Several facts make this early date for the house improbable. The Singleton family, it is true, owned the lot on which the Marx or Tredway house stood, but their home was at the southwest corner of Fifth and Main, in a wooden house on the site where the Nolting house now stands. This fact is attested by insurance policies and other records. Further, there is no evidence of any building on lot 562 before 1812, when a small house was erected at the northeast corner of Fifth and Canal Streets by Singleton's executors. A third piece of evidence in the case is that Joseph Marx only paid \$2400 for the thirty-foot strip—a high price until one remembers that this was during the “flush times”



SMALLER MARX HOUSE
Built 1816—Demolished about 1933

preceding the depression of 1819, but not a large enough sum to cover both the land and a building which was valued for taxes at \$6000 the following year.

Architecturally, the smaller Marx house is a true type of city house, more usual in large centers like Baltimore than it probably ever was in Richmond. The façade was flush with the sidewalk, the porches were on the garden side in the rear. The arches over the windows and the panels between the two floors, as well as the belt course, are all characteristic of the period at which we believe it to have been built. The same high gable was on Parson Blair's house.

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Jaquelin Harvie House

Lot 778—916 East Clay Street

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This house was built in 1817 by Jaquelin Burwell Harvie, son of Colonel John Harvie of “Belvidere.” Born in 1788, Jaquelin Harvie was prepared for the Navy, and served with distinction as a midshipman at Tripoli. When the Theatre Fire deprived him of a brother, a sister, and a niece, his mother was so overwhelmed by the disaster that he was forced to resign in order to remain at home and manage the great landed properties of the Harvie family.¹ He devoted himself with vigor to the business future of Richmond, developing the Richmond Docks and Water Works with great expense and labor. His thwarted career in the Navy did not prevent him from giving much of his energy to the State Militia, in which he was for many years Brigadier General for the Eastern District of Virginia. He also took an active part in politics, serving as State Senator for the district that included Richmond, Henrico, and Charles City Counties, “with credit to himself and usefulness to his fellow citizens.” The writer in the *Dispatch* goes on to say: “He was a citizen eminent for his public spirit. . . . a gentleman of great energy and boldness of character, as well as kindness of heart.”

General Harvie married in 1813 Mary Marshall, only daughter of the Chief Justice, who is said to have resembled her father more than any of his other children in both appearance and mentality. Mrs. Harvie died in 1841 and her husband in 1856.

In 1858 the Harvie house was sold to James A. Cowardin, founder and editor of the *Richmond Dispatch*, who sold it in less than a year to his brother-in-law John Purcell.



JAQUELIN HARVIE HOUSE
Built 1817—Demolished 1906

Mr. Purcell's parents had emigrated from Limerick, Ireland, before his birth. At an early age he entered the drug business, first as a clerk of Dr. Tompkins, then with Alex. Duval & Co., where he was soon taken into the firm. In 1842 he formed the partnership of Purcell, Ladd and Co., wholesale druggists. During the Civil War he equipped the Purcell Battery, which rendered distinguished service to the Confederacy. When he died in 1894, a writer in the *Richmond Times* described him as "a man of strong principle, and incorruptibly honest in his impulses and actions . . . very positive by nature . . . very gracious and kindly in manner, and . . . loved by all who knew him." Like his Irish mother, he was a devoted member of the Roman Catholic Church.

Mrs. Purcell, who had celebrated her golden wedding the year before her husband's death, lived until 1906. That same year the house was sold and was immediately torn down.

The proportions of this house seem particularly pleasing; in spite of its superficial resemblance to the Stanard House (Westmoreland Club), due largely to the similarity of the front porches, it is more closely related to the nearby Wickham House in that it was broad and low, rather than square. It measured 55' 6" in width by 40' 6" deep, with a wing in the rear 43 by 21 feet. It is unusual in having two windows on either side of the door, rather than one, or a triple window. The stucco is characteristic of the houses up to about 1840, the inset rectangles typical of several houses built between 1810 and 1818. The cornice, below the level of the roof, is unusual and beautiful. The windows without any sort of frame breaking the wall surface add to the chaste appearance of the whole.

1. We repeat with some reservations this reason for Harvie's leaving the Navy. Already in 1807 he was warning trespassers to keep away from "Belvidere," as though he were managing it then (*Enquirer*, June 20).

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Brander House

Lot 625—100 North Fourth Street

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This beautiful little house had a chequered career, as far as ownership was concerned. It was built probably late in 1816 by Samuel Myers Jr., who in the preceding May had married a daughter of Joseph Marx. Myers fell into financial difficulties, the house was mortgaged, and it seems to have belonged for a number of years to two different people. Finally, in 1843-45, the various claimants sold out their interest to William A. Seldon and Jane Seldon, who in 1848 sold the property to Miss Martha Henry.

Apparently the owners of this house never lived in it: it was always rented property. Samuel Myers lived in Norfolk, the Seldons in Charles City County. Among those who rented it were John Robertson, Mrs. David Briggs, and John Q. Winn. The tenants with whom it is most often associated were Major Thomas A. Brander and his family. Major Brander, who had served with distinction in Pegram's Battalion, rented the Myers house sometime between 1879 and 1881, and his family occupied it for thirty-four years. No wonder it was generally called the Brander house, although that family had never owned it.

The house was demolished in 1920. During the last two years of its existence it had served as headquarters of the Virginia Equal Suffrage League.

The interest of this house lies not in the people who owned it, nor even in those who made it a delightful centre of social life. Its chief interest is its architectural charm. In appearance it was an ideal city house of medium size. The proportions, the roof-line,



BRANDER HOUSE
Built 1816—Demolished 1920

the recessed arches over the windows, the door with its approach by a discreet but graceful double stair, even the louvre—all were perfect in relation to each other. Of the interior, Major Brander's daughter, Mrs. Taliaferro, who grew up in the house, said that it had a beautiful stair, mantels, and fireplaces, and that it still had the old locks. There was no more pleasing house in Richmond.

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“Columbia”

601 North Lombardy Street

page 135

On September 8, 1810 Philip Haxall bought of “the reverend John Buchanan” for 685 pounds, 4 shillings and 2 pence, “15 acres, 3 roods and 10 poles” of land about half a mile west of the newly established boundary of Richmond at Madison Street. Parson Buchanan had inherited 500 acres of land from his brother James. “Bellville,” “Duncan Lodge,” “Elba,” and “Columbia” were all said to have been built on parts of this great tract.

The date of the house which Haxall built is determined by two records: from 1812 to 1816 Philip Haxall was renting the former



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

home of Peter Tinsley, on Sixth near Clay; in February 1818 he insured “my four buildings on my land, south side of Richmond Turnpike, occupied by myself.” The dwelling was valued at \$11,000. We may safely assume that it was built in 1817.

Philip and William Haxall had come to Petersburg from Exning (Suffolk) in 1780. William remained in Petersburg, but the two brothers in 1809 took over the flour-mills of David Ross, already called the Columbian Mills. Philip Haxall married Clara Walker, of “Kingston” in Dinwiddie County. Mrs. S. C. Mitchell, in her delightful article on “Columbia,” which should be read in its entirety by those who would appreciate this “suburban seat,” says of Clara Haxall:

Mrs. Haxall was an enthusiastic gardener, and the most notable feature of the place soon became the beautiful trees and flowers by which it was surrounded . . . The lawn was laid out with white gravelled walks and box borders.¹

Philip Haxall died on December 29, 1831 “at his seat near Richmond” in his sixty-second year. The following May the place was offered for sale, the advertisement being the first mention of the “seat” by the name “Columbia” that I have found. Mrs. Haxall wished to sell not only the house and adjoining lots, including a garden of five acres, but the house-servants, green-house plants, cows, wines, liquors, and furniture. Perhaps the changes in the Haxall Mills in 1831 and the need of money to rebuild on a larger scale precipitated this sale. However, the house was not actually disposed of until two years later.



*“COLUMBIA”
Built 1817*

On November 21, 1834 Mrs. Haxall sold six lots, including the house, to Jesse Snead, Richard Reins, and Madison Walthall, trustees of the Virginia Baptist Education Society. This organization had started a seminary two years earlier at “Spring Farm” at the terminus of the Hermitage Road. The combination of agriculture and studies for the Baptist ministry not having proved entirely successful, those interested in the venture bought the Haxall place. In 1840 the seminary was changed to a liberal arts college, incorporated on March 4 of that year, and the Education Society handed over “Columbia” to the “trustees of Richmond College.” For



some time the whole institution was housed in the Haxall mansion and two outbuildings, some of the students having their rooms in the two-story kitchen. Wings were added to the stable and later to the kitchen. Such was the genesis of the University of Richmond under the guidance of that remarkable man, Dr. Robert Ryland, first president of Richmond College.

Mrs. Mitchell tells many amusing anecdotes of those days, gathered from older alumni still alive when her article was first published. During the Civil War, most of the students having gone to the front, the college buildings were used as a hospital, “and blood stains were long visible on the floor.” For eight months after the Surrender, the buildings served as barracks for Union soldiers. In 1866 Dr. Tiberius Gracchus Jones, who had succeeded Dr. Ryland as president, took up his residence at “Columbia.” By now



there were other buildings available for classrooms and dormitories. From 1869 to '72 Professors H. H. Harris and Edmund Harrison and their families shared the house. Dr. Harris and his family long continued their residence in it. He was “the bright particular star” of the college. Professor Puryear lived there about five years, and the family of Dr. S. C. Mitchell for more than twice that number. It is Mrs. Mitchell who is the historian of the old house.

When Richmond College moved to Westhampton in 1914, and the old “College lot” was sold off and Grace Street cut through for the first time, the University wisely decided to keep “Columbia” as the seat for its law school and school of business administration. Unfortunately this has necessitated some changes to the old house. The front porch originally was on Lombardy Street, and a small informal stoop opened on what is now Grace but was then simply a side yard. A more serious change is the suppression of the chimneys and the “Captain’s walk” around the top, which are to be seen both

in the first insurance policy and in an old photograph. Even with these alterations and the addition of a wing, it remains a fine house. The proportions are satisfying, the brick-work good, the rectangular panels between the first and second floors, the trim around the windows, and the elliptical fanlight which has been moved from the Lombardy Street side—all are characteristic of the period.

Within, the barn-like and neglected appearance of a building given over to offices and classrooms cannot conceal the beauty of the woodwork—the lofty and graceful stair, the rich door-frames, the dado on the lower floor and chair-rail upstairs, and above all, the mantels. Those on the second floor are of wood, reeded with great delicacy and variety. Two mantels downstairs, in a room originally broken in half by an arch, are of mottled marble, one of them with columns on either side of the opening. A charming arch in the lower hall has been spared. Among other attractive features is the reeding on salient angles of the building and the tiny panelled stair that leads to the attic.

1. “Columbia,” in *The Messenger*, April, 1906.

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Hayes-McCance House

801 East Leigh Street

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Both the date and the original appearance of the Hayes-McCance house are uncertain. Like the Adams-Van Lew house, it is a composite, but no insurance policy can be found to show how much of it was the work of Dr. John Hayes. Dr. Hayes was the son of James Hayes, publisher of the *Virginia Gazette*, who had died in 1804. Three years later his son advertised his professional services to “the citizens of Richmond and its vicinage.” He and his mother, who had been Ann Dent, lived in a wooden house in the middle of what is now Leigh Street, on a large tract which James Hayes had bought in 1798. By 1816 Dr. Hayes had started building “a substantial and highly finished” brick dwelling on the southeast corner of Leigh and Eighth streets. On January 31, 1817 he offered it for sale, but apparently did not get the price he wished, since it was not sold till long after. In September of that year Mrs. Hayes deeded him the property, which her husband had left to her. The fact that there is no mention of the house in this document and that it was not fully taxed until 1822 does not alter the probability that it was completed in 1817.

Dr. Hayes died in 1834. Family tradition makes of him an accomplished violinist and reports that he died of cholera contracted while caring for his patients. Though his death occurred two years after Richmond’s great cholera epidemic, this legend is possibly correct, as an article published the day after his death mentions that there were thirty-six cases of the disease in Richmond, with



HAYES-McCANCE HOUSE
Built about 1816—Demolished 1893

fourteen deaths. His obituary notice, one of the most lachrymose and incoherent that we have encountered, mentions nothing so specific as the cause of his death. The writer grieves for his dying “in the meridian of life,” and pities “the poor man, the widow and the orphan, so dependant, in the hour of visitation by disease, on the charity of the beloved physician.”¹

Two years before, John Hayes had sold his property, with land running back to Clay Street, to Thomas Green for only \$5030. At that time the improvements were valued at \$2750, which was increased in 1833 to \$6000, and in 1834 to \$15,000. Such a change as this could hardly be accounted for by the carriage house and other outbuildings which we know Green added, nor by the elaborate arrangement of the grounds. Mordecai, who would have remembered it in the Hayes’s day, speaks of it as: “. . . originally, in



HAYES-McCANCE HOUSE, GARDEN SIDE

plain garb, that of Dr. Hayes, from whom it passed to Thomas Green, who decorated it highly and introduced the Heathen Deities into the grounds, where they still preside.” (The statues are now in the garden of the Wickham house.) Robert A. Lancaster thus describes the grounds:

Across the garden ran a deep ravine with a stream flowing through it. Mr. Green terraced the ravine and by checking the flow of the brook with a stone dam, made a little lake which was spanned by a rustic bridge. Upon the lake a small boat floated, and near the shore stood a tiny chalet-like cottage, covered with bark. In another part of the grounds was a bear-pit, containing several black bears,

while here and there among the shrubbery and flowers gleamed pieces of white marble sculpture from Italy. . . . One of the attractions of the garden was a spring which was a favorite drinking place.²

It was Green who first insured the house in 1833, and thus it is only as he altered it that it is known to us today.

Thomas Green was a speculator in Land Warrants. He had mortgaged his house and, becoming insolvent, sold it and moved to Washington. It was bought in 1842 from the mortgage-holder by Thomas W. McCance, who paid \$15,000 for the property.

The McCances owned the house for over forty years and were living there as late as 1888, when the mortgage-holders sold it for \$9000 to Mann S. Valentine II. Thomas W. McCance died the following year, "at his residence, 712 E. Marshall St." Born in 1813, he had started in business working for his uncle, James Dunlop, and was associated all his life with the firm that later became Dunlop, McCance. Before the War, Dunlop, Moncure & Co. were importers and commission merchants, located at the northwest corner of Cary and Eleventh Streets. After the War this firm was succeeded by Dunlop, McCance, which conducted a milling business exclusively. Thomas W. McCance was president of the Dunlop and McCance Milling and Manufacturing Co. which succeeded Dunlop, McCance. They occupied the magnificent building still called the "Dunlop Mills" at the south end of the present Fourteenth Street Bridge and were counted among the leading millers of the country.

No better and purer man ever walked the streets of Richmond than Thomas W. McCance, whose death

occurred yesterday. . . Thos. W. McCance was one of the most unostentatious of men, but nevertheless a leader of and a power among his fellow-citizens. . . . His quiet but forceful influence was always on the side of conservatism and had swayed the councils of the people into the path of safety in more than one hour of sore trial. . . . He was an example to the young, the peer of the noblest of his contemporaries in all that constitutes the good and public-spirited citizen, and trusted God with the sublime . . . faith of a child.³

Unlike the Adams-Van Lew mansion, the Hayes-McCance house was less a composite than a pure Greek Revival mansion, of the most magnificent sort. It really should be placed in the line of architectural succession beginning with the second Brockenbrough house and continuing through the Westmoreland Club, the Barret house, and the Nolting house. It is hard to know whether the proportions, the beautiful cornice, truly Greek, or the magnificent portico in the rear is more to be admired. Its demolition, in 1893, is a calamity only exceeded by the loss of the Van Lew house. Each was perfect in its way, both had lovely settings, both were essential links in the study of early Richmond's architectural evolution.

1. *Whig*, Oct. 28, 1834.

2. *Historic Virginia Homes and Churches*, pp. 141-42.

3. Editorial in *Richmond Dispatch*, Aug. 15, 1889.

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John Holt Rice House

Lot 15—192 East Broad Street

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This house was built in 1818 by the Reverend John H. Rice. He had purchased the site from Dr. John Adams on April 27 of that year, paying \$7000, which seems a high price even in that boom time. An insurance policy taken out in that same month describes the house as “entirely unfinished.” The date of the policy might indicate that the \$7000 partly included the building itself. By 1819 Dr. Rice was living there.

John Holt Rice was born in Bedford County in 1777 and in 1804 was ordained to the Presbyterian ministry. By 1806 he had begun the efforts to establish on a firmer basis the theological seminary at Hampden-Sydney, the success of which endeavors was to be the great achievement of his life. In May, 1812 he came to Richmond, with the purpose of consolidating the scattered Presbyterians here into a church. At first he preached in the Masons’ Hall, and on October 17, 1812 was installed as pastor in “the new Brick Church near Rocketts,” the first pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond. Finding this too remote for his congregation he built a church on Grace between 17th and 18th Streets. This was in 1815. During his thirteen years’ residence in Richmond Dr. Rice also founded two religious papers, the *Christian Monitor*, and the *Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine*.

While here, Dr. Rice says, his salary was supposed to be \$2000 but never amounted to more than \$1600. His ability is evident from the fact that he was simultaneously elected Professor of Theology



JOHN H. RICE HOUSE
Built 1818—Demolished 1934

(which really amounted to head and entire faculty) of the infant seminary at Hampden-Sydney, and, in that same year, 1822, President of Princeton! He declined the latter offer, attractive as the salary of \$2500 was, but accepted the call to Hampden-Sydney, resigning his pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church on June 2,

1823. At the end of that summer he moved his family to Hampden-Sydney and spent the remaining years of his life building up the Seminary, which involved many trips to New York, Philadelphia, and Boston in search of funds. He died in 1831.

Among Dr. Rice's friends and correspondents may be mentioned William Wirt, Mrs. Judith Randolph of "Bizarre," and Mrs. Jean Wood. Of his character, his friend Dr. Alexander wrote soon after his death:

It was undoubtedly one prominent characteristic of him, that his views were uncommonly large and comprehensive. He . . . considered himself a citizen of the world. No narrow horizon or sect or country, circumscribed his benevolent views and efforts . . . while he was . . . firmly set for the defence of the great cardinal doctrines of the gospel, his zeal was not indiscriminate. He was never inclined to dispute about trifles and metaphysical subtleties. . . . some of Dr. Rice's most intimate friends entertained the opinion, that he was disposed to extend this excision of controversy, to more points than was consistent with a maintenance of the complete system of sound doctrine. . . . He was a man of deeds rather than words.¹

The nature of the streets leading up to Church Hill in Rice's time may be guessed from an accident which he describes in a letter to the Reverend Archibald Alexander:

Mrs. Rice and her father had an almost miraculous escape from death the other day. They were coming from Main

Street home in the evening, and while rising the hill to my house, the horse became choked by the collar, wheeled aside, and fell breathless and senseless down a precipice about 15 feet, headforemost, and gig and riders, and all went down together. Yet not a bone was broken. . . (Dec. 5, 1828).²

From 1826 to 1837 the house belonged to Sterling J. Crump, who lived there between his residence on Nineteenth Street and his last years in the Tinsley house on Sixth. From 1837 to '39 it was the home of William Beers, just before he built his house on Broad at College Street (see [William Beers house](#)).

In 1839 it was purchased by William Greaner who added four or five outbuildings. Greaner lived there until his death in 1868 and was so much associated with the property that it was generally referred to as the “Greaner house.” This name was evidently pronounced “Grainer” and is often so spelled. William Greaner had been born in Baltimore in 1793 and moved to Richmond in 1815. Raised as a tobacco manufacturer, he was engaged in that business without interruption, being widely known through the cities of this country. His factory became the famous “Castle Thunder,” where local lawbreakers were confined during the Civil War. Says a Baltimore newspaper at the time of his death: “The deceased commenced life poor, but by his untiring energy, sagacity and probity he succeeded in amassing a handsome property, which, however, became somewhat impaired during the rebellion.”³

After Greaner’s death the house was rented and passed from his estate in 1887. In its later years it was in a very neglected condition but still impressive with its solid proportions and commanding

location. In 1934 it was demolished, the only traces left being one of the two big magnolias that used to stand in front of the house, and the steps, made before the vogue of granite, that formerly led up to the high yard.

The Rice-Greaner house had much that linked it with the past and other features that looked toward the architecture of the 1840's. It was stuccoed, had at least three triple windows and a belt-course. The approach to the porch, as more informal than that of similar mansions built twenty years later, but the porch itself closely resembled those of the Greek Revival period. This was the type of house which the builders of the 'forties harked back to in designing the mansions of that period.

1. Maxwell, *Memoir of the Rev. John H. Rice*, pp. 399 ff.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 198.
3. *Enquirer*, Jan. 2, 1869, quotation from the *Baltimore Sun*.

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White House of the Confederacy

(Second Brockenbrough House)

Lot 831—1201 East Clay Street

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Six years after Dr. Brockenbrough had built his mansion at Clay and Eleventh Streets, he bought from Hall Neilson another half-acre lot, only a block away, and before the end of 1816 had begun another large house. The coming of Robert Mills to Richmond as architect of the Monumental Church, and the beauty of the house he had designed for John Wickham diagonally across from Dr. Brockenbrough's earlier one was probably what inspired the new house. 1816 was a boom year, and the lot alone cost \$10,000. The following year Brockenbrough added another lot to the east, on what is now only a very steep hillside. The ravine between Church and Shockoe Hills, then unspoiled by railroad tracks, no doubt seemed a more commanding location than the one he had chosen for his former house. In 1818 the new house was not yet finished, but the chief work on it was done that year, as is evident from two insurance policies taken out at that time. It is first insured for \$7000 and later in the year for \$20,000. Though not yet occupied, the house was obviously nearly complete when this second policy was secured, consequently it is interesting to compare it with the present house. The dimensions are 67 by 52 feet, the walls are brick, plastered outside, the roof of slate. Both the small front porch and the big back portico show in the drawing. The chief difference is in the height—the house is described in 1818 as having 2½ stories. The half-story would be the high basement. “Parapet walls all round” is another detail that does not correspond with the present house.



Dr. John Brockenbrough, who had become, after the death of Abraham Venable in the Theatre Fire, President of the Bank of Virginia, was one of the leading politicians, citizens, and gentlemen of his day. On the jury for the trial of Aaron Burr he had made the acquaintance of John Randolph of Roanoke, and they became the closest of friends. Randolph visited Brockenbrough again and again in both of the latter's homes. Of Brockenbrough, Randolph wrote a friend, "That gentleman stands A1 among men," and said of him to another, "He is not as other men are." Randolph was no less devoted to Gabriella Harvie Brockenbrough, who had first been married to Thomas Mann Randolph of Tuckahoe. John Randolph said of her, "There is a mind of a very high order: well improved and manners that a queen might envy." Blennerhassett called her "the nearest approach in this town to a savante and bel esprit." It was no doubt Mrs. Brockenbrough who laid out the now vanished



SECOND BROCKENBROUGH HOUSE
Built 1816-18

garden on the slope of the ravine. John Randolph said “that most gracious and amiable friend” excelled in gardening and “in all the domestic arts that give its highest value to the female character.” The Brockenbroughs, losing their only son in childhood, adopted Mrs. Brockenbrough’s granddaughter, Mary Randolph. She was married to John Chapman of Philadelphia from this house, the ceremony taking place in the long drawing room now called the Georgia Room.

In 1844 Dr. Brockenbrough sold the house for \$20,000 to James M. Morson, himself retiring to his property at Warm Springs, where he died. Morson only owned the Brockenbrough house a year. In 1845 he sold it to his wife’s sister, one of the two beautiful Bruce girls, who shortly afterwards married James A. Seddon. It was probably during the Seddons’ ownership that the third story was added. Up



to 1851 it had not been changed, as the insurance policies bear witness. The valuation of the buildings for taxes remained steady from the time it was finished until 1852, when it was changed from \$15,000 to \$18,000, with no corresponding advance in other real estate. This probably indicated the addition of the top story.

When Morson left the Brockenbrough house, he moved to “Dover” in Goochland County. In 1857 his brother-in-law James A. Seddon likewise sold the house in town and moved to “Sabot Hill” near “Dover.” Seddon subsequently had an important part in the Confederacy, being one of Virginia’s representatives at the Peace Congress in January, 1861, and later Secretary of War of the Confederate States. The Brockenbrough house was purchased by Lewis D. Crenshaw, who remained there until June 1, 1861, when he sold it to the City for \$35,000.



The City had intended to offer the use of the house to President Davis, but he refused to accept this, and the Confederate Government rented the house from the City for a presidential residence. As the house was not ready when he arrived, on May 29, 1861, he stayed at the Spotswood Hotel, at the City's expense. As soon as the house and the furniture which the City had bought were ready, the Davises moved in, and there they lived until April 2, 1865 when the President and government officials fled from Richmond. The chief events that took place in the house while it was the "White House of the Confederacy" were the birth of Varina Anne ("Winnie") Davis, the baptism of the President by Dr. Minnigerode of St. Paul's, the tragic death of "little Joe," not yet five, who fell from the back porch on April 30, 1864 and was instantly killed, the marriage of Jefferson Davis's sister to Captain William Waller, and an attempt, fortunately frustrated, by some of the servants to burn the house, in January, 1864.

Mrs. Davis describes her own impressions of the house. While enjoying the old-fashioned terraced garden and large airy rooms, she found the latter too few.



The Carrara marble mantels were the delight of our children. One was a special favorite with them, on which the whole pilaster was covered with two lovely figures of Hebe and Diana. . . . The little boys, Jefferson and Joe, climbed up to the lips of these ‘pretty ladies’ and showered kisses on them. . . .¹

Mrs. Davis speaks with gratitude of the kindness of her next-door-neighbor, Mrs. James H. Grant, and of the various friends they enjoyed in the city. Concerning Richmond’s reaction to the President’s wife, we cannot perhaps accept as universal criticism the sour words of the “Rebel War Clerk”:

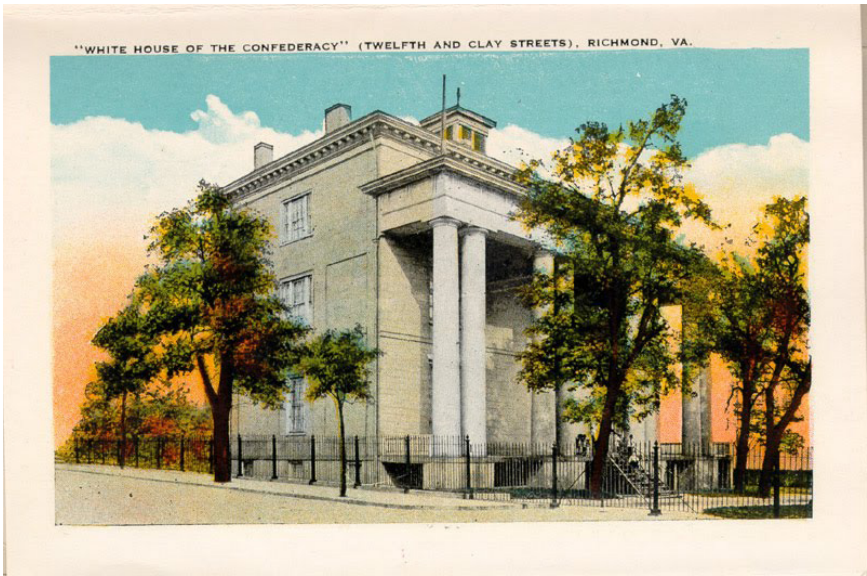
Everywhere the ladies and children may be seen plaiting straw and making bonnets and hats. Mrs. Davis and the



ladies of her household are frequently seen on the front porch engaged in this employment. Ostentation cannot be attributed to them, for only a few years ago the Howells were in humble condition and accustomed to work.²

He makes *amende honorable* in his description of Mrs. Davis's parties:

Last night . . . the President's house was pretty well filled with gentlemen and ladies. I cannot imagine how they continue to dress so magnificently, unless it be their old finery which looks well amid the general aspect of shabby mendicity. But the statures of the men, and the beauty and grace of the ladies, surpass any I have seen elsewhere, in America or Europe. There is high character in almost every face, and fixed resolve in every eye.³



On April 2, 1865 President Davis and the government officials fled from Richmond. The conquerors took immediate possession of the former executive mansion; General Weitzel is even said to have breakfasted on the fare provided for the President. During the visit of a few hours that Lincoln paid to the city on the day Richmond was occupied, a reception was held, chiefly of Union officers, in the late White House of the Confederacy.

Seized by the United States Government, the Mansion was held until 1870, when it was returned to the City. Having barely escaped being turned over to the Freedman's Bureau to be used as a Negro Normal School, it was in 1871 made into a public school, called Central School, and continued to be so used until 1890.

In a recent letter to the *News Leader*,⁴ a former pupil has vividly described his boyhood there and the adaptation of the house and



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

the many outbuildings then standing to the uses of a public school. The “A. B. C.” class was located in the former kitchen, east of the mansion. The girls’ playground was in the garden that Mrs. Brockenbrough and Mrs. Davis had loved. The janitors, Henry and Paul, lived in the former slaves’ quarters. The writer recalls the large trees: “Among them were two 150-year old horse chestnuts, a live oak and an English walnut.” There were also stables, and the place



was surrounded by a ten-foot brick wall. The boy who remembered his school-days recalls in glowing terms the superintendent, Stephen T. Pendleton, “a polished gentleman and one of Virginia’s foremost scholars.” “Now, after fifty-eight years in the business world, fine-combing on my part fails to produce a more sterling character. . . .”

In November 1889 a movement to tear down the former White House as no longer suitable for a school was initiated in the City School Board. Fortunately a sufficient number of citizens were opposed to this to prevent the same fate that later overtook the Van Lew house. On December 9, 1890 Colonel John B. Cary offered a resolution in the Board of Aldermen that an appropriation for a new school be made and that the White House be turned over to the Confederate Memorial Literary Society for use as a museum as soon as the new school was ready. On June 3, 1894 (Davis’s birthday) this transfer formally took place. Under the supervision of Henry



C. Baskerville, architect, the house was repaired and fire-proofed. “In every particular the old house in its entirety was preserved, the woodwork [replaced by iron] being used for souvenirs.” On February 22, 1896 it was opened to the public as the Confederate Museum with ceremonies appropriate to such an occasion.

Of the half-dozen Richmond houses that have been attributed to Robert Mills, the second Brockenbrough house is the only one in which any proof of his authorship has thus far been found. Mr. Kimball has seen a letter from Dr. Brockenbrough to the architect which he considers establishes the fact.⁵ It is interesting to compare this house with the Wickham house, always attributed to Mills. Without the third story the proportions would be similar, low and broad. The fact that both are stuccoed has little significance, since we are not sure the Wickham house originally was stuccoed. Concrete resemblances are the triple windows (though these have not the recessed arches of the Wickham house) and, on the inside,



This is now the home of [The Museum of the Confederacy](#)

the elliptical entrance-hall, the niches both there and on the steps, and the stairway itself. This last is a smaller adaptation of the striking “palette” stair of the Wickham house. Tucked away in the hall on the right, it is not a feature of the architecture as that of John Wickham’s house is, but perhaps Mrs. Brockenbrough demanded the extra service stair which balances it on the left. The three chief rooms across the garden side follow the same arrangement as those of the Wickham house, with the advantage of better lighting, since the portico is two stories high. Perhaps the high portico was Dr. Brockenbrough’s own amendment, as he had built a similar one on his first house (see [First Brockenbrough House](#)). This is certainly the most magnificent garden-front portico in Richmond, and, with the elliptical one on the Archer Anderson house (1815) set a fashion that did not exhaust itself until the late 1840’s. The woodwork and plaster cornices of this house are less delicate than



those of the Wickham house, but the central room with its hold ceiling and folding doors to match is very effective. From the point of view of one studying its architecture, the White House of the Confederacy is in very unsatisfactory condition, the rooms being filled almost to the ceiling with Confederate relics. The process of fire-proofing involved concrete floors, and the mantels have all been changed long ago from the originals. In spite of these drawbacks it is a magnificent building, and it is earnestly to be hoped that some day the relics may be moved to a more nondescript setting and Dr. Brockenbrough's mansion restored to its former charm.

1. Davis, *Jefferson Davis*, vol. 2, pp. 199-200.
2. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, vol. 2, p. 16.
3. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 136.
4. Letter from E. Willard Sweeney in the *News Leader*, Aug. 9, 1938.
5. *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies...*, p. 291.

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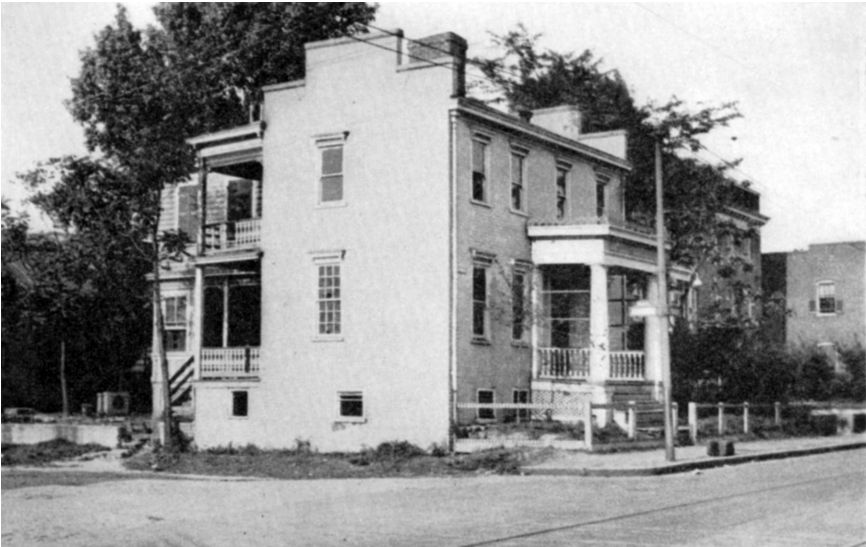


Howard House

Lot 188 (Adams Plan)—2224 Venable Street

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One of the most attractive houses that formerly stood in Richmond was the one always owned by the Howard family. The original brick part of the house was built by George Howard probably between 1817 and 1819 on a site then described as “near Racefield.” The name Venable Street began to be used in the records in 1831. About 1845 a frame wing was added in the rear, with a tiny porch of the same type as that of the Andrew Ellett house (see [below](#)), and a heavier Greek Revival porch in front could have dated from the same period. Composite as it was, the house was extraordinarily harmonious.



*HOWARD HOUSE
Built 1817-19—Demolished 1930*



SIDE PORCH OF HOWARD HOUSE

Of the builder, George Howard, we only know that he was twice married, that one of his sons was a coach-maker, that at the time of his death in 1860 he was seventy-one years old, and that he was buried from St. James's Church.

Mr. Howard left a good deal of property on Venable Street, which he divided among eight surviving children. To his daughter, Cornelia Amanda, he left the family home, and there she lived until about fifteen years ago. She had married George W. Early, who launched into the business of making yeastcakes, known as "Early Risers." This enterprise was carried on in a building on the rear of the lot.

The house never passed out of the hands of George Howard's family; Mrs. Early, evidently very feeble, was still living there in 1922. In 1930 the house was demolished.

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George Greenhow Houses

Lot 607—401-403 East Grace Street

page 155

These two houses were built in 1818 by George Greenhow. They are not exact duplicates, as the corner building has three stories and the next house two-and-a-half. Each formerly had a stable and smokehouse in the rear.

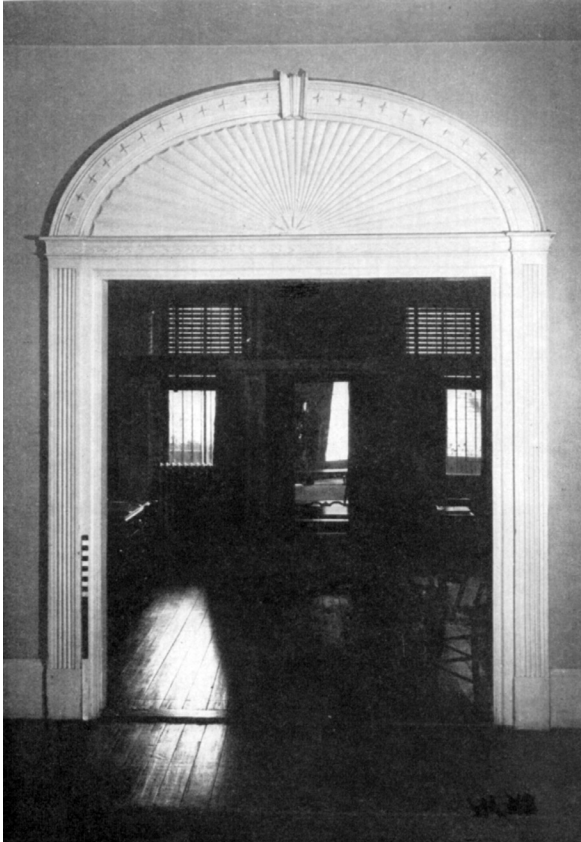
Their history is not particularly interesting. Greenhow, who had built them to rent or sell, his own home being across Grace Street, sold both in 1821. During the 'twenties both belonged to Robert Saunders of Williamsburg, and in the 'thirties both belonged for a few years to Dr. John Cullen. From that point on, the history of the two houses diverges.

In 1838 the corner house was sold to William Breedon, who a few years later was to build his large mansion on the corner just west of this modest house. Mr. Breedon's dry goods store was at Fourth and Broad, and it is characteristic of this first half of the nineteenth century that a merchant should wish to be near his place of business. The Breedon family owned this house up to 1919 when Alice L. Breedon Watkins sold it. Mrs. Watkins, wife of A. Judson Watkins, lived in the house for many years, and it is with her family that it is most identified. Since passing from the Breedon family it has changed hands three times and has been made into a store, with a display window in front. Its material value, since it is in the heart of the retail district, is very high, the house having brought, even in 1919, as much as \$35,000.

Number 403 has been less closely associated with one family,



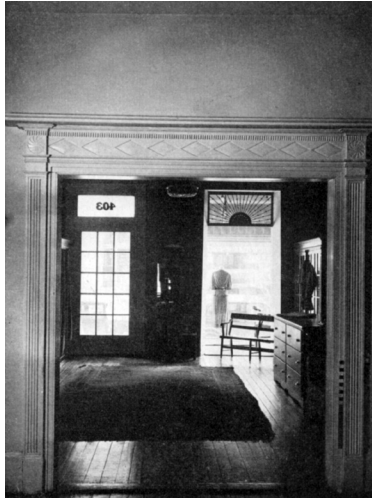
GEORGE GREENHOW HOUSE
Built 1818



INTERIOR DOORWAY, GREENHOW HOUSE

although it belonged to Mrs. Elizabeth Forbes and to her estate from 1835 to 1892. During a good part of those years it was rented, though one of Dr. and Mrs. Forbes's nine children, Mrs. Cowan, was living there in the 'seventies. Since the Forbes heirs sold it, it has belonged to seven individuals or corporations.

The great interest of these two inconspicuous houses, both now marred by shop fronts and by recent stucco, is their magnificent woodwork. Outside, the windows have very delicate trim, around both the single and the triple frames. Inside is the greatest variety of



INTERIOR DOORWAY, GREENHOW HOUSE

mantels, arches, door-frames, and stairways: seemingly some artist in woodcarving tried out all the patterns he knew. When the two houses are pulled down, as they will probably be in view of their valuable location, it is pleasant to reflect that the best part of them can fortunately be preserved in some other place.

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Spencer Roane House

Lot 796—900-902 East Leigh Street

page 158

One of the last houses built before the depression of 1819 blighted Richmond was that of Spencer Roane. Roane, whose home was at “Spring Garden” in Hanover County, had rented various houses in Richmond and in 1815 had purchased the site at Ninth and Leigh. The house was under construction in 1819, though he did not occupy it before the following year. When completed it was a two-story house, not yet stuccoed, with a kitchen and stable to the east.

Judge Roane had very little time to enjoy his house, as he died at Warm Springs on September 4, 1822. Undeserved oblivion has engulfed the name of a man who was the chief legal exponent of the ideas of Thomas Jefferson and was a formidable opponent of Chief Justice Marshall. Born in 1762 in Essex County, Spencer Roane was a first cousin and close friend of the great newspaper editor, Thomas Ritchie. An ardent supporter of the Revolution, he was elected in 1783 to the Virginia House of Delegates. From 1786 to '89 he was state senator from Essex, King and Queen, and King William Counties. His first judicial position was as a member of the General Court (which was abolished by the Constitution of 1851). In 1794, though only thirty-two years old, he became a member of the Virginia Supreme Court. President Adams appointed John Marshall Chief Justice at the last moment of his administration, preventing Jefferson from appointing Spencer Roane. Recognizing the need of a Republican (i.e. democratic) organ in Virginia, Roane



SPENCER ROANE HOUSE
Built 1819—Demolished 1958

established the *Enquirer* in 1804 and made his cousin Ritchie the editor. *The Enquirer* was often termed “the Democratic Bible.” In that same year he rendered one of his most important decisions, sustaining the Glebe Act, which dispensed parish lands to the poor. Under Marshall the United States Supreme Court had been getting steadily stronger. In 1815 it came into conflict with the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals over the right of Lord Fairfax’s devisee to keep) a royal grant. Roane took the position that the state had the right of confiscating and re-granting alien property, and when the United States Supreme Court reversed this decision the Virginia

court refused to obey the mandate, claiming that there could be no appeal from decisions of the highest state courts. Roane's articles at this time did much to crystallize public opinion in favour of states' rights. He also wrote articles attacking Marshall's opinion in *McCullough vs. Maryland* (on the constitutionality of the United States Bank) in 1819 and in *Cohens vs. Virginia*, involving the right of appeal from a state court to the United States Supreme Court in a criminal case.

Roane had married Anne, eldest daughter of Patrick Henry, in 1786 and their son William B. Roane became a distinguished member of the Virginia legislature, and of both houses of Congress. It has been said of Spencer Roane: "His name would not have been so nearly forgotten had not the civilization and system which he helped to found been so completely overthrown by the War between the States."¹ Like Benjamin Watkins Leigh at a slightly later period, he was a complete states' rights man, and his memory has perished with the cause he defended.

In 1825 Roane's executors sold the property to Lewis Webb, who lived there until his death at the age of eighty-three, in 1873. He had had the house stuccoed about 1850 and had added the third story in 1857. The disfiguring porch and bay-windows are apparently of still later date.

After Mr. Webb's death the house was rented for several years to the Reverend Thomas L. Preston, prominent Presbyterian minister. In 1884 Isabella Webb sold it, and it was at this point that it was divided into two dwellings. The eastern half was bought in 1888 by John Bell Bigger, long Clerk of the House of Delegates, who died in 1899, but whose heirs only sold the house in 1911. The

western half belonged until that same year to Howard M. Walthall. Since then the history of the two dwellings has been the sad one of deteriorating property, changing hands often and occupied by a low grade of Negro tenants. Only the fact that it was the Richmond home of a man important in the development of Virginia law and political thought makes it worth this long a study.

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III. Stagnant Years 1820-1835

Effects of the Depression of 1819

page 163

The expansion in real estate purchases and building in Richmond in the four years following the Treaty of Ghent (1814) had reached the proportions of a mania. The causes were complex: the psychological release that immediately follows most big wars was probably as much a contributing cause as the over-expansion facilities afforded by the second Bank of the United States and by the state banks. Some hard-headed business men had probably bought land during the War of 1812, for the same reason that Thomas Rutherford did: they feared paper inflation and thought real estate a safer investment than stocks. The fever of buying and building was prolonged by the foreign rise in tobacco in 1818, which netted Richmonders between half-a-million and a million dollars in that year.

In his *Richmond in By-Gone Days* Mordecai has a vivid description of the “flush times” of 1816-18, of which we quote a brief part:

Real estate in and around the city, soon to rival New York, rose in value (or price) from day to day. . . . The limits of Richmond were too contracted for the imaginary population which was soon to overflow the city, and new towns or extensions of the old were tacked on in every direction. . . . City lots proper advanced in price, two, three, five, aye, ten fold, There were not days enough in the week, nor hours enough in the day, for the rival auction sales of real estate, so called.¹

But then banks were required to resume specie payments, and all of those who had anticipated installment-buying by small down-payments and heavy mortgages were forced to abandon their real estate El Dorados, often ruined men. Richmond was having its bitter share of the first depression of nation-wide extent.

Since this is not an economic history but a story of houses, we shall pass to the effect that this depression had on the growth of Richmond during the next fifteen years. The tax-value of buildings was cut in half in 1819 and again cut in half in 1820, so that a house valued at the peak at \$3000 was only counted worth \$750 two years later. Building, so extensive in 1815-18, dropped to practically nothing. While no regular list of new houses was kept in the eight years immediately following the collapse, those we have found are a mere handful, many of them in the eastern suburbs where land was cheap and taxes lower. In 1827 the City Council passed an ordinance that all buildings erected each year should be listed. These lists are invaluable for the knowledge they give of Richmond's past. They tell us not only the number of buildings erected but what they were—whether factories, churches or dwellings, brick or wood,

one story or four. While many of these lists are missing, they are complete for the years 1827-35, which we are here considering. A glance at the [graph of houses built](#) brings out one salient fact—that there was still very little construction going on during those years, less than twenty-one buildings a year being the average.

A few lumber-houses and warehouses, the tobacco factory of S. S. Myers, and the enormous Haxall and Gallego mills were practically the only business constructions dating from this period. The overwhelming majority of the new buildings were dwellings. Among those that still survive or were standing up to twelve years or less ago were the four on Franklin between Fifth and Sixth erected by Richard Anderson in 1823, the Wiseham house (1823) on Clay, in which Poe is said to have lived for a few months, and the McGruder house (1832) at Third and Franklin. All of these have been demolished in recent years. More fortunate are the older Morris cottage (1830) at Twenty-fifth and Grace; the pair erected by Mann S. Valentine in 1829 at 402-4 East Franklin; the little dwelling, 514 North Third, erected by George Crutchfield in 1829; the Andrew Ellett house (1829); and the Dill mansion (1832). A remarkable ensemble of houses of this period are the two pairs now numbered 2303-5 and 2309-11 East Franklin, all of them dating from 1827. This block between Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth, while in wretched condition, is one of the most picturesque in Richmond and is interesting because half the houses date from this arid period.

It is much more difficult to recognize houses of this stage of Richmond's development than those built either earlier or later, because they have no marked characteristics. Some cling to earlier forms: the little Crutchfield house, for instance, has a panelled stair

and a charming wooden mantel. The Wischam and Ellett houses had the same general outlines as that of Parson Blair, without the high gable. In the Ellett house a delicate form of Greek Revival influence had begun to creep in with the little porch. A few dwellings of this period show much more marked Neo-Classic characteristics: unless the Mann Valentine house, 402 East Franklin, had its porch added later, it is the earliest manifestation that we have identified of the complete Greek Revival type as developed in Richmond.

With the exception of the McGruder and Dill houses, all of these were unpretentious if not actually small (the two Valentine houses have had a third story added). The McGruder house, before it was demolished, had been so much altered that it was impossible to classify. The Dill house, as we shall see, has much in common with “Columbia” and with the Wickham house.

The only way to guess the age of any of these buildings is to notice that while, with a few exceptions, they are not yet of the complete Greek Revival pattern, still they lack the distinguishing characteristics of the earlier period—bricks set in keystones, belt-courses, panels between the stories, delicate trim around the windows. Above all, in spite of a few pretty mantels, the interior woodwork is on the whole uninspired. In an age of contraction and fear, if not of actual poverty, builders did not risk their money either on large houses or on ornament which they were coming to consider non-essential.

1. *Richmond in By-Gone Days*, 1st ed., pp. 218-19.

Richard Anderson Houses

Lots 549-506—12 East Franklin Street

page 165

Among the earliest “rows” of dwellings in Richmond were the four houses built by Richard Anderson at the northwest corner of Sixth and Franklin in 1823. These houses were among the first to be erected after the great depression of 1819.

Anderson, a tobacconist, never lived in these houses himself, the four having been built to rent. They remained in his estate until 1860, some of them longer. To enumerate the many tenants would be futile. Among those of early days one may cite David M. Branch (builder of Miss Glasgow’s house), also Philip Harrison, J. R. Triplett, and Mrs. Jane Mackenzie, whose foster-daughter Rosalie Poe no doubt lived there with her. At least three schools have had their headquarters in one or another of the houses—that of Miss Jane Mackenzie (at 506) between 1830 and 1835, the Southern Female Institute in the ’fifties, and the boarding school of Mrs. L. S. Squire, at 512 East Franklin, in the ’eighties.

Many have owned the houses in comparatively recent years who have made a deep impression on Richmond’s life. At 506, the westernmost house, there lived from 1887 until 1927 Mr. Burnett Lewis and his family. Mr. Lewis, a dry goods merchant and a devoted member of Centenary Methodist Church, was especially noted for his tireless work at the Penitentiary where for more than thirty years he was superintendent of the Sunday School.

The second house, 508, was purchased in 1872 by J. Adair Pleasants, whose family continued to make its home there until



*Richard Anderson Houses
Built 1823—Demolished 1929*

1929. His four daughters, Mrs. Archer, Mrs. Minor, Mrs. Purcell, and Miss “Lutie” Pleasants, made unforgettable contributions to the cultured life of the city over a long period of years.

From 1863 to 1892 the next house, 510, was the home of Thomas J. Evans and of his widow. Mr. Evans, who died in 1889, was a prominent lawyer and outstanding member of the Baptist church, being at the time of his death the oldest living member of the Richmond College Board of Trustees as well as one of the oldest Masons in the city.

At the corner of Sixth and Franklin there lived for thirty years Mrs. Constance W. Robinson, one of the most striking figures in the Richmond of her day. Her appearance, clad in purple velvet, with beautiful white hair, driving a closed electric automobile around town, was one not easily forgotten. Countless tales, many no doubt fictitious, were quoted about Mrs. Robinson. One may suffice. In

an argument with General Dabney Maury, Mrs. Robinson sought to clinch the matter by, "But, General, you must remember I am a King's Daughter," to which General Maury replied devoutly, "Madam, God save the King!"

All these houses had been affected by the age of cast-iron: small balconies and fences were added to the two western ones, and the two eastern houses were considerably changed in appearance by the substitution of iron verandas for their small entrance porches. These changes did not, however, destroy their great charm or appearance of age. As a block, they were one of the most attractive in Richmond, and when they were demolished, together with the Dunlop house just above them, in 1929, one of the really beautiful neighborhoods in town was wiped out.

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Andrew Ellett House

Lot 125—2702 East Grace Street

page 169

Among the few houses dating from the late 'twenties is the Andrew Ellett house, built in 1829 by William C. Allen. By early March, 1830 it was occupied by Fleming James, a prominent business man who nearly twenty years later was to build the eastern half of Linden Row (see [below](#)). In 1835 Allen sold the property, which at that time ran back to Broad Street, to Orren Williams. From that time until 1937 it remained in the hands of the same family: Williams left it in 1841 to Cornelia Hull, who, three years later, became the wife of Andrew E. Ellett.

The Ellett family continued to make this their home until the death of Caroline H. Ellett, Andrew Ellett's daughter, in June, 1929. "Miss Caddie" was one of the most picturesque elderly inhabitants of Church Hill, a cousin of Miss "Jennie" Ellett. She remembered driving as a little girl with Poe's Elmira, who at one time had lived right across the street from the Elletts in Samuel Adams's little cottage.

There is no more charming old house of moderate size left in Richmond than the Ellett house. The Greek Revival had hardly begun to influence Richmond architecture when it was built: the little porch with two small columns and a tiny pediment are the only signs of it here. The house is fairly well preserved. The front is painted a light grey, with white trim, and it is shadowed by a big tree. Even to those who are not versed in Richmond's past, this is a house that makes them say, "I wish I could live there!"



ANDREW ELLETT HOUSE
Built 1829

We need a modern photo of this house

Two similar houses of different dates show how long this simple style remained popular. One is No. 2309 East Franklin, half of a double house built in 1827, this half by James McKildoe, who afterward owned the forerunner of Ford's Hotel. The other is the house at 632 North Seventh Street, built in 1838 by Samuel Jordan Blair, a son of Parson Blair. This house is beautifully preserved and looks much earlier than it is. Neither of these two has the little pediment over the porch that the Ellett house has.

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John Morris Cottages

Lot 121—2500 East Grace and 207 North Twenty-fifth Street

page 171

The date of the corner cottage, now numbered 2500 East Grace is extremely hard to determine. In 1827 Will Montague bequeathed to his son William D. Montague “the lot I last purchased of George Winston . . . a frame house with chimney in the middle lying opposite the old Episcopal Church wall.” The location fits, but the chimney is not in the middle of either of these cottages. We must conclude that Montague’s cottage had disappeared and that the present two buildings were erected by John Morris, the corner one about 1830, and the one on Twenty-fifth Street in 1835. As Morris only paid \$220 for a lot 138 ft. on Twenty-fifth and 129 ft. on Grace, it is hardly reasonable to suppose this low price



We need modern photograph of this house



JOHN MORRIS COTTAGES
Built 1830 and 1835

included even a small wooden house. The Twenty-fifth Street house is easier to date, as the list of buildings erected between March 1835 and March 1836 includes a one-story dwelling on the east side of Twenty-fifth between “H” and “G,” as Broad and Grace Streets were called at that time.

In 1859 the heirs of John Morris sold the property, including a house now gone, further east on Grace, to Eli G. Bickford. Other owners were William Craig and Thomas W. Pemberton. Except from 1882 to 1904, they have always belonged to a single individual.

No account of the successive owners of these little houses can give an inkling of their charm. Both are tiny. The corner house is the simpler of the two, the frieze of dentals, heavier dormers, and more elaborate porch giving the Twenty-fifth Street house a much more sophisticated air than the older cottage. Unfortunately the

porch on the later cottage has recently been somewhat spoiled by an extension to the north. The corner house is untouched and, with its big tree and box bush right against the porch, is a most alluring little dwelling.

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Addolph Dill House

00 Clay Street

page 172

Although Addolph Dill was living in the neighborhood of this house as early as 1819, his home was on the north side of Clay Street. He went on acquiring land in what had formerly been “Foushee’s Garden,” and in 1832 he built on the south side of Clay the house in which he spent the rest of his life.

Addolph Dill, whose unfamiliar first name the 1819 directory renders “Edall,” was born in 1792 and came to Richmond from Pennsylvania early in the nineteenth century. He was a baker, his



ADDOLPH DILL HOUSE
Built 1832



extensive buildings being on the north side of Clay, near his earlier home. The bakery, which the Confederate government had bought in 1861, was burned during the Civil War, the fire being attributed to an incendiary. Dill died in 1867 and is buried, with many of his family, in Shockoe Cemetery.

His son Joseph, a tobacconist, continued to live in the family mansion until his death in 1886. In 1890 the Dill heirs sold the property, which then had a sixty-seven-foot frontage instead of its original two blocks. The unusual number is due to the fact that the house stands at the junction where east and west numbering meet, Foushee Street, the dividing line, not being cut through, thanks perhaps to Dill's having built his house where he did.

By 1922 Clay Street was a Negro neighborhood, and the house was purchased by the Council of Colored Women and used as a club. One of the leading spirits in this was that remarkable Negro



We need a description on the current status of the building

woman, Maggie Walker, probably the outstanding member of her race in Richmond at that time. In 1931 the City purchased the property to serve as the Negro branch of the public library.

Although shorn of both its outside kitchen and the elaborate gardens west of it which appear in the Richmond Atlas of 1876, this mansion of Addolph Dill (whose name we spell as he spelled it himself) has suffered little from time or neglect. It is particularly interesting as the only large house left from the arid period between 1819 and 1834. In its proportions and general appearance it suggests the earlier period that produced "Columbia" and the Hawes house. The cornice, with an egg-and-dart frieze and rich corbels is very pleasing. The porch suggests that of the Wickham house and has beautiful marble steps. Inside, the lower floor has been greatly changed, large openings replacing both the doors and an archway. The woodwork was probably coarse from the beginning, but it has

one fine feature in the palette stair, similar to that of the Wickham house only on a smaller scale and less effective because it is placed in a side hall. The second floor is better preserved than the first: there one finds six-panel doors, attractive wooden mantels and a charming small archway.

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Slater House

Lot 79—405 North Twenty-seventh Street

page 175

Among the most attractive houses built in what were then the suburbs of Richmond is this one built in 1835 by John F. Alvey, probably for William Slater, since the latter only paid \$1600 for the property in the following year. The house follows a pattern that remained popular for thirty years or more in Richmond—gable-end flanked by two large chimneys, small porch on one side. This house, though built on the verge of the Greek Revival, harks back to an earlier day. The outside frieze of daisies is charming. The mantel in the back room is the plain, solid type so frequent on Church Hill, but the front room mantel is high, small, delicate, and looks almost like a product of the eighteenth century. The stairway is light, with round rail; the doors seem to have been altered. The house has triple windows both upstairs and down, and also one in the rear. There is a very attractive brick outhouse.





SLATER HOUSE
Built 1835

The history of the house is not so interesting as its architecture. Few of its nineteenth century owners—Slater, James A. Goddin, and William Boswell—seem to have lived there, save Goddin, briefly.

We need modern photograph of this house

But the house and outbuilding merit inclusion in this collection as a very pleasing example of “the years between.”

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IV. Greek Revival Boom 1836-1852

Recovery and Expansion

page 179

During the period from 1819 to 1835 there were good years and bad ones, but neither depressions nor apparent recoveries were sufficient to start Richmond building again until a new industry started the wheels turning. This catalytic was the coming of the railroads.

The first steam railroad in the vicinity of Richmond which had its terminus in the city proper was the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac. On February 13, 1836 a train of flat-cars, bearing the governor and all the notables of Richmond, steamed triumphantly out at the rate of ten miles an hour to the then terminus of the line, twenty miles away! Before this event actually happened a panegyrist in the *Compiler* wrote:

The facilities for travelling are now so great that “time and space” are almost “annihilated” . . . We met with a gentleman in Washington who 13 hours previously

had been in Philadelphia. . . . Upon completion of the railroad between Baltimore and Washington and between Fredericksburg and Richmond a trip to New York from this city will be but the work of twenty-four hours.¹

While these dizzy prospects were being realized by the steady advance of the R. F. & P. and the construction of other railroads into Richmond, someone seems suddenly to have waked up to the possibilities of combining the iron mines of western Virginia with the large soft-coal deposits around Richmond. Both coal and iron had been mined in Virginia since the early eighteenth century, but only in the middle 1830's did Richmond come to be a centre for furnaces that used the coal to operate rolling mills.

Though the demands of railroad construction gave the start to iron manufacture, by no means all of the raw materials were brought into Richmond by this means. The James River Canal, which had come to a virtual standstill after furnishing waterpower to the millers, was given a fresh start when the legislature in 1831-32 chartered the James River and Kanawha Canal Company, which was only organized in 1835. By 1840 the canal had been opened to Lynchburg, by 1851 to Buchanan. When it is remembered that as late as 1859 the canal tonnage exceeded the freight on all four railroads entering Richmond, it may readily be seen how important the completion of the canal was for the industrial and mercantile development of the city.

Those interested in the many iron-foundries started in the late 'thirties and the succeeding years should consult Dr. Kathleen Bruce's *Virginia Iron Manufacture in the Slave Era*. Most important

and longest-lived was the Tredegar iron works, founded in 1838. But there were many other important iron firms. The manufacture of cotton took a new lease of life with the opening in 1830 of the Richmond Cotton Manufactory, owned by Cunningham and Anderson. In 1833 P. J. Chevallié opened subscriptions for a cotton factory adjoining his flour-mills. In 1835 a new industry came to Richmond—the Franklin Manufacturing Company, first of the great paper mills for which the city is noted. Flour and meal had been the first to feel the upswing, both the Gallego and the Haxall mills being rebuilt on a larger scale in 1833-34 and 1831-32 respectively. Flour was rapidly catching up with Richmond's leading product, tobacco. In 1835 a survey of exports for the preceding five years showed that Richmond had exported a little less than three times as much tobacco as flour, the other two products named, coal and pig-iron, being far behind.² Of the tobacco exported during this five-year period, less than a third was manufactured. This proportion was rapidly changing: by 1839 Richmond was not only in all probability the greatest tobacco market in the world, but factories were rapidly increasing, the manufacturer catching up with the exporter soon after 1840. Already in the preceding year the S. S. Myers factory was producing nearly a million dollars' worth annually.

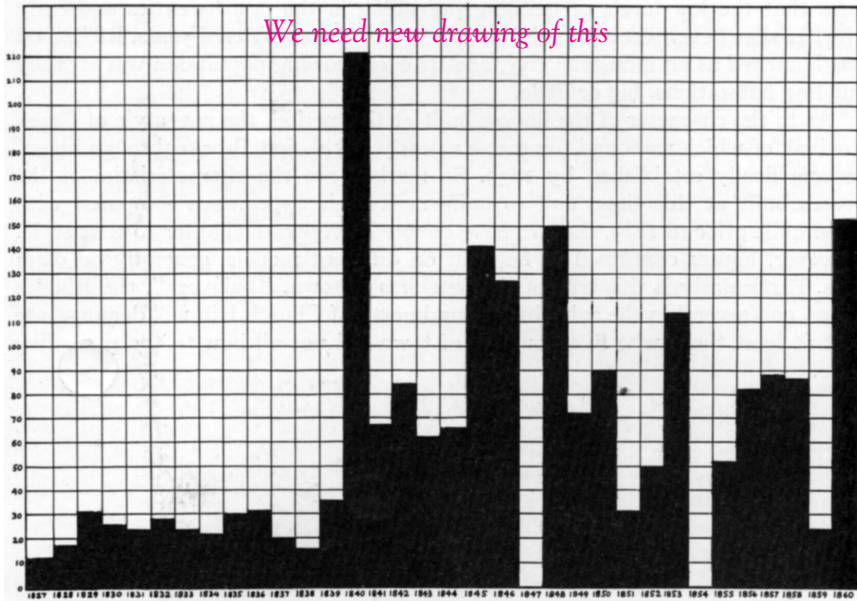
All of this activity began about 1835 to make itself felt in house-building. With an increase in population of over 4000 between 1830 and 1840, and only about twenty houses a year being built during that time, it was inevitable that building must start sooner or later.

Industrial construction led the way. The natural process was that a man built a factory, warehouse, or store, and a few years later, when he had had time to recuperate from the outlay, he built himself a fine

house. Then, if real estate tempted him at all, he would build other houses, or perhaps a “row” as an investment, to rent or to sell. This was the process that went on in the late ’thirties and early ’forties. The laborers in the factories and the small tradesmen who profited by this expansion were likewise able to build modest dwellings, often in such outskirts of the city as Union Hill, Shed Town, Sydney and Oregon Hill (great centre of the “sons of Vulcan,” as Mordecai calls the foundry-workers).

By August 8, 1836 the *Compiler* could list, under the caption CHEERING SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT, thirteen major building enterprises either completed or nearing completion. These ranged from the cotton and paper mills already mentioned to the residence of Dr. Cullen (at Ross and Thirteenth, where St. Luke’s Hospital had its beginnings long afterward), and the “stucco work in imitation of granite” which was dressing up older buildings on Main Street.

The appended graph of annual building in Richmond, to which we have already referred, is less satisfactory for the years following 1835 than for the earlier period. The lists are missing for several years during the ’forties, and disappear altogether for the ’fifties, with the solitary exception of 1855. To complete the picture of houses built in the years between 1835 and 1861 we have had to resort to the “improvements added” in the annual land books. These are fairly satisfactory, except that only in the rare cases when one can identify an improvement is it possible to tell whether it represents one building or four, or whether it is a factory or store, church or dwelling. More serious defects in the list are caused by the lack of any notation of improvements in either 1847 or 1854, which we have therefore had to leave blank. In the years when valuations



NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT ANNUALLY IN RICHMOND,
1827-60

were all increased it is difficult to decide how much of the increase is due to new buildings, how much to additions, and how much is merely a proper evaluation of improvements already made but inadequately taxed hitherto. This is perhaps responsible for running up the number of apparently new buildings to such immense heights in the year 1840.³ Of course these lists do not include the new building in the outskirts of Richmond, much of which is now in the heart of town.

With all these defects, this diagram has the value of demonstrating in graphic form that the low levels of building prevailing in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties were never reached again, save in two or three scattered years. Richmond was launched as an industrial city, and its ever-growing population was steadily building habitations, big or little.

As to the character of the houses built at this period, the new style of Greek Revival, of which we found foretastes as early as the first Brockenbrough house, became firmly established by 1839. So marked are the characteristics of the houses built at this time, and so uniform is their appearance compared with those built prior to 1819, that we have devoted a separate chapter to that style. However, houses continued to be built on different models, generally on older ones. Particularly is this true of the outskirts of town. "Talavera," the Rhodes house, and several in the suburbs east and north of Church Hill will demonstrate that at least those who lived outside of town did not all bow to the prevailing style.

1. *Compiler*, April 16, 1835.
2. *Compiler*, Feb. 23, 1835.
3. This graph could well be checked with one made of the total tax values of improvements during the same period of years.

Greek Revival Houses in Richmond

page 183

Although the beginnings of Greek Revival architecture took place in Richmond in 1787 when Jefferson's Capitol was erected, oddly enough the hundreds of houses, inspired by this building, which covered the United States from Maine to Michigan and to Mississippi never were numerous in Virginia. In one small town in Georgia one can see even today more of these temple houses than could ever have been found in the length and breadth of Virginia. The most striking examples still in existence are "Berry Hill," "Arlington," and the Lawn of the University of Virginia.

In Richmond, likewise, the use of neo-Greek temples as a pattern for houses was very exceptional. The style was evidently considered more suitable for public buildings than for dwellings. Among churches that followed this pattern were St. Peter's (1834); First Baptist (begun by 1832, dedicated 1841); St. Paul's (1845); and Leigh Street Baptist (1855-56). The old City Hall as early as 1816 had a classic portico; so had the Marshall or Richmond Theatre, first built in 1818. Only two dwellings that we know of were constructed to look like temples: the Joseph R. Anderson house (1845) and the William F. Taylor, or Mayo house, built that same year.

Richmond had, however, its own adaptation of Greek Revival influence. This began as early as 1812 with the Wickham house, where we have not only classic detail in the front and back porches, but Greek motifs in the interior cornices and trim. With the exception of the Hancock house, this imitation of Greek motifs in the trim was not copied, so far as remaining houses show. On the

other hand, the use of porticoes either on the front or more often on the garden side of a house was enormously extended and developed. John Brockenbrough, as we have seen, had used such a portico on the front of his first home, as early as 1810. The magnificent elliptical portico on the rear of the Archer Anderson house (built in 1815 by Carter B. Page) is the first recorded example of a two-story porch used on the garden side. The second Brockenbrough house in 1816-18 again used a two-story portico facing the garden. These were not only impressive in themselves but let more light into the rooms on that side than a one-story porch like that on the Wickham house. The portico of "Moldavia," added sometime before 1820, was more Greek than the others in that it had a pediment rather than a flat roof, but the square pillars in place of columns made it less impressive and more of a hybrid.

Some time in the late 'twenties, during that long pause in building which followed the depression of 1819, someone seems to have worked out a formula that utilized the details of Greek decoration to make a house within the means of people of medium as well as of great fortune. The first houses of this type are those now numbered 402 and 404 East Franklin, which were erected by Mann S. Valentine I in 1829. On account of the alterations in these (a third story has been added to both and an iron porch to 404) it will be easier to study the type in a similar pair erected by William C. Allen in 1836 and numbered 4 and 6 East Main. Except that one has had a store attached to the front, they are largely unchanged.

In general outline these follow the double houses built as early as 1810 (see [Brick Double Houses](#)). They have gable roofs with a dormer, and a single chimney to serve both halves. In the rear are



WILLIAM C. ALLEN DOUBLE HOUSE
Built 1836

two-story porches, generally partly enclosed with shutters. In front, instead of being flush with the street like the earlier houses, they



Now home to the [Historic Richmond Foundation](#)

are set back in a shallow yard and are approached by several granite steps set between cheeks of the same stone. Over the doors are small porches flanked with columns (generally two). The columns and mouldings of these little porches are entirely neo-Greek in character. This style, both for single and double houses, was copied hundreds of times, as late as 1853 (see [Late Greek Revival Houses](#)).

Larger and more pretentious houses followed the same general pattern: on the garden side a partially enclosed porch, generally with square pillars but occasionally with Doric or Ionic columns, and on the front a small entrance porch with columns of any of the Greek orders. The only differences between these and the smaller dwellings were that the front porch was in the center, with a hall cutting the house in two and with rooms on either side (like the Barret and Nolting houses), and that the roof was flat or slightly peaked, instead of having a gable. In the middle 'forties houses that



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

occupied less ground than these were built with three full stories as well as a full basement and with the entrance porch on one side as it had been in the smaller gabled houses. The Norman Stewart house is a good example of this type. This gave somewhat of a shoe-box appearance, too tall for its width, so that the proportions were less satisfying than those of either the gabled houses or the big mansions. These houses were most pleasing when combined into rows. A number of them were erected in the late 'forties and early 'fifties, the most striking examples being the three Jaquelin Taylor houses and Linden Row.

On the inside, all of these Greek Revival houses are chiefly notable for their spacious rooms and the dignity, rather than comfort, which they gave to their inhabitants. With small fireplaces and no central heat they must have been exceedingly bleak in winter, well-built as most of them were. The trim in these houses is

simple and dignified, like the buildings themselves. Marble mantels have superseded wooden ones, and until the middle 'fifties these are restrained in design. The stairs vary from the magnificent sweep of that in the Barret house to the heavy absence of character of the one in Frederick Bransford's otherwise beautiful mansion.

These Greek Revival houses, large and small, continued to be built until after the Civil War, in spite of the many and varied innovations tried during the 'fifties. So much were they the accepted style during both the 'forties and 'fifties that there was a certain monotony to Richmond architecture at that period, contrasting with the boundless experiment of the first nineteen years of the century. However, they made a very pleasing and dignified type of city house, evidently satisfactory to those who built them or lived in them, since no style has remained popular so long or been so widely used, at least in Richmond.

In selecting from the large number of such houses still standing, we have been guided by the desire to cover different architectural variants-gable roof with one, two, or four chimneys, stair-stepped gable, flat roof; to show the finest of the big mansions still extant or recently demolished; and to select the homes of those individuals or families who made a notable contribution to the city's economic or social history.

Abram Warwick House

Lot 569—503 East Grace Street

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The first real mansion of the Greek Revival period is the one built in 1834 by Abraham (or Abram) Warwick on the site of Chancellor Wythe's modest home.

Born in 1794 in Nelson County, Warwick spent all but the first sixteen of his nearly eighty years of life in Richmond. He first went into the tobacco business, in which he was quite successful, but after his marriage in 1832 to Sally Magee, daughter of Peter Chevallié, he joined his father-in-law in the famous Gallego Mills. In 1834 Warwick owned 7/44 of this business. The fact that the mill had just been burned and rebuilt in 1833 did not deter him from building this handsome house in the following year. After his father-in-law's death in 1837, he became head of the mills. He was one of the twenty-three men who signed the bail-bond of Jefferson Davis.

At the time of his death, which occurred at this house in 1874, a writer in the *Dispatch* thus described him:

Mr. Warwick was distinguished for his business enterprise, and though he suffered great loss by the burning of his mill, which occurred twice, he never faltered, but seemed to be always up and doing. Perhaps the most striking feature in his nature was the cheerful, sanguine disposition which marked his entire life.

After Mr. Warwick's death his house changed hands a number of times before becoming in 1887 the property and home of Major



ABRAM WARWICK HOUSE
Built 1834—Demolished 1932

Lekh R. Page. During the lifetime of this distinguished lawyer, it was a center for all the notable lawyers and judges of this region. Major Page died in 1893, and his family sold the house the following year.

In 1899 the property was purchased by Mary Cooke Branch, wife of Beverley B. Munford. Hardly a couple more gifted or more beautiful ever lived in Richmond. Mr. Munford was a fine lawyer and the author of *Virginia's Attitude toward Slavery and Secession* and of *Random Recollections*. Mrs. Munford was a leader in every movement for the betterment of education in Virginia, one of the founders of the Woman's Club of Richmond and of the Cooperative Education Association. Her work for education was not confined to improving the public schools nor even to her partially successful struggle to have the University of Virginia opened to women. Seeing among her own friends and their daughters many women who had never gone to college yet were potential leaders in the community, she organized an informal group, known only as "Mrs. Munford's class," which met at her home once a week to discuss some stimulating book or hear some valuable citizen tell of his or her work, after which the forty-odd women—who scarcely realized they were being educated—enjoyed Mrs. Munford's delicious tea and cakes.

By 1932 the neighborhood had been entirely given over to business and the house was razed, a serious loss both for its connection with the industrial, social, and intellectual life of the city and for its architecture. Harbinger of the Greek Revival houses of the 'forties, it retained some features of early nineteenth century houses, particularly in its proportions. Compared with the Barret house, it was broad and low. But compared with the Dill house, built only two years earlier, it belonged definitely to the type of mansions characteristic of the 'forties. There is something big and effective about the Warwick house which makes the Dill house seem almost dainty. The portico was very impressive, flanked with

two columns on either side instead of the more usual single column. The size of these columns and their adherence to the Ionic formula is characteristic of fully developed Greek Revival architecture. The porch, too, was shallow, where that of the Dill house is nearer square. The handsome iron lanterns on either side were brought from England by one of the Warwicks and now belong to a member of that family. The granite approach was of recent date, having been put on in the Pages' day when the grading of Grace Street made higher steps necessary. The cupola, too, is probably later than the house, since we find no others here of that date. There is a lavish use of triple windows, the heavy trim and the slight bow of the upper ones leading one to suspect that they suffered some alterations during the years. Originally the house had a wing running out to Fifth Street, but this was removed when another house was built to the west.

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“Talavera”

2315 West Grace Street

page 191

“Talavera” has the peculiar interest of being the only house still standing in Richmond where Edgar Allan Poe is known to have been a visitor. The house was built in 1838 by Thomas Talley on a tract of land that had formerly belonged to “The Hermitage,” country home of John Mayo. The land between the Richmond Turnpike (Broad Street) and a continuation of Franklin Street, from what is now Meadow Street to the present Boulevard, was sold off by the Mayos in 1816, and in 1838 Talley began to buy up these lots until he had accumulated twenty-five acres. On this farm he built the house, called “Talavera” from his family name.



“TALAVERA”
Built 1838

Thomas Talley's daughter, Susan Archer, who later became the wife of Louis Weiss, knew Poe during his last visits to Richmond. She reports that in the late summer of 1849 her family saw a good deal of him, while he was spending pleasant evenings at her home or at nearby "Duncan Lodge." Poe came to see her one drizzly morning in September and discussed with her in detail the composition of "The Raven."

Apparently the Talleys were not in Richmond during the Civil War. Mrs. Weiss graphically describes her return to her old home, which had been surrounded with fortifications:

What a shock to me was the first sight of it! In place of the pleasant, smiling home, there stood a bare and lonely house in the midst of encircling fortifications, still bristling with dismantled gun-carriages. Every outbuilding had disappeared. All the beautiful trees which had made it so attractive—even the young cedar of Lebanon, which had been our pride—were gone; greenhouses, orchard, vineyard, everything, had been swept away, leaving only a dead level, overgrown with broom-straw, amidst which were scattered rusty bayonets. . . . The place was no longer "Talavera," but "Battery 10." . . . In this desolate abode I remained some time, awaiting the arrival of our scattered family, and with no protectors save a faithful old negro couple. Each evening we would barricade . . . against the hordes of newly freed negroes who roamed the country, living on whatever they could pick up.¹

Mrs. Weiss's marriage was a failure. She spent the rest of her long life in Richmond, but not at "Talavera." That was sold in 1871



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and '72. In 1886 it became part of a land-development project of James W. Allison and Edmond B. Addison, recalled by Allison and Addison Streets nearby. From 1904 to 1922 “Talavera,” by then closely surrounded with new dwellings, belonged to C. F. Sauer, the manufacturer of flavoring extracts, who owned the Japanese garden some blocks west. From 1923 to 1930 the house was the property of Richmond Post No. 1 of the American Legion, which had its headquarters there.

Surrounded with recent houses, the old Talley farmhouse has little to remind one of the country surroundings which Poe had delighted to visit. If one can with the mind’s eye remove the ugly terrace and balustrade in front and the highly fanciful windows, one can see that it is a very old house. With its beaded clapboarding and tall chimney at either end, one would be tempted to think

it was a contemporary of the Craig house rather than of the Westmoreland Club! “Talavera,” in addition to the primary interest of its connection with Poe, serves as another link in the chain of evidence that houses built in the (then) suburbs of Richmond retained architectural characteristics of a much earlier period than those built in the city proper.

1. Weiss, *The Home Life of Poe*, pp. 212-13.

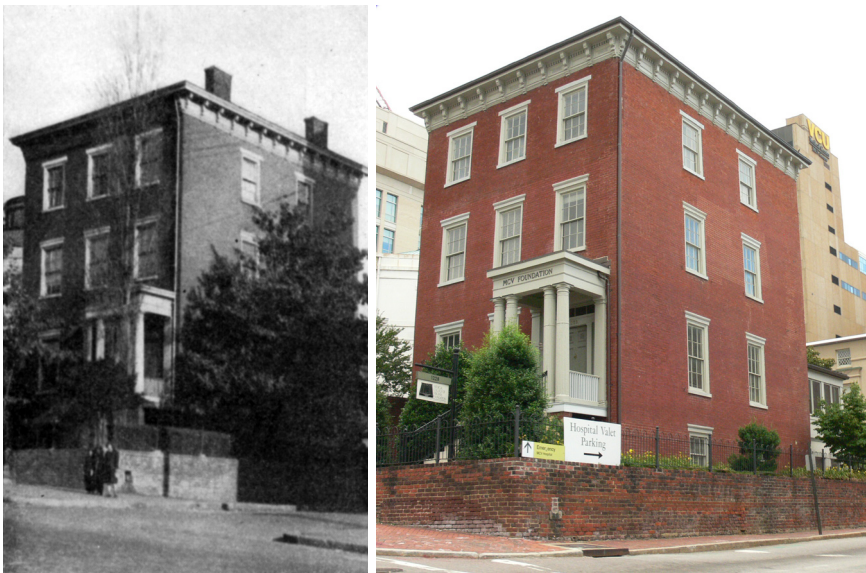
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Two Early Greek Revival Houses

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Two charming houses of the same pattern as that of the Allen double house are the Quarles House at 1 East Main and the Beers house at 1228 East Broad Street. Both date from 1839.



WILLIAM BEERS HOUSE
Built 1839

The first was built by John D. Quarles, described as a bricklayer. Probably, like Curtis Carter, he was a contractor who built brick houses. The house remained the home of Mrs. Sarah F. Quarles down into the 'eighties. In 1887 Mrs. Quarles left it to Charles Phillips, presumably her nephew, and it only passed out of this family in 1925. While in poor condition now and stripped of its outbuildings, the house has been little altered. The cornice is a relatively modern one, and the lower front windows have been lengthened to reach



We need a description of the current status of the house at 1228 East Broad street

the delicate iron balcony which is undoubtedly later than the house. The location on a corner, shaded by a big tree, and the satisfying proportions make it, even in its decay, one of the most attractive Greek Revival houses in Richmond.

Also on a corner is the house built by William Beers, merchant tailor. Originally it too had a gable roof. This is evident both from the list of dwellings erected in 1839, where this is called a two-story



JOHN D. QUARLES HOUSE
Built 1839

house, and from a glance at the east wall of the building, where the addition of the third story (put on in 1860) is perfectly apparent. As late as 1866 William Beers was still living here. In 1872 his children sold the property to James Leigh Jones, a tobacco manufacturer,



who was living there up to 1881. Since 1883 it has passed through several hands, belonging since 1915 to the Monumental Church next door. At present it is occupied by offices of the National Youth Administration.

While in far better condition than the Quarles house, this one has the drawback of the third floor, which spoils what were probably

*We need a modern photograph and a description of the current status of
the house at 1 East Main Street*

charming lines. Its chief attraction at present is the entrance—a Greek Revival porch with two grouped columns on either side instead of the more usual single column. This is approached by a high flight of steps, with a beautiful wrought-iron handrail, unusual in Richmond. The porch, high steps, and commanding location of the house, the front half-masked with Lombardy poplars, make a most attractive approach to the building.

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Samuel Freeman House

Lot 623—316 East Main Street

page 197

This unusually attractive example of early Greek Revival architecture was built in 1838-39 by Samuel Freeman. From 1846 to 1869 it belonged to Charles W. Purcell, in the 'seventies to William B. Stanard, and from 1882 to 1906 to the family of William P. de Saussure. Older citizens of Richmond generally call it the de Saussure house.

Similar to the Quarles and Beers houses in general outlines, it was distinguished by its picturesque outbuildings and, within, by woodwork of unusual delicacy and by a stairway that was continuous from the basement to the top floor. A long iron balcony that overhung the sidewalk was a terror of this writer's childhood on visits to a nearby dentist. The balcony had long since vanished, the outbuildings had been torn down and even the windows removed, so that the recent demolition of the house (in 1941) is almost a relief.

Prior to the last few years, it made a charming corner, together with the two slightly later houses to the west of it. Number 312 was built in 1840 by John Freeman, and the middle house, number 314, by Charles W. Purcell just after he bought from Samuel Freeman the corner house and what was then its yard. Purcell was a brother of John Purcell, and the latter lived in the newer of the two houses until he bought the Jaquelin Harvie mansion (see [above](#)). Later on Mr. and Mrs. John Dunlop lived at 314. Mrs. Dunlop, the brilliant and cultivated Mildred Maury, created a salon wherever she was living. Still later this was the home of Mrs. John Dooley and her



*SAMUEL FREEMAN HOUSE (CORNER)
Built 1838-39—DEMOLISHED 1941*

daughters, Miss Alice Dooley and Mrs. Henry Houston. For many years Mrs. Houston lent her former home to the League of Women Voters, which had its headquarters there. In recent months these two houses, like the corner one, have been pulled down.

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The Westmoreland Club

(Stanard House)

Lot 531—601 East Grace Street

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In 1835 James Gray bought the southeast corner of Sixth and Grace Streets and by the following year had begun to build a mansion which was to rival in size and beauty the one Abram Warwick had just finished on the next block west. But his affairs became involved, and in 1839 he sold the partly finished building, together with the building-material intended for the house, to Robert Stanard, who finished it that same year.

Born in 1781, Robert Stanard married Jane Stith Craig. At the time their son, little Robert Craig Stanard, was bringing his



WESTMORELAND CLUB
Built 1839—Demolished 1937



friend Edgar Allan Poe home to see his rabbits, the Stanards were living in the George Hay house on Ninth Street, where the Federal Reserve Bank now stands. Jane Craig Stanard lost her mind and died in 1824. One of the leading lawyers of Richmond, Stanard was appointed to the Virginia Supreme Court in the same year that his new house was completed. He hardly lived there six years before he died. A writer in the *Whig* said of him:

If he sometimes hesitated, his hesitation resulted from those comprehensive views which made him anxious to overlook the whole ground of controversy . . . his doubts, in fact, proceeded from his love of justice. . . . The inflexibility of his mind imparted an air of sternness to his manners, but he was stern in the eyes of none with whom he was well acquainted. To his family and his friends, he was kind, devoted and constant. . . .¹



Judge Stanard's son continued to occupy the house, keeping up the tradition of hospitality associated with it. Thackeray visited there in 1853. In fact, Mrs. R. C. Stanard rarely missed a visiting "lion." Mrs. Semmes of New Orleans wrote:

. . . do you not remember Mrs. Stanard, who had such a charming house and gave such delicious teas, alluring such men as Soulé, Commodore Barrow, Henry Marshall, of Louisiana, and . . . our dear old Vice President Stephens? She boasted that she never read a book, and yet all these distinguished gentlemen gathered around her board and ate those hot muffins and broiled chicken with gusto!²

Robert C. Stanard died in 1857 when he was only forty-three, and like his father was buried from this house. He had served in both the State Senate and House of Delegates but was chiefly noted as a



lawyer. An editorial at the time of his death considered him

. . . eminent for legal research, logic and acumen. He possessed a truly legal mind, clear, powerful, and thoroughly trained, and the most irrefragable professional and personal integrity and honor.³

Five years after his death his widow sold the house to William H. MacFarland. Born in Lunenburg County in 1799, MacFarland had a distinguished career as a lawyer, legislator, businessman, and churchman. In the public mind he was chiefly associated with the Farmers' Bank, of which he was president from 1837 until the bank closed in 1865. For nearly thirty years before buying the Stanard house, Mr. MacFarland had lived across Grace Street in the one built by Christopher Tompkins and owned, after MacFarland sold it, by John H. Tyler. Judge Christian quotes a disrespectful characterization of MacFarland as “the curly-headed poodle from

Richmond, nearly overcome with dignity and fat”⁴ which it is amusing to contrast with the praises bestowed by St. Paul’s vestry on their Senior Warden at the time of his death:

His long residence in our midst, his . . . varied talents, his refinement and tact, the urbanity of his manners, the prominent posts which the confidence of the people assigned him as a statesman, jurist and man of pure and lofty character, placed him on an eminence which few have reached, and made him for years the representative man of our city.⁵

Like his predecessors in this house, MacFarland was a “king of hospitality.” In 1870, two years before his death, the house was sold at auction to Alfred Penn of New Orleans and was the home during the next decade of the latter’s son-in-law, James Lyons.

Mr. Lyons, “one of the leaders of the Virginia bar, the handsomest man of his day,”⁶ maintained the tradition of good living and of legal talent with which his new home was associated. He had lived in Richmond since his infancy, being the son of Dr. Lyons, whose house stood at the northwest corner of Seventh and Marshall Streets. By a curious coincidence, James Lyons had in his youth read law with Judge Stanard, and when the latter went on the Bench he handed over his practice to his son and to James Lyons, the firm being called Lyons and Stanard. A man of striking appearance and presence, Mr. Lyons was always called upon to speak on public occasions. Before moving to the Stanard house he had lived at “Laburnum” and at the St. Claire Hotel, which he owned. Wherever he lived, he entertained as many prominent visitors as



Mrs. Robert C. Stanard had done. Though he was eighty-one years old when he died in 1882, he remained active and vigorous, often expressing his opinions in the local press.

In 1879 the heirs of Alfred Penn had sold the Stanard mansion to the Westmoreland Club, which had been chartered two years before. After occupying the Norman Stewart house, this group of gentlemen settled in the former Stanard home, where the Club carried on the unbroken tradition of hospitality which seemed almost the gift of some fairy godmother to this house. In 1937 the Westmoreland Club ceased to exist and the house it had occupied was replaced by a parking lot.

This building really set the type for the Greek Revival mansions of the 'forties. The proportions were more foursquare and less low and broad than the slightly older Warwick house. It had a typical portico with Doric columns, wider and heavier than those of later houses such as the Jaquelin Taylor row or the Barret house. The large triple windows, similar to those of the Warwick house, were somewhat awkwardly spaced, making a checkerboard pattern. Unlike the Warwick house, it was stuccoed. As we shall see, this was characteristic of about half of these mansions of the neo-Greek period. The back portico as well as the outside kitchen had been eliminated when a large wing was added to the rear of the Club. The small porch on the east side was no doubt an addition. In one respect the house differed radically from those that followed it: the

frieze windows, intended to let air into the attic, found no favor in Richmond. Many fine houses of this period in Baltimore used this type of window, and Mr. E. V. Valentine once said that the architect of the Stanard house was a Baltimorean. If that tradition was based on fact, this variation from Richmond custom would be explained. On the whole, while the Westmoreland Club was not the most beautiful of the Greek Revival mansions, it was a beautiful one and was particularly significant for its intimate connection with the social history and the legal life of Richmond from the time it was built until its demolition almost a century later.

1. *Whig*, May 16, 1846.
2. Clay, *A Belle of the Fifties*, p. 174. After she left the Stanard house, in 1862, Mrs. Stanard continued to entertain at her home at Eighth and Franklin.
3. *Daily Dispatch*, June 4, 1857.
4. *Reminiscences of . . . Bench and Bar*, p. 6.
5. Weddell, *St. Paul's Church*, Vol. 2, p. 452.
6. Wise, *End of an Era*, p. 70.

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Conversation with Mr. E. V. Valentine.

Bransford House

Lot 567—13 North Fifth Street

page 202

While excellent houses had been built on Fifth Street as early as the 1790's, it seems to have had a revival of popularity in the 1840's, when it attracted particularly the successful tobacconists who wished to build fine houses. Among them were William Barret, James Scott, and Frederick Bransford, not to mention James Dunlop, the commission merchant, and John Cannon Hobson, president of the Exchange Bank. The earliest of these big square houses was that of Frederick Bransford, which was built in 1840.

In the 1846 directory, Bransford is called a commission merchant, but in 1856 he was a tobacconist. When he died, in 1858, his fellow-vestrymen at St. James's Church bore eloquent testimony



BRANSFORD HOUSE
Built 1840



We need a modern photograph and a description of the current status of the house at 13 North 5th Street

to the excellence of his character and his conscientious fulfilment of every task laid upon him:

Just in every transaction of his life . . . distinguished for the gentleness of his disposition, his unostentatious charity, his genuine and enlarged philanthropy, and his sincere piety, Frederick Bransford was a noble and beautiful specimen of a true Christian, whose faith was illustrated by his works.¹

Mr. Bransford left no children, but his widow, Mrs. Charlotte Bransford, appears to have lived in the house as late as 1894. With her were William Hatcher and Miss Mary Hatcher, apparently a nephew and niece. The latter is remembered as “the sweetest thing you ever knew . . . a little old lady who always crossed the street in



the middle of the block, tucked her head and ran like a turkey.”

In 1928 the innumerable Bransford heirs sold the property to the Trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church next door, long famous as “Dr. Hoge’s church.” Called Cecil Memorial in honor of another beloved pastor, Dr. Russell Cecil, the house, now beautifully restored, serves as a church-house.

The Bransford house has the distinction of having belonged to the same family for nearly ninety years, during more than half of which time it was the home of the builder and of his widow. It has the further interest of possessing unusually fine woodwork for a house of the ’forties, the door-frames having a plumelike design more beautiful than the Barret house, for instance. On the other hand, the interior is more cramped than the Barret or Nolting houses. Instead of a hail down the middle, it has a small entry, opening on two large rooms that face the garden. The stairway, tucked in the northwest corner, is uninteresting, with an ugly newel-post.

Outside, it is imposing. It has no triple windows and is not

stuccoed. The porch on the garden side is less impressive than that of the Barret house, which it resembles in having square pillars. Originally there were a kitchen and a greenhouse in the yard, but these have been demolished and are replaced by a lovely garden.

1. *Dispatch*, June 28, 1858

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Conversation with Mr. Julien Bossieux.

McGinness House

Lot 49—2109 East Franklin Street

page 204

It is curious that one of the most attractive old houses left in Richmond, apparently quite complete in itself, should be really only an addition to a house that was pulled down about fifteen years ago! As early as 1820 Joseph Marx owned a house which sat endwise to Franklin Street, just east of the present one. This was bought by Charles W. McGinness, who lived there and a few years later bought another sixty-foot strip to the west of this, on which he erected in 1840 a wing at right angles to his older house. That wing is the house in our photograph.

McGinness was a house and sign painter whose shop was at the southeast corner of Eleventh and Bank Streets. He also did ornamental painting and gilding. The list of his effects made after his death in 1841 (for he barely lived beyond the time he had completed the addition to his house) contains an amusing assortment. Besides the tools of his craft, which included fourteen boxes of window-glass and broken boxes of the same, he left “3 candlesticks, snuffers and Dial . . . Shovel Tongs 2 spit boxes and Fenders (brass) . . . 1 Trundle Bed . . . and 1 Negro woman about 75 years old (no value).” Few documents are more revealing of the social ways of a period or group than these seemingly dry appraisements.

After McGinness’s death, his widow became Mrs. Wilkinson and apparently ceased to live in either part of the house. The eastern section was sold to one person and the new part to another. This latter was rented property for many years. In 1888 it was bought by



McGINNESS HOUSE
Built 1840

Philip Shea, who left it to its present mistress and occupant, his daughter Mrs. Maggie Shea Matzke.

The house is beautifully kept up by the devotion of Mrs. Matzke, who was married from it and loves every stick of it. She regrets the blindness that allowed her to take out tall wooden mantels and substitute latrobe stoves with slate mantels. A kitchen on what was originally the back porch and a bathroom upstairs are the only other changes. Having been built to harmonize with the older part, the house has many traits of an earlier period than 1840—random-width floor-boards, a steep stair with round handrail and slender balusters, a chair-rail (very simple) and surface locks with big keys. It is only one room deep, like so many late eighteenth-century houses. Both within and without it is a delight, and its great charm is enhanced by its position, well away from houses on either side,

*We need a modern photograph and a description of the current status of
the house at 2109 East Franklin Street*

with the grassy slope leading up to Monte Maria convent in front of it. Perched on the edge of a ravine, it has to be approached by a bridge across the area in front. This gives it an attractive air of informality in spite of the Greek Revival porch, reminding one of the houses built in the suburbs, which retain this pleasant character.

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Scott-Clarke House

Lots 564—9 South Fifth Street

page 206

The dwelling generally called the Clarke house was built in 1841 by James Scott. The executors of John Allan's estate had sold Scott the quarter-square that had once been part of the garden of "Moldavia," and James Scott sold the corner at Cary Street to William



SCOTT-CLARKE HOUSE
Built 1841



Barret and built his own home just south of the Allan house.

Scott was one of the tobacconists who gravitated to Fifth Street in the 'forties. Born in Scotland in 1773, he had emigrated to Virginia in 1798, first settling in Manchester, where he was in the tobacco export business. He married the daughter of Archibald Freeland. For about twenty years he lived in Freeland's house on what is now Bainbridge Street (see [above](#)). Mr. Scott died in 1861. His wife continued until her death in 1876 to live in their Fifth Street house with her daughter Ellen, who had married Captain Maxwell T. Clarke.

Apparently Captain Clarke was a great favorite, and his name is that most identified with the house in the minds of older Richmonders. He had served in both the army and the navy of the Confederacy and for many years was in the leaf tobacco business with his brother-in-law James A. Scott, under the firm name of



We need a description of the current status of the house at 9 South Fifth Street

Scott and Clarke. In later years he was assistant cashier of R. L. Christian and Co. Mr. Munford describes Captain Clarke as “erect, of patrician appearance, and a most entertaining talker.” An elder of the nearby Second Presbyterian Church, he was buried from there when he died at eighty-one in 1911.

The house had been sold in 1897 and has since passed through many hands. In appearance it is a curious compromise between the problem “to stucco or not to stucco,” which every builder in the ‘forties must have faced. The Clarke house was not stuccoed, but was painted a light color, now partly worn off and not unattractive. It has a belt-course as well as window sills and a porch of granite. The rear porch has square pillars, the entrance porch Doric columns.

Inside, the arrangement is similar to that of the Bransford house—a square entrance hall, the stair to the left, and two rooms across the back. The trim is much less elaborate, and the mantels are for the most part of wood.

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Ellen Glasgow House

1 West Main Street

page 209

David M. Branch, a tobacconist, who afterward lived in one of the Richard Anderson houses, built this Greek Revival mansion in 1841. He sold it the following year, the auction of the house and of eight of his slaves taking place in front of the Bell Tavern. In 1846 the house was purchased by Isaac Davenport.



GLASGOW HOUSE
Built 1841



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

Mr. Davenport had come to Richmond from Newton, Massachusetts, and by 1819 was in partnership with another New Englander, James Allen, in an auction business. In 1835 they built the Franklin Manufacturing Company, first of the many paper mills that have operated in Richmond, and were thus the pioneers in one of the city's major industries. Davenport died on April 3, 1865. It is said he was killed by a falling brick from his warehouse, which had been burned in the Evacuation fire.



He left the house to his daughter. Griffin B. Davenport and other members of the family continued to live in the house until, in 1887, “Miss Eliza” sold it to Francis T. Glasgow. Since the latter’s



daughter, Ellen Glasgow, who has lived there since that time, has so peculiarly identified herself with Richmond by portraying its life in fictional guise, it is only suitable to call the Branch-Davenport house by her name.

The house is in the most perfect condition of any of the remaining Greek Revival mansions. It is beautifully planted, perhaps a little too thickly to show off the lines of the house. We have been unable to determine when the wing was added. Its presence eliminates the porches in the rear which have characterized all the rest of this type of house. The building is stuccoed and has no triple windows. The Doric columns of the entrance are considerably heavier than those of the Barret, Clarke or Bransford houses. The Glasgow mansion gives an impression of solid dignity rather than of grace or harmony, such as distinguishes the Barret house.



We need a description and website for Ellen Glasgow House at 1 West Main Street

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Rutherford-Hobson House

2 West Franklin Street

page 211

This house, formerly a square, two-story building with a high basement, similar to the Barret house, was built in 1842-43 by Alexander Rutherford on land bought from his father, Thomas Rutherford. Thomas's own house, built in 1796, stood at the upper end of the same square, and gradually his sons established their homes around him, William Rutherford's having stood at Foushee and Grace, immediately north of Alexander's house.

In 1872, Alexander Rutherford, who had not been living at 2 West Franklin for some years, sold the house to General Joseph R. Anderson, who evidently wished to have his daughter, the wife of Colonel Edwin L. Hobson, near him. In that same year the house was enlarged to give room for the Hobsons' large family (ten children were still living in 1938). The mansard roof and iron porch and



RUTHERFOORD-HOBSON HOUSE
Built 1842-43—Demolished 1941



the ornate chimneys gave it an appearance very different from its original one, but strange to say, the effect was quite harmonious and beautiful. This was partly due to the happy proportions of the whole and partly to the beautiful trees that surrounded it both in the yard and along Franklin Street. The house, like its mistress, was one of the last to retain the atmosphere of old Richmond characteristic of Franklin Street up to the middle 1920's.

The Hobsons continued to live there, still using the kitchen in the back yard, until Mrs. Hobson's death at the age of ninety-two in January, 1939. The house was then sold, as well as a good deal of the land west of it, to the Young Men's Christian Association, which demolished it in the winter of 1941.

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Holden Rhodes House

Forest Hill Park

page 213

The Rhodes House is interesting both for the man who built it and because it is, except for the Old Stone House, the only stone dwelling in Richmond. This house was built in 1843 by Holden Rhodes, who had bought one hundred and three acres lying along Reedy Creek from the estate of Fielding Dunstan in 1836. The place, then called Dunstan's, had a house on it but evidently an unpretentious one. Nothing is left of either Dunstan's buildings or any outbuildings which Rhodes may have erected. Rhodes changed



HOLDEN RHODES HOUSE
Built 1843



the name to “Boscobel,” and afterwards bought a good deal of other property in that same neighborhood.

Holden Rhodes had come from Canada as a very young man to be tutor to the children of Samuel Taylor, who lived on what is now Porter Street. He studied law in Mr. Taylor’s office and soon acquired a large clientele, appearing in many important cases.

He was a man of large information and profound erudition; and a most sagacious counsellor. He is reputed to have been a strong and acute thinker, and a debater of power and facility He was a man of the most finished address and charm of manner, and had a lofty and dignified bearing; with a fine brow and eyes of fire and expression. Extremely neat in his dress, without the slightest taint of dandyism, he always appeared in elegant, yet appropriate, attire.¹



We need a description and website at entrance to Forest Hill Park

Among Rhodes's friends were his neighbor Richard Archer, his law-partner William H. MacFarland, Chapman Johnson, Marmaduke Johnston, and Judge Bassett French of "Whitby."

Though twice married, Rhodes left no children and when he died in 1857 willed his property to his nephew and adopted son, Charles Rhodes. Charles Rhodes sold the Dunstan place five years later, reserving the Rhodes burying ground and the Negro burying ground, as well as the Confederate earthworks then running through the place. In 1871 the property was bought by a group of New York men, some of them involved in the Tweed Ring. When it became necessary for one of this group to "disappear," the title to the Rhodes property was in dispute for years. Finally, in 1889, it was acquired by the Southside Land and Improvement Company, which



sold it the following year to the Richmond and Manchester Railway Company. In connection with the trolley lines, an amusement park with merry-go-rounds etc. was developed here. The Stone House underwent an extraordinary metamorphosis, being completely surrounded by a porch and used as a keeper's house and focal point of the amusement park.

In 1933 the amusement park being no longer successful, the street-car company sold the property to the city as a park, and the Stone House was restored. Unfortunately, the trees that once surrounded it had all disappeared, and a porch was put on which was evidently inspired by that of "Gunston Hall" but is completely inappropriate to this house. Our photograph shows what was probably the original porch, since it is quite in keeping with the period when the house was built. The interior of the house is not

particularly interesting, save for a small circular staircase leading from basement to attic. This never was a handsome house, but was simply a country house, following the cottage lines used from the early eighteenth century on down through all changes of style. The fact that it was not of clapboard as most such houses were, but of stone quarried on the place, gives it a unique interest. An old Negro told Mr. David Pulliam that Rhodes's slaves had quarried the granite. "See da, boss, tha's whar Missa Holden got the rock to build the gret house wid."

1. "The Rhodes House," article by David L. Pulliam in the *Saturday News Supplement*, Nov. 10, 1900.

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“Duncan Lodge”

West Broad Street between Lodge and Mackenzie Streets

page 215

In 1812 William Mackenzie purchased from the Reverend John Buchanan “11 acres, 2 roods and 32 poles.” Mackenzie put a mortgage on the land and never paid it off, and in consequence it was sold at auction after his death in 1829. The high bid, \$675, was made by his widow, Mrs. Jane Mackenzie. While this included “all the houses, buildings, offices . . .” and the plat accompanying shows a house and four outbuildings, we must conclude from the price that they were very simple affairs. This is confirmed by the fact that they were only valued at \$250 in the land books up to 1844, when they were first valued at \$6418 with the notation “imp. ad.” (improvements added). The house we know as “Duncan Lodge” was not built until 1843.

This fact quite upsets the widespread impression that Poe played there as a boy with his sister Rosalie, who had been reared by the Mackenzies. William Mackenzie owned a great deal of property in and around Richmond and lived in various places. While the family may have stayed at the small house on the “Duncan Lodge” tract, then far out in the suburbs of Richmond, there is no record of their having made their home there before the brick house was erected. That Poe visited them there in 1849 is practically certain: Mrs. Weiss, who as Susan Talley lived nearby at “Talavera,” speaks of the pleasant evenings there, and of Poe playing leap frog on the lawn; but he was a mature man, not a little boy.

William Mackenzie’s wife (who like his better-known sister



“DUNCAN LODGE”
 Built 1843—Demolished 1906

was named Jane) had increased her holdings on what is now West Broad Street to over twenty-nine acres. On July 4, 1853 Mrs. Jane Mackenzie, then “abiding in the City of London, England,” sold her property on Broad Street to Alexander R. Holladay and Henry P. Poindexter. The deed has some curious provisions. Miss Jane Mackenzie was living there at the time, “with her family,” and was to be allowed to stay there until September 1, and to “gather, use and appropriate and dispose of” the crops, but was not to remove the “offal, straws, stocks and manure.”

In 1874 eighteen acres of the property were purchased by William C. Mayo. For many years a private hospital for the treatment of inebriates

and mental diseases was run there under the direction of Dr. James D. Moncure. Called the Pinel Hospital, this was still in operation in 1886, when Mr. N. M. Leigh, at that time directing it, died.

Dr. Hunter McGuire bought the place in 1891. He planned to establish the new College of Physicians and Surgeons there but was unable to get city water and light, and in consequence the college was started in the Brockenbrough and Bruce houses (see [above](#)). In 1905 his widow sold "Duncan Lodge" to E. A. Saunders, and the following year it seems to have been demolished.

It is difficult to imagine just what "Duncan Lodge" looked like when it was built. It seems probable that the third story was added by the Pinel Hospital, first, because the valuation of improvements was increased from \$5000 to \$7000 in 1876, and second, because the top of the house, with its brickwork pattern and no cornice, the chimneys scarcely visible, is so entirely different from any other Greek Revival house. If there were originally back porches, they too had disappeared. The chief interest of the house was of course its connection with Poe and with his sister, but it was also a beautiful building, in a lovely and characteristic setting of magnolias and box.

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Richardson Houses

618-20 North Twenty-seventh Street

page 219

These twin houses were built in 1843 and 1847 by George Richardson. Which house was built first is of little importance, since the second was obviously copied from the first. The pair are well preserved and unaltered examples of the dwellings built under Greek Revival influence by small trades-people. While preserving the general outlines of eighteenth-century houses, one room deep and two stories high, with a moderately sloped gable roof, they reveal their comparatively late date by the porches and the absence of early trim.

Both houses remained a long time in the Richardson family. Charles Richardson was a house-painter and willed the tools of his



RICHARDSON HOUSES
Built 1843 and 1847

craft to his son and the house on the corner to his daughter, who sold it in 1891. The house next door remained in possession of a member of this family until 1913.

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Barret House

Lot 564—13 South Fifth Street

page 220

The Barret House was built in 1844 on what had formerly been part of the garden of “Moldavia.” The builder, William Barret, was the son of John Barret, who had been thrice Mayor of Richmond during the 1790’s. William Barret, born in Richmond in 1786, had begun business as an importer but afterward went into the manufacture of tobacco. He was extremely successful, being considered at the time of his death the wealthiest man in Richmond. His best known brand was “Negro Head,” a chewing tobacco (as most of that manufactured in Richmond before the Civil War was) which was shipped to every part of the globe. Barret was married, briefly, his wife, Margaret, dying after a few years. He spent much time abroad on account of her health, bringing back exotic grapes to plant in his garden. For many years he lived almost alone, with only his nephew and an old colored body-servant, Wilson. He had retired from active business shortly before the War and, seldom venturing from his house, due to his great age, was almost unknown to the general public. His end was a tragic one. He set fire to himself either while smoking or trying to light his pipe and was fatally burned in January, 1871.

After his death, the house was sold by his executor, Jaquelin Taylor, to David N. Walker. Captain Walker, who had been in command of Otey’s Battery in the siege of Petersburg, must have lived in the house a few years, as his daughter Lulie (now Mrs. Aubrey Young) was born there, and his sister-in-law, Mrs. Baughman, was married



BARRET HOUSE
Built 1844

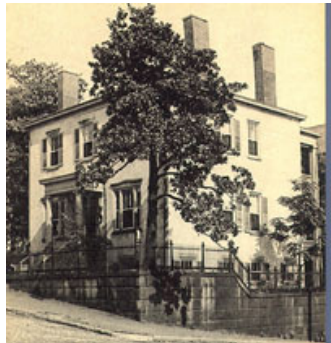
from the house. By 1876, however, the Walkers had moved to Laurel and Park Avenue and had rented the Barret house to the Vicomte de Sibour, French Consul in Richmond. The de Sibour family stayed there into the early 'eighties and were so identified with the place that an older generation in Richmond always called this "the de Sibour house." The Vicomte had one special talent—that of dressing a pheasant with all the feathers on! He and his wife (who had been a Miss Johnson of Connecticut) were both very homely. When some trouble-maker revealed to Madame de Sibour that her husband had been seen kissing the French maid, her reply was, "I don't care whom he kisses provided he doesn't kiss *me!*" There were three children—Marie, Louis (known as "Frenchy") and Henri. "Frenchy" was an active member of the "Fifth Street Gang." The house had one of the first bathrooms in the city, and one day "Frenchy" and his neighbor

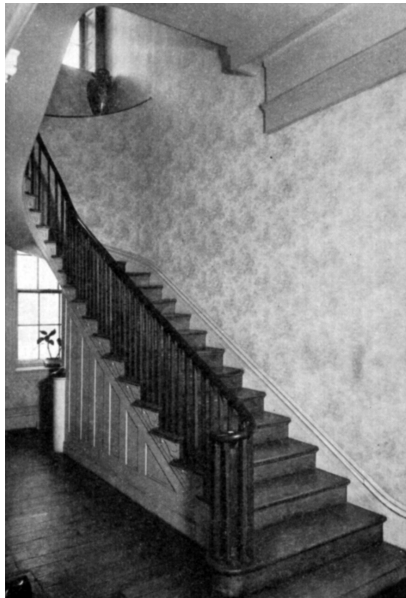


REAR PORTICO OF THE BARRET HOUSE

Tom Scott were taking a bath together, when the Vicomte began to hammer on the door. Both jumped out of the window into the area and dressed under the high front steps. “We’d have dressed in the middle of Fifth Street rather than have the Vicomte catch us,” chuckled the surviving hero of this adventure.

In 1882 the mortgage-holders sold the house including “mirrors, stoves, furnaces, ranges, grates, fenders, blowers, gas-fixtures and water-heaters.” After two changes of hands it was bought in 1895 by the Reverend Robert Willingham, executive secretary of the Baptist Board of Missions. Dr. Willingham had ten children, one or two of whom were born in this house. This large and lively family lived there





BARRET HOUSE STAIRWAY

for twelve years, Dr. Willingham's friends often teasing him about having a wine-cellar. In 1907 he took a trip around the world to visit missions everywhere. An enormous man, he happened to cross the Pacific with William H. Taft, then Secretary of War. Reporters photographing the two big passengers dubbed them the "Secretary of War and the Secretary of Peace."

In 1929 Mrs. Willingham sold the house, long occupied by "squatters," to a company which planned to replace it with a large garage. This was never done, thanks to the depression of that year. In the winter of 1936 several immense granite blocks from the retaining wall on Cary Street collapsed, and this precipitated the sale of the house for its building material. After considerable negotiation during which the outdoor kitchen was torn down, the place was bought in the spring of that year by the writer and Mrs.



John H. Boccock, to whom it now belongs.

In a way, the Barret house is the most perfect of the mansions built in the 'forties. It is less heavy than the Branch-Glasgow or the Dunlop houses, less pretentious than the Nolting house, though the back porch lacks the magnificence of either of the last two. The woodwork is less beautiful than that of the Bransford house, but the arrangement of the rooms with a wide hall in the middle is much more impressive. The really peerless feature of the interior is the stairway, a magnificent sweep, modeled on that of the Wickham house, without the palette feature. Both handrail and balusters



We need a description for the current status of the house at 15 South 5th Street are mahogany. The mantels are marble, those in the two southern rooms white, very simple and dignified. That in the small room on the northwest is of yellowish marble to harmonize with the painted walls. When the paper was scraped off, the rooms downstairs were found to have been all painted. Only this one and the hall were sufficiently well preserved to restore. The walls of the hall were marbled; the ceiling of the northwest room was painted in a delicate design of leaves.

Outside, the house has the rare distinction of a commanding situation on the brow of a steep hill. It has two triple windows and is stuccoed. The iron fence, with pineapple posts, and the graceful little guard rail on either side of the front porch would seem to be contemporary with the house. Like everything else about it, they are harmonious and dignified, without a trace of pretentiousness. In these respects, it is truly Greek in spirit.

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Norman Stewart House

Lot 491—707 East Franklin Street

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In early time the whole square bounded by Seventh, Eighth, Franklin, and Main Streets was occupied by the home of Archibald Blair, Secretary of the Council of State. The garden was adorned with trees and shrubbery and a pond, fed by a spring. After Blair's death the property was divided into lots, most of those on Franklin Street being sold to Norman Stewart who erected five brick houses there, known as Stewart's Row.

Norman Stewart, first of that family to emigrate from Rothesay in Scotland to Virginia, had come out before 1806 and engaged in the business of buying and selling leaf tobacco. His nephews John and Daniel Stewart later joined him in Richmond. Norman Stewart remained a bachelor and lived in this house after building it in 1844, renting the others in the row. His great-nephew gives an amusing picture of the younger members of the family stopping after service at St. Paul's, before the long drive to "Brook Hill," to have a glass of sherry and some stale sponge-cake with their uncle; of the latter's vanity in concealing his red hair under a brown wig; and of his true Scotch thrift in having his servant unravel his old stockings to darn his new ones!

At his death in 1856 Norman Stewart left this house to his nephew John. During the Civil War Mr. Stewart rented it to General Custis Lee and some brother-officers, and in 1864-65 Lee's mother and sisters occupied it, so that it was General Robert E. Lee's home during his brief stays in Richmond. Mrs. Chesnut describes the life there at this time:



NORMAN STEWART HOUSE
Built 1844



Then we paid our respects to Mrs. Lee. Her room is like an industrial school: everybody so busy. Her daughters were all there plying their needles, with several other



We need a description for 707 East Franklin Street



ladies. When we came out someone said, “Did you see how the Lees spend their time? What a rebuke to the taffy parties.”¹

After the Surrender, Lee rode to Richmond on Traveller. His son Robert writes:

On April 15th he arrived in Richmond. The people there soon recognized him; men, women and children crowded around him cheering and waving hats and handkerchiefs. It was more like the welcome to a conqueror than



to a despised prisoner on parole. He raised his hat in response to their greetings and rode quietly to his home on Franklin Street, where my mother and sisters were anxiously awaiting him.²

But General Lee found life in Richmond with the constant stream of callers too exhausting and in the latter part of June, 1865 moved his family to the country. Thence they moved to Lexington, after his call to be president of Washington College. His actual residence in the Stewart house was thus slightly over two months. When he tried to pay Mr. John Stewart rent, the latter wrote him that “the payment must be in Confederate currency, for which alone it was rented to your son.”³

Later, the house was rented to judge Anthony M. Keiley, who lived there while he was Mayor of Richmond, 1871-76. Judge Keiley figured in an international incident, the Italian government indicating that he was *persona non grata*, when he was named ambassador, because he had taken a prominent part in a meeting of Richmond Roman Catholics who had protested the Pope's being deprived of his temporal power.

In 1879 the Westmoreland Club, which had been founded two years earlier, occupied the Stewart house. During the 'eighties it was the home of William O. English and Robert N. Gordon. Mr. English had married Miss Jessie Gordon, head of one of the many well-known schools for girls. The school had been in existence since 1855 and during the 'eighties occupied this house.

The Stewart family continued, evidently, to feel as John Stewart had when he wrote General Lee, refusing to accept rent:

You do not know how much gratification it is, and will afford me and my whole family during the remainder of our lives, to reflect that we have been brought into contact, and to know and to appreciate you and all that are dear to you.⁴

In 1893 Mrs. Stewart and her daughters gave the house, forever associated with General Lee's brief stay in Richmond, to the Virginia Historical Society, to be the headquarters of that organization.

Although the interest of the house is largely its connection with the Lees and with the Stewart family, which has meant much to Richmond, it is worth study architecturally as a good example of a Greek Revival house of the three-story, "shoe-box" type. Among

dozens of houses of this plan, many of them still standing, this is the only one in excellent condition or likely to be preserved. That it is good of its sort is evident from a comparison with the Maury house, for example. One can easily see that the Stewart-Lee house is far better proportioned and much more pleasing in detail. The handsome iron fence with pineapple posts is identical, except for the gate, with that of the Barret house, built in the same year.

Unfortunately the appearance of the house is greatly injured at present by a large gasoline advertisement which masks the doorway when it is approached from the east.

1. *A Diary from Dixie*, pp. 292-93.
2. Lee, *Recollections and Letters of General Robert E. Lee*, p. 155.
3. Lee, *Recollections and Letters*, p. 170.
4. Capt. R. E. Lee, *loc. cit.*

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James Dunlop House

Lot 568—101 North Fifth Street

page 228

On January 20, 1844 James Dunlop bought the half-acre lot, number 568, the price of \$8000 proving how popular Fifth Street was at that time. This site had the further attraction of being considered the highest elevation in the city, Thomas P. Watkins, the surveyor, having built himself a small frame house there when he ascertained its unique advantage. That house was immediately demolished by Mr. Dunlop, and the mansion was built within the year.

James Dunlop (who was born in Richmond in 1801) spent the rest of his life in the house he had built. He had married Ann Dent McRae, daughter of Alexander McRae and it was in this house that the widow of Alexander McRae died. Dunlop was a partner in the ante-bellum firm of Dunlop, Moncure & Co., auctioneers and commission merchants, which was located at the northwest corner of Cary and Eleventh Streets. After the War this firm became Dunlop & McCance and devoted itself exclusively to milling. One of the founders of St. Paul's Church, Mr. Dunlop was a member of the vestry from 1844 until his death in 1875, at which time he was treasurer. Passing resolutions on his loss, the members of the vestry described him as "the gentle, genial, generous friend."

Mrs. Dunlop continued to live there until her death, following which it was the home for about five years of James Alfred Jones. W. Brydon Tennant owned it for a similar period, and in 1899 it was sold to Walter Blair, a grandson of Parson Blair. Mr. Blair lived there until his death, and his daughter, Miss Ellen Blair, continued

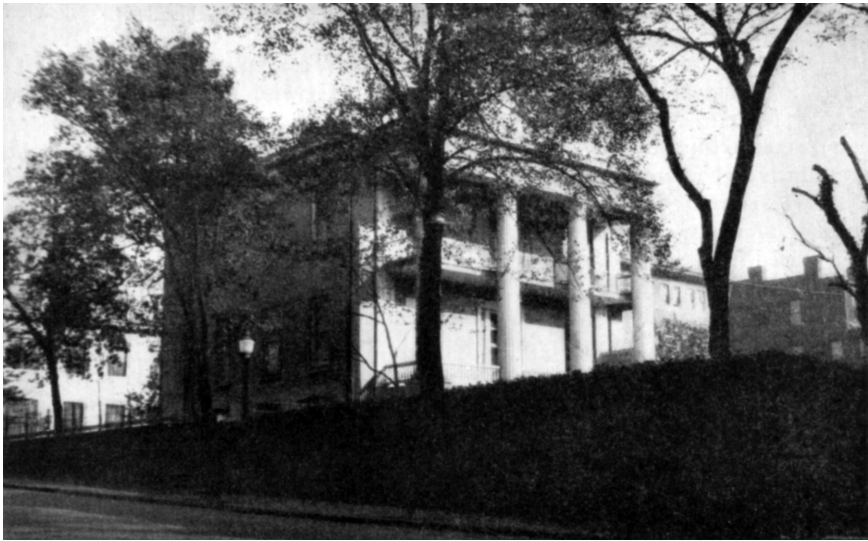


DUNLOP HOUSE

to make it her home. She sold it in 1928, and it was demolished in that year to be the site of the John Marshall Hotel.

The Dunlop house, built at the same time as the Barret house and in the main very similar to it, had several marked differences. The front porch was heavier and there were no triple windows. The chimneys were placed toward the centre of the house instead of on the outer wall, a much less awkward plan.

The chief feature of the Dunlop house was the magnificent portico in the rear, with its great columns instead of the modest square pillars of the Barret house. Although the porch had two floors, the upper one was somewhat masked so that the effect was more like the Van



DUNLOP HOUSE, PORTICO ON GARDEN SIDE
Built 1844—Demolished 1928

Lew and Hayes-McCance houses than like those being built in the years just before the Dunlop house. The portico of the Nolting house is evidently copied from this one. The Dunlop house was beautifully kept up, to the very end, and the pearl-grey stucco and white trim, the secluded garden surrounded by its high brick wall, and the tall portico made it a place of romance and beauty.

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Weddell, *St. Paul's Church*, pp. 18 and 607.

Joseph R. Anderson House

113 West Franklin Street

page 230

Built in 1845 by Henry Ludlam, this house was purchased two years later by Joseph Reid Anderson, with whose name it is entirely identified.

Joseph R. Anderson was born near Fincastle in 1813. After graduating fourth in his class from West Point, he resigned from the army fifteen months later to work as an engineer under Colonel Claudius Crozet, chief engineer of the State of Virginia. In four years young Anderson surveyed the macadam road between Staunton and Winchester and supervised its construction.

In 1841 he became agent for the Tredegar Iron Company, which had been in the throes of financial upheavals ever since it was founded three years earlier. The rest of Anderson's long life was one with the life and development of the Tredegar. He leased the business, in which he had gradually built up confidence, in 1843, and five years later, when the lease expired, he bought it for \$125,000. Since that time it has been owned, or, since its incorporation in 1866, largely controlled by General Anderson and his family. The great prominence of the Tredegar Company (as it has been called since the incorporation) was attained during the Civil War, when its furnaces kept the Confederacy supplied with arms and ammunition.

General Anderson, commissioned as a brigadier, served with the Confederate forces in 1861-62, but in July of the latter year General Lee sent him back to the Tredegar to direct the vital manufacture of arms, a task in which no one could replace him. Up to the time of



JOSEPH R. ANDERSON HOUSE
Built 1845—Demolished 1893

his death he remained active both in the great firm he had created and in nearly every movement where the well-being of Virginia was concerned. He died in September, 1892 at the Isle of Shoals on the coast of Maine, whither he had gone to recuperate from an attack of grippe, and was buried from St. Paul's, of which church he was Senior Warden.

Two months after his death, his heirs sold the family home to Major Lewis Ginter, who planned to erect the Jefferson Hotel on the site. The house was demolished in the following spring.

The Anderson house and the Taylor (Peter Mayo) house directly across the street from it are the only examples of the temple style of architecture in Richmond that survived to comparatively recent years. Unlike many buildings of this style further South, this one was not too imposing to suggest a house, rather than a public building. The

one-story wings probably contributed to the grace of its proportions, which must have been peculiarly harmonious and satisfying. It was a happy combination of dignity and homelike intimacy. The terraced garden that stretched down the hill behind the house to Main Street is described by General Anderson's granddaughter, Mrs. Francis D. Williams, in *Historic Gardens of Virginia*.

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Mayo Memorial Church House

(William F. Taylor House)

110 West Franklin Street

page 233

In 1841 Samuel Taylor purchased the entire square between Franklin and Grace, Jefferson and Adams Streets. At that time the only house on this block was the one built by Alexander Stuart and known in recent years as the Barksdale house. Here Taylor lived. In 1845 he built at the western end a much larger house which was occupied by his son William F. Taylor, teller of the Bank of Virginia, to whom his father left the newer house when he died.

The Taylors owned this house until 1872, when it was purchased by Walter K. Martin, senior member of the wholesale commission house bearing his name, who owned the property and made his



MAYO MEMORIAL CHURCH HOUSE
Built 1845



home there until 1883. In that year he sold it to Peter H. Mayo.

A descendant of Colonel William Mayo who made the first plan of Richmond, Mr. Mayo was born at “Powhatan Seat,” below Richmond, in 1836, and died in 1920 at “Powhatan” in Clarke County, which he had named for the old Mayo home. His father had



We need a description for 110 West Franklin Street

been a successful tobacco manufacturer, who is said to have made the first “Navy Plug” in the world. But the family fortunes were ruined in the Civil War, in which Peter Mayo served as a captain, and in 1866 the latter started afresh. His business prospered, and he became one of the wealthiest men in Richmond. After selling out his tobacco business to the Continental Tobacco Company, he retired. As a tobacconist, an owner of real estate, a churchman largely responsible for the founding of All Saints Church, and a philanthropist, he was for many decades an outstanding figure in the life of Richmond.

In architecture Mr. Mayo’s taste was that of his time, and the house suffered from Victorian prosperity. In the Martins’ day, it looked very similar to the contemporary Joseph R. Anderson house across the street, with low one-story wings on either side and a detached kitchen and laundry in the rear. In 1884 Mr. Mayo carried out



extensive alterations, doubling the assessed value of the buildings. The outbuilding was replaced by a long addition on Jefferson Street, the original wings were raised to two stories, and large windowpanes replaced the small ones. Inside, the changes were even more radical. How much this was in accord with the taste of that day is amusingly shown in a contemporary paean of admiration:

The handsome exterior is overshadowed by the elegant and costly-finished interior, which is of polished hardwoods. The parlors, library and dining-rooms are in mahogany. The main stairway is in quartered oak; the chambers in olive-wood, walnut, bird's-eye-maple, mahogany and oak. The bathrooms are finished in cherry and walnut, and the pantry in walnut. In the main story the inlaid flooring of different-colored hardwood gives a beautiful finish to the rich surroundings.¹

Fortunately, the exterior retains much of its original dignity and simplicity.

In 1923 Mr. Mayo's daughters, Mrs. Benehan Cameron and Mrs. Thomas N. Carter, gave their father's home to the Diocese of Virginia to serve as a centre of church activities. It is known as the Mayo Memorial Church House.

1. "The Finest Residences," *The Sunday State*, Jan. 31, 1886.

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Conversation with Mrs. Saunders Hobson.



Horace Kent House

Lot 739—12 East Franklin Street

page 235

This imposing mansion was built in 1845 by Horace L. Kent. The building was described at that time as a two-story dwelling: when the third story was added, or whether the beautiful iron porch was contemporary with the house, we do not know. Iron verandas did not come into vogue in Richmond until the middle 'fifties, but it is possible that Mr. Kent ordered this one from New York before they became usual in Richmond. The pattern of this ironwork is unlike any we have encountered in Virginia or Maryland, and its similarity to the veranda of the Harper house on Gramercy Park, New York City, and to another brought from that city in recent years by Mrs. Robert M. Jeffress, suggests that the Kent porch was made in New York.

That Mr. Kent should have ordered a porch from the North was natural, since he was a northern man himself. He was born in Suffield, Connecticut, in 1804, came to Richmond at seventeen, and married a daughter of Heman Baldwin of New York. As head of the large dry-goods firm of Kent, Paine and Company he no doubt kept up many business connections with the North. His bitterness toward Secession is amusingly shown in his will. To one daughter, who had evidently been a whole-hearted supporter of the Confederacy, he ironically bequeathed \$250,000 in Confederate bonds, emancipated slaves, and other such unrealizable assets, with the comment, "I could continue the list to the extent of more than half a million of dollars, but the above will suffice—she will



HORACE KENT HOUSE
Built 1845

see what the effect of secession has been, but for which, I could have left my children a handsome competency.” A large fortune indeed would have been needed to provide for the ten daughters and three sons of Horace L. Kent! In his will he remembers not only his children and sons-in-law but many other relatives, leaving mementoes to each member of the family. Students of Victorian furniture and knick-knacks would find his will almost a guide to an interior of that period.

Mr. Kent died in 1872. He is described as one of Richmond’s “most valued merchants and citizens—a man of sterling worth and integrity and a Christian gentleman.”¹ Whatever his sympathies during the late War, he had evidently kept the respect and



admiration of his fellow-citizens. Mrs. Kent continued to live in the house until 1876, when it was purchased by Charles Talbott, of whom we write elsewhere (see [below](#)). Mr. Talbott died here in 1881, but his widow lived in the house for many years after.

In 1904 the house became connected with a third notable Richmond family when it was purchased by Granville G. Valentine, son of Mann S. Valentine II, who founded the Valentine Museum.

At the time when Mr. Valentine bought the Kent house iron-work was suffering an eclipse. He replaced the iron porch with a Greek portico, utilizing only the rails of the former veranda. The one-story wings were raised, to enlarge the house. While this has changed its appearance considerably, the house with its beautiful yard, surrounded by a brick wall and iron fence, retains the atmosphere of Richmond in the early nineteen hundreds, of Franklin Street when it was not given over to stores and parking



We need a description and modern photo for 12 East Franklin Street

lots but was synonymous with beauty, leisure and a gracious way of life. While losing the letter of its original architectural character, the Kent-Valentine house has kept that more elusive quality, the spirit of a vanished period.

1. *Dispatch*, Feb. 28, 1872.

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Dispatch, Feb. 28, 1872.

Conversation with Mrs. George Hall and Mr. Robert B. Munford.

Jaquelin Taylor Row

Lot 750-1108—12 Capitol Street

page 238

This row of three houses was built in 1844-45 by Jaquelin P. Taylor on the site of the modest frame dwelling of Jacob Cohen. Mr. Taylor had come to Richmond as a young man from Orange County, and as a large importer of dry-goods he had built up a considerable fortune. In his obituary notice he is said to have been one of the oldest and most respected citizens of Richmond, whose name was synonymous with the word probity. "He lived," says the writer in the *Whig*, "a pure and spotless life, and was charitable and Christianlike in all his dealings with his fellow men."¹ Executor of William Barret, he was in process of winding up his friend's affairs when he died suddenly in January, 1872, just after celebrating his seventy-fifth birthday.



JAQUELIN TAYLOR HOUSES



JAQUELIN TAYLOR HOUSES
Built 1845—Demolished 1938

The two easternmost houses in the row remained the property of Mr. Taylor's heirs as late as 1910. He left no children, but his wife's family, the Richardsons, who during Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's lifetime had occupied the middle house, later moved into the one at Twelfth and Capitol, which had been the Taylors' own home. The Misses Jane and Harriet Richardson and their two brothers are remembered as "characters" by all those who knew them. One brother, who was very tall, was often seen in the Capitol Square, feeding the squirrels, with whom he was so gentle that they ate out of his hand without fear. The Misses Richardson were unadjusted to such modern indelicacies as ladies attending to business, so Judge Beverley Crump, who had charge of their affairs, had to bring them what money they needed in cash every month: going to a bank would have been quite out of the question for them. Mr. Jaquelin P. Taylor II, a great-nephew and namesake of the builder of these houses, recalls that when he came to Richmond as a youth he had to pay regular Sunday visits to the Richardsons and that he put up with the inevitable attendance at church for the sake of the excellent dinner that always followed.

The westernmost house was sold in 1851 to Thomas R. Price, a leading citizen of his day. In 1833 he had founded the well-known dry-goods store of Thos. R. Price and Company, of which he was head at the time of his death in 1868. Under various names, Fourquarean and Price, Fourquarean, Price and Temple, etc. this concern survived well into the twentieth century. Mr. Price's son Edward is remembered by Mr. Munford (and by this writer) as an usher at St. Paul's over a long period of years. "A man of patrician appearance and of courtly manner, Mr. Price gave distinction to the old Church he so faithfully attended and served."²

Major von Borcke, the German officer on Jeb Stuart's staff, tells in his memoirs of a visit to the Prices in this house in 1884. He had cared for Channing Price, when the latter was mortally wounded at his side, and ever since the Civil War the family had cherished von Borcke's sword, which had barely escaped destruction when Mr. Price's store was burned.³

The Price family owned No. 1108 up to 1903, when it was bought by Gilbert K. Pollack, a member of the City Council who built himself an office on Broad Street. In 1911 and 1912 all three houses were sold to the City. During the next twenty-five years a game of battledore and shuttlecock went on between City and State for possession of the site, known (from Ford's Hotel which had stood to the west of the Taylor houses) as the Ford Lot. Meanwhile the houses were occupied by various worthy organizations, notably by the Juvenile Court (which had its beginnings there), the Tuberculosis Association, and the Academy of Arts, the last two organizations remaining, respectively, in 1112 and 1108-10 until the buildings were about to be demolished over their heads. It was finally decided that the projected State Library was to occupy the site, and in 1938 they were pulled down.

Together with Linden Row, the Jaquelin Taylor houses were the finest example of the rows of houses built during the 'forties and 'fifties. In some respects these were superior to Linden Row. The porches, with their delicate Corinthian columns, and the fences with pineapple posts like those of the contemporary Norman Stewart and Barret houses were particularly beautiful. Mr. Taylor's own home, 1112 Capitol, was further adorned with an exquisite iron balcony on the Capitol Street side. During the demolition,

the corner house was found to have a curious and interesting dome above the well of the stair, which was a continuous spiral from the bottom to the top of the house. When the houses were demolished the fence was given to Leigh Street Baptist Church, where it is now installed, and the balcony and front entrances to the Valentine Museum. The balcony is now in the garden of the Museum.

1. Jan. 23, 1872.
2. *Richmond Homes and Memories*, p. 116.
3. Quoted in the *Dispatch*, July 4, 1886.

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Conversation with Mrs. Beverley T. Crump and Mr. Julien Bossieux.

On 1108 Capitol (Price House):
Deed Books 59, p. 651; 176B, p. 98; 212D, p. 395.
Chancery Will Books 4, p. 515; 13, p. 302.
Dispatch, July 4, 1886; Dec. 8, 1868.

On 1110-12 Capitol:
Deed Books 206A, p.311; 212B, p. 223.

Cornelius Crew House

Lot 1-3 (Adams's Plan)—310 North Nineteenth Street

page 242

This house was built in 1845 by Cornelius Crew. Crew was born in Charles City County in 1805, of Quaker parents, but by 1834 he had established himself in Richmond and had bought the soap and candle factory of Margaret Maule. His successful business was continued by his son under the name of P. J. Crew and Company, and older citizens claim they remember the very smell of Crew's "Dixie Soap." Converted to Methodism, Cornelius Crew joined with those members of old Trinity Church who organized the "new" Trinity, at Twentieth and Broad, to which he was a generous contributor. He died in January, 1865.

Mr. and Mrs. Crew were remembered by their little grandson, George Warren, who lived in the old house as a child. They were kindly people and took into their home a young man, also named George, who had begun life by working as a lad in the Crew factory. The Crews built an office for him in their big yard, and after he was married he used to stop by every morning and was always invited in to breakfast. Every morning the same dialogue took place: "And George, how is Sally?" to which inquiry the invariable answer was, "Sally is complaining."



Mrs. Crew was living in the old home as late as 1881, and it was not sold until three years later. For many years it belonged to William A. Boswell, a large property-holder on Church Hill and in that vicinity. Mrs. Boswell left it to Mary E. Smith, who owned it up to 1921.



CORNELIUS CREW HOUSE
Built 1845

We need a modern photo and a description for 310 North 19th Street

The porch was lengthened a few years ago, which takes away much of its charm. While it has Greek Revival characteristics, such as the porch and the triple window above it, still it has a certain informality which gives the houses built on the outskirts of town a character quite different from those of the same period which were strictly city houses. The especial attraction of the Crew house is its location on the edge of a real ravine. On the street side there are two floors, but on the rear or garden side there are three. Even with the garden and outbuildings gone, the abrupt descent and the large trees still remaining make it a house that immediately attracts the passer-by.

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Conversations with Mrs. George V. Warren, Mr. Pleasant L. Reed, and Mr. Julien Bossieux.

McCurdy House

Lot B—1731 East Main Street

page 244

This typical store-and-dwelling was built in 1845, apparently by Neil McCurdy. In former times there were many buildings of this general character on both Broad and Main Streets, the Evacuation Fire having eliminated many of those on Main. This example is a particularly pleasing one, with its bold and harmonious “stair-step” gables silhouetted against the modernistic tobacco-factory to the south of it. In recent years it has been painted a peculiar greenish-white, giving it rather the tonality of a Roquefort cheese.

The building has no interesting history. It belonged to McCurdy’s estate until 1882. It is included because it is a fine example of a type of store at one time very much used in Richmond, to judge by old photographs.



McCURDY HOUSE
Built 1845

We need a modern photo and a description for 1731 East Main Street

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Maupin-Maury House

Lot 760—1105 East Clay Street

page 245

Although it is inevitably associated with the name of Matthew Fontaine Maury, this house should really be called the Maupin house, since it was built by the versatile physician and educator, Dr. Socrates Maupin. Dr. Maupin had bought from the Carrington heirs a part of the land on which the frame house of Colonel Edward Carrington stood and in 1846 had built this house.

Dr. Maupin, a “modest, quiet little gentleman,” was born in 1808 in Albemarle County, a descendant of Gabriel Maupin, the Huguenot who had emigrated to Virginia more than a century earlier. After graduating from Washington College (now Washington and Lee) Socrates Maupin took both the medical and academic courses at the University of Virginia, since he knew he would be a teacher. In 1835 he came to Richmond to become principal of the Richmond Academy. This position he resigned in 1838 to found a boys’ school of his own. On his staff was Basil Gildersleeve, later to become the great Greek scholar of Johns Hopkins University. At the same time, Dr. Maupin assisted in founding the medical department of Hampden-Sydney, now the Medical College of Virginia, where he was professor of chemistry and pharmacy from 1838 until 1853. He resigned to become professor of chemistry at the University of Virginia. For sixteen years he was chairman of the faculty there, and it was largely due to his administrative ability that the University survived the Civil War as well as it did. He died in 1871 as the result of a fall from his horse.



MAUPIN-MAURY HOUSE
Built 1846

When Dr. Maupin was called to the University of Virginia, he sold his home in Richmond to Robert H. Maury. Mr. Maury was a broker and during the 'seventies was president of the Richmond Stock Exchange. He was a cousin of Matthew Fontaine Maury, and



when the latter came to Richmond at the outbreak of the Civil War to offer his services to the Confederacy he made his home with his kinsman. The sojourn in Richmond of the “Pathfinder of the Seas” was brief—he was there only during the summer of 1861, being sent first to Cuba and then to Europe by the Confederate government.

We need a modern photo and a description for 1105 East Clay Street



Miss Belle Maury, daughter of R. H. Maury, who died in 1934 at the age of 92, remembered servants hauling tubs of water to the third floor front room for M. F. Maury's experiments on the submarine torpedo. His own son likewise relates:

His initial experiments to explode minute charges of powder under water, were made with an ordinary tub in his chamber at the house of his cousin, Robert H. Maury, a few doors from the [Confederate] Museum in Richmond. The tanks for actual use were made at the Tredegar Works, and at the works of Talbott and Son on Cary Street; the batteries were loaned by the Richmond Medical College, which also freely tendered the use of its laboratory. In the early summer of 1861 the Secretary of the Navy, the Governor of Virginia, the Chairman of the Committee of Naval Affairs and other prominent officials were asked by him to witness a trial and an explosion of torpedoes in James River at Rocketts.¹

Although their famous kinsman only came back to Richmond to rest in Hollywood, the Maurys owned this house until 1894, when it was bought by the Gwathmey family. Mrs. Abby Gwathmey and her daughters lived there until her children sold it in 1924 after Mrs. Gwathmey's death. Since then it has deteriorated to the rooming-house level.

An unusually heavy type of Greek Revival, this house is of little interest architecturally. It is, however, of intense interest as having been the home of two of the most remarkable men who have ever sojourned in Richmond and as the scene of scientific experiments which have been world-wide in their effect.

1. Maury, *A Brief Sketch of the Work of Matthew Fontaine Maury*, p. 6.



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Conversation with Miss Sarah Gwathmey.

Hobson-Nolting House

Lot 584—409 East Main Street

page 249

On the site of the Hobson-Nolting house once stood a large wooden dwelling which had belonged in the eighteenth century to Anthony Singleton. His heirs owned the property for many years and at one time rented it to Miss Jane Mackenzie, who had her well-known girls' school there. In 1845 the lot was purchased by John Cannon Hobson, who two years later built the mansion generally called the Nolting house. Concerning Mr. Hobson and the builders of the house we quote an article from the *Richmond Dispatch* of January 19, 1890, without vouching for its accuracy. It is interesting if true, because we know so little of the actual builders of



HOBSON-NOLTING HOUSE

Built 1847



HOBSON-NOLTING HOUSE HALL



HOBSON-NOLTING HOUSE DOORWAY



REAR PORTICO, HOBSON-NOLTING HOUSE

any of the old houses. Speaking of Singleton's home the writer says:

About 1840 the house was purchased by John C. Hobson, a Goochland farmer, who had been elected president of the Richmond Branch of the Exchange Bank of Norfolk.



Mr. Hobson had the old dwelling removed, and in its stead erected the commodious building still ornamenting the grounds. The builder of the Hobson house was Robert McClellan, who also built the Exchange Hotel. For the latter purpose he brought to this city a score of skilled workmen, most of them, like himself, of Scotch birth. That memorable citizen and worthy man, George Gibson, Sr., was one of McClellan's men. . . . The brick-work of the house was done by Beazley and Quarles.¹

Mr. Hobson was a tobacconist, and a “Goochland farmer” in the sense that he had bought “Howard’s Neck,” that fine home of Edward Cunningham (see [above](#)), which is still owned by Hobson’s descendants. President of the Exchange Bank, he had bought a great deal of property in the neighborhood of his mansion. Among the houses he built were the three at the southwest corner of Fourth



and Main, two of which are standing, and two very attractive little dwellings now numbered 3 and 5 South Third, which were erected just before the Civil War.

Hobson died in 1873. In that same year his home was sold to Emil Otto Nolting. Mr. Nolting had an interesting background. His father had fought against Napoleon in the Hanoverian army. The son, born in 1824 on the family estate in Prussia, was educated in Bremen and came to Richmond as a young man. He entered the office of his uncle, A. W. Nolting, who was already established as an exporter of tobacco. After 1850 E. O. Nolting formed a tobacco firm of his own which had several names before becoming in 1871 the firm of E. O. Nolting. Besides his principal interest, tobacco, Mr. Nolting was at various times President of the Bank of the Commonwealth and of the National Bank of Virginia, as well as of the Tobacco Exchange and the Chamber of Commerce. In 1852 he was made Belgian Consul in Richmond, a position he held until his death. He was decorated by the Belgian government with the Order of Leopold. When he died in 1893 he was described in the local press as “one of Richmond’s most prominent and highly respected business men . . . a good citizen, thoroughly unostentatious in his manner, and a devoted husband and father.”²

Three of Mr. Nolting’s children still live in the house their family

has now owned and occupied for nearly seventy years. The building is unaltered, save for an inconspicuous wing, and is furnished in the manner of the 'seventies with rarely pleasing effect. A house that looks "lived in" for generations has an atmosphere that no restoration can recapture.

The Hobson-Nolting house shows the most complete development of the Greek Revival mansion. It is larger than any of the earlier ones, with triple windows on all four floors (including the basement) on the Main Street side. The magnificent portico in the rear was obviously inspired by that of the Dunlop house but is more elaborate, with curved railing.

The interior, also, is much handsomer and more imposing than that of the Barret house, which seems simple and almost bare by comparison. The stair is in the extreme rear, and the hall is flanked by a superb pair of columns in front of the stair and another pair near the entrance. The use of the classical motifs in the door-frames and elsewhere is beautiful. A good deal of the original painted decoration of the rooms still remains. The house is in good condition save that, like the Clarke house, it needs paint on the outside trim.

1. "Houses of Long Ago," article signed G. C. W.
2. *Dispatch*, April 18, 1893.

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Linden Row

Lots 701 and 720-100—118 East Franklin Street

page 255

So often has the story been told of how Thomas Rutherford saved the western march of Richmond by preventing the Penitentiary from being built on this square that we will not repeat it. Rutherford gave the four lots between Grace and Franklin, First and Second to his brother-in-law, Parson Blair, after he had persuaded the State to accept the present site of the Penitentiary in lieu of this block so near his own home. In 1816 John D. Blair's son sold the eastern end of the Franklin Street side to Charles Ellis, whose own home stood across Franklin at the corner of Second. Ellis used the land as a garden, where, no doubt, Edgar Poe often



LINDEN ROW, EASTERN END



LINDEN ROW
Built 1847 and 1853

played with the Ellis children. In 1839 it was purchased from the estate of Ellis's partner, John Allan, by Fleming James. Eight years later, James built a row of five houses which were called, after the lindens that had adorned the Ellis garden, Linden Square. In 1853 the western end of the block, after passing through several hands, was bought by the sons of Thomas Rutherford, Samuel and Alexander, who had the wisdom to continue James's plan and built in that same year five more houses like those James had erected in 1847.

To trace the many people who have occupied or owned these ten houses would be a futile task, closely identified as the row has been up to a few years ago with all that was best in the social life of Richmond. We shall have to be content with naming some of the most interesting, including three famous schools that have been located in Linden Row (as the whole block came to be called). Just





before and during the Civil War the two westernmost houses were occupied by D. Lee Powell's school, called the Southern Female Institute. From this location (for the school moved several times) Mrs. Dickinson, one of the pupils, remembered seeing President Davis riding horseback in the morning, or driving in the afternoon. Miss Maria Blair was one of the graduates of this school in 1858. The second famous girls' school in the row was that of Mrs. Pegram and her daughter. From about 1856 to 1866 it occupied Nos. 106 and 108. Finally came the school of Miss Virginia Randolph Ellett, which occupied No. 112 from about 1895 to 1906, when it moved further west and eventually to Westhampton, to become St. Catherine's. More striking personalities than Miss Mary Pegram (later Mrs. Joseph R. Anderson) and Miss "Jennie" Ellett would be hard to find in any city, and the impress of all these schools on the



girls of three generations is incalculable.

For the individuals and families who made Linden Row their home we refer the reader to Robert B. Munford's *Richmond Homes and Memories*. Mr. Munford's acquaintance with many of the people who lived there when the Row was in its heyday gives this part of his book a flavor of which any imitation would be inadequate. Among the families that lived there longest we might cite those of Charles E. Whitlock (at No. 100); William H. Scott (at 102); Major Robert Stiles (at 104); James Pleasants (at 106); and Dr. Christopher Tompkins (at 116). Mary Johnston was living at 110 when she published *Lewis Rand*.

At present most of the houses are rented for antique shops and are owned by estates or by those who consider them from their investment possibilities. The two at the east end were pulled down



in 1922 to make place for the Medical Arts Building. In spite of this mutilation, the row as a whole remains the most satisfying example of the Greek Revival period in Richmond's architecture. The houses are substantially alike, though the Whitlock house has a long addition at the rear, besides being slightly broader than the rest of the row. In detail they are less delicate than the Jaquelin Taylor houses, built somewhat earlier. But the eight remaining houses are practically unaltered, and the great length and fair condition of the row, the characteristic magnolias, even the picturesque display of the antique-dealers, give it a charm unequaled by any block now standing in Richmond.



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Oliver House

701 North Twenty-third Street

page 259

An example of the many attractive houses of unpretentious character erected in what were then the suburbs of Richmond is the brick dwelling at the northeast corner of Twenty-third and M Streets. This seems to have been built in 1848 by Hiram Oliver, who owned a good deal of property in the neighborhood of Union Hill and further east. The quaint outbuildings or rear wings of such houses often lead one to imagine that they are much older than the records show them to be.

This house was evidently built as an investment, and its history, like that of most of the dwellings on Union Hill and in Shed Town,



OLIVER HOUSE
Built 1848



has little interest. Oliver left this house in 1891 to Peachy Lyne, who sold it in 1907 to the family of the present owner. During practically all of its existence it has been rented property.

An interesting picture of the type of people who made up this neighborhood occurs in the *Dispatch* of March 18, 1856:

Union Hill is rapidly becoming a town within itself, and . . . will soon be as thickly settled as almost any portion of Richmond. Most of the residents of this hill do business in Richmond—many of them are industrious, hard-fisted, honest mechanics, who now own the tenements they occupy, and all of them are sober, honest citizens. We do not know of a neighborhood in the State where the laws are more rigidly observed by all classes than on Union Hill, and where, in the same amount of population, as



Description needed

few crimes are committed. The residents act as their own policemen. . . .

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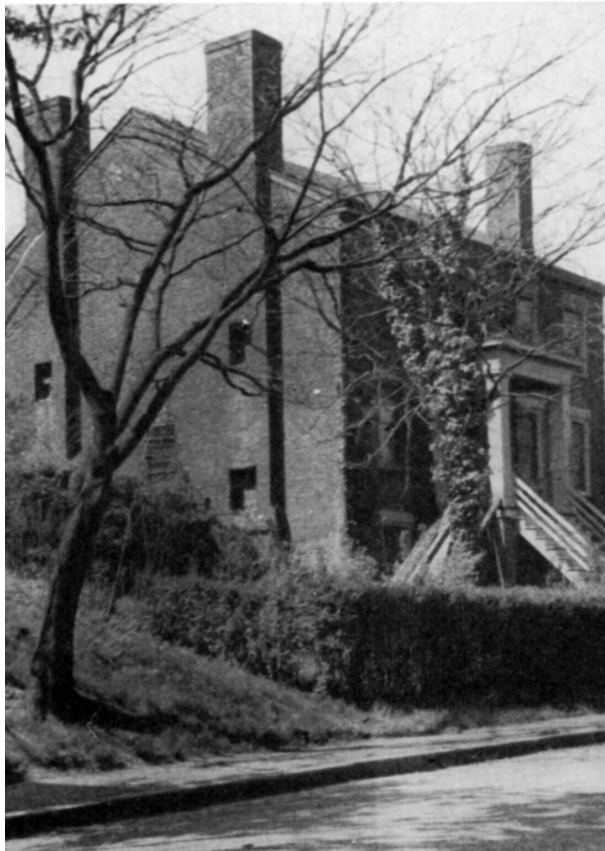
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Stubbs House

1905 Pleasants Street

page 261

Albert G. Stubbs, described in the Directory of 1856 as a clerk in the *Christian Advocate* office, built this house in 1849. He probably lived there, as his residence is given as Union Hill in that same directory. He mortgaged it in 1862, and ten years later the note-holder sold it.



STUBBS HOUSE
Built 1849

Modern photo and description needed for 1905 Pleasants Street

Since then it has changed hands many times, those who owned it longest being Jacob and Catherine Cohn and, in recent years, August Nolde, who only sold it in 1939. The house has generally been rented property, occupied in 1871 and perhaps later as a school. It had formerly a wooden addition on the east side, the fireplaces of which may still be seen. It is in fair condition.

With a history devoid of interest, the charm of the house lies in its simple lines and bold silhouette, with two chimneys at either end. Built at a time when Greek Revival architecture was chiefly imitating itself, it is a good specimen of a house that does not seek a style but attains to style by the taste with which it was designed.

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Late Greek Revival Houses

page 262

The persistence of the Greek Revival style in Richmond was great. Mansions after the pattern of the Barret house continued to be built at least until 1853, at which point wealthier citizens began to try other models. But for houses of medium size the same patterns were followed to the very eve of the Civil War. A house of this type was built at the northwest corner of Twelfth and Marshall as late as 1866, though of course this was exceptional. Nor did the type deteriorate with repetition. The block on Leigh between Eighth and Ninth, built between 1853 and 1858, must have rivaled Linden Row in beauty before the remaining houses sank to their present state of dilapidation.

Late Greek Revival houses—that is, those built between 1848 and 1859—followed several distinct patterns, just as the earlier ones had. Several of the mansion class, with the door in the centre, were erected in the early 'fifties. Among them was the one built by John Maben at the northwest corner of Sixth and Grace (1852); the Strother or Gray house at 10 South Fifth (1850); and the house next door to this at Fifth and Cary, which was built in 1853. All of these have been demolished. So has the Hubbard house (see [below](#)) built in 1856, in which the style was considerably modified from the mansions of the middle 'forties.

Among less pretentious houses, there were several distinct patterns. All resembled each other in that they had an entrance to one side, with a small columned porch of more or less classical style. All had two-and-a-half or three stories on top of a relatively high



STROTHER-GRAY HOUSE
Built 1850—Demolished 1924

basement. Practically all had two-story porches in the rear. The trim was extremely simple, the windows generally having a stone block as lintel. The rectangular lines and subdued trim contrast sharply with the elaborate ornament and curves already being introduced by 1853.

The variations in these scores of late Greek Revival houses were chiefly in the roof-line and treatment of the chimneys. The simplest and, in a way, the most attractive were the gable-roofed houses with one or two dormers which followed the general outline of the William C. Allen and Quarles houses (see [Allen](#) and [Quarles](#) houses). These had two full stories and a basement and varied little from the same sort of house built in 1836 or 1839.

A more striking design for a two-and-a-half story house is that with the gable in stair-step design. As we have seen, this was a very old Richmond pattern, dating back at least to 1816 and possibly to 1802, if that part of the Adams-Van Lew house was built by Dr. Adams. In the Greek Revival use of this gable, the chimneys played less part, the highest section was less exaggerated than in the smaller Marx house, for example, but the effect is nonetheless striking and attractive.

More commonplace are the “shoe-box” houses with three full stories above the basement. The roofs, instead of coming to a slight peak with a cornice all round, as in the Norman Stewart house, are almost flat, like those of Linden Row, and terminate at the ends with weak copies of the stepped gable, the chimneys, incorporated into one end, being insignificant in the general pattern of the house. Examples of this sort are the Palmer, Hardgrove, and G. W. Donnan houses.

A late use of Greek Revival detail in small cottages on Union Hill and in Shed Town is so different from any of these patterns used in the city proper that they will be discussed later (see [Two Raised Cottages](#)).

We shall show several examples of these various types of the late neo-Greek dwelling, passing rapidly over their individual histories, which are seldom very interesting, and considering them chiefly as the setting of Richmond of the late 'forties and the 'fifties.

Hardgrove House

Lot 95—2300 East Grace Street

page 265

This handsome example of late Greek Revival was built in 1849 by Samuel Hardgrove. The Hardgroves were tobacco manufacturers, whose factory stood at the southwest corner of Main and Twenty-seventh Streets, according to all the directories from



HARDGROVE HOUSE
Built 1849



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

1856 to 1894. It was at “Hardgrove’s” that one of the hired slave stemmers, John Jasper, “got religion” in 1839 and was given a holiday to “spread the news.” One might imagine that the Hardgroves had in some mysterious way foreseen that Jasper would become the most famous Negro preacher Richmond has ever known.



The house Samuel Hardgrove had built remained in his family up to about 1915. After owning and occupying it for many years, Mrs. Sarah Hardgrove Williams left it to her husband and son for their lives and after their deaths to the Woman's College and the Sheltering Arms Hospital, jointly. During recent years the house was in very ruinous condition. The last tenant, a "squatter," was taken in 1939 to the State Hospital in Williamsburg after shooting out of the window at the small boys who made her life a burden. The doors stood open, the blinds were falling to pieces—in fact, it had reached the lowest ebb to which a fine and dignified mansion could fall. During 1941 it was sold and restored, the new owner Mr. W. S. Huxter giving as his reason for buying it that he lived nearby and it depressed him to look at a house in such condition!

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Catlin and Bodeker Houses

2300 East Broad Street and 2801 East Grace Street

page 267

Two charming houses of the same shape as the early Quarles and Beers houses are still standing on Church Hill and show the persistence of the slant-roof, two-and-a-half story type. The earlier of the two was built in 1850 by William Catlin, who is simply described as a “merchant” in the directory of 1856. In 1871 Catlin sold the property to John W. Fergusson. As it was called “a large brick house” in the deed, one may presume that the wing in the rear had already been added by Catlin.

John W. Fergusson was a prominent printer, who made his home there and only sold the house in 1904. As a lad he had been a “printer’s devil” in the office of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and he well remembered Poe as editor of that periodical. “When he was himself, there was no more polite or considerate gentleman,” the old man said. “But when he had been drinking, he was every kind of a devil—a real case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.”

The house is in good condition, and while both the wing in the rear and a small entrance on the side are obviously additions they do not materially detract from the happy proportions. The interior woodwork is coarse, as would be expected at this period, and some of the mantels have been altered.

The second of the slant-gable houses is the one built in 1852 by Samuel Skinner but generally called the Bodeker house. It was purchased in 1862 by Augustus Bodeker, whose daughter did not sell it until 1908, and is in consequence associated with that family by all older residents of Church Hill.



CATLIN HOUSE
Built 1850

Modern photo and description needed for 2300 East Broad St.

Dr. Augustus Bodeker was one of five brothers who had emigrated from Hanover, Germany, in 1837. A great many Germans made their homes on Church and Union Hills, and with one of them, O. H. Strecker, Augustus Bodeker learned the drug business. In 1846 he went in business for himself, with his younger brother Henry, only retiring as senior partner in the year before his death, which occurred in 1884. The firm of Bodeker Bros. Wholesale Druggists, is still in existence.



BODEKER HOUSE
Built 1852

Modern photo and description needed for 2801 East Grace St.

In all relations of life he was an honored and valuable citizen, whose usefulness in life and integrity of character commanded the respect and esteem of men wherever he was known.¹

The house, which now belongs to Mrs. Joseph S. Wilson, is so charmingly kept up that it is a delight to pass by. It must have had paint on it at some time in the past. This has practically worn off,

leaving an orange cast on the bricks which, contrasted with the snowy white of the trim, would charm the eye of a painter. Like the Catlin house it has only one cheek on either side of the steps, which throws the heavy Doric columns a little too close to the street. The woodwork inside is heavy, with solid mantels of wood. It has a basement dining-room, and while the house does not look large, Mrs. Wilson testifies that fourteen people were living there when she bought it!

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Dispatch, July 27, 1884.

Three Step-Gable Greek Revival Houses

page 273

In the late 'forties and the 'fifties a large number of two-and-a-half story houses with gables terminating in three or four steps were built in Richmond. From among quite a number which have come down to the present time we select three for illustration.

The earliest of the three was built in 1846-47 at the west end of the block between Adams and First Streets on Clay. The mansion



21 WEST CLAY STREET

Built 1846-47

Modern photo and description needed for 21 West Clay St.
HOUSES OF OLD RICHMOND



KINNARD HOUSE
Built 1850

of Addolph Dill stands in the middle of this long block, and he erected two houses, both of which have step-gables, to the west of his home. In the corner house, now numbered 21 West Clay, Right Reverend Francis M. Whittle, that fighting Bishop of Virginia, lived in the early 'seventies, before he moved to his later home at 807 East Leigh. The Clay Street house then became the home of F. H. Habliston, who lived there until 1892. The house is imposing with its corner location and shade of fine trees.

Modern photo and description needed for 408 North 12th St.



JOHN D. SMITH HOUSE
Built 1856

The next in order of age is the one built by James Kinniard at 408 North Twelfth Street in 1850. This house is of particular interest historically, as it was one of the private homes thrown open as a hospital during the fighting around Richmond in 1862. Mr. Kinniard died two years later, but his estate owned this house until 1873. It then became the property of Joseph Augustine, who was living there as late as 1881. In 1894 it was the headquarters of the State Board of Education.

The latest of the three houses illustrated is that of John D. Smith, an upholsterer and paper-hanger, at 2617 East Franklin.

Modern photo and description needed for 2617 East Franklin St.

Built in 1856, this house remained in the family of Mr. Smith until 1900. This whole block between Twenty-sixth and Twenty-seventh is an interesting example of the houses built in the late 'fifties under neo-Greek influence. The location is particularly impressive, the back porches sharing a magnificent view over the James River. The Smith house was the most satisfactory of those still remaining, until its step-gables were injured in a storm a few years ago and replaced by simple slanting gables. A comparison of its present appearance with our photograph demonstrates forcibly the charm that this type of gable-end added to a dwelling.

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Mann S. Valentine House

Lot 434—900 Capitol Street

page 274

In 1844 the block bounded by Capitol, Broad, Ninth, and Tenth Streets, where Daniel Call's home had stood, was divided into lots and sold, and in 1850 Mann S. Valentine, who had bought the majority of the lots, erected a combined dwelling and store, the latter facing on Broad Street and the former on Capitol.

Mann Satterwhite Valentine I was born in 1786 and moved to Richmond in 1806. Although he had read law with Samuel McCraw, he early discovered his talent for trade when given charge of the Penitentiary store, and until his retirement in 1859 remained one of the leading business men of Richmond. He died just before the close of the Civil War, in March, 1865, of a broken heart, his grandson says.

From early childhood Mann Valentine was a lover of nature and art and indulged his taste for music, the drama, literature and art as fortune smiled upon him. He was a keen observer and endowed with energy of mind and good judgment. His carriage was erect and his manner dignified and uniformly courteous and gentle to his fellow men without regard to their condition.¹

Mr. Valentine was buried from his home, which he left to his widow, Elizabeth Mosby Valentine, for her lifetime. In 1875 it was auctioned and was purchased by Sarah Benetta Valentine and William F. Gray, daughter and son-in-law of Mann S. Valentine.



MANN S. VALENTINE HOUSE
Built 1850—Demolished 1912

Until its demolition in 1912 the big house was operated by various people as a hotel, called the Valentine House in the 'seventies and 'eighties, and later on the Park Hotel.

While not particularly beautiful, this mansion is significant both for the energetic and interesting family that built and owned it during most of its existence and also because it is one of the few examples of store-and-dwelling on a large scale that came down to recent times. Compared with such a building as the McCurdy house, built five years earlier, it seems to represent the change from small privately owned businesses to such big incorporated agglomerations as the department stores of today. At the time when the Valentine house was built, most business men lived as near their work as possible (the Talbotts on Nineteenth Street, and William Breedon at Fourth and Grace, a block from his store). Mr. Valentine carried

this custom to the point of living under the same roof with his place of business. But the tendency was in the other direction: even in the 'fifties merchants were moving to the country.

Architecturally the Valentine house still suggests Greek Revival forms, with small front porch and simple trim. But it had no triple windows, and the store in the rear eliminated the possibility of a high portico. Compared with the Nolting house it was a utilitarian factory; compared to the graceless buildings that superseded it, it was a gracious representative of a prosperous stage of Richmond's business history.

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Charles Talbott House

Lot 87—201 North Nineteenth Street

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This house was built in 1851 by Charles Talbott. The Talbott brothers, Charles and James, had come from Baltimore and in 1839 had established the firm variously known as the Shockoe Manufacturing Works, Talbott and Brother, and Talbott and Sons. In 1873 the firm advertised that it had been at the same location, the southwest corner of Cary and Seventeenth Streets, for over thirty-two years. The building had been burned in 1869 but was immediately rebuilt. In Wallace's *City on the James* (1893) the Talbott Works were called the "largest works of its kind south of Philadelphia," but a few years later the company failed. In the course of the years the Talbotts had made fire-engines, tobacco machinery and also, as early as 1842, wrought-iron railing.

Evidently wishing to live near their work, the Talbotts built three little houses on Nineteenth Street between Grace and Franklin in 1846. Four years later Charles Talbott bought the northeast corner of Nineteenth and Grace, and James Talbott the southeast corner of Nineteenth and Broad, and both built handsomer houses than the earlier ones. Both are still standing, though that of James Talbott has been much altered by its present owner, the Council Neighborhood House.

Charles Talbott was a staunch Methodist and a leading spirit in the building of Trinity Methodist Church at Twentieth and Broad, opened for worship in 1860. The chimes of Centenary Church, which have delighted so many generations of Richmonders, were



CHARLES TALBOTT HOUSE
Built 1851

Modern photo and description needed for 201 North 19th St.

given in 1883 by his family. In 1877 Charles Talbott had sold his Nineteenth Street home after moving to the Horace Kent house at First and Franklin. There he died in his sixty-ninth year, in 1881, his name, says a contemporary newspaper, having always been associated with the strictest business integrity.

After Mr. Talbott left Nineteenth Street, his former home belonged successively to Joseph N. Cullingworth, Christian Zimmer, and William S. Wood. It was purchased in 1898 by the Young Women's Christian Association. Oddly enough, in spite of the great changes in the neighborhood, this property has always brought approximately the same price, around \$6000. The Y. W. C. A. turned it over in 1910 to the Belle Bryan Day Nursery, which is still occupying it.

In spite of the attractive setting and porch, the house is not particularly interesting architecturally, being rather a shapeless example of late Greek Revival. Its chief interest is its connection with one of the enterprising business men who in the late 'thirties, by the development of such industries as iron, flour, tobacco, and paper manufacture, brought about the prosperity and hence the house-building of Richmond.

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Palmer House

211 West Franklin Street

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This beautifully preserved example of late Greek Revival was built on a corner of the old Robert Greenhow place, for many years the home of Joseph Mayo. This house was built in 1852 by the trustees for Mrs. Sarah Howard. From 1854 to 1860 it was



PALMER HOUSE
Built 1852



Description needed for 211 West Franklin St.

the property and home of Anthony Robinson Jr., and from 1868 to 1880 it belonged to Z. W. Pickrell, president both of a large lumber company and of the Citizens' Bank. In 1880 it was bought by William H. Palmer, head of the Southern Fertilizing Company,

whose daughter, Mrs. W. O. Young, still occupies it. Having been in the same family for over sixty years, the house is most readily associated with the Palmers.

The house is a typical example of the three-story dwelling of this period. What chiefly distinguishes it (in addition to its perfect condition) is the entrance porch, which is of the purest type of classic revival. In some of these late neo-Greek residences the builders seem to have lost the memory of what Greek orders were like, and the result is often a debased attempt at suitable columns, capitals, and entablature. The Palmer house porch is a delight, in perfect proportion to the size of the house. The only noticeable change is the large panes of glass which have been put in the elongated windows of the first floor.

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V. The Exuberant Fifties 1853-1860

Beginnings of Victorian Influence

page 283

In 1850 there were 30,280 people living within the city limits of Richmond and half as many again in the immediate suburbs. The industrial expansion of the city continued almost without a check, with tobacco, flour, and iron manufacture still in the lead. In 1852 five new tobacco-factories were in process of construction. In 1859 forty-three were operating in Richmond. Milling had reached its furthest expansion: while there were only seven mills in 1859, their total output was almost equal to that of fifty or sixty around Baltimore, large-scale production having the advantage over the smaller units. New iron-foundries were springing up almost every year, turning out everything from fire-engines and sugar-mills to porch railing. There were woolen mills and a cotton factory. In 1853 three new banks were chartered, to which two more were added in 1860. The tide of sectionalism which had begun to rise as early as 1835 turned buyers in the South to Richmond rather than to the rapidly expanding iron-works of Pittsburgh or the flour-mills of Minneapolis.



*LYONS HOUSE, 301 WEST FRANKLIN STREET
Built 1858*

The [graph](#) demonstrates that building continued at high levels during the decade preceding the Civil War. Glancing at the houses we illustrate, one cannot but be struck by the variety of their appearance. The psychology that lay back of this was, we believe, that many people were not unnaturally tired of Greek Revival architecture and wanted a change, while a great many others were used to it or too unimaginative to try anything different. The large



ARCHER-LYONS HOUSE

Same house?

number of houses that continue that tradition up to the outbreak of the War and even beyond proves how strong it was.

By 1853, however, many of those building new houses began to experiment with other patterns. Those able to afford a mansion and those building in the suburbs (of which there were more than ever) were the chief innovators. The latter group, who either wanted an inexpensive house or else evidently considered the neo-Greek dwelling as essentially urban, built small brick houses with perhaps a classic porch though in no other way resembling the accustomed lines of the Greek Revival house. The most attractive of these were the raised cottages, of which two are still standing. On the other hand, a wooden cottage like William F. Ritchie's with its vertical stripping has nothing in common with the past save the belated use of triple windows. As fantastic a building as Pratt's Castle is called a cottage in several deeds: evidently the term simply meant a non-urban dwelling of small or medium size, on the outskirts of town.

The big tobacco manufacturers who were making fortunes

Modern photo and description needed for 301 West Franklin St.

in this decade built great mansions that have little or no trace of classic influence. No more Doric or Ionic capitals support their small front porches. Curves replace lintels, and triple windows give way to small openings with cast-iron “eye-brows” over them, curved also. The lines that marked Victorian chairs did not spare houses.

The use of curves and the complete break with any classic influence is demonstrated best in the Morson Row on Governor Street, which forms an ensemble as attractive as it is completely Victorian.

The taste for curves and for elaborate exterior ornament was carried on into the brownstone period of the 'eighties, especially in expensive or elaborate houses. With houses of medium or small size another element entered in, to bring an end to the simplicity and uniformity of Greek Revival architecture. This was the development of cast-iron.

Iron-work had been used in Richmond at least as early as 1817, when the Bellona Furnace advertised cast-iron railing. An example of work of this period may be found on one of the George Greenhow houses. By 1844, when the Barret and Norman Stewart houses were built, cast-iron was more extensively used, for porch-guards, fences, and gates. The fence of St. Paul's Church, made in 1845, shows the elaborate and beautiful work of which the iron-masters of Richmond were already capable.

As long as the small entrance porch was almost universal, there was little room for cast-iron on the house itself. Sometime in the 'fifties the idea was conceived of substituting a veranda on the front of the house for the customary small porch, the large portico having always been kept in the privacy of the garden side up to that time. From that moment, down through the 'seventies, almost every city house had a cast-iron veranda. While one could name dozens dating from before the War and probably hundreds dating from the fifteen years after it, we shall merely mention two, both of which have particularly charming porches—the Pulliam house, 217 South Third, built in 1856 by Charles Campbell, and the Lyons house, 301 West Franklin, built in 1858 by Dr. Robert Archer. The whole subject of iron-work in Richmond is too large to be treated only incidentally, and in any case it would carry us out of our period. We have illustrated three iron porches, those on the Kent, Lyons, and Stephen Putney houses, the first two used as front verandas, the latter as a balcony. The Lyons and Putney houses show how completely Richmond had broken away from the Greek Revival style which had dominated its building for nearly twenty years. While few people were sufficiently inventive or experimental to follow William Ritter in building an Italian Villa (the Hickock house is so described!) or a mediaeval castle like William Pratt's, all succumbed to the craze for iron-work. The lines of a house had lost their importance; ornament was what the house-builders of the 'fifties wanted, and with the increased production of cast-iron they got ornament—often very beautiful—with a minimum of expense and little demand for imagination or inventiveness on the part of the owner.

Pratt's Castle

Lot 615—324 South Fourth Street

page 287

This curious building, usually called “Pratt’s Castle” or “Pratt’s Folly” and referred to in the city records as Pratt’s Cottage, was built in 1853-54 by William A. Pratt on what had until the year before been part of the Gamble property. The Gamble mansion stood just north of it.

William Abbott Pratt, born in England in 1818, had come to the United States in 1832. He settled first in Washington and Alexandria, coming to Richmond in 1845. In the variety of his talents and activities, Pratt was as much a man of the Renaissance as Thomas Jefferson, whose university he was to serve so faithfully and energetically. He had studied not only architecture and engineering but “the art of Daguerre,” and opened a daguerrian gallery on Main



PRATT'S CASTLE
Built 1853-54



Street, even inventing a process for taking four pictures on one plate. He gave lectures in England on philosophical subjects to raise funds for the purchase of a copy by Paul Balze of Raphael's "School of Athens" for the University of Virginia. This painting hung in the rotunda from 1857 until its destruction in the fire of 1895. Named in 1858 superintendent of buildings and grounds of the University, Pratt made plans for the grounds which were only partially carried out. He raised some of the money needed to build a chapel, an enterprise halted by the War.

Pratt interrupted his services to the University in 1862 to go abroad and buy munitions for the Confederate Government,



returning to serve until the end of the War. He afterward practised as an architect in Staunton and died at his country home, “Walnut Grove,” near Waynesboro, in 1879.

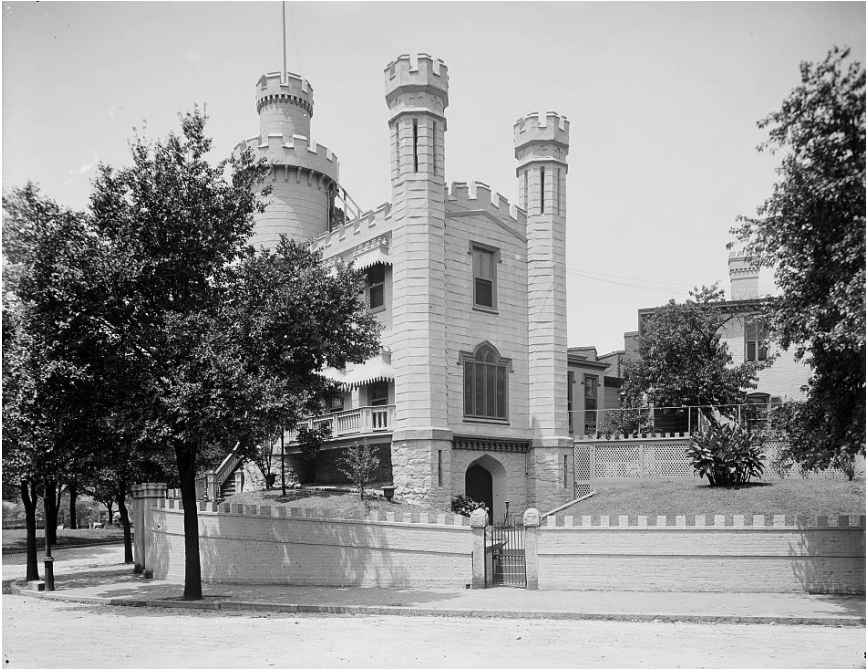
He had sold the Castle in 1865, probably foreseeing that he would not live in Richmond again. After being rented property for many years, it was bought in 1880 by Mrs. Henrietta Cornick, who lived there until her death in 1904. Mrs. Cornick was a “character.” The daughter of Joseph Mayo, who had been Mayor of Richmond during the War, she had contracted the mental habit of living under the blockade. She saved everything, her specialties being odd stockings and coffee-pots.

Mr. Cornick survived his wife only two years, and after his death the house and all its contents were sold at auction. The Castle itself was bought by Mr. J. F. Biggs, who assembled there a remarkable collection of historic furniture and souvenirs. Mrs. Biggs still makes her home there.



Pratt's Castle was demolished in 1958 and Ethyl Corporation now has its headquarters on the site

Needless to say, the Castle is the most astonishing house in Richmond. With its commanding location overlooking the river, it is a landmark that would be a real loss to the Richmond scene. Its unique appearance has been a temptation to the inventive. Mrs. Biggs's niece says that the family used to hear hack-drivers (in the days of the "hired hack") point it out as the White House of the Confederacy, the Penitentiary, and the State Capitol! It represents the most violent reaction against neo-Greek simplicity and uniformity and was fortunately not copied in Richmond. From the point of view of comfort it must leave much to be desired, as many of the rooms are of odd shapes and are connected by innumerable small stairs. The view over the James River from the roof is hardly equalled from any other spot in Richmond.



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James Thomas House

Lot 703—112 East Grace Street

page 288

The Thomas house, first of the big mansions of the 'fifties to break away from the neo-Greek style of architecture, was built in 1853 by James Thomas Jr. The building was valued for taxes at \$20,000, just twice the valuation placed on the Barret house.

James Thomas Jr. was born in Caroline County in 1806. By 1827 he had been living in Richmond several years, his older brother, Archibald, being in business there. In 1827 he was baptized by the Reverend John Kerr, then pastor of First Baptist Church, and from that day until his death in 1882 he was one of the most loyal, active, and generous members of his denomination. With a capital of only \$600 he began manufacturing tobacco in 1830, and from that small beginning he built up one of the largest tobacco businesses and fortunes in the city. His success was due to perspicacity and enterprise. He saw the possibilities of bright-leaf tobacco and encouraged its extended cultivation. When California was first settled, he developed a product that could stand the long trip around Cape Horn. Similarly he took advantage of the settlement of Australia to send tobacco there.

At the outbreak of the Civil War he foresaw that the conflict would be a long and severe one. Says his biographer, Dr. Broadus:

The day it was learned Fort Sumter had been taken, he made prompt arrangements for sending to his foreign markets the

manufactured product then on hand, or which could be speedily prepared, and directed the proceeds of sale to be transmitted to his trusted correspondents in London.¹

The last cargoes were seized by Federal ships at the mouth of the James, but Thomas had assured himself future comfort by his usual foresight. Similarly, he laid in provisions for five years, which were generously shared with the needy.

Mr. Thomas's greatest benefactions were to the various enterprises of the Baptist Church. He helped the Negroes to purchase the old First Baptist Church when the white members of the congregation moved up to Twelfth and Broad in 1841. He was one of the founders of the Richmond Female Institute, a



JAMES THOMAS HOUSE
Built 1853—Demolished 1937

Baptist college for young women, built in 1854, and was probably the largest contributor to Richmond College from its foundation until his death. For over forty years he was a trustee of the latter institution and when he died was president of the board of trustees. Thomas Hall in the old college grounds and the Thomas lectures commemorate his unfailing support.

Mr. Thomas had built houses for his daughters on the western half of the square where his own house stood. After his death one daughter, Mrs. Thomas M. Rutherford, lived in her father's former home, so that it was often called the Rutherford house. The property never left the hands of James Thomas's descendants, a granddaughter, Mrs. Ellsworth Lyman, living there until the house was demolished to make a parking lot in 1937. The quarter-square was at that time considered to be worth half a million dollars.

The Thomas house was imposing rather than beautiful, its large yard surrounded by a brick wall and iron fence contributing much to its charm. It was chiefly interesting as having been the home of an outstanding Richmond business man and as the first of the rather pretentious mansions erected by the tobacco magnates and other wealthy men of the 'fifties.

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Morson Row

219-223 Governor Street

page 291

Built in 1853 by James Marion Morson, who had for one year owned the mansion later to be the White House of the Confederacy, these three houses are interesting both for their connection with the medical history of Richmond and because they mark the advent of a new architectural style.

Their history had best be traced separately. The southernmost house, No. 219, was bought in 1862 by O. H. Chalkley and for thirty years was owned by him and by his estate. Mr. Chalkley was in the hide and leather business, a Richmond industry that dates back to Mayor Ben Tate's tannery, if not earlier. In 1892 the house was



MORSON ROW
Built 1853



Historic Richmond and Jeff Sauerhwaite

bought by Mrs. Kate C. Higgins, and it is chiefly with Mr. and Mrs. Higgins and their daughters that it is associated in the memories of Richmond people. Mr. Higgins died in 1907, and though the house lay under a heavy mortgage his two unmarried daughters continued to live there, unaware that it was no longer theirs. Finally, in 1939 it was condemned by the City. Joined to the Aluminum Building, which was rolled down Governor Street from its first location at Twelfth and Broad, the Higgins house has become the office of the Department of Public Works.

221 Governor Street, the middle house, was at first rented to one of the best-known anatomists of his day, Arthur E. Peticolas. Peticolas came of a background as unusual as his surname. His grandfather, Philippe, for love of adventure served eight years as a soldier of the King of Bavaria and subsequently painted a miniature

of Washington from life. His father, Edward Peticolas, was one of the best of Richmond's nineteenth century artists. A. E. Peticolas had been made a professor in the Medical College in 1855, and two years later he organized a medical preparatory school, known as the Metropolitan School of Virginia, in what was called "Morson's Building." In 1866 he resigned from the Medical College and accepted the chair of anatomy in the New Orleans Medical School.

In 1862 the middle house in Morson's Row had become the property of one of the "beloved physicians" of the old school, Dr. Robert Gamble Cabell, who lived there until his death in 1889. Born in 1809 in the Gamble house, his maternal grandfather's home, he came of a medical family, nine great-grandsons of Dr. William Cabell having followed their ancestor's profession. Robert G. Cabell's own father, however, was for thirty years presiding justice of the Virginia Supreme Court and was from 1805 to 1808 Governor of Virginia. In his long life of nearly eighty years Dr. Cabell was worthy of his distinguished forebears. Both as a physician and as an alderman he won public esteem. It was he who first induced the City to confine Shockoe Creek within bounds.

After his death his son Henry Landon Cabell lived for some years in the house on Governor Street, which was sold by Dr. Cabell's heirs in 1904. In 1920 it was purchased by the Associated Charities and since that time has been the headquarters of that organization and its successor, the Family Service Society.

The northernmost house of the row, 223 Governor Street, remained the property of the Morson family up to 1901. James M. Morson died in 1860, but two years later his son Arthur A. Morson was said to be living there. Sometime before 1876 it was rented to

the Lottier family, who occupied it as late as 1894 and with whom it is chiefly associated. The Lottiers were tobacco manufacturers, and John Lottier had married a daughter of Dr. Cabell. In 1901 the house was sold and after passing through a number of hands was bought in 1920 by the Southern Planter Publishing Company, which still owns and occupies it.

Like the James Thomas house, built in the same year, these three Morson houses retain not a trace of the Greek Revival style that had dominated Richmond architecture since 1839. Not only have the small columned entrance porches disappeared entirely and simple cornices and lintels been replaced by a cornice with corbels and a rich framework over the windows but the square or rectangular lines of Greek Revival houses have been broken by circular bays, reminiscent of those so much used in the first years of the century. Circular door-frames announce the use of round-headed windows, which in a few years were to distinguish such mansions as those of William H. Grant and Bolling Haxall. Within, the houses have mahogany doors and rather ornate marble mantels.

All three houses are now in good condition. Painted in pastel shades ranging from pale peach to pearl gray, they make a charming vista at the end of Capitol Street.

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Ritchie Cottage

616 North Ninth Street

page 294

This little wooden cottage was probably built in 1853 by William F. Ritchie. At that time the north end of Ninth Street, called French Garden Hill, was a particularly popular location for such small, almost suburban dwellings, referred to as cottages even when they were as far from our idea of the term as Pratt's Castle. William Foushee Ritchie was the son of Thomas Ritchie, founder and editor of the *Enquirer*, and was the grandson and namesake of Dr. William Foushee, the first mayor of Richmond. When Thomas Ritchie went to Washington in 1845 to edit an administration paper, the editorship of the *Enquirer* fell on Thomas Ritchie Jr. and W. F. Ritchie, neither of whom was as able as their distinguished father.

Shortly after building this house W. F. Ritchie married the successful actress and writer, Anna Cora Ogden Mowatt, who lived there during the seven years she spent in Richmond. Born in Bordeaux in 1819 of a distinguished New York family, Anna Cora Ogden had been married at fifteen, had a notable stage career in this country and in England, and was the author of several books and of the stage-hit, *Fashion*. Her first husband died in 1851. Just before marrying Ritchie Mrs. Mowatt published *The Autobiography of an Actress*.

During her years in Richmond she seems to have confined her theatrical activities to readings, at the Ballard Hotel and elsewhere, of such varied selections as *Lalla Rookh*, *Paradise and the Peri*, and George W. Bagby's humorous sketch, *Mozis Addums*. She made one



RITCHIE COTTAGE
Built 1853

permanent contribution to Virginia in her work for the movement to buy Mount Vernon for the nation. Anna Cora Ritchie was the first Virginia regent of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, serving from 1858 to 1866. Her position on that board during the last five years must have been largely titular, as she lived abroad after 1861, apparently differing from her husband on the issues of the Civil War. She died in England in 1870, and William F. Ritchie died seven years later.

In 1863 he had sold the Ninth Street cottage for \$42,718.33, a sum that indicates what enormous prices were paid for even a small house in the latter years of the War. The subsequent history of the property offers little of interest. It is now in poor condition, in a run-down neighborhood.

Mrs. Herbert A. Claiborne (afterwards Mrs. Cox), in manuscript notes now at the Valentine Museum, says that before the Hayes



Modern photo and description needed for 616 North 9th St

house was built this cottage stood at the then terminus of Leigh and was moved by Ritchie to its present location. While we can find neither confirmation nor contradiction, it seems improbable that the Ritchie house could date from the early nineteenth century. Two similar frame houses with vertical stripping that are still standing in Richmond, 2214 West Main and 1905 West Cary, date respectively from 1859 and 1862. Further, if Ritchie moved the former Hayes cottage, it would have been its second move, as it must have been taken from the middle of Leigh Street by 1819 (see [Hayes-McCance House](#)), and was not on the Ninth Street lot when Ritchie bought the property. Thus it would appear impossible to identify the early wooden house moved by Dr. Hayes with the one where Ritchie made his home, which he probably had built and not merely moved.

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Donnan Houses

Lot 832—401-403 North Twelfth Street

page 297

Built four years apart, these two houses are interesting architecturally as indications of the change in taste that was taking place during the 'fifties. The northernmost one, 403 North Twelfth, built by W. S. Donnan in 1853, was a typical Greek Revival house, similar to Linden Row or to the Mills Row diagonally across from this one on Twelfth Street. The corner house, built in 1857 by George W. Donnan, is smaller but much more elaborate, both in the trim around the windows and in the cornice and chimneys. It had the semi-enclosed back porches of the 'forties but was otherwise little reminiscent of the type of house that had been popular for nearly twenty years.

The Donnans were members of the well-known hardware firm, located in 1856 at 19 Pearl Street. In 1858-60 they built the southernmost of the handsome office-buildings on Governor Street and Tobacco Alley, known as the "Iron Row" from their elaborate iron fronts.

Members of the Donnan family owned these two houses until 1885 and 1889 and continued to live there into the 'eighties. In 1885 the corner house was sold to Mrs. Fannie Bottigheimer, whose heirs owned it down to 1930. The house next the corner was bought by the Monumental Church in 1889 to serve as a rectory, and the Reverend J. B. Newton lived there until his election as Bishop-Coadjutor of Virginia in 1894. Bishop Newton's daughter was Mrs. Mary Newton Stanard, author of *Richmond, Its People and Its Story*



DONNAN HOUSES
Built 1853 and 1857—Demolished 1938

and other books on Virginia.

The Monumental sold 403 in 1901, and in 1938 both Donnans were replaced by Hunton Hall, a part of the Medical College of Virginia.

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Hubbard House

Lot 757—1104 East Broad Street

page 298

The history of this house is quickly told, since it remained in the same family from the time it was built—1856—to its demolition in 1936. In 1848 William H. Copeland confirmed to William H. Hubbard the sale of fifty-eight feet on Broad Street, the eastern half of the lot “sometimes known as Green Corner,” on which Charles Copeland had lived. Copeland’s rambling frame house then and for long afterwards stood at the corner of Eleventh and Broad.

In his will Hubbard gives something of his own history. He was born in Guilford, Connecticut, on September 15, 1783. “In the month of October one thousand, eight hundred and nine I removed to Virginia and since that time I have been a resident of the City of Richmond.” About 1820 Hubbard formed a partnership with another New Englander, James H. Gardner, in the wholesale boot and shoe business. Under various names, this firm continued until the death of Mr. Gardner in 1877. William H. Hubbard, who had previously been Treasurer of the Monumental Church, was one of the founders of St. Paul’s and served as a vestryman from 1844 until his resignation “by reason of ill-health and the infirmities of age” in 1861. During a good part of this period he was Treasurer there also, and the destruction of his records in the Evacuation Fire is a serious loss to one studying the church’s history.

Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Gardner had married sisters. The Hubbards, who had no children, adopted Anna Hubbard Gardner, later the wife of Colonel Richard Reynolds. When Mr. Hubbard



HUBBARD HOUSE
Built 1856—Demolished 1936

died, May 23, 1865, he left the house on Broad Street to his widow, who did not long survive him. Her will bequeathed her home to “my adopted daughter, Anna Hubbard Reynolds.” Mrs. Reynolds, whom I well remember as a “cozy” little old lady in the bonnet and ribbons almost obligatory for elderly women in the early 1900’s, lived in the big house until her death in 1910. Every Sunday she came to St. Paul’s and sat in the very pew (No. 64) which her foster-father had bought when the pews were auctioned, after the custom of that day, in 1845.

Mrs. Reynolds left no children, and after her death the house went to the children of her sister, only other child of James H. Gardner. Since they were named Florance, the house was often called the Florance house. It was rented to the City for some years

as headquarters of the Police Department, and after the acquisition of the City Hall Annex made this no longer necessary the Hubbard house was used for offices. In 1936 it was finally pulled down and made into a parking lot. Only one magnolia remains.

This house was a fine example of the long survival of the neo-Greek tradition. The proportions were not as simple or satisfying as those of the mansions erected ten years or more earlier. The ornament, with cupola, Corinthian columns, and elaborate cornice, was in less good taste. The staircase was curious: it had a heavy Victorian newel-post and went straight to the high-pitched ceiling, with a landing part way up to break the climb. There were rich marble mantels, perhaps put in later, with cheval-glasses above. The location of the house, next the fine old First Baptist Church, with big magnolias at the entrance and the sweep of Broad Street in front, gave it a dignity and beauty past any carping study of details.

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Weddell, St. Paul's Church, pp. 18, 19, 20, 23, 50, 156.

Two Raised Cottages

Raised cottages, a type of house so frequently seen in Louisiana, never became acclimated to Richmond. However, two late examples of this charming style of dwelling are to be found, one on Union Hill and the other at the corner of Thirtieth and Leigh Streets. Both have Greek Revival porches approached by high steps, a full story basement, and only one floor above it.

The older of the two is a house built in 1854 by Frederick L. Swift at what is now 2121 Venable Street. After passing rapidly through several hands, it became in 1862 the property of Bernard Frishkorn,



*FREDERICK SWIFT HOUSE
Built 1854*

Modern photo and description needed for 601 North 30th St

to whose estate it belonged until 1898. It was not, however, the Frishkorn home, but was occupied during the 'seventies and 'eighties by James L. Porter and Wilson B. Joseph. From 1898 to 1939 it belonged to S. B. Wilson, his widow, and her heirs. Besides its attractive outlines, this house has on the outside a charming and elaborate cornice and frieze.

The other raised cottage, 601 North Thirtieth Street, was built in 1857 by James Gunn. For many years it was occupied by Samuel V. Godsey, and since his death in 1885 it has been owned and occupied by Negroes. The trim on this house is plainer than that on the Venable Street building, but it has the attractive informal wing with shuttered porch that we have found characteristic of small houses built in what were at the time the eastern suburbs of Richmond.

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Sheltering Arms Hospital

(William H. Grant House)

Lots 767-773—1008 East Clay Street

page 303

In 1854 William H. Grant bought from the estate of John Wickham an eighty-seven-foot strip of what had once been Wickham's stable lot, and three years later built a big house, valued for taxes at \$20,000.



*WILLIAM H. GRANT HOUSE
Built 1857*

Grant was a tobacco manufacturer, who in 1853 had built a handsome factory at the northeast corner of Nineteenth and Franklin Streets. His brother, James H. Grant, had a factory diagonally across Franklin Street and a home near William Grant's, on Twelfth, just south of the White House of the Confederacy. Both of the latter buildings have been demolished, but William H. Grant's house and factory still survive.

Unfortunately one of W. H. Grant's sons became involved in a scandal and crime that shook Richmond to its foundations, when, in revenge for what he considered an insult to a member of his family, he shot H. Rives Pollard, editor of *Southern Opinion*.¹ Less than a month after this tragedy, in December, 1868, William H. Grant mortgaged his home, and in 1871 the house, which he was still occupying, was sold. In 1874 it was bought by Peter Chevallié Warwick, son of Abram Warwick, who lived there a few years. Again its owner was ill-fated, for Peter Warwick lost money in the Gallego Mills, with which Chevallié's and Warwicks had so long been connected. When he had moved to Chesterfield County and was selling lithia water from the beautiful "Campfield" spring, the tale is told that some acquaintance stopped the wagon and said to Mr. Warwick how sorry he was to see him fallen thus. "If you'd paid me what you owe me, I wouldn't be driving this wagon!" retorted the erstwhile master of the Grant mansion.

In 1878 the house was sold, and from then until 1892 was rented. To judge by the number of people of different names that the directories list as living there, it must have been used as a boarding-house. For a short time Miss Lizzie Grattan had her school for girls there.

On December 7, 1892 the property was sold to the Sheltering



Historic Richmond and Jeff Satterthwaite

Arms Hospital. After its chequered career the Grant house became a haven for the sick and afflicted. Founded by Miss Rebekah Dulaney Peterkin, daughter of the beloved rector of St. James's (see [below](#)), the Sheltering Arms opened on February 13, 1889 in the old Clifton House on Fourteenth Street, once the splendid mansion of Benjamin James Harris, but fallen from its high estate. The hospital was founded to care for needy white people from all over Virginia and not only has remained the solitary hospital in the state which is absolutely free but has continued through more than fifty years of existence to grow in the affection and esteem of all who know its work.

Its use as a growing hospital has inevitably altered the Grant house. Indispensable fire-escapes mar one side of the building; the porches in the rear are gone; first the wing was raised from two stories to three; and now, in 1941, a large new addition connecting the house with the Benjamin Watkins Leigh house to the west of it has entirely covered the original wing. While the Grant mansion dates from a period of tobacco-prosperity rather than of artistic taste, it is imposing, especially placed as it is in the middle of a block. There are curves everywhere, over the windows and over the porch. The heavy "eyebrows" above the windows are of iron, painted to look like elaborate plaster-work. The panelled effect of the front and the frank bigness of the house give it a certain imposing quality that makes it very suitable for a public building or institution.

1. For an account of this affair see Ezekiel's *Recollections of a Virginia Newspaperman*, pp. 19-20.

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Meagher, *Education in Richmond*, p. 84.

Conversation with Mrs. James H. Scott.



The Woman's Club

(*Bolling Haxall house*)

Lot 662—211 East Franklin Street

page 305

This handsome house was built in 1858 by Bolling V. Haxall, fifth son of that Philip Haxall who had built “Columbia.” Although the writer in the *Richmond Dispatch* at the time of Mr. Haxall’s death said that he was born at “Columbia,” this seems improbable, as he must have been born in 1814 or ’15, when Philip Haxall was living in the Tinsley house.

Mr. Haxall began business as a clerk in the Haxall Mills and became a partner in that famous firm in 1842. While milling remained his chief activity, he took an active part in other Richmond enterprises, among them the Old Dominion Iron and Nail Works, of which he was president, and the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad Company.

He won and retained in all the transactions of his life, varied as they were, the respect and confidence of all who knew him, and has left behind a name of which his relatives may be proud. . . . He was regarded as a most energetic and successful man of business, whose advice was often sought and highly valued.¹

At the time of his death in 1885 Mr. Haxall was no longer living at the mansion he had built but on the block west of it. He had sold his earlier residence in 1869 to Dr. Francis T. Willis, who made his home there. About 1884 Dr. Willis added what were considered



BOLLING HAXALL HOUSE
Built 1858





The principal stairway, dining-room and halls are of hardwood finish. About two years ago the main stairway . . . was taken out and replaced by a solid walnut stairway, which is said to have cost over \$3000. . . . The walls on the main floor are handsomely frescoed.²

Fortunately the changes were not as out-of-keeping with the house as those admired by the same writer in the Peter Mayo house. An ironic fact is that Dr. Willis's daughter, who was a sleep-walker, was killed by falling down the treacherous stairway.

In 1900 Edward J. Willis sold the Haxall mansion to the Woman's Club, which had been founded in 1894 and which has had its headquarters there ever since. The addition of an auditorium has partly obliterated the porches on two floors, which mansions of the



'fifties had adopted from those of the 'forties. Otherwise, the house looks very much as it must have in Bolling Haxall's day, particularly the exterior and the lower floor.

It is an admirable example of the changes which had taken place in the taste of Richmond's wealthy men during the 'fifties. While the main lines, the small front porch and two-story porch in the rear are similar to the Greek Revival mansions of the 'forties, the spirit is quite different. The chief elements in this change are the debasing of neo-Greek detail and the extensive use of curves. The Haxall house even has a curved pediment, an advance on the William Grant house, which it somewhat resembles. The high cupola is characteristic of the period. The ornate chimneys suggest those of the later Donnan house, built a year before this one. Iron work is used, the fence in this case being a beautiful one, probably



made by George Lownes, as there is an identical fence with his name on it in Hollywood Cemetery. The marble mantels (which could have been Dr. Willis's addition) are far more elaborate than those of the Barret house, for example. The doors have curved arches. Altogether, a comparison of this house with the Bransford, Barret, or Nolting houses is more enlightening as to the differences in taste



between the 'forties and 'fifties than pages of explanation would be.

1. *Dispatch*, June 27, 2885.
2. *Sunday State*, Jan. 31, 1886.

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The Woman's Club



During April in 1865, the Union troops had the Confederates surrounded in Richmond. They must either flee and be destroyed by the enemy. General Robert E. Lee ordered the Confederates to leave Richmond and burn the military storehouses. They did, and the fire spread through the whole of the riverfront. Hundreds of businesses were lost and the city was reduced to burned rubble.



In the fire, all of Bolling Walker Haxall's business investments, including the Haxall Mills, were lost. He was ruined financially. In 1869 he sold his mansion for more than the cost of its construction.



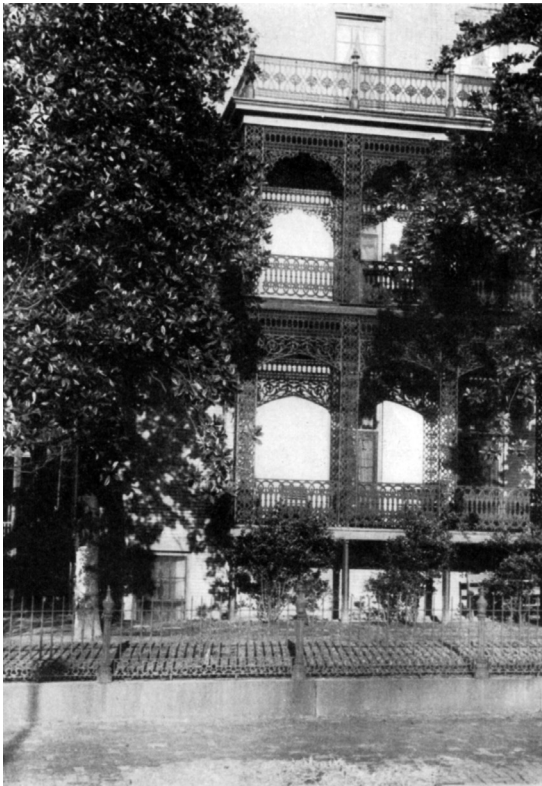
*HAXALL MILLS
probably should not be in this book, but for now here it is*

Stephen Putney House

Lot 765—1012 East Marshall Street

page 309

Built by Samuel Ayers in 1859, this house was owned from 1862 to 1894 by Stephen Putney, who lived there until he sold it. Putney was the son of Samuel Putney, a New Englander who had come to Richmond as a youth and become a leading dealer in shoes as well as one of the most prominent and generous laymen in the



STEPHEN PUTNEY HOUSE
Built 1859



Methodist Church. His son continued the wholesale boot and shoe business of his father, and the firm (now manufacturers of shoes) is still in existence under the name of the Stephen Putney Shoe Company.

Mr. Putney sold the house in 1894. From 1909 to 1938 it belonged to Mrs. Louise Kernodle, author of several guide books of Richmond.

The building itself is large and plain, with a long wing in the rear. It has no trace of Greek Revival influence. What chiefly distinguishes it is the beautiful iron balcony on the side. That this was made by the Phoenix Iron Foundry is proved by a *carte-de-visite* photograph of it evidently used to advertise that firm and now in the possession of the son of William B. Cook, head of the Phoenix Foundry.



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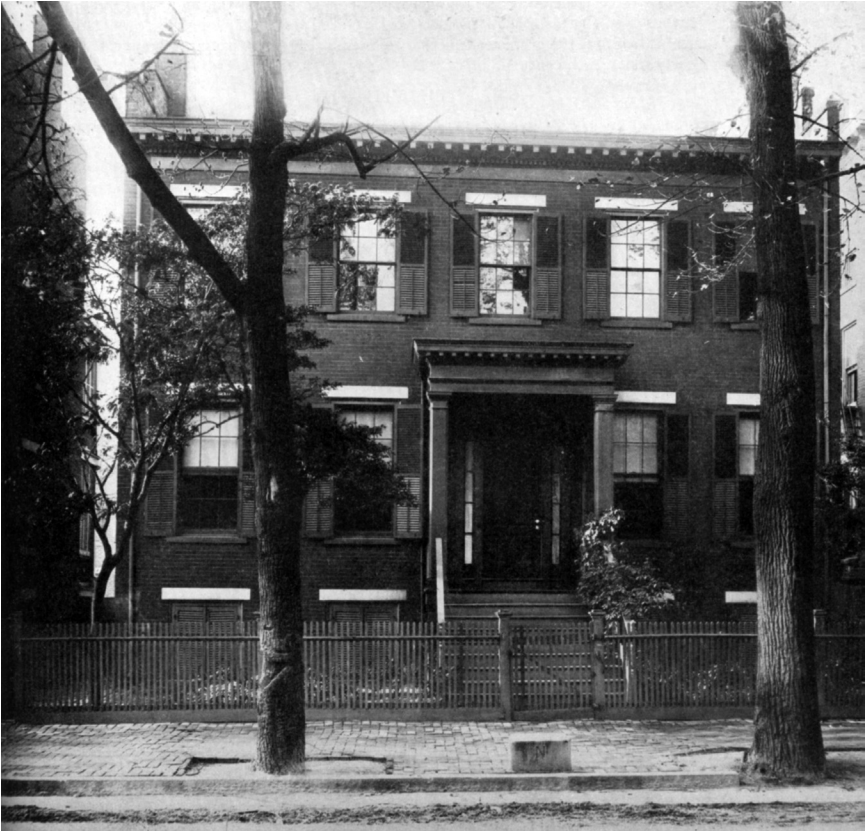
HOUSES OF OLD RICHMOND

Peterkin House

Lot 24 (Coutts's addition)—705 East Leigh Street

page 310

Both the site and the means to build this house were contributed by parishioners of Dr. Joshua Peterkin. The Ladies of St. James's Church had bought a lot for him at another location, and on January 5, 1860 an exchange was effected whereby he acquired



*PETERKIN HOUSE
Built 1860—Demolished 1929*

this site, directly across from the Patrick Gibson house. Two years earlier one of his vestrymen, Frederick Bransford, had bequeathed him \$3000, to be paid in semi-annual installments. On April 6, 1861 Bransford's executors allowed Dr. Peterkin to mortgage the property "on which he has lately erected a dwelling-house," the mortgage to be paid off by the installments of the legacy.

Dr. Joshua Peterkin, with whose name alone this house was associated, was one of the most beloved clergymen who ever lived in Richmond. From 1855 until his death in 1892 he was rector of St. James's Church, then at Fifth and Marshall. It was he who conducted the funeral of General Jeb Stuart on May 14, 1864. He was largely instrumental in establishing St. Mark's, Grace Church, and St. Philip's, sending members away from his own congregation to strengthen new parishes further west in the city. But "the record of what he did for the cause of Christianity is not to be found on written or printed page. His influence spread as those who came under that influence went abroad."¹

An example of his care of his flock may be quoted from Mrs. George W. Bagby:

... when several children in the family ... were ill ... and the house was under quarantine, no one daring to even ring the door bell ... Dr. Peterkin came every morning about 9 o'clock when he knew I would be in the dining room, the only time I came downstairs. He came only to the back porch (one of her daughters tells me he always had a market basket on his arm) and he offered daily to go to market or to the drug store, or to do anything to help me. Sometimes I had to accept his services—dear Dr. Peterkin—was there ever his equal?²

When Dr. and Mrs. Peterkin celebrated their golden wedding on September 26, 1888, this house was crowded with their friends. Dr. Peterkin died four years later, but Mrs. Peterkin survived until 1910, when the house was left to their son, Right Reverend George W. Peterkin. Three years later it passed out of the hands of this family and in 1929 was demolished.

It is extraordinary that a dwelling so simple and unpretentious as this one should have been built as late as 1860. Its style reflects the man who built it rather than the taste of its period. Nothing save the rather long windows of the main floor and the granite cornices over them set it apart from the houses of the early nineteenth century.

1. McGuire, *St. James's Church*, pp. 12-13.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

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Conclusion

page 313

When this book was begun, in 1928, the title chosen for it was “Vanishing Richmond.” That might almost be changed to “Vanished Richmond.” The fact that eighty-five of the houses shown are still standing does not alter the truth of this statement. As we said in the Foreword, we have purposely chosen examples that are still to be seen, selecting from among the houses that are gone only those of outstanding interest. Many of those still in existence are included because they are picturesque, or because they represent a link in the architectural evolution of the city. Few are to be compared in interest with the Hayes-McCance house, the two Adams houses, the Archer house, or the Westmoreland Club.

The chief causes of destruction are those common to most old cities—families break up, no one can or will afford to maintain a mansion with perhaps one old lady left to live there. Heating problems and high wages for domestic service play their part. For houses in the centre of town, the growth of retail business and high taxes add to the problem. Neighborhoods change: when this writer was a child, lower Grace and Franklin Streets were residence districts. Now business has monopolized the eastern end of Franklin Street up to First, and Grace Street much farther west than that. When, on the other hand, neighborhoods deteriorate, one cannot expect people able to maintain a mansion like the Hayes-McCance house to live in the part of town where it stood.

What is to be done about it? Some few of our fine houses with historic associations have been saved by the concerted effort of many

citizens. Among these are the White House of the Confederacy, the Marshall house, and the Craig house. A few have been given to organizations by the generosity of an individual—the Wickham house, the Old Stone House and the Mayo house are examples. But we cannot multiply shrines and museums indefinitely, even were the money or the interest available to acquire them. Some method must be found to absorb houses into the needs of the community and to make people realize that they are not only a great asset to the city as a whole but can be made to pay the individual or group to which they belong, materially as well as in intangible values.

Old houses in large sections of town are still usable as residences, or, if they are too large for that, can be made into apartments, as has recently been done with the Hardgrove house. Church Hill is still a region of homes rather than of stores. Nor are its houses, for the most part, too large to be used as dwellings. The same may be said of Oregon Hill and of the great Negro section north of Broad Street. Given a little foresight and vision on the part of their owners, there is no reason why a single interesting house in any of these neighborhoods should remain empty or be pulled down.

The few fine houses remaining in the old Court End and in the centre of town present a more complex problem. Some few have been adapted for business—the two Greenhow houses, the Curtis Carter (Crozet) House and the Call house being examples. A few have been utilized by organizations—the Bransford house as a church house, the B. W. Leigh house as a nurses' home, the Grant house as a hospital, the Barret house as offices. What is to be done with the rest? We believe that many more can be advantageously turned into offices, as was done with the George house at Third and

Canal and with about half of the section between First and Second on Cary. Anyone comparing this shady and charming block with the treeless and for the most part characterless heart of our business section will be able to imagine how attractive our retail and office districts could have been made by keeping some of their earlier character as residence neighborhoods. For the many office-workers who like to walk to their business, the demand for downtown rooms and apartments should make it possible to use the upper floors of old houses as living quarters, the lower part for shops or offices. New York has set an example by its charming (and profitable) utilization of old houses around Washington Square—an example which could be applied in Richmond to Linden Row and to Third Street.

More appreciation of our assets as a city on the part of house-owners, tenants, and the City Government, will not only give Richmond a more beautiful and unusual appearance but will keep it what it is, a city with a long history, with much to offer the visitor, and with a setting of which those who live there may be proud.

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