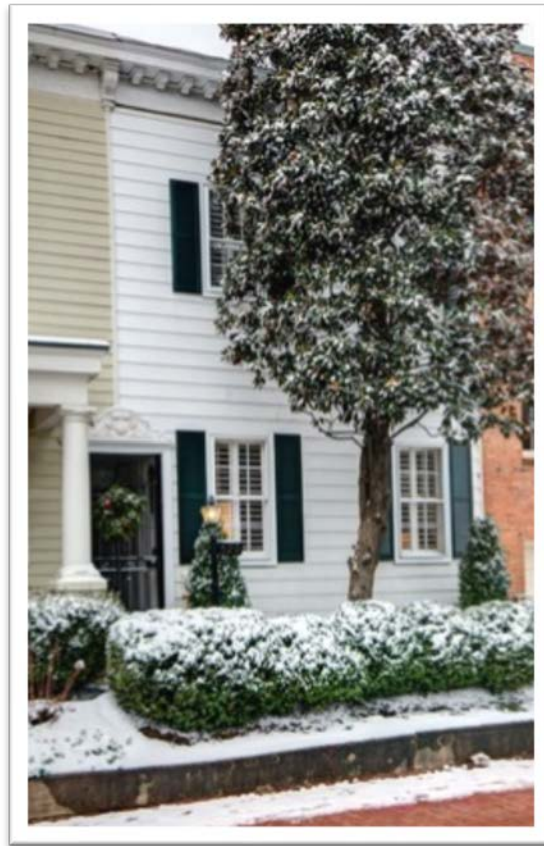


History of
529 6th Street



Historical Research
of
529 6th Street, SE



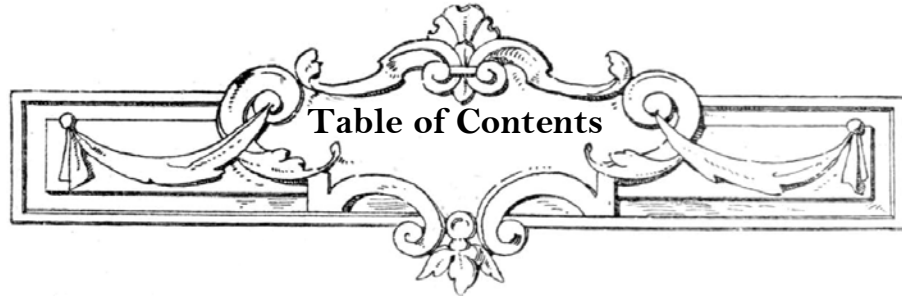
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January 2019



Historical Research
of
529 6th Street, SE
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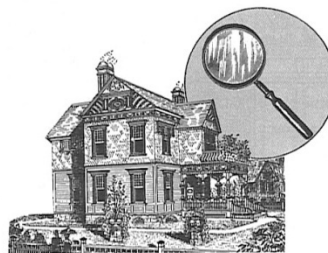
The Construction of 529 6th Street, SE.....4

The Development of the 500 Block of 6th Street.....

Owners and Residents of 529 6th Street.....

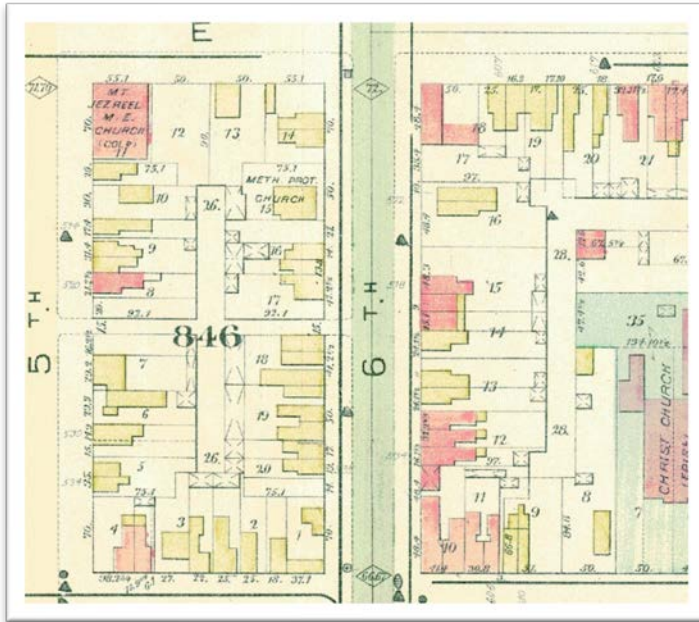
Capitol Hill Neighborhood History

Bibliography



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The Construction of 529 6th Street, SE



THE house located at 529 6th Street SE was constructed before the requirement of a building permit, which was necessitated by the City of Washington beginning in February of 1877.¹ Utilizing a combination of maps, tax assessments, and deed research, however, it has been determined that the houses now located at 529 and 531 6th Street were built about 1857. They first appear on the Boschke

Map, below, delineated in 1861 from research conducted from 1857 to that date. They were either built by, or first occupied by, an Italian immigrant musician named Gaetano Repetti. The two houses had several different house numbers during their early years, and census records suggest they were either conjoined at one point, as the same extended family members resided in both structures.

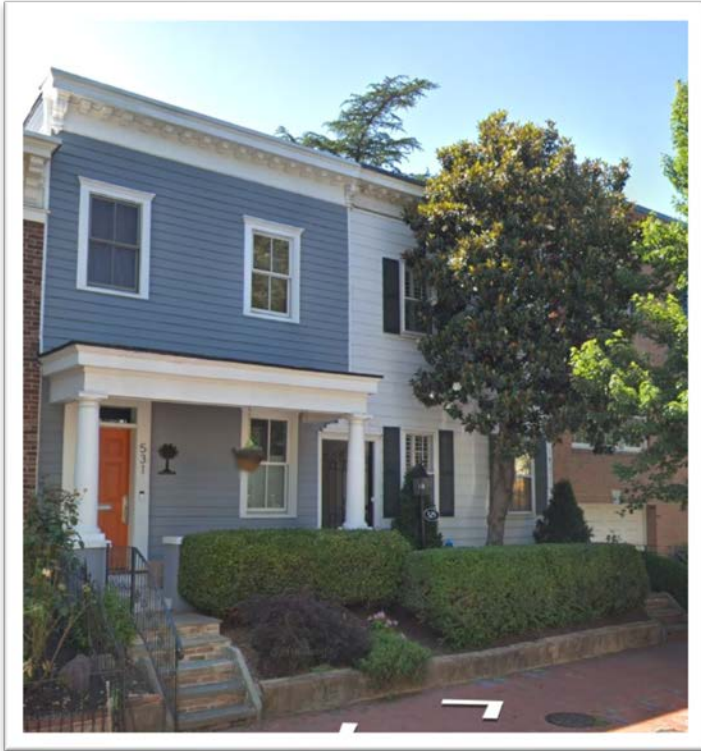
Washington's original building code penned by George Washington precluded frame construction, but from cost reasons it appears to have been ignored. Frame homes and buildings were especially allowed outside the original city boundary limits at Florida Avenue.² Depicted in yellow, both the houses appear on single lot 19 on the 1887 Hopkins map, above.



Houses built during that era were heated by a "Latrobe Stove." These devices were invented in Baltimore, Maryland by John Hazelhurst Latrobe (1803-1891), the son of noted engineer and architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe, and are sometimes coined a "Baltimore Heater." They were squat and round, about 20 inches in diameter at the base, and stood about two feet high. They fitted into a fireplace opening, and burned coal, requiring a daily cleaning of a somewhat messy ash tray. There were 30,000 in use by 1878 in Baltimore alone.

¹ Building permits in Washington were not required until 1872, and not archived until 1877. Permit No. 1 was issued to Martin McMalty on February 17, 1877 for a \$50 repair to his house on H Street on Capitol Hill. The first house issued a building permit occurred on the same day, when Thomas Henry was awarded Permit No. 2 for his \$15,000 house to be built at 916 6th Street, NW.

² Hoagland, Alison K., "Nineteenth-Century Building Regulations in Washington, D.C.," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society*, Vol. 52, pp. 57-77.

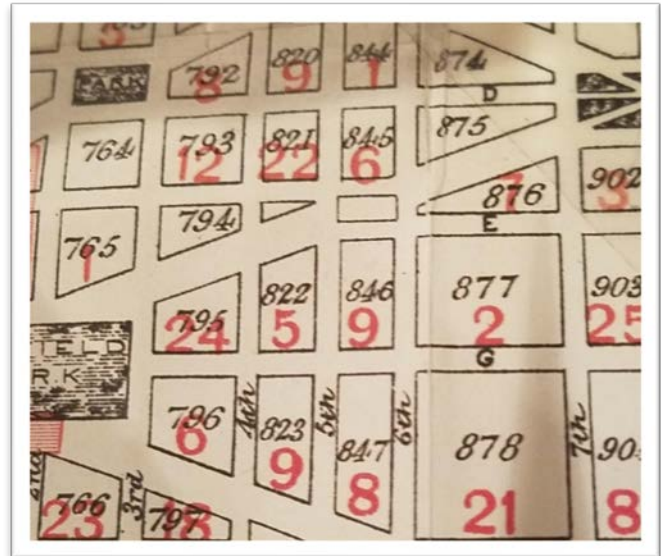


The Development of the 500 Block of 6th Street



LIKE many surrounding residential blocks, the 500 block of 6th Street was mostly developed following the massive improvement of city streets and laying of sewers in the Territorial Government's civic campaign led by Alexander "Boss" Shepherd in the 1870s. Although it left the city ultimately bankrupt, such improvements made many residential developments possible, and combined with the streetcar lines initiated in the early 1880s, the area around Capitol Hill boomed.

While there were many structures built before the requirement of a building permit in 1877, the building permit index does list several that either replaced early wood frame houses or were built between them. The house at 521 6th Street was built in May of 1892 for F. E. Smith and was designed by architect Henry F. Getz. It was built at a cost of \$3,000. The following year, A. G. Humphrey provided the plans for the house at 501 6th Street for owner Samuel Hardy. In 1895, B. Stanley Simmons designed the house at 536 6th Street for owner Robert Harper. The four houses built between 509 and 515 6th Street were built in 1903. They were designed by William J. Palmer. The house at 537 6th Street was built in 1905 and designed by J. H. Lane.



A sanitation map dated 1894 (right) indicated that the entire Square 846 had 9 outhouses or privy's located within its borders, while the square to the west had 22 and the square to the east had 7 outhouses. Overall there were 8,959 outhouses citywide.³

³ The northern city boundary ended at today's Florida Avenue. Old Square 650 in SW Washington had the most privies recorded: 109. Washington County, the property north of Florida Avenue, had an additional 5,133 outhouses recorded that year. E. Norris Peters Company Lithograph Map, copyright Kelsey & Associates.



Owners and Residents of 529 6th Street, SE



OWNER Gaetano Repetti and his wife Lena are the first known occupants of what is today 529 6th Street, SE, which first appears with its twin house at 531 6th Street, SE on the 1857 Boschke Map, seen on page 4. The sheer number of Repetti family members that would be listed as occupants at the same time

suggests both houses were utilized, and perhaps even interconnected at one time.

A large number of Repetti family members intermarried and established their own portion of the extensive family tree also lived in Washington, DC, often with repetitive names. However, piecing together records specific to the two houses such as city directories and census information significantly narrowed down the research over time.

Kenthall Mary A., h 531 6th east
 Repetti Gaetano, house furnishing, 535 6th east
 Repetti Joseph, fancy drygoods, 482 I south
 Repetti Mary Jane, wid Jerome, washerwoman,
 h 574 9th east

As was stated earlier, the residence(s) had several different house numbers during their early years, as was typical in the city until houses began to fill in vacant lots along the block, necessitating a change in the numbering system. The first record of the family, when there was only two adjoined houses on the block, was the 1863 City Directory, which lists Gaetano Repetti at what was then known as 535 6th Street 'east' (above), when he was operating a furniture store. Subsequent directories list himself and his children in the block and in the house confirm the chain of occupants.

535	1863	Gaetano Repetti	38	M	Musician	1,300	Italy
		Lena Repetti	21	F			Baden
		Joseph	1	M			DC
		Catherine	2	F			

Repetti was enumerated in the 1860 census (above), where he indicated he was employed as a musician, and the house(s) were then valued at \$1,300. He was the son of Antonio Rappetti (born 1794) and Anna Narizano (born 1796). His wife Magdalena “Lena” had been born about 1839 in Baden, Germany, and at the time, they had a son Joseph who was then age 1, and daughter Catherine or “Katie” who was just two months old.

Perhaps the most complete record of Repetti's life appeared in the *Rambler* column in the *Washington Evening Star* long after his death, on June 14, 1925 entitled "Some Music History." It read:

"Gaetano Repetti was born at Genoa in June of 1821, was trained in the art of music from childhood, and played in bands and orchestras in Italy. He came to the United States and to Washington in 1843, enlisted in the Marine Band, and made his home in a house on Seventh street southeast, between G and I. He remained in the Marine Band till some time in the Civil War, when he helped recruit and organize in the military camp, part of whose site is Lincoln Park, a band for service in the Union Army of the Potomac.

That band served with troops in the field, but what its name and service were the *Rambler* does not know. Not long before the end of the war, Gaetano Repetti was a member of Ford's Theater Orchestra, and then later joined the orchestra of the Theater Comique, later Kernan's Lyceum, and now, after many changes, The President Theater. He retired from music and went into business in southeast Washington.

Soon after enlisting in the Marine Band, he bought the frame house, No. 527 Sixth street southeast, and two of his children, Henry Repetti of the Marine Band and Miss Anna, are living there. It is one of the old and comfortable homes of the street.

Gaetano Repetti married Miss Lena Dilgers at New York. She was German born, and the bride and bridegroom came to the Sixth street home. There all their children were born. In the *Star*, Monday, June 20, 1904, was this death notice: "On Saturday, June 18, 1904 at 2 p.m. at his residence, 527 Sixth street southeast, Gaetano Repetti in the 84th year of his age. Funeral from his late residence, Tuesday, June 21, at 2 p.m.

Of the sons of Gaetano the *Rambler* remembers Joseph, William, John, Henry, Albert and Frederick. All the boys studied and practiced music except Frederick. He is now Dr. Frederick Repetti, 811 L street northwest. Joseph is with the Capital Traction Co. and Albert has been a clerk in the post office for 24 years.

Henry enlisted in the Marine Band, November 20, 1896, when Francuilli was the leader, and with 18 months more service will be able to retire. William and John Repetti, who played in band and orchestra, are dead. There were several daughters. Ida Repetti married Dr. T.V. Ward, Minnie married Walter English and Kate married Michael Gallagher."

The 1873 City Directory (right) also listed Repetti at the residence, and several additional family members by the time the 1890 City Directory was published (below), suggesting the houses were combined at that time. The 1880 census lists the large family at 527 6th Street, with no mention of anyone living at 529 6th Street.

Repetti Dorathy, dry goods, 702 I se, h 760 7th se
 Repetti Gaetani, furniture, 527 6th se
 Repetti Joseph, boots and shoes, 700 I se, h 760 7th se
 Renn John A. mess land o. 1239 N H

Repetti Albert, musician, 527 6th se
 Repetti Anthony, cook, Insane asylum
 Repetti Frederick, musician, 527 6th se
 Repetti Fred'k F (F F Repetti & Co), 149 B se
 Repetti F F & Co (Frederick F Repetti), dry gds, 149 B se
 Repetti George, stoves, 527 6th se
 Repetti Geo R (Weller & Repetti), 1312 3d se
 Repetti Harry, musician, 527 6th se
 Repetti John, musician, 527 6th se
 Repetti Joseph, shoes, 913 8th se, h 700 I se
 Repetti Joseph A, shoes, 1610 14th nw
 Repetti Joseph B, musician, 527 6th se
 Repetti Mary, attendant, Insane asylum
 Repetti William, musician, 527 6th se

Information gleaned from the 1900 census taken at the house aided in revealing the complex family tree. Gaetano was then listed as the head of the household and added that he was employed as a musician. His son Joseph, also a musician, had been born in June of 1859 in Washington, DC.

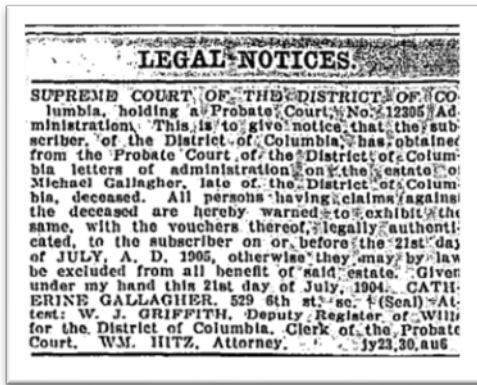
Also listed at the household in the 1900 census (below) was daughter Annie who had been born in October of 1866 (died 1930); son John who had been born in February of 1868 (died 1919) and was also employed as a musician; son Harry who had been born in

November of 1870 (died 1936) also a musician; son Albert who had been born in November of 1871 (died 1941) who worked as a bookkeeper; son Fred who was born in August of 1875 (died 1945) and worked as a government clerk; daughter Minnie who had been born in October of 1880 (died 1911); and daughter Ida who had been born in June of 1888 (died 1979).

Other children not captured in various census included son Willie (1865-1922) and son William, who had been born in 1864, bringing the total number of children to 11. Lena (Dilgers) Repetti died on May 27, 1898 and was interred in Congressional Cemetery in range 107, site 107.

527 73-72	Repetti Gaetano	Head	M	21	June 1821	79	1898	Dist of Col
	Joe	Son	M	21	June 1859	41		Dist of Col

	Annie	Daughter	W	7	Oct 1866	33		Dist of Col
	John	Son	W	31	Feb 1868	32		Dist of Col
	Harry	Son	W	29	Nov 1870	30		Dist of Col
	Albert	Son	W	28	Nov 1871	28		Dist of Col
	Fred	Son	W	24	Aug 1875	24		Dist of Col
	Minnie	Daughter	W	19	Oct 1880	19		Dist of Col



Gaetano Repetti died on June 18, 1904 at age 83, and was interred in Congressional Cemetery in range 107, plot 210. A notice of his estate in the July 30, 1904 *Washington Post* (left) revealed that his daughter Catherine had married Michael Gallagher and resided with her own family at the adjacent 529 6th Street, SE.

529	10	77	Gallagher, Michael	Head	M	June 1841	58	M	10		Ireland
			Catherine	Wife	M	April 1860	40	M	10	5	Dist of Col.
			Agnes	Daughter	M	June 1891	9	A.			Dist of Col.
			Helen	Daughter	M	July 1892	7	A.			Dist of Col.
			Alice	Daughter	M	Nov 1895	4	A.			Dist of Col.
			Ethel	Daughter	M	Mar 1899	1	A.			Dist of Col.

The 1900 census (above) has Michael Gallagher listed as the head of the household at 529 6th Street, although the enumerator misspelled his name phonetically as “Mickle Galager.” He had been born in June of 1841 in Ireland and indicated that he was working as a watchman for the government. He owned the house and indicated that he could read and write. He married his wife Catherine (Repetti) in 1887, and together they had four daughters by the time the census was taken in 1900; Agnes, born in June of 1891, Helen, born in July of 1892, Alice, born November of 1895, and Ethel, born in March of 1899. Catherine had been born in April of 1860 in Washington, DC; her father had been born in Italy, and her mother had been born in Germany.

Military records reveal that Michael Gallagher served in the Civil War as he mustered into the 90th Illinois Infantry as a Corporal on September 5, 1862 in Chicago, Illinois at the age of 22.⁴ He was described as being 5’10” tall, fair complexion, with dark hair and blue eyes. He was then employed as a farmer. He served three years, was promoted to Sergeant on May 1, 1863 and mustered out in Washington, DC on June 6, 1865.

The house was skipped in the 1910 census, suggesting it was either vacant or the Gallagher’s never talked to the enumerator; Catherine was listed as the occupant up to the 1914 City Directory. Beginning in 1917, the house was occupied by Francis A. Belt, according to the City Directory.

⁴ Illinois Civil War Muster and Descriptive Rolls via Ancestry.com.

- - - - - U - - - - -

Henry Repetti et al.) NO. 181. Recorded June 28, 1922.
to)
Albert Repetti) Deed. at 2:12 P.M.

THIS DEED Made this 27th day of June in the year one thousand nine hundred and twenty-two Henry Repetti, Albert Repetti, Fred Repetti Clara B. Repetti, his wife, Annie M. Repetti and Ida M. Ward. parties of the first part, and Albert Repetti (unmarried) of the City of Washington, District of Columbia, parties of the second part,

WITNESSETH, That in consideration of Ten Dollars the parties of the first part do grant unto the party of the second part, in fee simple, all that piece or parcel of land in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, described as follows: To Wit:

Lot numbered forty-five (45), in Fred Repetti, Trustee's subdivision in Square numbered eight hundred and forty-six (846) as per plat recorded in Book 53, page 47 in the Surveyor's Office of the District of Columbia, improved by premises known and distinguished as No. 529 Sixth street, Southeast.

On June 28, 1922, six members of the Repetti family consolidated ownership of 529 6th Street by transferring title to Albert Repetti. They included Henry, Albert, Fred, Clara B. Annie M Repetti and Ida M. Ward. It would remain in his estate until 1956 and operate as a rental investment.

7/11/20	Thomas W. Moreland	WV	39/11	Washed Virginia
	Interest Wife		27/7/11	Washed Virginia
	Thomas W. Moreland		2/11/11	Washed Virginia
	Albert J. Moreland		3/11/11	Washed Virginia
	Evelyn M. Moreland		4/20/11	Washed Virginia
	Crown Sallie		6/5/11	Washed Virginia

Thomas W. Moreland was listed in the local City Directories as a renter of 529 6th Street and was first enumerated at the house in the 1920 census (above). He would later become its owner. According to his WWII draft card and various census records, Thomas Welby Moreland Sr. had been born in Loudoun County, Virginia on August 8, 1884. His wife Teresa Florence had been born about 1888 in Washington, DC. They had married on August 26, 1907 according to the DC Marriage Register.

Their son Thomas W Jr. had been born about 1911, and twins Albert J. and Evelyn M had been born about 1918, all in Washington, DC. Moreland indicated in 1920 that he was employed as a mechanic in a automobile repair shop. In 1920, Florence's mother, Sallie A. Crown, resided with them at the house. She had been born about 1855 in Washington, DC.

529	1930	Moreland, Thomas W	Head	R	45	10	20	77	11	45	77	25	20	190	Virginia
		Florence T	Wife	H				77	11	43	77	23	20	190	Washington District of Columbia
		Thomas Jr	Son					77	11	20				190	Washington District of Columbia
		Albert J	Son					77	11	11				190	Washington District of Columbia
		Evelyn M	Daughter					77	11	11				190	Washington District of Columbia

The Moreland's were again enumerated as renters of 529 6th Street in the 1930 census (above). They paid a monthly rent of \$45, and owned a radio, one of the more interesting questions asked of residents that year. Thomas Sr. worked as a salesman in a building supply store, and Thomas Jr. then worked as a counterman at a restaurant.

529	1958	40	10	Moreland, Thomas W	Head	1	M	W	57	M	No	8	8	Virginia
				Florence	Wife	1	F	W	57	M	No	5	5	D.C.
				Albert J	Son	2	M	W	22	S	No	12	10	D.C.
				Lorraine	Daughter	4	F	W	3	S	No	0	0	D.C.

Their granddaughter Florence was born in Washington, DC about 1937 and resided with them in the house in 1940, according to the census (above). In 1940, Moreland indicated on the census that he was then employed as a salesman at a retail hardware store. 1940 is the last available in detail for researchers.⁵

His 1942 WWII draft card (right) revealed that he then worked for the Fries Beall & Sharp Company at 734 10th Street, NW, in their heating equipment department.

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)

SERIAL NUMBER 2109 I. NAME (Print) THOMAS WELBY MORELAND ORDER NUMBER

U. (First) (Middle) (Last) S.R.

2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) 529-6 ST. S.E. WASHINGTON D.C. (Number and street) (Town, township, village, or city) (County) (State)

(THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON THE LINE ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 2 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL)

3. MAILING ADDRESS Same (Mailing address if other than place indicated on line 2. If same insert word same)

4. TELEPHONE FR 8038 5. AGE IN YEARS 58 6. PLACE OF BIRTH Loudoun County (Town or county) (State or country)

DATE OF BIRTH 8 6 1884 (Mo.) (Day) (Yr.) (State or country)

7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS Mrs. Florence Theresa Moreland - 529-6 St. S.E. Wash. D.C.

8. EMPLOYER - NAME AND ADDRESS Fries Beall & Sharp Co - 734-10 St. N.W. Wash. D.C.

9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT - BUSINESS Heating Equip. Dept. - More at 734-10 St. N.W. Wash. D.C. (Occupational suffix or B. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.

D. S. S. FORM 1 (Revised 4-1-42) (over) 16-21620-2 Thomas Welby Moreland Sr. (Registration number)

On April 3, 1956, the house was sold to George and Sophia Basiliko. The grantor included the Washington Home for Incurables, a corporation organized under the Will of Fred Repetti, then deceased, and the sole devisee of his brother Albert Repetti, also then deceased. The sale price was \$4,000. They were used to clear title, as the house was sold the very same day to Frank G. Martin, unmarried.

Washington Home for Incurables was a US health charity located in Washington, D.C. that was founded by Mrs. S. Charles Hill in 1888. Its object was to provide a comfortable and permanent home for persons afflicted with any incurable physical disability

⁵ Detailed census information is sealed for a total of 72 years; the 1950 details will be released in 2022.

or disease, for whom no provision exists elsewhere. Previous to this time there was no provision for such cases.

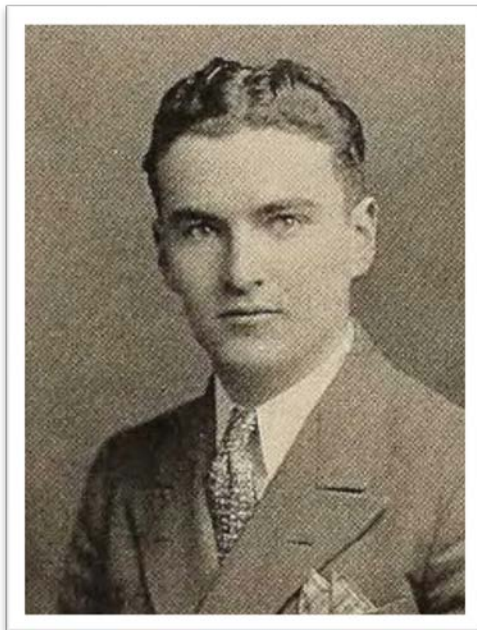


The Home was first located on Meridian Avenue, Mount Pleasant, in a building which soon proved altogether inadequate for the increasing demands made upon it. In 1892, land was obtained north of U Street, between Thirty-first and Thirty-second, on Georgetown Heights (left). Here a new building, costing over \$50,000

was erected. The new building was made possible without any public appropriation.

After a short tenure of ownership, Martin sold the house on January 17, 1961 to E. Fulton and Laura C. Brylawski, who also bought the adjoining house at 531 6th Street, SE. He had been born on July 24, 1885 in Baltimore, according to his WWII draft card filled out in 1942, when they resided at 2760 Brandywine Street, NW. He was employed as a lawyer.

The Brylawski's sold just the house at 529 6th Street a short time later, on May 31, 1962 to Morvie Ann Colby. According to Minnesota birth records, she had been born in Owatonna Township on February 9, 1922 to Lyle Leroy Colby and Florence Christina Martin. She was enumerated in Milwalkie, Wisconsin in the 1940 census, the last available in detail for researchers. Colby apparently used another name in non-legal situations, and is not mentioned in local city directories, etc. It appears she rented the house to unknown individuals.



An individual named Lionel S. Taylor eventually obtained a rent to own private mortgage on May 9, 1977 from Irving and Jeanne Richter, who eventually defaulted. Irving Richter had been born on October 3, 1911 in New York, New York. He grew up at 988 Dahill Road in the Bronx, and attended New York University, when his yearbook photograph was taken in 1936 (left). He married Jeanne Dishong (1925-1996) in 1961 in Detroit, Michigan. Richter worked as an economist for the Federal Government when he was temporarily enumerated in 1940 in Boston, Massachusetts.

Jeanne D. Richter, the widow of co-owner Irving Richter who died in 1989, sold the house on July 31, 1991 to Kevin N. and Carol R. Anderson. The Anderson's sold the house on May 5, 2004 to Nicholas T. Goldsborough. He is a 1967 graduate of Hobart University, and at the time, was the managing director of the Shakespeare Theater Company. He is currently the Executive Director of the Miami City Ballet.

The house was sold for \$610,000 on June 19, 2009 to Thomas Corcoran. Amanda Rose Corcoran was added to the title on November 30, 2012.

The current owner Christopher Martin McGuinn purchased the house on February 4, 2015.

[Feel free to add in anything about yourselves or what you have done to the house]



Capitol Hill: A Brief History



WHILE the Capitol Hill neighborhood undoubtedly

derives its name from its proximity to the United States Capitol, it is not in fact actually located on a Hill. The Capitol building is

situated on the highest point of land between the Anacostia and Potomac rivers, hence the name “Capitol Hill” for the campus surrounding the main building for the legislative branch of the government. The *neighborhood* known as Capitol Hill was developed on the high plateau extending east from the crest of the hill – seen here on the 1883-84 Sachse map.

Originally, at the time that the Capitol City was designated in 1791, it was hoped that the deep waters of the Anacostia River would eventually become host to a significant seaport. Pierre Charles L’Enfant, the architect of the original plan for the Capitol City, designed East Capitol Street to be 160 feet wide, with the expectation that it would accommodate a major commercial strip, deriving its traffic from a series of ports to be developed along the shoreline. However, the Anacostia seaport never materialized; sediment churn in the water, from early urban development, caused the river to become marshy, and by the time the McMillan Plan of 1901-1902 was implemented, plans for a major seaport had long been abandoned in favor of filling in the shoreline to create much needed parkland.

By the 1920s and 1930s, the newly formed parkland had mostly been built upon, due to increasing pressures for housing. (This explains the fact that the building stock closer to the present-day edge of the river is all more recent than the stock further inland.)

At the midpoint of East Capitol Street, L’Enfant also designed a park (now Lincoln Park) to house a “historic column from whose station, [a mile from the Federal House], all distances of places through the Continent, are to be calculated.” While the landmark column never materialized, the park that served as the outer boundary of the neighborhood in 1876 did receive Thomas Ball’s Emancipation Monument, which was designed, built and erected solely with contributions from freed slaves.

The first neighborhood called “Capitol Hill” was a small cluster of homes located at First and Second streets along New Jersey Avenue, S.E., around 1800. Few Congressmen preferred to establish permanent residence in the city during the early years of the Republic and chose instead to rent rooms in one of the numerous boarding houses located within walking distance of the Capitol. This cluster remained the primary residential area of the neighborhood for the first several decades of the 19th century. Two houses from this period still stand, at N^{os.} 20 and 22 Third Street, S.E., dating back to around 1820.



Other areas began to witness development shortly thereafter, including the streets around the Navy Yard and the nearby Marine Barracks. The illustration above, from an 1834 drawing by George Cooke depicting the Navy Yard, shows the sparse development beyond. In addition to the formal military architecture, many lower-quality homes were constructed in the surrounding areas to house skilled and unskilled construction laborers. The image below shows a wood frame officer's quarters at the Navy Yard in 1866.

Construction in southeast Washington remained slow during the first half of the 19th century, however. The boarding-house quarter close to the Capitol began expanding somewhat by 1850, and several merchants had begun to construct stores to serve the growing residential population around the Marine Barracks. A few of the homes dating from this period remain standing, perhaps the best known of which is located at 326 A Street, S.E. Built around 1850, it was the home of Constantino Brumidi, an Italian artist responsible for most of the decoration of the U.S. Capitol, including the large frescoes in the main rotunda.



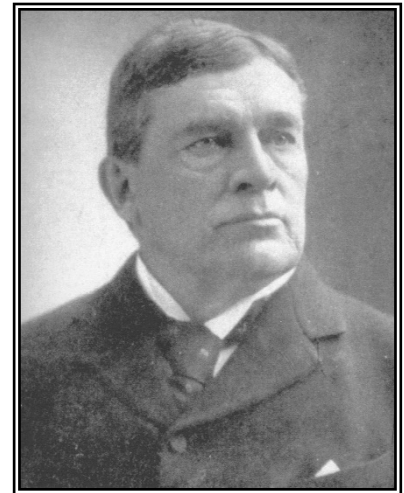


During the Civil War, when new construction was all but completely halted, many homes on Capitol Hill doubled up as hospitals and boarding houses. Following the war, builder Captain Alfred Grant attempted to develop an area of the Hill into a lavish and highly desirable residential neighborhood. In 1871, Grant speculatively constructed a row of 16 mansions along A Street and 14 mansions on East Capitol Street. Illustrated above, they were designed to sell for an outrageous \$75,000 each and

were leveraged, as was much of the speculative development at that time. The project failed, and the mansions were eventually demolished and replaced beginning in 1928 by the Folger Shakespeare Library.

That spectacular failure notwithstanding, Capitol Hill, along with the rest of Washington, experienced tremendous growth following the Civil War, as workers and freed slaves poured into the city to work for a rapidly expanding Federal Government.

Notorious vice president of the Board of Public Works, Alexander “Boss” Shepherd, illustrated at right, proposed a civic improvement scheme for Washington in 1871 that had a budget of \$6 million and stimulated new construction all over the city (before it ultimately failed under numerous allegations of scandals and kick-backs). Local building associations advertised the need for masons to gather and construct new housing as quickly as possible.



Federal employment spiked in 1883 with the passage of the Pendleton Act, which replaced the earlier method of hiring by appointment with a system based on competitive merit. With this shift, the quality and social stature of the federal workforce increased sharply, and the top salary for government employment increased to \$4,000, a substantial sum for the time.



Even with the brisk pace of development, however, the housing market could not keep pace with the influx of new workers, and many Capitol Hill homeowners built additions or rented rooms throughout the 1880s.

The area now known as the Capitol Hill Historic District was primarily built up on a speculative basis in the 1880s and 1890s. Several developers and architects collaborated to construct homes often one entire block at a time. These included such men as Diller B. Groff, Nicholas T. Haller, Nicholas Grimm, J.T. Walker, T. Franklin Schneider and countless others.

Ever a highly residential area of the city, Capitol Hill has seen commercial development in small waves through the years. Most of all, Capitol Hill is known for its placid residential streets and family-friendly

atmosphere. More than any other part of the city, it enjoys a certain immunity to economic ups and downs, as it is so densely residential and positioned so closely to the United States Capitol.





Kelsey & Associates
Historical Research
of
529 6th Street, SE

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Information, research and writing included in this report was completed by Paul K. Williams during the winter of 2019.