NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)

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1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: **2101 W Clarkson Ave**

Postal code: **19144** Councilmanic District: **8**

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2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **"Wister House," and "Mary and Frances Wister Studio"**

Common Name:

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3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ **Building** ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

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4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☐ good ☒ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☐ occupied ☒ vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use:

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5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary. **SEE ATTACHED SHEET**.

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6. DESCRIPTION **SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

Please attach a description of the historic resource and supplement with current photographs.

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7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance. [See Attached Sheet]

Period of Significance (from year to year): from **1868 to 1984**

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: **1868, east porch added late 19th c.**

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: **Attributed to designs by J.C. Sidney**

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: **Unknown**

Original owner: **William Wister, Sarah Logan Fisher, William Rotch Wister**

Other significant persons: **Frances Anne Wister**

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

X **(a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,**

(b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or

X (**c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,**

(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,

(e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,

(f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,

(g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,

(h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,

(i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or

X **(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community**.

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8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography. **SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

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9. NOMINATOR

Name with Title: **Arielle Harris**
Organization:
Street Address: **4101 Spruce Street, #317**
City, State, and Postal Code: **Philadelphia, PA 19104**
Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner

Email: **harris.ari@gmail.com**
Date: **8/26/2016**
Telephone: **914-512-0239**

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt:____7/15/2016_____

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date:___9/6/2016_____

Date of Notice Issuance:_____9/6/2016_____

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name:___La Salle University_____

Address:___1900 W Olney Ave_____

_____

City:___Philadelphia_____ State:_PA_ Postal Code:__19141_

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation:_____

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission:_____

Date of Final Action:_____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property known as the "Mary and Frances Wister House" is identified on the La Salle University Campus Map as building number 44. The house sits on an approximately 7.6 acre parcel that includes numerous other buildings and structures, including "Belfield," the early nineteenth-century estate/farmstead of Philadelphia painter and museum founder Charles Wilson Peale. The boundary of the larger parcel is described below. The area proposed for individual designation is located in the northwest corner of the larger parcel, on the north side of W. Clarkson Avenue, as indicated by the red boundary shown below.

The official address of the property is 2101 W Clarkson Avenue, Philadelphia, Pensylvania, OPA #776506000. The Philadelphia OPA website indicates two parcel numbers: 121N12-0156 and 135N13-0095 (merged). The boundary of the larger parcel is described in a 1984 deed as follows:

"BEGINNING at a point on the Northeasterly side of Clarkson Avenue (60 feet wide) which point is measured South 78 degrees 39 minutes 00 seconds East along the said Northeasterly side of Clarkson Avenue the distance of 350 feet from a point formed by an intersection of the said Northeasterly side of Clarkson Avenue and the Southeasterly side of Wister Street (50 feet wide); THENCE extending from said point of beginning North 11 degrees 21 minutes 00 seconds East the distance of 190 feet to a point on the former Northwesterly side of 21st Street (stricken from City Plan confirmed 5/5/1969); THENCE extending North 86 degrees 25 minutes 07 seconds East crossing the bed of said former 21st Street, the distance of 232 feet 10-3/8 inches to a point; THENCE

extending South 78 degrees 39 minutes East the distance of 325 feet to a point on the Northwesterly side of 20th Street (60 feet wide); THENCE extending South 11 degrees 21 minutes 00 seconds West along the said Northwesterly side of 20th Street the distance of 719 feet 3-1/2 inches to a point of curve; THENCE extending Westwardly along the Northwesterly side of 20th Street (variable width) on the arc of a circle curving to the right having a radius of 193.137 feet the arc distance of 151 feet 8-1/4 inches to a point of compound curve; THENCE extending Westwardly partly along the Northerly side of said 20th Street and the Northerly side of Belfield Avenue (80 feet wide) on the arc of a circle curving to the right having a radius of 81.618 feet the arc distance of 108 feet 6-1/2 inches to a point of reverse curve; THENCE extending Westwardly along the said Northerly side of Belfield Avenue and crossing the Southwesterly end of 21st Street (on City Plan, no record of legal opening) on the arc of a circle curving to the left having a radius of 470 feet the arc distance of 157 feet 2-1/8 inches to a point; THENCE extending North 11 degrees 21 minutes 00 seconds East the distance of 300 feet to a point; THENCE extending North 78 degrees 39 minutes 00 seconds West crossing the bed of said Clarkson Avenue the distance of 178 feet to a point; THENCE extending North 11 degrees 21 minutes 00 seconds East recrossing the bed of said Clarkson Avenue; Thence extending North 78 degrees 39 minutes 00 seconds West along the Southwesterly end of said former 21st Street and along the said Northwesterly side of Clarkson Avenue the distance of 130 feet to a point, being the first mentioned point and place of beginning."

6. DESCRIPTION

Site

As stated in Section 5, the parcel on which 2101 W. Clarkson Street is located is about 7.6 acres and contains more than one structure. In addition to the Wister Studio, the parcel contains three tennis courts, part of a parking lot, the Peale House (Belfield) and Gatehouse (already listed in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places under the same OPA address, and on the National Register of Historic Places under the address of 2100 Clarkson Avenue), Security & Safety Dispatch Center (Carriage House), Greenhouses, and the Japanese Tea Ceremony House (Tenant House). The Wister Studio is located at the Northwesterly portion of the parcel, at the northwest corner of 21st Street and Clarkson Avenue. To its west is 2103 W. Clarkson Avenue, a similar cottage type, and a low-rise student housing development which replaced a number of detached and semi-detached properties dating from the same time period as 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue. These boundaries date from 1984 and are intended to capture the site and structures associated with Charles Willson Peale and Wister family residencies.

Exterior

2101 W. Clarkson Avenue is a freestanding three-story stone house on the campus of La Salle University. Its irregular massing and mix of Gothic and Italianate elements mark it as a mid-nineteenth century suburban “cottage,” a type once common in the area. Its massing is formed by three gables that meet in the center of the house.[1] The gable roofs are open rake and are supported by decorative brackets. The gable dormers are ornamented in the same way.

The majority of the windows on the house are 2/2-double hung, with flat heads on the first floor, segmented headed on the second floor, and round/semicircular heads on the third floor. Although the third floor windows are the same size throughout the cottage, the differences in scale of the gable dormers and the gable roofs, most apparent on the southern elevation, emphasize the asymmetricality of the massing. On the first floor, the right bay on the southern façade contains a 1/1 mullioned window with segmental heads. Beneath this on the ground level is a 15 light glass block window, likely a later alteration.

Southern elevation along Clarkson Avenue. Courtesy Aaron Wunsch.

The southern façade also contains a partial width porch which extends to meet the front of the right bay. Behind this porch on the left bay of the house is a door-length window with a shallow segment frame. The entrance is defined by a wooden paneled door topped by a three-light transom.

[1] C. Doebley, "2101 Clarkson Street," Key No. 053327, Pennsylvania Historic Resources Survey Form, February 25, 1983.

Contextual perspective shot of southern and eastern elevations along Clarkson Avenue. 2103 Clarkson Avenue, and La Salle University student housing visible in the background. Courtesy Aaron Wunsch.

The first floor of the 21st Street, or east elevation is somewhat obscured by a full width porch with shed roof, likely added after the house was constructed, but still within the building's period of significance. The porch roof is supported by knee-braced wooden columns. Along the first floor of the house, sheltered by the porch roof, is a pair of glass-paneled doors and a bay window. Above the porch roof, the second and third stories are more or less symmetrical, divided by a pair of bracketed cross gable dormer windows on the third story. Between the cross gable dormers on the roof level is an inset casement dormer window.

Part of northern elevation and western elevation. Courtesy Aaron Wunsch.

On the east and west elevations are bay windows with 1/1 double sash panes.

At the northern elevation, which extends outward from the main massing, is a one story wood frame addition which appears to date to the same period of construction as the house, based on its visible matching stone foundation. Historic maps also show this portion. This addition has two door openings on the northern elevation, and one on the eastern elevation. The second and third stories of the building at this elevation have no windows, while its eastern block is fenestrated.

Northern elevation. Courtesy Aaron Wunsch.

At the intersection of the north and east elevations is a square entry porch supported by decorative columns which match the ornament on the southern porch.

INTEGRITY

The house at 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue retains nearly all of its original fabric. The most notable exterior alteration is the east porch, likely added around ca. 1890. As of this year, the wooden columns on both the southern and eastern porches have been replaced and some ornament has been lost. Despite the house being used as La Salle University's fine arts studio in the late twentieth century, many original details remain inside the house, and the floor plan and room arrangements have not changed. The original staircases survive, as well as built in closets, interior shutters, doors, hardware, plaster ceiling medallions, mouldings, hardwood floors, fireplaces, and mirrors. The house itself is in fair condition; on the exterior, paint is peeling off the window frames and some of the wood trim is rotting on the porches. In addition, some of the stones supporting the porch/comprises the foundation have been lost. Inside the house, graffiti and other artwork from students remain on the walls.

What integrity has been lost from the house is due to its siting: as will be described in the statement of significance, 2101 Clarkson Street was once surrounded by similar houses along Clarkson Avenue, Wister Street, and Cottage Lane. These houses, with the exception of the Belfield house on 20th Street and 2103 Clarkson Avenue, directly to its west, have all been demolished or destroyed, and replaced with parking lots or La Salle University buildings.

Interior shots, courtesy Aaron Wunsch.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

2101 W. Clarkson Avenue meets Criteria for Designation (a), (c) and (j) as identified in Section 114-1004 of the Philadelphia Code. From an urban history perspective, the property at 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue is a surviving example of the mid-to-late nineteenth century settlement patterns of Quaker families in Germantown whose occupants are linked by both blood and faith. Acquiring the large estate of Belfield in 1826, the Fishers, and eventually through marriage, the Wisters, settled the land; the latter family commissioned a number of detached and semi-detached properties on the property within a short distance of each other, including 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue. Both responding and reacting to the suburbanization of the area, families such as the Wisters sought to preserve the land from their long-standing country seats by commissioning such structures on their property; on the one hand, this strategy prevented development from outsiders, yet contributed to the emerging suburban fabric in Germantown that many in the upper class opposed. In a general sense, the 1868 cottage embodies the picturesque design principles espoused by architects such as Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Jackson Davis. There is also circumstantial evidence to suggest that the house was designed by local architect James C. Sidney. Sidney, a leading architect of the time, was known in the Germantown community for his cottage and villa designs. Based on existing housing stock in the neighborhood attributed to or known to be works by Sidney, as well as specific architectural features characteristic of Sidney's work, it can be concluded that the house adheres to many of his design patterns. Finally, 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue was the early home and birthplace of Frances Anne Wister, a well-known name in Philadelphia for her work with the Philadelphia Orchestra and her involvement in early historic preservation efforts in the city.

Criterion (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past

Criterion (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

Prior to La Salle University moving to their current location in Logan, the neighborhood was settled by prominent Philadelphia families who desired to have "country seats" away from the city center. Frederick B. Tolles hypothesizes that the country seat idea is practically as old as Philadelphia itself: "There is good reason to believe that William Penn expected the "great Men" of his colony to be country gentlemen, living on their broad acres and visiting Philadelphia (which was itself to be a "greene Country Towne") only to transact the public business."[2]

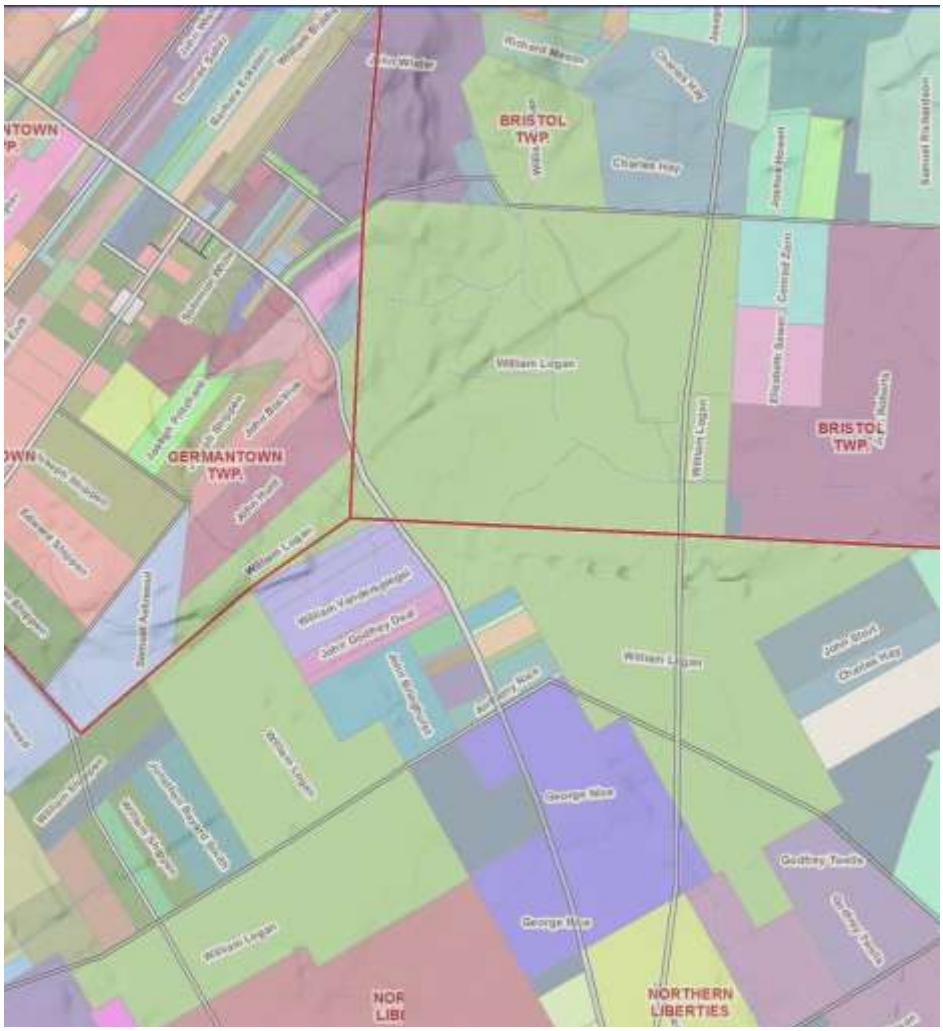
[2] Frederick B. Tolles, *Meetinghouse and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1948), 113.

Germantown was a desirable area of Philadelphia County in which to build such retreats due to its higher elevation to that of Philadelphia City, making it relatively cooler in the summer months. Once seen as an enclave to escape the unhealthy conditions of the colonial city, country seats in Philadelphia soon began to mimic the estate dynamics seen in cities such as London.

Frances Wister's paternal ancestors – the Wisters, Logans, and Fishers – have roots in Germantown that stretch back to the Colonial period. Their settlement patterns in the colonial period contributed to the early rural nature of Germantown and Quaker country seat life in Philadelphia. The land on which 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue stands can be traced from the Logans and Fishers, Philadelphians whose ancestry can be linked to some of the first families in Philadelphia, to the Wisters, early German settlers in Germantown in their own right. Through the nineteenth century, Wister's grandparents and parents were witness to the increasing suburbanization of the township and transition of the area from a summer retreat oasis to year-round suburban settlement. In constructing 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, along with a number of other cottages, the families contributed to the growing suburbanization of the region while preserving their land from speculative development.

Logan-Fisher-Wister Settlement in Germantown, 1728-1830

Frances Wister's ancestors can be traced to the time of William Penn and the early settlement of Germantown. Her fourth great-grandfather, James Logan (1674-1751), served in his lifetime, among other things, as colonial secretary to William Penn, Mayor of Philadelphia, Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, and Governor of Pennsylvania. He built a country seat at "Stenton" in 1728, renowned for its architecture and gardens, and lived there for about the last 20 years of his life. The 511 acres of land that comprised the Stenton plantation was on the border of Germantown, Bristol, and Northern Liberties townships; the remainders of this original tract circa 1777 can be seen in the map created by Jim Duffin, below. (Also visible to the northwest of the remnants of this original Stenton tract is land belonging to John Wister, another ancestor of Frances; more on that to come.)



Screenshot from Jim Duffin's *Mapping West Philadelphia: Landowners in October 1777,* website, showing Logan and Wister tracts.

As Tolles notes, "Every Quaker merchant, as soon as he was able to afford it, built a country house outside the city, where he and his family could escape the heat of the Philadelphia summer."[3] However, there were exceptions to this seasonal settlement. As eighteenth century historians Carl and Jessica Bridenbaugh observe, "Gradually some Friends, especially those of an earlier generation who were growing old and withdrawing from business, began to retire permanently to their estates and set up as country gentlemen."[4] Logan was one such pioneer in year-round Philadelphia country living. In the decades to follow Logan's retirement to Germantown, "Grantees of the choicest parcels of land round about the city and the first of its inhabitants to amass

[3] Frederick B. Tolles, *Meetinghouse and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1948), 132.
[4] Carl and Jessica Bridenbaugh, *Rebels and Gentlemen: Philadelphia in the Age of Franklin* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1942), 191.

considerable fortunes, many of them easily followed the example of James Logan at Stenton by opening up country estates in the 1740's."[5]

There were a number of dynamics at play in the eighteenth century which explain the emergence of such retreats. At first, a rural seat "developed from a means of escape from either the discomforts of the city or the pressure of affairs into something good and positive in itself."[6] As more families began to build country seats, the houses became an opportunity to distinguish themselves from one another.

> In the [seventeen-] sixties the area around Philadelphia became the setting for more fine estates than could be found elsewhere on the continent. In keeping with this trend the simple family dwelling of earlier days gave way to the mansion house of the pre-Revolutionary country gentleman, acquiring dignity and architectural distinction, and reflecting to an extraordinary degree the tastes and interests of its owner[7]

The implications of owning such a dignified estate are intrinsically tied to the colonial relationship with Britain. With a new interest in country living as a means of displaying wealth, Philadelphia Quakers began to "approximate as closely as possible the country-house life of old England."[8] The Bridenbaughs continue:

> Class distinctions being implicit in the idea of an aristocracy, wealthy Philadelphians now consciously sought to set themselves apart from their fellows as men of taste and elegance, as arbiters of society and patrons of the arts, and as exponents of gentle living. Into this aristocratic ideal the half-town, half-country way of life of the eighteenth-century English gentleman fitted with beautiful ease, and Philadelphians, though they still sought relaxation and comfort and a refuge from hot weather epidemics, began to indulge a new and expensive luxury in their rural seats"[9]

James Logan's children and grandchildren remained in Germantown and Bristol Townships long after his passing, and built other country estates on Stenton inheritance including "Wakefield," inhabited by granddaughter Sarah Logan and husband Thomas Fisher, and their son, William Logan Fisher; "Little Wakefield," occupied by William Logan Fisher's son, Thomas Rodman Fisher, and others through the nineteenth century, ultimately including 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue.[10]

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[5] Ibid., 191.
[6] Ibid., 193.
[7] Ibid., 195.
[8] Ibid., 196.
[9] Ibid., 193.
[10] Sarah Logan (1751-1795) was willed the northeast portion of *Stenton* land; her husband, Thomas Fisher (1741-1810), a Quaker merchant (whose great-grandfather came aboard the *Welcome* ship with William Penn in 1682-3), built "Wakefield" there in 1798 Stenton and Wakefield were less than half a mile apart, and it was the construction of Wakefield by Fisher that gave the name to Fisher's Lane, one of the oldest roads in Germantown. The son of Sarah Logan and Thomas Fisher, William Logan Fisher (1781-

The Wister family had deep roots in Germantown as well. Their ample farm house, "Grumblethorpe," was constructed in 1774 by Johannes (John) Wüster (1708-1789), the first ancestor of the Wister branch to emigrate to the United States from Heidelberg, Germany.[11] John Wüster's grandchildren and great-grandchildren continued his legacy in Germantown at Grumblethorpe and in new dwellings.[12]

Early in 1826, William Logan Fisher purchased an approximately 105 acre estate in Bristol Township called "Belfield" from Charles Willson Peale. Peale (1741-1827) was well known in Philadelphia for his portraits of Founding Fathers, as well as his collection of natural history specimens which he placed in a museum of his own design. He had lived at Belfield since 1810, when it was known as "Nieve's Place," although land records can trace the property ownership to a 1684 William Penn land grant.

The Early Suburbanization of Germantown in the Nineteenth Century and Wister Family Life, 1826-1862

For the first half of the nineteenth century, the settlement patterns from the colonial period remained essentially unchanged. Germantown continued to be known for its advantageous topography and climate, safer for one's health than the dense, dirty, and disease-ridden downtown. Germantown's early elite pioneered living patterns that

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1862), grew up at Wakefield, and moved into the house with his wife and small children in the early nineteenth century. William Logan Fisher made his career in the textile industry as one of many early industrialists who set up mills along the Wingohocking Creek. He founded the Wakefield Manufacturing Company in 1815 and situated it at Eighteenth Street and Fisher's Lane, now Belfield Avenue and East Logan Street. William Logan Fisher and his wife, Mary Rodman (1781-1813) had three children: the eldest, Thomas Rodman Fisher (1803-1861), went on to continue and expand the milling business begun by his father. Setting up a plant of his own called Wakefield Mills, Thomas Rodman Fisher is considered the creator of the first knitting factory in the country – "an organized mill in which a number of employees were engaged with steady work at good rates of pay (Martha C. Halpern, "Germantown Goods: A Survey of the Textile Industry in Germantown," *Germantown Crier* 43, no. 1 (Winter 1990-91), 4-15.). He built and lived in an estate called "Little Wakefield" (1829), for which he received Stenton land at the time of his marriage. His daughter, Mary Rodman Fisher (1838-1899), and son-in-law, George Washington Carpenter (1837-1921), lived at Little Wakefield and at the Carpenter estate, Phil-Ellena. They in turn gave their daughter/his granddaughter, Letitia Ellicott Carpenter (1861-1933), and husband, William Redwood Wright (1846-1914), 22 acres of land, on which an estate called "Waldheim" was built in 1888.

[11] Johannes' brother, Caspar, also emigrated to the United States but his last name was Anglicized as Wistar, thus resulting in two different lineages for the same family.

[12] Charles Jones Wister, a grandson of John Wüster/Wister, inherited Grumblethorpe and raised his children there. One of his sons, Dr. Owen Jones Wister, married Sarah Butler and resided with her at her family estate, "Butler Place," located at West Grange Avenue, north of Olney Avenue, between 16th and 17th Streets. At this house, Owen Wister, future husband of Frances' sister Mary Channing Wister, was born. John Wister (1776-1863), another grandson of John Wüster/Wister, purchased "Vernon," a country estate built between ca. 1741 and 1805, in 1812. In 1892, the city of Philadelphia purchased the estate and turned it into a small park. From 1898-1907, Vernon was the location of a Philadelphia Public library branch.

mimicked those of the English aristocracy and endured for over a century: “The culture of spending summer in the country but returning to the city in the fall was deeply ingrained among Philadelphia’s wealthiest citizens, and few would consider spending the winter anywhere but the city.”[13]

Sidney George Fisher, a cousin of Sarah Logan Fisher (shared a grandfather, Thomas Fisher) known for his published diary, mentions Fisher and Wister tracts in his musings about Germantown:

> All the families who own much land here have been enriched, and, as the neighborhood was composed of farms only a few years ago, these are very numerous. Some of the estates are immense. The Logans and Miss [Sally N.] Dickinson, whose property now belongs to the Logans, have nearly 1,000 acres, worth now millions, Wakefield has 200 acres, the Norrises 600, Butler 200, the Wisters a large quantity, and many others.[14]

Writing of his uncle William Logan Fisher in 1859, he adds "The family is rich. Uncle William cannot be worth much less than half a million now and all his children, except Tom, are independent & have besides expectations from others than himself."[15] Despite this immense wealth, which would afford the family the ability to maintain both city and country homes, the Fishers were an exception to seasonal country seat living because their places of work, which at this time consisted principally of the Wakefield Mills industrial site, were located on the same property as the homesteads. The Belfield tract vastly increased Fisher-Wister family holdings to the north of Wakefield and provided further opportunity to utilize land along the Wingohocking Creek for industrial purposes.

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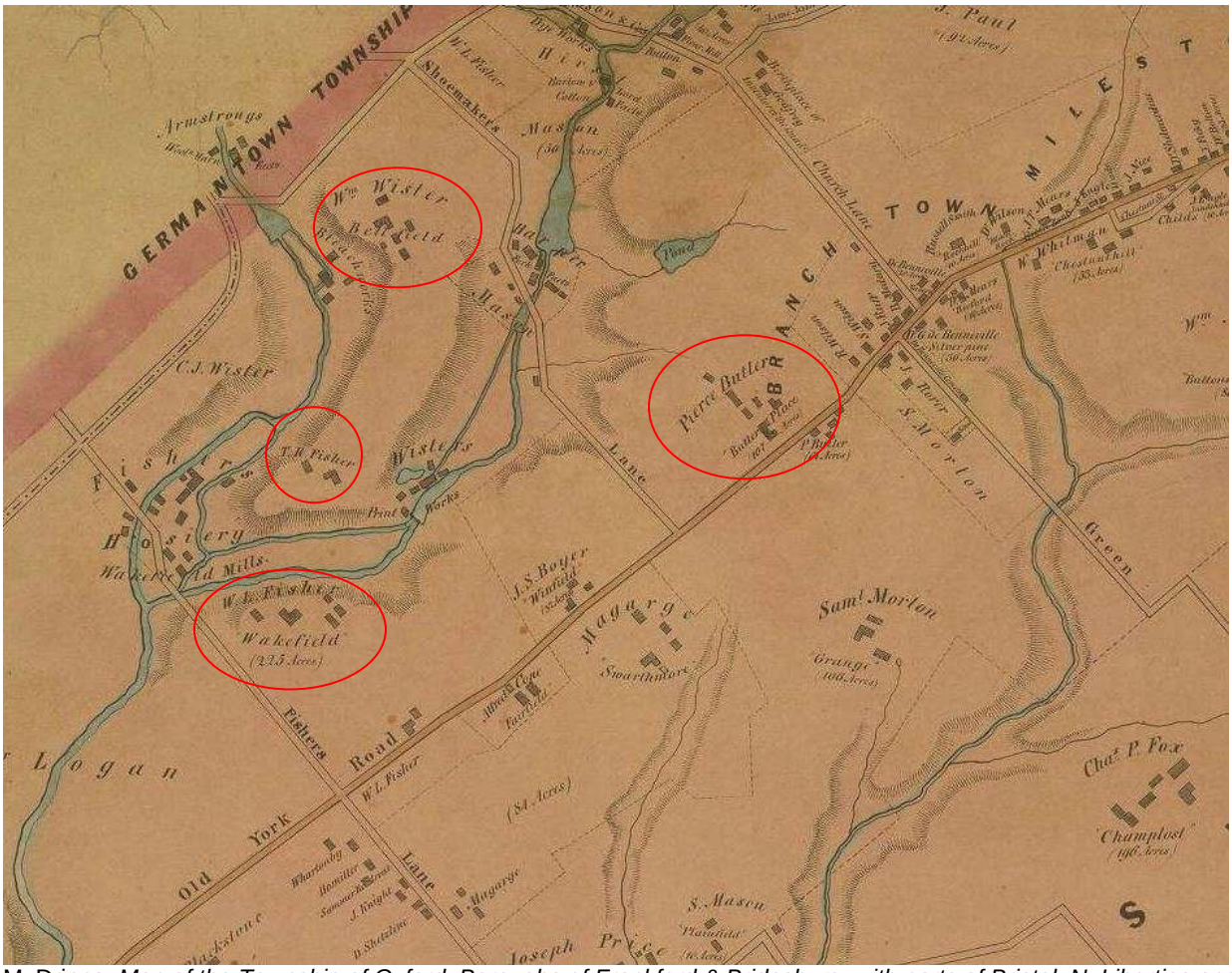
[13] Holst, Nancy A. "Pattern Books and the Suburbanization of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in the Mid - Nineteenth Century,” (dissertation, University of Delaware, 2008), 75.
[14] Nicholas B. Wainright, ed., *A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967), 328.
[15] Ibid., 324.

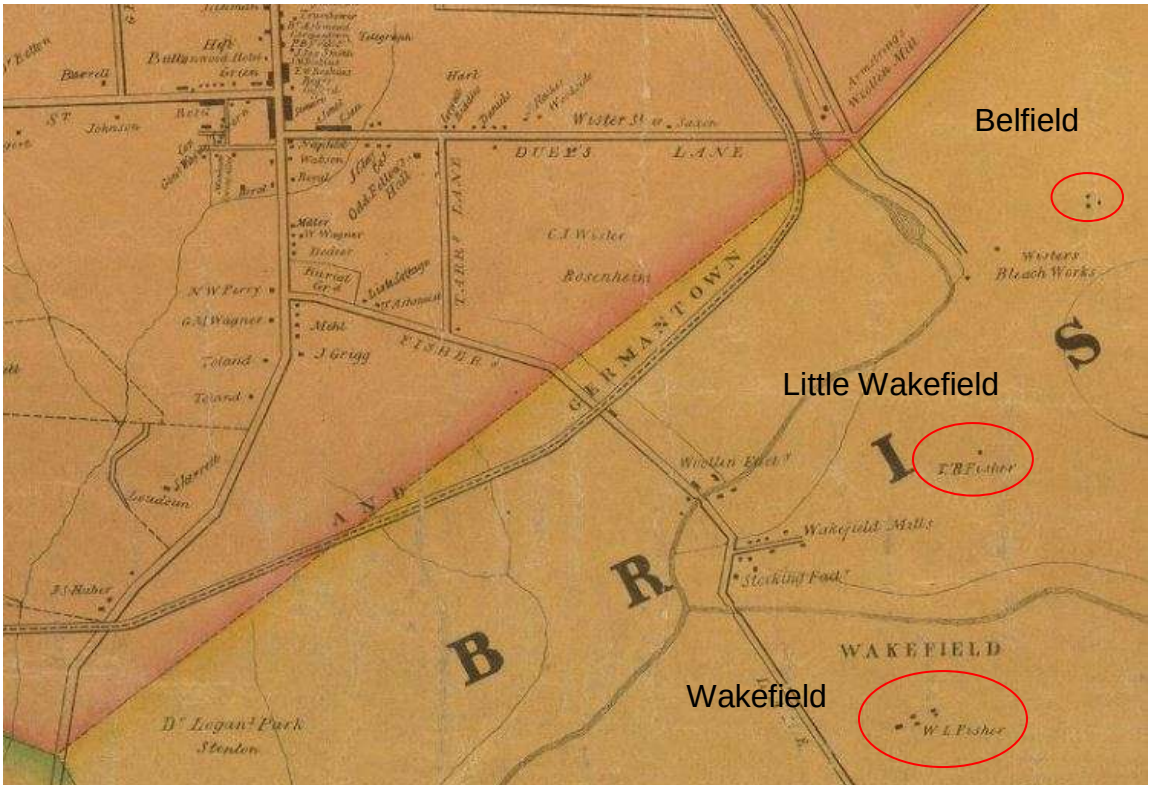


M. Dripps, *Map of the Township of Oxford, Boroughs of Frankford & Bridesburg: with parts of Bristol, N. Liberties and Cheltenham Townships*, 1849. Courtesy of Free Library of Philadelphia. Wakefield, Little Wakefield, Belfield, and Butler Place are all annotated. The Fishers are developing what is known as Wakefield, containing their estate and mills, with Fisher's Lane as a legacy of that, and the Wister family has holdings in Germantown Township as well as north of Wakefield in Bristol Township. Logan family holdings can be seen to the south.

In the same year William Logan Fisher bought Belfield, his second child, Sarah Logan Fisher (1806-1891) married William Wister, the great-grandson of John Wister. The ceremony took place at Grumblethorpe, the Wister family seat; William Logan Fisher, Sarah's father, disowned and banned her from marrying on his property or a Quaker meetinghouse after learning that the Wisters were not birthright Quakers. As Barry Levy notes in *Quakers in the American Family*, "When more than one child married out, even if a father did not cooperate, the parents lost prestige and were often subjected to these criticism of the meeting."[16] Even though Sarah was the only child of William Logan Fisher's to do so, he presumably felt it necessary for the reputation of his family or himself to force her out of Meeting.

[16] Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988): 142.

Perhaps to dissipate this family tension, the newlyweds were gifted by William Logan Fisher approximately 12 acres of Belfield land, including the farmstead, where they raised their six sons – William Rotch Wister (1827-1911), John Wister (1829-1900), Langhorne Wister (1834-1891), Jones Wister (1839-1917), Francis Wister (1841-1905) and Rodman Wister (1844-1913).[17] The boys grew up at Belfield, all served in the Civil War, and held a number of careers both within and outside the family businesses.[18]



J. C Sidney's *Map of the Township of Germantown, with the names of the Property Holders*. Philadelphia: R. P. Smith, n.d. (ca. 1848). Greater Philadelphia Geohistory Network/Germantown Historical Society Although a less detailed map than the 1849 Dripps, the Logan family holdings around Stenton are apprent in Germantown The impact of the Logan, Fisher, and Wister families are becoming apparent; the Logans have considerable holdings in the Stenton tract to the southwest.

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[17] Sarah Logan Wister Starr, *History of Belfield,* Philadelphia: Sarah Logan Wister Starr, 1934, Historical Society of Pennsylvania Starr papers.

[18] William Rotch Wister, the father of Frances Anne Wister, is the oldest son. He attended the University of Pennsylvania, earning a Bachelor of Arts in 1845. Admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar in 1849, Rotch was only one of only a few lawyers in Philadelphia, and thus maintained a lucrative law practice during his lifetime. William Rotch is also known as the "father of American cricket." It is said that, as a young boy, he and his brothers stumbled upon English millworkers playing cricket and begun to research and play the sport. In 1842, William Rotch helped organize a cricket club at Penn, which today is recognized as the university's first organized sport. In addition, he was a founding member of the Germantown Cricket Club, along with some of his brothers, in 1854. John Wister, another brother, took over as president of the family-owned Duncannon Iron Works, and split his time between Belfield and Duncannon. In addition to the legacy of the Duncannon Iron Works, combinations of brothers collaborated on businesses. William Rotch, John, Jones, and Langhorne built a blast furnace and formed a partnership called the J & J Wister Company, lasting from the late 1860s to 1882. Then, Jones, Langhorne and Rodman joined together as L. & R. Wister & Company, selling iron and other scrap metals.

By 1830, Logan-Fisher estate holdings or residents of descendants included Stenton, Grumblethorpe, Vernon, Butler Place, Wakefield, Little Wakefield, and Belfield. Belonging to Sarah Logan Fisher Wister's immediate descendants were Wakefield, Little Wakefield, and Belfield. At Belfield, Sarah Logan Fisher Wister tended to her family, while her father William was close by at Wakefield, and brother Thomas at Little Wakefield. Thomas, William, and her husband William Wister, too, were close to their places of work at the mills close by. Jones Wister, in his reminiscences, noted the degree to which his father was familiar with the surrounding community. "He knew everybody in Germantown and everybody knew him. As he drove through the streets he would hail his friends and talk jovially with every one."[19]

The development of Germantown in the decades to follow transformed the area to a coexisting mix of suburban commuter dwellings, working-class housing, and country seats, and in doing so changed the nature and significance of Wister land holdings.

The first big change came to Germantown in 1832 with the incorporation and construction of the Philadelphia, Germantown & Norristown Railroad. With more trains running to and from Philadelphia in the summer than in the winter, the railroad maintained a schedule enforcing the idea of Germantown as a summer retreat or year-round country seat for the ultra-wealthy. It was still not common, yet, for year-round suburban living and commuting to the city. Germantown historian Nancy Holst adds:

> For the wealthy man who had concluded his days of active business, “retiring” to a location outside the city was acceptable, but for the man still actively tied to the market life of the urban center, such a relocation was often regarded as a surprising act of willfulness, a strange rejection of urban society and culture, and a foolish submission to the vicissitudes of winter transportation.[20]

Indeed, “numerous, dispersed, multi-acre lots came on the market in the 1840s and 1850s, many of which were advertised as being suitable for country seats and purchased by buyers for that purpose.”[21] At the same time, speculators created a number a smaller lots which “accommodated the flood of immigrants who arrived to work in Germantown’s growing industries.”[22]

It took nearly a decade and a half after the construction of the railroad before developers used it as a selling point. But it was also around this time that public discontent with the infrequent train schedule became apparent, indicating that,

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[19] Jones Wister, *Reminiscences* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1920): 108, accessed 31 May 2016, https://books.google.com/books?id=LTtHAAAAIAAJ.
[20] Holst, Nancy A. "Pattern Books and the Suburbanization of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in the Mid - Nineteenth Century,” (dissertation, University of Delaware, 2008), 210.
[21] Ibid.,101.
[22] Ibid., 77.

gradually, the population was beginning to change in favor of year-round residents. The railroad ultimately responded to the public outcry by adding ten daily trains by 1853, and sixteen by 1857.[23]

The emergence of developers subdividing lots on speculation coincided with the incorporation of Germantown as a Borough in 1844 late and the resultant local oversight over road paving and property survey. Adding smaller lots in the vicinity of Germantown allowed the area to transform to an area not just for the Philadelphia elite. It turned into a living, working community with diversity in occupation and lifestyle. Holst claims that

> With its increasing assortment of new village homes, suburban villas, and country seats—properties both owned and tenanted and conducive to both summer or year-round use—Germantown encompassed the multiple and overlapping categories of experience and perception that characterized a landscape of early suburbanization. Exploring the nature of these experiences and the various meanings connected with them suggests that early suburbanization was marked by considerable diversity and ambivalence. In 1850, the idea of leaving the city for year-round residency in Germantown or any other outlying location was still an unconventional choice, for reasons that included limited physical access, social isolation, and a reluctance to abandon the culture and status associated with living in the city. Perceptions of the village varied as widely as the individuals who expressed them. The emergence of Germantown as a suburb was not a natural outcome of its accessibility, nor an indicator of pattern-book influence, but a sign of gradually changing cultural attitudes.[24]

Not everybody was happy with changes in infrastructure that came to the area. Holst argues through testimony from "Old Germantown" families, including the Wisters, that "those who cherished a sentimental attachment to ancestral property or revered the pristine qualities of natural scenery found scant comfort in damages awarded or in notions of progress."[25] She goes on to explain that

> Most of the complainants were wealthy occupants of country seats who not only resented encroachment on their property rights, but head a contrasting view of the character and prospects of Germantown. They did not want their carefully landscaped and wooded properties bisected by new streets they deemed unnecessary, and they had no interest in the potential for suburban-lot development that would detract from the rural character of their land.[26]

Sidney George Fisher is not an exception to this theory, writing in his diary that

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[23] Ibid., 209.
[24] Ibid., 165-66.
[25] Ibid., 80.
[26] Ibid., 94.

> Wakefield, which looked very beautiful, with its lawn of rich grass, groves of noble forest trees and fine masses of wood, now glowing with the rich colors of autumn. It is a handsome place and I feel an interest in it, not merely from early association but because it has belonged to my family for three generations.[27]

Rather than giving in to mounting development pressure, upon his death in 1862, William Logan Fisher willed the Belfield land to his two daughters, Sarah Logan Fisher Wister and Mary Rodman Fisher Fox (half-sisters). However, Fisher stipulated that Sarah Logan Fisher Wister inherit the Belfield house, gardens, and secondary structures of the farmhouse.[28]

The Wister Compound at Belfield, 1862-1984

The construction of 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue was both a reflection of and a reaction to the rapid pace of suburban development in Germantown. Between 1868 and 1891 (Sarah Logan Fisher Wister's death), the western part of the Belfield estate was built up with ample cottages and villas and semi-detached homes, mostly by the six sons of Sarah Logan Fisher Wister. Various branches of the Wister family lived in these cottages, mostly from the last quarter of the nineteenth century through the first quarter of the twentieth century. Not unlike other prominent Quaker families of the time, the Wisters created a compound for themselves in Germantown with both the older homesteads and newer mansions reflecting the popular architectural styles of the time. Yet, these architectural styles also remained within the aesthetic boundaries of Quaker taste. As previously described, the main holdings for the Wister family focused around the Belfield mansion and its surrounding land, while those earlier estates such as Stenton and Wakefield were inherited by other descendants of Fishers and Logans. The properties of William Logan Fisher's grandchildren were constructed on his land without any formal change in title; it was easy for different families and/or family members to move in and out.

This development was probably also done in response to the increasing suburbanization of the area and pressure to sell off their land to speculators. By developing the land themselves with houses for the family, the Wisters would not have to sell their land to a developer and could continue the country lifestyle which had been maintained by their families in prior generations.

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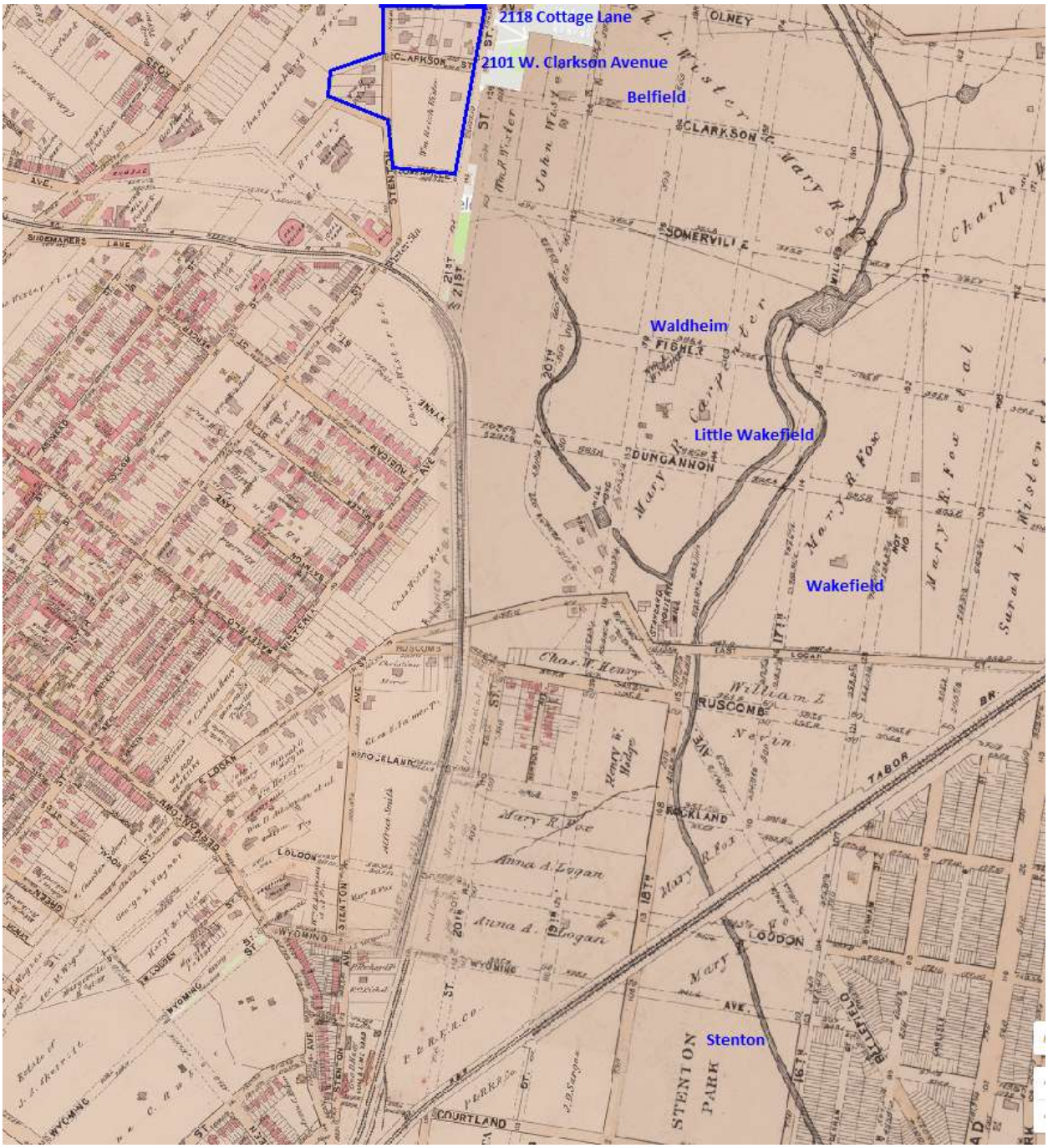
[27] Nicholas B. Wainright, ed., *A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967), 335.

[28] Philadelphia Deed Book No. 341 p. 227 &c (15 July 1893), Philadelphia Will Book No. 49 p. 79 &c (9 October 1862). The Belfield estate also included Wakefield, and William Logan Fisher requested that his unmarried daughter, Elizabeth Rodman Fisher, maintain the property. Little Wakefield, too, was willed to Sarah Logan Fisher Wister, but it was lived in by Thomas Rodman Fisher, her brother, and his family.



By 1895, development is creeping inward to Logan, Fisher, and Wister land holdings. To the west of their compound is the diverse housing stock along and off Germantown Avenue--what Nancy Holst describes as the suburban town house, the the center-passage suburban dwelling, and the suburban twin. To the southeast, the map indicates small lots subdivided for future construction for dense, middle-class housing. The properties within the blue polygon are what was built by the Wisters between 1868 and 1891. G. W. Bromley, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia* (1895), Plate 39.

2105 and 2107 Clarkson Avenue. This was also the house type of 5501, 5507, 5519, 5521, 5533, and 5535 Wister Street. Courtesy Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Cultural Resources Database.

549 Wister Street, another house in the "compound," built in the 1880s-1890s. Courtesy Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Cultural Resources Database.

2101 Clarkson Avenue was one of the detached, single-family cottages on the property. William Rotch Wister had the house built in 1868 for himself and his new wife, Mary (Eustis) Wister. It was in this house that their daughter Frances Anne Wister was born (and very likely that her older sister Mary Channing Wister was born). In 1876, the Wister family moved to their new large estate, called "Wister," located across the street on Clarkson Avenue.[29] In 1884, Jones Wister and his two daughters moved into 2101 Clarkson Avenue, and lived there for approximately ten years.

[29] Wister and its parcel was donated by Frances to the city of Philadelphia in 1911; Frances Anne Wister lived in this property until her death. The land was turned into a park and called Wister's Woods. Managed by the Fairmount Park Commission, the house was demolished in 1956. Wakefield in the 20th Century had a similar fate: the house and grounds were transferred to the city in 1922 to create a public park. The house burned down in 1985, an act of arson. Little Wakefield is owned by La Salle University and is known as St. Mutien Christan Brother's Residence.

1926 aerial image showing the Wister family compound. 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue is indicated by the red arrow. 2103 W. Clarkson Avenue, still extant, is to its right. Wister can be seen in the background with what appears to be an adjacent farm patch. Courtesy Library Company of Philadelphia.

The family compound was vital to daily life at Belfield. With Sarah Logan Fisher Wister and William Wister occupying Belfield, the surrounding properties occupied by their children, and the Wister brothers doing business together, the family remained both physically and emotionally close and in constant contact.

Photograph of Wister from Mutual Assurance Insurance Survey. Courtesy Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Ella Wister Haines in her *Reminiscences* notes the frequency with which she saw her grandparents and cousins at Belfield: "I was twelve when [Grandmother Wister] died, at

the age of 85, and up to that day I had eaten noon dinner with her seven days a week, except during our vacations away from home."[30] She goes on to say:

> ...[Grandfather Wister] and grandmother sat at dinner with as many grandchildren as they could assemble. These consisted of my sisters Mary Channing and Frances, Anne and Ethel, daughters of my uncle Jones who, during Gram'ma's life time were living in the Clarkson Avenue house originally occupied by my parents, and several times a year we were thrilled to have with us Bessie (later Mrs. Charles Stewart Wurts), Sarah (Mrs. James Starr), Margaret (Mrs. Edward B. Meigs), daughters of Uncle John and Aunt Sally, who lived in Duncannon. Grandmother also had three very young grandsons, my brother John Caspar Wister born in 1887, Uncle Rodman's two sons, Langhorne Harvey and Rodman Mifflin, a trifle younger. The latter family lived in town and came only on Sundays.[31]

Other extended family members and friends lived nearby in Germantown. Ella continues:

> At the time of the occupancy of my grandparents of Belfield, notable personages were living on the surrounding estates. Among those were John Cadwaller whose summer home was very near on Wister Street, what was then Dewey's Lane; John Dickenson [sic] was frequently at Stenton; Fanny Kimble and Pierce Butler were occupying Butler place [sic], whose fields adjoined the Belfield tract; James Logan Fisher and his sisters were at Brookwood, now Crescentville, while several of the Ingersoll family were located nearby. William Wharton and his brothers, Joseph and Charles, were within a mile.[32]

When Sarah Logan Fisher Wister died in 1891, her son, John, bought the Belfield farmstead from her estate, and lived there until his death in 1900.[33] Other portions of the Belfield estate were split up among the Wister brothers the following year; however, the block of 21st Street, Wister Avenue, Clarkson Avenue and Cottage Lane – the land containing 2101 Clarkson Avenue and eight other cottages – was not part of these divisions, and thus remained part of Sarah Logan Fisher Wister's estate. Elizabeth Rodman Fisher, who was living in Wakefield, passed away that same year; after her death, her half-sister Mary Rodman Fox moved her family into Wakefield.

John Wister died in 1900. By 1901, his newly married daughter, Sarah Logan Wister Starr, was living in "The Mansion," 2118 Cottage Lane, with her husband James. In 1922, her mother, Sarah Tyler (Boas) Wister, still living at Belfield, passed away and

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[30] Ella Wister Haines, *Reminiscences of a Victorian Child* (September 1953): 2.
[31] Ibid., 6.
[32] Sarah Logan Wister Starr, *History of Belfield*, manuscript, 5-6, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
[33] Ibid., 2.

willed the land to Sarah Logan and her husband (much to the chagrin of Sarah's sister, Elizabeth). Starr also inherited the land that was part of Sarah Logan Fisher Wister and Mary Rodman Fox's estate. Starr and her husband moved into Belfield, maintaining and improving the farmstead, while also installing bathrooms and electricity in the house. She lived in Belfield while renting out the other houses remaining in the estate, including the Tenant House at Belfield, 2101 Clarkson Avenue (for $75 per month, according to her personal ledgers) and 2118 Cottage Lane.[34] She and her husband also oversaw municipal improvements to the area around Belfield, including the installment of below-ground pipes, street grading, and street paving on their land (which, much to their chagrin, they had to pay for).

Sarah Logan Wister Starr was interested in Philadelphia history as well as her own family history, which translated into a preservation-minded strategy for Belfield. She maintained the house as a farmstead, with various animals and plantings. Her husband added a Chinese Garden after a trip to China. She also gave talks on William Penn and colonial history for a variety of groups. In 1934, she self-published *History of Belfield,* and a similar work for Stenton in 1938. In an address she gave there, she noted, "Public opinion is a strong force, and to my mind, Philadelphia will suffer an irreparable loss if Germantown Avenue, with its beautiful old buildings, is to be sacrificed to the commercial idea of the moment."[35] Clearly supplementing the work of her preservationist cousin Frances (to be elaborated on in the next section), in the same talk at Stenton, she states:

> We, as a country, are so very young and have so little of a past that it seems to me perhaps more important for us to protect the few things that we have…the influence on the architectural future of a country of its original buildings of beauty has always been very noticeable to me. The charm of the New England villages is largely traceable, I think, too. The early settlers from England coming as they did from generations of Manor Houses, brought with them in their minds the *groupings of buildings.*[36]

Perhaps it was Starr's exposure to the Fisher-Wister grounds of Belfield and Wakefield that made her aware of other intentional residential developments such as those in England or New England. Given this public opinion of hers, it is unsurprising, then, that she kept 2118 Cottage Lane and 2101 Clarkson Avenue for as long as she did: they remained as vestiges of this type of settlement in her own family.

By the 1930s, however, the Starrs recognized that holding on to all these properties while being forced to invest in undesired municipal improvements was changing the character of their land, and no longer a lucrative family investment. Without any other descendants either interested in continuing to live in Belfield or alive to do so, the Starrs

[34] Insurance on "Belfield" properties, Starr Family Papers, La Salle University Special Collections.
[35] Sarah Logan Wister Starr, manuscript of lecture at Stenton, n.d., Historical Society of Pennsylvania Starr Family Papers.
[36] Ibid.

began to solicit schools, country clubs, and other groups to garner interest in their land holdings. It was around this time that La Salle College bought their first tract of land neighboring Belfield on 20th and Olney from the Starrs.

Sarah Logan Wister Starr passed away in 1956, leaving Belfield to her daughter and grandson. In 1984, the grandson, Daniel Blain, Jr., sold the remaining property to La Salle University. This land included the Belfield mansion and its secondary structures, as well as the block bounded by 21st Street, Clarkson Avenue, Wister Street, and Cottage Lane (containing 2101 Clarkson Street). This was the last acquisition that La Salle obtained from the original Belfield tract. The house was used as the university's art studio, and aptly named the "Mary and Frances Wister Fine Arts Studio." La Salle mothballed the property in 2004 when it ceased its fine arts program.[37]

Quaker Family Compounds in Philadelphia

"Today went out with [Joshua F.] Fisher & his wife to a family dinner at 2 o'clock at Wakefield. . . . The dinner was good and properly tho simply served, the house is comfortable, the place beautiful and their manners tho plain & quakerlike are cordial, kind & by no means vulgar. Far superior in this to those of much of the flashy society in town and for this reason, that the family is, in position, fortune & education, what they have been all their lives & what their fathers were before them. They live on the estate which they have inherited, & the furniture of the house, plain, compared with modern luxury, belonged to those who lived there before them."[38]
-Sidney George Fisher, December, 29, 1843

The settlement of William Logan Fisher, his daughter Sarah Logan Fisher Wister, and her sons is reflective of a not uncommon practice among mid-nineteenth century Philadelphia Quakers. On the one hand, their vast land holdings and proximity to one another could be interpreted as a reaction against the increasing urbanization and development of areas like Germantown; with increasing access to the area via railroad, one could feasibly live full time in Germantown rather than just seek refuge over the summer. However, as descendants of long-standing conservative Quaker families, the Fisher-Wister's settlement can be understood as a nineteenth century adaptation of early colonial Quaker settlement patterns: one which sought to isolate from "worldly" influences and emphasized childrearing, "neighboring," and kinship beyond one's nuclear family.

The earliest Quakers to settle in the Delaware Valley recognized a conflict between earning a successful living and adhering to Quaker tenets of simplicity, frugality, and piousness, especially in fertile Pennsylvania lands. To remedy this, families began to place a strong emphasis on the family unit, and in particular raising children; as Barry

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[37] Steve Graham, "Historic Wister Family Home Sits Unused on La Salle Campus, Future Uncertain," *Germantown Beat*, 31 March 2016, accessed 25 May 2016, http://wp.lasalle.edu/gb/2016/03/31/historic-wister-family-home-sits-unused-on-la-salle-campus-future-uncertain/

[38] Nicholas B. Wainright, ed., *A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967): 150.

Levy notes, "Children made piety and profit compatible. The settlers' private wealth did not destroy their communities, it made them possible."[39] One had to earn a substantial living to support a large family, and for those early settlers, owning land in a new colony would make a good investment.

However, this land was not sold for profit. Levy goes on to say that in the late seventeenth century, "settlers bought, exchanged, and preserved land largely for their children...Hoping to settle all their sons on farms, and some grandchildren too, the settlers bought land as their households grew."[40] In Germantown, at least among the Logans, Fishers, and Wisters, this practice did not change through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even when industries such as smelting, printing, or dyeing replaced farming as the primary occupation for the family, having large land holdings remained a priority.

William Logan Fisher and his Meeting disowned his daughter Sarah for marrying a "convinced" Quaker rather than a birthright Quaker, but he gave her and his son-in-law a house of their own, Belfield, on his property. Even though this appears to be a nice gesture, or even a contradiction of his purported disapproval of his daughter's union, there may have been more at work here. Fisher, in light of his daughter's marriage, was probably interested in keeping her on his land, within his Quaker domain, rather than her going to live with William Wister's "worldly" family. The influence of Fisher's more conservative ancestors, who lived among the early Quaker settler ideals of land holding, family legacy, and piousness, in this context, is clear. Would Sarah and William Wister have had six children if they did not have the physical grounds to do so? Their offspring, in turn, built up the land with houses of their own (including 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue), or inherited others, ultimately staying within the family enclave that had been so essential to their upbringing.

Levy also notes that "middling Quakers, by seeking to protect their children from the "world" and by maintaining nurturing familial love and peace, effectively accumulated wealth. Quaker parents bought vast amounts of land, built large and comfortable houses, and distributed their wealth carefully and seemingly shrewdly to their children"[41] A "shrewd inheritance" may have been the custom of early Germantown Quaker settlers such as James Logan, who gave his daughter Sarah Logan Fisher a mere 12 acres (of his hundreds, if not thousands) upon her marriage; John Wister, whose son William Wister made his living by working for his wealthier in-laws, the Fishers; or William Logan Fisher, who did not officially grant his daughter and son-in-law the Belfield land until after his death.[42]

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[39] Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988): 128.
[40] Ibid., 135.
[41] Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 178
[42] William Wister had a variety of business ventures with his in-laws. His brother-in-law, Thomas Rodman Fisher, ventured in the woolen goods business together as Wiste & Fisher Woolen Goods. The Belfield

As these families grew in size well into the nineteenth century, the sentiments that endured were those of familial proximity and wealth, and less about Quaker religious values. In 1856 Sidney George Fisher writes in his diary of the dilemma he faced between moving somewhere more affordable and staying close to family:

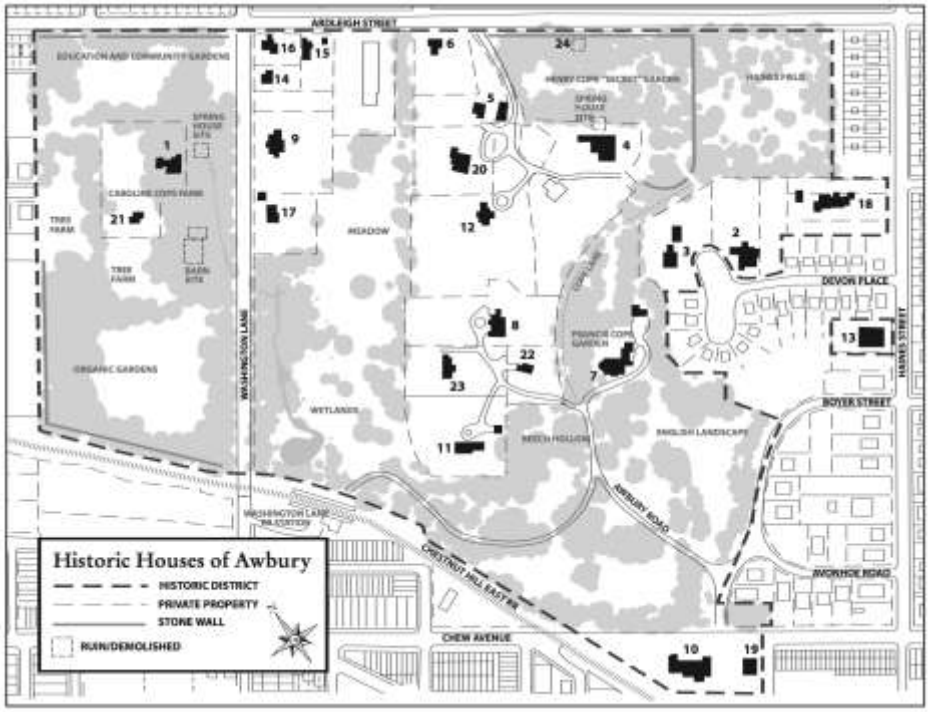
> I cannot afford to live in town...the question is where to go. Unless we go somewhere on the line of this North Penna. Rl. Rd., we shall be isolated from all our friends, and the separation would be almost complete for the rest of our lives. If we do go there, it would be easy to get to Henry's, Geo. Smith's, Harry Ingersoll's, Joshua Fisher's, and Wakefield, & Forest Hill, & these comprise all the relations and friends who are nearest to us in both blood & intimacy.[43]

It was not just a coincidence that these family members and close friends lived near each other. Keeping land in the family ensured that wealth stayed within the family, rather than slipping away to a “world’s person.”

There are other well-known examples of this phenomenon in nineteenth century Germantown. Awbury, just a few blocks northwest of the Wister enclave along Chew Avenue, was the enclave the Haines-Cope family compound. Land was acquired first by John Haines (1820-1886) and Mary Cope (1819-1890), and then followed by those of Mary’s father, Henry Cope (1793-1865). From about 1850-1920, approximately 30 houses were built by relatives and descendants on the grounds. In hiring prominent architects to design the houses, and landscape architects to plant the grounds, the Copes created an enclave in an increasingly urbanized Germantown, a neighborhood becoming different from the rise in speculative development. In the early twentieth century, the families preserved part of the grounds as a public arboretum, still open today. Awbury has also been nominated to the local and national historic registers.

Print Works was founded by William Wister and his father-in-law, William Logan Fisher. William Wister also built the Wister’s Print Works, a bleaching and dyeing facility, along the Wingohocking Creek. From 1853-1880 he also served as Treaturer of the North Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

[43] Nicholas B. Wainright, ed., *A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967), 255-256.



Courtesy Awbury Arboretum Association, *The Historic Houses of Awbury* (Philadelphia: 2008).

The family of Marmaduke Cope is yet another Germantown Quaker settlement. Cope moved to Germantown in 1875, purchasing and enlarging a cottage at 48 E. Penn Street. This completed a family grouping on the south side of E. Penn Street.

1895 map showing Cope family settlement along E. Penn Street.

Immediately to the east of Marmaduke Cope's house was the home of his son-in-law and daughter, Anthony Morris Kimber, who had married Margaret Cooper Cope in 1853. The next house to the east was Marmaduke Cope's other son-in-law and daughter, James Whitall who had married Mary Wistar Cope (1834-1897) in 1856.[44] The enclave of Quakers survived until 1960 when Mildred Whitall Waring's grandson sold 48 E. Penn Street to the Germantown Settlement for one dollar.

Other families in Germantown, such as the Hackers and Strawbridges, had two-house settlements on modest parcels, typically representing a parent-child relationship.

[44] Form: Family Record of James Whitall, The Gilbert Cope Foundation of Genealogical and Historical Research, 14 January 1939.

2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, and the Wister compound in general, is an interesting case of this phenomenon because, as shown through the narratives of Frances Wister's ancestors and relatives, the family settlement had existed in the area arguably since James Logan built Stenton. Fisher-Wister building campaigns occurred in three phases: a colonial/early republic period, from 1728-1798, a second campaign in 1803-1830, and a final spurt from about 1868 to 1881. This roughly corresponds with six generations of settlement, including Frances' generation. In addition, not all the cottages built on Wister land were inhabited by Wisters. Among family correspondence held at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, it is Belfield, Wister, Wakefield, Little Wakefield, Butler Place, 2101 Clarkson Avenue, 2103 Clarkson Avenue, and 2118 Cottage Lane that are mentioned, despite there being many other properties built on Wister-owned land. It is possible, then, that the remaining houses were used as rental properties to bring in additional income to the family while allowing the land to remain in Wister hands.

Excluding Belfield, which was constructed prior to Wister settlement of this particular area of Germantown/Logan, 2101 Clarkson and 2103 Clarkson are the only two remaining properties from this era of suburban development. Wakefield, Little Wakefield, Wister, and all the cottages along Wister Street and Cottage Lane have been either demolished or destroyed by fire. Although 2101 W. Clarkson Street was less grand than some of the other estates on the Wister property, and could arguably be considered a secondary property of the family compound, it serves as a surviving example of the type of development that did exist in this part of Germantown, and of the family compound that was once located here.

"Gentleman Farming" at Belfield

At Belfield, Charles Willson Peale was among a number of Philadelphians who took an interest in "gentleman farming" -- an amateur pursuit among upper middle class and wealthy men who enjoy the idea of partaking in a bucolic lifestyle removed from the busy urban core. For them, farming was not about producing goods to sell as a livelihood-- it was about combining the science of agriculture and the art of horticulture.

In fact, nearly 100 years earlier, James Logan was known to have an interest in horticulture. This interest was not uncommon for the time, and supports the argument that "The chief diversions of the Quaker merchants and their families were gardening and the pleasures of the table, and Quaker gardens were as famous for their beauty as Quaker dinners for their abundance."[45] In designing Stenton, he initially referred to the estate as a "plantation," conducted experiments on plant species, and maintained one of the earliest horticultural libraries. His son, William Logan, cultivated gardens and transformed the land into a working farm.

[45] Frederick B. Tolles, *Meetinghouse and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1948), 135.

With the sentiments of optimism and equality for all that many Americans felt after the Revolution, some scholars observe a level of restraint in early Federal period gardens. Kenneth Stilgoe notes that "In the Federalist mind, the big new house ornamenting a growing seaport city or inland market town must not insult the sensibility of farmers and mechanics. Instead it must reinforce the popular understanding of shared beliefs linking the farmer or workingman with the well-to-do merchant or lawyer."[46] As such, a gentleman pursuing horticultural studies is doing so to advance the science of agriculture, not just for his own profit but for the profit of other farmers in America.

Charles Willson Peale, *Cabbage Patch, The Gardens of Belfield, Pennsylvania* (1814-15), shows the transition of agriculture and intentional plantings to the natural landscape beyond the farm.

Charles Willson Peale, *View of the Garden at Belfield* (1816), shows the integration of built features into the landscape, such as the farmhouse, gazebo, a fountain, and decorative fencing.

Charles Willson Peale, *Belfield Farm* (1817)

As Therese O'Malley observes, "During the years 1810 to 1820, Peale transformed his property into a *ferme ornée*, an ornamented farm where the artful and utilitarian characteristics of Belfield were intermixed."[47] A close friend of Thomas Jefferson and inspired by Monticello's gardens, "Peale embraced a classical republican imagery for his garden, reaffirming the agrarian ideal through ornament, inscription, and the

[46] John R. Stilgoe *Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb 1820-1939* (New Haven: Yale Press, 1988), 95.
[47] Therese O'Malley, "Charles Willson Peale's Farm Belfield: Its Place in American Garden History," in *New Perspectives on Charles Willson Peale: a 250th Anniversary Celebration,* ed. Lillian B. Miller and David C. Ward (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1991), 269.

productivity of the farm."[48] This relationship can be seen in his paintings of Belfield, where features such as gazebos, winding paths and careful plantings are juxtaposed with the uninhabited lands beyond the farm. [49]

Peale greatly expanded the farmhouse, cultivated a garden, and built a number of secondary structures on the property. "We can understand Peale's "improvement" of the property he purchased as an attempt to perfect the natural world, to order it as he did the natural history objects in his museum," O'Malley adds. "In his retirement at Belfield, Peale brought together the emblems, forms, philosophy, and order that he had pursued in many media throughout his life."[50]

2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, as part of the original Belfield tract, is also representative of a larger philosophy of gentleman farming that was part of the Belfield and Wakefield landscape. William Wister and Sarah Logan Fisher Wister lived at Belfield for their entire married life, and continued the gentleman farming that Charles Willson Peale had started on the estate. This activity was passed down to their sons and other relatives, who, as described earlier continued to tend animals and grow crops and gardens through the early to mid-twentieth century.

Cows in a field at Butler Place (with house in background). Courtesy Germantown Historical Society.

Appearing in publications like *The Horticulturist*, gentleman farming was understood as amateur farmkeeping in the suburban countryside that rarely produced a profit. Instead,

[48] Ibid., 270.
[49] Ibid., 270
[50] Ibid., 279

there was an aesthetic and scientific component to gentleman farming in the way a property owner cultivated his land, experimented with crops, and placed his house among the various plantings and gardens. From the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century, the idea of gentleman farming transitions from a scientific endeavor harkening to the Englightenment to a practice channeling ideas of country living.

In June 1856, the *Horticulturist* published a critique of this practice, noting that "the gathering and fixing alone too often cost the gentleman more money than he receives for the whole load."[51] However, the publication does not acknowledge that these gentlemen often understand this, and that their "farming" is inspired by the writings of Andrew Jackson Downing, who in his works classifies the farm-house type as a beautiful and desirable: “It requires no argument, therefore, to prove that the comfort or convenience of farmers is of more weight and importance, numerically considered, than that of any other class; or that whoever desires to see his country adorned with tasteful dwellings, must not overlook its most frequent and continual feature – the farm-house.”[52]

Downing, too, writes about the gentleman farmer; however, his reflections are similar to that of the *Horticulturist:*

> These city gentleman forget that agriculture, when properly pursued, under the most favorable circumstances, requires great attention, both early and late, and there are very few employments which have more crosses, losses, and disappointments, necessarily attached to them.[53]
>
> The farmer returns to his work as soon as market is over; *his* wife and children are busily employed in the gardens, or field, and their presence and example keep his laborers at work while he is from home. The gentleman is very differently situated; everything is hired, and the examples set by one or another are exactly calculated to promote idleness, chicany, and fraud.[54]

Although Downing too disdains the seeming idleness of the gentleman farmer, his pattern books provide designs for farm houses that cost up to tens of thousands of dollars – a homestead clearly meant for a gentleman, and not what he sees as a true farmer.

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[51] *The Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Craft and Rural Taste, Vol. VI* (June 1856) (Philadelphia: Robert Pearsall Smith, January to December 1856): 251.
[52] Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses, Including Designs for Cottages, Farm-Houses, and Villas, With Remarks on Interiors, Furniture, and the Best Modes of Warming and Ventilations* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1851): 135.
[53] *The Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Craft and Rural Taste, Vol. VI* (June 1856) (Philadelphia: Robert Pearsall Smith, January to December 1856): 250
[54] Ibid. 251.

J. C. Sidney also hints at gentleman farming in his pattern book, *American Cottage & Villa Architecture:*

> "What more agreeable and healthy for a man harassed by the cars and fatigues of business, than to leave the confined and heated streets of the city, to step on board one of our splendid river boats, breath the pure and refreshing air form off the water, get "home," eat his dinner in a cool room, with fruits and vegetables from his own garden, and then, with his family, enjoy the evening stroll in his own grounds, free from the restraint of dress and etiquette!"[55]

Although this comment focuses more on the benefits of suburban living, Sidney does imply the practice of cultivating food on one's own land.

The Wisters and Fishers certainly adhered to Downing's principles. The inhabitants of Belfield, Wakefield, and Little Wakefield maintained their properties as farmhouse villas, with gardens, animals, and produce plantings. Long after the family land was inherited by the Starrs, Sarah Logan Wister Starr continued the "farm" at Belfield through the mid-twentieth century. The preservation of farmland likely contributed the strong level of integrity of Belfield when it was nominated to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in 1956 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974.

Despite being smaller than Belfield of Wakefield, 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue was the site of gentleman farming as well. Upon moving to the house in 1884 with his daughters, Jones Wister made a number of improvements to the property, including constructing a stable, chicken house, hothouse, greenhouse, lawn tennis court, and planting a vegetable garden.[56] His intent was not to profit from the crop, but rather, to provide sustenance for his family on his land. At the same time, he wanted to use his property for leisure and recreation, as evidence by the tennis court and greenhouse.

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[55] J. C. Sidney*, American Cottage & Villa Architecture*, (New York: Appleton & Co., 1850): 4.
[56] Jones Wister, *Reminiscences* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1920): 205-6, accessed 31 May 2016, https://books.google.com/books?id=LTtHAAAAIAAJ.

2101 Clarkson Avenue: Birthplace of Frances Anne Wister

This property is also significant under **Criterion A** as the birthplace and early childhood home of Frances Anne Wister (1874-1956), a Philadelphian who became involved with and founded several important institutions in the city, including the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks.

As previously described, Frances comes from an accomplished set of descendants with a long history in Germantown. 2101 W. Clarkson Street, her birthplace, was built in 1868, the year her parents, William Rotch Wister and Mary Eustis, were married.[57] Frances' younger sister Ella, in her *Reminiscences*, described how the newlywed couple stayed on the family compound in a different property, Wakefield, with William's sister:

> "Aunt Elizabeth remained a maiden lady and occupied "Wakefield" until her death. She was devoted to my father, and when he brought his bride, Mary Rebecca Eustis, to Philadelphia in 1866, her house became their home for the first six months of their marriage, while their first Clarkson Avenue home was under construction."[58]

In 1876, when Frances was 2, she and her family moved across the street from 2101 Clarkson Street to *Wister*, an estate built by her father. She grew up surrounded by family members – in particular, her paternal grandparents at Belfield, whom she saw often, and various cousins and extended relatives.

One of her earliest public service commitments was her involvement with the Women's Civic Club of Philadelphia, which was founded by her older sister, Mary Channing Wister, in 1894 as an outlet "to aid in municipal reform."[59] She served as one of its vice presidents from 1907 until her death, with a brief stint as president from 1922-29; in addition, she edited the *Civic Club Bulletin*, the organization's monthly newsletter.

Frances Anne Wister developed a passion for music at a young age, and in particular developed an aptitude for the violin. From 1905-1956 she was Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra Association. From 1910-1956, she served as chairman of the Woman's Committee of the Orchestra (1910-1956); in this role, she helped with publicity and fundraising. From 1912-1956, she served as President of the Volunteer Committees. In 1925, she published *Twenty-five years of the Philadelphia Orchestra (1900-25)*. In the 1930s, she opposed then conductor Leopold Stokowski's desire to

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[57] So far unmentioned in this nomination is her mother, Mary Eustis (1844-1944), who grew up in Massachusetts and is the granddaughter of Rev. William Ellery Channing, the founder of the Unitarian religion (Milton Rubicam, "The Wister-Wistar Family: A Pennsylvania Family's Contributions Toward American Cultural Development," *Pennsylvania History* 20, no. 2 (April 1953): 158.).
[58] Ella Wister Haines, *Reminiscences of a Victorian Child* (September 1953), 5. Germantown Historical Society.
[59] Civic Club of Philadelphia, *Bulletin* XII, no 5 (January 1919), 2.

move the orchestra out of the Academy of Music to a new concert hall, calling him "out of order."[60]

Frances Anne Wister and her family were often chronicled in local papers, which documented their travels and local doings in Philadelphia. She never married, but after the passing of her sister Mary Channing she cared for her six children. When her brother in law, Owen Wister, moved from Belfield and took the children, Frances was able to devote more time to her civic pursuits.

Perhaps more interesting in the context of this nomination is one of Frances Anne Wister's lasting contributions to the city of Philadelphia: the founding of the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in 1931. After hearing that the Powel House on 2nd Street was about to be demolished to make room for street parking, Wister, with the help of other members of the newly-formed Society, was able to raise the funds necessary for the Society to purchase the property, thus saving it from demolition. Later acquisitions of the Society in her lifetime included Grumblethorpe, the house built by her first Wister ancestor in America. In addition to helping the Society purchase the house and preventing its demolition, she also raised the money necessary to restore the property to its colonial appearance.

Frances Anne Wister in an undated photo. Courtesy of Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks.

The Society did not just purchase threatened historic buildings, also being involved in the preservation campaigns of the Second Bank of the United States, Elfreth's Alley, and the Old Franklin Institute (currently the Philadelphia History Museum). After

[60] "Women Who Do Things: Miss Frances A. Wister," *Evening Public Ledger*, n.d., Germantown Historical Society, Wister Family Scrapbook

Frances Anne Wister's death, the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks acquired and restored the Physick House in Old City, and helped administer Historic Waynesborough, the farm of General Anthony Wayne, in Chester County.

In 1949 she was appointed as the Director of Pennsylvania Parks Association Board. That same year she donated *Wister* and seven and a third acres to add to Wister's Woods to the Fairmount Park Conservancy. She did, however, continue to live in Wister until her death in 1956.

Frances Wister's involvement in Philadelphia affairs did not go unrecognized. Awards and honors include the Elise Willing Balch Memorial medal of the Colonial Dames for her work with the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in 1933. She was honored as a Prominent Woman of Pennsylvania, a meritorious service medal from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1935. In 1936, Wister won the Gimbel Award for her contributions to the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks and the Philadelphia Orchestra. In 1949 she was honored as a Designated Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania.

In some of her writings held at the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks, Frances Anne Wister is quoted as saying:

> …places of interest and importance are to be found in every section of Philadelphia, but how long they will be found is another question. How many years will it take to educate the public to preserve landmarks? People endow art galleries, collect pictures, take some interest in orchestras, but little in old buildings.[61]

2101 W. Clarkson Avenue is one such old building that has been under the radar for decades, and, without further intervention, at risk of demolition. With a staggering number of her family's holdings in Germantown no longer standing, designating 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places is an opportunity to honor her family's legacy in the development of Germantown, as well as Frances Anne Wister's personal legacy as a preservationist and civic-minded Philadelphian.

(c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;

The block bounded by Clarkson Avenue, 21st Street, Olney/Cottage Lane, and Wister/Stenton Avenue was fully developed (likely by the Wisters) with three freestanding homes and five "twins" for a total of 13 dwellings. Across Stenton (Wister) Avenue, William Rotch Wister owned two detached homes and one semi-detached

[61] "History," *Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks*, accessed 30 June 2016, http://www.philalandmarks.org/#!history/chlo.

house. Between Clarkson and Somerville Avenues along 21st Street was Wister, his family home after moving from 2101 Clarkson Street. These homes were all designed between 1868 and 1895 in the increasingly popular cottage style, published in pattern books by architects such as Andrew Jackson Downing and James Charles Sidney.

The Rural Gothic: Gothic Revival Cottages in Germantown

Through the mid nineteenth century, Germantown took on a more suburban character.

> The 1850s and the 1860s were the transition years in which the number of villas multiplied and their functions changed. At first they were still weekend and summer retreats, useful as a refuge from the tropical heat and tropical diseases that marked the Philadelphia summers. But by the 1860s Germantown had become the locale for permanent dwellings of those who worked in the central city.[62]

Although the Logans, Fishers, and Wisters are the exception to this argument, they are not the bourgeois class to which Fishman is referring. However, anticipating the influx of such residents could have been a motivation for their speculative development along W. Clarkson Avenue, Wister Street, and Cottage Lane. As Fishman observes. “the expansion of Philadelphia was no longer the advance of a solid city into the countryside. It was genuinely suburban in that it sought by design to incorporate natural elements permanently into a domestic landscape”[63] In building cottages and country seats of their own, The Wisters were thus able to curate their own domestic landscape, adding cottages in the locations and styles they desired on their bucolic holdings, rather than allow a developer to simply maximize density for profit with little regard for the scenic surroundings.

As new development came to Germantown, architecture changed with it. In 1860, Sidney George Fisher noted the improvements that the Wisters had made to the farmhouse at Belfield: "The roof has been raised & another story added, it has been stuccoed, a piazza built, new doors & windows, all in cottage style & it is a handsome house now."[64] Such improvements as those of Belfield were reflective of emerging theories on landscape gardening and rural/suburban architecture. One of the main writers on this subject was Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852).

Nancy Holst argues that prescriptive literature such as pattern books are crucial in understanding architectural taste of the time.

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[62] Ibid., 140.
[63] Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1987), 140.
[64] Nicholas B. Wainright, ed., *A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967), 379.

> The new suburban houses of Germantown struck a balance between the implied reserve and older values of tradition-bound forms and the application of numerous superficial Italianate and bracketed-cottage details that not only lay claim to current fashion, but established an unmistakable relationship to rural ideals and provided a measure of individual character that seldom transgressed accepted boundaries.[65]

In *The Architecture of Country Houses*, one of Downing's pattern books, "good houses" - and why men should have them, are emphasized. In addition to their aesthetic value, Downing argues that "there is a moral influence in a country home," and that certain types of architecture and landscaped settings are more conducive to a moral life.[66]

This philosophy may have been attractive to Quaker families, such as the Fishers or Logans, or even "convinced" Quaker families like the Wisters, for whom truth and morality were a part of daily life and religious practice. To combine religious teachings with architecture, to such Quaker families, could complement their longstanding traditions of land preservation, kinship, and child-rearing. These rural suburban ideals were yet another justification to hold on to their land and withstand encroaching development.

What's more is that the Fisher families knew Downing personally. Sidney Logan Fisher, writing in his diary about William Logan Fisher's daughter Mary's wedding to Samuel Fox in 1859, mentions that "Downing, the writer on landscape gardening, there also...Downing is on a visit to Harry Ingersoll and went to Wakefield with them."[67] Throughout his diary Fisher writes about the commissions that Downing completed for various members of the Fisher family and Germantown elite.

One discrepancy could be due to the fact that, "In terms of design, pattern-book authors made few distinctions between rural homes that were appropriate for seasonal rather than year-round use."[68] Features for cooking, heating and cooling, and room arrangement would all be different due to the function of the house as a part time or full time residence.

The Wisters added to 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, in Holst's view, "design attributes that enhanced summer enjoyment—such as projecting eaves, piazzas, and floor-length windows, which variously provided shade, views of nature, summer breezes, and easy access to the outdoors."[69] Yet, this house was occupied year-round. What could

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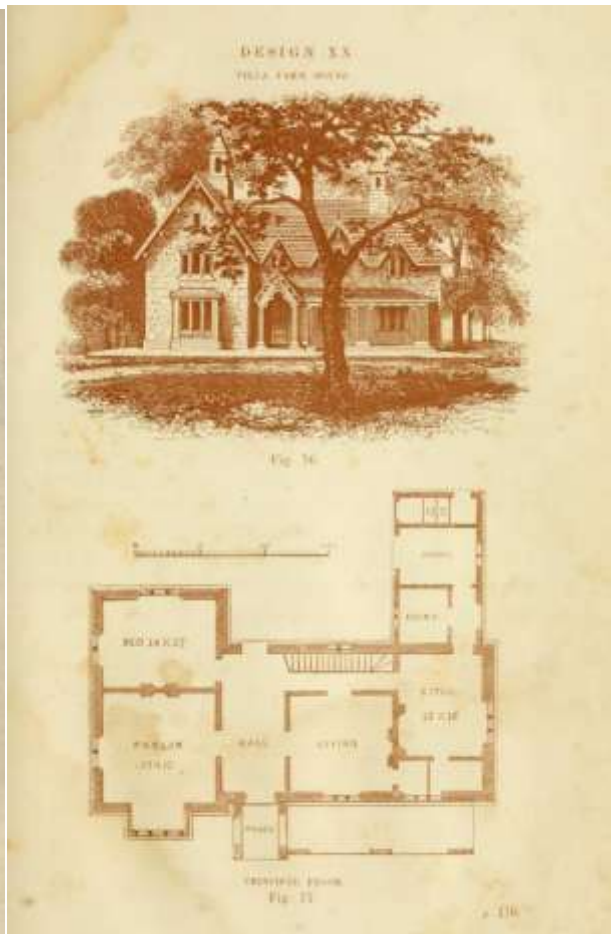
[65] Holst, Nancy A. "Pattern Books and the Suburbanization of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in the Mid - Nineteenth Century," (dissertation, University of Delaware, 2008), 291.
[66] Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses, Including Designs for Cottages, Farm-Houses, and Villas, With Remarks on Interiors, Furniture, and the Best Modes of Warming and Ventilations* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1851), v-vi.
[67] Nicholas B. Wainright, ed., *A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967), 274.
[68] Ibid., 169.
[69] Ibid., 169.

account for this discrepancy is that the Wisters wanted their cottage developments to blend in with the surrounding suburban fabric of Germantown, while adhering to picturesque principles that define their family landscape.

With its three crossing gables, 2101 W. Clarkson Street creates a number of visual planes from the exterior. In addition, its random placement of bays and porches adds an irregular and picturesque dimension to the house. However, features such as windows do remain consistent throughout the cottage, and on some elevations, add symmetry to the overall massing. These details also give the house a sense of order and hierarchy, and express on the outside the function of the rooms on the inside. Downing writes that "Architecture, especially, borrows the most winning and captivating expression from foliage."[70] Indeed, the knee-braced wooden columns on the east porch resemble a tree with exposed branches, and the house's gables and gable dormers harken to mountain peaks.

Downing also writes about the “farmhouse as a villa”: an idea may have translated well to the type of compound that the Wisters and Fishers wished to develop. [71] With stately houses built on large land holdings, and the family businesses located a short distance away along the Wingohocking Creek, the Wister family was still able to separate work and pleasure by using the grounds near the homes for more leisurely pursuits, such as gardening and farming. Downing provides designs for such estates in his books. Their late nineteenth century family cottages allowed for the preservation of family land without overdeveloping the landscape.

[70] Andrew Jackson Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses, Including Designs for Cottages, Farm-Houses, and Villas, With Remarks on Interiors, Furniture, and the Best Modes of Warming and Ventilations* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1851), 48.
[71] Ibid., 91.



Left: “An Irregular Cottage in the Old English Style” (*The Architecture of Country Houses*)
Right: “Villa Farm House” (*Cottage Architecture*)

Although it is likely, but not proven, that architect, cartographer, and landscape architect James C. Sidney designed the house at 2101 W. Clarkson Street, he, and other contemporaries of his in the mid-nineteenth century followed many of the ideas and directives set forth by Downing. J. C. Sidney’s commissions in Germantown and Chestnut Hill at this time, as well as his self-published designs, reflect picturesque principles and an emphasis on the rural ideal. It would be unsurprising, given his work in the area that he would be a known name among Germantown families and those who wished to build. The following examples of J. C. Sidney’s work in his pattern book, *American Cottage & Villa Architecture*, contain elements similar to those at 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue.

Courtesy J. C. Sidney, *American Cottage and Villa Architecture.*

The plate at left shows a design with three cross gables intersecting at the center of the house. It also contains, bay windows, and a porch. The plate on the right shows a house with a partial-width entry porch, cross gable roofs, and cross gable dormers.

Holst observes that "although a small number of houses mimic published designs, a far larger number exhibit varying degrees of pattern book influence or little at all."[72] Although Sidney's pattern book was written nearly 20 years before the construction of 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, it yields ideas about how his style could have changed over time, or how clients or developers adapted the images they saw in this prescriptive literature.

Not far from the Wister family holdings, East Logan Street in Germantown show fine examples of J. C. Sidney's work built in the 1860s, what could be seen as a period of deviation from pattern book styles such as his. Despite differences in scale and style among the houses, their fenestration and ornamentation remain consistent. The block ultimately shows Sidney's transition from a stricter interpretation of the Italianate to an eclectic rural Gothic that became characteristic of Sidney's work. Elements typical to Sidney's homes include:

- Gabled roofs/gable dormers arranged in an irregular pattern; gables often with large eaves, and dormers often paired on a single side
- Round-top windows within gables, often appearing too small or too large compared to the size of the gable
- Ashlar stone quoins that are nearly camouflaged within the stone-clad façade
- Variation in window height between stories
- Pairs of narrow round-top windows separated by a mullion

[72] Holst, Nancy A. "Pattern Books and the Suburbanization of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in the Mid - Nineteenth Century," (dissertation, University of Delaware, 2008), 16.

These design characteristics can all be found within the East Logan Street Historic District, nominated to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in 2010.[73] Although a number of contributing houses to the district are of unknown architect, their similarities to those houses attributed to Sidney based on these details are too great to be unrecognized.

Just a few blocks away from the Belfield tract, 81 E. Logan Street is nearly an exact copy of 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, down to the window size, porch details, and floor plan. Although surveys have not officially attributed this house to Sidney, the houses on E. Logan Street which have been confirmed Sidney designs show similarities in stone work, window type and size, and massing.

81 E. Logan Street. Photograph taken by author.

While this evidence is circumstantial, it is clear that J. C. Sidney's work in his pattern books and in Germantown and Chestnut Hill could have had broad influence in the area. Whether the design of 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue is Sidney's or is by an architect or builder influenced by his designs, the Wister family, despite developing their land in a way which at first appears speculative, preserved its bucolic nature by commissioning houses that complemented and mimicked nature, as well as displaying picturesque qualities which embody moral (and Quakerly) ways of life.

[73] See http://www.preservationalliance.com/files/EastLogan.pdf.

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