

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)

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

Street address: 1430 N Broad St

Postal code: 19121 Councilmanic District: 5

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Charles E. Ellis house

Common Name: Palace/Unity Mission

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

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

Occupancy: ☐ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☒ unknown

Current use: unknown

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See attached.

6. DESCRIPTION

See attached.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1890 to 1909

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1890-91

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: William H. Decker

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____

Original owner: Charles E. Ellis

Other significant persons: _____

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

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

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

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached.

9. NOMINATOR

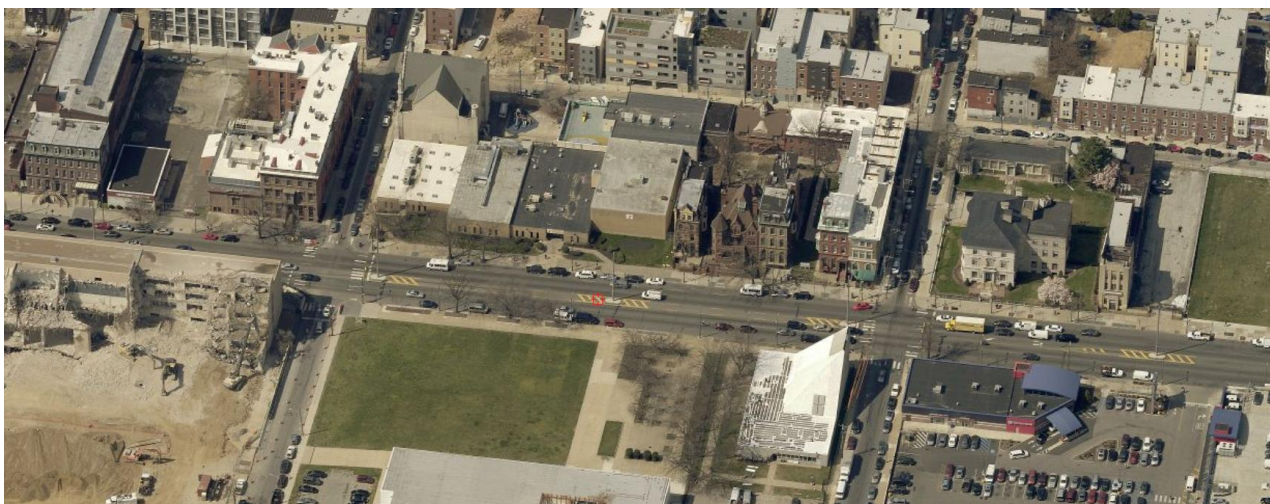
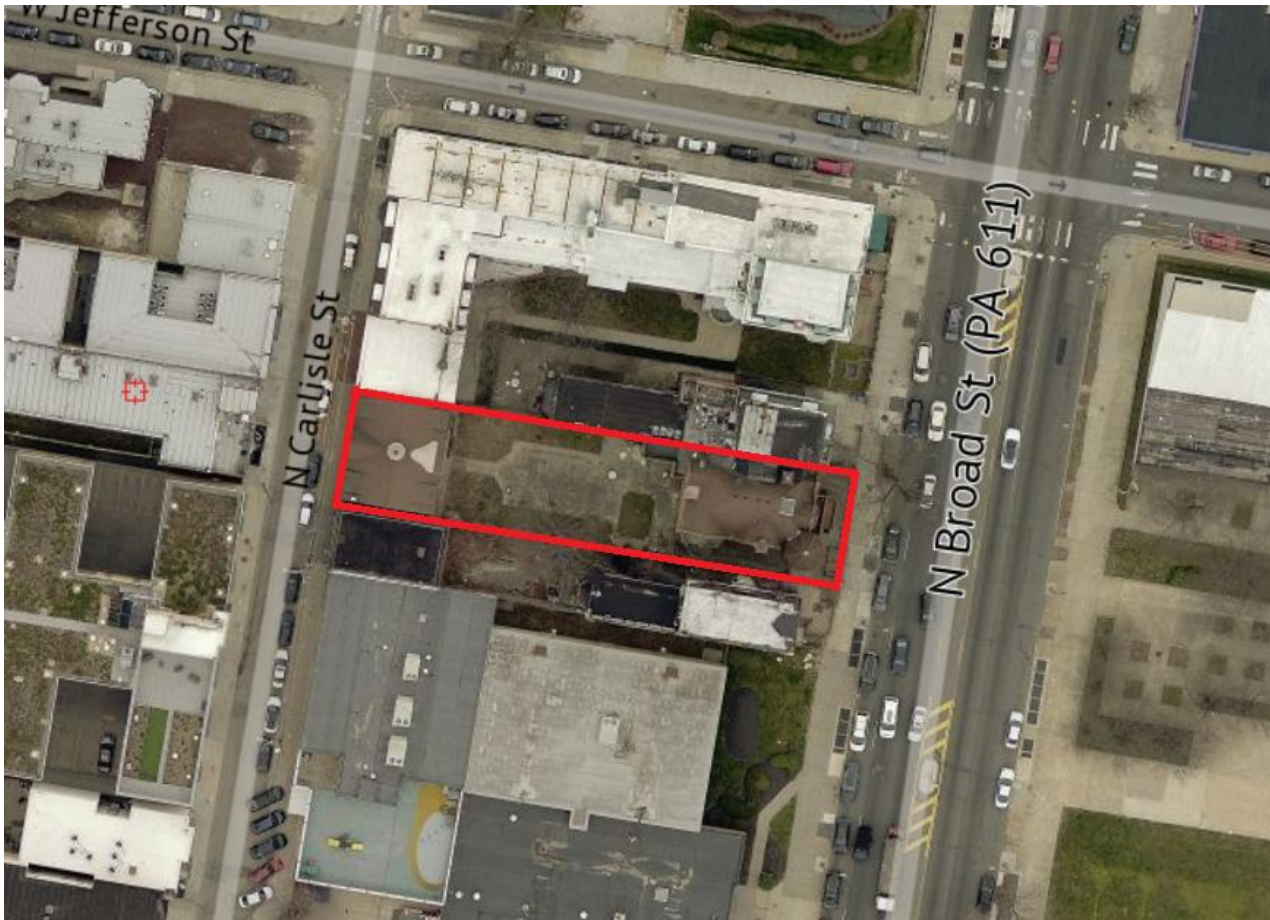
Name with Title Staff of the Historical Commission Email Laura.DiPasquale@phila.gov
Organization Philadelphia Historical Commission Date 12/22/2017
Street Address 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor Telephone 215-686-7660
City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19107
Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 12/22/2017
☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 1/2/2018
Date of Notice Issuance: 1/2/2018
Property Owner at Time of Notice
Name: Palace Mission Inc. Alt name: Circle Mission Church
Address: 20 S 36th St (OPA), zip: 19104; Alt address: 764-72 S Broad St, zip: 19146
City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: _____
Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 2/14/2018
Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 3/9/2018
Date of Final Action: 3/9/2018, A, D, E, and J
☒ Designated ☐ Rejected

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All that certain lot or piece of ground with the buildings and hereditaments thereon erected, situate on the West side of Broad Street at the distance of 105 feet 2 ½ inches measured southward from the south side of Jefferson Street, containing in front or breadth on N. Broad Street 50 feet and extending of that width in length or depth westward between parallel lines at right angles with the said Broad Street 200 feet to Carlisle Street. Office of Property Assessment Account #: 772072800



6. BUILDING DESCRIPTION



Figure 1: 1430 N Broad Street, present-day (Left, source: author, 2017), c. 1960 (Right, source: Peace Mission¹).

The building at 1430 N. Broad Street is an asymmetrical three-and-one-half story, semi-detached masonry house constructed in 1890 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The house is notable for its eccentric composition and profusion of ornament and stained glass. The house is elevated and set back slightly from the street edge, which is delineated by a low, patterned stone retaining wall that matches the base of the front elevation and is topped by a wrought-iron fence. The property extends block-to-block between N. Broad Street and N. Carlisle Street, and features both the mansion house fronting on the west side of N. Broad Street and a two-story carriage house or garage along N. Carlisle Street, constructed in 1891. An open yard separates the two structures today, as it did historically. The house is attached along its north elevation to a circa-1870 four-story Second Empire brownstone.² While the property's broader context of North Broad Street has changed dramatically since its construction, its position amid several other high-style late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century buildings provides a snapshot of the property as it would have appeared originally. Beyond its immediate neighbors, the formerly high-style residential block has been transformed into a low-scale, sprawling institutional and commercial area. Just a few blocks to the north is Temple University's rapidly growing campus.

¹ From Robert Morris Skaler, *Philadelphia's Broad Street: South and North*, Arcadia Publishing, 2003.

² The brownstone mansion to the north was built for J. Bolton Winpenny.

East (Broad Street) Elevation



Figure 2: The most elaborate elevation is unsurprisingly the Broad Street frontage. Facing east, this elevation is clad in ashlar stonework of varying textures and features prominent arched openings and a tower, all common elements in Richardsonian Romanesque buildings (Source: Google Streetview, 2016).

The primary, three-bay-wide east elevation is clad in an alternating pattern of smooth dressed and rough dressed stone which gives the appearance that it is woven together. The relative size of the ashlar blocks diminishes progressively as the building rises, producing finer and finer textural effects. Although currently painted a monochromatic brown, historic photographs of the property indicate that the rough and smooth dressed stone were also differentiated by color, creating a checkerboard effect (see Figure 1). A polygonal tower at the southeast corner (or left-hand side of the front façade) provides the off-center focus of the composition, as well as the termination for the arcaded stone porch sheltering the double-door entrance. A large round-headed window on the right-hand side of the front façade echoes the twin arches of the porch. The second story opens onto the roof of the porch which is enclosed by a balustrade to create a balcony. A trio of flat-headed windows with transoms provides the fenestration to the right of the balcony. The central mass is lit by two round-headed windows between which a single massive corbel carries the third-story balcony. This corbel is distinguished by a sculpted grotesque figure, which is one of many tucked into ornate organic details across the elevation. The third story is articulated into the central dormer opening onto the balcony as well as a lower cross gable to the north (right), both of which relate in form and materials to the polygonal tower at the left. These three masses screen the hipped roof of the building which is enlivened in turn by a copper attic shed dormer and unusual terracotta-clad chimneys whose ribs are treated as grouped colonettes. The roof was historically clad in red tile, but has since been replaced

with brown asphalt shingles. The roof of the turret retains an original copper gutter system with leaf ornamentation.

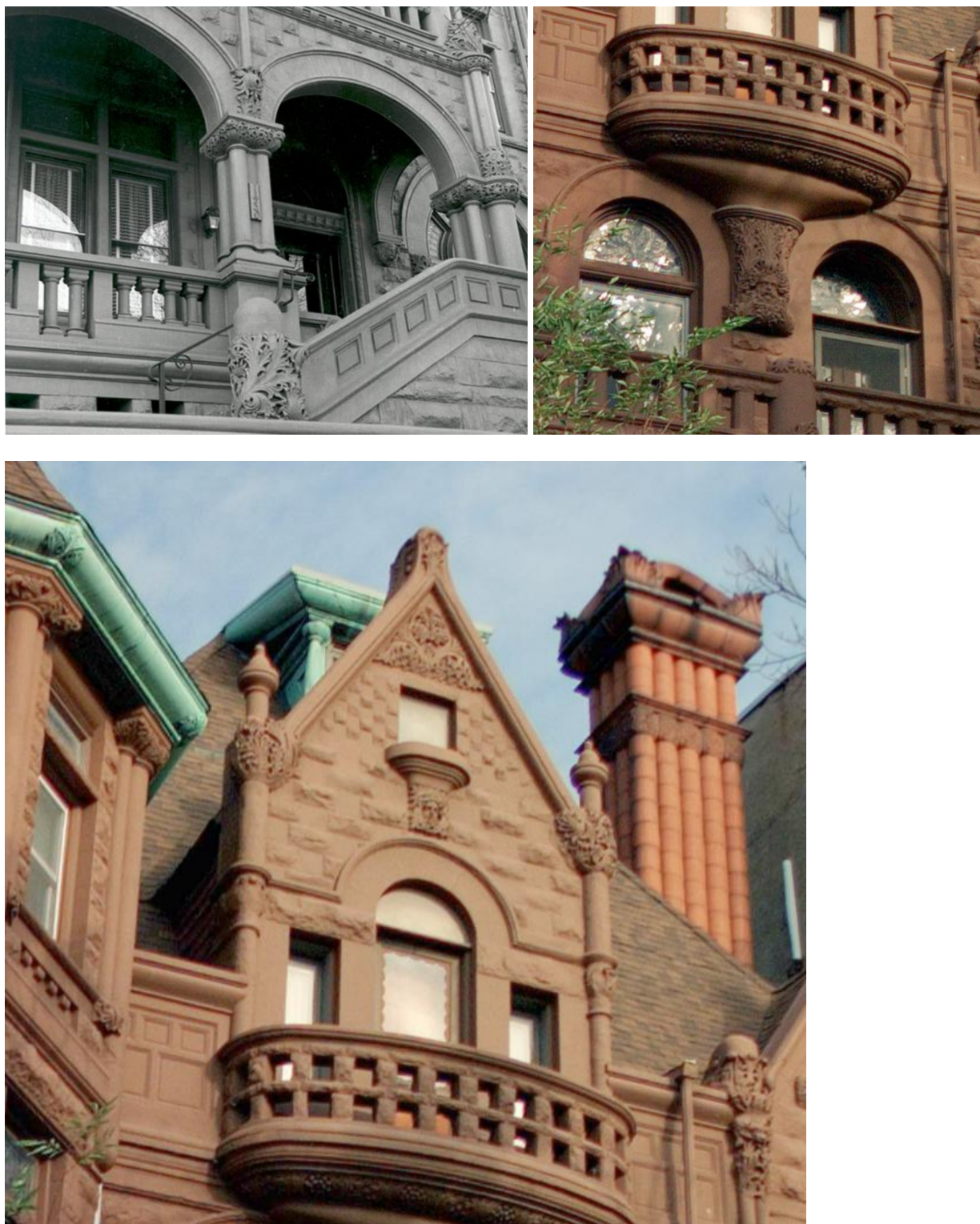


Figure 3: East elevation details (Upper left, source: Philadelphia Historical Commission, 1971. Upper right and bottom, source: author, 2017).

South Elevation



Figure 4: The south side elevation is clad in brick and features brownstone and terracotta details. (Left and top right, source: Google Streetview, 2016. Lower right, source: Philadelphia Historical Commission, 1971.)

Beyond the return of the polygonal stone tower at the southeast corner, the south elevation transitions to a fine, red-orange (possibly painted) brick cladding with terracotta and brownstone details and beltcourses. The two-bay deep elevation is formed by two lower cross gables, each of which is given its own treatment from the ground up. The eastern cross-gable, which is situated closer to Broad Street, is interrupted by an elaborate exterior chimney. The base of the chimney is clad in brick and features smooth and rough-dressed stone details, as well as a terracotta lion's head set within a central molded-brick Roman arch detail. Pairs of square-topped windows can be found to the west of the chimney at the first and second floors. At the third-floor level, which is delineated by a thick beltcourse of rough stone topped with terracotta panels, the chimney cladding transitions from brick to ribbed terracotta. Single Roman-arched windows flank the chimney within the gable of the third floor.



Figure 5: The south elevation features a semi-circular conservatory with a glass or metal roof. (Left, source: Google Streetview, 2016. Right, source: Philadelphia Historical Commission, 1971.)

The first floor of the western bay on the south elevation is dominated by a semi-circular conservatory set out from the primary plane of the façade by angled, castellated walls. The conservatory features a turreted roof clad in what appears to be glass or metal. The curved windows of the conservatory retain their original stained glass. Two windows with transoms open out onto the roof of the conservatory at the second floor. At the third-floor level, a trio of Roman arched windows rise above a dentilated sill. A single rectangular window sits at the peak of the gable.

West Elevation

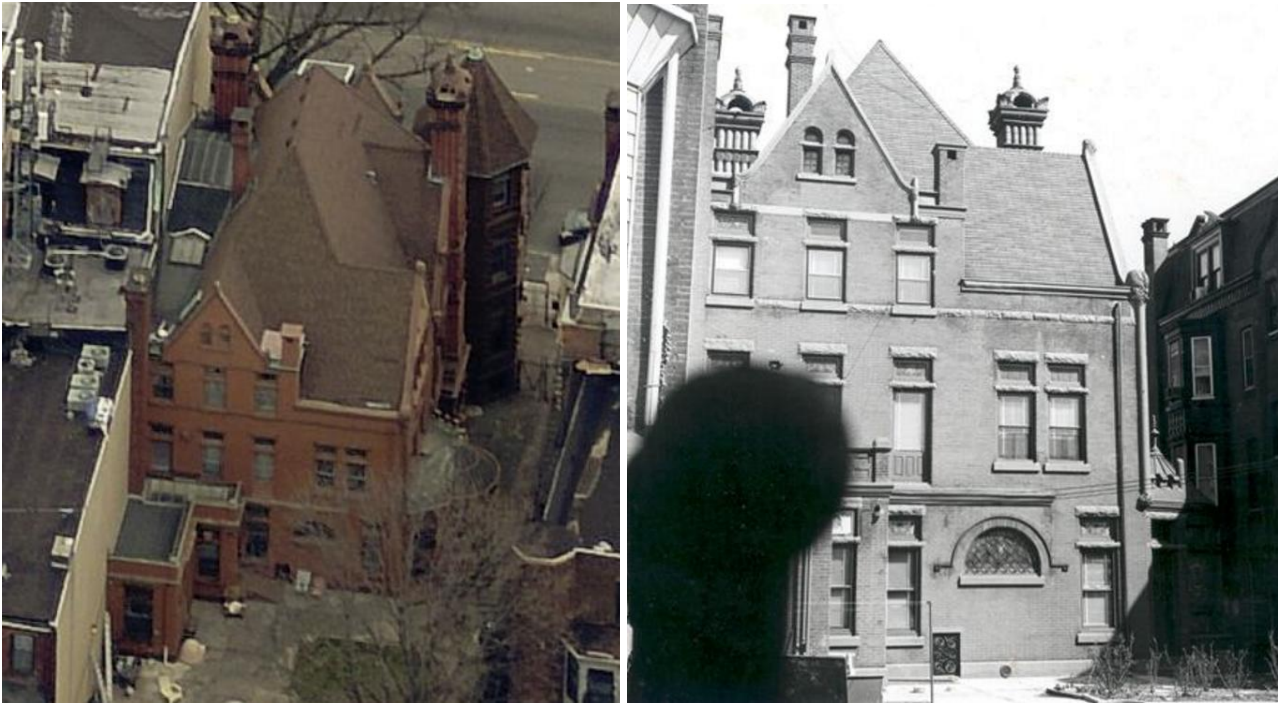


Figure 6: Visibility of the west (rear) elevation is limited from the public right-of-way. (Left, source: Pictometry, 2017; Right, source: Philadelphia Historical Commission, 1971).

The west elevation is not readily visible from the public right-of-way. The elevation is two asymmetrical bays wide, which, like the other elevations, is defined by the roofline. The wider bay to the north features a lower cross gable front that allows for windows at all three and a half floors. The fenestration in this bay forms three columns of evenly-spaced single windows with transoms. Although the building steps out at the first and second windows of the ground floor, their placement aligns with the windows above. A pair of round-arched windows is set in the peak of the gable. The narrower bay to the south features a half-round stained glass window and a single, double-hung window with a transom at the first-floor level, and a pair of double-hung windows with transoms at the second floor.

Carriage House

At the rear of the property, facing N. Carlisle Street, is a semi-detached brick carriage house constructed in 1891 on a design by William Decker, the architect of the main house. The one-and-one-half-story carriage house has a side-gabled roof with overhanging bracketed eaves, and is surmounted by an octagonal cupola. A utilitarian brick chimney rises from the southwest corner. Like the main house, the carriage house features smooth and rough stone elements and banding, as well as some carved organic details. The three-bay wide western Carlisle Street elevation is painted a burnt orange and features a central gabled wall dormer flanked by two shed-roofed wall dormers. Within the center dormer is a pair of glazed paneled doors topped with a rough stone lintel. The shed dormers each contain a pair of twelve-over-two windows. At the ground floor is a carriage entrance outlined with rough stone quoins and topped with a heavy lintel. The opening contains a modern roll-up garage door. To the left (north) of the carriage opening is a double-width window opening infilled with painted masonry. A historic photograph indicates that this opening originally held a pair of sixteen-over-two windows (see Figure 8). To the right (south) of the center opening are a single infilled window and a person door. The historic photograph indicates this window was sixteen-over-two as well.

While the northern elevation is attached to a neighboring carriage house, the southern elevation is exposed along a narrow breezeway. It contains one slightly off-center window below the gable.



Figure 7: Carriage house, along N. Carlisle Street, 2017 (Source: author).



Figure 8: Carriage house, c. 1974 (Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission).



Figure 9: Carriage house details (Source: author, 2017).

The rear, east-facing façade of the carriage house is not readily visible from the public right-of-way. Aerial photograph indicates that this elevation features a central eyebrow dormer flanked by two shed-roofed wall dormers. The dormer to the left (south) of the center dormer features a pair of windows, while the dormer to the right (north) features a single window and a door leading to a fire escape. The ground floor features a rough stone base, which is interrupted by a single door. To the right of the door is an arched window. Two single double-hung windows are positioned at either end of the first floor, above the rusticated base.



Figure 10: Rear (east) carriage house elevation (Source: Pictometry, 2017).

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The property at 1430 N. Broad Street is historically significant and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Pursuant to Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code, the property satisfies Criteria for Designation D and J. The property:

- (D) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; and,
- (J) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

Constructed in 1890 for streetcar magnate and philanthropist Charles E. Ellis, the property at 1430 N. Broad Street is significant under Criterion J as an exemplification of the history of North Broad Street as an avenue of the exuberant homes and social clubs of Philadelphia's *nouveau riche* of the Gilded Age. Under Criterion D, the property is significant as an example of Richardsonian Romanesque design popular among the *nouveau riche* of this era.

Criterion J: Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community

North Broad Street and Philadelphia's Gilded Age

In the late nineteenth century, Philadelphia's North Broad Street was the boulevard for the Gilded Age industrial rich. Following the Civil War, the City of Philadelphia witnessed a population boom brought on by a rapid influx of immigrants, the migration of freed slaves northward, and the general movement in the country from an agrarian to an industrial economy. Industry, fueled by breakthroughs in technology, flourished in Philadelphia, which had long been considered the "Workshop of the World." With changes came opportunity, and as capitalist empires were built, a new upper class emerged.³

Known as the *nouveau riche* or *parvenu*, this new social class mirrored the well-established *vieux riche*, or "old money" families of the city, but was shunned by the elite as *déclassé*. From its inception, Philadelphia had been home to some of the most-established wealth in the young nation. Much of this wealth had been transferred from European families, primarily descendants of the wealthy English merchant class that built the economy of the city. By the 1870s, the city's old money families had established themselves largely in the fashionable neighborhood of Rittenhouse Square.⁴ As entrepreneurs rose within the city, building fortunes from industry, transit, and development, they discovered that it would take more than wealth to penetrate the classes. Such self-made men, largely rejected from the established high society because of their new-found wealth and lack of pedigree, looked towards North Philadelphia to build their own social scene of exuberant homes, hotels, clubs and theaters. While they based their social structure on the mores of established society, the designs of their buildings reflected a style unconstrained by the conventional taste or conservative nature of their Rittenhouse counterparts, and became icons to all that new wealth and influence represented.⁵ Among these were the Philadelphia Opera House (better known as the Metropolitan Opera House) and the Mercantile Club (see Figure 11 and Appendix), which grew and flourished across the turn of the century.

³ E. Digby Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1958).

⁴ George E. Thomas, "North Broad Street Mansion Historic District." *National Register of Historic Places Form*. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1984.

⁵ Thomas, p. 3.



Figure 11: Circa 1915 colorized postcard of the 1400 block of N Broad Street, looking north. The magnificent Mercantile Club dominates the foreground, while the red tile roof of the Ellis mansion is visible towards the center of the postcard (Source: Ebay).



Figure 12: Same view, 2016. The low-scale YMCA building on the left replaced the Mercantile Club, which was demolished c. 1960, as were the buildings on the east side of Broad Street (Source: Google Streetview).

North Broad Street proved convenient for wealthy industrialists for a number of reasons, including the proximity to many of their factories and mills in the adjacent industrial areas, and the availability of high-visibility properties along one of the city's burgeoning thoroughfares.⁶ Unlike other parts of the city, such as Rittenhouse Square, North Philadelphia had a broad range of housing types and sizes for the developing working-class population, so the nouveau riche tended toward the most visible, and valuable, real estate along North Broad Street and the immediately adjacent areas.

At the forefront of the area's rise was butcher-turned-streetcar magnate Peter Arrell Brown Widener, the kingpin of Philadelphia's nineteenth-century industrial and real estate boom. Widener's extravagant Willis Hale-designed Germanic mansion at 1200 North Broad, constructed in 1887, was a landmark in the community and paved the way for other flamboyant expressions of new wealth (see Figure 13). That same year, Widener's business partner William L. Elkins began acquiring land opposite Widener on the east side of Broad Street and held a competition for the design of his own home, which James H. Windrim won (see Figure 14).



Figure 13: Peter A.B. Widener's Willis Hale-designed mansion at the northwest corner of Broad Street and Girard Avenue, constructed in 1887. In 1900, Widener transferred ownership of the property to the Free Library for use as the H. Josephine Widener Memorial Library. Demolished c. 1980. (Source: Philadelphia Architects and Buildings. From George Washington Engelhardt, *Philadelphia Pennsylvania, The Book of Its Bourse & Co-operating Bodies*, Philadelphia, Lippincott Press, 1898-99., p. 22-23).



Figure 14: W. L. Elkins residence, designed by James H. Windrim, constructed c. 1893 on the east side of Broad Street, north of Girard Avenue. The house was incorporated into the Majestic Hotel in 1903. Demolished 1971. (Source: Philadelphia Architects and Buildings. From George Washington Engelhardt, *Philadelphia Pennsylvania, The Book of Its Bourse & Co-operating Bodies*, Philadelphia, Lippincott Press, 1898-99., p. 26).

While Widener and Elkins are the best known players in the early development of public transportation in Philadelphia, many other men of vision also contributed to and profited greatly from the establishment of transit companies during this period. One of these men was Charles Ellis, who built the mansion at 1430 N. Broad Street in 1890 with the profits he and his father had earned from the expansion of trolley lines throughout the city. Charles' father Amos had been the operator of a large lumber yard at 10th Street and Columbia Avenue (now Cecil B. Moore Ave) in the mid-nineteenth century. Not satisfied solely by the lumber business, the ambitious Ellis invested in the Quaker City Traction Company, a horse-drawn trolley company founded in 1858 along 10th and 11th Streets, near Ellis's lumber yard.⁷ Ellis soon gained control of the company, became its president, and renamed it the Citizens Passenger Railway Company (see Appendix A). Selling stock in the company at \$20 a share, Ellis made a fortune, leaving an estate worth \$3 million, which would be split evenly between

⁶ Steven Ujifusa, "The Lost World of North Broad Street," PhillyHistory Blog, June 08, 2010, accessed November 9, 2017, <https://www.phillyhistory.org/blog/index.php/2010/06/the-lost-world-of-north-broad-street/>.

⁷ Thomas J. DiFilippo, *Charles E. Ellis, Forgotten Philanthropist, and his School for Girls* (2007).

his three sons upon his death in 1888.⁸ The elder Ellis had involved his son Charles in this undertaking from the onset and, when he died, Charles became president of the company. Charles Ellis seized every opportunity to expand his father's empire, buying up as much stock as possible, and keeping a vigilant watch over developments that would influence it. As the metropolis expanded to the north and south beyond Center City, Ellis saw to it that the streetcar reached as far as the population did. His 10th and 11th Street line eventually shifted to 11th and 12th Streets and became SEPTA's #23, which boasted the title of longest streetcar route in the world until the 1990s.⁹ In time, he expanded his trolleys to 5th, 6th, 15th, and 16th Streets, charging five cents per ride. Ellis sold the lines in 1895 to the Electric Traction Company, which became the foundation for the Philadelphia Rapid Transportation System, later SEPTA. Before his death, Ellis became a director of the Frankford & Southwark Company, which built and ran the Market Street Elevated lines.¹⁰

In 1890, Charles E. Ellis commissioned architect William H. Decker to design a mansion and stable for him at 1430 N. Broad Street.¹¹ The mansion cost \$55,000, or approximately \$1.5 million in today's currency. A favorite among the North Philadelphia elite, Will Decker executed bold and complex designs for his *nouveau riche* clients in ways that would have been considered tasteless to Philadelphia's old society. Writing in the mid-twentieth century, architectural historian George B. Tatum described Decker as having "perhaps more feeling for bizarre design than any other architect active in Philadelphia"; a steep claim given the work of other late-nineteenth century Philadelphia architects.¹² Although often overshadowed by his contemporaries Frank Furness, G.W. & W.D. Hewitt, and Willis Hale, Decker was responsible for the impressive designs of buildings such as the Columbia Avenue Saving Fund building at N. Broad and Columbia Avenue and the Betz Building at Broad Street and South Penn Square (both demolished, see Figure 15) and residential commissions such as the Swain residence at 3925 Chestnut Street (now the Ronald McDonald House, see Figure 15, right).

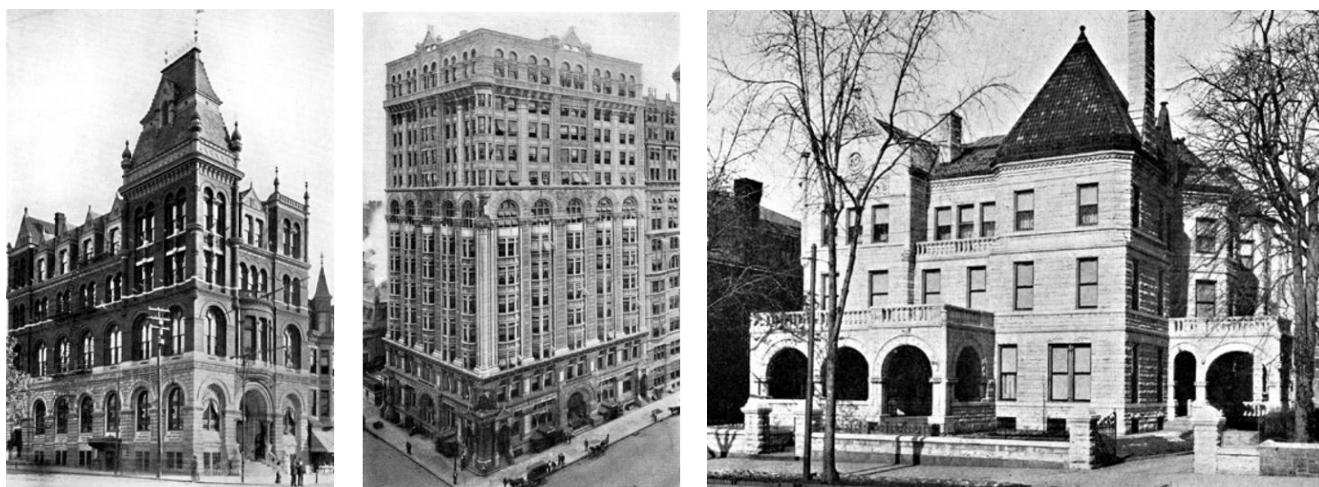


Figure 15: (Left) Columbia Ave Savings Fund, Safe Deposit, Title & Trust Co., built 1889, demolished. (Center) Betz Building, built 1891-92, demolished. (Right) 3925 Chestnut Street, William J. Swain residence, built c. 1893, extant. Source: King, Moses. *Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians*. (New York: Blanchard Press, Isaac H. Blanchard Co., 1901).

⁸ DiFilippo, 2007.

⁹ "Tracking the History of the Route 23 Trolley," *NewsWorks*, <https://why.org/articles/tracking-the-history-of-the-route-23-trolley/>.

¹⁰ DiFilippo, 2007.

¹¹ The 5/28/1890 *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, v.5, n.21, p. 306 noted that William H. Decker had completed plans for a dwelling for client Charles T. Ellis. The following year, the PRERBG (v.6, n. 23, p.i) noted that Decker had completed plans for Ellis's stable.

¹² George B. Tatum, *Penn's Great Town: 250 Years of Philadelphia Architecture Illustrated in Prints and Drawings* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961).

Tragically, Charles Ellis died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound at home in April 1909. His health had been deteriorating for some time and, according to a front-page *Philadelphia Inquirer* article, he had recently received news that he would be permanently bed-ridden.¹³ Although many newspaper articles speculated that his death was a suicide, his family and the police chose to consider it accidental. His death was reported in newspapers as far afield as Nebraska, Michigan, and Indiana, as were the contents of his will.¹⁴ Inspired by the work of Stephen Girard on behalf of orphaned boys and the establishment of Girard College, Ellis resolved to provide educational opportunities to fatherless girls, leaving a large portion of his estate for the creation of the Charles E. Ellis College for Fatherless Girls.¹⁵ The school opened in Whitemarsh, Pennsylvania in 1919, ten years after his death, and closed in 1977. The foundation's trustees then adjusted their mission to provide grants to girls in Philadelphia who come from single-parent households and need financial aid to complete their education.¹⁶

By the time of the death of Charles E. Ellis, the character of North Broad Street had already begun to change. Many of the thoroughfare's wealthier long-time residents were aging and abandoning the city for more prestigious suburban neighborhoods. At the same time, the neighborhood was experiencing a new influx of activity as cultural and civic institutions increasingly located along the street.¹⁷ While many constructed purpose-built structures, others established themselves in former residences. In 1900, Peter A.B. Widener donated his mansion at Broad and Girard to the Free Library of Philadelphia, which established the Josephine Widener Memorial Library in the converted residence. Elkins' mansion was incorporated into a 10-story Majestic Hotel, and the Willis Hale-designed Lorraine Apartment building was converted into the Lorraine Hotel.¹⁸ The opening of Roosevelt Boulevard (known originally as Torresdale Boulevard, or just "The Boulevard"), which connected to Broad Street north of the Ellis mansion in Hunting Park just after the turn of the century, and the incorporation of North Broad Street into the Lincoln Highway, one of the earliest transcontinental highways for automobiles in the United States, in 1913 ushered in the automobile age on North Broad. By the 1920s, the automobile industry itself had also taken root along North Broad Street, helping to solidify its transition to a commercial corridor. Over the course of the mid-twentieth century, wealthy property owners along Broad Street continued to leave the city for the suburbs, and the demographics of the area shifted from predominantly white and largely Jewish to African American. In 1952, followers of Father Divine, the leader of the International Peace Mission movement, purchased the former Ellis mansion for \$40,000.¹⁹ The movement, under the name Palace Mission Inc., still owns the property, which was most recently used as a lodging house, possibly for foreign visitors.²⁰ Over the 1940s and 1950s, Father Divine and his followers purchased numerous properties in Philadelphia, most notably the Divine Lorraine Hotel at 699 N. Broad Street, and the similarly-designed Circle Mission Church at 764-72 S. Broad Street. It is a testament to the Peace Mission's stewardship that, despite dramatic changes in the neighborhood over the past half century, the exterior of the property at 1430 N Broad Street remains nearly perfectly intact.

¹³ "Shot from Own Revolver Kills Charles E. Ellis," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 7, 1909. Source: newspapers.com

¹⁴ "Wealthy Man Kills Himself," *Omaha Daily Bee*, April 9, 1909; "Home for Fatherless Girls Made Certain," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, April 18, 1909; "Millionaire A Suicide: Charles E. Ellis of Philadelphia Ends His Life," *The Brainerd Daily Dispatch*, Brainerd, Minnesota, April 7, 1909. Source: newspapers.com

¹⁵ DiFilippo, 2007, p.7.

¹⁶ "Charles E. Ellis Trust for Girls: Philadelphia Grants," Inside Philanthropy, accessed October 09, 2017, <https://www.insidephilanthropy.com/fundraising-in-philadelphia/charles-e-ellis-trust-for-girls-philadelphia-grants.html>.

¹⁷ Benjamin Leech, Nomination of 1314-16 N Broad Street (the Legendary Blue Horizon) to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places (2014), 27. Available: http://www.preservationalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/nominationform_BlueHorizon.pdf

¹⁸ Bradley Maule, "North Broad Rising," Hidden City, April 11, 2017, accessed October 09, 2017, <https://hiddencityphila.org/2017/04/north-broad-rising/>.

¹⁹ A 1988 zoning application described the use as "Rooming house, seven units and assoc. garage." A 2010 PlanPhilly article identifies the most recent use as "lodging for foreign visitors." Alan Jaffe, "Look Up! The nouveau mansions of North Broad," PlanPhilly, June 02, 2010, accessed December 01, 2017, <http://planphilly.com/articles/2010/06/02/look-north-broad-nouve-riche-1>.

²⁰ Jaffe, 2010.

Criterion D: Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen

Richardsonian Romanesque

The mansion at 1430 N. Broad Street is an excellent example of Richardsonian Romanesque design. Introduced in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, the Romanesque Revival style was based on the buildings of ancient Rome, and popularized by influential American architect Henry Hobson Richardson throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Richardson, who was a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, developed a more dramatic take on the Romanesque, with wider arches and strong sculptural forms. Known as “Richardsonian Romanesque,” Richardson’s eclectic version of the style was popular for public buildings and residential mansions. Interest in the style continued to grow after his death in 1886 with the publishing of a book on his work, as well as later pattern books and builders’ guides.²¹

Richardsonian Romanesque buildings are visually weighty and evoke a sense of permanence. They are most readily identifiable by their pronounced round arches, semicircular arched windows, hipped or pointed roofs, and heavy rusticated stonework. Other distinguishing features included round towers, squat columns, belt courses, and decorative or interlacing patterns.²² The Ellis mansion reflects the eclectic intricacy, unusual shapes, and individuality of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. It is constructed of solid masonry, with a combination of rusticated and smooth ashlar stonework on the prominent front elevation, with brick secondary facades, common of the style. The roof of the Ellis mansion is hipped with lower cross gables and a polygonal tower; unusual roof forms were popular features of the eclectic Richardsonian Romanesque. The first floor of the Ellis mansion is defined by a series of Roman arches resting on short columns, one of the highlights of the Richardsonian Romanesque.²³



Figure 16: (Left) Cupples house, St. Louis, Missouri, designed by Thomas Annan, built 1890. Source: City of St. Louis. Right: Elizabeth Plankinton house, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, designed by Edward Townsend Mix, built 1886-1888. Source: Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, HABS WIS, 40-MILWA, 40—1.

²¹ "Romanesque Revival Style 1840 - 1900." PHMC: Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide. Accessed November 09, 2017. <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/romanesque-revival.html>.

²² Alexander G. Passikoff, *A Facade of Buildings: A Collection of Architectural Styles, Architects, and Their Buildings That Make Up The Face of New York* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), 111.

²³ "Richardsonian Romanesque 1880-1900," Wentworth Studio, , accessed October 9, 2017, <https://www.wentworthstudio.com/historic-styles/richardsonian-romanesque/>.

Conclusion

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, North Broad Street was lined with the luxurious mansions and social establishments of the Gilded Age industrialist rich; it was the place to see and be seen. While many significant buildings along this grand boulevard have been lost including the Widener and Elkins mansions and the Mercantile Club, a small enclave around the intersection of Broad and Jefferson Streets provides a snapshot of the once ubiquitous residential life of North Broad. Constructed in 1890 for transit tycoon Charles E. Ellis, the Richardsonian Romanesque mansion at 1430 N. Broad Street exemplifies the history of North Broad Street as a corridor for Philadelphia's *nouveau riche* and is one of the most stunning examples of its architectural style in Philadelphia.

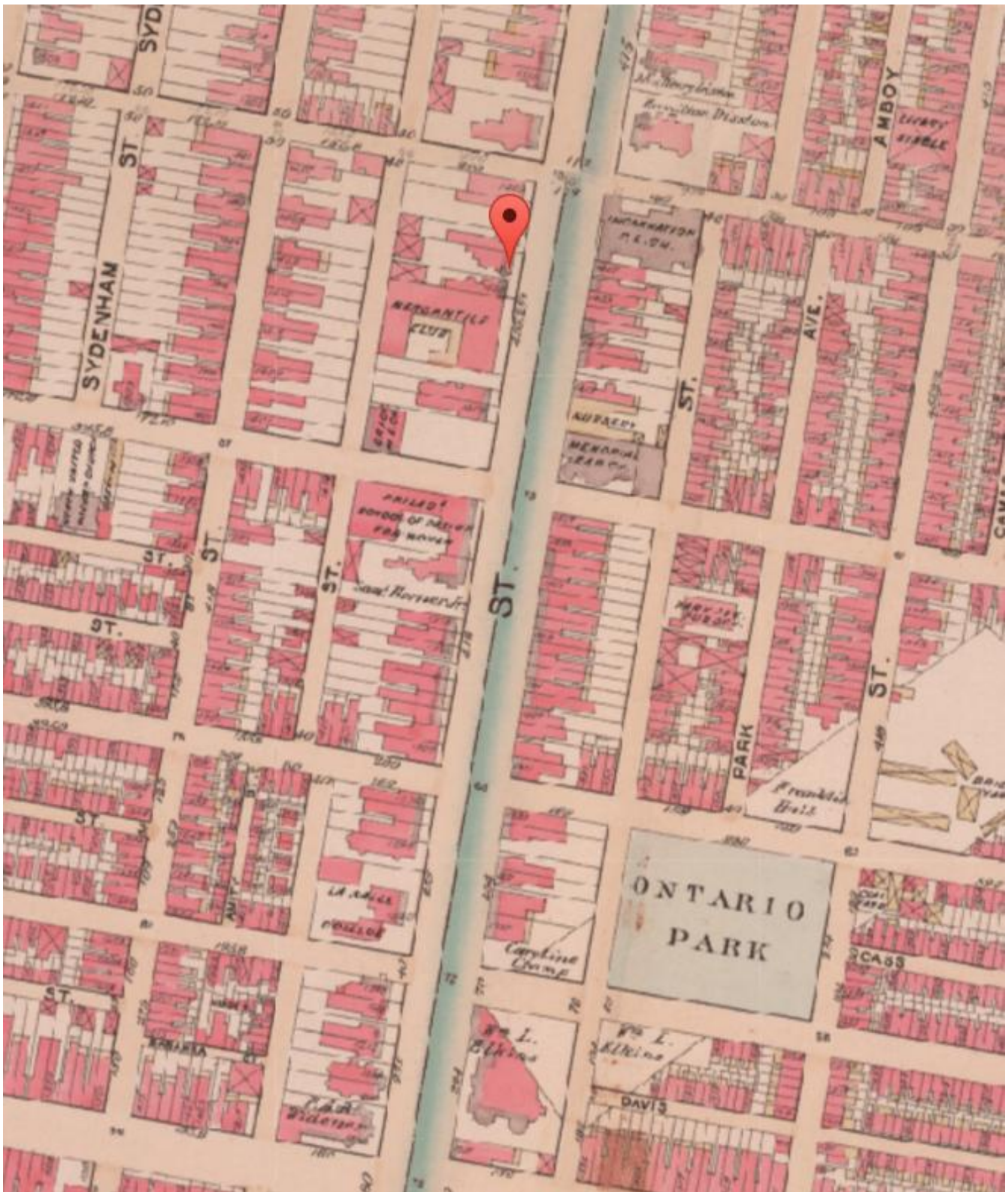
APPENDIX: MAPS



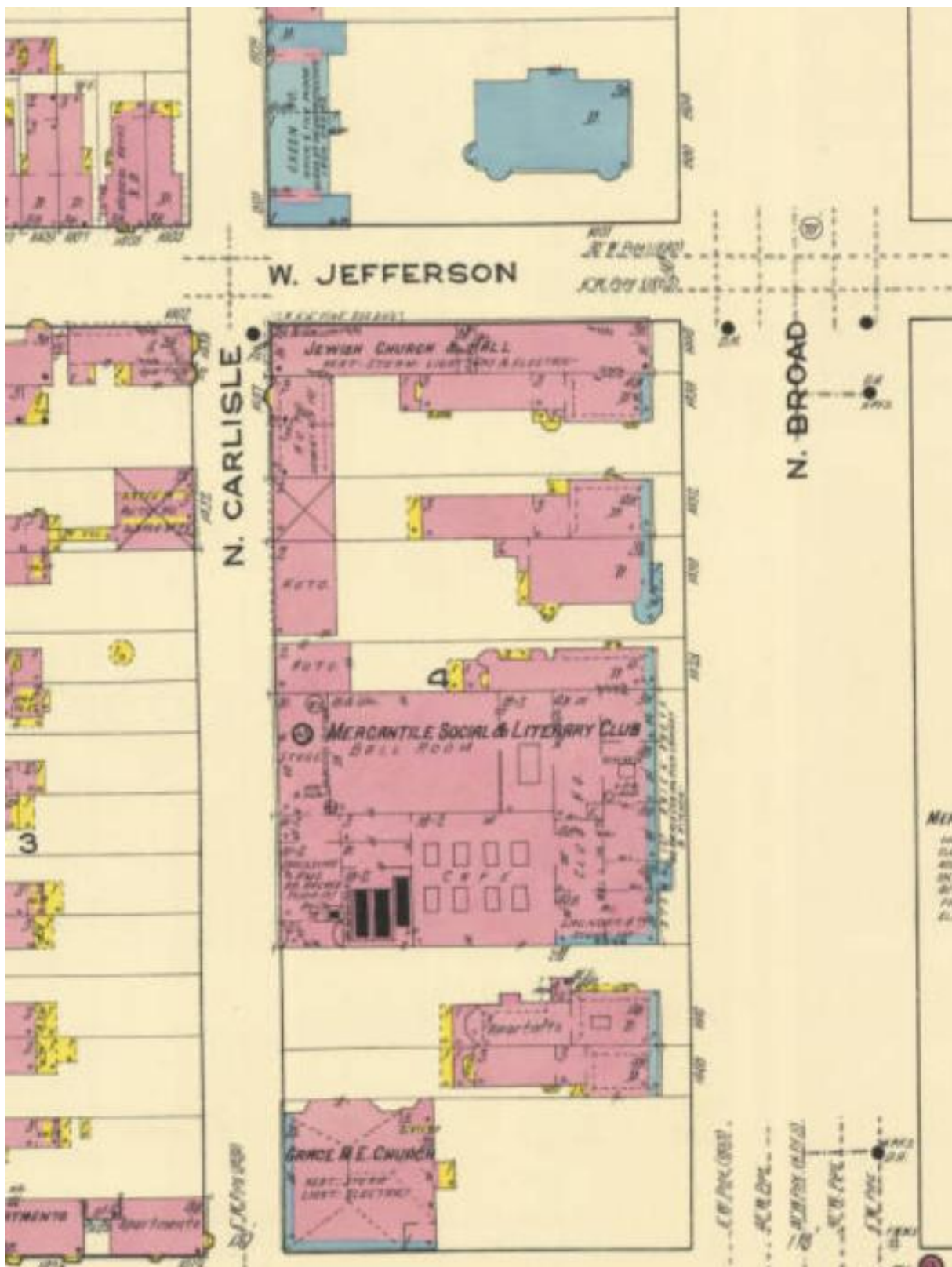
Detail of 1862 *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia* by Samuel L. Smedley showing relatively little development along North Broad Street near the subject property. The depot for the Citizens Passenger Railway that created the Ellis fortune is visible along the right edge of the map.



Detail of 1875 *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia* by G.M. Hopkins showing increasing residential and associated development occurring along Broad Street and to the east and west, particularly along 16th Street. The site of the Ellis mansion remains undeveloped.



Detail of 1895 *Atlas of Philadelphia* by G.W. Bromley showing expansive development along Broad Street and adjacent areas. The Widener and Elkins mansions are visible in the lower portion of the map, and just beyond the Ellis property to the north is the former Second Empire mansion of the industrialist Disston family. Two doors down from the Ellis property is the Mercantile Club.



Detail of 1918 Insurance Map of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Vol. 7, sheet 628. Source: PennState University Libraries. Available online: <https://collection1.libraries.psu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/maps1/id/18171>

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