

ADDRESS: 1017 AND 1019 SPRUCE ST

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owners: (1017): Megan Blickley; Natasha Mizra and Kamran Tareen; 1017 C Spruce LLC; Denise and Philip J. Driscoll; John Karamatsoukas. (1019): Steven Berk

Nominator: Staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission

Staff Contact: Kim Chantry, kim.chantry@phila.gov, 215-686-7660

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the properties at 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street and list them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the buildings embody distinguishing characteristics of late Victorian architecture, and include elements of Queen Anne and Anglo-Dutch detailing of the late nineteenth century, satisfying Criteria C and D. The nomination further argues that the buildings were designed in 1888 by architect George C. Mason, Jr. of the noted Philadelphia and Newport, Rhode Island firm George C. Mason & Son, satisfying Criterion E.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the properties at 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street satisfy Criteria for Designation C, D, and E.



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 (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

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

Street address: 1017 Spruce Street

Postal code: 19107

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: 1017 Spruce Street

Current/Common Name: 1017 Spruce Street

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: Residential condominiums

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1888 to 1888

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1888

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: George C. Mason, Jr., architect

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: A. H. Tourison, builder

Original owner: Beauveau Borie

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

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization: Philadelphia Historical Commission Date: 13 May 2019

Name with Title: Staff of the Historical Commission Email: Kim.Chantry@phila.gov

Street Address: 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor Telephone: 215-686-7660

City, State, and Postal Code: Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 13 May 2019

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: 14 May 2019

Date of Notice Issuance: 15 May 2019

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Multiple condominium owners – see attached

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Postal Code: _____

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

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

**Property Owners at the Time of Notice, 5/15/2019
1017 Spruce Street**

1017 SPRUCE ST # A

Megan E Blickley
1017 Spruce St # A
Philadelphia, PA 19107

1017 SPRUCE ST # B

Natasha Mirza and Kamran Tareen
623 Foxfields Rd.
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

1017 SPRUCE ST # C

1017 C Spruce LLC
165 Stanton Rd.
Flemington, NJ 08822

1017 SPRUCE ST # D

Philip J and Denise Driscoll
38 Van Doren Way
Belle Mead, NJ 08502

1017 SPRUCE ST # E

John Karamatsoukas
1017 Spruce St. # E
Philadelphia, PA 19107

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 (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

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

Street address: 1019 Spruce Street

Postal code: 19107

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: 1019 Spruce Street

Current/Common Name: 1019 Spruce Street

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: Residential apartments

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1888 to 1888

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1888

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: George C. Mason, Jr., architect

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: A. H. Tourison, builder

Original owner: Beauveau Borie

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

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization: Philadelphia Historical Commission Date: 13 May 2019

Name with Title: Staff of the Historical Commission Email: Kim.Chantry@phila.gov

Street Address: 1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor Telephone: 215-686-7660

City, State, and Postal Code: Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 13 May 2019

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: 14 May 2019

Date of Notice Issuance: 15 May 2019

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Steven Berk

Address: Penthouse, The Windsor

1700 Benjamin Franklin Parkway

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19103

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

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

5. Boundary Description – 1017 Spruce Street



Figure 1A. 1017 Spruce Street. Base map: Parcel Explorer.

Situate on the North side of Spruce Street at the distance of 17 feet Eastward from the East side of S. Warnock Street. Containing in front or breadth on said Spruce Street 17 feet and extending in depth Northward between lines at right angles with the said Spruce Street 75 feet. **Being No. 1017 Spruce Street.**

5. Boundary Description – 1019 Spruce Street



Figure 1B. 1019 Spruce Street. Base map: Parcel Explorer.

Situate on the Northeast corner of Spruce Street and S. Warnock Street. Containing in front or breadth on the said Spruce Street 17 feet and extending of that breadth in length or depth Northward along the East side of the said S. Warnock Street 75 feet. **Being No. 1019 Spruce Street.**

6. Physical Description – 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street

1017 and 1019 Spruce Street are a pair of four-story townhouses located on the northeast corner of Spruce Street and S. Warnock Street in the Washington Square West neighborhood of Philadelphia. The surrounding neighborhood consists primarily of dense red brick rowhouses in the Greek Revival style. Each building's façade is seventeen feet in width. 1019 Spruce Street is on the corner, and as such, the west (side) wall and north (rear) wall are visible from the street.



Figure 2. 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street. March 22, 2017.

South (Primary) Façades

The front facades of these late Victorian Eclectic rowhouses are clad in both brick and stone, and mirror each other in design. The predominant exterior material is red brick laid in a running bond on the second through fourth stories. The first floor is finished in rusticated limestone with large, multi-paned casement windows and seashell hoods over the front doors. The Dutch front entrance doors are medieval in appearance (Figure 4). Each façade has two basement windows cut into the limestone, with steps down to a below-grade entrance to the basement (Figure 5). Similar, but not identical, three-sided pedimented bays pierce the second stories, while pairs of original multi-paned-over-two double-hung sash on both buildings remains intact on the third story. The houses are topped with pitched slate roofs that are screened by vertically-proportioned stepped gables, evoking the Anglo-Dutch style of architecture. These gables each contain one bull's eye window above two round arch windows, with the original multi-paned-over-two double-hung sash at 1017 Spruce Street.



Figure 3. Primary (South) facades of 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street. May 13, 2019.



Figure 4. Front entrance doors of both properties (left); close-up of seashell hood over the door (right). May 13, 2019.



Figure 5. Below-grade entrance to basement. May 13, 2019.

West (Side) Façade, 1019 Spruce Street

The side of 1019 Spruce Street runs approximately 66 feet along S. Warnock Street. The red brick wall contains multiple windows of various sizes and configurations, in addition to one bay at the second story. Two of the windows at the third story contain the same multi-pane double-hung windows as are found on the front façade.



Figure 6. West (side) façade of 1019 Spruce Street along S. Warnock Street. May 13, 2019.

North (Rear) Façades

The rear walls of 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street are red brick, although the first and second story of 1019 Spruce Street has stucco applied over the brick. 1017 Spruce Street has a bay at both the first and second stories, while 1019 Spruce Street has a bay at just the first story, with double-hung two-over-two windows above.



Figure 7. North (rear) facades of 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street. May 13, 2019.

Integrity and Alterations

The facades at 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street retain an impressive degree of integrity. The majority of windows on the front façades appear to be original to the buildings, and the facades appear nearly identical to those shown in George C. Mason, Jr.'s 1890 drawing (Figure 8) and a Department of Records photograph from 1958 (Figure 9).

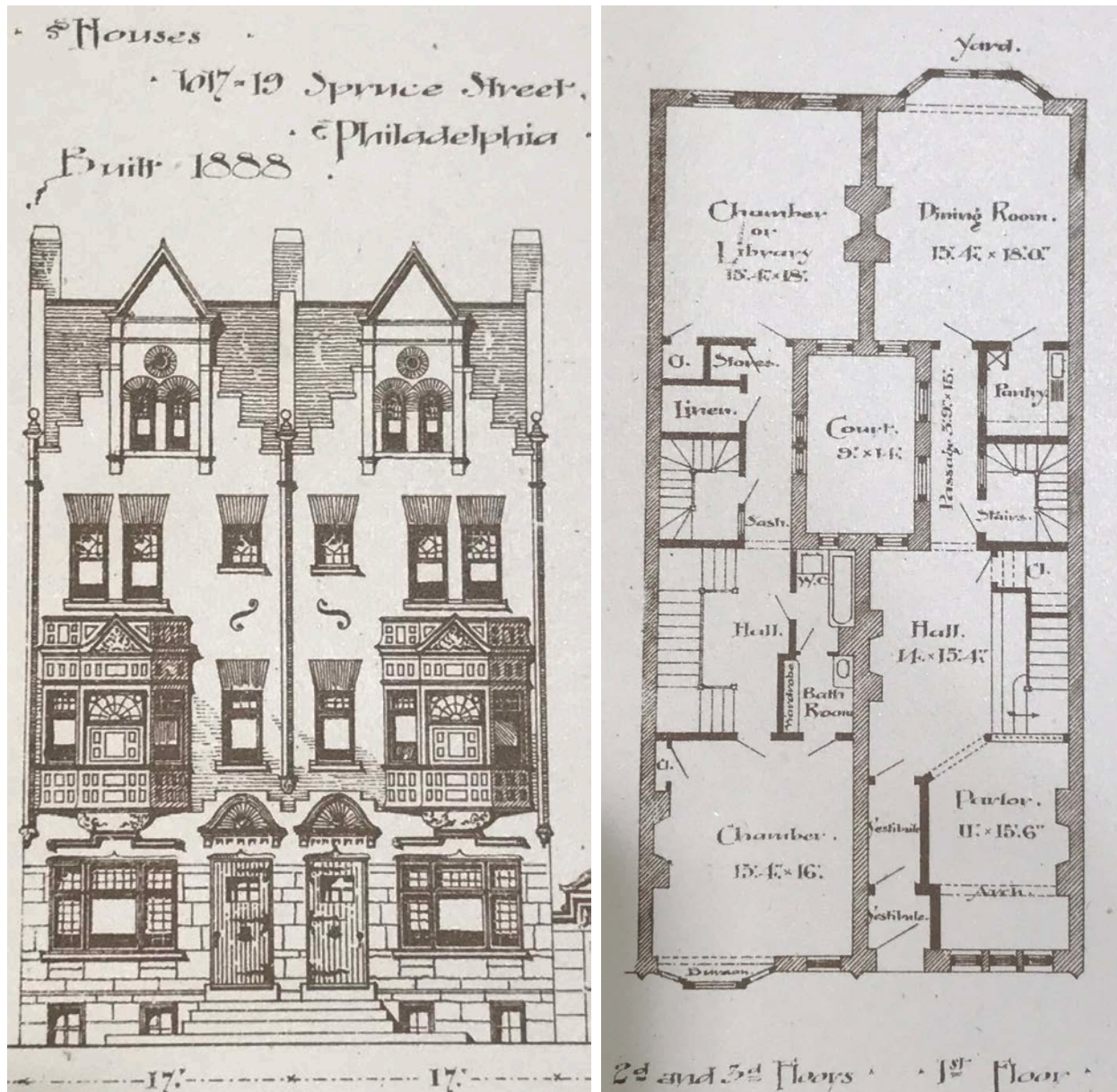


Figure 8. Detail of "Study for Three Houses on Lot – 50 x 100, Geo. C. Mason & Son, Architects" showing elevation and original floor plans. A note on the drawing states that the kitchen is located in the basement. *The Builder, Decorator and Wood-worker*, Vol. XV, No. 4, December 1890. Available at the Free Library of Philadelphia Parkway location.



Figure 9. 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street in 1958. Source: City of Philadelphia, Department of Records.

Statement of Significance – 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street

1017 and 1019 Spruce Street are significant historic buildings in Philadelphia and should be listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Pursuant to Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code, the properties satisfy Criteria for Designation C, D, and E. The buildings embody distinguishing characteristics of late Victorian Eclectic architecture, and include elements of Queen Anne and Anglo-Dutch detailing of the late nineteenth century (Criteria C and D). Additionally, architect George C. Mason, Jr. of noted Philadelphia and Newport, Rhode Island firm George C. Mason & Son designed the buildings in 1888 for Beauveau Borie, shortly after Mason Jr. married into the prominent Borie family. Mason lived with his wife in 1017 Spruce Street immediately following construction (Criterion E).

Criteria C and D: The buildings embody distinguishing characteristics of late Victorian Eclectic architecture, and reflect the environment in an era characterized by these highly decorative styles.

The late Victorian period (1850-1910) was a time period in American architecture known for intricate and highly decorative styles such as the Second Empire, Romanesque Revival, Victorian Gothic, Queen Anne, Stick/Eastlake, Shingle, Renaissance Revival, and Chateausque. All of these styles are often described as Victorian, and indeed many buildings of this era borrowed stylistic elements from several styles, and were not pure examples of any. Such is the case with 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street, where the façade cannot be classified solely as one architectural style, but rather one that employs elements from several styles, including Queen Anne and Anglo-Dutch, and is therefore best described as late Victorian Eclectic.

The late Victorian period was a time of growth and change in America. Advances in building technology made it easier to build more complex and decorative structures. The expanding railroad system allowed building products to be transported across the country at a more reasonable cost. It was an expansive time in American culture and the buildings of this period reflect this. Most Victorian styles look to historic precedents for inspiration, but the architectural designs of the era were not exact replicas of those earlier buildings. The tall, steeply roofed, asymmetrical form of Victorian-era buildings is based on a medieval prototype, with a variety of stylistic details applied. New stylistic trends like the Second Empire style, Queen Anne style, Stick/Eastlake style, Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, and

Chateausque borrowed from previous styles, but offered new shapes, forms and combinations of decorative features.¹

1017 and 1019 Spruce Street embody distinguishing characteristics of several architectural styles of the late nineteenth century, an era defined by often grandiose stylistic experimentations and juxtapositions. The Queen Anne style uses wall surfaces as primary decorative elements. This is accomplished by avoiding plain flat walls through devices such as bays, towers, overhangs, and wall projections. Queen Anne elements found on this building include decorative brickwork above windows, projecting bays, window sash with small multiple panes of glass, and front gables with decorative brickwork. The prominent Anglo-Dutch features of the façade are the stepped brick gables at the roof, red-brown brickwork of the facades, and double-hung windows with glazing bars in the top sash and a single sheet of glass in the lower sash. All of these elements combine to form the architect-designed façades of 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street.²

Criterion E: The buildings were designed by George C. Mason, Jr. of George C. Mason & Son, an architect whose work and interest in the preservation of historic structures has significantly influenced the architectural development of the City, Commonwealth and Nation.

George C. Mason, Jr. (1849-1924) was born in Newport, Rhode Island and was the son of prominent Newport architect, George C. Mason, Sr. (1820-1894). He entered his father's successful architectural firm at the age of eighteen, and by 1871 he was made a full partner of the firm. Mason Sr. made significant contributions to the history of Newport, including calling for the creation of the Newport Historical Society in 1853, and as the designer for numerous Newport mansions. Unfortunately, his name is found quite frequently as the architect of "Lost Newport" houses on the Preservation Society of Newport County's website.³ Examples of these losses include By-the-Sea (1860, demolished 1946, now the site of modern homes), and Greystone (1883, demolished 1938, now the site of the visitor parking lot of The Breakers). See Figure 10.

¹ Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, "Late Victorian Period," <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/late-victorian.html>. Accessed 27 March 2017.

² Virginia & Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 262-287, 373-377.

³ <http://www.newportmansions.org/learn/history-highlights/lost-newport>. Accessed 3 January 2018.



Figure 10. By-the-Sea (left) and Greystone (right). Owing to the date of design, By-the-Sea would have been the product of Mason Sr., whereas Greystone could have been a collaboration between father and son. Sources: newportmansions.org (left); wikimapia.org (right).

According to *The Grove Encyclopedia of American Art*, the firm's designs became more ambitious with Mason Jr. as chief designer. An important Newport collaboration with his father was Edgewater (1869-70) for J. Frederick Kernochan, which was considered to be one of the most elaborately decorated houses on the Cliff Walk (Figure 11). It must have been considered an impressive commission, as it was one of two houses mentioned in a newspaper article announcing the marriage of Mason Jr. to Sarah Borie.⁴



Figure 11. Edgewater (J. Frederick Kernochan Villa), 1869-70 (razed 1888). Source: James L. Yarnall, *Newport Through Its Architecture: A History of Styles from Postmedieval to Postmodern*, p. 69.

⁴ *The Times*, Sunday, October 10 1886, p. 9. The newspaper announcement refers to Miss Borie as "Lizzie," however, the 1886 marriage license identifies her as Sarah McKean Borie.

Several years after designing Edgewater, George C. Mason & Son was commissioned to design the Eisenhower House at Fort Adams, Newport (1872-73) for General H. J. Hunt, commandant of Fort Adams. Now a well-preserved late-nineteenth-century dwelling, it is representative of upper-middle-class suburban residences of the period. The best-known resident of the house was Dwight Eisenhower, who lived in it during summer vacations in 1958 and 1960. The house was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 (Figure 12).⁵



Figure 12. Eisenhower House, Newport RI, constructed in 1872-73. Source: <http://www.eisenhowerhouse.com/>

Another Newport collaboration between father and son, the Francis Morris House (1883; Figure 13), employs a unique design element that is also found on 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street: seashell hoods over window and door openings. According to an article announcing the sale of the property for \$1.23 million in 2016, “the house reflects a skilled architect unloading his talents with varied embellishments inside and out. Contrasting stylistic elements fit together unexpectedly, joined like a tough puzzle solvable only by a master.” The article goes on to state that George C. Mason & Son designed about 150 houses in Newport alone, although many have been demolished.⁶

⁵ National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, “Eisenhower House,” added 1974. <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset?assetID=1d0c614e-146b-4380-a487-1d03db840c7b>. Accessed 9 January 2018.

⁶ Mark Schieldrop, Patch Staff. “Three \$1 Million-Plus Houses Sell in Newport Last Week.” Updated 16 March 2016. <https://patch.com/rhode-island/newport/three-1-million-plus-houses-sell-newport-last-week-0>. Accessed 3 January 2018.



Figure 13. Francis Morris House, Newport RI, constructed in 1883. <https://www.luxuryrealestate.com/residential/837890-the-francis-morris-house-newport-rhode-island-united-states#p1>

Mason Jr. married Sarah Borie, a resident of Philadelphia, in 1886 and relocated to Philadelphia. In early 1888, he opened a branch office of George C. Mason & Son at 302 Walnut Street.⁷ The same year, Beauveau Borie, the brother of Sarah Borie, purchased 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street, which contained three two-story houses at that time. He may have become aware of the available properties owing to his own residence being just several doors down at 1035 Spruce Street. Beauveau Borie had the two-story houses demolished and work quickly commenced on two new residences at 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street. The *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* in 1888 states “George C. Mason...has finished the plans of two houses for Beauveau Borie, of the Philadelphia Warehouse Company. The fronts will be of limestone and brick, and the interior handsomely fitted up in hard woods, and all the

⁷ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, v. 3, January 30 1888, p. 41.

latest appliances. A. H. Tourison has the contract.”⁸ Upon completion, Beauveau Borie sold 1017 Spruce Street to Sarah Borie Mason (George Mason Jr.’s wife and Beauveau Borie’s sister) and 1019 Spruce Street to Eleanor Barker, each for a sum of \$7,000.⁹

It appears that marrying into the prominent Borie family provided Mason Jr. with some work, as 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street was not the first collaboration between Mason Jr. and Borie. According to its listing on The Art Institute of Chicago’s archival image collection, Chelten (Figure 14) was actually the house of Beauveau Borie, rather than Charles, and the main house was designed by George Mason, Jr. in 1886, rather than Wilson Eyre, Jr. Eyre allegedly only designed the garden and greenhouse. A mention in *York Road, Old and New*, states that Mason Jr. was the architect for Borie’s 1886 rebuilding of the stone dwelling, known as Chelten. The house was demolished circa 1940.¹⁰

⁸ George C. Mason, Jr. letters Mason (George C., Jr.) letters, RLC.Ms.524, Redwood Library and Athenaeum, <http://library.brown.edu/riamco/xml2pdf/files/US-RNR-ms524.pdf>. Accessed 23 March 2017; *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, v. 3, n. 16, April 23 1888, p. 188.

⁹ Deed between Beauveau Borie to Sarah B. Mason, 26 January 1889, GGP book 445 p 315; Deed between Beauveau Borie to Eleanor S. Barker, 25 June 1890, GGP book 688 p 25.

¹⁰ The Art Institute of Chicago, Ryerson & Burnham Archives, <http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/cdm/ref/collection/mqc/id/9902>. Accessed 28 July 2017; Hotchkin, Samuel F. *The York Road, Old and New* (Philadelphia: Binder & Kelly, 1892), 193.



Figure 14. Despite the caption under the photograph, Cheltenham, the residence of Beauveau Borie, was designed by Mason Jr. The entrance was on Washington Lane. Source: The Art Institute of Chicago, Ryerson & Burnham Archives.

George C. Mason & Son remained in operation until Mason Sr.'s death in 1894. From 1895 until his own passing in 1924, George C. Mason Jr. practiced independently, taking a special interest in the restoration of historic structures.¹¹

Mason surrounded himself in his professional career by architects that are considered to be extremely significant to Philadelphia's built environment. For many years he was Secretary of the American Institute of Architects, and in 1897, he was Vice President of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, at a time when Wilson Eyre served as President, and Frank Miles Day served as Co-Vice President.¹²

Mason's contribution to the architectural profession was through design, restoration, and also as a respected author of books and articles on the profession. Significant new construction projects include the subject buildings, the Delancey School at 1420 Pine Street (1898, now Peirce College, Figure 15), St. Stephen Episcopal Church Parish House at 19 S. 10th Street (1888), and the Borie residence near Rydal

¹¹ George C. Mason, Jr. letters Mason (George C., Jr.) letters, RLC.Ms.524, Redwood Library and Athenaeum, <http://library.brown.edu/riamco/xml2pdf/files/US-RNR-ms524.pdf>. Accessed 23 March 2017;

¹² "The Institute of Architects," *The Times*, number 3328, Friday, October 24 1884, p. 1; *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sunday, December 12 1897, p. 24.

Station (1886; Figure 14). Significant restoration projects in Philadelphia include the Senate Chamber at Congress Hall (1896), Old Swedes' Church interior (1896; altered to three-aisle plan), and a second restoration of Congress Hall (1901, in collaboration with Walter Cope, Wilson Eyre, Jr., Edgar V. Seeler, and Frank Miles Day).¹³



Figure 15. 1420 Pine Street, the seven-story school house built for Henry Hobart Brown, to be a private institution known as the Delancey School. Now Peirce College, the building was designed by George C. Mason in 1898.¹⁴

Mason Jr. studied Colonial architecture and published many books and articles on the subject.¹⁵ Percy Ash, who wrote Mason's obituary for the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, characterized him in this way: "While Mr. Mason's buildings showed the work of the refined and painstaking practitioner, a great deal of his time was devoted to the literary side of his profession, where his scholarship and graceful expression found ready outlet."¹⁶ One of the more interesting articles written by Mason Jr., as it relates to 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street, is his 1881 article in *The American Architect*

¹³ Richard J. Webster. *Philadelphia Preserved* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), 79, 144, 174.

¹⁴ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 8 1898, p. 12

¹⁵ Joan M. Marter, ed. *The Grove Encyclopedia of American Art, Volume 1* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 254.

¹⁶ Sandra L. Tatman, "Mason, George Champlin, Jr. (1849-1924) Biography from the *American Architects and Buildings* database," https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/26690. Accessed 4 December 2018.

and *Building News* entitled "Colonial Architecture – II." In this article, which can be read in its entirety in *Appendix A*, Mason Jr. discusses the design element of a shell over a front door. He references and illustrates this feature as it was used in the Fairfax House in England (demolished, Figure 16 and Figure 17). He states that the Fairfax House, with its shell ornament over the front entrance doors, is "a very good elevation of so-called Queen Anne."

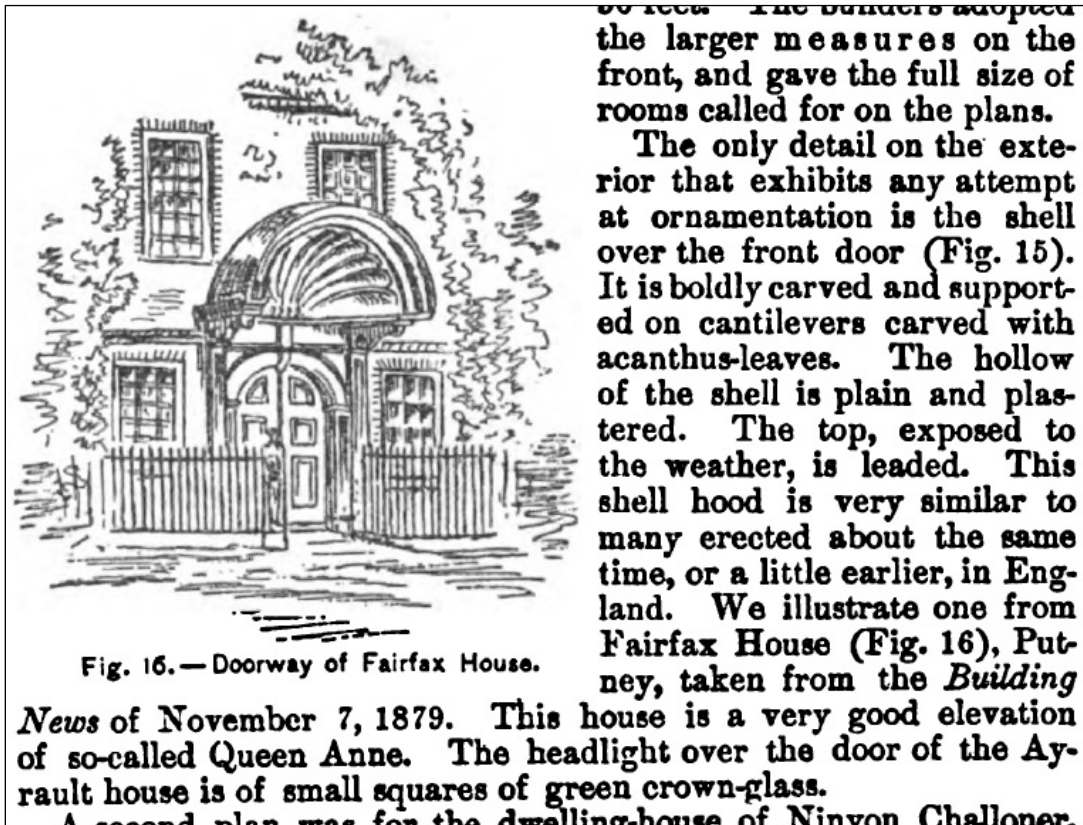


Figure 16. "Colonial Architecture – II" by George C. Mason Jr. *The American Architect and Building News*, Vol. X, August 20, 1881, p. 83.



Figure 17. Fairfax House, Putney, London. Demolished. Source:
http://www.putneysociety.org.uk/putney_society_files/KP%20The%20History%20of%20PHS%2027%2011%2017.pdf

Sarah Borie Mason and George C. Mason Jr. relocated permanently to their new home, “Rubblestone,” in Ardmore in 1914.¹⁷ George C. Mason Jr. passed away in 1924 at “Rubblestone.”¹⁸ Sarah Borie Mason passed away in 1944, and her obituary claims that she was the great granddaughter of Thomas McKean, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.¹⁹ See *Appendix B* for additional information on Beauveau Borie and his immediate family.

In conclusion, the buildings at 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street are significant historic buildings in Philadelphia and should be listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Pursuant to Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code, the properties satisfy Criteria for Designation C, D, and E. The buildings embody distinguishing characteristics of late Victorian Eclectic architecture, and include elements of Queen Anne and Anglo-Dutch detailing of the late nineteenth century, satisfying Criteria C and D. Architect George C. Mason, Jr. of noted Philadelphia and Newport, Rhode Island firm George C. Mason & Son designed the buildings in 1888 for Beauveau Borie, shortly after Mason Jr. married into the prominent Borie family, satisfying Criterion E.

¹⁷ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 13 1914, p. 15.

¹⁸ “George C. Mason,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Wednesday, April 23 1924, p. 25.

¹⁹ “Mrs. George C. Mason,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Wednesday, January 5 1944, p. 15.

8. Bibliography

Mason, George C. Jr. "Colonial Architecture I," *American Architect and Building News*. Vol. X, No. 294, 1881, p. 71-74.

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Mason, George Champlin. *Architects and Their Environment, 1850-1907*. Lancaster, PA: Wickersham Printing Company, 1907.

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COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE.¹—II.

LET us now follow the various steps in the erection of a colonial mansion of the higher class, taking as an illustration a house still standing in Newport, R. I., at the junction of Thames and Anne Streets. This house was erected in the year 1739, for Daniel Ayrault, Jr., one of the prominent merchants of Newport of that day. The house remains in all respects the same in plan and detail as when first occupied by the original owner.

The contract and specification form one paper, in the handwriting of Daniel Ayrault himself. It will be observed that the phraseology is very similar to that used in contracts at the present day. One peculiarity is particularly worthy of note. It is here shown that the corruption of technical terms, such as "modillion" into "mundillion," "cornice" into "cornish," "dormer" into "dormant," is not of recent growth, but has been bequeathed to us through a long line of mechanics. That such corruptions were in general use seems well established, when we find them incorporated into the text of a legal paper, written by an educated gentleman. Here is the contract:—

Articles of Agreement made concluded and agreed upon this Day of May in the Twelfth Year of his Majesties Reign George the Second King of Great Britain &c. Annoqu Dom; 1739 Between Richard Monday and Benjamin Wyatt both of Newport in the County of Newport in the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England House Carpenters of the one Part and Daniel Ayrault of Newport aforesaid Merchant of the other Part Witness That the said Richard Monday and Benjamin Wyatt Do hereby Promise Bind and Oblige themselves their Heirs Executors and admirs. Jointly and Severally To erect and Build for the said Daniel Ayrault a Good Substantial and handsome Dwelling House (upon the Lott of Land purchased by Daniel Ayrault Jun of Stephen Wanton in Newport aforesaid where there is a cellar now dug) and to procure and find all the Stuff and Materials necessary for the same and to Do all the Carpenters Work Masons Work Glasiers Work and Iron Work needfull and necessary to be done thereon and to be built and finished of the following Demensions and in the following manner. Viz. Said House is to be Thirty Six feet Square The Room in the Clear to be Nine feet high below stairs

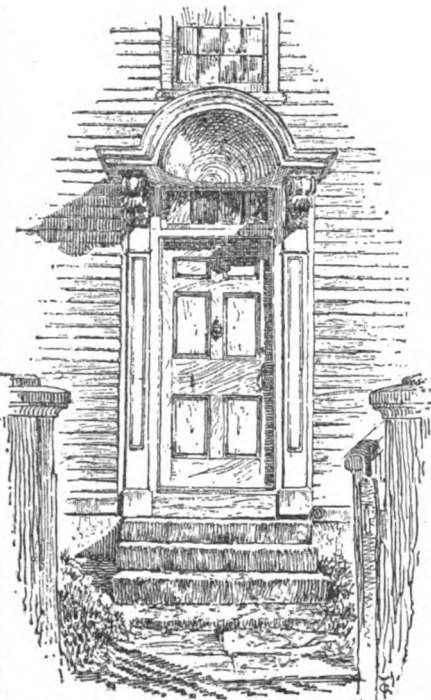


Fig. 15.—Doorway of the Ayrault House, Newport, R. I.

high in the Chambers the House to be Planked all Round with Plank of Inch and half thick and square edged the Clapboards to be beaded Two stacks of Chimneys with Nine Fire Places in the whole Twenty Six whole Windows with twenty four Squares of Glass in Each of Seven and Nine Four half Windows and four Dormant Windows of the same sort of Glass all the Windows to go with Springs and to be cap'd with a cornish and leaded over the Seams The House is to be jetted all Round with a Mundillion Cornish on three Sides and a Scuttle Door upon the Top of the House Three outside Doors to be placed where the said Daniel Ayrault shall direct The Front Doore (Fig. 15) to have a Shell over it and covered with Lead Twenty one Inside quarter round Doors The Floors to be all Double and all the Cellar Floor to be laid with Plank upon Sleepers Two Staircases One in the Great Entry to raise no higher than the Chamber Handsome and Suitable to the Place The other Stair Case to go from the lower room into the Garret and two pair of Stairs from the Lower Room down into the Cellar Two outside Cellar Doors The four Front Rooms below the Breast Work to be wainscotted with a Boffet in the biggest of them Window shuts in all the Rooms below and a Cornish round the two Front Rooms below and the Great Chamber. A Skirting Board to go round all the rooms below. A Moulding to go round all the Chimneys excepting the Kitchen Chimney where there is to be a Mantletree Shelf In the Kitchen is to be a Sink and Suitable Shelves for Dishes &c. Connecticut Stone Steps for the outside Doors Four Brass Locks for four of the Inside Doors and Locks and Thumb Latches suitable for the rest of the Inside Doors and Locks and Bolts for the Outside Doors Closets with shelves therein The Garret to be Pointed and one partition in the Same and one Partition in the Cellar And the said Richard Monday and Benjamin Wyatt do hereby Bind and Oblige themselves their Heirs Executors and Adminrs. Jointly and Severally to find and Provide all the aforementioned Stuff and Materials and Build said House in Manner Aforesaid (exactly agreeable to a Platt or Draught thereof bearing even Date with these Presents and Signed by the Parties) And the same to be finished well and workmanlike on or before the last Day of October next ensuing the Date hereof

¹ A preliminary report presented at the last Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects.

For and in Consideration whereof the said Daniel Ayrault doth hereby promise Bind and Oblige himself his Heirs Executors and Administrators to pay or cause to be paid to the said Richard Monday and Benjamin Wyatt their Heirs Executors Administrators or Assigns The Sum of twelve hundred pounds One half thereof in good and passable bills of Public Credit and the other half in good and merchantable goods.

The house was built according to the annexed plan, but the advisability of running the "great hall" through the house was discussed, as is indicated by pencil marks still on the plan. In case such an alteration was made, two chimneys were to have been built instead of one. In proof of this the contract is accompanied by a detailed estimate, or bill of quantities, of "labor and stuff" required for building the house with these additions. These charges would have increased the cost; bringing the amount up to £1,508 2s. The scheme was therefore abandoned, and the contract was signed for £1,200. Here is the bill of quantities, priced:—

House 36 feet Square Entry through 2 stacks Chimneys.	
Oak Plank Boards Joyce and Timber.....	£120
Pine Plank and Boards.....	180
Nails, Locks, hinges Glass and Glazing.....	150
Mason's work and stuff.....	345
Clapboards.....	25
Carling.....	12
Shingles.....	25
Lead.....	15
Digging the cellar.....	14
Springs for the windows.....	6
Carpenter work and stuff for the windows.....	370
	£1,263
Cellar work and stuff.....	68 15s.
Chimneys and stuff and work.....	134 12
Plastering work and stuff.....	126 15
Carling.....	15
	£1,508 2s.

The blacksmith's bill, written in a delicate and regular hand, amounts to £14 12s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., and includes window-bars, nails, brads, — i.e., large round-headed nails for fastening in place the H and HL hinges, — door-latches, window-springs, hooks and staples, and "things belonging to ditto."

Another bill shows 1,280 feet of red-cedar boards. This was used in making window frames and sashes. The lumber is all put down in the bills under two heads, "clear" and "merchantable," the former being the better quality. On Rhode Island there is no native stone suitable for cutting into ashlar. Nearly all the steps-stones, hearths, etc., were therefore brought from a distance at considerable expense, and only the well-to-do could afford such luxuries.

In the present instance the steps were made of Connecticut brown-stone, costing £10 15s. 6d., and are described as

3 step stones 20 feet @ 4s.....	£4
1 large Do 21 feet @ 5s. 6d.....	5 15s. 6d.
	£10 15s. 6d.

The payments made on the above contract were somewhat peculiar, as compared with modern practice, and show the scarcity of money, although the colonial bills had been very much depreciated in value. The checked-off list of payments has fourteen dates, running from May, 1739, to April, 1741, and amounts with the "extras" to £1,880 4s. 6d. The circulating medium seemed to consist of everything except money, which is only mentioned twice, and then in the shape of notes to the amount of £51. The other payments were made in "good and merchantable goods." Rum takes precedence to the amount of 1,002 gallons; then come calico, calimanco, hardware, molasses, glass, lumber, broadcloth, groceries, and miscellaneous articles. The bills are all accompanied with receipts, sub-orders and vouchers.

The builders were evidently careful and conscientious men. The contract calls for a house 36 feet square. The plan is figured on the outside 36 feet by 32 feet. The rooms add up across the front 36 feet 6 inches without the walls and partitions, and from front to rear 30 feet. The builders adopted the larger measures on the front, and gave the full size of rooms called for on the plans.

The only detail on the exterior that exhibits any attempt at ornamentation is the shell over the front door (Fig. 15). It is boldly carved and supported on cantilevers carved with acanthus-leaves. The hollow of the shell is plain and plastered. The top, exposed to the weather, is leaded. This shell hood is very similar to many erected about the same time, or a little earlier, in England. We illustrate one from Fairfax House (Fig. 16), Putney, taken from the *Building News* of November 7, 1879. This house is a very good elevation of so-called Queen Anne. The headlight over the door of the Ayrault house is of small squares of green crown-glass.

A second plan was for the dwelling-house of Ninon Challoner,



Fig. 16.—Doorway of Fairfax House.

generally employed by the wealthy citizens of the English colonies; and of all places then prominent for commerce, culture and education, Newport stood second only to Boston. The merchants had the means to secure buildings substantial in construction, elaborate in all the decorative portions, and correct, although perhaps severe, in design. These houses are still in good condition, and shelter children of the fifth and sixth generation.

Peter Harrison, the most prominent practitioner of our art, contributed much toward the beautifying of the town of Newport. He was also called to Boston, Cambridge, New Haven, and other places of early importance. At the last-named place he died, being at that time Collector of Customs. Among his more prominent works in Newport are: the City-Hall, 1760; Redwood Library (Fig. 19), a clever design in Roman Doric, 1748-50; Jewish synagogue (Fig. 20), 1762, and the Malbone House, said to have been the most elegant of all, which was burnt in 1766. Many other houses of the same date bear evidence of his handiwork, but no authentic records show his connection with their erection.

With all this activity in building, architecture was not a lucrative profession and its practitioners were obliged to occupy their spare time with other employments. In 1804 William Bridges advertised himself as engineer, architect, and land-surveyor, and offered to furnish plans, estimates, and minute specifications. He resided on King Street, now Franklin. Mrs. Bridges did her part in the effort to maintain the family; for at the same time she made it known that she had for sale a general assortment of millinery, and also ladies' morning-dresses and children's coats and pelisses.

Even Peter Harrison, a man of marked ability, was constrained to engage in trade, and for many years, in connection with his brother Joseph, carried on an extensive grocery business.

We will close this rather sketchy report by quoting from an advertisement, January 3, 1807, of a new publication on architecture. Many volumes of note in different branches of literature had been published in Newport, but it is difficult to gather from the present announcement whether the "American Builder's Companion, or a new System of Architecture," by Asher Benjamin, was from the Newport press, or only offered for sale there. It was a quarto volume and contained forty-four neatly executed engravings, representing, in geometrical lines, twenty different designs for mouldings, the five orders of architecture, with great alterations both in size and expense, gluing up and diminishing of columns, base and surbase mouldings, architraves, etc.

The notice ends as follows: "The engravings were executed and revised under the inspection of Asher Benjamin, architect and carpenter, and Daniel Raynard, architect and stucco-worker, authors of the work. . . . Perhaps no work containing an equal number of engravings ever published comprises so many neat, elegant and useful designs, devoid of that heavy, expensive and colossal mass of work so common in European publications, designed for wealthy and luxurious cities. The designs are calculated entirely for buildings adapted to the taste and genius of the United States."

Probably the best-known of Mr. Benjamin's literary works is his "Practice of Architecture," published at Boston in 1833.

In 1817 Mr. Benjamin was called to design the Rhode Island

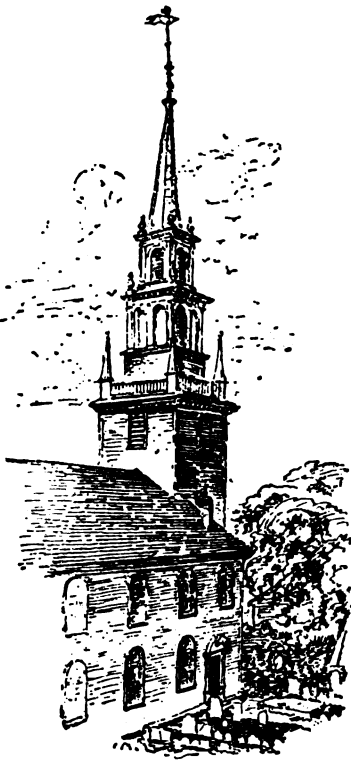


Fig. 21.—Trinity Church,¹ Newport, R. I. (1724-25.)

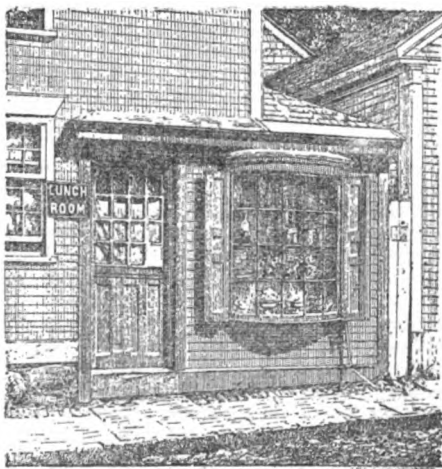


Fig. 22.—Dr. Johnson's Shop, Newport, R. I.

Union Bank-Building at Newport, which when completed was looked upon as a somewhat remarkable work, both for its "chaste simplicity of design and for its extraordinary strength and solidity as a place of deposit." It is built of brick with a brownstone basement and an order of white marble of simple character above. The staircase is of brownstone, and before alterations were made in the interior, the stairs had a wrought-iron railing.

We will not trespass longer upon the time of the Convention, only reiterating what we have before remarked: that we trust the little we have done may serve as an incentive for fuller investigation and research, begun and carried on in a systematic and business-like manner.

Respectfully submitted for the Committee.

GEO. C. MASON, JR., Chairman.

The public buildings of the colonial period were mostly erected during the era of commercial prosperity, between 1730 and the passage of the Stamp Act and Boston Post Bill. The illustrations here given embrace the Newport City-Hall (Fig. 18), Redwood Library (Fig. 19), and Jewish synagogue (Fig. 20), all designed by Harrison, the State-House by Munday, and Trinity Church (Fig. 21), the earliest of them all, built in 1724-25, the designer of which is unknown. These edifices all bear the stamp of the best English work of the time, and evince the cultivated taste of their projectors, and the skill and professional knowledge of the architects. Without exception they are still in good heart and condition. The lines in some places have become curved where they were once straight, roofs have become hollowed, and floors settled. But the white-oak frames bld fair to outlive several generations of the more ambitious but slightly constructed edifices of to-day.

Dr. Johnson's shop (Fig. 22) is the sole survivor of a type which once lined Thames Street, Newport, R. I. I have been unable to discover the date of its erection, but, from the details of the dwelling-house, it evidently belongs to the period prior to 1730. The mouldings, flutings, etc., are delicate and refined; the curved sash well put together, and the quaint Dutch door still opens hospitably to the hungry wayfarer. The colored bottles of the old doctor have disappeared and have been replaced—sad commentary upon the futility of attempting to give permanent health to man—with suspicious looking pies and indigestible compounds served out to the unwary under the generic name of "lunch."

BRUCE J. TALBERT (1838-1881).

"WHEN a great man, who has engrossed our thoughts, our conjectures, our homage, dies, a gap seems suddenly left in the world,—a wheel in the mechanism of our own being appears abruptly stilled." Thus wrote Lord Lytton, in his admiration of genius, and his words are not too eulogistic as applied to the object of this brief memoir. Those who have attentively followed the furniture history of our country for the last twenty years will be best able to estimate the position that "Talbert" holds in relation to the modern revival of cabinet-work, worthy of the name. It is perfectly true that we now rejoice in many designers entitled to rank with him; but it must be remembered that he stands forth as a pioneer in the better phases of modern taste. When young Talbert came to the front, the only guiding star was Mr. Charles Eastlake's "Hints on Household Taste,"—a volume theoretically useful, whilst practically unsatisfactory. The views therein expressed were already finding pleasing embodiment in designs by the young architect, and a fashion was set that for constructive correctness, beauty, and natural individuality, has not been equalled during this century.

Looking, as we do, upon Talbert as the creator of an epoch, we shall not apologize for asking our readers to trace the steps of his artistic career; and to do so from the commencement, we must go back some forty-three years, to the North of Scotland. "Bonnie Dundee" was the birthplace of our designer; and in the High School of that town he received an education which served him well later in life. When leaving school he was asked to choose what he would like to be. He asked to be made an artist, and as this wish was not granted he commenced as a wood-carver, but he never cared much for it, and was frequently occupied during his apprenticeship in making designs, etc., when not using the chisel. It was early seen he had a decided bent for drawing; indeed, he easily carried all before him in that way at school, just as he did in the competitions of after-days. There is a story told of him that when a little lad ill of fever he could only be coaxed to take his powders on condition that the papers were all carefully kept to be afterwards used by him for sketching upon. After serving his apprenticeship as a carver, he started in business on his own account, and continued for about two years; this he gave up, not, as he used to say, because he did not get enough to do, but those who employed him were rather too slow in paying for the work done. It was, however, fortunate for young Talbert that upon his leaving school he had a period of technical training at the carver's bench, and was thus brought into contact with the principles involved in the construction and ornamentation of cabinet-work. It would appear that at one time he made a rather ambitious attempt in the way of carving which did not meet with that reception that the aspiring young artisan thought it deserved. This discouragement would have damped the ardor of many an one, and made them content to "jog along" in a humbler class of work. Not so with young Bruce. Perhaps his name reminded him of the spider's influence over his royal ancestor, King Bruce of Scotland; at all events, we find him, spider-like, climbing the ladder of art, and plying his pencil in an architect's office in Dundee.

The desire to "come down South" which develops in many Scotchmen was early manifested in this case, for we next hear of Talbert in the offices of a Glasgow architect. Amongst others, he served Messrs. W. N. Tait, Campbell Douglas, in company with Mr. J. J.

¹The spire is still surmounted by the English crown.

Appendix B: The Borie Family

According to his obituary in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Beauveau Borie was born in Philadelphia in 1846, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Borie. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1865, and entered into the banking and brokerage business of his father the following year. For many years he was a prominent figure in financial circles, both in Philadelphia and in New York. He was Vice President of the Philadelphia Warehouse Company in the 1880s, at the time that he commissioned the properties at 1017 and 1019 Spruce Street. In 1900 he became president of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange. The obituary continues that the Borie family for many years has been identified with the business and social life of Philadelphia, and an uncle of Beauveau Borie, Adolphe Borie, was Secretary of the Navy under President Grant.²⁰

Borie had four sons, one of whom was Charles Louis Borie, Jr. According to the biography from the *American Architects and Buildings Database*, Charles Louis Borie, Jr. (but really II), was born in Philadelphia to Beauveau and Patricia Duffield (Neill) Borie. He attended the University of Pennsylvania in its course in civil engineering, and went on to work in his father's banking enterprise, C. and H. Borie, bill brokers, where he remained until 1902. At that time he joined C. C. Zantzinger in a firm which was formally named Zantzinger & Borie by 1905. The partners were subsequently joined by Milton B. Medary and practiced as Zantzinger, Borie & Medary until Medary's death in 1929. Following Medary's death, the firm reverted to Zantzinger & Borie. Interestingly, Borie served as more than simply a business partner. In a 1915 letter written by C. C. Zantzinger in support of Borie's membership in the AIA, his partner states that it was Borie's idea to site the Philadelphia Museum of Art atop an "acropolis" which would be surrounded by Philadelphia institutions of art instruction.

Charles Louis Borie, Jr., was extremely active in both professional and social organizations. He was a founder of the Mask and Wig Club, a member of the national AIA and T-Square Club, chairman of the Fairmount Park Art Association, and chairman of the Art Commission of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, among many other endeavors. He was made a Fellow of the AIA in 1915.²¹

²⁰ "Obituary, Beauveau Borie," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sunday, May 4 1930, p. 22.

²¹ Sandra L. Tatman, "Borie, Charles Louis, Jr. (1870-1943) Biography from the *American Architects and Buildings database*," https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/24059. Accessed 29 March 2017.