

**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: 1824 Chestnut Street

Postal code: 19103

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: Edward H. Trotter House

Current/Common Name: 1824 Chestnut 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: Mixed-use commercial and residential

**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 1859 to ~~1859~~ 1933

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1859; c. 1922 storefront

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: \_\_\_\_\_

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Charles A. Rubicam, builder

Original owner: Edward H. Trotter

Other significant persons: Charles F. Haseltine

**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 February 6, 2020

Name with Title Philadelphia Historical Commission staff Email Laura.DiPasquale@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch Street, 13<sup>th</sup> 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: February 6, 2020

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: February 7, 2020

Date of Notice Issuance: February 7, 2020

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: 19<sup>th</sup> & Sansom Corp

Address: Leroy E Kean Inc.

1821 Sansom St

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19103

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 5/20/2020

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 6/12/2020

Date of Final Action: 6/12/2020, Criteria C, D, and J. See amended boundary

☒ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

## 5. Boundary Description

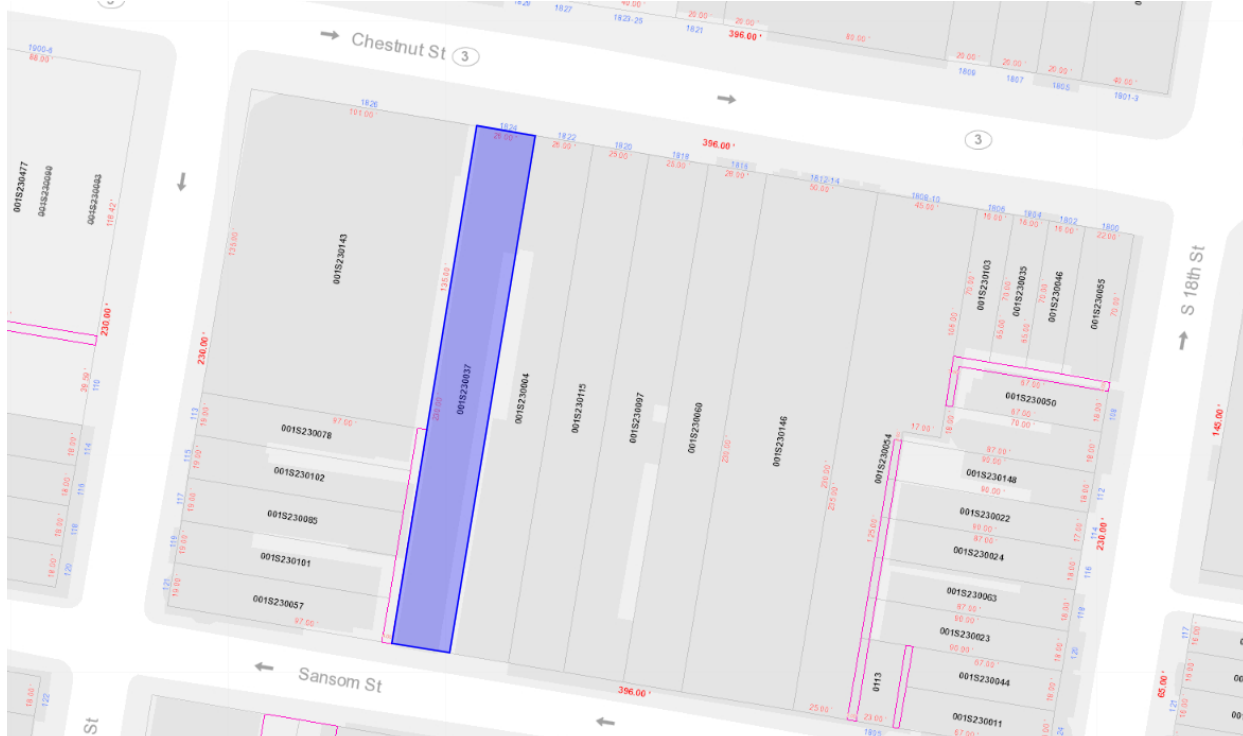


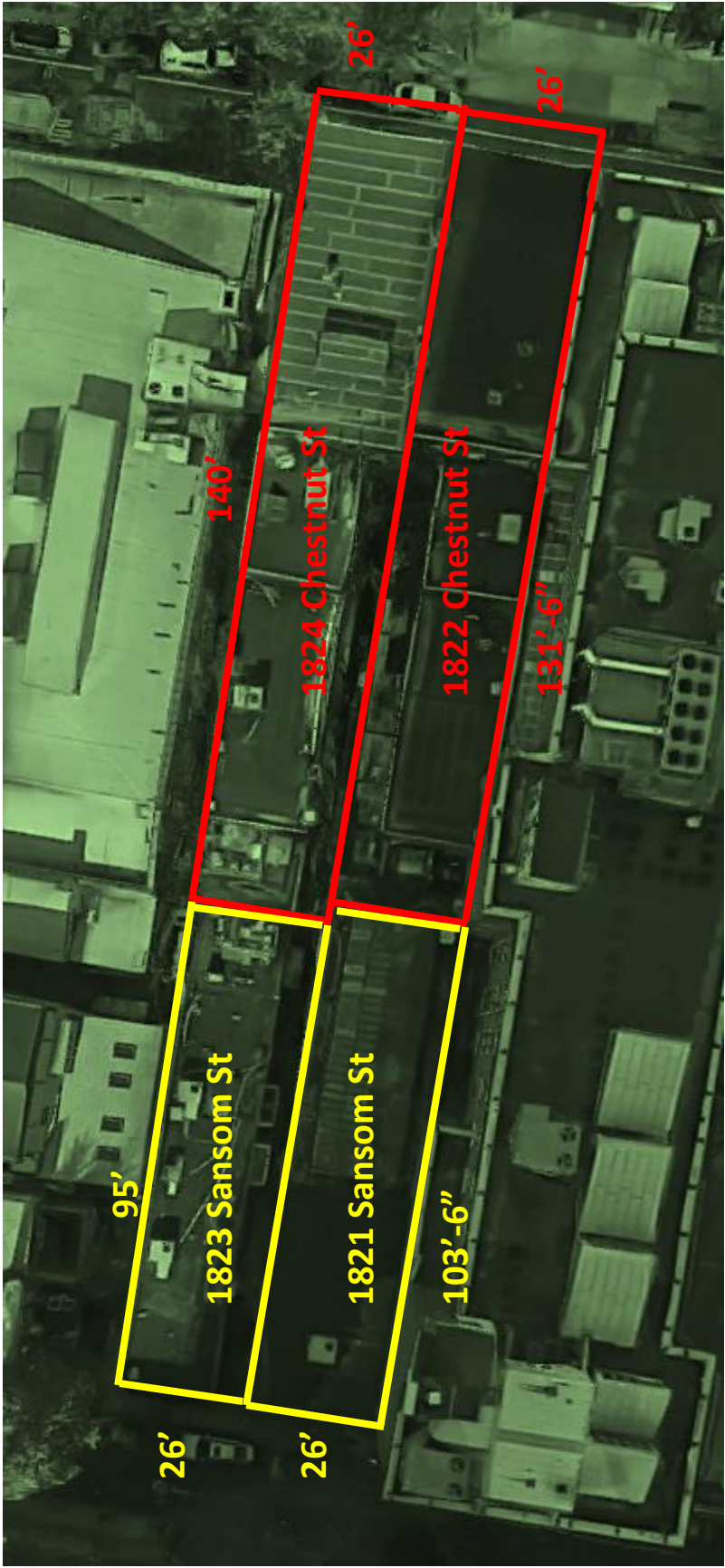
Figure 1. The boundary identifying the parcel at 1824 Chestnut Street. Source: CityAtlas.

Situate on the South side of Chestnut Street at the distance of 101 feet Eastward from the East side of 19<sup>th</sup> Street. Containing in front or breadth on the said Chestnut Street 26 feet and extending of that width in length Southward ~~235 feet to Sansom Street~~.

**\*\*AMENDED BOUNDARY**, adopted by PHC at its meeting on 6/12/2020:

26 feet in width along Chestnut Street x 140 feet in depth from Chestnut Street (see attached)

DESIGNATED BOUNDARIES, SHOWN IN RED, FOR 1822 AND 1824 CHESTNUT ST, AS ADOPTED BY THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION 6/12/2020. YELLOW BOUNDARIES (AKA 1823 AND 1821 SANSOM ST) EXCLUDED FROM DESIGNATION





## 6. Architectural Description



Figure 2. View of 1824 Chestnut Street, February 2020. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Located on the south side of Chestnut Street on a block that transitioned from residential to commercial during the early twentieth century, the Italianate building at 1824 Chestnut Street is surrounded by high-style and architecturally significant buildings, such as the Bair Funeral Home (now Boyds), the Belgravia, the Aldine Theatre, and the Samuel T. Freeman Auction Company building. The parged brownstone building at 1824 Chestnut Street, constructed in 1859 for Edward H. Trotter, rises four stories in height and spans three bays in width (Figure 2). The parcel extends a full block from north to

south. In plan, the building consists of a main block and rear ell. The carriage house historically associated with the house was replaced by a one-story, utilitarian brick building in 1907.<sup>1</sup>

The Edward H. Trotter House historically mirrored 1822 Chestnut Street and was built a few months later than its eastern neighbor at 1822 Chestnut. At the time of their construction in the mid-nineteenth century, the 1800 block of Chestnut Street housed some of Philadelphia's most fashionable citizens and was anchored by the palatial, marble-clad Jayne Mansion just west of the pair (Figure 3). While the buildings' front facades still allude to the upscale residential district in which they were constructed, the area's transformation to a commercial center resulted in several ground-story alterations to accommodate the buildings' changes in use.



Figure 3. Jayne Mansion at southeast corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, with 1824 Chestnut Street at far left showing original residential ground floor, c.1900. Source: PhillyHistory.org.

#### North (Chestnut Street) elevation

The north or Chestnut Street façade of the Edward H. Trotter House is the front façade. The three upper stories historically matched the neighboring building at 1822 Chestnut Street, having been clad in yellow sandstone with decorative hoods and projecting sills. The building currently has stuccoed walls, the stucco of which covers the original yellow sandstone (Figure 4). The decorative hoods have been removed, and the window surrounds have been similarly stuccoed, though a string course remains between windows. Each of the three stories includes three bays with double-hung windows that were historically segmentally arched. While all the same width, the windows get progressively shorter at the third and fourth stories. A decorative wood cornice caps the façade and features double rosettes

<sup>1</sup> Philadelphia Real Estate Record & Builders Guide (PRERBG), v. 22, 1907, p. 487.



between brackets and an applied scroll below. Large, carved end brackets contain floral motifs and acanthus leaves.

As it stands now, the Edward H. Trotter House presents the history of Chestnut Street through the dichotomy of its façade: with its residential Italianate upper stories distinctly separate from its early-twentieth-century storefront. As the block transformed from residential to commercial, alterations to the building at 1824 Chestnut Street largely focused on the creation and adaptation of its storefront. By 1921, the pair of large four-over-four first-story windows was replaced with a single storefront window; in this early commercial iteration, the building retained its entry door and elaborately carved hood (Figure 5). In the following years, however, the storefront expanded to a system that engulfed much of the ground floor (Figure 6). Within a few years, the richly detailed brownstone door was traded for a streamlined entry that matched the storefront.<sup>2</sup> At that time, the first story transformed from its ornately detailed brownstone to a buff-colored limestone composed in simple rectilinear forms, with a tall rectangular storefront opening adjacent to a residential entry of the same height (Figure 7). Above the residential entry is a tall, narrow transom with a center mullion. The only ornamentation is two rosettes above the storefront and entry. A simple cornice divides the ground-story commercial space from the residential floors above.



Figure 4. Second through fourth floors of 1824 Chestnut Street, February 2020. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission.

<sup>2</sup> Photographs from 1900, 1921, and 1933, as well as descriptions of storefront alterations available in the Philadelphia Real Estate and Builders' Guide, provide the progression of changes. Though the storefront of 1822 Chestnut Street is not entirely visible in the 1933 photograph, it likely changed at about the same time and in the same manner as the storefront of 1824 Chestnut Street.



Figure 5. April 1921 photograph showing the now-demolished Jayne Mansion at the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets with 1822 and 1824 Chestnut Street at left. Note that the storefronts have been created, though the original entrances were retained. Source: PhillyHistory.org.



Figure 6. June 1933 photograph with the Aldine Theatre constructed on the Jayne Mansion site; the storefronts of 1822 and 1824 Chestnut Street (far left) have already been altered to their current configurations, eliminating the residential use at the ground stories. Source: PhillyHistory.org.



Figure 7. Current storefront of 1824 Chestnut Street, February 2020. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission.

### West Elevation

The west elevation of the main block is clad in brick with no window openings (Figure 8). The main block remains at four stories in height, followed by a three-story portion of the ell. The ell then steps down to two stories, with a small, one-story addition at the rear. The entirety of the historic structure, including the main block and rear ell, occupies approximately half of the parcel.

### East Elevation

The east wall of the main block functions as a party wall and is not visible. The ell, clad in brick, features regular punched openings and is seven bays deep (Figure 9).





Figure 8. View of the west elevation of 1824 Chestnut Street, 2018. Source: Pictometry.



Figure 9. View of the east elevation of 1824 Chestnut Street, 2018. Source: Pictometry.

### South (Sansom Street) Elevation

At the rear of 1824 Chestnut Street is a tall one-story red brick commercial building, currently occupied by Cavanaugh's Rittenhouse and known as 1823 Sansom Street (Figure 10), which was constructed in 1907, replacing an original carriage house. The structure was extensively altered in 1966. The floor was lowered and both the door and window openings on the front façade were extended downward to accommodate the new interior floor level (Zoning plan, 11/29/1966). Interestingly, with the extension of the arched window opening downward, the enlarged opening took on the appearance of a carriage house opening. However, the building was never a carriage house, but only resembled one after the 1966 alteration. The structure is seen in its original 1907 form in a photograph shortly after its construction and in its altered form in a 1980 photograph (Figure 11). This rear building is considered to be non-contributing for the purposes of this nomination.



Figure 10. Rear building at 1824 Chestnut Street, known as 1823 Sansom Street. February 2020.





Figure 11. Left, 1907 photograph of 1823 Sansom Street, just after construction. Source: Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Right, 1980 photograph after alterations. Source: Clio Group survey form, Philadelphia Historical Commission archives.



Figure 12. Sansom Street façade of the structure at 1824 Chestnut Street, 26 February 1931. Source: Dallin Aerial Survey Company, Hagley Library.

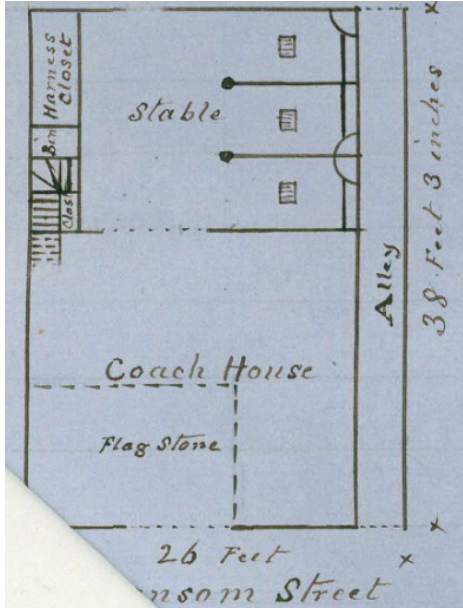


Figure 13. Floor plan of the original carriage house from 1859 insurance survey. Source: Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, Cancelled Fire Insurance Surveys, Philadelphia Contributionship (Archives), policy number 10272.

Looking past the former structure at 1823 Sansom Street, the rear of the subject building at 1824 Chestnut is only partially visible from the public right-of-way (Figure 14). The visible areas show a red brick rear ell with corbelled cornice. A second-story rear addition appears to be clad with plywood.



Figure 14. East wall of rear building and view of rear ell at 1824 Chestnut Street. February 2020.



Figure 15. West wall of 1824 Chestnut Street exposed owing to demolition of Jayne Mansion. May 18, 1921. Source: PhillyHistory.org

## 7. Statement of Significance

The property at 1824 Chestnut Street, known as the Edward H. Trotter House, is historically significant and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The property satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J as delineated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. Constructed in 1859, the building reflects the environment in an era characterized by the popular Italianate style, the most popular style of the Civil War Era, satisfying Criterion C. Additionally, the building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Italianate style, including its low-pitched roof with wide eaves supported by decorative brackets, and tall two-over-two segmentally-arched double-hung windows with dramatic carved hoods and projecting sills, satisfying Criterion D. With its brownstone upper floors and commercial ground floor, the property represents both the residential development of the upper-class Rittenhouse neighborhood in the mid-nineteenth century, and the commercial development of Chestnut Street in the early decades of the twentieth century, satisfying Criterion J.

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

Until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Center City west of Broad Street remained virtually undeveloped, comprised mostly of open fields, pastures, clay pits, and scattered clusters of housing and industry with wharves along the Schuylkill River. The first significant phase of residential construction west of Broad Street occurred in the 1830s, owing to development pressure from the city's growing business district on residential properties east of Broad Street (Figure 16). Mirroring the development of Washington Square to the east one generation earlier, the blocks of Chestnut, Walnut, Spruce and Delancey Streets around Rittenhouse Square quickly became a fashionable locale for the homes, churches, and cultural institutions of the city's established upper and upper-middle class families. These families employed prestigious architects, including John Haviland, who designed the 1830's Colonnade Row at 15<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, and Thomas U. Walter, who designed the porticoed Epiphany Episcopal Church opposite Colonnade Row.<sup>3</sup>

Development moved west, beginning in earnest on the 1800 blocks of Chestnut and Walnut Streets in the 1850s. Rowhouses lined the west side of 18<sup>th</sup> Street (then called Schuylkill 5<sup>th</sup>) between Chestnut and Sansom Streets by 1849, joined by a smattering of other buildings along the north side of Chestnut Street (Figure 17). In 1853, the impressive brownstone Tabernacle Baptist Church, designed by New England architect William Boyington, was constructed on the north side of Chestnut Street, west of 18<sup>th</sup> Street (Figure 18). A detailed profile of the church in *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion* at the time of its construction noted that, "within a few years several splendid structures for devotional purposes have been reared, and the district west of Broad Street may claim the honor of having contributed its full share to the architectural adornment of the city...This elegant building is about being finished, and in point of beauty of design and finish, will rank with any similar structure in the city."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Caroline A. Benenson and Jefferson M. Moak. "Center City West Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, September 28, 1987.

<sup>4</sup> *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion* (Boston), v. 7, n. 5, p. 72 (8/5/1854).



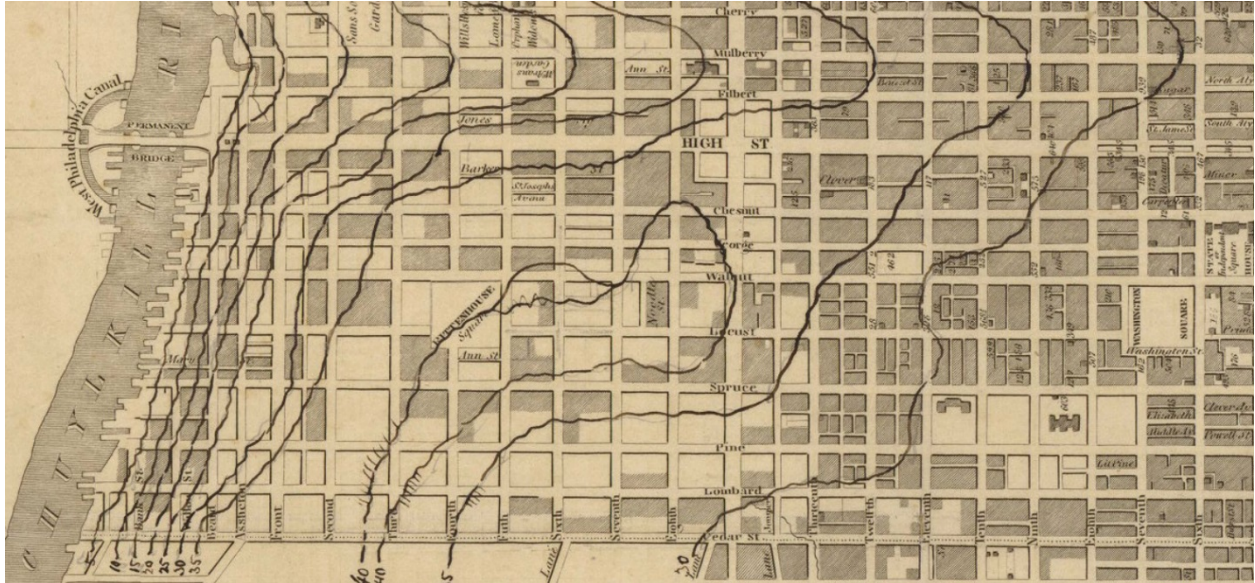


Figure 16: Detail of the Map of the City of Philadelphia, 1831, showing nearly complete development east of Broad Street and spotty development west of Broad. The 1800 block of Chestnut, located between what was then known as Schuylkill Fourth (19<sup>th</sup>) and Fifth (18<sup>th</sup>) Streets was as of yet undeveloped. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

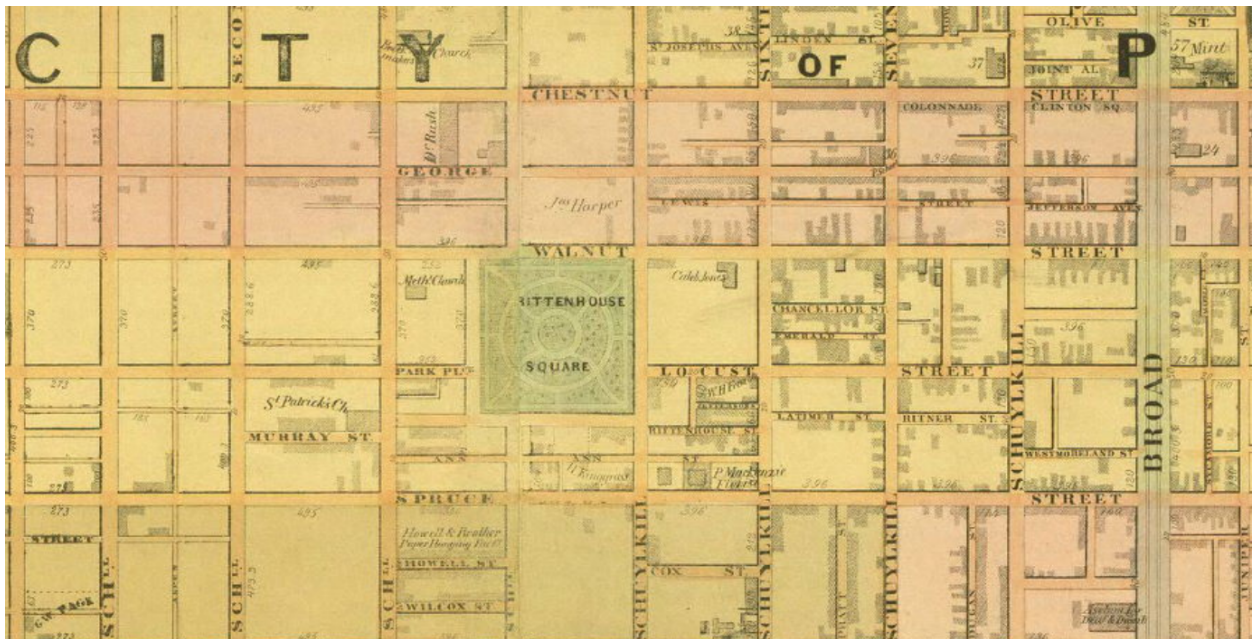


Figure 17: Detail of the 1849 J. C. Sidney Map of the City of Philadelphia, showing development slowly creeping westward. By this time, a few buildings had been constructed on the 1800 block of Chestnut Street. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

The division of the estate of Edward Shippen Burd by his executors in the late 1840s opened a large block of undeveloped land east of Schuylkill 4<sup>th</sup> (19<sup>th</sup> Street) between Chestnut and Sansom Streets to

development. In 1858, Elon Dunbar purchased a portion of that land from Joseph Harrison Jr.<sup>5</sup> Dunbar, along with neighboring property owner Robert DeSilver, commissioned Charles A. Rubicam to build large brownstone mansions at 1822 and 1820 Chestnut Street, respectively.<sup>6</sup> The following year, Dunbar sold the adjoining lot at 1824 Chestnut to Edward H. Trotter, merchant, who in turn hired Rubicam to construct a building of the “same character and dimensions.”<sup>7</sup> Rubicam was “an extensive builder,” who “enjoyed an excellent reputation, and some of the best and most substantial buildings in this city were erected under his supervision.”<sup>8</sup> The brownstone residences, which were situated on lots 25 to 26 feet wide, extended the full 235-foot depth to Sansom Street, where their stables were located. Rubicam’s high-style designs were in keeping with the bracketed Italianate styles that would come to characterize the Rittenhouse neighborhood between 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Streets, but were lauded as being “fitted up in the finest style” and “among the finest that have been made on Chestnut Street for dwellings.”<sup>9</sup> With the completion of 1824 Chestnut Street, the 1800 block of Chestnut Street was nearly fully built out by 1860, with the notable exception of a large parcel at the southeast corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut, which would become home to the impressive John McArthur, Jr.-designed Second Empire mansion for Dr. David Jayne following the Civil War (See Figure 3).

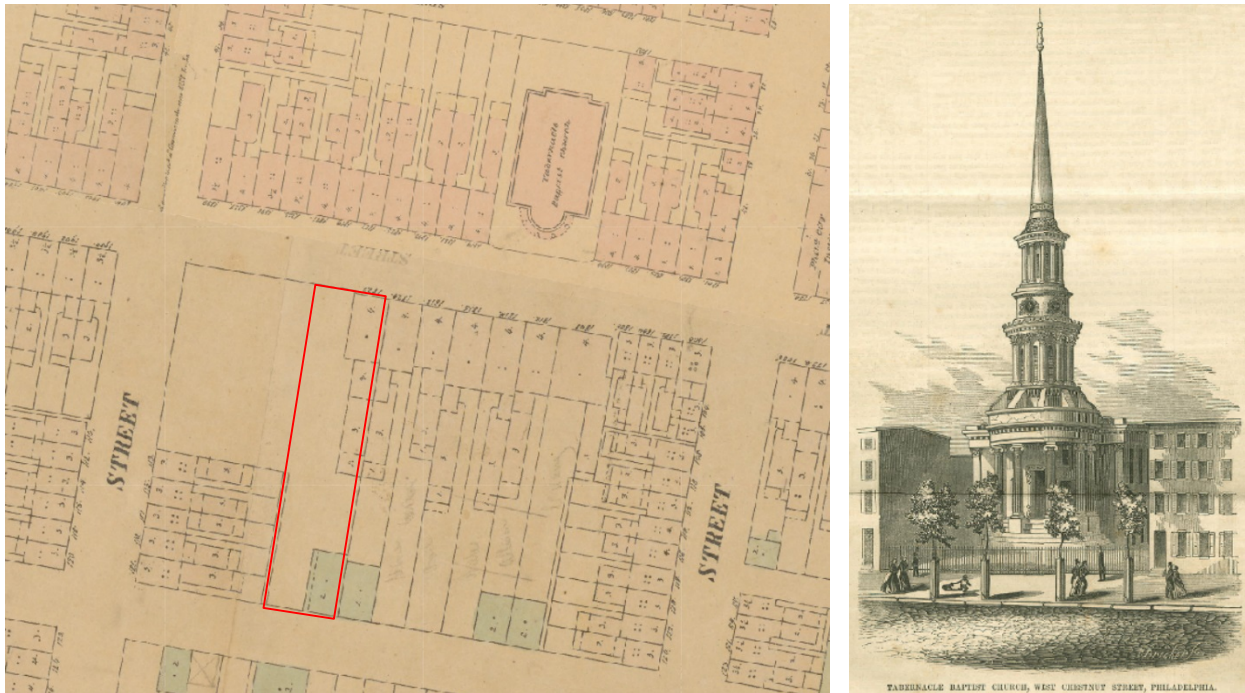


Figure 18: Left, detail of 1858 Hexamer & Locher atlas showing the 1800 block of Chestnut Street. Note that 1824 Chestnut, built in 1859, does not appear on the map. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network. Right, Tabernacle Baptist Church and the neighboring brick residences, 1854. Source: Gleason’s Pictorial Drawing Room Companion (Boston), v.7, n.5, p. 72.

<sup>5</sup> Philadelphia Deed Book ADB-16-67.

<sup>6</sup> Robert DeSilver purchased an undeveloped lot in 1857 from Joseph Harrison Jr. (Philadelphia Deed Book ADB-18-294), who had purchased a large block of land from the Burd estate in 1852 (Philadelphia Deed Book TH-55-99).

<sup>7</sup> Philadelphia Deed Book ADB-32-372. Trotter owned 1824 Chestnut Street until 1864, when he sold it to Eli W. Bailey (Philadelphia Deed Book LRB-29-381); “A Fine Improvement,” *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 8 March 1859, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> “Well-Known Citizen Deceased,” *Inquirer*, 15 September 1876, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.





Figure 19: In the mid-nineteenth century, the character of the 1800 block of Chestnut Street appeared similar to that of its counterpart to the south along Walnut Street, shown here, with large four-story Italianate homes built for the city's upper class residents. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia, Castner Collection, item nos. pdcc01258 (left) and pdcc01268 (right).

Within a few short decades after this residential development, Chestnut and Walnut Streets west of Broad Street evolved into an area of retail, banking, and other professions; the streetscape transformed from its residential character to one of low and high-rise retail and office buildings. Hints of the changes to come were evident as early as 1888, when a doctors' office began operating out of 1822 Chestnut Street, but the earliest and most significant change to the 1800 block of Chestnut Street occurred in 1896, when two rowhouses on the north side of Chestnut Street were demolished to make way for an eleven-story Wilson Brothers-designed Professional Building (Figure 21). Tabernacle Baptist Church was replaced by the eight-story Belgravia Hotel in 1902, and 1820 and 1818 Chestnut were demolished for the J.T. Windrim-designed Oliver Bair Company building in 1907. Dr. David Jayne's mansion, already in poor condition despite being only 55 years old, gave way for the Aldine Theatre in 1921. The remaining three-and-one-half to four-story residential buildings on the 1800 block of Chestnut Street were refaced or replaced with a heterogeneous collection of early twentieth-century commercial designs. Only 1822 and 1824 Chestnut Street survived relatively unscathed, their residential ground floors retained until the early 1920s, when storefronts were added to accommodate the changing uses and context of the buildings.

Around the turn of the century, following a catastrophic fire in his office and galleries at the Haseltine Building at 1416-18 Chestnut Street, famous art dealer Charles F. Haseltine moved his home and operations to 1822 and 1824 Chestnut Street. From 1901 until his death in 1915, 1822 and 1824 Chestnut Street are listed interchangeably as Haseltine's home and galleries.<sup>10</sup> Haseltine purchased 1824 Chestnut Street in 1906, which he appears to have also run as an apartment building for a time. Following his death in 1915, Haseltine's collection was auctioned off, and the buildings at 1822 and 1824 Chestnut Street sold. In keeping with the commercial development of Chestnut Street, storefronts were

<sup>10</sup> *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), 13 Dec 1903, p. 29.



added to the properties and leased to commercial tenants, including an opticians' office and millinery shop. The upper floors continued their residential use, and, although somewhat altered, appear much as they did for their first owner, Edward H. Trotter, in 1859.

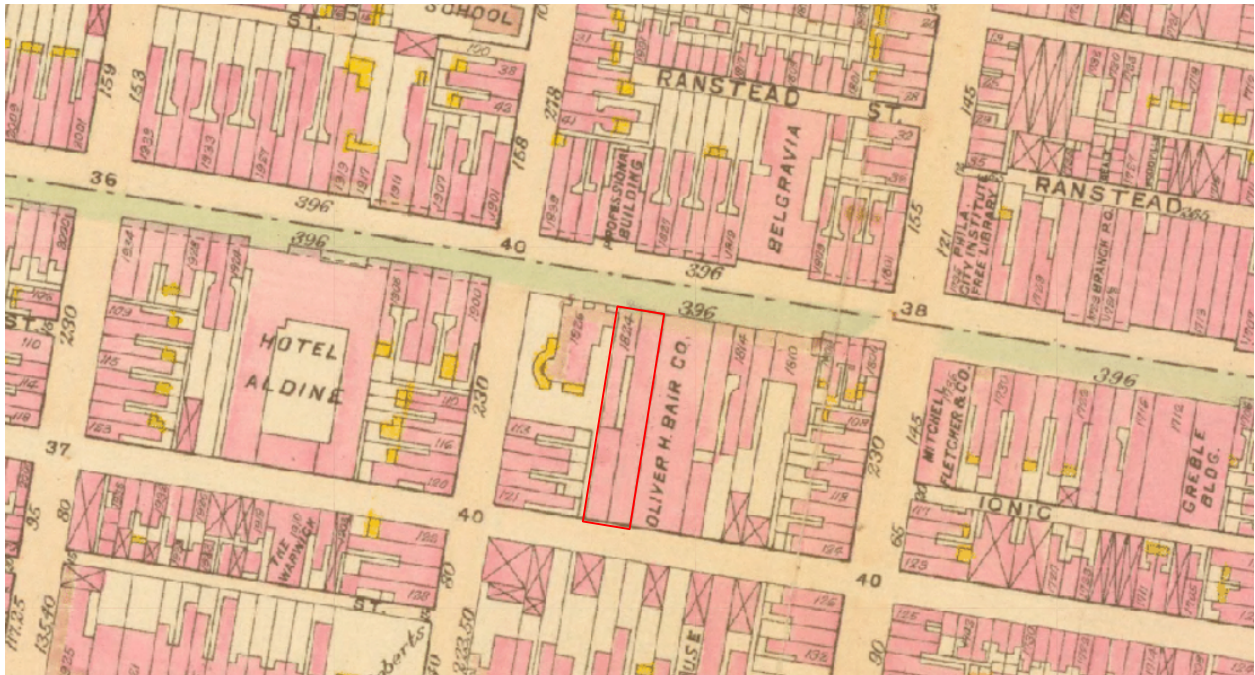


Figure 20: Detail of the 1910 G.W. Bromley atlas of Philadelphia showing the changing character of Chestnut Street. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

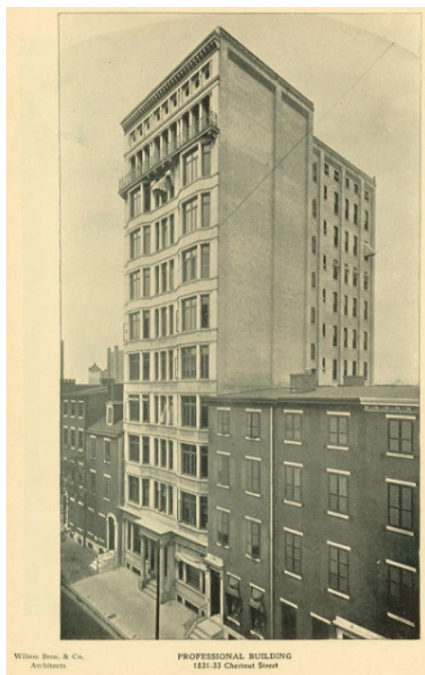


Figure 21: Left, an 1899 view of the Wilson Brothers-designed Professional Building which replaced earlier residential rowhouses at 1831 and 1833 Chestnut Street, from *The Official Office Building Directory and Architectural Handbook of Philadelphia*, The Commercial Publishing and Directory Co., Philadelphia, 1899, p. 526. Right, the same view in 1963. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission.

**Criterion C: Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style.**

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

For the design of his new house, Edward H. Trotter chose a high-style version of the popular Italianate style, which drew inspiration from fifteenth-century Italian palazzo design, the classical detail, elegance, and gravitas of which were “deemed eminently suitable for symbolizing prosperity and social position in a limited space.”<sup>11</sup> Dominant during the period from 1855 to 1870, the Italianate style lent itself well to numerous building forms, including urban and rural residences, commercial, and institutional buildings. Nationally, the Italianate style was the most popular style of the 1850s for urban row construction. The facades of Italian Renaissance palazzi offered a prototype for John Notman’s Athenaeum on Washington Square of 1845-47 (Figure 22) and for Thomas Ustick Walter’s Lewis’s Row of 1849 (Figure 23). Walter adopted the characteristics of a Renaissance façade using brownstone instead of brick on this row and many other commissions in Philadelphia. Notman and others were responsible for the designs of 1618, 1620, and 1622 Locust Street, all considered to be excellent examples in Philadelphia of the Italianate style (Figure 24) along with the later Italianate rowhouses on the 2000 block of Walnut Street, which showcase the high front stoop which was originally found on the subject building (Figure 25).<sup>12</sup>



Figure 22. Athenaeum of Philadelphia at 219 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Source: Steve Minor, Flickr.

<sup>11</sup> Suzanne Spellman, “Italianate Architecture.” *Brownstoner*, April 6, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Bobbye Burke et al, *Historic Rittenhouse: A Philadelphia Neighborhood* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 48-49.





Figure 23. 1500 block of Pine Street, Lewis's Row. Source: Google Street View, 2019.



Figure 24. 1600 block of Locust Street. Source: Google Street View, 2018.



Figure 25. 2000 block of Walnut Street. Source: Google Street View, 2017.

Distinguishing characteristics of the urban townhouse adaptation of the Italianate style found at 1824 Chestnut Street include its low-pitched roof with wide eaves supported by decorative brackets; tall segmentally-arched double-hung windows, originally with dramatic carved hoods and projecting sills as evidenced in historic photographs, and window heights differentiated by floor level.<sup>13</sup> The building at 1824 Chestnut Street presents a more stylish version of the brick-fronted Italianate rowhouses found throughout Philadelphia.

While the architect of 1824 Chestnut Street is not known, its original appearance was very similar to that of the building that stood at 1804 Arch Street, a c. 1853 townhouse designed by Stephen Decatur Button and erected for B. A. Fahnestock (Figure 26; left). Button's façade for the Fahnestock house at 1804 Arch Street can be contrasted with Thomas Ustick Walter's design for an unidentified townhouse (Figure 26; right). Where Walter was restrained, drawing from his earlier Greek Revival work, Button, according to architectural historian Jeffery Cohen, "dressed his façade with an insistent richness and florid ornament. Arches, encrusted with stone tiaras, adopt a variety of curving profiles, with only a weak indication of their springing levels rather than more architectonic shapes or treatments. Beneath these arches round-headed wooden tracery tops the paired ranges of lights in each window, with an intervening circle at the first- and fourth-floor levels. These allude to early Renaissance palaces in Venice, an admixture that infused the Italianate style of the 1850s with additional richness compared to the more rectilinear Roman models that had reigned in the late 1840s. By its decorative celebration and its new imposing scale, this inflected Italianate style served especially to celebrate the wealth and announce the presence of those who were newly arrived, both economically and socially. A similar style and motive marked the

<sup>13</sup> "Italianate Villa/Italianate Style 1840 - 1885." Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/italianate.html>.



new commercial palaces then rising in Philadelphia's old center."<sup>14</sup> The same year that Button designed the Fahnestock house, 1853, he designed an Italianate commercial building at 920-22 Chestnut Street for Elon Dunbar, the original owner of 1822 Chestnut Street, the property next door to the subject property (Figure 28).<sup>15</sup> Button is also known for erecting "many of the handsomest private residences around Rittenhouse Square."<sup>16</sup> It is likely that Button designed the Edward H. Trotter House.

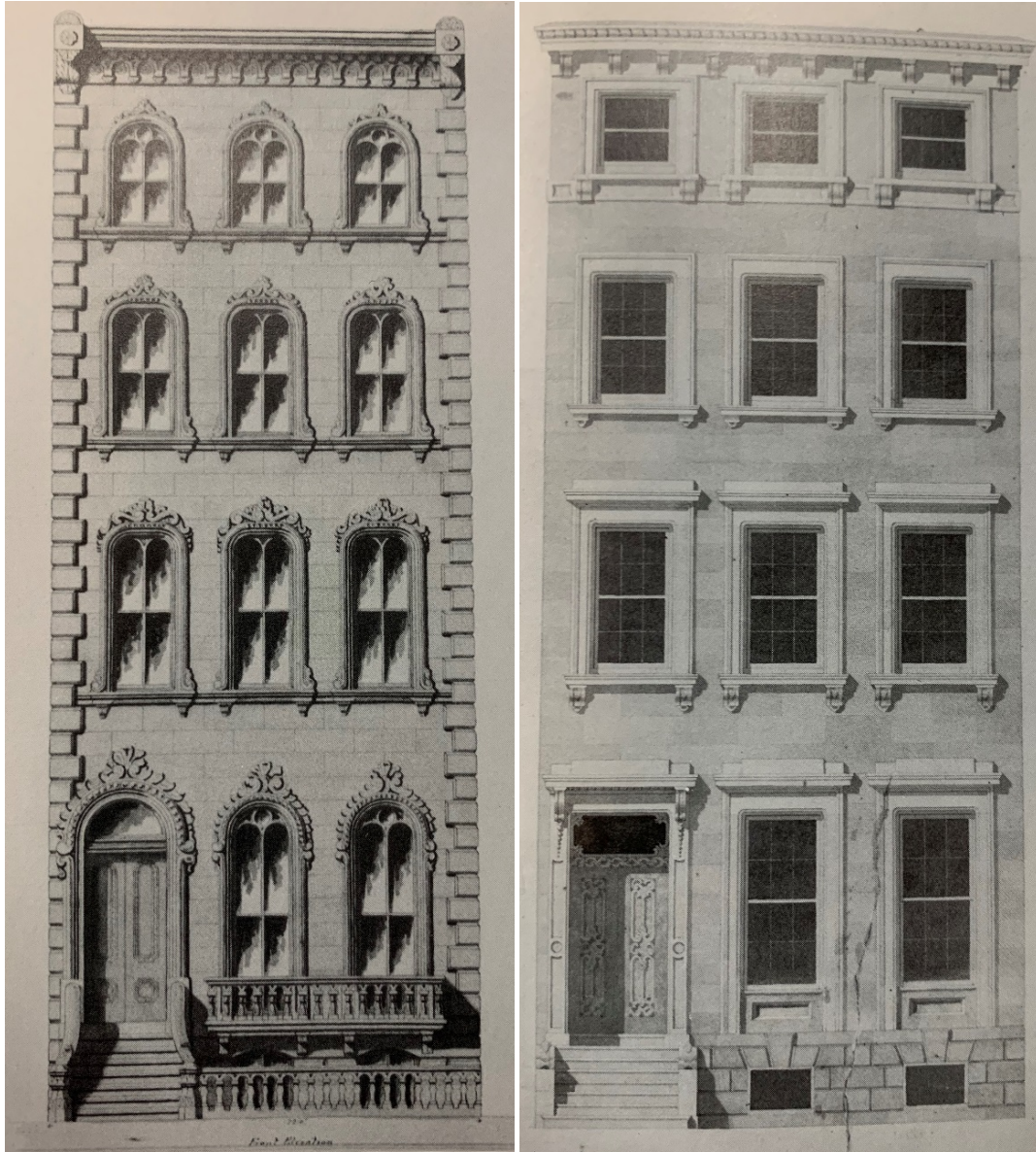


Figure 26. Left: B. A. Fahnestock Townhouse at 1804 Arch Street. Source: O’Gorman et al, p. 103. Right: “Unidentified Townhouse.” Source: O’Gorman et al, p. 93.

<sup>14</sup> James F. O’Gorman, Jeffrey A. Cohen, et al, *Drawing Toward Building: Philadelphia Architectural Graphics 1732-1986* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 103-104.

<sup>15</sup> On the Dunbar buildings at 920-22 Chestnut Street, see: “Large Contract,” *Public Ledger*, 9 February 1853, p. 2. On Philadelphia’s commercial architecture of the 1850s, see: Winston Weisman, “Philadelphia Functionalism and Sullivan,” in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 20, no. 1, March 1961, p. 3-19.

<sup>16</sup> “The Oldest Architect: Stephen D. Button Celebrates his Eightieth Birthday,” *The Times* (Philadelphia), 16 June 1892, p. 7.



Figure 27. 1824 Chestnut Street. Source: CBRE.com.

As evidenced by its popularity, Italianate architecture knew no class boundaries, and was used on earlier, more simple buildings as well as higher-style facades such as those at 1822 and 1824 Chestnut Street. The often-incorporated high square towers of the Italianate Villa design made the style a natural choice for upscale homes of the newly rich; however, the brackets and other architecture details, made affordable by new methods for machine production, were easily applied to simple cottages and townhouses. New technologies also made it possible to affordably produce cast-iron decorations beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, making the Italianate a favored style of this period for practical yet elegant designs of urban townhouses. While the façade of 1824 Chestnut Street does not specifically feature cast-iron detailing, one can see the influence of its popularity at this time via the fluidity and detail of the dramatic carved hoods and sills at the windows in a circa 1900 photograph (Figure 3), which stand in stark contrast to the earlier rectilinear designs which characterized early Italianate townhouse design. Italianate remained a preferred house style in the region through the 1870s, and is a visual hallmark of the Rittenhouse-area streetscape.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Leland M. Roth, *A Concise History of American Architecture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 118-121; "Picturesque Italianate Architecture in the U.S." <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-italianate-house-style-178008>.





Figure 28. 920-22 Chestnut Street, designed by Button for Elon Dunbar, the original owner of 1822 Chestnut Street. Source: Baxter's Panoramic Business Directories, Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

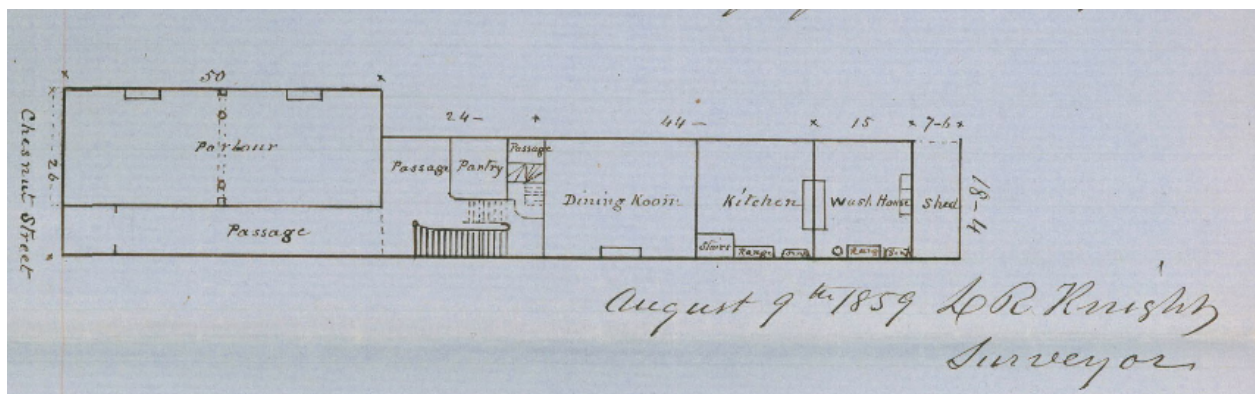


Figure 29. Floor plan for 1824 Chestnut Street from 1859. Source: Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, Cancelled Fire Insurance Surveys, Philadelphia Contributionship (Archives), policy number 10141.



## **Conclusion**

In summary, the building at 1824 Chestnut Street merits listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, satisfying Criteria for Designation C, D, and J. The building reflects the development of Chestnut Street from the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth-century, as well as the environment in an era characterized by the popular Italianate style, which was nationally the most popular style of the 1850s for urban row construction, satisfying Criteria for Designation C and J. Additionally, the building embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Italianate style, including its low-pitched roof with wide eaves supported by decorative brackets, and tall segmentally-arched double-hung windows, originally with dramatic carved hoods and projecting sills, satisfying Criterion D.

## 8. Major Sources Cited

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