

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: 1733-49 North 4th Street

Postal code: 19122

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Union Mission Hospital/ Stetson Hospital

Current/Common Name: ACT 2 Program of Jewish Educational and Vocational Services

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: Health Care

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 1904 1870 to 1906 1971, as adopted by PHC 1/14/2022

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1903-1904

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Ballinger and Perrot

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: _____

Original owner: John B. Stetson Company

Other significant persons: John B. Stetson

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.

Criterion I added by PHC 1/14/2022

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Organization _____ Date 10 September 2021

Name with Title Steven J. Peitzman, MD Email peitzmansj@gmail.com

Street Address 2911 Wood Pipe Ln Apt D Telephone 215 840 5637

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19129

Nominator is is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 9/10/2021

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 10/27/2021

Date of Notice Issuance: 10/28/2021

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Department of Public Property, City of Philadelphia

Address: City Hall, 7th Floor

1400 John F. Kennedy Blvd

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19107

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 12/1/2022; rec. Crit. A, D, E, I; POS 1870-1971

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 1/14/2022

Date of Final Action: 1/14/2022; Criteria A, D, E, & I; POS 1870-1971

Designated Rejected

NOMINATION

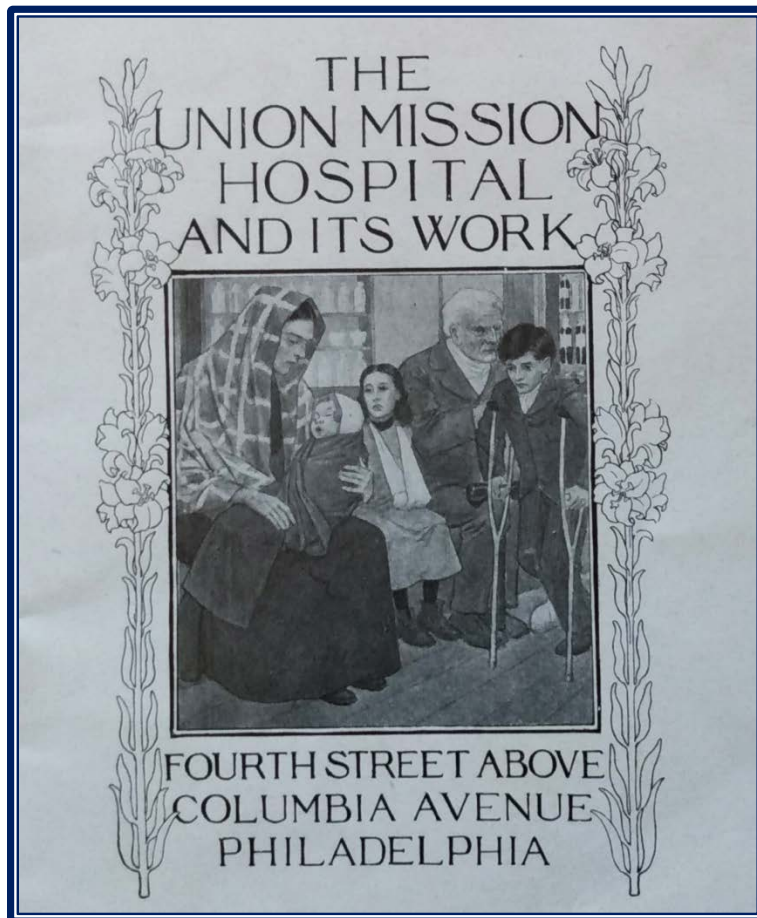
To the

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STETSON HOSPITAL

1733-49 N. 4th Street, Philadelphia

First known as Union Mission Hospital



*Title page of a pamphlet, c.1904; Historical Medical Library, The College of Physicians of Philadelphia
Union Mission Hospital was the early name of Stetson Hospital.*

5. Boundary Description

This nomination proposes to designate a portion of a larger OPA tax parcel known as 1733-49 N. 4th Street, which is composed of two deeded parcels, Map Registry #013N240301 to the north and #013N240302 to the south. The nomination is limited to the northern deeded parcel, 013N240301.



Figure 1: The boundary of 1733-49 N. 4th Street is outlined in red. It includes two deeded parcels. The nomination is limited to the northern half of the property, shaded in blue.

Map Registry #013N240301 is almost entirely occupied by the subject building. The boundary of the parcel (figure 1) can be described as follows: Beginning at a point along the west side of N 4th Street 120 feet south of the south side of Montgomery Avenue, then 102.5 feet easterly parallel to Montgomery Avenue to a point, then southerly 76 feet parallel to N 4th Street, then 102.5 feet westerly parallel to Montgomery Avenue, then 76 feet northerly parallel to N. 4th Street, to the beginning point.

6. Architectural Description

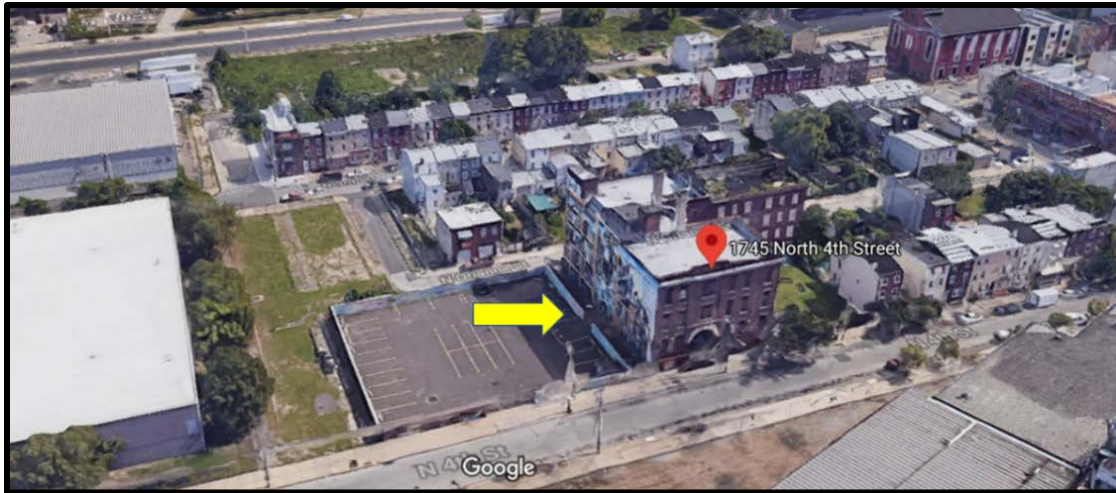


Figure 2: The nominated resource in context looking east and south. Google Maps image..

Figure 2 shows the hospital in its current (2021) context on North 4th Street south of Montgomery Avenue. A scattering of three-story nineteenth-century row houses remains, especially along Third Street to the east, and to the south on 4th. In the 1920s, many of these houses were occupied by workers at the Stetson factory, including many of Hungarian and Croatian background.¹ To the west, along 5th Street, and to the south, an area once dense with manufacturing buildings has been undergoing a transformation to residential, by way of some attractive re-use of former mills, and a good deal of new construction. Eateries and taverns have followed the new, young, residents.

Figure 3, from an historic postcard, shows the hospital as it stood in 1910 within the Stetson complex. The view is to the west and north.



Figure 3: Segment of a postcard, c. 1910 (Library Company of Philadelphia).

¹ This statement is based on a review of 1920 United States census sheets for the area for North 3rd and North Orianna Streets, Ward 19, enumeration district 0397.

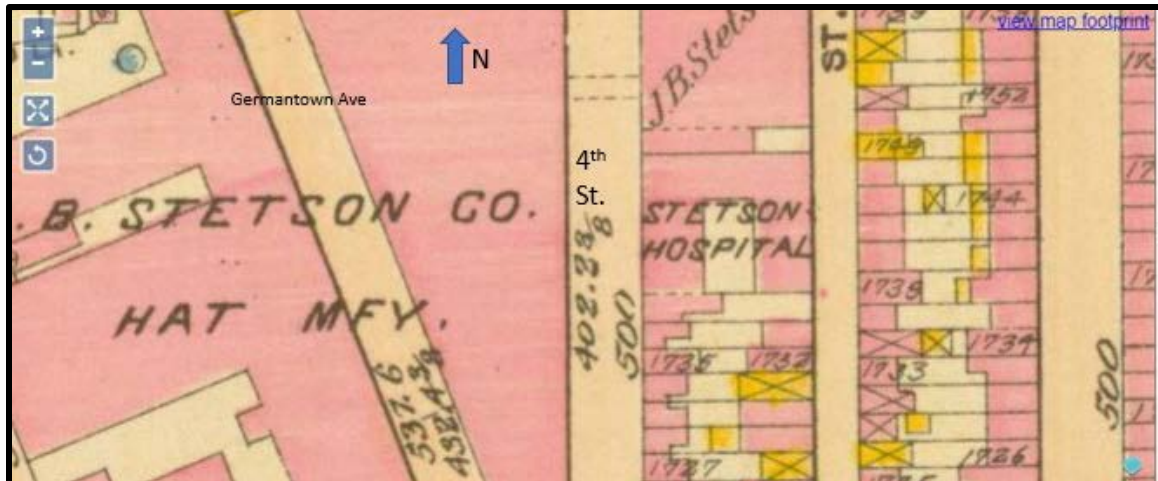


Figure 4: The hospital depicted in the 1910 Bromley Atlas

Stetson Hospital is U-shaped in plan, with two matching three-story (plus raised basement) blocks, 'A' (west block) and 'C' (east block); and a central connecting section with a south-facing semi-octagonal bay, 'B.' The boundaries of the building largely coincide with the parcel. A later extension adjoining 'C' to the south can be seen in this figure: it is not included in this nomination. It occupies a separate parcel. The central volume, B, contains the main staircase and an elevator. The building is of brick with a stone foundation seen above ground, and stone lintels and sills.

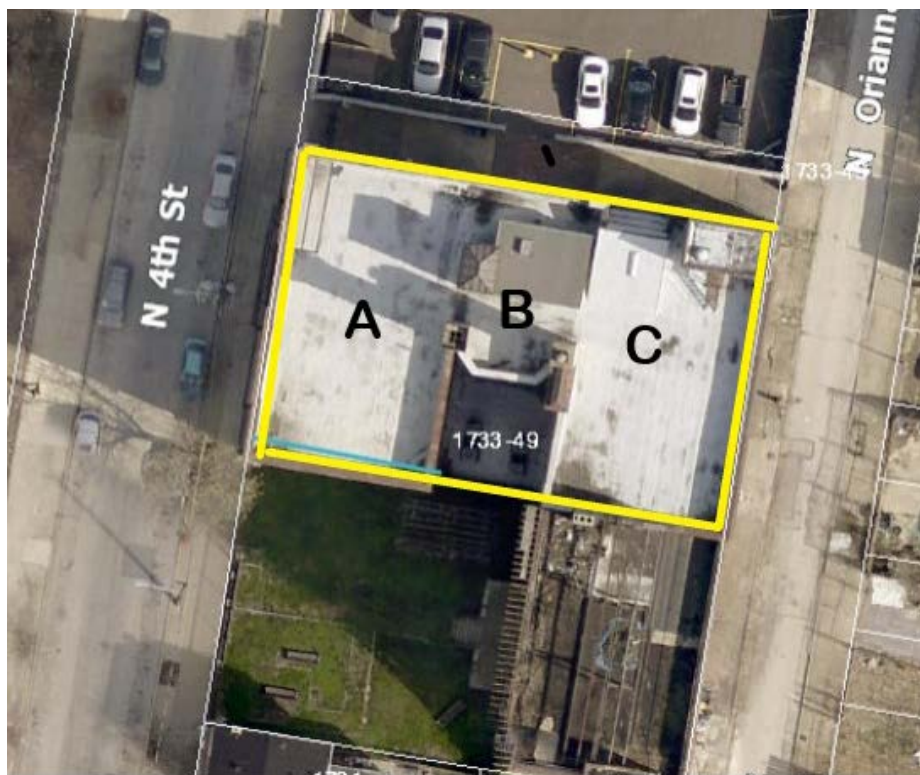


Figure 5: Aerial view of the portions of 1733-49 N. 4th Street proposed for designation (Atlas.Phila.gov).

The most distinctive façade faces west onto North 4th Street. This block is 60 feet wide (north-south) and rises three stories above the rusticated ashlar foundation; walls above this foundation are everywhere brick on all elevations.

Using the conventional terminology of “bays,” the façade can be seen as comprising 4 bays: two-windows wide (at stories 1 to 3) to the north; next a central bay over the entrance arch with double windows at levels two and three; then another two-window bay; then a one-window bay whose surface is recessed the depth of one brick. The southernmost narrow bay alters what would otherwise now be a symmetrical design. The existing windows in all openings are metal replacement windows with a one-over-one sash below a fixed opaque panel above. The original windows featured a similar configuration, with one-over-one sash below a transom hinged to tilt inward. Each window is simply dressed with a stone sill and a rusticated stone lintel. The size and generous number of windows, seen also on other elevations, reflect the perceived importance of fresh air and ventilation for healing and well-being at the time this hospital was built (1903-1904).



Figure 6: West façade along 4th Street. All current photos by Steven Peitzman unless otherwise noted. The slight curvature results from the need to use a wide-angle lens. See also a Google image in the appendix.



Figure 7: The nominated building from a 1919 photograph, looking north and east. The addition to the right (south) was a nurse's residence, since demolished. To the north (left) is a two-story connector that attached the hospital to a Stetson warehouse building. It was demolished in 1978.



Figure 8: Photograph from 1978, prior to renovations that removed a two-story connector to the adjoining building (Courtesy of David S. Traub).

A set of double stairs supported on rusticated stone blocks, with railings, leads to the arched opening of an inset entry porch with the (modern) doors set in about 5 feet from the front surface (figure 9). The semicircular arch comprises brick voussoirs painted white, with crossettes left unpainted (the original scheme did not include the white paint). The voussoirs increase in size from the abutments upward until flattened at the crown, where the arch and particularly the keystone meet a course of projecting bricks spanning this bay. The rusticated design was far more cohesive and comely before the white paint.

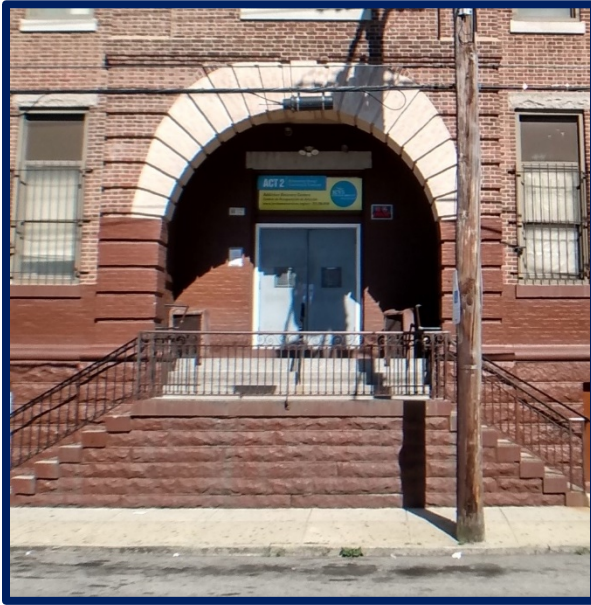


Figure 9: Left, detail of entrance frontispiece, present-day. Right, detail of the entrance in 1912, showing a horse-drawn ambulance in front of the Hospital entrance (Report of the Stetson Hospital for 1912). Hospitals in this period loved showing off their ambulances, including when later motorized.

Seemingly rising from each arch abutment, a thin pilaster strip of brick ascends to the cornice, and the eye sees the verticality continue through the cornice to the two date markers in the parapet (see again figure 6 and figure 10), which form a kind of cap.



Figure 10: Detail of the cornice and parapet. The projecting cornice presents simplified classical molding over modillions.

The parapet shows 1887, the date of founding of the Union Mission Hospital (the earlier name), and 1904, the year the subject building was mostly completed; it opened in February of 1905. Between these date markers is the name as of when construction began, Union Mission Hospital.

Only the west façade might be assigned a style. The *second Renaissance revival* is suggested by the rusticated base, the prominent arch, the overhanging cornice and modillions, the parapet, and the period (early decades of the twentieth century). The large arched entry might suggest some lingering Richardsonian influence.

The north elevation, spanning all three blocks, hosts a vivid and complex mural titled “Personal Renaissance” designed by James Daniel Burns, dated 2010, which evokes the ascent of individual achievement, reflecting the building’s current use (2021) for treatment of addiction disorders (figure 11). The design includes some “trompe l’oeil” effects, as if one is looking into rooms of the building, and some architectural images. Somewhat camouflaged, several actual windows can be discerned, easier seen looking tangentially (not illustrated). For example, a row of four windows survives at the first-floor level to the west (4th Street). Two bridges to a neighboring Stetson building (not extant) were removed as part of a 1978 renovation (figure 12).



Figure 11: The mural "Personal Renaissance" on the north elevation. Note several windows at the lower level.

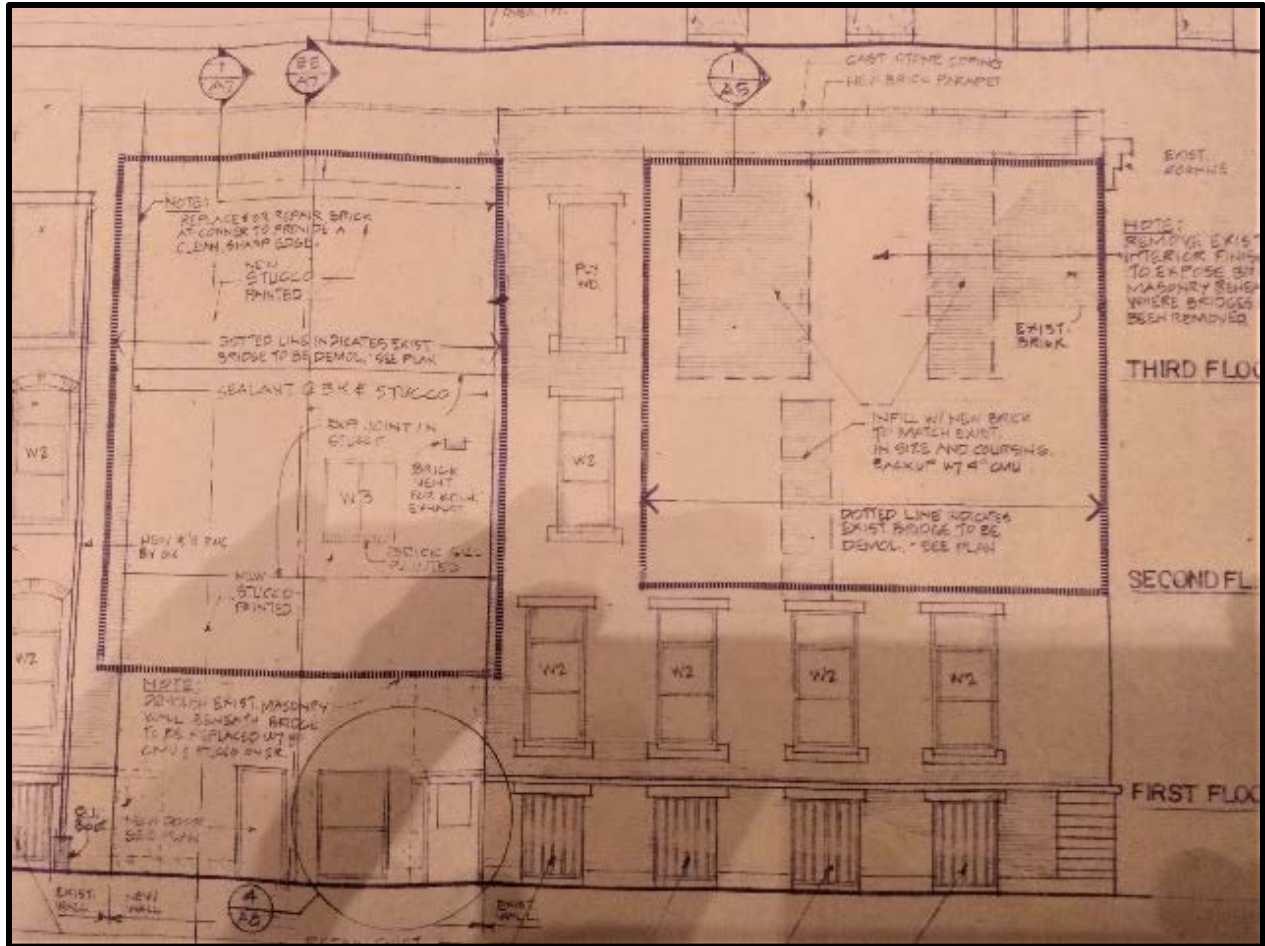


Figure 12: 1978 architectural drawings, showing the removal of adjoining bridges along the north elevation to be removed, and areas of brick to be infilled. Courtesy of David S. Traub.

The south elevation (figure 13) of the west block (A) is merely a plastered surface with three fenestrations, centrally placed at each level. Originally, this wall adjoined the later removed nurses' residence. The **central volume** (B) is not visible from the public right-of-way, but an birds-eye view shows a three-sided bay with triple windows on the second and third levels. An interior photograph from c. 1916 suggests that at one level this space contained a solarium for recuperating patients or perhaps a nurses' sitting room (see Appendix 3). A one-story addition infills the ground floor between sections A and C of the building below section B. Windows from both blocks at all floor levels, not visible in the image, face the central open court. The south elevation is obscured by the addition to the south. The amount of original fabric remaining

is unknown, although a portion of the original wall extends above the roofline of the south addition.



Figure 13: View northeast towards the south elevations of the former Stetson Hospital. Source: Cyclomedia, 2020.



Figure 14: Birds-eye view of the south elevation of the property. Source: Google Maps.

The east elevation, meaning here the east elevation of the east block, facing Oriana Street, is a brick wall with an array of windows at each level, many closed off, and two doors. It is in poor condition. Of some interest, unlike the windows of the prominent west façade, the windows of the east elevation of the east block show not stone lintels, but instead rounded heads (brick relieving arches). A portion of this wall is shown in figure 15.



Figure 15: A portion of the east elevation of the east block. Google maps.

7. Statement of Significance

Introduction

Begun in 1887 as the dispensary for employees of the John B. Stetson Company, manufacturer of hats, and for some years known as the Union Mission Hospital, Stetson Hospital became a community hospital serving its North Philadelphia and West Kensington districts. The subject of this nomination is the building erected by Stetson for the Hospital in 1903-1904, designed by Ballinger and Perrot. The Hospital eventually merged with nearby St. Luke's Hospital, then closed when the large Stetson plant went out of business in 1971. Later, the building regained use as an addiction treatment facility conducted by JEVs, the Jewish Educational and Vocational Society, and continues as such until today (2021). The handsome red-brick structure with an impressive arched frontispiece stands as the only survivor of the Stetson complex in North Philadelphia, and was in its day the only substantial hospital in Philadelphia begun by and associated with one of Philadelphia's major industries.

A portion of the property at 1733-49 N. 4th Street, the former Stetson Hospital building satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and E, as enumerated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code.

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

John B. Stetson and His Company

For a city which once manufactured everything from push pins and lace, to steam locomotives and battleships, it does not surprise that Philadelphia produced the "Boss of the Plains" Western hat, and a wide variety of other headwear. As is well known, the John B. Stetson Company stood for many years as the largest hat manufacturing firm in the United States, with a plant that comprised 1,000,000 square feet of floor space and employed at its peak between 3500 and 5000 employees (sources vary). It was capable of turning out 3 million hats in a year in the 1920s.² The Stetson hat became known around the world.

John B. Stetson (1830-1906) was born in Orange, New Jersey, then a prominent site for the making of hats, his father's trade. Stetson worked with his father, then moved to Philadelphia where he first conducted a hat repair and trimming shop in the downtown before beginning

² For information about John B. Stetson and the Stetson Company: Historic American Building Survey for the John B. Stetson Company, HABS PA-1227, accessed on-line via the Library of Congress; Society for Industrial Archeology, Oliver Evans Chapter, *Workshop of the World* (Wallingford, PA: Oliver Evans Press, 1990); Roman A. Cybriwski and Charles Hardy III, "The Stetson Company and Benevolent Feudalism," *Pennsylvania Heritage* 7(1981):14-19; biographical account on the website of the Stetson Mansion in Deland, Florida (<https://www.stetsonmansion.com/john-b-stetson-biography>); *Biographical Album of Prominent Pennsylvanians*, article on John B. Stetson (Philadelphia, 1890), pages numbers not included in the on-line version I used via Google Books.

manufacturing in 1865. As his business grew, centered on the wide-brim “cowboy” hat, he engaged architect George T. Pearson and others as he built what became his vast plant in North Philadelphia (the location might also be considered Kensington). Attaining considerable wealth, he built a home in Elkins Park (demolished) and a winter mansion in DeLand, Florida, designed by Pearson, extant and now open to visitors and for rental. Stetson also founded a school in DeLand which became Stetson University, which dates itself to 1883.

Stetson is well-known for his treatment of his workers, which has been referred to as “benevolent feudalism.” He established for the factory staff a library, a building and loan association, a dispensary which later grew into a general hospital (more on this below), and a custom of providing gifts at Christmas. Lesser known was his creation of the North Fourth Street Union Mission. At some point in his life, Stetson became actively and evangelically Christian. A “mission” can have several meanings. It can be a subsidiary or “satellite” of a large church or parish. But generally, a foreign or domestic Christian mission combines evangelism with some amount of humanitarian services. A “union” mission seems to have denoted one not affiliated with any one Protestant denomination. The Union Mission on 4th Street comprised a variety of activities, as detailed by a newspaper reporter in 1889: the “John B. Stetson Mission... similar to the YMCA”; the “Guard of Honor” made up of “Sunday School scholars”; a “military company nicely uniformed, pledged to abstain from drinking, smoking, and swearing, and numbering about 175 boys”; Bible study sessions; and the “Mysterious Twelve,” a group of a dozen men who met in the library “to appropriate a sum of money to relieve want and suffering among the worthy poor of the neighborhood.”³ But most prominent, and highly typical of the times, was the Union Mission Sunday School, mainly for children but also adults: its dedicated hall, opened in 1886, could seat fifteen hundred.⁴ Stetson’s Union Mission and Sunday school were remarkably similar to the evangelical efforts and apparatus – with some of the same quasi-military attributes—established by John B. Wanamaker in conjunction with his store, Stetson and the merchant were acquainted, and no doubt Wanamaker sold many Stetson hats.⁵ Stetson was a member and supporter of the Fifth Baptist Church on Spring Garden Street.

Origins of Stetson Hospital

Stetson Hospital began as a dispensary (outpatient clinic) set up by the Stetson Company for employees, probably in 1887, then later opened to neighborhood residents. Not all sources agree on the details or dates of succeeding events, so the following represents the nominator’s best attempt at a probable sequence. The main source is the account in the *Founders’ Week Memorial Volume* of 1909⁶ (FWMV) by Charles Warder, MD, a senior physician at the Hospital; other sources are cited:

³ “A New Free Hospital,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8 October 1889.

⁴ “Dedication of Union Mission Rooms,” *The Times* (Philadelphia), 26 March 1886.

⁵ For Wanamaker’s amalgam of retail and religious work, see Nicole Kirk, *Wanamaker's Temple: the Business of Religion in an Iconic Department Store* (New York: NYU Press, 1918). For the Sunday school in America, an excellent account is Robert W. Lynn and Elliott Wright, *The Big Little School: Two Hundred Years of the Sunday School* (Birmingham, AL and Nashville, TN: Religious Education Press and Abingdon, 1971, 1980).

⁶ Frederick P. Henry, ed., *Founders Week Memorial Volume* (Philadelphia, 1909), pp. 739-42.

25 March, 1886: “Dedicatory services” for the John B. Stetson Hall and the “Union Mission Rooms” were held. The Sunday School room could hold “nearly fifteen hundred.” Medical services were not mentioned in the *Inquirer* article.⁷

c. 1887: A room near the library was set up as a dispensary for employees.

8 October 1889: An *Inquirer* article refers to “A New Free Hospital” which will be seven stories high in the “angle formed by the intersection of North Fourth Street and Cadwalader Street.” This would be the triangular clock tower building by George T. Pearson, lost in the 1980 arson fire, but it was not built to be the hospital.

1891: The medical service moved to the “apex of the factory building” and would be known as Union Mission Hospital. This was, again, a reference to the clock tower building, which may have been built in part to house the Mission activities, with the hospital moving in to the basement and first floor in 1891.⁸ Though referred to as a hospital, this may still have been an enlarged outpatient service, with sessions for various categories of problems – eye, medical, surgical, ear nose and throat, skin, “nervous.” It was open to all persons, not just Stetson employees. (FWMV)

1893: A small ward was established for post-operative care. (FWMV)

1895: A diagnostic laboratory was opened at 1743 North Fourth Street; presumably, a row house was acquired for this purpose.⁹

1895: A directory of charitable services produced by the Civic Club listed Union Mission Hospital as serving “employees of the John B. Stetson Company, and...the worthy poor of the neighborhood” during the hours of 12 noon to 2 pm, with John B. Stetson as founder and president. It was mainly a dispensary, but included five beds.¹⁰

1898: With space needed for other purposes in the clock tower building, the clinical service moved to “two small houses directly opposite the factory” at 1745 and 1747 North 4th Street, presumably acquired or leased. (FWMV) The new hospital would eventually occupy this location.

1902: An entry in the *Philadelphia Builders’ Guide* referred to a contract for building “an addition to the Union Mission Hospital” with plans by architects Stearns and Castor. It does not seem that this was actually built.¹¹

⁷ “Dedication of the Union Mission Rooms,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 March 1886.

⁸ Described, with images of floor plans, in an undated pamphlet from 1903 or 1904 titled *Union Mission Hospital and its Work*, at the Historical Medical Library of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia. It refers to the first dispensary room as initiated “seventeen years ago,” and other sources state this occurred in 1887.

⁹ “A valuable addition,” *The Times* (Philadelphia), 30 November 1895. The article refers to a “bacteriology floor” where germs will be “hatched, raised, and studied.”

¹⁰ *Civic Club Digest of the Educational and Charitable Institutions and Societies in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1895), p. 115. The *Baist Property Atlas of the City and County of Philadelphia* for 1895 clearly marks the corner building where Cadwalader Street meets 4th as “Hospital.”

¹¹ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record & Builders’ Guide* 1902, v. 17, p. 709.

1903: The *Philadelphia Builders' Guide* of 29 July 1903 reported that “Ballinger & Perrot, architects and engineers, 1200 Chestnut Street, have posted plans and are taking sub-bids on the new Union Mission Hospital to be built on Fourth street below Montgomery Avenue for John B. Stetson Company. It will be a handsome ornamental brick building 65 x 102 feet, three stories and basement high with a roof garden. All bids due July 31.”¹² This refers to the subject building of this nomination.

1905: The *Inquirer* for 22 February reported on the opening of the new Union Mission Hospital.

1905, August: The charter was amended to rename the hospital the Stetson Hospital of Philadelphia (see appendix).

1905: The nurses' homes, adjacent to the Hospital on the south end, was added.

1905: On September 17, the *Inquirer* for the first time reported on clinical care at the Stetson Hospital: a Stetson employee named John. H. Getz tried to stop a runaway horse at Fifth and Montgomery Avenue, near the hat works, and suffered a serious injury to his hand. Mr. Getz was treated at the hospital.

(Subsequent history, not essential to this nomination, will be continued in an appendix)

This nomination argues that the surviving Stetson Hospital building relates generally to the industrial history of Philadelphia (certainly part of its “heritage”), and to its medical history, being the only “company hospital” in the city; and more specifically, recalls the unusual relationship established between John B. Stetson, his massive hat-making business, and his employees. In various ways, his creation of the whole “Union Mission” apparatus, with elements ranging from a huge Sunday School to a loan association--and notably for this document, a hospital--reflects how benevolence, paternalism, business, and even evangelical Christianity could be amalgamated in the industrial-capitalist environment of the Gilded Age. Some of this also can be seen in the activities of John Wanamaker and Henry Disston, though only Stetson's efforts spawned a busy neighborhood hospital. The resource is, of course, associated with a person “significant” in the past, John B. Stetson. Though he died in 1906, he lived long enough to see the subject building completed, in use, and named for him. He served as the hospital's president until his death.

Criterion D. Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style

As noted in the description section of this nomination, the 4th Street façade of the Stetson Hospital exhibits some features of the “second [Italian] Renaissance Revival” style – a rusticated base, arched entrance, a projecting cornice bearing modillions, near-symmetry, and a parapet.

¹² *Ibid.* 1903, V. 18, p. 481. An interesting account of the planning and building of the hospital is “Hats Off to Stetson's Union Mission Hospital,” by Dennis Carlisle, in *Hidden City*, <https://hiddencityphila.org/2015/01/hats-off-to-the-last-stetson-building-standing/> This on-line article seems to be based on primary sources, though these are not cited.

These design elements, some subtle, form a harmonious whole, consistent with the aforementioned style. Not subtle is the large projecting entry frontispiece: the Florentine arch spreads outward with crossettes, placing the arch within a rectangle which gestures to the similarly proportioned rectangle of the west elevation. The two pilaster-like strips seen rising from the frontispiece and seemingly piercing the cornice to reach a capping at the date markers add a hint of verticality to contrast with the slight horizontality of the proportions of the façade, and with the horizontal emphasis created by the cornice and by the molding running between the stone foundation and the brickwork above it. The small upward extension of the parapet with the date markers adds interest to that point where the body of the structure meets the sky, almost like a small hat. Finally, the numerous large windows suggest a cheerful amount of light inside, as well as the opportunity for ample fresh air. The prominent 4th Street façade provides an appearance of both strength (that solid stone base and rusticated arch), and elegance.

Criterion 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

For the new Union Hospital building (later Stetson Hospital), Stetson chose the firm Ballinger & Perrot (previously Hales and Ballinger) as architects. It is not known why George T. Pearson, who had done so much work for the Stetson Company, and Stetson himself, was not selected. Ballinger & Perrot had received a commission for a new Jefferson hospital building early in 1903, so this may have been a factor. Sandra Tatman contributed this entry for the firm Ballinger & Perrot to the “Philadelphia Architects and Buildings” project of the Philadelphia Athenaeum:

The architecture and engineering firm of Ballinger & Perrot was established in 1901 by Walter F. Ballinger and Emile G. Perrot. It succeeded the firms of Geissinger & Hales and Hales & Ballinger and was succeeded by the Ballinger Co. which began in 1920 after Walter F. Ballinger bought out the interests of his partner Emile G. Perrot. Ballinger & Perrot built upon the industrial building interests of the earlier firms but also expanded into workers housing, especially that associated with company or federal housing operations. Chief among these works was the village constructed for the American Viscose Company in Marcus Hook, PA. However, the partners were not limited to industrial building, but instead completed churches, schools, and commercial structures and pioneered in the use of reinforced concrete. During World War I Ballinger & Perrot also maintained a 125-person office in New York, supervised by Carl deMoll.

The heads of the firm were Walter F. Ballinger (1867-1924) and Emile George Perrot (1872-1954).

The PAB lists 435 projects under the firm, and this is almost surely incomplete. Searching “Ballinger & Perrot” from 1900 to 1920 in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, also by way of the Philadelphia Athenaeum’s on-line resources, yields “over 500 results.”

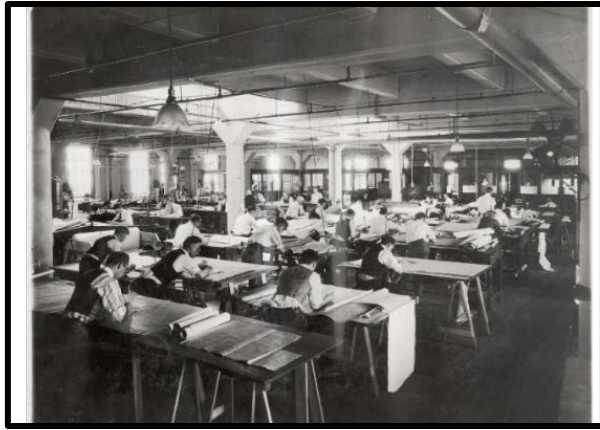


Figure 16. The Ballinger and Perrot office (Ballinger Collections, The Athenaeum). Date not given.

Yet the fourth edition of John Andrew Gallery’s *Philadelphia Architecture: A Guide to the City* (2016) includes only one project by Ballinger & Perrot, the 1914-1915 Gothic revival Robert Morris Hotel near 17th and Arch Streets. This firm did not create notable public landmarks: rather, it was known mainly for industrial, educational, and institutional structures which relied on the principals’ (and staff’s) expertise in both architecture and engineering—though the company certainly did design houses, housing operations, and churches. Offering both architectural and engineering expertise within one firm likely helped attract business in the

early twentieth century, which saw the spread of steel framing, structural concrete, elevators, electrification, and new materials. The partners were known for the use of reinforced concrete and even published a handbook on the topic.¹³ They advanced the use of the “Daylight Building,” a particular arrangement of large windows, and the “Super-Span” trussed sawtooth roof.¹⁴ The latter can be seen in one of their very large (by square foot) projects, the plant for the Atwater Kent Manufacturing Company from the 1920s, a large portion of which survives in the East Falls/Hunting Park section of Philadelphia.

The Ballinger & Perrot partnership ended in 1920, but the firm continued as the Ballinger Company. Walter F. Ballinger died in 1924, ironically in a modern, mechanical manner – from head injury incurred in an automobile accident. Ballinger Company continues as a major architecture and engineering company to the present (2021). The Athenaeum holds a large collection of materials relating to Ballinger & Perrot and the Ballinger Company.

Given the large number of built projects in Philadelphia and elsewhere, the advances in engineering techniques (the partners received many patents), the books published (not listed here), and the duration of the firm, there can be little doubt about the standing and influence of Ballinger & Perrot.

¹³ Walter F. Ballinger and Emile G. Perrot, *Inspectors’ Handbook of Reinforced Concrete* (New York, 1909).

¹⁴ Betsy Hunter Bradley, *The Works. The Industrial Architectural of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 22.

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Appendix 1: Continued History of Stetson Hospital

On 14 August 1905, the charter of Union Mission Hospital was amended by orphan's court in Philadelphia to change its name to Stetson Hospital of Philadelphia ¹⁵ In 1907, the hospital received a grant from the Commonwealth, which by this time was financially aiding non-profit hospitals. It was clearly an autonomous entity, though the building itself was almost certainly still owned by the company (and was physically connected to other Stetson Company structures to the north). As with similar institutions, Union Mission/Stetson Hospital was headed by a board of trustees, the president of which was John B. Stetson until his death in 1906. But annual reports of the hospital for this period show that the hospital was not fully subsidized by John B. Stetson or the Stetson company: as with most general hospitals of that time, its board and managers constantly sought financial aid from its community. Large numbers of employees made small annual contributions to the "employees' endowment fund," and all were listed, by department – e.g., "stiff hat trimming department," "back shop," "flanging department," etc. The increase in state funding to hospitals in the 1890s helped support these largely charitable institutions.

As with other Philadelphia hospitals of the time, the annual reports of Stetson Hospital abound in details on numbers of inpatients and outpatients, numbers of various categories of complaints and illnesses, usually topped by "lumbago" (back pain), bronchitis, "rheumatism," gastritis, and various rashes – the eternal constants of outpatient medicine, though the names change. Also cared for were typhoid fever (an intractable public health problem in Philadelphia), and tuberculosis. Surgical work included appendectomies and removal of tonsils, as well as the care of injuries.

¹⁵ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of State, on-line data base of corporations and businesses, <https://www.corporations.pa.gov/search>.

The Philadelphia Hospital and Health Survey, 1929 reported that the hospital had 79 beds, but typically only about half were in use on any given day.¹⁶ As with many small community hospitals by the 1920s, surgery predominated, being mostly the removal of tonsils and adenoids, excessively in vogue at that time. Elective surgical work of this sort brought many paying patients into previously mostly “charity” hospitals. The outpatient clinics kept busy, much of it relating to surgical problems, probably including post-operative visits. The 1929 surveyors suggested that for its factory district, more evening clinic hours should be added for working men, and a venereal disease service ought to be added. The hospital weathered the Great Depression and even underwent some renovation, particularly of the X-ray department, in 1936.

The hospital made it through the nursing shortages and other difficulties of World War II, and continued to serve as a small, neighborhood general hospital over the next few decades. But it became more and more difficult for such a hospital to survive in Philadelphia (or elsewhere) into the 1960s and 1970s. The increasing sophistication of medicine and surgery demanded expensive technology and technologists. The transformation of already large medical school hospitals into sprawling “academic medical centers” attracted insured patients seeking specialty care and needing the more difficult surgical procedures. In 1970, threatened with closing owing to lack of inpatients, Stetson underwent a merger with the much larger St. Luke’s and Children’s Hospital nearby on Girard Avenue at Eighth Street. St. Luke’s placed its alcoholism treatment program at the Stetson location.¹⁷

But St. Luke’s suffered financial problems of its own, and an article in the *Philadelphia Daily News* in September of 1971 reported its need for “belt tightening,” some of which it blamed on sustaining the work of Stetson Hospital.¹⁸ To make matters worse, the prevailing hatlessness among American men led to the decline and finally the closing of the Stetson Company in early 1971. The hospital at this time still obtained its heat and electricity from the company.¹⁹ It, too, closed in 1971.

On 21 February 1977, the Stetson Hospital property was deeded, along with the rest of the Stetson complex, to the City of Philadelphia for one dollar.²⁰ Later that year, a federal grant of \$479,000 was awarded to the city to “renovate the old Stetson Hospital for continued use as a drug clinic.”²¹ Architect David Traub was engaged to create the plans for the renewal. Presumably the city conducted the program on-site for some years, then awarded a contract for its continuation as “ACT 2” (Achievement through Counselling and Treatment) of the Jewish Educational and Vocational Services (JEVS).

As is well known, other than several Stetson buildings by George T. Pearson along the west side of fourth street including the “clock tower,” which first housed the dispensary and hospital, the city demolished the complex. Intended for eventual re-use, the saved structures fell to an arson

¹⁶ *Philadelphia Hospital and Health Survey, 1929: Conducted under the Auspices of a Citizens' Survey Committee* (Philadelphia, 1930), pp. 730-31.

¹⁷ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 April 1970.

¹⁸ *Philadelphia Daily News*, 7 September 1971. St. Luke’s also cared for countless uninsured patients.

¹⁹ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 August 1971.

²⁰ Atlas.phila.gov, listing of information for 1745 N. 4th Street

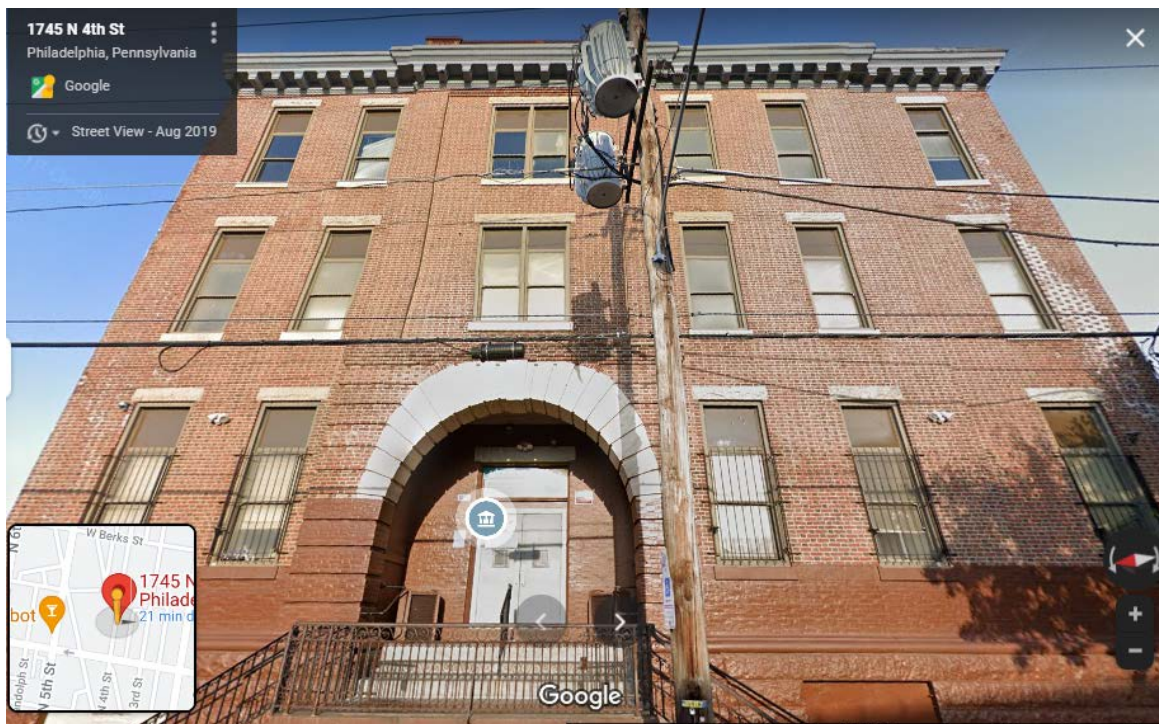
²¹ *Philadelphia Daily News*, 8 September 1978

fire in 1980, a huge loss to preservation. The hospital, on the other side of 4th Street, fortunately escaped, to host continued work in health care.

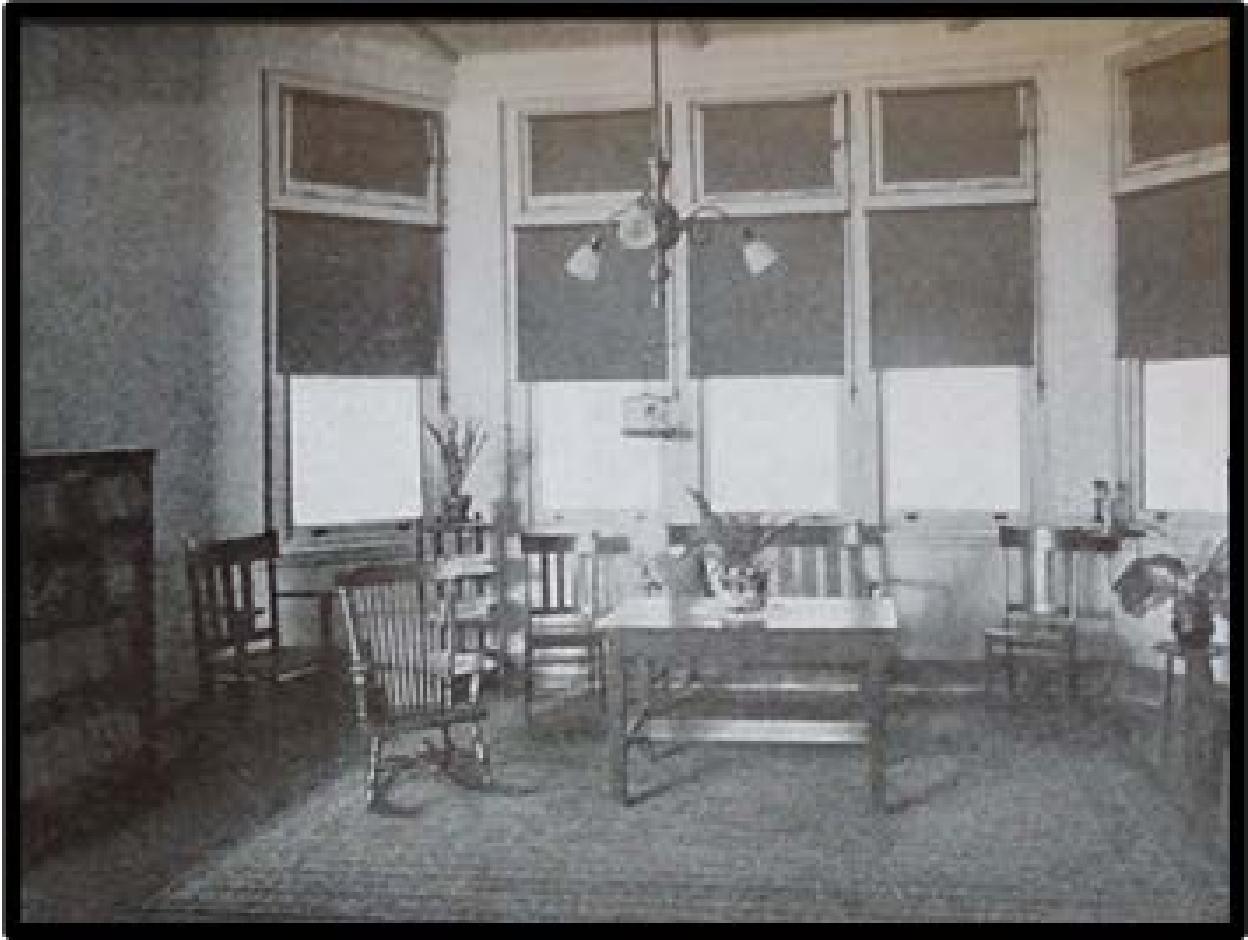
Appendix 2: The Image at the Frontispiece of this Nomination

The nominator found the cover image of the Union Hospital pamphlet both charming and poignant, showing a somewhat idealized view of the waiting room of a c. 1900 dispensary. It seemed a nice representation of the style of illustration prevalent among the highly skilled illustrators, many or most women, in the Philadelphia region at the time. Many were students of the master Howard Pyle, who taught at Drexel Institute of Arts Science and Industry, later and now Drexel University. A curator of historic American art at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and several authorities at the Delaware Art Museum concur that the small cover illustration falls within this school, though it is unfortunately unsigned and the name of the artist is unknown.

Appendix 3: Additional Images



Google Streetview image of the 4th Street elevation, August 2019.



Interior of the south-facing bay in the central block (section B) of the building. Source: Stetson Hospital, Annual Report for 1916.



Acknowledgements: I am indebted to David S. Traub for his help and for making available the architectural drawings for the 1978 renovation of the subject property; and also to several architectural historians who have offered their expertise.