

ADDRESS: 224 W WASHINGTON LN

Name of Resource: Taws Cottage

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Conarro Jawn LLC

Nominator: West Central Germantown Neighbors

Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 224 W. Washington Lane and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the so-called Gardener's Cottage of the Lewis and Martha Taws Estate satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, G, and J. Under Criteria C and D, the nomination argues that the property reflects the Gothic Revival style of architecture and reflects the built environment in an era characterized by that style. Under Criterion G, the nomination contends that the property is "nestled within a distinctive nineteenth-century vignette of ancillary suburban, estate buildings and features that conform to a Romantic ideal in architecture and the Picturesque in landscape." Criterion G reads: "Is part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif." The other buildings to which this property is allegedly related are not designated as historic and do not form a park or square. Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the property reflects the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Germantown community.

A development project for the site was underway when the Historical Commission notified the property owner on 28 October 2021 that it would consider a nomination proposing to designate the property. If the development project had been implemented, it would have destroyed the character-defining features of the property and rendered it ineligible for designation. The Historical Commission postponed the review of the nomination to allow for any permits that were in place before the notice date to be implemented or expire. As of 1 June 2022, the zoning permit application (ZP-2021-004730) and two building permit applications for the project (RP-2021-015619 and RP-2021-017667) had been withdrawn. An additional permit application (RP-2022-001144) had expired. No work was undertaken pursuant to the permits. One building permit application (RP-2022-004626) is active (submitted but not issued), but it only proposes interior work to the historic building, no exterior work. The development project that would have destroyed the character-defining features of the property has been abandoned.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 224 W. Washington Lane satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J. The staff contends that the nomination does not make a cogent argument for the satisfaction of Criterion G. That Criterion is intended to allow for the individual designation of resources associated with a park, square, or other area that might not qualify for individual designation on their own. An example of a resource that would satisfy Criterion G might be a rowhouse bordering and creating the backdrop for a city square. The assumption behind the Criterion is that the primary resource, the park or square, is designated. It is unclear what the primary resource might be in this case, because nothing in the vicinity of this property is designated. There is no distinctive area that should be preserved according to a historic, cultural, or architectural motif.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**1 DECEMBER 2021, 9:30 A.M.
REMOTE MEETING ON ZOOM
EMILY COOPERMAN, CHAIR**

CALL TO ORDER

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 00:00:00

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. The following Committee members joined her:

Committee Member	Present	Absent	Comment
Emily Cooperman, Ph.D., chair	X		
Suzanna Barucco	X		
Jeff Cohen, Ph.D.	X		
Bruce Laverty	X		
Debbie Miller	X		
Elizabeth Milroy, Ph.D.	X		

* Owing to public health concerns surrounding the COVID-19 virus, all Committee members, staff, and public attendees participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom video and audio-conferencing software.

The following staff members were present:

- Jon Farnham, Executive Director
- Kim Chantry, Historic Preservation Planner III
- Laura DiPasquale, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Shannon Garrison, Historic Preservation Planner I
- Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Allyson Mehley, Historic Preservation Planner II
- Leonard Reuter, Esq., Law Department
- Megan Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner II

The following persons attended the online meeting:

- Paul Steinke, Preservation Alliance
- Rich Lampert
- Rye Fitzgerald
- Dennis Carlisle
- Kevin Block
- James Campenella
- Theresa Stuhlman, Parks and Recreation
- Hal Schirmer
- Cynthia Thompson
- Steven Peitzman
- Jeffrey Ogren, Esq., Bochetto and Lentz
- Aaron Wunsch

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 928-30 Christian Street satisfies Criteria for Designation A, D, and J.

ITEM: 928-30 CHRISTIAN ST					
MOTION: Satisfies Criteria A, D, and J					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	5				1

ADDRESS: 224 W WASHINGTON LN

Name of Resource: Taws Cottage
 Proposed Action: Designation
 Property Owner: Conarro Jawn LLC
 Nominator: West Central Germantown Neighbors
 Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 224 W. Washington Lane and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The nomination contends that the Gardener’s Cottage of the Lewis and Martha Taws Estate satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, G, and J. Under Criteria C and D, the nomination argues that the property reflects the Gothic Revival style of architecture and reflects the built environment in an era characterized by that style. Under Criterion G, the nomination contends that the property is “nestled within a distinctive nineteenth-century vignette of ancillary suburban, estate buildings and features that conform to a Romantic ideal in architecture and the Picturesque in landscape.” Under Criterion J, the nomination argues that the property reflects the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Germantown community.

A development project for the site was underway when the Historical Commission notified the property owner on 28 October 2021 that it would consider a nomination proposing to designate the property. A zoning permit application for a three-story duplex building (ZP-2021-004730) was processed by the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) on 30 April 2021, though the permit has not yet been issued. Two building permit applications (RP-2021-015619 and RP2021-017667) were submitted to L&I around the time of the notice. RP-2021-015619, which proposes to demolish a portion of the existing building and construct an addition, was started in eCLIPSE on 4 October 2021 and determined complete by L&I on 3 November 2021. RP2021-017667, which proposes to construct a three-story duplex adjacent to the existing structure, was started in eCLIPSE on 3 November 2021 and determined complete by L&I on 5 November 2021. The Historical Commission’s staff will confer with L&I and the Law Department to

determine whether RP-2021-015619 was “filed” before the date of the notice letters. If it was, the Historical Commission does not have the authority to review or deny the application.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 224 W. Washington Lane satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J. The staff contends that the nomination does not make a cogent argument for Criterion G.

START TIME IN ZOOM RECORDING: 03:07:45

PRESENTERS:

- Ms. Keller presented the nomination to the Committee on Historic Designation.
- Oscar Beisert represented the nomination.
- No one represented the property owner.

DISCUSSION:

- Ms. Keller stated that the staff has been in contact with the property owner and an attorney representing the owner and that the owner opposes the designation of the property. She added that the owner contests the filing date of building permit application RP-2021-015619 identified by staff.
- Mr. Beisert commented that he found sufficient evidence that this building functioned as a gardener’s cottage for an estate fronting Tulpehocken Street and extending to Washington Lane. He contended that the streetscape has a distinctive feeling that includes other landscape features, adding that the buildings stand out within the dense Germantown environment as a “distinctive vignette” with a picturesque quality. He noted the staff’s argument against the inclusion of Criterion G and referred the Committee to photographs and a discussion on pages 17 and 18 of the nomination. He argued that the property is distinctive, owing to the wall and open landscape and is set apart from other properties on Washington Lane. He concluded that few Gothic Revival gardener’s cottages survive in Philadelphia and asked that the property be designated and preserved despite the current plans to demolish the building.
- Ms. Milroy observed that the period of significance is contradicted within the nomination, noting that it is listed as 1880 on the nomination form and written as 1860 to 1861 within the body of the nomination. She asked that the period be amended to start in 1860 to correspond with the building’s construction date and to end in 1923. She asked Mr. Beisert whether he could more definitively state that the building was designed by James C. Sidney, since it strongly resembles the Sidney building illustrated in the nomination. She then argued against including Criterion G, adding that she does not find that the nomination demonstrates that the property is part of or related to a square or park. She agreed with the other criteria identified in the nomination.
- Mr. Cohen stated that the adjacent stable shows the hierarchy of the estate’s buildings. The stable, he continued, was much more imposing on Washington Lane than the cottage. He remarked that the stable and cottage reinforce the “horticultural country” found within Germantown among the successful individuals who commuted downtown. He observed that the property passed through the hands of John Fraser at about the time the cottage was being designed. He questioned whether the building was a commission by fellow architect, James C. Sidney, or whether Fraser himself designed the building.
 - Mr. Beisert responded that Mr. Cohen’s observation is the reason he did not propose an architect. He commented that Fraser owned the twin on Tulpehocken

Street while Sidney designed a cottage in a very similar design to the gardener's cottage at the rear of the twin's property. He stated that he would need to locate more information to be able to attribute the building's design to one of the two architects. He added that the enclosed front porch was historically open, and it would have even more closely resembled the building in the Sidney drawing when first constructed.

- It was noted that the stable stands on a separate property and is not proposed for designation by this nomination.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Russell Fulton, representing the West Central Germantown Neighbors, commented in support of the nomination.
- Hal Schirmer commented in support of the nomination.
- Allison Weiss, representing the SoLo Germantown Civic Association, commented in support of the nomination.
- Celeste Morello commented in support of the nomination.
- Steven Peitzman commented in support of the nomination.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS:

The Committee on Historic Designation found that:

- The property has an outstanding legal question regarding the filing date of building permit application RP-2021-015619, which proposes to demolish most of the nominated building and construct a duplex on the site. If the Department of Licenses and Inspections and Law Department find that the permit application was filed prior to 28 October 2021, the date notice of the nomination was sent, the Historical Commission does not have the authority to review or deny the application.
- The start date of the Period of Significance is listed inconsistently in the nomination and should reflect the date of construction, 1860 to 1861.
- The building strongly resembles a cottage designed by architect James C. Sidney, though the property was owned by architect John Fraser. The architect of the cottage remains unknown, though Sidney or Fraser likely designed it.

The Committee on Historic Designation concluded that:

- The nomination argues that the property reflects the Gothic Revival style of architecture and reflects the built environment in an era characterized by that style, satisfying Criteria C and D.
- The nomination contends that the property reflects the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the Germantown community, satisfying Criterion J.
- The nomination fails to demonstrate that the property is part of or related to a square, park, or distinctive area and does not satisfy Criterion G.

COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION RECOMMENDATION: The Committee on Historic Designation voted to recommend that the nomination demonstrates that the property at 224 W. Washington Lane satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J, with an amended period of significance from circa 1860 to 1923.

ITEM: 224 W WASHINGTON LN					
MOTION: Satisfies Criteria C, D, and J					
MOVED BY: Barucco					
SECONDED BY: Cohen					
VOTE					
Committee Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Emily Cooperman, chair	X				
Suzanna Barucco	X				
Jeff Cohen	X				
Bruce Laverty					X
Debbie Miller	X				
Elizabeth Milroy	X				
Total	5				1

ADDRESS: 1810 RIDGE AVE

Name of Resource: Ridge Avenue Farmers’ Market
Proposed Action: Rescission
Property Owner: 18th and Ridge LLC
Nominator: Historical Commission
Staff Contact: Jon Farnham, jon.farnham@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: The Historical Commission is considering whether to remove the property at 1810 Ridge Avenue from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The Ridge Avenue Farmers’ Market stood on the property at 1810 Ridge Avenue from 1875 to 1997. The market hall was designed by architect Davis E. Supplee. Acting on a recommendation of the Historic Values Committee, a predecessor of the Committee on Historic Designation, the Historical Commission designated 1810 Ridge Avenue on 28 May 1968. The minutes of the Historical Commission’s and committee’s meetings do not indicate a reason or basis for the designation, other than to identify the designated resource as “Ridge Ave. Farmer’s Market,” and no nomination was produced. However, a National Register nomination was written in 1983.

The market hall suffered a major fire in June 1952 and was eventually abandoned following the civil unrest in the 1960s. Vacant and untended, it fell into disrepair. In 1983, an entrepreneur attempted to revitalize the building as a farmers’ market again, but the project, embroiled in litigation, never got off the ground and the building continued to decay. In 1993, the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) ordered the owner to repair or demolish the unsafe building. However, that order went unheeded. On 6 March 1997, the building partially collapsed during strong winds that accompanied a winter storm. L&I began demolishing the remainder of the building the following day. The building was completely demolished and the lot regraded, fenced, and planted with grass. The property sat vacant for several years but was later subdivided and redeveloped with the Historical Commission’s consent.

Section 5.14.b.1.a of the Historical Commission’s Rules & Regulations stipulates that the Commission may rescind the designation of a property and remove its entry from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places if the resource has ceased to satisfy the Criteria for Designation because the qualities that caused its original entry have been lost or destroyed. While the property was designated prior to the adoption of the current historic preservation

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: **224 W. Washington Lane**

Postal code: **19144**

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **Gardener's Cottage of the Lewis & Martha Taws Estate**

Current Name: **Unknown**

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: **Single-Family**

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): **ca.1880-1923**

Date(s) of construction: **ca.1860-61**

Architects: **Unknown**

Builders: **Unknown**

Original owner: **Lewis & Martha Taws**

Significant person: **Unknown**

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: **West Central Germantown Neighbors**

Author: **Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian
Keeping Society of Philadelphia**

Date: **13 September 2021**

Address: **1315 Walnut Street, Suite 320
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107**

Telephone: **717.602.5002**
Email: **keeper@keepingphiladelphia.org**

Nominator is is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: September 13, 2021

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: October 22, 2021

Date of Notice Issuance: October 28, 2021

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Conarroe Jawn LLC

Address: 224 W. Tulpehocken St., #5

City: Philadelphia

State: PA

Postal Code: 19144

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: December 1, 2021

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

Designated Rejected

NOMINATION

FOR THE

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES



Figure 1. Looking east at the northwest and southwest elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

**GARDENER'S COTTAGE
IN THE GOTHIC REVIVAL STYLE
ERECTED CA. 1860-61
OF THE
LEWIS & MARTHA TAWS ESTATE**

**224 W. WASHINGTON LANE
GERMANTOWN
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**



Figure 2. The boundary for the proposed designation is delineated in blue. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia.

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the designation of the subject property is as follows:

Situate on the southeasterly side of Washington Lane at the distance of two hundred twenty-five feet and one-quarter of an inch southwestwardly from the southwesterly side of Greene Street (both Streets fifty feet wide). Containing in front tor breath on the said side of Washington Lane sixty-five feet and five-eighths of an inch and extending of that width in length or depth southeastwardly between parallel lines with the said Greene Street eighty-seven feet, nine inches.

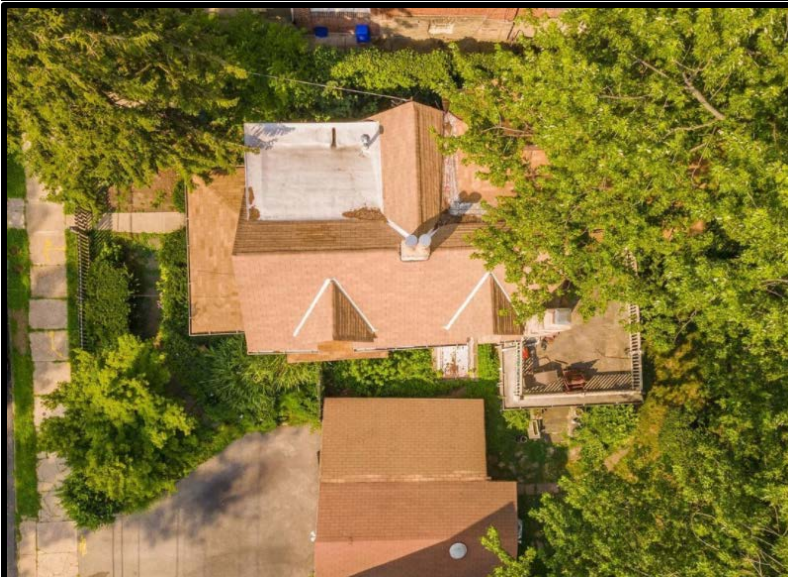


Figure 3. Looking north at the environment of the subject property, which is identified with an arrow. Source: Pictometry, Atlas, City of Philadelphia. Figure 4. Looking north at the subject property. Source: Google. Figure 5. An aerial view of the subject property. Source: Google.



Figure 6. Looking east at the northwest and southwest elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Built ca. 1860-61, the Taws Gardener's Cottage contains a one-and-one-half-story building designed in the Gothic Revival style. It is recessed from W. Washington Lane and enhanced by a matured plantings and trees in the front, rear and side yards. The subject building is part of and related to an historic vignette, which includes the prototype ancillary structures and features of a prosperous suburban estate. Shown in Figures 33 and 34, the subject building is nestled within a streetscape of two service-related buildings and other resources, including the distinctive Taws Stable at 228 W. Washington Lane (not included in this nomination) to the southwest, a handsome stone wall at 228 and 232 W. Washington Lane (not included in this nomination), and the site of the former Taws Greenhouse (not included in this nomination) and paddock, now open space. The topology of this place is defined by undulating grounds within which the subject property stands about midway on an incline, just below which is the Taws Stable, and, further down, the site of the former Taws Greenhouse and Paddock. The Taws Paddock is a low-lying parcel that sits below the elevated thoroughfare. The subject property and the other aforementioned structures form a distinctive suburban and still pastoral remnant of nineteenth century Germantown.

According to real estate atlases of the nineteenth century, the subject building is constructed primarily of brick with a stucco finish, as was common in this part of Philadelphia. The Gothic Revival style is exhibited by the quaint, low-slung form and scale of the building, the employment of gable-front wall dormers within the projecting eaves of the upper story, the second-floor window openings, the terracotta chimney pots that crown the central chimney, and the cross-gable roof. The subject building is defined by two rectangular volumes, which include an enclosed, one-story porch at the northwest elevation, a one-story bay window at the westerly end of the southwest elevation, and a one-story addition at the south corner of the building.



Figure 7. The northwest elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

The northwest elevation of the northwesterly block is comprised of a one-and-one-half-story gable-end and an enclosed, one-story projecting porch. The upper story features a Gothic Revival style gable end with a single opening at center defined by a triangular arch and features a replacement window. The gable is defined by wooden molding. The northwest elevation of the porch features a single pedestrian door to the northeast and a large opening with three replacement windows divided by mullions. The southwest elevation is dominated by two Gothic Revival style gable-front wall dormers that feature single openings each defined by a triangular arch. The first floor features a one-story bay window with two small openings with replacement windows near the north corner followed by a three-part mullion window, as well as a large chimney stack at the south corner of the building. This chimney is embedded in a one-story addition at the west corner of the building. The southwest elevation of the one-story addition features a large opening with windows and a single pedestrian door. The northeast elevation features a central, Gothic Revival style gable end that extends from the main roofline of the northwesterly block, forming a cross-gable roof. The gable features a single opening at center that is defined by a triangular arch. To the southeast is the secondary block that features two additional Gothic Revival style gable-front wall dormers each of which serve single apertures defined a triangular arch. The southeast elevation of the southeasterly block is defined by a Gothic Revival gable end with a central opening, featuring a triangular arch. The building features affordable replacement windows. The southeast elevation of the southeasterly block features a single pedestrian door that leads to a deck that is situated atop the aforementioned one-story addition at the south corner. At the center of the northwesterly block is a central chimney with two Gothic Revival style terracotta chimney pots.



Figure 8. Looking southeast at the northeast elevation with the Taws Twin at 223 W. Tulpehocken Street in the background. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Figure 9. Looking northwest at the southeast and northeast elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.



Figure 10. Looking northwest at the southeast elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.



Figure 11. Looking south at the roofline of the subject property within its matured landscape from W. Washington Lane. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Figure 12. Looking northwest at the southeast elevation of the subject property and the Taws Stable to the southwest within the lush and matured landscape. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.



Figure 13. The northwest elevation, ca.1960s. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission via PhillyHistory.org.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gardener's Cottage of the Lewis & Martha Taws Suburban Estate (Taws Gardener's Cottage) at 224 W. Washington Lane in Germantown is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The subject building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation, as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style;
- (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; and
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

The period of significance dates to the time of design and construction: ca.1860-61.

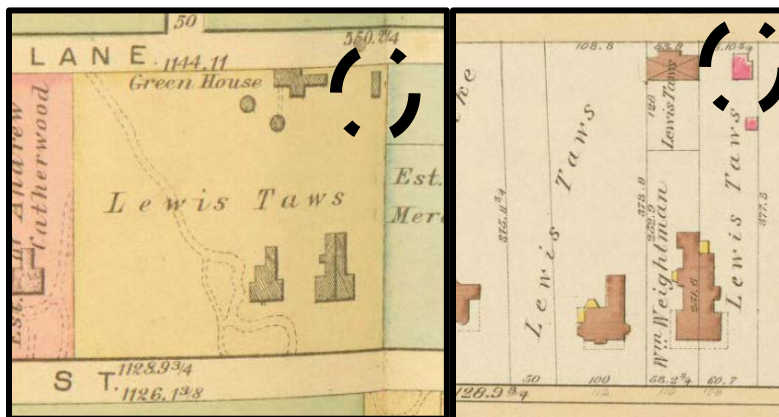


Figure 14. Left: 1871 Germantown Atlas. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network. Figure 15. Right: 1889 Germantown Atlas. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.



Figure 16. Gardener’s Cottage or Tenant House by J.C. Sidney. Source: *The Gardener’s Monthly*, July 1860.

CRITERIA C, D, E, & J

Satisfying Criteria C and D, the Taws Gardener’s Cottage possesses distinguishing characteristics of the Gothic Revival style and reflects the built environment in an era characterized by this architectural movement. The subject building is nestled within a distinctive nineteenth-century vignette of ancillary suburban, estate buildings and features that conform to a Romantic ideal in architecture and the Picturesque in landscape, satisfying Criterion E. The Taws Gardener’s Cottage also exemplifies national and international trends in the development of the suburban built environment during the nineteenth century, specifically gardener’s cottages. Satisfying Criterion J, the employment of the Gothic Revival in the design of such buildings reflects the cultural, economic, social and historical heritage of the Germantown community.

Criteria C & D. The State Historic Preservation Office’s (SHPO) *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide* devotes an entire subsection to the Gothic Revival Style, in which dwellings are described as a common building type. Of the eight identifiable features, the subject building possesses characteristics that exemplify the Gothic Revival style: arches as decorative elements and as window shape; front facing gables; porches with turned posts or columns; steeply pitched roof; gables often topped with finials or cross bracing; and decorative crowns (gable or drip mold) over windows and doors.¹

¹ Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Bureau for Historic Preservation. “Gothic Revival Style 1830–1860,” in *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, last modified August 26, 2015, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/gothic-revival.html>



Figures 1 and 8. The above photographs are enhanced to highlight various characteristics of the Gothic Revival style, including yellow outlines on the gable ends and gable front wall dormers, as well as dotted lines on the Gothic Revival style triangular top arched windows. Top: Looking east at the southwest elevation. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Bottom: Looking northwest at the southeast and northeast elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

Containing six of the eight most identifiable features defined by the SHPO’s *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, the subject building includes triangular arched windows; front and side facing gables with decorative molding; one-story porches supported by turned posts/columns—though the side porch has been enclosed, the turned posts appear to be boxed in; a steeply pitched roof; distinctive gable-front wall dormers; decorative placement of triangular arch windows within gable-front wall dormers, as well as triangular top arch windows within the gable ends of the roof; and distinctive terra cotta chimney pots at the center of the northwesterly block of the building. While not all of the subject property’s Gothic Revival features are precisely described by the SHPO, other notable features are referenced in Virginia and Lee McAlester’s discussion of the Gothic Revival style in *A Field Guide To American Houses*, published in 1989. The McAlesters

include the following common variants and details: a one-story porch; the cross-gable roof; triangular arched windows; one-story bay windows; exposed rafters and purlins, occasionally with an open eave; etc., all of which are exhibited in the subject building.²



Figure 17. Taken in 1858, looking north, this photograph shows a small Gothic Revival style cottage in the rear of a lot along the east side of Germantown Avenue between E. Penn Street and Church Lane. Source: Philalandmarks.org.

While somewhat unusual, the employment of gable front wall dormers with varying types of arched window openings was a common thread of Gothic Revival and Italianate houses in Germantown. One of the earliest known examples stood in the rear of a lot extending from the east side of Germantown Avenue between E. Penn Street and Church Lane. Illustrated above in Figure 17, this early specimen was also a one-and-one-half-story, stucco-clad cottage with a gable front wall dormer, featuring a triangular arched window. The aforementioned features of this building are akin to those employed in the subject property. Figure 18 illustrates the Charles W. Churchman House at the corner of Chew and Stenton Avenues in East Germantown, which is replete with gable front wall dormers and windows defined by triangular arches. The Churchman House is also related stylistically to the subject building. Shown in Figure 19, the E.H. Coates House at 5326 Baynton Street is a hybrid Gothic Revival and Italianate style building with two gable front wall dormers like the subject building.



Examples of Gothic Revival style buildings in Germantown, all of which employ arched windows and gable front wall dormers. Figure 18. Left: The Charles W. Churchman House at the northeast corner of Chew and Stenton Avenues in East Germantown. Source: Google. Figure 19. Right: The E.H. Coates House at 5326 Baynton Street is a hybrid Gothic Revival and Italianate style building with two wall dormers featuring gable front dormers with round arch openings. Source: Germantown Historical Society.

² Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide To American Houses*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989).



Figure 20. Top: A Gothic Revival house in Germantown, featuring a central gable, a Gothic Revival style doorway, and gable front wall dormers with barge board. Source: Germantown Historical Society. Figure 21. Bottom: The Thomas A. Gummey Twin at the southeast corner of High and Morton Streets in Germantown, featuring a gable front wall dormer, featuring a pointed arched opening. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

Beyond the concept of a gardener's cottage, dwellings for servants who lived and worked onsite were often designed in the Gothic Revival style. This national and international trend also persisted in Philadelphia. North Cedar Hill Cemetery in Frankford features a one-and-one-half-story Gothic Revival cottage (Figures 22 and 23), likely built for a caretaker or keeper. Stylistically, the building differs in form from the subject property but shares more subtle characteristics like its cross-gable roof and one-story porch with Gothic Revival style details. Two Gothic Revival style stables originally stood in the rear of this dwelling, though one was recently demolished. A twin dwelling (Figure 24) for servants (1852), designed in the Gothic Revival style, still stands at 6190 Ardleigh Street and is part of the Awbury Arboretum Historic District. This building features a cross gable roof, gable front wall dormers, triangular arched windows, etc.³ All of these features relate to the subject building. Shown in Figure 25, the Gardener's Cottage at Ravenhill in W. School House Lane was also designed in the Gothic Revival style with a distinctive cross gable roof and terra cotta chimney pots that are similar to the subject building.

³ *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Awbury Historic District*. (Philadelphia: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, 2008).



Figures 22. and 23. Top left and right: Keeper's Cottage at North Cedar Hill Cemetery in the Frankford neighborhood of Philadelphia. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Figure 24. Bottom left: Awbury Servant's House (1852) at 6190 Ardleigh Street, East Germantown. Source: Awbury Historic District Nomination. Figure 25. Bottom right: Gardener's Cottage at Ravenhill, showing John McCleary, the gardener and his family. Source: Germantown Historical Society.

Other examples, varying in form and stylistic application, grace the Germantown landscape. Shown in Figure 26, a Keeper's Cottage (ca.1790, 1837, and 1880) of the Roxboro Estate in the rear of the main house in W. School House Lane in East Falls/Germantown is likely an eighteenth-century building that was later enhanced with Gothic Revival style windows. Serving another estate on W. School House Lane, Figure 27 depicts the Stone Gothic Cottage (ca.1848-50) on Cherry Lane, officially 3000 W. School House Lane.⁴ This building is also one-and-one-half-stories with a cross-gable roof, a central chimney, and a one-story porch. Further west, in Overbrook, The Chestnuts, also known as Leighton Place, is a fully intact suburban estate, which retains its Gardener's Cottage (Figures 28 and 29). This building too has a cross-gable roof, as well as gable-front wall dormers.⁵

⁴ Nancy Pontone. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Stone Gothic Cottage on Cherry Lane, 3000 W. School House Lane*. (Philadelphia: East Falls Historical Society, 2020).

⁵ Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The Chestnuts aka Leighton Place, The Country Seat of David Scull, Jr., 5848 City Avenue, Overbrook, Philadelphia*. (Philadelphia: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2020), 34.



Similar examples of the Gothic Revival style employed in cottages that served larger estates in Philadelphia. Figure 26. Top left: A Keeper's Cottage (ca.1790, 1837, and 1880) of the Roxboro Estate, School House Lane, East Falls/Germantown. Source: www.estate.com. Figure 27. Top right: Stone Gothic Cottage (ca.1848-50) on Cherry Lane, officially 3000 W. School House Lane, East Falls/Germantown. Source: Nancy Pontone. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: Stone Gothic Cottage on Cherry Lane, 3000 W. School House Lane*. (Philadelphia: East Falls Historical Society, 2020). Figures 28. and 29. Bottom left and right: Views of the Gardner's Cottage at The Chestnuts aka Leighton Place, The Country Seat of David Scull, Jr. at 5848 City Avenue. Source: Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The Chestnuts aka Leighton Place, The Country Seat of David Scull, Jr., 5848 City Avenue, Overbrook, Philadelphia*. (Philadelphia: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2020), 34.

Discussed in greater detail in the historic context section of this nomination, the Gothic Revival style Gardener's Cottage went far beyond the Philadelphia Region, being a common architectural type for large to moderate size suburban and country places in North America and across the Atlantic in Europe. Below are several examples of the Gothic Revival style cottage in the Hudson Valley, including Matthew Vassar's Cottage (Figure 30/Demolished) and his Porter's Cottage (Figure 31) at Springside in Poughkeepsie, New York; the Gardener's Cottage at Springwood (Figure 32), the Estate of Franklin D. Roosevelt at Hyde Park, New York; the Cedarcliff Gatehouse (Figure 33) at Poughkeepsie, New York; and the Gardener's Cottage (Figure 34) at the Manor of Montebello in Quebec, Canada.

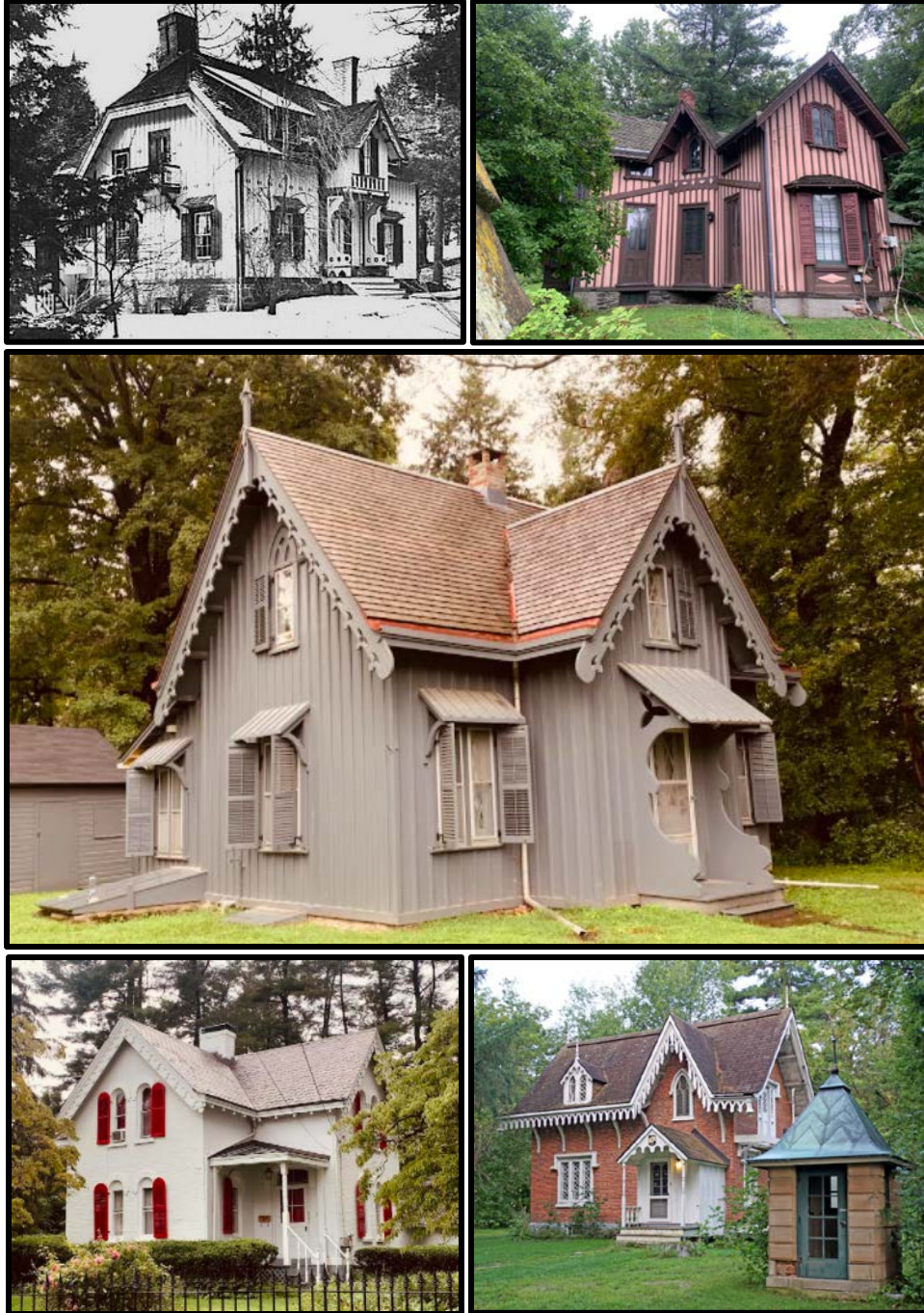


Figure 30. Top left: Matthew Vassar's Cottage (Demolished) at Springside, Matthew Vassar's estate in Poughkeepsie, New York. Figure 31. Top right: The Porter's Cottage at Springside, Matthew Vassar's Estate in Poughkeepsie. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Center: The Gardener's Cottage at Springwood, the Estate of Franklin D. Roosevelt at Hyde Park, New York. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Bottom left: The Cedarcliff Gatehouse at Poughkeepsie, New York. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Bottom right: Gardener's Cottage (1855) of the Manor of Montebello in Quebec, Canada, being of a similar scale to the subject property. Source: Dennis Jarvis, 2018.



Figure 32. The Edward White Clark Estate at the southeast corner of School House Lane and Wissahickon Avenue, showing the ancillary buildings, which formed a distinctive historic landscape. Source: New York Public Library.

Criteria G and J. The Taws Gardener's Cottage is representative of the cultural and social heritage of suburban development of the mid-nineteenth century in Germantown. The influence of Andrew J. Downing, the eminent American tastemaker and horticulturist, and other designers had long term influence on places where ornamental suburban and rural architecture was commissioned and built, a circumstance wherein aesthetics was a primary considerations over pure utility. In this pursuit even ancillary buildings, such as cottages for servants, greenhouses, and stables were designed to suit the Romantic taste of the era. The stereo view shown above in Figure 32 of the Edward White Clark Residence is not focused on the Italianate mansion at the southeast corner of W. School House Lane and Wissahickon Avenue in Germantown, rather the Gothic Revival and Italianate outbuildings. While the land remains open today, all of Clark's buildings, aside from the Gardener's Cottage or Lodge, have been demolished; however, this illustration depicts a distinctive built environment and landscape that was once common in Germantown.

The subject property is part of distinctive nineteenth-century landscape that is visible from E. Washington Lane, as well as Tulpehocken Street. The E. Washington Lane vista includes the Taws Gardener's Cottage, the impressive Taws Stable, stone walls, gate posts, matured plantings and trees, the former site of the Taws Greenhouse and Paddock. This view affords the public with a glimpse of the planned Romanticism of nineteenth-century suburban architecture and landscape in Germantown. While the Lewis and Martha Taws House has been demolished, a substantial twin residence, which was part of their estate, still stands at 223 and 225 W. Tulpehocken Street. Component parts of large suburban and rural estates that survive in other parts of the country are protected and preserved by their respective municipalities, while also being listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The gatehouse (Figure 33) at Cedarcliff in Poughkeepsie, New York survives, along with iron fencing and posts. Set within matured plantings and trees, this vignette is an historic landscape that represents a component part of a once larger property. Also in Poughkeepsie, the gateway, including brownstone posts and iron fencing, as well as the Gothic Revival style Porter's Cottage (Figure 34), of Springside, the Matthew Vassar estate, survives at

the margin of a larger historic viewshed. These landscape vignettes provide remarkable physical evidence of the estate properties that have been lost to development and time. The subject property not only relates to these examples architecturally, but it is also part of a small vignette that speaks to that same development and aesthetic heritage in Germantown.

From the driveway of 223 W. Tulehocken Street is an historic viewshed of the subject property, and its characteristic Gothic Revival gable end and triangular arched window. From both W. Washington Lane and W. Tulpehocken Street, as well as the alley between the two streets, the Taws Gardener's Cottage is part of and related to a distinctive mid-nineteenth century architectural and landscape vignette that speaks to the aesthetic, cultural and social heritage of the community.

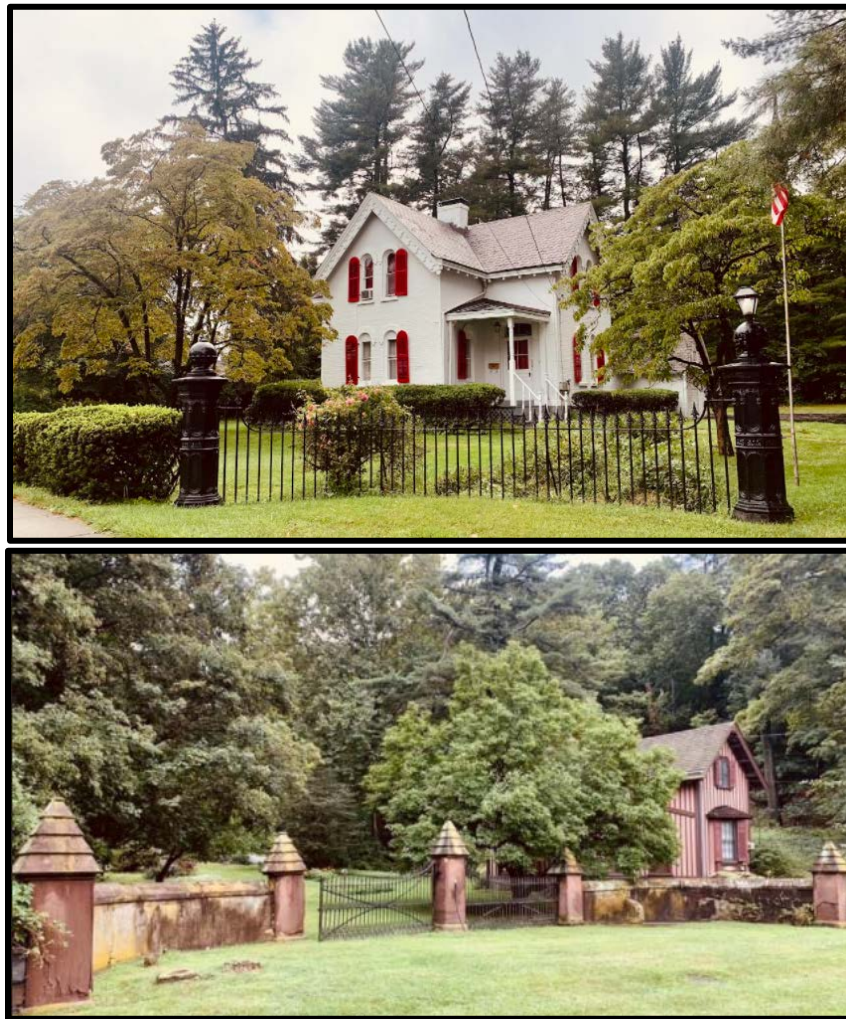


Figure 33. Top: The Gatehouse of Cedarcliff, a Gothic Revival style cottage, similar to the subject property in scale and particular details, at Poughkeepsie, New York. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Figure 34. Bottom: The mid-nineteenth century gateway and Porter's Cottage of Springside, Matthew Vassar's estate in Poughkeepsie, New York. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.



Figure 35. Top: Looking east at the Taws Cottage and the Taws Stable from W. Washington Lane. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Figure 36. Middle: Looking southeast at the Taws Gardener's Cottage and the Taws' Stable. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021. Figure 37. Bottom: Looking northwest at the Taws Twin Residence at 223 and 225 W. Tulpehocken Street with the Taws' Gardener's Cottage in the background. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2021.

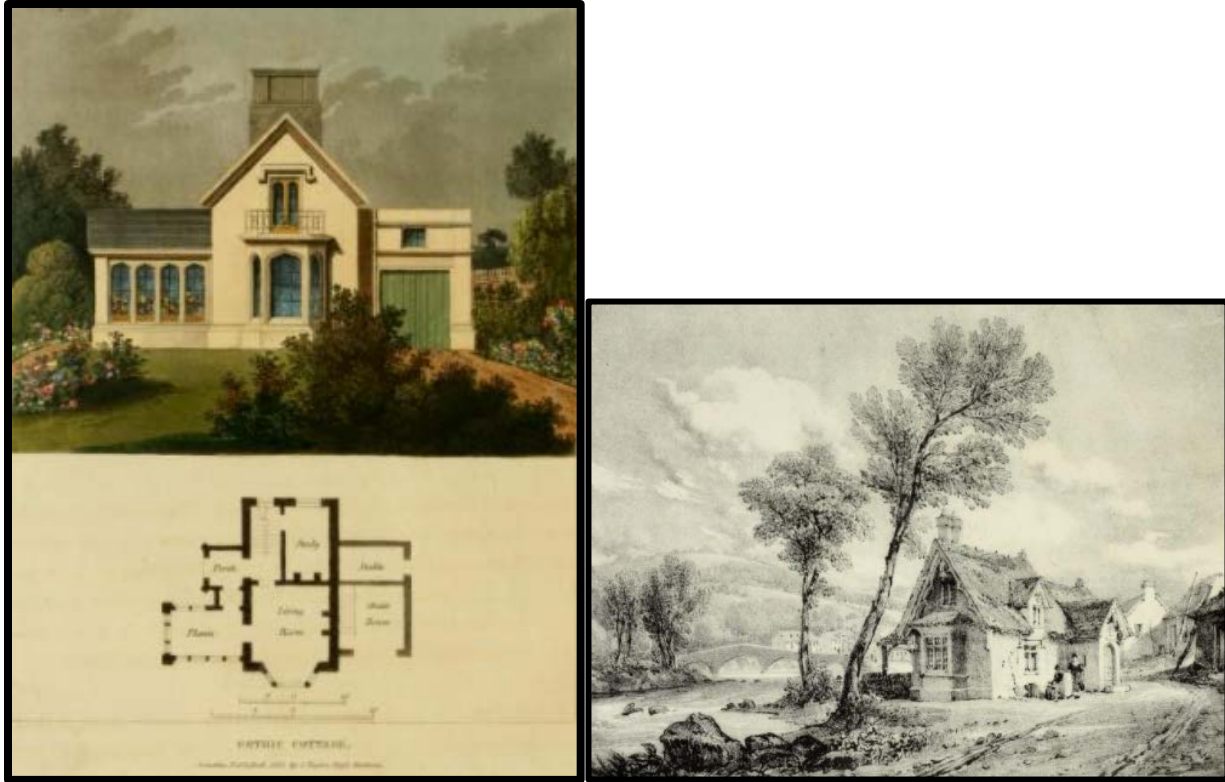


Figure 38. Left: Plate III, Gothic Cottage. Source: James Thomson. *Retreats: A Series of Designs, Consisting of Plans and Elevations for Cottages, Villas, and Ornamental Buildings*. (London: Printed for J. Taylor, Architectural Library, 1827), 3. Figure 39. Right: Design, No. VII. Gate Cottage (of brick, roughcaste). Source: P.F. Robinson. *Rural Architecture: Being a Series of Designs for Ornamental Cottages*. (London: Printed for James Carpenter and Son, 1828).

While some buildings along Germantown’s rich suburban streets were unique designs, dwellings like the Taws Gardener’s Cottage were influenced by pattern books and publications that popularized the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles across the country. Naturally, the introduction of the pattern book did not begin in America, but, rather, across the Atlantic in England. As shown in Figures 38 and 39, elevation drawings and floor plans for cottages of a similar design and scale to the subject property were published for British consumption in the early nineteenth century. American pattern books began with agricultural and architectural journals, including some early examples such as designs “On Horticultural Architecture” in *The Horticultural Register* in 1835 and a farmhouse competition with illustrations in *The Cultivator* in 1839. A.J. Downing’s *Rural Residences* was perhaps the most important early pattern book, published in 1837-38, which was followed by his *Landscape Gardening* in 1841.⁶

While Downing had popularized the pattern book trend in the 1830s and 1840s, Philadelphia too boasted similar publications. In July 1860, *The Gardener’s Monthly* published “Gardener’s Cottage or Tenant House” by the eminent Quaker architect, J.C. Sidney of Philadelphia. The illustration shows a one-and-one-half-story dwelling with a side-gable roof, projecting eaves, a one-story side porch, gable front wall dormers, and windows with triangular arches. Sidney describes the purpose of such a building on an estate:

⁶ *Prophet With Honor: The Career of Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815-1852*. (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989), 169-178.

A Gardener's house on a gentlemen's place is often required to accommodate assistants as well as the gardener and his wife. Sometimes the gardener's tastes go beyond fruits and flowers and may require room for a family.⁷

Sidney's design, published by Thomas Meehan of Mt. Airy, is remarkably similar to the Taws Gardner's Cottage built soon after this publication. Ultimately, architects like Sidney used publications like *The Gardener's Monthly* to promote their designs to the local community, and, in many cases, patronage followed. The subject building is an example of how the pattern book was important to the popularization of the Gothic Revival style in Germantown and Philadelphia, exemplifying the cultural and social heritage of the community.



Figure 40. A design for a cottage with wall dormers like the subject property. Source: Henry W. Cleaveland, William Backus, and Samuel D. Backus. *Village and Farm Cottages*. (New York: Appleton, 1856; reprint, Watkins Glen, NY: Library of Victorian Culture, 1976).

⁷ J.C. Sidney. "Design For A Gardener's Cottage or Tenant House," *The Gardener's Monthly*, April 1860, 99.

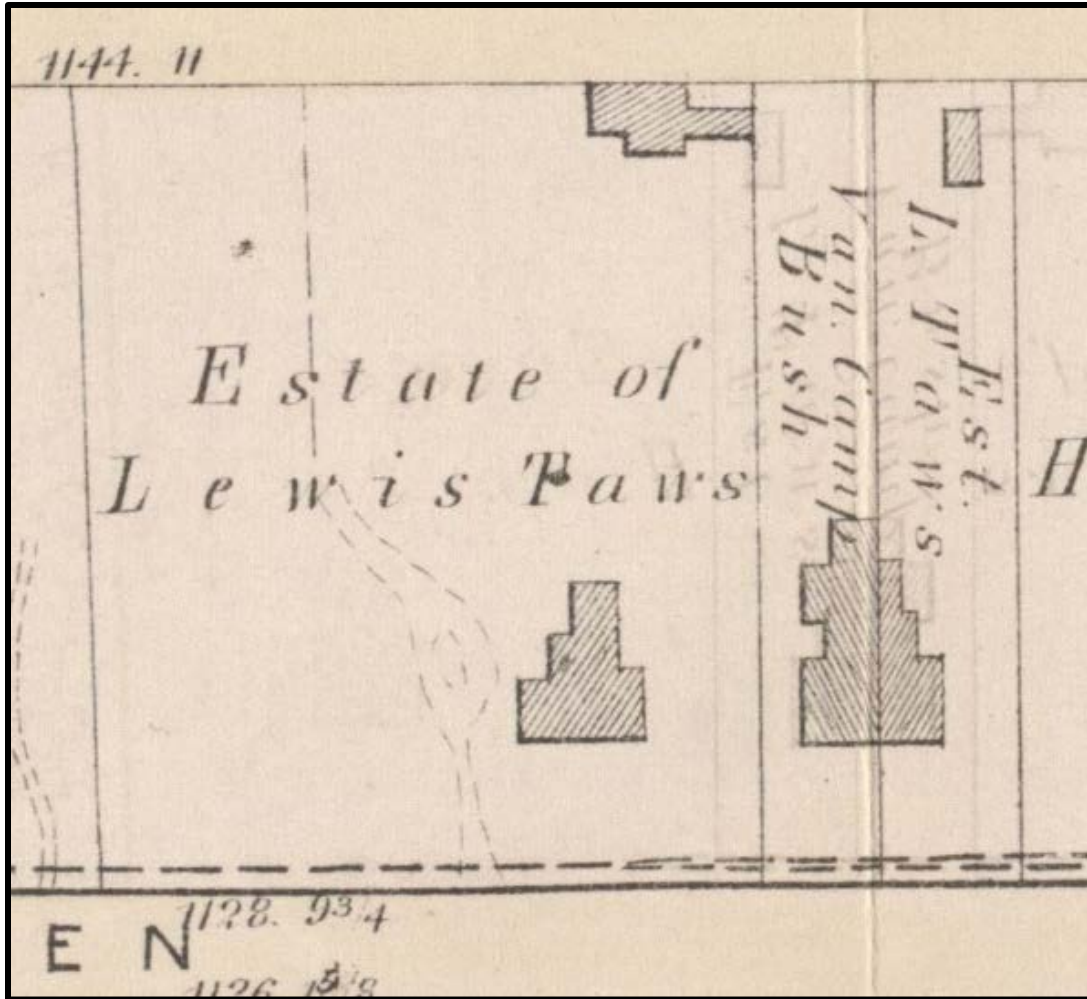


Figure 41. City Atlas of Philadelphia, 22nd Ward, 1876, Plate U, showing the Lewis and Martha Taws Estate. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LEWIS & MARTHA TAWS' SUBURBAN ESTATE

Between 1860 and 1863, Lewis and Martha Taws assembled several parcels including what is known today as 231 W. Tulpehocken Street, 225 W. Tulpehocken Street, 223 W. Tulpehocken Street, 232 W. Washington Lane, 228 W. Washington Lane, and 224 W. Washington Lane—the subject property—to form a substantial suburban estate on Tulpehocken Street, extending to Washington Lane. The primary Taws Mansion (demolished) stood at 231 W. Tulpehocken Street. The properties at 223 and 225 W. Tulpehocken Street contain a large Italianate style twin residence that was purchased by Lewis and Martha Taws likely for the use of their daughters—Madelene Vincentia Taws Moore (1832-1912) and Mary Gertrude Taws Scott (1847-1876). In the rear of 231 W. Tulpehocken Street, 232 W. Washington contains low-lying open space that was formerly the site of the Taws Greenhouse, the walls of which appear to be still present, retaining the elevated cartway above. In the rear of 223 and 225 W. Tulpehocken Street, the property at 228 W. Washington Lane contains the Gothic Revival style Taws Stable, which was likely connected to the Taws Greenhouse. Located at 224 W. Washington Lane, the subject property contains the Gothic Revival style Taws Gardener's Cottage.



Figure 42. Lewis Taws, ca. 1850-70. Source: Betsy Sprouse, a descendant of Lewis Taws.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON LEWIS AND MARTHA TAWS

A native of Philadelphia and the son of Charles Taws, an organ maker, Lewis Taws was among the hugely successful businessmen of the mid-nineteenth century Quaker City. After “receiving ample training in the best of schools,” he apprenticed as a mechanical engineer with Messrs. Rush & Muhlenberg, successors to Oliver Evans, after which time he learned more about “engine building” at various firms in New York City.⁸ Just a few years later, he undertook a tour of the American South and Puerto Rico, where he studied various types of machinery and manufacturing.⁹ In 1824, he entered the partnership of I.P. Morris and Company, then one of the largest iron foundries in the country. He was initially placed in the mechanical department as an engineer, though within ten years he was a senior partner in the firm. During his tenure, he installed the water-wheels at the Fairmount Water Works and supervised the construction of various sugar refineries in the American South. During the Civil War, Taws supervised the construction of iron light houses and war vessels for the Union Army.¹⁰

⁸ “Obituary. Lewis Taws, Esq.,” [Unknown Publication], December 1871.; “Obituary. Death of Mr. Lewis Taws.,” [Unknown Publication], December 1871.; and “Death of a Well-Known Citizen—Lewis Taws,” [Unknown Publication], December 1871.

⁹ Mrs. Edward Town Taws. *Charles Taws, ca. 1743-1836, musical instrument maker: his career, his progeny, and some of his descendants*. (Philadelphia: The Authors, 1986), 15-16.

¹⁰ “Obituary. Lewis Taws, Esq.,” [Unknown Publication], December 1871.; “Obituary. Death of Mr. Lewis Taws.,” [Unknown Publication], December 1871.; and “Death of a Well-Known Citizen—Lewis Taws,” [Unknown Publication], December 1871.



Figure 43. Left: Martha Hunter Snyder Taws. Figure 44. Center: Madeline Vincentia Taws Moore. Figure 45. Right: Dr. Thomas Lawrence Moore. Source: Betsy Sprouse, a descendant of Lewis Taws.

Born in Pottsville to George Snyder, Jr. and Sarah Matlack, Mrs. Martha Hunter Snyder Taws was remembered as an “avid horticulturist,” employing a gardener almost immediately upon the purchase of the subject and associated properties at Germantown.¹¹ One of the first gardeners of the Taws family was Thomas Meghran, employed temporarily in 1862.¹² By 1863, Remi Herrise (1838-1916), an Alsatian gardener, was employed by the Taws family, as their fulltime employee.¹³ The employment of Alsatian landscape architects and gardeners was a well-known trend in America during the nineteenth century, as described in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination for The Chestnuts in West Philadelphia.¹⁴ It appears that the subject building was built between ca. 1860 and 1863, being occupied by the gardener early on during the Taws’ period of ownership. Remi Herisse and his German-born wife, Pauline Jaegle Herrise (1840-1908), were recorded in the 1870 Census at Germantown, seven years after being recognized in *The Gardener’s Monthly* as the Taws’ gardener.¹⁵ The 1880 census confirms that the Herrises were still residing at 112 W. Washington Lane (now known as 224 W. Washington Lane), at which time the Taws property was recorded as 110 W. Tulpehocken Street.¹⁶ In 1863 alone, he worked with Martha Taws to earn a “prize for a pretty pair of Hand Bouquets, of modest proportions and gracefully combined.” He was recognized in *The Gardener’s Monthly* for “luscious mushrooms,” as well as a basket of flowers of a “harmonious arrangement.”¹⁷ Martha Taws was known for “her artistic floral displays and for growing tropical fruits and flowers in her

¹¹ Mrs. Edward Town Taws. *Charles Taws, ca. 1743-1836, musical instrument maker: his career, his progeny, and some of his descendants*. (Philadelphia: The Authors, 1986), 15-16.

¹² *The Gardener’s Monthly*, 1 March 1862, 94.

¹³ *The Gardener’s Monthly*, October 1863, 159.

¹⁴ Oscar Beisert. Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: The Chestnuts aka Leighton Place, The Country Seat of David Scull, Jr., 5848 City Avenue, Overbrook, Philadelphia. (Philadelphia: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2020), 34.

¹⁵ 1870 U.S. census, population schedules. NARA microfilm publication M593, 1,761 rolls. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.

¹⁶ Tenth Census of the United States, 1880. (NARA microfilm publication T9, 1,454 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

¹⁷ *The Gardener’s Monthly*, October 1863, 159.

well equipped greenhouse.”¹⁸ The greenhouse appears to have been located immediately adjacent to the subject property at 226 W. Washington Lane, as part of the Taws Stable.

Dr. Cornelius Weygandt, writer and professor of English literature at the University of Pennsylvania, once resided on Tulpehocken Street next to the Taws Mansion, recording the following in *On The Edge of Evening*, published in 1944:

On the other side, at Mrs. Taws, lived Ross Granville Harrison, now the distinguished biologist. This was a place with grotto and fish pond and formal terraces, hemlock-bordered gardens and trellises for grapes, and greenhouses and hothouses of many kinds. There was a cool house of circular construction for camellias, a warm greenhouse from which we once stole a ripe pineapple, and hothouses where were gardenias and orchids. William Herrise, the Alsatian gardener who presided over all these extravagances, was choleric and marvelously bearded, a man who seemed to have stepped right out of a German fairy tale. He bred strange breeds of fowls, of French and German origins, sultans and Houdans, golden Hamburgs and silkies.¹⁹

In his book *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*, Edwin Costley Jellet, a local historian, recognizes the three most important gardens of Tulpehocken Street, which included that of “Mrs. Lewis Taws.”²⁰ After the death of Martha Taws, her daughter and son-in-law, Madeline Vincentia Taws and Dr. Thomas Lawrence Moore (1827-1882), an important physician in Philadelphia and Germantown, would remain in residence at the Taws’ Germantown property, which included the subject building.

¹⁸ Mrs. Edward Town Taws. *Charles Taws, ca. 1743-1836, musical instrument maker: his career, his progeny, and some of his descendants*. (Philadelphia: The Authors, 1986), 16.

¹⁹ Cornelius Weygandt. *On The Edge of Evening*. (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1946).

²⁰ Edwin Costley Jellett. *Germantown Gardens and Gardeners*. (Germantown: H.F. McCann, 1914), 82.

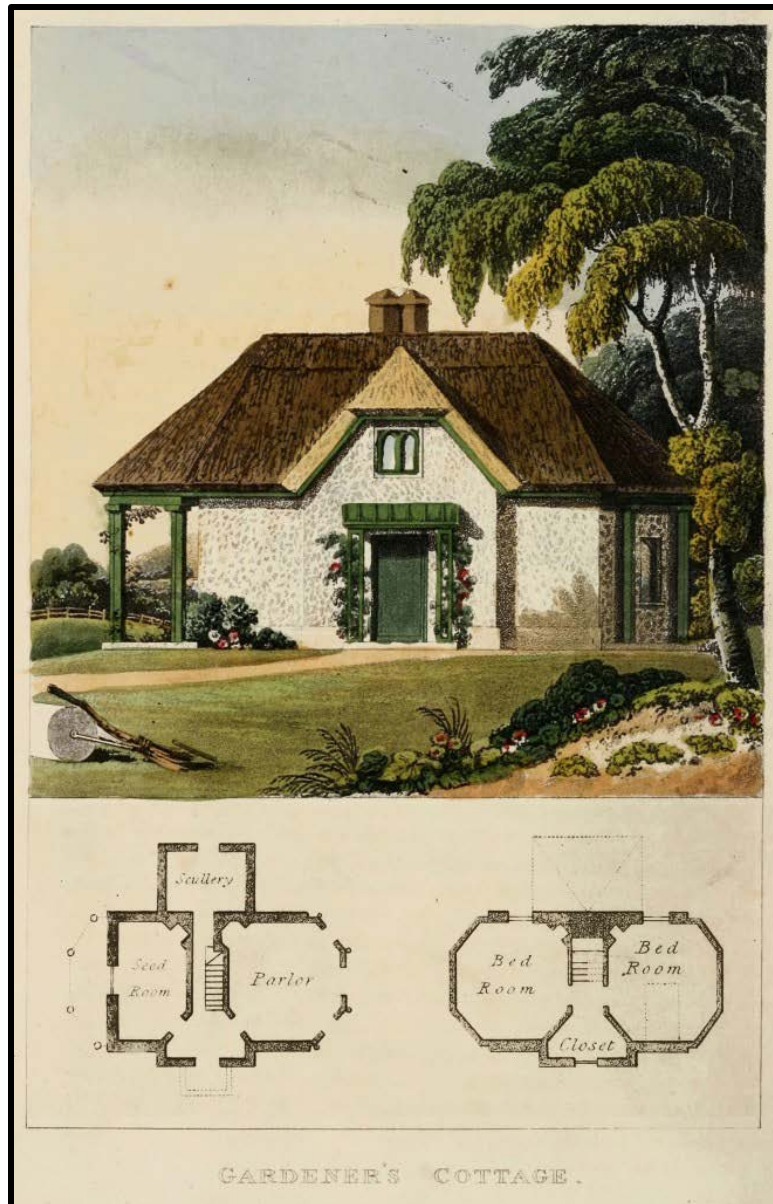


Figure 46. Design for a Gardener's Cottage by J.B. Papworth in 1818. Source: John Buonarotti Papworth. *Rural Residences, Consisting of a Series of Designs for Cottages, Decorated Cottages, Small Villas, and Other Ornamental Buildings*. (London: R. Ackermann, 1818).

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE GOTHIC REVIVAL IN ENGLAND

The Taws Gardener's Cottage is a distinctive and unusual surviving example of a Gardener's Cottage, designed in the Gothic Revival style in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. While gardeners and their cottages may be an age-old fact, the promulgation of the dwelling type came to fore in popular culture during the nineteenth century, starting in England. The Gothic Revival began in the mid-eighteenth century, specifically in 1749, when Horace Walpole (1717-1797) created his "Gothick" villa, Strawberry Hill House, in Twickenham. While other early examples emerged, the style would remain rather exclusive to particular houses and drawing rooms until the early nineteenth century. In 1807, John Britton published *Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain*, a series that caste a new light on the relevance of aged building forms. Ten years

later, in 1817, Thomas Rickman published *Attempt to discriminate the styles of English architecture from the Conquest to the Reformation*; preceded by a sketch of the Grecian and Roman orders, with notices of nearly five hundred English buildings, an opus that popularized terms such as Norman, Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular as sectors of Gothic architecture. As these books popularized the Gothic Revival style, tastemakers like John Buonarotti Papworth made employment of the style practicable for a wider audience of varying means to create buildings. His book, *Rural Residences, Consisting of a Series of Designs for Cottages, Decorated Cottages, Small Villas, and Other Ornamental Buildings*, provided elevations of idyllic cottages for the purposes of working people, specifying possible occupants such as bailiff, gardener, steward, etc. His examples also provided floor plans that made his book supremely useful to the owners of large estates, builders, and possibly those of more modest means. The design for “A Cottage,” later relabeled “Gardener’s Cottage” (Figure 43) shows a small one-and-one-half-story dwelling with a gable front at the center of the long side of the building with a porch at one end and a three-sided bay at the other. Slightly smaller and obviously in a more original state, this design is not entirely dissimilar to the subject property, though it was introduced roughly four decades earlier.

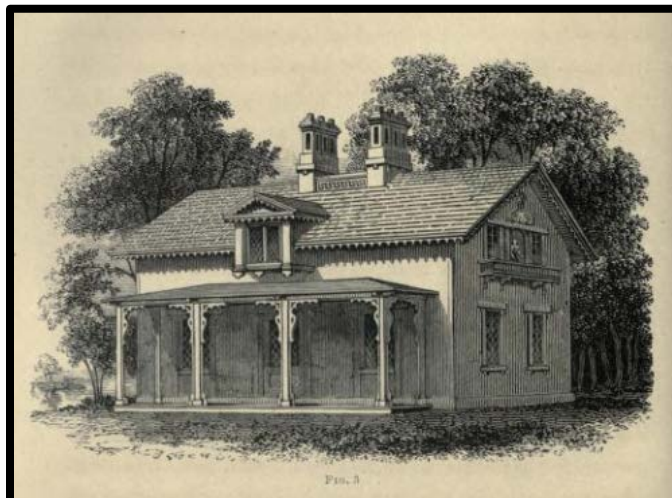


Figure 47. A cottage. Source: Andrew Jackson Downing. *Cottage Residences*. (New-York and London: Wiley and Putnam, 1842).

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE GOTHIC REVIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES

On this side of the Atlantic, America came slightly later to the Gothic Revival, though there were, like in England, early examples of the style being employed by wealthy eccentrics. One of the most popular tastemakers of the United States, Andrew Jackson Downing published designs for small cottages in the 1840s and 1850s. In 1842, Downing published *Cottage Residences, or, A series of designs for rural cottages and cottage villas, and their gardens and grounds: adapted to North America* which, like Papworth’s book in England, popularized the applicability of the style to American buildings. The pattern book provided readers with elevation drawings and plans, including “Design 1. A Suburban Cottage, “which was a one-and-one-half-story cottage with a projecting wall dormer at the center.”²¹ While this building is perhaps slightly larger than the subject building, it shows the conceptual influence on local designs.

²¹ Andrew Jackson Downing. *Cottage Residences*. (New-York and London: Wiley and Putnam, 1842), 98-106.



Figure 48. Mrs. Camac's Residence near Philadelphia. Source: Andrew Jackson Downing. *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*. (New York: C.M. Saxton & Co., 1855), 57.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE GOTHIC REVIVAL IN PHILADELPHIA

Like in so many other chapters of American architectural history, the nascent Gothic Revival style was nurtured in Philadelphia, beginning with a house and followed on by a church, representing the two most popular building types influenced by the style. In 1810, John Dorsey, a merchant and self-taught architect, commissioned a Gothic Revival style mansion at 1217 Chestnut Street.²² While this building was demolished even before its aesthetic took hold, a period illustration of the mansion helped to popularize the style.²³ One of the first Gothic Revival style churches in the country was St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at 19 S. Tenth Street, which designed by William Strickland and built in 1823.²⁴ While both of these buildings predate the primary period of the significance, they illustrate the earliest examples of a longtime stylistic prevalence in domestic and religious architecture at Philadelphia.

As Downing's influence took hold of the popular imagination, Philadelphia remained a leader in the employment of the Gothic Revival in various categories of building types and stylistic application. St. James the Less was "the first example of the pure English Parish Church style in America, and one of the best examples of a nineteenth-century American Gothic church for its coherence and authenticity of design."²⁵ Located at Hunting Park Avenue and Clearfield Street, the church was designed by architects George Gordon Place and John E. Carver and built in 1846.²⁶ This was one of enumerable examples of the style in Philadelphia, which found its way into rural landscapes, village settings, and urban streetscapes. Downing illustrated "Mrs. Camac's Residence," in his 1844 edition of *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, which showed a moderate size country house. Designed by prominent Philadelphia architect John Notman and built ca.1841, the picture of Elizabeth Markoe Camac's "picturesque cottage, in the rural gothic style, with very charming and appropriate pleasure grounds," was a persuasive image that influenced domestic architecture in Philadelphia for decades.²⁷ Commercial buildings too were erected in the Gothic Revival style, perhaps the most prominent example being the Jayne

²² *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, 17 July 1810.

²³ George B. Tatum. *Penn's Great Town*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961.), 177.

²⁴ Richard J. Webster. *Philadelphia Preserved*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976., 144.

²⁵ National Register of Historic Places Nomination: St. James-the-Less Episcopal Church, Hunting Park Avenue and Clearfield Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. (National Park Service, 4 February 1985).

²⁶ Phoebe B. Stanton. *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968).

²⁷ Constance M. Greiff. *John Notman, Architect*. (Philadelphia: The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, 1979), 235.; and Judith K. Major. *To Live In The New World, A.J. Downing and American Landscape Gardening*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1997), 74-75.

Building at 242-44 Chestnut Street. The building featured a heavily fenestrated façade, delineated by Gothic architectural details, including quatrefoil windows on the eighth floor.²⁸



Figure 49. Thomson's Cottage, Shoemaker Lane, 1858. Source: Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE GOTHIC REVIVAL IN SUBURBAN GERMANTOWN

The taste for the Gothic Revival did not escape Germantown's diverse built environment, emerging prominently in commercial, institutional, religious, and residential architecture for much of the Victorian era. The latter two categories being the most prominent benefactors, the development of Germantown as one of America's premier suburbs in the late second and third quarters of the nineteenth century rendered it an ideal setting for the realization of Downing's Gothic Revival ideal, as articulated in its own vernacular language. *The Map of the Township of Germantown* of 1851 by John Flynn shows a dense community that is largely centered on Germantown Avenue with sparsely developed cross streets. While many of the cross streets that exist today had been established by that time, few were comprehensively developed, even in spacious suburban format of many of Germantown's most lush streets. Known today as E. Penn Street, Shoemaker's Lane underwent suburban development after 1842, when George Henry Thomson and Rebecca Harrison Willing Thomson purchased the old Shoemaker property.²⁹ Shown in Figure 48, "Thomson's Cottage," also known as Mayfield, was constructed between 1842 and 1844 and was one of the first known Gothic Revival style dwellings in Germantown.³⁰ Shoemaker's Lane was soon renamed Penn Street in 1845. When the 1851 Atlas was published, the street boasted several houses, including the Anne Mifflin House (demolished), a Gothic Revival style building, at the southwest corner of E. Penn and Wakefield Streets. Price Street was another elevated suburban development that was opened with several new houses by 1851.

²⁸ Historic American Buildings Survey, Creator, and William J Johnston. Jayne Building, 242-244 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, PA. Documentation Compiled After. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/pa0942/>.

²⁹ Deed: Robert Morris, of the City of Philadelphia, doctor of medicine, to George H. Thomson, of the same, gentleman, 1 April 1842, Philadelphia Deed Book G.S., No. 39, p. 112, CAP.

³⁰ Insurance Policy for "A Two Story Stone Dwelling House" of Geoge H. Thomson. Issued by the Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia on December 3, 1844. Source: Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE DEVELOPMENT OF TULPEHOCKEN STREET

Perhaps the most successful and intact of the suburban developments that came to define Germantown occurred within the vicinity of what would become Tulpehocken Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Predating that line's important presence on the west side, near the township line, the subject development included Tulpehocken Street and Walnut Lane, specifically the westerly blocks between Germantown and Wayne Avenues. Among the earliest known developers were John C. Fallon (1819-1885), architect; Phineas E. Hamm (1799-1861), a former City Treasurer; and Ebenezer Maxwell (1829-1870), a prominent dry goods merchant. At the time of the development, the land that now encompasses Tulpehocken Street was largely owned by Justus Johnson (1789-1847), a descendant of the famous Johnson (Jansen) family of Germantown. In 1848, Fallon, the aforementioned architect, made a fortuitous marriage to Susan Elizabeth Johnson (1823-1893), the daughter of Justus Johnson and his wife Abigail "Abby" Willing Morris (1787-1858). After his marriage, Fallon almost immediately purchased and began carving up his father-in-law's sixty-one-acre estate, which led to the creation of Tulpehocken Street, opening in 1850 or 1851.³¹ Born in Spain but of British ancestry, Fallon and his brother, Christopher Fallon (1809-1863), were the financial representatives of Queen Christina of Spain in the United States, a position used no doubt to propel their real estate venture.³² In fact, the first houses built in Tulpehocken Street were two Gothic Revival style cottages—one for the Queen of Spain and the other for her ladies in waiting. While Her Majesty never needed to flee, the proposed residence no doubt made an alluring attraction to the nouveau riche of Philadelphia, who were flocking to new suburban developments in the mid-nineteenth century.

As more and more of the Johnson family land was subdivided so were neighboring properties, including the former Axe property to the north, as well as the rear acreage of Wyck to the south. While the lots closest to Germantown Avenue were smaller, where the development was denser, the properties further to the west were originally larger estate-like lots with room for outbuildings and grounds. The subject building was constructed at the rear of the house at 223 W. Tulpehocken Street. That lot came into being as part of the larger subdivision of the Justus Johnson property in the summer of 1858, when Fallon sold the property to John Fraser (1825-1906), the eminent Philadelphia architect.³³ At the same time, Fraser also developed the lot at 225 W. Tulpehocken Street, which ultimately led to the construction of substantial Italianate twin residence that still stands at 223 and 225 W. Tulpehocken Street. Fraser sold both houses to George W. and Elizabeth Day in 1860.³⁴ The Days only owned the property for a short time, when both buildings were sold to Lewis and Martha Taws in 1861.³⁵

³¹ Nancy A. Holst. *Doctoral Dissertation: Pattern Books and The Suburbanization of Germantown, Pennsylvania, in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*. (Fall 2008), 104.

³² *Find a Grave*, database and images (www.findagrave.com/memorial/33613856/christopher-fallon): accessed 15 August 2021), memorial page for Christopher Fallon (23 Apr 1809–6 Jul 1863), Find a Grave Memorial ID [33613856](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33613856), citing Saint Charles Borromeo Cemetery, Drexel Hill, Delaware County, Pennsylvania, USA ; Maintained by lam (contributor [46956893](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33613856/contributor/46956893)).

³³ Deed: John Fraser, architect, to George W. Day, merchant, 6 January 1860, Philadelphia Deed Book A.D.B., No. 99, 343. Source City Archives of Philadelphia.

³⁴ Deed: George W. Day to Lewis Taws, 16 March 1860, PDB A.C.H., No. 6, p. 510. Source: CAP.; and Deed: John Fraser, architect, to George W. Day, merchant, 6 January 1860, PDB A.D.B., No. 99, 343. Source: CAP.

³⁵ Deed: George W. Day to Lewis Taws, 16 March 1860, PDB A.C.H., No. 6, p. 510. Source: CAP.

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Submitted by West Central Germantown Neighbors, this nomination was sponsored by Constance Capp Winters and completed by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia. The primary author was Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist, with assistance from J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian, Kelly E. Wiles, Architectural Historian.

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