

# 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: **4841 Germantown Avenue**

Postal code: **19144**

#### 2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **The Joseph P. Bolton Store & Dwelling**

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: Commercial/Residential

#### 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

#### 6. DESCRIPTION

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

#### 7. SIGNIFICANCE

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

Period of Significance (from year to year): **1870 to 1871**

Date(s) of construction: **1870-71**

Architects: **Unknown**

Builders: **Job Kirby, House Carpenter**

Original owner: **William Rotch Wister and John Wister**

Significant person: **N/A**

**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: **SoLo/Germantown Civic Association RCO**

Author: **Keeping Society of Philadelphia**

Date: **4 July 2022**

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

Email: **keeper@keepingphiladelphia.org**

Nominator  is  is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: July 5, 2022

Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: July 20, 2022

Date of Notice Issuance: July 21, 2022

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Venture Philly LLC

Address: 939 Township Line Rd

City: Elkins Park

State: PA

Postal Code: 19027

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: 10/19/2022

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: 11/10/2022

Date of Final Action: 11/10/2022. Designated under Criteria for Designation C and D. Garage building is non-contributing.

Designated  Rejected

12/7/18

**NOMINATION**  
**FOR THE**  
**PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**



Figure 1. The side (northwest) and primary (southwest) elevations of the subject property. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022.

**JOSEPH P. BOLTON STORE & RESIDENCE**  
**BUILT 1870-71**  
**4841 GERMANTOWN AVENUE**  
**GERMANTOWN**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19144-3014**



Figure 2. The boundary of the proposed designation is delineated by the blue dashed line. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia.

## 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary description of the proposed designation is as follows:

Situate on the Northeasterly side of Germantown Avenue and the Southeasterly side of East Logan Street in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ward of the City of Philadelphia; containing in front or breadth on said Germantown Avenue 18 feet and extending in depth Northeastwardly on the Southeasterly line thereof at right angles to said Germantown Avenue 104 feet 1-1/4 inches and on the Northwesternly line along said East Logan Street 102 feet 8-5/8 inches and being in width on the Northeast or rear end thereof about 24 feet 8-7/8 inches, including an alley 4 feet in width extending across the rear thereof into the said East Logan Street.

BEING No. 4841 Germantown Avenue



Figure 3. Top: The primary elevation (southwest) and side (northwest) elevations of 4841 Germantown Avenue. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022.

## 6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Joseph P. Bolton Store & Residence at 4841 Germantown Avenue is a Second Empire style, 3-story row building located on the east side of the street and at the south side of East Logan Street where it intersects with the Avenue. Historically known as Fisher's Lane, East Logan Street is an Historic District listed in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places; however, this building is just outside the boundary. Along the north side of East Logan Street and directly across from the subject property is historic Hood Cemetery. The property occupies the corner with two main elevations visible from the public right of way. The primary (southwest) elevation faces Germantown Avenue, and the side (northwest) elevation faces East Logan Street. The primary entrance to the building is at the corner of these two elevations, which includes a one-story storefront. This subject building is a purpose-built mixed-use, store and dwelling.

The subject property boasts a distinctive, concave Mansard roof at the third, and uppermost, level of its two street-facing elevations. This roof is pierced by elegant dormers employed at the primary (southwest), or Avenue-facing, elevation, as well as at the side (northwest) elevation facing East Logan Street, as the building leads visitors to the East Logan Street Historic District. The dormers feature arched gabled fronts with decorative brackets that are textbook variants of the style. The Mansard roof is set off from the brownstone façade along Germantown Avenue by a cornice comprised of decorative modillions, a common feature employed in both the Second Empire and Italianate styles; the cornice and modillions turn the corner to the side (northwest) elevation along East

Logan Street although they cap an exterior wall plane that was originally brownstone and is now covered in stucco except for the window lintels and quoins at each corner.

Another distinctive feature of this early, mixed-use building is the ground level corner entry and storefront on Germantown Avenue, wrapping slightly around to the side (northwest) elevation along East Logan Street. The entry door is canted to face the corner at a 45-degree angle from both elevations and is recessed under the corner of the building at the second level. This upper-level corner expression matches the cornice that is supporting the Mansard roof at the third level with its wooden profile supported by decorative modillions. It acts as a porch covering for the entry door below and is supported at the ground level by a fluted cast iron column of the highly ornate Corinthian order.



Figure 4. The primary (southwest) elevation of the subject property in context. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022.



Figure 5. The primary (southwest) elevation. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022.

### **PRIMARY (SOUTHWEST) ELEVATION (FACING GERMANTOWN AVENUE)**

This is the primary (southwest) elevation of the building and is the one that is expressed in the original brownstone masonry. At the ground level, the two-bay building is completely expressed by its commercial storefront treatment. The central display windows are supported on a wood base above the basement window openings within the brownstone wall; the wood base has simple paneling details. The display windows have wood framing at the jambs. There is a transom window detail above the primary display windows; the Avenue transoms are currently covered by a removable advertising banner. The top of the windows is where the storefront cornice is located. The cornice has decorative modillions below which is a raised floral design pattern in the form of horizontally laid, decorative garland. All ground-level storefront design features carry through to the East Logan Street

elevation. All wood trim is painted dark green, as is the fluted, corner column. Three brownstone steps turn the corner and lead up to the primary entry door of the commercial component.



Figure 6. Top: The primary (southwest) and side (northwest) elevations at the corner of Germantown Avenue and East Logan Street. Figure 7. Bottom: The corner storefront. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022.



The second level of the primary (southwest) elevation is the only portion clad in ashlar-cut, random-coursed brownstone. There are two window openings at this elevation; both have brownstone sills and segmented arch headers with prominent keystones. The windows are contemporary, 1/1 double-hung. At the corner are brownstone quoins laid with alternating widths. All wood window trim is painted dark green.

The third level of the primary (southwest) elevation is the Mansard roof sitting on a wooden cornice base with decorative modillions, which also serves as a gutter connected to the ground by a downspout at the party wall with the adjacent property. The roof itself is concave and covered with black, asphalt shingles. Centered in the Mansard is a single dormer with an arched top and small finials carved from the springer ends of the arch above plainly framed wood jambs. There is a contemporary, double-hung window in the opening. Above the shingled roof is an upper cornice of simply stratified wood elements. All wood trim is painted dark green.



Figure 8. The side (northwest) elevation. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022.

### **SIDE (NORTHWEST) ELEVATION (FACING EAST LOGAN STREET)**

The side (northwest) elevation consists of the main volume of the building, a one-story addition, and a recessed, rear lean-to addition adjacent to a garage that opens onto East Logan Street. The walls are covered in stucco and painted in an off-white color at the ground and second levels. The original brownstone cladding is exposed at the window headers and sills, as well as the quoins within the main volume.

At the end of this elevation closest to the Avenue, the ground-floor storefront assembly wraps the elevation. The wood frame topped by a cornice contains the display window topped by transoms; this storefront is a shorter one than on the Avenue elevation. Further

down East Logan Street, there are three windows at the second level that are centered above four openings at the ground level. The second opening from the Avenue contains what are likely original double doors with upper glazing topped by pediments and solid panels at the lower part of the doors; there is a glass transom above the doors. The ground floor window closest to the Avenue contains a jalousie window while the other two ground floor windows in the main volume contain what are likely original 2/2 wood windows. All ground floor glazing is covered by metal grating. The second-floor windows all contain contemporary, 1/1 double-hung windows. At the third level, embedded within the Mansard roof, are four dormers matching the one at the Avenue elevation: elegantly arched tops with carved finials dangling from the springers and over otherwise plain wood jambs. The Mansard roof is clad in black asphalt shingles topped by a simplified cornice at the roof. All wood trim at this elevation is painted dark green.



Figure 9. The side (northwest) elevation. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022.

Behind the main volume, further down East Logan Street, is a one-story addition of stucco with two window openings over a painted base of Wissahickon schist, indicating that this addition came after the original build. This addition is in the same wall plane as the main volume. The roof is flat as it extends from the main volume with a wood cornice and over one window, then slants downward as it extends over the second window. Both windows are trimmed in wood that has been painted dark green; they both have metal grating over contemporary, 1/1 double-hung windows.

There is a lean-to addition that extends from the one-story, later addition and it is set back from the wall plane and accessed by three steps that lead to a door. The roof of the lean-to slopes toward the rear. At the rear of the lean-to is a low wall approximately 4'-0" tall of

painted schist in a random-coursed pattern. A tree grows in the small yard contained by this wall and behind the lean-to.



Figure 10. The detached garage that stands in the rear of the subject property, accessible from E. Logan Street. Source: Keeping Society of Philadelphia, 2022. Garage building is a non-contributing resource to the overall historic property.

Behind the lean-to is a one-story garage that contains a roll-down garage door wide enough for two cars to park side by side. The garage has a heavy wood cornice capped by metal coping and each end of the roofline is accentuated by tin finials with a pressed X design in the main panels.



Figure 11. The Dr. Edward F. Rivinus House on the site of what became the Church of Christian Science on Greene Street in Germantown, a building form which many twins emulated in the Second Empire style. Source: PhilaLandmarks Collections.

## **7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Joseph P. Bolton Store & Residence at 4841 Germantown Avenue in Lower Germantown is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places satisfying 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; and*
- d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen.*

The period of significance dates to the period of construction between 1870 and 1871.



Figure 12. Left: 1851 Germantown Atlas with the Dedier House circled in red. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network. Figure 13. Right: The Dedier Huse, built ca. 1733, 5137-41 Germantown Avenue, Demolished ca. 1869-70. Source: Julius Friedrich Sachse, Litt. D. *Quaint Old Germantown In Pennsylvania; A Series of Sixty Former Landmarks of Germantown and Vicinity; Drawn on Zinc During the Years 1863 – 1888 by John Richards.* (Philadelphia: 1913).

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT: A BRIEF HISTORY OF 4841 GERMANTOWN AVENUE**

For nearly a century-and-a-half, the ground associated with the buildings at 4837, 4839, and 4841 Germantown Avenue was occupied by the Dedier House (Figure 13/Demolished), a one-and-one-half-story stone dwelling with a gambrel roof. Speaking to the foundational period of Germantown’s built environment, this early house was purportedly built ca. 1733 by John Dedier.<sup>1</sup> Throughout its tenure, the Dedier House stood south of the Lower Burial Ground, later known as The Hood Cemetery, separated by Fisher’s Lane, now known as East Logan Street. The Waschmuth-Henry House stood caddy corner in its present form for much of the second half of the Dedier House’ lifespan. Only the Wagner House at the southwest corner of Germantown Avenue and W. Logan Street was removed for a row of houses in the early twentieth century.

Around 1869-70, the Wister family came into possession of the old Dedier place—specifically a transaction that included Sarah L. Dedier. This ultimately led to a subdivision of the Dedier place into three lots, as well as a series of transactions that amounted to Bonus Building, a real estate development pattern and/or system in Philadelphia that replaced that once controlled by the Ground Rent Estate. Both Germantown natives, William Rotch Wistar, a prominent lawyer, and John Wistar, II/III, an iron master of Duncannon, Pennsylvania, partnered in the project. The said subdivision created the individual parcels associated with 4837, 4839, and 4841 Germantown Avenue. In 1870, the Wisters deeded the said three lots to Job Kirby, a local house carpenter, which enabled the contractor to finance construction of the planned buildings.<sup>2</sup> While it appears that Kirby finished a portion of the project, the buildings at 4837 and 4839 remained unfinished, which ultimately led to Kirby to transfer the property back to the Wisters in March 1870. In July 1870, the lot at 4837 Germantown Avenue was conveyed to a new builder, a partnership

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Naaman H. Keyser, C. Henry Kain, John Palmer Garber, and Horace F. McCann. *History of Old Germantown.* (Germantown, Philadelphia: Horace F. McCann, Publisher, 1907), 164-65.

<sup>2</sup> William Rotch Wister of the City of Philadelphia, Attorney at Law and Mary E., his wife, to Job Kirby, of the City of Philadelphia, House Carpenter, 19 March 1870, Philadelphia Deed Book J.A.H., No. 29, 264, City Archives of Philadelphia.

between James Kinnier, William Kinnier, and Alexander Kinnier.<sup>3</sup> The precise date of completion for each property remains unclear; however, an 1870 insurance survey indicates that the house at 4839 Germantown Avenue was substantially finished. Additionally, the 1871 Germantown Atlas indicates that at least two structures were present on the site, including the subject building at the corner.

Ultimately, William Rotch Wister would hold the subject property until May 1882, when the store and dwelling was sold for \$3,250. The purchaser was Joseph P. Bolton, a “Drug Merchant,” of Philadelphia. Bolton appears to have resided in Germantown for some years prior to this purchase and was associated with at least one important apothecary in Philadelphia. The 1882 deed references that the transaction was related to the “Store and Dwelling,” which Bolton may have used as a retail pharmacy, or some other purpose related to his business affairs. It appears that Bolton retained ownership of the subject property from 1882 until 1923.<sup>4</sup>

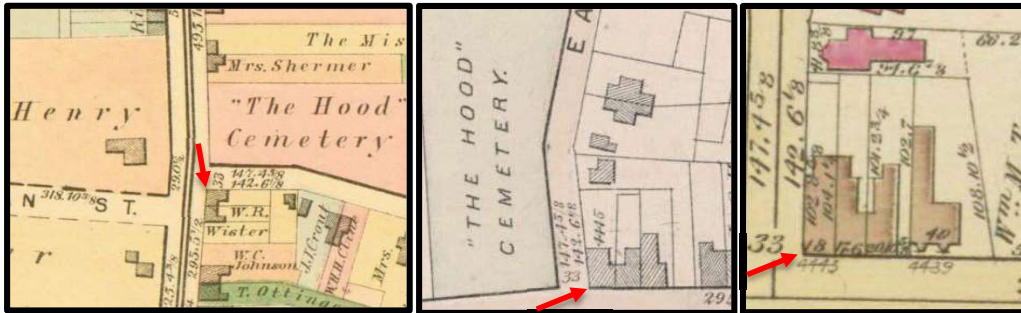


Figure 14. Atlas of the Late Borough of Germantown, 22<sup>nd</sup> Ward, City of Philadelphia, 1871. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network. Figure 15. Middle: City Atlas of Philadelphia, 22<sup>nd</sup> ward, 1876, Plate O. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia. Figure 16. Right: Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Vol. 7, 22<sup>nd</sup> Ward, 1889, Plate 7. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

<sup>3</sup> Deed: William Rotch Wister of the City of Philadelphia, Attorney at Law and Mary E., his wife, to James Kinnier, William Kinnier, and Alexander Kinnier of the City of Philadelphia, House Carpenters, 15 July 1870, Philadelphia Deed Book J.A.H., No. 77, 74, City Archives of Philadelphia.

<sup>4</sup> Reg. Plan: 54-N-B-18-A, City Archives of Philadelphia.



Figure 17. Bottom: The William Adamson Mansion, 4811 Germantown Avenue, Germantown, Pa., ca. 1920s. Source: The Germantown Historical Society.

#### **CRITERION D**

One-third of a small Victorian-era development, the Joseph P. Bolton Store & Residence embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire style, as applied to commercial and residential buildings of a domestic scale during the post-Civil War period in the Philadelphia.

According to Virginia & Lee McAlester’s *A Field Guide To American Houses* (*McAlester Field Guide*), the Second Empire style enjoyed widespread employment in American architecture from 1855 to 1885, constituting a distinct and significant aesthetic period within the larger realm of the Victorian era. In line with national trends, Pennsylvanians appear to have been particularly fond of the style in all manner of building types. The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission’s *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide* (*PHMC Field Guide*) describes the “Second Empire/Mansard Style” as being popular between 1860 and 1900, which is a slightly longer timespan than is used in the *McAlester Field Guide*, likely related to the widespread popularity of the style in Pennsylvania. The *PHMC Field Guide* recognizes that the Second Empire style became incredibly fashionable in the 1860s and 1870s, as influenced by the “well-attended exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867”, becoming a modern architectural movement rather than a revivalist style like so many others. The *PHMC Field Guide* also establishes the most common building types to be executed in the style: commercial, residential, and public/government.<sup>5</sup>

Though some alterations have occurred during the past 150 years, the Joseph P. Bolton Store & Residence a distinctive, fully articulated concave Mansard roof that forms the third floor of the subject building and that of the building at 4839 Germantown Avenue. The Mansard area is pierced by elegant dormers on the primary (southwest) and side (northwest) elevations, featuring arched gable fronts with decorative brackets that are

<sup>5</sup> “Second Empire/Mansard Style,” *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*, accessed 28 September 2020. <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/second-empire.html>

present in textbook variants of the style. The Mansard roof is set off from the masonry façade below by a cornice comprised of decorative modillions, which are details generally associated with both Italianate and Second Empire styles. While the rusticated brownstone front is less common in Philadelphia than New York City, it was a significant façade material of the Victorian era and its employment here is one of the few surviving examples on Germantown Avenue. The brownstone façade is further accentuated by quoins, an important elaboration of the Second Empire style and a sign of fine stonework. The building also features segmental arches with keystones in continuous brownstone as part of the fine window details. As a residence and store building, the corner storefront is an integral feature and likely original or a very early alteration. The storefront is delineated by its own cornice, also comprised of modillions, as well as a cast iron Corinthian column at the corner. Within the fenestration of the side (northwest) elevation is a residential entrance that includes the same segmental arched top.

Both the *McAlester Field Guide* and the *PHMC Field Guide* describe identifying features, principal subtypes, variants, and details of the Second Empire style, which are attractively aligned with those present in the subject building. As a result, the Joseph P. Bolton Store and Residence embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire style.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Virginia & Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide To American Houses*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 240-243.





Figure 18. A Second Empire Style Store-and-Dwelling at the northeast corner of Germantown Avenue and East Herman Street. Source: Google, 2018.

### CRITERION C

In Philadelphia and, specifically, in Germantown, the Second Empire style, including its prominent Mansard roof feature, was decidedly influential in shaping the built environment during the second half of the Victorian era and onwards into the twentieth century.<sup>7</sup> Just after Richard's Row, a dozen Italianate houses with occasional storefronts, was developed nearby in the summer of 1869, a Second Empire triumvirate, including the subject property, was erected between 1870 and 1871 by aforementioned members of Wister family. The development included the subject property, a semi-detached store-and-dwelling at 4841 Germantown Avenue; an attached single-family house at 4839 Germantown Avenue; and a semi-detached single-family house at 4837 Germantown Avenue. This small, but attractive project was designed in the Second Empire style and included an elegantly appointed commercial component to serve the growing suburban population of Germantown. While other parts of the Main Street were commercialized in the decades prior, Lower Germantown retained much of its eighteenth century and rural, village character until the post-Civil War period. With an increase in Germantown's railway services in mid-nineteenth century, the area became more and more attainable to middle class Philadelphians seeking desirable suburban domicile with a means to commute to their workplaces. As this transition occurred, the new buildings constructed in the 4600, 4700, 4800, and 4900 blocks of Germantown Avenue were designed in the romantic styles that came to define the built environment of the third quarter of the nineteenth century, including both Italianate and Second Empire. While these developments included plentiful attached and semi-detached single-family twins and rowhouses, there were also numerous commercial components that punctuated largely residential blocks. Examples of this

<sup>7</sup> "Second Empire/Mansard Style," Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, accessed January 24, 2017. <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/second-empire.html>

building type, designed in the Second Empire style, include 153 East Cheltenham Avenue; 311-327 Church Lane; 5141 Germantown Avenue, 5201 Germantown Avenue, 6100 (demolished) and 6102 Germantown Avenue; 6117 Germantown Avenue; etc. Additional examples are both illustrated and described in the forthcoming historic contexts on the Second Empire styles in Philadelphia and Germantown.

The Joseph P. Bolton Store & Residence at 4841 Germantown Avenue is representative of an era characterized by the Second Empire style, as adapted to a Store and Dwelling building type on the Germantown Avenue Main Street.



Figure 19. Top: A Store-and-Dwelling Twin at the west corner of Germantown Avenue and Walnut Lane. Source: Robert Slater, 1990, Germantown Historical Society. Figure 20. Bottom: A row of domestic buildings at the corner of Church Lane and Belfield Avenue in Germantown. Source: Google.



Figure 21. Public Ledger Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, ca. 1867. Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia.

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT:**

#### **EVIDENCE OF THE SECOND EMPIRE STYLE IN PHILADELPHIA**

Philadelphia's built environment features a wide variety of buildings designed in the Second Empire style. Perhaps the most significant example in America, Philadelphia's City Hall was designed by John McArthur Jr., architect, being constructed between 1871 and 1901 at a cost of \$24 million.<sup>8</sup> Built earlier, in 1865, just south of Center Square, the Union League of Philadelphia was another Second Empire style building.<sup>9</sup> It was designed by leading Philadelphia architect John Fraser (1825-1906), and still stands at 140 S. Broad Street.<sup>10</sup> Unlike Philadelphia City Hall, the original portion of this private club resembles a mansion rather than a public building. On the commercial and industrial frontier, the *Public Ledger* constructed "their new and splendid building" (Figure 21) at the southwest corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets in 1867, which was also designed by John McArthur, Jr. The *Scientific American* said the following about the building:

The new *Ledger* building is one of the largest printing houses in the Union, very beautiful in architecture, located on the corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets. Every portion of the establishment is complete with regard to light, heating, ventilation, and other comforts. The office and editorial rooms are furnished splendidly. The composing room is on the upper floor, which, by aid of a Mansard roof, has a height of twenty-one feet.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Russ F. Weigley (editor). *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*. (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982).

<sup>9</sup> Walter L. Fleming. *Documentary History of Reconstruction: Political, Military, Social, Religious, Educational, and Industrial, Vol. 2*. (1906), 1-20.

<sup>10</sup> Russ F. Weigley (editor). *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*. (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982).

<sup>11</sup> "A Philadelphia Newspaper Establishment," *Scientific American* (1845-1908). (New York: 6 July 1867), 10.

Another important public building was the Court House and Post Office (Figure 22/Demolished), also designed in the Second Empire style, by Alfred B. Mullet (1834-1890), architect. Completed in 1874, it featured a complex, multi-level Mansardic roof structure at the center and a smaller, low-slung Mansard roof atop the vast four-story building.



Figure 22. Court House and Post Office, facing onto S. Eighth Street between Chestnut and Market Streets in Philadelphia, ca. 1874. Source: Oscar Beisert.

Commercial and other private for-profit establishments styled both their buildings and their advertisements in response to what might be called a “Mansard mania.” Known to shy away from modernity—especially in style, even Old Philadelphians warmed to the Mansard roof. No doubt their inherent Quaker conservatism was satiated by the prospect of a low-cost addition that allowed them to keep the existing building yet update and even formalize its appearance. No greater specimen can be found than the Philadelphia Contributionship. The “Oldest Continually Operating Fire Insurance Company in America” commissioned Thomas U. Walter (1804-1887), a darling of Philadelphia architecture, to design a commodious building for the establishment, which was completed in 1836.<sup>12</sup> It had the appearance of a large Greek Revival house with Georgian antecedents. Later in the nineteenth century, the fourth, half-story was enlarged to accommodate a full floor—an improvement that was achieved politely with a Mansard roof.

By 1883, Hagar & Campbell’s “New Dime Museum” was proudly advertised as opening on “Monday September 3d.” at the corner of Ninth and Arch Streets (Figure 23/Demolished). The advertisement illustrates their distinct four-story, Second Empire

<sup>12</sup> “Company History,” The Philadelphia Contributionship. Accessed 25 January 2017. <<http://www.contributionship.com/history/tour.html>>

style edifice that is largely concealed by advertisements for the museum.<sup>13</sup> Just in time for the Centennial Exhibition, the Second Empire style was so popular that companies like Cunningham & Hill, Manufacturers and Retailers of Flags and Shields, published an advertisement (Figure 24) for their product in which a Second Empire style building is shown draped in their products.

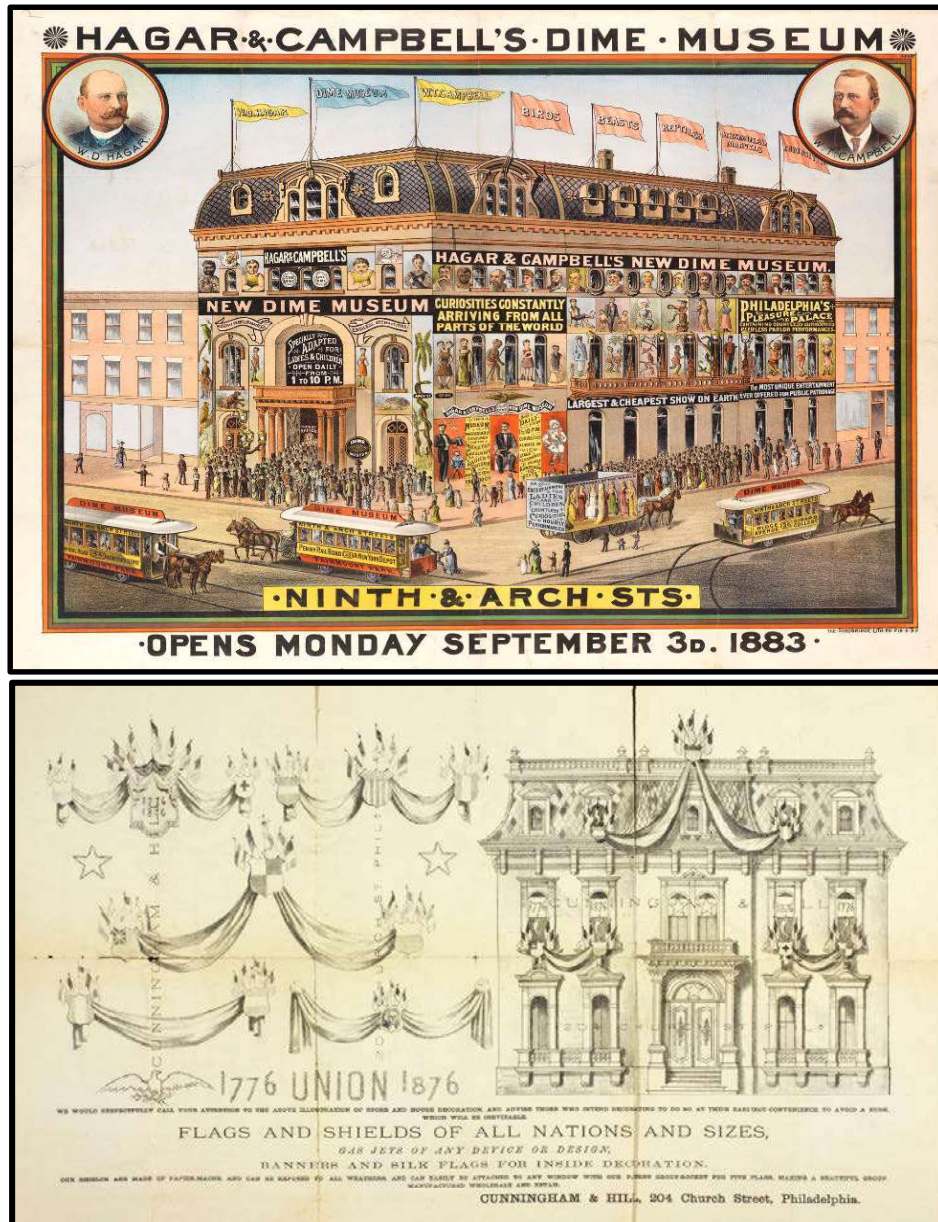


Figure 23. Top: Advertisement Card: “Hagar & Campbell’s Dime Museum, Ninth & Arch Streets. Opens Monday September 3d. 1883.” (The Stobridge Lithograph Co., 1883). Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia. Figure 24. Bottom: Advertisement of Cunningham & Hill, 204 Church Street, Philadelphia, ca.1876. Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia.

<sup>13</sup> Advertisement Card: “Hagar & Campbell’s Dime Museum, Ninth & Arch Sts. Opens Monday September 3d. 1883.” (The Stobridge Lithograph Co., 1883). Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia.

The Second Empire style was particularly popular in its application to Philadelphia’s domestic architecture with continual use in detached, semi-detached buildings—including twins, and rowhouses from the 1860s into the early twentieth century. Yet we understand that the French influence in local domestic architecture appeared earlier, if not just for brief moment. Purported to be the first Mansard roof in America, Robert Morris, known as the “Financier of the American Revolution,” commissioned the éminent French architect, Pierre Charles L’Enfant (1754-1825), to design a mansion for him around 1794. However, after the project was well underway, Morris suffered major financial losses that prevented him from finishing the house. As a result, the building became known as “Morris’ Folly,” standing as an incomplete masonry shell on a large parcel bound by Chestnut Street at the north, 7<sup>th</sup> Street at the east, Walnut Street at the south, and 8<sup>th</sup> Street at the west (Figure 25)—the block is known today as Jeweler’s Row.<sup>14</sup>



Figure 25. Detail of “The Morris Mansion, Philadelphia, As It Was.” Source: PhiladelphiaBuildings.org.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Rappleye. *Robert Morris: Financier of the American Revolution*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

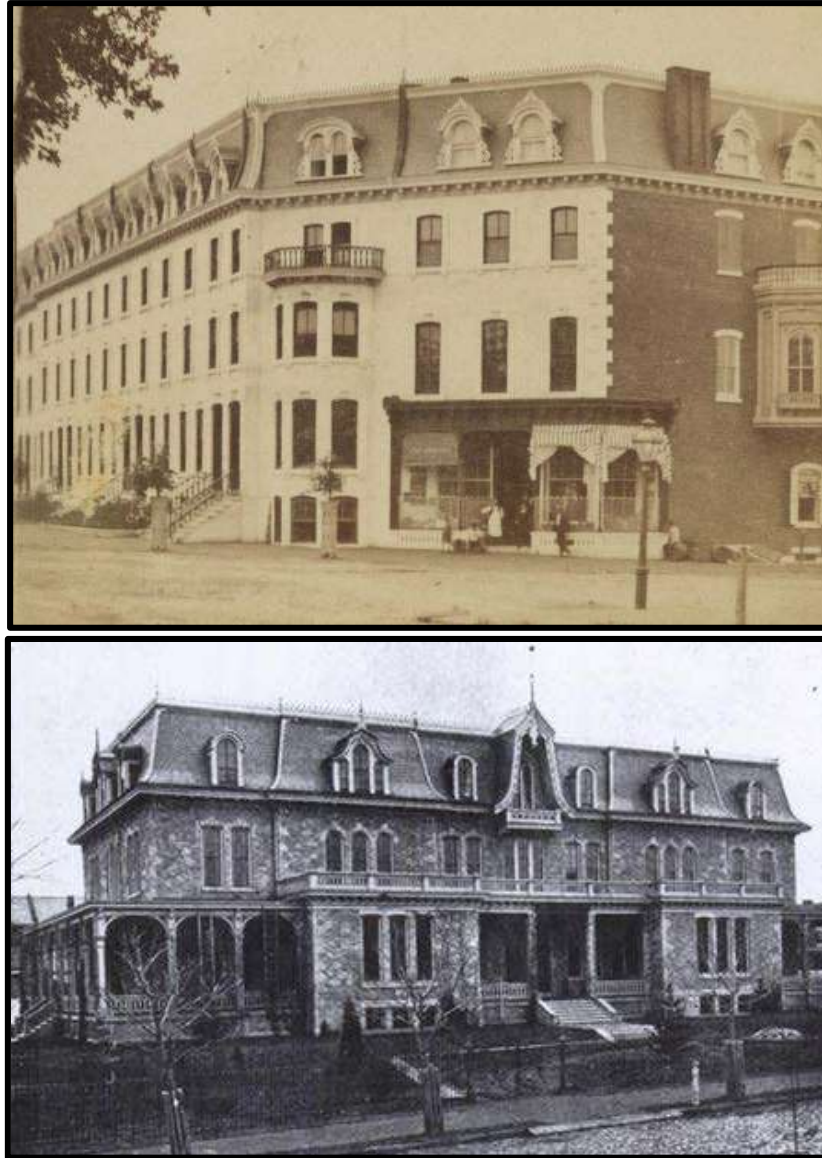


Figure 26. Top: Marble Terrace, 3200 Block of Chestnut Street, West Philadelphia, ca. 1872. Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia. Figure 27. Bottom: The Old Man's Home on Powellton Avenue between Saunders Avenue and 39<sup>th</sup> Street, designed by Hewitt Brothers, architects, in 1897. Source: Robert Morris Skaler. *West Philadelphia: University City to 52<sup>nd</sup> Street*. (Arcadia Publishing, 2002).

After Morris' Folly, the employment of the Mansard roof was almost entirely dormant at Philadelphia until the Second Empire style came into vogue. In the 1860s, one of the most impressive blocks to be constructed in the Quaker City was known as Marble Terrace, ca. 1870 (Figure 26/Demolished). Located in the 3200 block of Chestnut Street, the development was described in real estate advertisements as: "Handsome Modern Four-story Marble Front," a property that was, in fact, four stories in height—the fourth floor being a Mansard roof with a variation of dormers typical of high style designs of the 1860s and 1870s.<sup>15</sup> A similar marble-front development was completed in the same manner on the northeast side of Ridge Avenue just below Girard, the last vestiges of which were more

<sup>15</sup> "M. Thomas & Sons. Auctioneers," *Legal Gazette*. (15 May 1874), 160.

recently renovated beyond recognition. In West Philadelphia, the style was employed in detached, semi-detached, and row houses. Further into West Philadelphia, the development of streetcar suburbs led to the construction of enumerable detached and semi-detached twin buildings. Many of the residences were designed in the Second Empire style, which may be found on the fringes of University City in Powelton Village, Spruce Hill, and West Powelton. Located in Spruce Hill, the Satterlee Heights Development (Figure 28) began in 1871, which included several houses in the 4300 block of Osage Avenue that were all of the Second Empire style.<sup>16</sup>

This historic context on the history of the Second Empire in Philadelphia provides a brief overview of the style and its influence on this fair city.

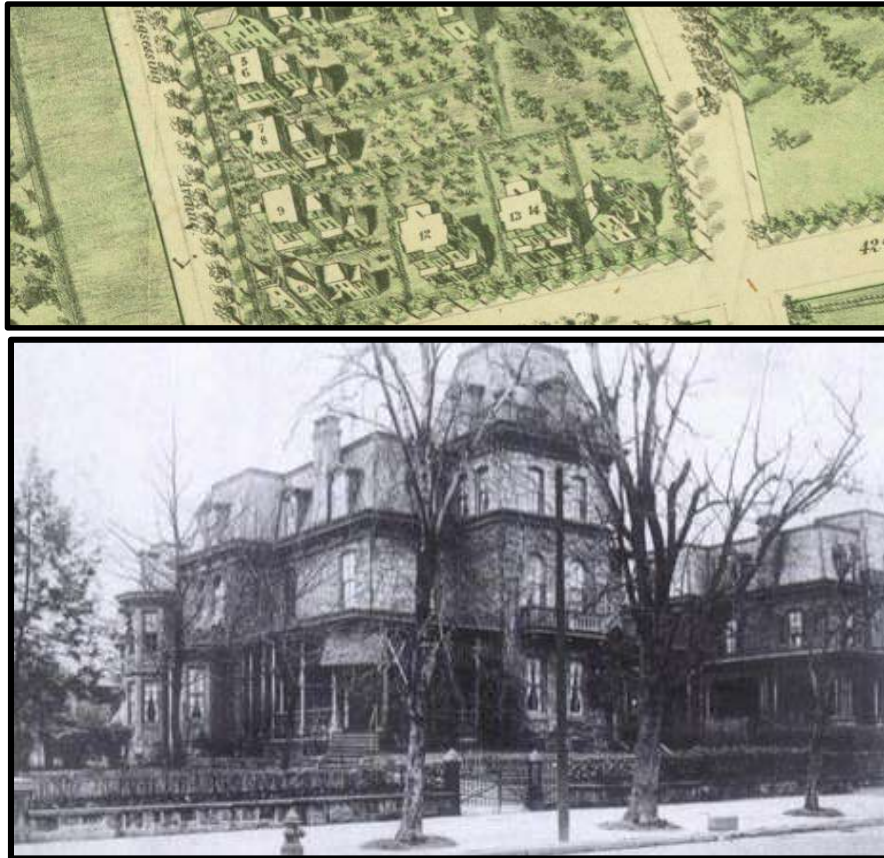


Figure 28. Top: Detail from Satterlee Heights. Satterlee Hospital Grounds, 27<sup>th</sup> Ward. West Philadelphia., n.d. Note: the large detached house facing onto 42<sup>nd</sup> Street is labeled “12” and was the home of Samuel Sloan. Immediately to the north, a twin is labeled with two numbers, “13” and “14,” being the homes John F. Bush and Mrs. M. Harding. Each of these houses appear to be designed in the Second Empire style. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network. Figure 29. Bottom: Large Second Empire style houses in the 4200 block of Chester Avenue, which are no longer extant. Source: Robert Morris Skaler. *West Philadelphia: University City to 52<sup>nd</sup> Street*. (Arcadia Publishing, 2002), 52.

<sup>16</sup> Oscar Beisert. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination: 4300-03 Osage Avenue*. (Philadelphia: Oscar Beisert, 2015).



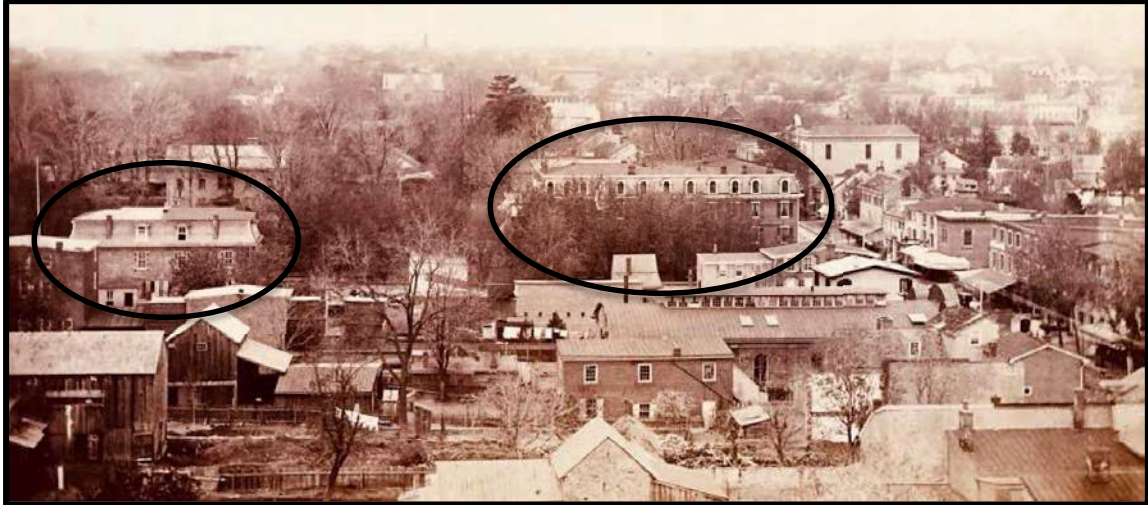


Figure 30. A view north from the tower of Trinity Lutheran Church in Germantown, showing the rise of several Second Empire style building that would have been relatively new at the time this photograph was taken. Source: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

### **HISTORIC CONTEXT:**

#### **EVIDENCE OF THE SECOND EMPIRE STYLE IN THE GERMAN TOWNSHIP**

In the German Township, the Second Empire style and its distinctive Mansard roof were popularized in similar building types—primarily commercial, institutional and residential. The lithograph, *Germantown, Viewed from the Town Hall Tower, 1884*, illustrates the local prominence of the style. It showcases three buildings that employed Mansard roofs and other details: William Conner’s Pharmacy at the corner of Germantown and Cheltenham Avenues (Demolished); Albert Smith’s Building, including his pharmacy, at the corner of Germantown Avenue and E. Coulter Street (Demolished); and Greenwood’s “Opposite Cheltenham Avenue Depot,” which appears to be extant at 153 E. Cheltenham Avenue. All of these buildings were added to the Germantown landscape between 1860 and 1880 and featured hallmarks of the Second Empire style. This transition is illustrated above in the bird’s eye view shown in Figure 30, where several Mansard roofs have emerged in the neighborhood along Germantown Avenue below Church Lane. Numerous other buildings were constructed on the commercial streets of Germantown that employed the style. At 5706 Germantown Avenue, the Savings Fund Society of Germantown and Its Vicinity erected a three-story stone building with a Mansard roof in 1868—it later became the site of John S. Trower’s Restaurant (Figure 32). Another building that was renovated to have the same appearance once stood at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Armat Street. The Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Germantown (Figure 33/Demolished) had “improved” a Federal style building to appear in the Second Empire Style, adding a brownstone façade and a Mansard roof.



Figure 31. Top: Detail views from The lithograph, “Germantown, Viewed from the Town Hall Tower, 1884,” including William Conner’s Pharmacy at the corner of Germantown and Cheltenham Avenues (Demolished); Greenwood’s “Opposite Cheltenham Avenue Depot”, which appears to be extant at 153 E. Cheltenham Avenue; and Albert Smith’s Building, including his Pharmacy, at the corner of Germantown Avenue and E. Coulter Street (Demolished). Source: The Scrapbook Collection of John B. Harting (in possession of the descendants). Figure 32. Bottom left: On left is John S. Trower’s Building (formerly the Savings Fund Society of Germantown & Its Vicinity). ca. 1890. Source: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Figure 33. Bottom right: Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Germantown, c. 1880. Source: The Germantown Historical Society.

Emulating the architecture of Philadelphia’s City Hall, prominent institutional buildings throughout Germantown were also prime candidates for a Second Empire treatment. Immaculate Conception Church and St. Vincent’s College (Figure 36) comprise a large complex of buildings that includes specimen of the subject style. Another like building was that of the Little Sisters of the Poor in Church Lane below Chew Avenue (Figure 37/Demolished). Designed by Ballinger & Perot, architects, this building also featured a fully articulated Mansard roof and other predictable details.<sup>17</sup>

Even some of the industrial buildings at Germantown included Mansard roofs. The Consumer’s Brewing Co. (Figure 35/demolished) featured a large Mansard roof constituting the fourth floor of the brewery. One smaller company, the Shirland Knitting

<sup>17</sup> Postcard: “Little Sisters of the Poor, Germantown, Pa.,” The Library Company of Philadelphia. (1900-20).  
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Mills (Figure 34/demolished), 5239-43 Wakefield Street, also featured an adorable Mansard roof along its side elevations, a wonderful merger with a gambrel roof.

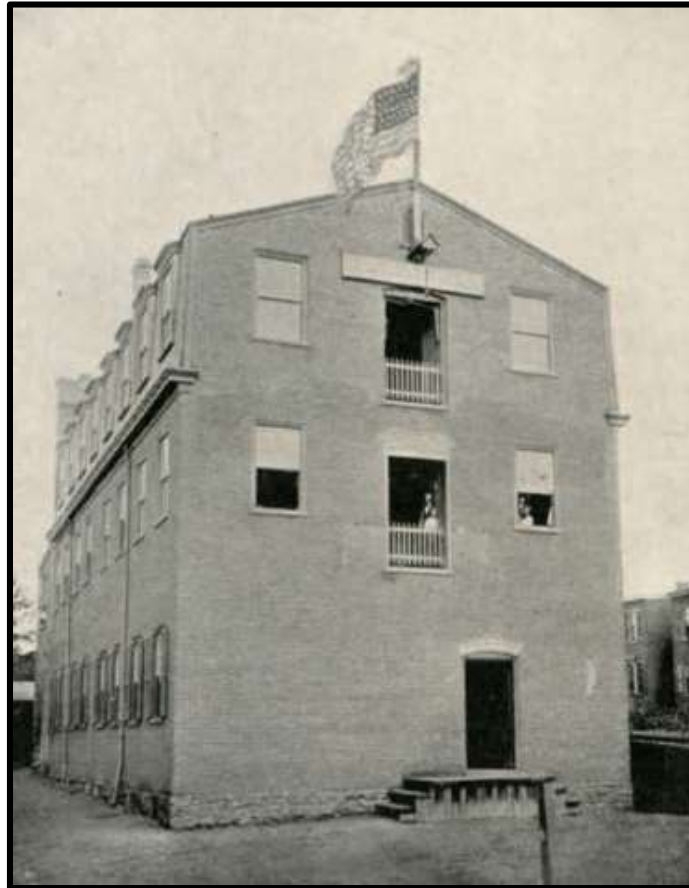


Figure 34. Top: The Shirland Knitting Mills, 5239-43 Wakefield Street, Germantown. Figure 35. Bottom: The Consumer's Brewing Co., Germantown. Source: *Handsome Homes of Germantown, Chestnut Hill, Mt. Airy and Pelham*. (Press of Germantown Independent, 1899).

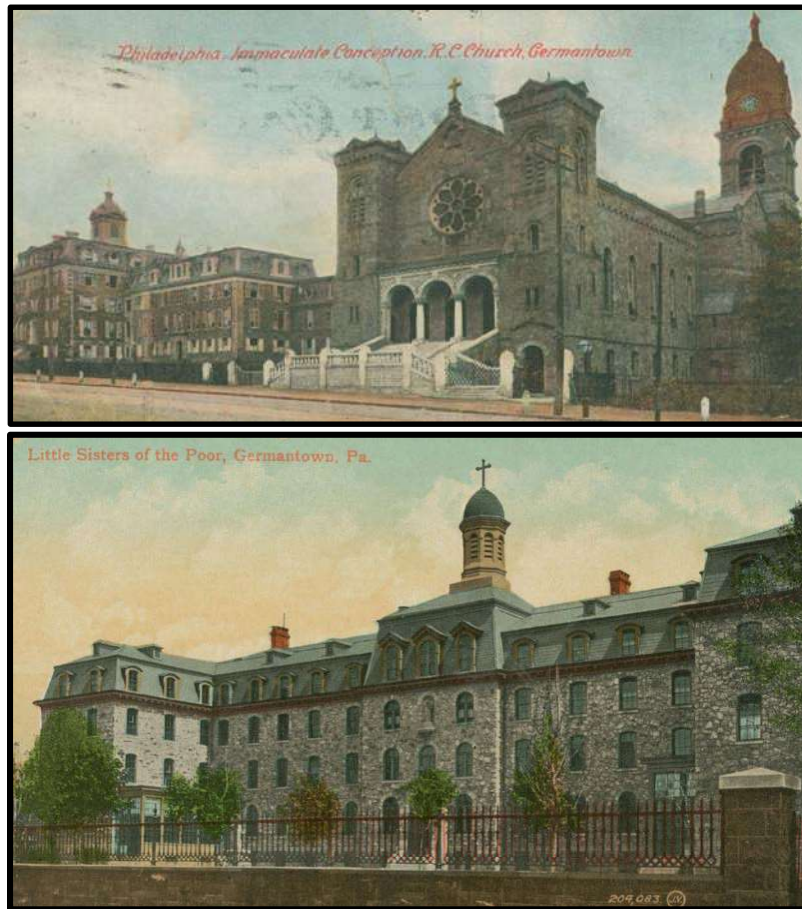


Figure 36. Top: Immaculate Conception Church and St. Vincent's College, Germantown, Pa., ca. 1900-20. Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia. Figure 37. Bottom: Little Sisters of the Poor, Church Lane, Germantown, Pa., c. 1900-20. (Demolished). Source: The Library Company of Philadelphia.

While the style influenced the design of many building types, the most common was that of a domestic scale, as shown in the earlier discussion of West Philadelphia. Residential buildings ranged from mansions to large, detached houses, semi-detached twins, and row houses, including those with a commercial component. Even some stables and outbuildings of domestic capacity were completed with Mansard roofs and bracketed cornices. A large percentage of the houses in Germantown were designed in the Second Empire style, being largely constructed of brick or Wissahickon Schist. However, the subject property is faced in rusticated brownstone, a chocolate sauce ubiquitous in New York City, though a rare application in Germantown. One of the grandest of the style erected at Germantown was perhaps the mansion of William Adamson (Figure 17), which still stands nearby at 4811 Germantown Avenue. Built in 1874, after the subject property, this substantial house features a Mansard roof on the main structure that is further dominated by a tower that once featured its own Mansard roof.<sup>18</sup> A rival in size and scale, the Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion

<sup>18</sup> Photograph: "The William Adamson Mansion," The Germantown Historical Society. (Philadelphia: 1920).  
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was built earlier in 1859 at 200 W. Tulpehocken Street, employing an eclectic mixture of Victorian-era features, among them a Mansard roof.<sup>19</sup>



Figure 38. The Butler Mansion, ca. 1890. Source: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Demolished).

At the site of what is now Germantown High School, the Butler Mansion (Figure 38/Demolished) was erected on the “Old Rose Property,” at least in part, by 1868. The house is rather a hodgepodge of architectural styles and features, but among those components is a distinctive Mansard roof and the typical dormers and cornice details associated with the Second Empire style.<sup>20</sup> Nearby is the familiar Germantown Music Settlement at 6128 Germantown Avenue (Figure 39). Originally a private residence, this institutional building features a fully articulated Mansard roof, a bracketed cornice, and a smooth-faced stone façade with quoins.<sup>21</sup> Further up the Avenue in Mt. Airy was a famous old dwelling known as “The Steamboat House” (Figure 40), named for the profession of its former occupant, Erasmus James Pierce, a sea captain. It had a flat roof, which was “framed into the appearance of the hurricane deck of a steamer.”<sup>22</sup> This could only be achieved in Victorian times with its Mansard roof.

<sup>19</sup> *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: The Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion*. (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, 24 February 1971).

<sup>20</sup> Photograph: “The Butler Mansion,” The Historical Society of Pennsylvania. (c. 1890s).

<sup>21</sup> Photograph: “Germantown Settlement Music School,” The Germantown Historical Society. (1914).

<sup>22</sup> Samuel Fitch Hotchkin. *Ancient and Modern Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill*. (Philadelphia: P.W. Ziegler & Co., 1889), 353.

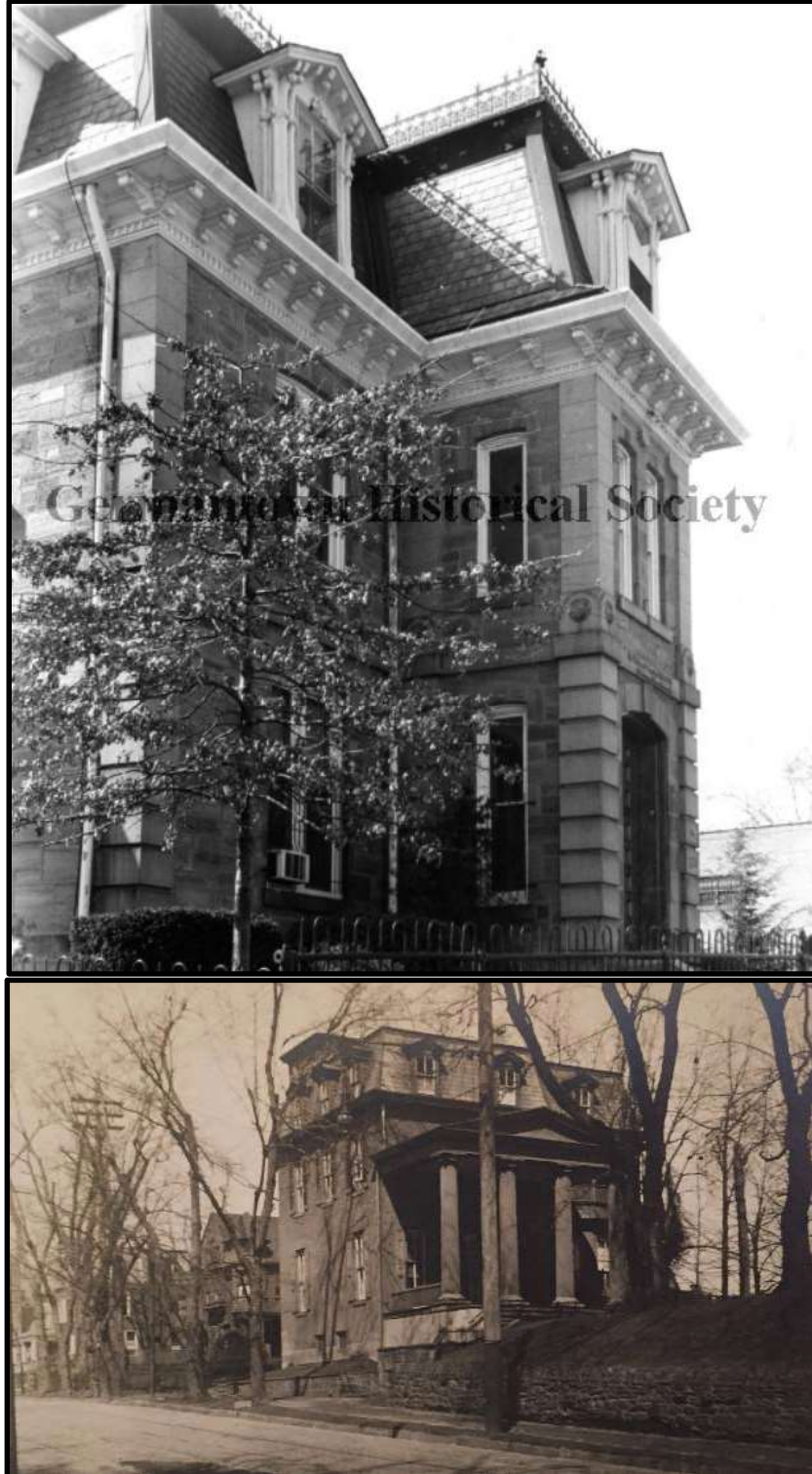


Figure 39. Top: The Germantown Music Settlement. Source: The Germantown Historical Society. Figure 40. Bottom: The Steamboat House, Mt. Airy, ca. 1900. Source: The Germantown Historical Society.

Prosperous families followed the villa model as an established fashionable statement in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. One example stands at the corner of East Johnson and Morton Streets—originally owned by the Cummings family, it was later the residence

of J. Henry Dunn (Figure 41). This house features a Mansard roof with dormers and a full veranda.<sup>23</sup>



Figure 41. “Residence of J. Henry Dunn” at the corner of E. Johnson and Morton Streets (1910). Source: The Germantown Historical Society.

Similar versions of the detached house or villa may be found throughout the German Township at the following addresses: 5321 Knox Street, Germantown (ca.1875); the Emory House at 14 Summit Street, Chestnut Hill (ca.1862); and the John Allen House at 314 Wister Street, Germantown (ca.1870). A narrower version of this house type, much similar to the aforementioned commercial examples, stand at the following addresses: 11 W. Walnut Lane, Germantown (ca.1860); 114 W. Coulter, Germantown (ca.1880); 348 W. Allens Lane, Chestnut Hill (ca.1870); 410 E. Locust Avenue, Germantown (ca.1875); 6115 McCallum Street, Germantown (ca.1875); 6119 McCallum Street, Germantown (ca.1875); 6121 McCallum Street, Germantown (ca.1875); 6845 Germantown Avenue, Mount Airy (ca.1875).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Photograph: “Residence of J. Henry Dunn” at the corner of E. Johnson and Morton Streets. (1910) Source: The Germantown Historical Society.

<sup>24</sup> Joseph Minardi. *Historic Architecture in Northwest Philadelphia.* (Schiffer Publishing, Limited, 2012).

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Figure 42. The Rev. George Bringhurst House at 524 Locust Avenue, which is one side of a Second Empire style twin. Source: Wyck House & Garden.

Semi-detached twin dwellings are also among the common house types in the area, often executed in the Second Empire style. The deceptive designs of many twins represent the appearance of a single house that upon closer inspection have two entrances, often symmetrically placed bay windows, porches, and other features. The following are examples of the Second Empire style as applied to twins in the area: 500-06-508, 501-05-507, and 522-524 Locust Avenue, Germantown (Figure 42); 311-313, 319-321, and 327-329 E. Walnut Lane, Germantown; 324-326 Springfield Avenue, Chestnut Hill (1886); 330-332 Springfield Avenue, Chestnut Hill (1886); 202-204 and 210-212 High Street, Germantown; 34-36 and 42-44 W. Coulter Street, Germantown; 120-122 W. Penn Street, Germantown (ca.1875); and 51-53 W. Walnut Lane, Germantown (ca.1860). These are just a few of countless examples of Second Empire style twins in Germantown.<sup>25</sup>

The second half of the nineteenth century saw entire streets developed with twin houses featuring Mansard roofs, such as Maplewood Avenue and Wingohocking Terrace. Row houses too were also designed in the Second Empire style and many more simply employed Mansardic roof features. Early examples include: 4857-61 Germantown Avenue, Germantown (ca.1870); and a row of houses in E. School House Lane, Germantown.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Joseph Minardi. *Historic Architecture in Northwest Philadelphia.* (Schiffer Publishing, Limited, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> Joseph Minardi. *Historic Architecture in Northwest Philadelphia.* (Schiffer Publishing, Limited, 2012).





Figure 43. Showing the intended glimpse of middle to upper middle-class grandeur of the period, this unidentified Second Empire style twin was likely in Germantown, ca.1860-70s. Source: The Germantown Historical Society.

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