

**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: 2008 Chestnut Street

Postal code: 19103

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: William Howell Marble-Front Row

Current/Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**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 and residential

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

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

**6. DESCRIPTION**

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

**7. SIGNIFICANCE**

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

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1868 to 1928

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1869

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Attributed to John McArthur, Jr.

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: \_\_\_\_\_

Original owner: William Howell

Other significant persons: David Brooks

**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 Historical Commission staff Date April 20, 2023

Name with Title Jon Farnham, Executive Director Email jon.farnham@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch Street, 13th floor Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator  is  is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: April 20, 2023

Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete Date: April 20, 2023

Date of Notice Issuance: April 21, 2023

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: 2008 Chestnut LLC

Address: 537 S Heibron Drive

City: Media State: PA Postal Code: 19063

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: May 24, 2023

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: June 9, 2023

Date of Final Action: June 9, 2023

Designated  Rejected

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT**  
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**1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE** *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: 2010 Chestnut Street

Postal code: 19103

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: William Howell Marble-Front Row

Current/Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**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

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

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

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Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: \_\_\_\_\_

Original owner: William Howell

Other significant persons: \_\_\_\_\_

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*Please attach a bibliography.*

**9. NOMINATOR**

Organization Historical Commission staff Date April 20, 2023

Name with Title Jon Farnham, Executive Director Email jon.farnham@phila.gov

Street Address 1515 Arch Street, 13th floor Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, PA 19102

Nominator  is  is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: April 20, 2023

Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete Date: April 20, 2023

Date of Notice Issuance: April 21, 2023

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Women's Opportunities Resource Center

Address: 2010 Chestnut St

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19103

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: May 24, 2023

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: June 9, 2023

Date of Final Action: June 9, 2023

Designated  Rejected

### 5. Boundary Description

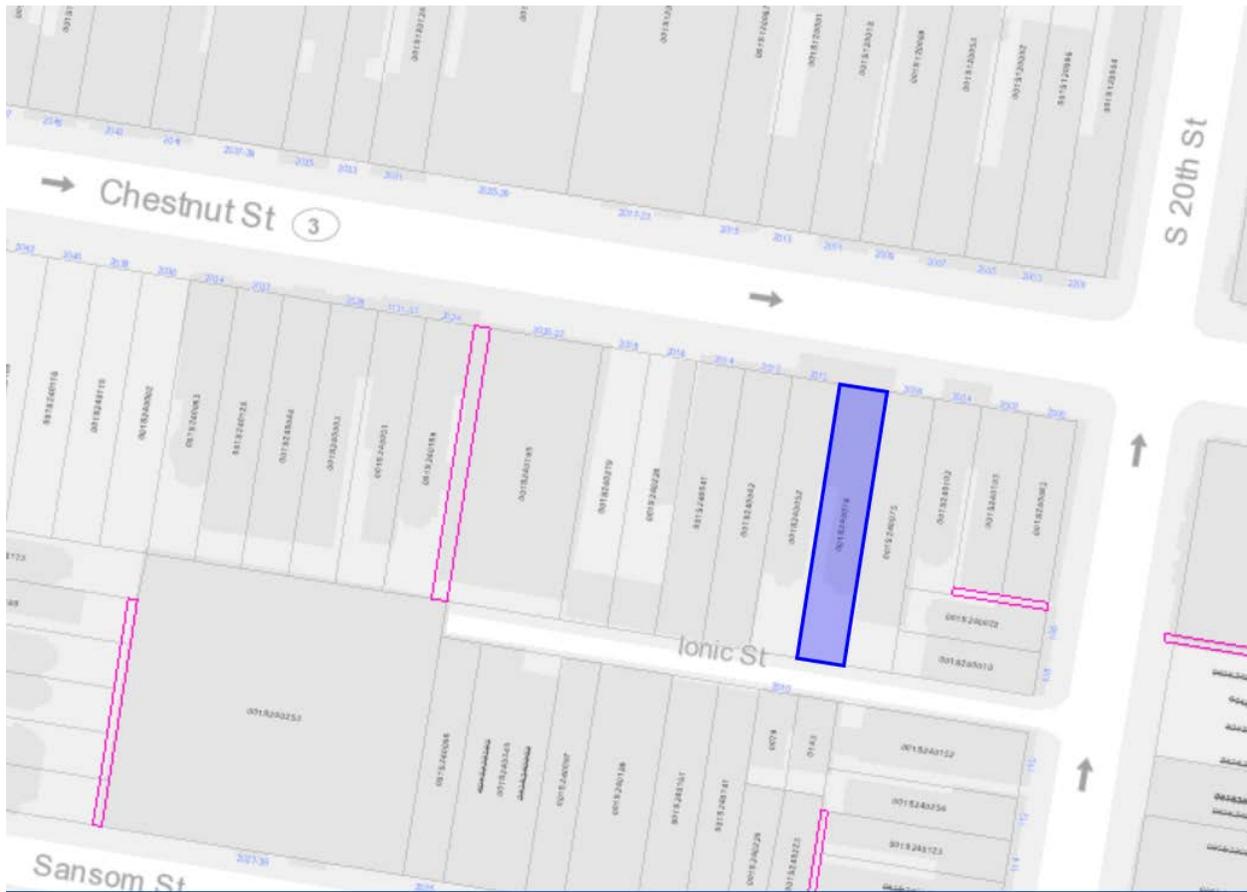


Figure 1. The boundary identifying the parcel at 2008 Chestnut Street. Source: CityAtlas.

Metes and bounds for 2008 Chestnut Street:

All that certain lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, Situate on the South side of Chestnut Street at the distance of 80 feet Westward from the West side of 20<sup>th</sup> Street in the 8<sup>th</sup> Ward of the City of Philadelphia. Containing in front or breadth on the said Chestnut Street 20 feet and extending of that width in length or depth Southward 120 feet to Ionic Street, Being 2008 Chestnut Street.

OPA Account Number: 881565800

Registry Number: 001-S24-0074



Figure 2. The boundary identifying the parcel at 2010 Chestnut Street. Source: CityAtlas.

Metes and bounds for 2010 Chestnut Street:

All that certain lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, Situate on the South side of Chestnut Street at the distance of 100 feet Westward from the West side of 20<sup>th</sup> Street in the 8<sup>th</sup> Ward of the City of Philadelphia. Containing in front or breadth Westwardly on the said side of Chestnut Street 20 feet and extending of that width in length or depth Southwardly 120 feet to Ionic Street, Being 2010 Chestnut Street.

OPA Account Number: 883036220

Registry Number: 001-S24-0052

## 6. Architectural Description



Figure 3. View of the front or north facades of 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street, March 15, 2023. The third building in the row was located at 2006 Chestnut, where the two-story Art Deco commercial building is now located. Source: Kim Chantry.

Located on the south side of the 2000-block of Chestnut Street, the Second Empire rowhouses at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street stand adjacent to and mirror one another (*Figure 3*). The rowhouses at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut are two of three grand, elegant structures constructed as a row by wallpaper manufacturer turned real estate developer William Howell in 1869. The third house, which stood at 2006 Chestnut Street, was demolished in the 1920s.

### Massing of the Rowhouses

The parcels at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street extend a full block from north to south, from Chestnut Street to Ionic Street, a service alley. The marble-fronted rowhouses rise four stories in height and span three bays in width at the front or main blocks (*Figure 3*). Behind the main blocks, the buildings include

piazas and three-story rear ells. Narrow, rear side yards separate the mirroring rear ells. The rear yards on Ionic Street are open, paved, and used for parking (*Figure 4*).



Figure 4. Left: Aerial view looking north toward the rears of the buildings at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street, 21 March 2020. Source: Pictometry. Right: Aerial view looking north toward the rears of the buildings at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street, 26 February 1931. Source: Dallin Aerial Survey Company, Hagley Library.

### North (Chestnut Street) elevation

The north or Chestnut Street façades of the buildings at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street are the front façades. The buildings are four stories in height including a mansard. Each façade has three bays or registers of windows and doors below the mansard. The main façades below the mansards are clad in marble. The marble cladding is laid in a running bond with each piece measuring about 18" by 72". The buildings have raised basements with projecting marble watertables. Each watertable is punctuated by two arched basement windows. A marble stoops at the eastern edge of the façade at 2008 and at the western edge at 2010 lead to the main entrances. The arched windows and doors are framed with ornate, projecting surrounds. The surrounds include hoods with acroteria at the apexes at all floors and ends at the first floor. The surrounds are supported by the watertable at the first floor and by brackets at the upper floors. The first-floor windows are tall, with marble panels below (*Figure 5*). The original doorway included a two-leaf, paneled wood door with an arched transom. The original doors and transom survive at 2008 but not at 2010 (*Figure 6*). The original windows were wood, arched, one-over-one, double-hung windows at the first floor and wood, arched, two-over-two, double-hung windows at the second and third floors. The original windows survive at 2010 but not at 2008. The mansards are separated from the lower façades by broad bracketed cornices. Each of the steep, straight mansards is punctuated with two arched dormers. The original dormer windows were wood, arched, two-over-two, double-hung windows.



Figure 5. Detail of first-floor, front windows at 2010 Chestnut Street, March 15, 2023. Source: Kim Chantry.



Figure 6. Detail of first-floor, front doorway at 2008 Chestnut Street, March 15, 2023. Source: Kim Chantry.

### South (Ionic Street) Elevation

The rears of the buildings at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street face onto Ionic Street (*Figure 7*). The open area between the buildings and Ionic Street is paved with concrete and used for parking. The backs of the main blocks, piazzas, and three-story rear ells are visible from Ionic Street. The rear ells retain their original, shallow, half-gable roofs. The original brick of the rear ell at 2008 has been coated in stucco. The original brick of the rear ell at 2010 is exposed, except at the first-floor rear façade, which has been coated in stucco. Original but altered bays project at the second-floor rears of the ells.



Figure 7. Rears of 2008 (right) and 2010 Chestnut Street. March 15, 2023. Source: Kim Chantry.

## 7. Statement of Significance

The properties at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street, known together with the lost building at 2006 Chestnut Street as the William Howell Marble-Fronted Row, are historically significant and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The properties satisfy Criteria for Designation C, D, and J as delineated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. Constructed in 1869, the “marble-fronted dwellings” reflect the environment in an era characterized by buildings with marble facades, satisfying Criterion C. Additionally, the rowhouses embody distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire style, the most popular style in the decade after the Civil War, including their marble façades with decorative window and door surrounds, broad bracketed cornices, and mansards with dormers, satisfying Criterion D. Finally, the buildings at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street are emblematic of the transition of the area south of Market Street and west of Broad Street from vacant land and sites used by the building materials industry to a dense, upper-middle-class and upper-class residential neighborhood in the years after the Civil War and its subsequent transition to a mixed-use commercial and residential neighborhood a few generations later.

### William Howell and 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street

On August 3, 1868, Albert R. Baker, who was listed in deeds and city directories as an “accountant” and a “clerk,” purchased the properties at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street.<sup>1</sup> Two days later, on August 5, he sold the properties as a bundle with mortgages payable to the former owners to William Howell, a wealthy wallpaper manufacturer who was turning his attention to real estate development.<sup>2</sup> Baker acted as Howell’s agent for several real estate purchases in the late 1860s.<sup>3</sup> Howell quickly demolished the structures standing on the properties and erected three marble-fronted, Second Empire rowhouses. Architect John McArthur Jr. had completed the most elegant and expensive townhouse in the city, a marble mansion for Dr. David Jayne, one block east on Chestnut in 1866, and Howell was looking to take advantage of rising real estate values as the area transitioned to a fashionable residential neighborhood.

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<sup>1</sup> Deed for 2006 Chestnut Street, William L. Simes et al to Albert R. Baker, August 3, 1868, JTO-168-106; deed for 2008 Chestnut Street, John W. Simes to Albert R. Baker, August 3, 1868, JTO-168-208; deed for 2010 Chestnut Street, Sylvester Bonnaffon to Albert R. Baker, August 3, 1868, JTO-166-156; Philadelphia Department of Records.

<sup>2</sup> On August 5, 1868, William Howell purchased the three lots known as 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street, each 20 feet wide, from Albert R. Baker for \$13,500, with mortgages of \$5,000 for 2006 and \$7,000 for 2008, both payable to former owner John Simes, and a mortgage of \$7,000 for 2010, payable to former owner Sylvester Bonnaffon. Deed, Albert R. Baker to William Howell, August 5, 1868, JTO-168-197, Philadelphia Department of Records.

<sup>3</sup> At age 29, Baker drowned in a boating accident on the Schuylkill River and was buried at Odd Fellows Cemetery in 1870. “Sad Drowning Casualty,” *Evening Telegraph*, June 15, 1870, p. 8; “Drowned Bodies Recovered,” *Inquirer*, June 18, 1870, p. 2.

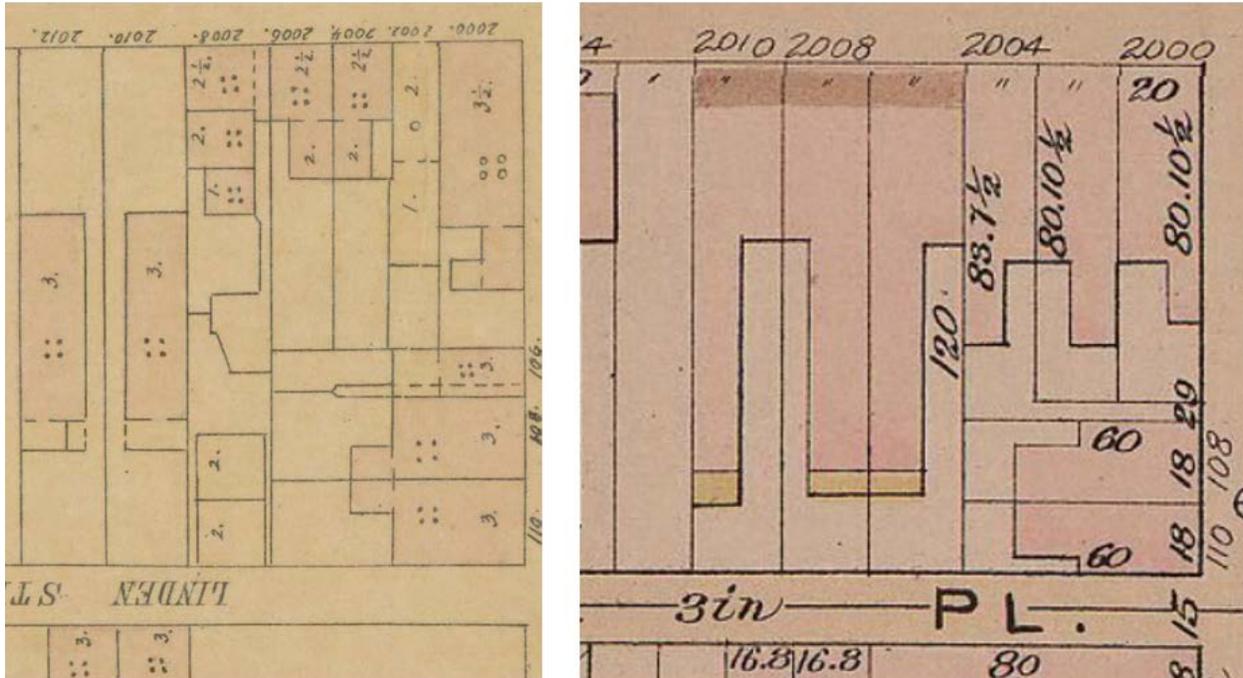


Figure 8. A comparison of details from the Hexamer & Locher, *Maps of the City of Philadelphia*, Plate 40, 1858 and Geo. W. & Walter S. Bromley, Civil Engineers, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*, Plate R, 1885. The 1858 map shows the buildings at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street that were demolished in 1868. The 1885 map shows the marble-fronted rowhouses that replaced the earlier structures.

Howell marketed the house at 2010 for sale first, perhaps before it was completed. On March 19, 1869, conveyancer E. R. Jones advertised “No. 2010 Chesnut (sic) street, white marble, \$35,000” in the *Inquirer*.<sup>4</sup> The house at 2010 Chestnut Street did not sell immediately. On August 12, 1869, “the new and unoccupied dwelling at No. 2010 Chestnut street” was “slightly damaged” in a fire.<sup>5</sup> One year later, the house at 2010 Chestnut Street was still unsold. Conveyancers Fox & Burkhardt advertised it in the *Inquirer* in August and September 1870 as “THE ELEGANT NEW marble front Dwelling, No. 2010 Chestnut street, with mansard roof, designed and finished with all the modern architectural improvements, ... will be sold on terms and price to suit.”<sup>6</sup> Despite the advertising, the house at 2010 Chestnut Street was not purchased and Howell retained ownership of it and rented it until his death in 1889, at which time Fidelity Trust took over the management of the property for Howell’s estate; it was finally sold out of the Howell family in 1921.<sup>7</sup> According to city directories and the 1880 United States census, Mrs. P.M. Etting and her adult sons Reuben, Charles, and Theodore, resided at 2010 Chestnut Street in the 1870s and 1880s. Reuben and Charles Etting were in the fire insurance business and Theodore Etting was an attorney.

<sup>4</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Inquirer*, March 19, 1869, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> “Fires,” *Evening Telegraph*, August 12, 1869, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Inquirer*, August 20, 1870, p. 8; September 27, 1870, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> William Howell died on April 20, 1889, at which time Fidelity Trust took control of the property on behalf of Howell’s estate. The property was sold in 1921. Deeds: Fidelity Trust to John S. Horsey, 19 August 1921, JMH-1179-110; John S. Horsey to Eugene Underhill, 16 September 1921, JMH-1143-498; Eugene Underhill to Herbert Monheit, 5 July 1968, JRS-156-6; Philadelphia Department of Records.

The house at 2008 Chestnut Street was advertised by Fox & Burkart as a “first-class marble front Dwelling, replete with every modern convenience” in October 1869.<sup>8</sup> Unlike the adjacent house at 2010 Chestnut Street, the house at 2008 Chestnut sold immediately to Lydia A. and David Brooks.<sup>9</sup> Brooks was a nationally renowned electrical engineer who became very wealthy from his inventions and patents related to telegraph systems. He constructed the first telegraph line for commercial purposes built in the United States, between Lancaster and Harrisburg, and received the first message over it. In 1840, he built the first line between Philadelphia and Pittsburg. The following year he invented repeaters, which were first used in telegraphing Henry Clay's Lexington, Kentucky speech on the Mexican-American War to the New York dailies. The report of the speech was carried from Lexington to Cincinnati by pony express, and then transmitted by telegraph. In 1851, he built the first telegraph lines in Mexico, from Vera Cruz to Mexico City. From 1852 to 1854, he ran the Pennsylvania Railroad telegraph construction and operation. While working at the Pennsylvania Railroad, Brooks employed Andrew Carnegie as a messenger boy. Carnegie frequently said that Brooks gave him his first start in life. From 1854 to 1867, Brooks worked for several telegraph companies, chiefly the Western Union. He resigned from company service in 1867 to devote himself to invention of telegraph and telephone components.<sup>10</sup>

The third marble-fronted house, the rowhouse at 2006 Chestnut Street, was first advertised for sale on November 3, 1869. Like the house at 2008, it was described by Fox & Burkart as a “first-class marble front Dwelling, replete with every modern convenience.”<sup>11</sup> It was described a few weeks later in the *Legal Gazette* as an “ELEGANT FOUR-STORY MARBLE FRONT RESIDENCE, No. 2006 Chestnut st., finished in a very superior manner, with all the modern conveniences.”<sup>12</sup> At the end of November 1869, it was put up for auction, listed as “CHESTNUT, No. 2006 – Elegant Marble Front Residence,” but apparently was not sold.<sup>13</sup> The following spring, in March 1870, it was again advertised by Fox & Burkhart for sale.<sup>14</sup> The house at 2006 Chestnut Street was apparently rented in 1870, while it awaited sale. The 1870 United States census indicated that John H. and Louisa Fisher lived at the property. William Howell eventually sold the “Three Story Brick (marble front) messuage” at 2006 Chestnut Street to William Bucknell in 1871.<sup>15</sup> Bucknell gave the house to his daughter and new son-in-law Craige Lippincott as a wedding gift at the time of their marriage in April 1871.<sup>16</sup> Lippincott was a publisher with his family's publishing house, J.B. Lippincott & Co. The Lippincotts resided at 2006 Chestnut Street until 1885.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Inquirer*, October 7, 1869, p. 8; October 9, 1869, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Deed: William Howell to David Brooks, telegraph (operator) engineer, and Lydia A. Brooks, 27 October 1869, JTO-283-239, Philadelphia Department of Records.

<sup>10</sup> “David Brooks, An Eminent Electrician Dies in Philadelphia,” *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 1, 1891, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Evening Telegraph*, November 3, 1869, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Legal Gazette*, November 26, 1869, p. 175.

<sup>13</sup> “Auction Sales, M. Thomas & Sons, Auctioneers,” *Inquirer*, November 30, 1869, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Inquirer*, March 21, 1870, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> Deed: William Howell and Rebecca, his wife, to William Bucknell, 9 January 1871, JAH-109-411, Philadelphia Department of Records.

<sup>16</sup> Deed: William Bucknell to Sallie Erie Bucknell, 6 April 1871, JAH-123-484, Philadelphia Department of Records. “Craige Lippincott, noted publisher, commits suicide,” *Inquirer*, April 7, 1911, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>17</sup> Deed: Craige Lippincott, publisher, and Sallie Erie, his wife, to Lewis C. Cassidy, 30 October 1885, GGP-88-61, Philadelphia Department of Records.



Figure 9. The southwest corner of 20<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets with the marble-fronted rowhouses at 2006 and 2008 Chestnut Street on the far right, August 26, 1924. Source: Department of Records Archive, Asset ID 9164.



Figure 10. The rowhouse at 2012 Chestnut Street with the edge of the marble-front rowhouse at 2010 Chestnut Street seen on the left, December 14, 1926. Source: Department of Records Archive, Asset ID 9345.

## Howell & Brothers Wallpaper Manufacturing<sup>18</sup>

The story of Howell & Brothers begins in 1793, when John Howell and his son John Brazier Howell arrived in the United States from England and set up a small wallpaper manufactory in their home in Albany, New York. The Howells had experience in the wallpaper trade, having been involved in the business in England. Wall coverings in the form of printed or flocked papers had first been developed in Europe in the seventeenth century, typically as inexpensive alternatives to costly tapestries or damasks. Wallpaper was first manufactured in the United States in the 1760s but the market was relatively small. By 1800, there were still only a few modest factories. Nonetheless, it appears John Howell and his son may have had some success in Albany since they remained there for about 20 years. The younger John married in 1804, having several children with his wife Elizabeth (Carpenter). Little else is known of the Howells' time in Albany. The family left Albany around 1805, spending time in New York City and Baltimore before finally settling permanently in Philadelphia.<sup>19</sup>

The Howells brought their small wallpaper business with them to Philadelphia. Although several sources claim the Howells arrived in the city in 1813, the first year any member of the family is found in a Philadelphia directory is 1818, when the younger John was listed as a "paper stainer" at 351 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.<sup>20</sup> Two years later, John was listed as a "paper hanging manufacturer" at 125 N. Front Street.<sup>21</sup> As John's five sons grew older, they became deeply involved in the family business and by the mid-1830s, directories suggest that John A., George, Zophar, William, and Darius Howell had taken over their father's small company, moving it to 3<sup>rd</sup> and Chestnut Streets and officially renaming the firm Howell & Brothers.<sup>22</sup> The new firm continued to produce their own wallpaper and imported French-made papers. In 1840, Howell & Brothers was one of only six wallpaper manufacturers or dealers in Philadelphia.<sup>23</sup>

Over the following decade, Howell & Brothers continued to produce wallpaper in much the same way that their father and grandfather had since they arrived in the US more than 40 years earlier. In 1839, Walmsley Preston, a foreman in a calico textile mill in Lancashire, England, known as Potter & Ross, developed the first steam-powered printing machine. This new technology was easily transferred to the wallpaper industry. Recognizing the great potential of the machine for the wallpaper market, Potter and Preston formed their own firm in 1840 to begin producing wallpaper exclusively.<sup>24</sup> Over the next few years, knowledge of Preston's machine gradually made its way across the Atlantic. The Howells purchased one of the new machines from England to Philadelphia in 1844, making Howell & Brothers

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<sup>18</sup> This section titled "Howell & Brothers Wallpaper Manufacturing" is taken directly, with some editing for length, from: Kevin McMahon, Powers & Co., National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Howell & Brothers Paper Hangings Manufactory, 2101 Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2017. On Howell & Brothers, see also John Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Company, 1884), 2322; and Dennis Carlisle, Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination for Howell & Brothers Wallpaper Hangings Manufactory, 2101 Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> Catherine Lynn, *Wallpaper in America from the Seventeenth Century to World War I* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980), 18-24 and Phyllis Ackerman, *Wallpaper: Its History, Design and Use* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1923), 68-69.

<sup>20</sup> John Adams Paxton, *The Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1818* (Philadelphia, 1818).

<sup>21</sup> Edward Whitely, *The Philadelphia Directory and Register for 1820* (Philadelphia, 1820).

<sup>22</sup> Robert Desilver, *Desilver's Philadelphia Directory and Stranger's Guide for 1835 & 1836* (Robert Desilver: Philadelphia, 1835), 94.

<sup>23</sup> A. McElroy, *A. McElroy's Philadelphia Directory for 1840* (Philadelphia, 1840).

<sup>24</sup> *The Grove Encyclopedia of Materials and Techniques in Art*, edited by Gerald W.R. Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 743-744.

the first wallpaper manufacturer in the US to employ a fully mechanized, steam-powered production process.<sup>25</sup>

The arrival of the machine likely greatly expanded the Howells' manufacturing capacity, for it coincided with a period of tremendous growth for the fledgling company. The Howells opened a store in Baltimore in 1843, a new store in New York City in 1846, and moved to larger quarters at 116 Chestnut Street in 1847.<sup>26</sup> Now very likely the largest wallpaper manufacturer in Philadelphia, Howell & Brothers quickly rose in prominence. Gaining recognition even in England, possibly due to their use of English technology, the Howells participated in the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London, displaying a selection of their wallpapers in the Crystal Palace.<sup>27</sup>

Back in the US, Howell & Brothers caught the attention of Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852), one of the country's most prominent landscape designers and architectural writers, who is known to have visited the Howells' store in 1852. Downing later wrote to the Howells to express interest in using their wallpaper in his Newburgh, New York home. Unfortunately, Downing died shortly after writing the letter and it is unknown whether Howell & Brothers ever supplied him with any wallpaper.<sup>28</sup> In Philadelphia, another prominent designer, Thomas Ustick Walter, architect of numerous Greek Revival landmarks in Philadelphia as well as the dome of the United States Capitol, used the Howells' wallpaper extensively in his own home. Intended for his retirement, Walter built the house in the Germantown neighborhood in the early 1860s, decorating it with dozens of rolls of wallpaper purchased from the Howells. Unfortunately, the house was demolished in the 1920s.<sup>29</sup>

By 1858, Howell & Brothers, which until that time had most likely produced their wallpapers directly above their Chestnut Street store, was growing so quickly that a new, separate manufacturing space was needed. The Howells chose a large site on the south side of Spruce Street between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Streets, just south of Rittenhouse Square, building a four-story, 396' by 80' factory occupying nearly the entire block (*Figure 11*). According to one source, the factory was "undoubtedly the largest in the US, and probably larger than any similar European manufactory."<sup>30</sup> A year after completing their new factory, the firm also moved into a new, larger store, this time at 622 Chestnut Street.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Catherine Lynn, *Wallpaper in America from the Seventeenth Century to World War I* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980), 308.

<sup>26</sup> Howell & Brothers announced their new stores in the *Baltimore Sun* in 1843 and several New York newspapers, including the *Daily Tribune* and *Evening Post*, in 1846.

<sup>27</sup> *Official Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of All Nations, 1851* (Royal Commission: London, 1851), 194.

<sup>28</sup> Andrew Jackson Downing to Howell & Brothers, May 25, 1852.

<sup>29</sup> Stephen G. Harrison, "The Thomas Ustick Walter House, 1861-1866, Germantown, Pennsylvania," master's thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1992.

<sup>30</sup> Edwin T. Freedley, *Philadelphia and its Manufactures* (Edward Young: Philadelphia, 1859), 372.

<sup>31</sup> Howell & Brothers advertisement, *The North American* (Philadelphia, PA), April 4, 1859.

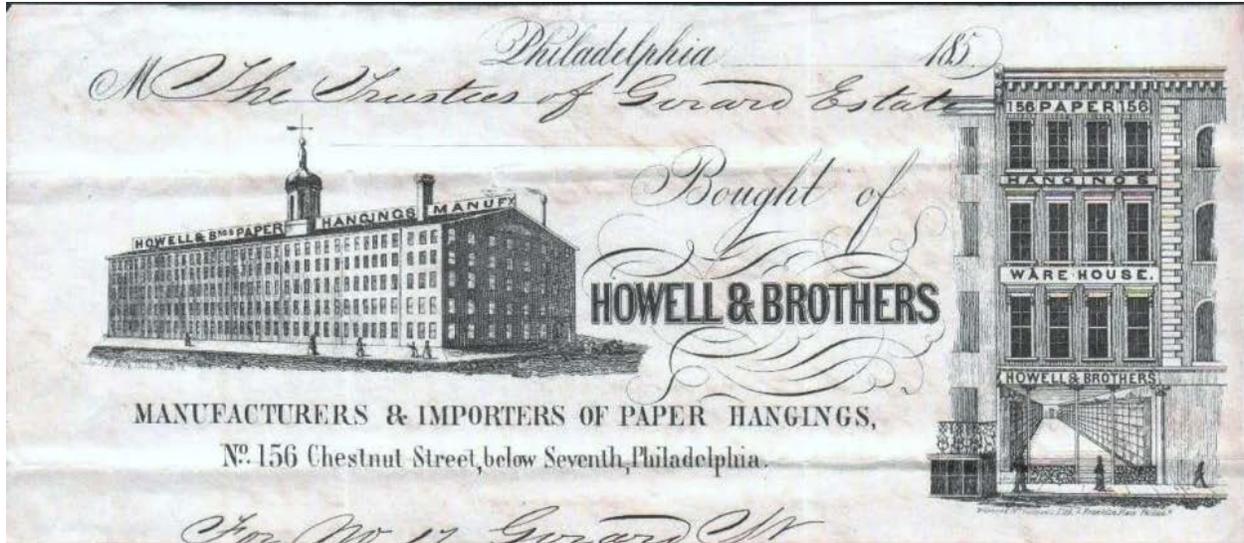


Figure 11. The letterhead of a Howell & Brothers receipt showing the factory building at 19<sup>th</sup> and Spruce Streets on the left, 1850, <https://bollingco.com/collections/factories-ephemera/products/1850-howell-bros-billhead>

Although the full impact of the Civil War years on Howell & Brothers' business is unknown, they appear to have remained prosperous. In January 1864, for example, the Howells expanded their retail presence yet again, moving into a larger retail space at the southwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets (*Figure 28*). The new space was described by one guidebook as a "marble palace" and "one of the most elegant stores in the country."<sup>32</sup> Although their highly praised store at 9<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut was largely destroyed by a massive fire in January 1869, a conflagration that made national headlines, the company quickly rebuilt. In 1870, Howells & Brothers opened a large new store on 6<sup>th</sup> Street just south of Market Street.<sup>33</sup> Howell & Brothers remained in the building until the early 1880s, when they appear to have pulled out of the direct retail business altogether, afterwards selling wholesale to other retailers.

As the blocks around Rittenhouse Square evolved into a highly desirable residential area, the value of the Howells' property on Spruce Street likely dramatically increased. At the same time, this location, which lacked close proximity to a rail line, was also increasingly ill-equipped to handle large deliveries and outbound shipments. Therefore, seeking to capitalize on their real estate investment and to locate more closely to the railroad, Howell & Brothers purchased the large block fronting Washington Avenue between 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Streets in 1865. The company quickly built a factory of similar size to the one they occupied on Spruce Street and subsequently sold their former building, which was quickly demolished to make way for large and elegant houses. The new site, in a relatively sparsely settled area about nine blocks south of Spruce Street, was adjacent to the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad, providing the direct rail access Howell & Brothers likely desired.<sup>34</sup> Although little is known of the

<sup>32</sup> *Guide to Philadelphia* (John Dainty: Philadelphia, 1866), 126.

<sup>33</sup> The five-story building, with its cast iron, Italianate-style front, was recorded by the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) shortly before it was demolished in 1961. Howell & Brothers Building, Philadelphia, PA, Historic American Building Survey, HABS PA-1428 (1961).

<sup>34</sup> The Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad (PW&BRR) was inaugurated in 1836 and was the first railroad to provide access to points south of Philadelphia. After entering the city, the railroad traveled east on Washington Avenue to the terminus at Broad Street. On April 22, 1865, Abraham Lincoln's funeral train arrived in Philadelphia on the PW&BRR, passing in front of Howell & Brothers' new factory as it was under construction.

construction process, the new factory appears to have been operational by November of 1865.<sup>35</sup> The completed building is extensively documented in a series of Hexamer General Surveys, the first of which appeared in 1866 (*Figure 12*). In 1870, a correspondent of New York's *Evening Mail* visited the Howell factory and later chronicled the production process in *Scientific American* magazine, noting that the company had ten printing machines each running off 10,000 rolls of wallpaper each week.<sup>36</sup> "The facility with which Wall Paper [sic] is manufactured by the modern processes is most remarkable," Edwin T. Freedley wrote in the updated 1867 edition of his book *Philadelphia and its Manufactures*. Freedley went on to describe how "Hundreds of rolls of blank paper can be printed in a variety of colors, dried, reeled and be ready for market in a few hours." The company, Freedley continued, consumed about 40 tons of paper weekly and produced around 50 million yards of wallpaper annually, a quantity greater than the circumference of the Earth.<sup>37</sup>



Figure 12. View of the Howell & Brothers Paper Hangings Manufacturing at 2101 Washington Avenue, looking southeast. Source: *Hexamer General Surveys*, Volume 9, Plate 807, 1874.

By 1870, statistics show that Howell & Brothers, now led primarily by Zophar C. Howell, was by far the largest wallpaper firm in Philadelphia. As recorded by the Manufacturing Census that year, there were four wallpaper manufacturers in the city employing a total of 385 persons. With somewhere between 200 and 250 employees in any given year during the mid- to late-nineteenth century, Howell & Brothers dominated, comprising greater than 50% of the city's wallpaper workforce.<sup>38</sup> Howell & Brothers continued to manufacture wallpaper throughout the nineteenth century, but succumbed to market

<sup>35</sup> "Building Improvements," *Daily Evening Bulletin*, Philadelphia, November 7, 1865.

<sup>36</sup> "How Wall Paper is Made," *Scientific American* 22, no. 10, March 5, 1870, p. 156.

<sup>37</sup> Edwin T. Freedley, *Philadelphia and its Manufactures* (Edward Young: Philadelphia, 1867), p. 608.

<sup>38</sup> Lorin Blodget, *The Industries of Philadelphia as shown by the Manufacturing Census of 1870* (Philadelphia, 1877), p. 24.

pressures later in the century and joined the National Wall Paper Company in 1892.<sup>39</sup> Despite its absorption into the National Wall Paper Company, Howell & Brothers, like many of the other affiliated firms, maintained a certain level of autonomy after 1892. Now known as Howell & Brothers Limited, the company continued to produce its own wallpaper patterns on Washington Avenue and still employed about 250 workers.<sup>40</sup> By the late 1890s, a number of independent manufacturers had arisen in opposition to the National Wall Paper Company, starting a price war and ultimately forming their own combination, the Continental Wall Paper Company, in 1898. On July 19, 1900, the National Wall Paper Company's stockholders approved the dissolution of the company.<sup>41</sup> Most of the affiliated company including Howell & Brothers ceased operations at that time. The last surviving Howell brother, Zophar C. Howell, died two years later in October 1902.<sup>42</sup>

### The Howells and Real Estate Development

The Howells not only manufactured wallpaper but also developed real estate. As early as 1848, the brothers advertised to rent "newly finished four-story houses with two-story back buildings, marble mantels, hydrant water in yards" on George (now Sansom) Street east of Schuylkill Fifth (now 18<sup>th</sup>) Street.<sup>43</sup> The Howells advertised additional houses on the same block in 1849.<sup>44</sup> In 1853 and 1854, they offered to rent three-story brick houses with "bath with hot and cold water, range in kitchen, and a good yard back" on Marshall Street, south of Thompson, in North Philadelphia.<sup>45</sup> Needless to say, the Marshall Street houses were "papered throughout." A few years later, in 1860, they offered the house at 1442 Marshall for sale or to let.<sup>46</sup>

William Howell, the brother who constructed the marble-fronted houses at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street, was an especially prodigious real estate developer. An obituary in Philadelphia's *Times* noted at his death in 1889 that he "was actively engaged in the development of real estate in this city. He also made extensive investments in Western real estate, notably in Denver, Duluth, and other growing cities."<sup>47</sup> Howell also operated as a mortgage broker, buying and selling ground rent agreements and mortgages for himself and investors (*Figure 13*).<sup>48</sup> An analysis of Philadelphia's deed records for the decade from 1863 to 1872 shows that William Howell was listed as the grantee on 85 deeds, an exceptional number that does not include purchases as a partner with his brothers or others.<sup>49</sup> In seven of those transactions, he used Albert R. Baker as his agent, the person who facilitated the purchase of the 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street properties.

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<sup>39</sup> "The Wall Paper Trust," *The Times*, Philadelphia, June 4, 1892.

<sup>40</sup> *Historical and Commercial Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, A.F. Parsons, 1892), 112.

<sup>41</sup> "Trust May Be Dissolved," *New York Times*, July 3, 1900.

<sup>42</sup> "Zophar C. Howell," *New York Times*, October 7, 1902, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Public Ledger*, November 16, 1848, p. 4.

<sup>44</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Public Ledger*, March 26, 1849, p. 3.

<sup>45</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Public Ledger*, April 12, 1853, p. 4. Real estate advertisement, *Public Ledger*, August 17, 1854, p. 4.

<sup>46</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Public Ledger*, April 25, 1860, p. 3.

<sup>47</sup> "Death of William Howell," *The Times*, April 21, 1889, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> Mortgage advertisement, *The Times*, November 3, 1877, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> The H-W deed indices for LRB, 1863-1866; JTO, 1866-1869; and JAH, 1869-1872 were searched for the name Howell, William.



Figure 13. William Howell, advertisement for real estate investment services, *The Times*, November 3, 1877, p. 3.



Figure 14. North, front facades of the rowhouses at 1916, 1918, and 1920 Spruce Street, May 25, 1995. Source: Philadelphia Historical Commission.

At the same moment that William Howell was developing the marble-fronted mansions on the 2000-block of Chestnut Street, he and his brothers were redeveloping the site of their wallpaper factory on the 1900-block of Spruce Street with brownstone-fronted mansions of a nearly identical design to those on Chestnut Street (*Figure 14*). As the building materials industry relocated from the city center to less expensive, more easily accessed properties on the outskirts after the Civil War, Howell & Brothers moved and consolidated its manufacturing facilities from two valuable sites at 19<sup>th</sup> and Spruce Streets and 11<sup>th</sup> and Catherine Streets to one enormous site at 2101 Washington Avenue in 1865. The new factory took advantage of less expensive real estate, the rail line running along Washington Avenue, and

an accessible workforce, who lived in the expanding working-class neighborhoods to the north and east.<sup>50</sup> The vacated industrial sites became available for residential development. In 1868, the Howells engaged E. Burgess Warren to erect “a dwelling house suitable to the neighborhood” on each of the lots at 1916, 1918, and 1920 Spruce Street, the block where their wallpaper factory had been located.<sup>51</sup>

Like the Howells, E. Burgess Warren worked in the building materials industry.<sup>52</sup> Warren and his brothers were national leaders in the roofing industry. At the turn of the nineteenth century, most buildings were roofed with cedar shakes. In the early years of the century, roofers experimented with new roofing systems comprised of pine tar applied to canvas. In the 1840s in Cincinnati, Samuel M. and Cyrus M. Warren developed a roofing system comprised of heavy paper covered with pine tar and sprinkled with sand. From experiments begun in 1847, they successfully replaced increasingly costly pine pitch with coal tar, a by-product of manufacturing illuminating gas from coal. Initially the gas companies paid them to haul the waste away. They discovered that the coal tar made from waste was an ideal adhesive for producing asphalt built-up roofs. Their continued development of the product and expansion to other cities assured the Warrens' status as leaders in the industry. E. Burgess Warren and his brother Herbert founded a branch of the family business in Philadelphia in middle of the 1850s which focused on roofing and paving and drew upon the extensive oil fields in Pennsylvania for raw materials. E. Burgess Warren was first listed in a Philadelphia city directory in 1856 as a “comp. roofer.” In later city directories, his occupation is described as “gravel roofer.” Warren and his brothers later expanded their wealth when they found that natural asphalt from Pitch Lake in Trinidad could produce an easy-to-mix roofing pitch when combined with petroleum tar, a by-product of oil refining.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> See Kevin McMahon, Powers & Co., National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Howell & Brothers Paper Hangings Manufactory, 2101 Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2017; and Dennis Carlisle, Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination for Howell & Brothers Wallpaper Hangings Manufactory, 2101 Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2017.

<sup>51</sup> Deed, Howell Family to E. Burgess Warren, 25 May 1868, JTO-156-134, Philadelphia Department of Records.

<sup>52</sup> E. Burgess Warren, the developer of the houses at 1916, 1918, and 1920 Spruce Street, was born in Peru, Vermont in 1833. He was a noted art collector, who owned the best Barbizon painting collection in the country, and a director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts for 38 years. He was also owned the steam yacht Ellide, considered the fastest boat of its kind in the world in the late nineteenth century. Warren died in 1917. An extensive biography of Warren can be found in his obituary in the *Bennington Evening Banner*, January 26, 1917, p. 6.

<sup>53</sup> Kaaren Staveteig, *From Asbestos to Zinc: Roofing for Historic Buildings*, Technical Preservation Services Branch, Heritage Preservation Services Division, National Center for Cultural Resources, National Park Service, 1999.



Figure 15. An advertisement for E. Burgess Warren's roofing company, Warren, Kirk & Co., *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 22, 1866, p. 7.

E. Burgess Warren not only ran the Philadelphia branch of the family roofing business, but he also developed real estate, especially upscale residential units around Rittenhouse Square. He was referred to as a “real estate operator and builder.”<sup>54</sup> Although “he was a chemist by occupation,” he “also made much money in real estate.”<sup>55</sup> An observer noted in 1867 that:

Six elegant residences [at 2011-2021 Spruce Street], brown-stone fronts, are fast being completed by Mr. E.B. Warren, on the north side of Spruce Street, above Twentieth. ... The [largest] residence [at 2013 Spruce Street], when completed, will compete with many of the fine structures now built in Philadelphia. The other new buildings are not quite as large as the one we have referred to, but they are constructed in elegant style. Mr. Warren is deserving of great praise for beautifying the city with such handsome buildings.<sup>56</sup>

Warren and his family resided in the large mansion at 2013 Spruce Street from its completion in the late 1860s until his death in 1917.<sup>57</sup> His real estate career was summarized in an obituary at the time of his death.

In 1866, foreseeing that the section of Walnut and Spruce streets west of Twentieth Street, in Philadelphia, would become the most desirable in the city for residences, E. Burgess Warren purchased real estate on Spruce Street above Nineteen Street, and also west of Twentieth and Twenty-first Streets, and erected costly dwellings upon all this land, some of which had been given over to a most objectionable, even disreputable settlement of people, known as the “Schuylkill Rangers,” which were a menace to the neighborhood. Four years later he purchased many vacant lots on Walnut Street west from Nineteenth to Twenty-second Streets, building also upon these dwellings of greater value than any which have been built for sale in the city up to the present time. These dwellings numbered more than forty, and their total value was about

<sup>54</sup> Obituary for Ebenezer Burgess Warren, *Evening Star* (Washington, DC), January 19, 1917. p. 9.

<sup>55</sup> Obituary of Ebenezer Burgess Warren, *Barre Daily Times*, January 29, 1917, p. 7.

<sup>56</sup> “Elegant Improvements,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 24, 1867, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup> Warren is listed as 35 years of age and living with his wife and four young children at 2013 Spruce Street in the 1870 US Census. He is listed as 76 years of age and living with his wife and two servants at 2013 Spruce Street in the 1910 US Census. His death certificate, dated January 16, 1917, listed his home address as 2013 Spruce Street.

two millions of dollars. This undertaking was considered at the time an enormous venture for a man of only thirty-two years, but the results have shown the wisdom of his foresight.<sup>58</sup>

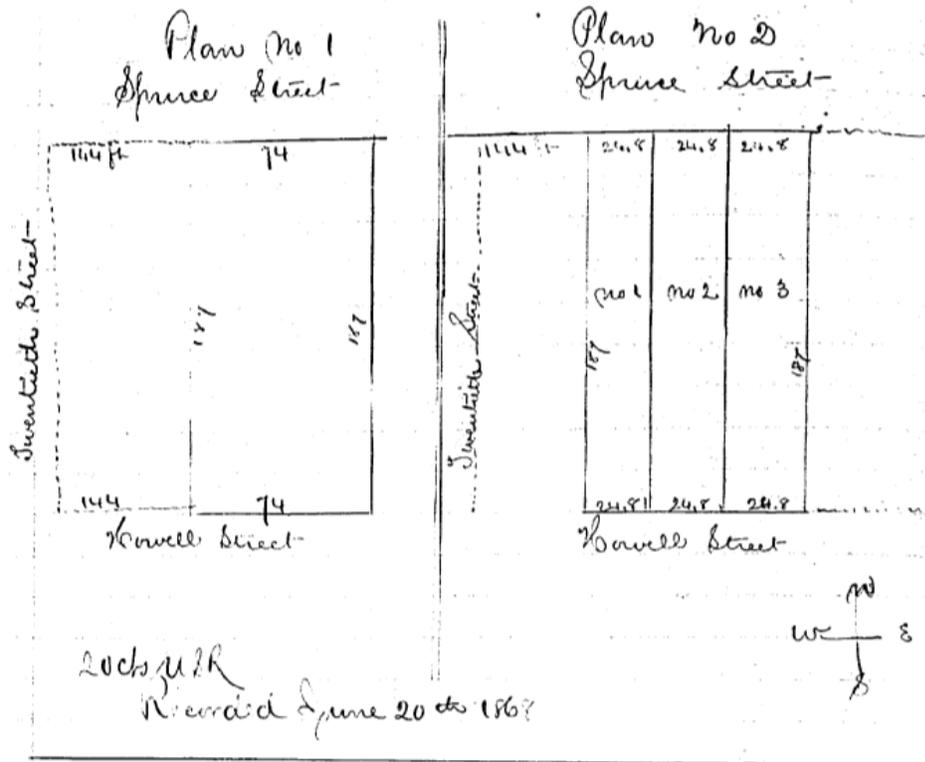


Figure 16. Subdivision plan for the Howell Brothers wallpaper factory site on the 1900-block of Spruce Street. Source: Deed, Howell Family to E. Burgess Warren, 25 May 1868, JTO-156-134, Philadelphia Department of Records.

In 1868, the Howell family enlisted Warren, who was described in the deed as a “Gravel Roofer,” to redevelop land on the 1900 block of Spruce Street, south of Rittenhouse Square, where one of the wallpaper factories had been located (Figure 16). As part of the deal, the Howells agreed to advance the funds to Warren “toward the erection on the said lot of ground three dwelling houses.” The agreement stipulated that:

for the price or sum of \$29,600 the said lot to be subdivided into three smaller lots twenty four feet eight inches each in front ... the whole of said purchase money together with the sum of \$5,133.33 for each lot to be thereafter advanced for the purpose of assisting the said E. Burgess Warren in erecting on each of the said lots a dwelling house suitable to the neighborhood to be secured on the said three lots of ground by a mortgage of \$15,000 for each lot one of said mortgage to be assigned to said petitioners as their share in the purchase money and advances that said petitioners believed the same was a full and fair price and better than could be possibly be obtained at public sale.

The agreement also stipulated that:

no works shop, steam engine, candle, soap, or glue manufacturer or other buildings for offensive use or occupation shall be at any time hereafter erected or built upon the lot of

<sup>58</sup> Obituary of Ebenezer Burgess Warren, *Bennington Evening Banner*, January 26, 1917, p. 6

ground above described or upon any part of the said lot and that no buildings except stables, coach houses, green houses, or privies not exceeding two stories in height shall at any time hereafter be erected or built upon the rear end of the aforesaid lot fronting on said Howell Street and that the northernmost three feet of the said lot shall forever remain unbuilt upon and unmolested excepting steps, cellar door, iron railings, or vaults underneath the pavement.<sup>59</sup>

Warren's receipt books for the years 1868 to 1871 survive at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and detail his many construction projects including those for the Howells at 1916, 1918, and 1920 Spruce Street. The books narrate the construction of the houses as they rise out of the ground with payments for surveying, digging foundations, gravel, stone, brick, brownstone, marble, lumber, nails, carpentry, masonry, plastering, painting, roofing, plumbing, assessing party walls, advertising of the finished houses, and numerous other services. While the receipt books list hundreds and hundreds of payments to artisans and building material suppliers, they only include two entries for payments to architects, both to John McArthur Jr., one for \$350 in 1868 and a second for \$200 in 1871. Neither receipt indicates an address or location for the services. The first receipt indicated that it was for "professional services." The second did not describe the work.<sup>60</sup> While the receipts alone are not sufficient to attribute the rows at 1916, 1918, and 1920 Spruce Street and 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street to McArthur, they may provide enough evidence for a tentative attribution to McArthur. As will be discussed, McArthur was the premier architect in Philadelphia working in the Second Empire style. For example, he designed marble-clad, Second-Empire-style mansions for Dr. David Jayne at 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets about 1866 and George W. Childs at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Walnut Streets about 1869. He also designed the Second-Empire-style Public Ledger Building at 6<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets for Childs in 1867 and started on Philadelphia's City Hall, the city's most prominent marble-clad, Second-Empire-style building, in 1871. And, perhaps most important for this discussion, McArthur designed the "marble palace" at 9<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets in 1864, where the Howell & Brothers flagship retail store was located.

Warren completed the construction of the speculative Second-Empire Howell houses on Spruce Street in 1869 and engaged conveyancer Edward R. Jones to market them for sale. Jones not only negotiated the purchase and sale of properties for clients but also functioned as a mortgage broker, lending his investors' money to builders.<sup>61</sup> Jones advertised the house at 1920 Spruce Street for sale for \$45,000, a large sum of money, in March 1869. Interestingly, Jones offered the "white marble" house at 2010 Chestnut Street for \$35,000 in the very same newspaper advertisement, which ran in the *Inquirer* on March 19, 1869, perhaps indicating that the rows on Chestnut and Spruce were developed in coordination.<sup>62</sup> Warren sold the new brownstone houses at 1916 Spruce Street to lawyer and businessman Elias D. Kennedy on April 27, 1869; at 1918 Spruce Street to brewer-turned-banker

<sup>59</sup> Deed, Howell Family to E. Burgess Warren, 25 May 1868, JTO-156-134, Philadelphia Department of Records.

<sup>60</sup> E. Burgess Warren Receipt Books, vol. 1, August 28, 1868, and vol. 2, April 8, 1871, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Amb. 92.

<sup>61</sup> Edward R. Jones advertised himself as a "conveyancer" offering "mortgages and sales of real estate negotiated" in the *Legal Intelligencer*, v. 13, no. 25, June 20, 1856, p. 198. Jones not only advertised properties for sale in Philadelphia newspapers throughout the middle of the nineteenth century, but also ran advertisements seeking investors and offering loans. For example, he ran an advertisement stating that he had \$75,000 to invest in first-class city mortgages or ground rent at par." See: E.R Jones investment advertisement, *The Times*, December 28, 1876, p. 3.

<sup>62</sup> E.R. Jones real estate advertisement, *Inquirer*, March 19, 1869, p. 6.

Frederick Collins on the same day, April 27, 1869; and at 1920 Spruce Street to shipbuilder Randolph Wood on May 26, 1870.<sup>63</sup>



Figure 17. E.R. Jones real estate advertisement offering 2010 Chestnut Street for \$35,000 and 1920 Spruce Street for \$45,000, in the *Inquirer*, March 19, 1869, p. 6.

<sup>63</sup> 1916 Spruce Street (03S22-0169), E. Burgess Warren to Elias D. Kennedy, April 27, 1869, Department of Records Deed JTO-238-302; 1918 Spruce Street (03S22-0170), E. Burgess Warren to Frederick Collins, April 27, 1869, Department of Records Deed JTO-248-112; and 1920 Spruce Street (03S22-0174), E. Burgess Warren to Randolph Wood, May 26, 1870, Department of Records Deed JAH-168-511.

### Criterion D: The Second Empire Style of Architecture

The marble-clad rowhouses at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street embody distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire architectural style, and thereby satisfy Criterion for Designation D. The Second Empire style, also called the French Second Empire style or Mansard style, was an immensely popular style throughout the United States in the 1860s and 1870s. It was used extensively in the northeastern and midwestern parts of the country. The Second Empire style had its beginnings in France, where it was the chosen style during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-70), France's Second Empire, hence its name. Well-attended exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867 helped to spread Second Empire style to England and then the United States. However, the Second Empire style harkens back to an earlier time, the seventeenth-century designs of French architect Francois Mansart, for whom the mansard roof is named (*Figure 18*). The mansard roof, a four-sided gambrel roof with a shallow or flat top usually pierced by dormer windows, is the key identifying feature of this style and was considered both a fashionable and functional element since it created a fully usable attic space. The mansard roof can assume many different profiles, with some being steeply angled, while others are concave, convex, or s-shaped. For most Second Empire buildings, the mansard roof is the primary stylistic feature and the most recognized link to the style's French roots.



Figure 18. François Mansart, Château de Maisons, Maisons-Laffitte, Yvelines, Île-de-France, 1630-1651.

In its time, the Second Empire style was viewed as a contemporary "modern" style, rather than revival style since it was popular in France and the United States simultaneously and its combined design elements did represent a new building form. The style was first seen in America in the 1850s and flourished after the Civil War. The outbreak of the Civil War limited new construction in the United States, and it was after the end of the war that Second Empire finally came to prominence in American design. The architects Alfred B. Mullett, who was supervising architect for the Treasury Department,

and John McArthur, Jr. an important designer of public buildings in the Mid-Atlantic, helped popularize the style for public and institutional buildings. Mullett, in particular, who favored the style, was responsible from 1866 to 1874 for designing federal public buildings across the United States, spreading Second Empire as a stylistic idiom across the country. His massive and expensive public buildings in St. Louis, Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, New York, and Washington D.C., which closely followed the precedents set by the Louvre construction with grand mansard roofs and tiers of superimposed columns, made a strong impression on the architects in cities with new Mullett designs. Because of its early use by the federal government, the Second Empire style quickly became the preferred style for the construction of public and commercial buildings. Because of the expense of designing buildings with the level of elaborate detailing found in European and public examples, Second Empire residential architecture was first taken up by the wealthy. The Civil War had caused a boom in the fortunes in the north and the Second Empire style was considered the effective vehicle for demonstrating wealth and expressing new power.

Perhaps the best-known example of this style in Pennsylvania is John McArthur Jr.'s Philadelphia City Hall, on which construction began in 1871. While it is distinguished by its crested mansard roof, City Hall has opulent Second Empire details throughout, including dormers with decorative hoods and elaborate columned window surrounds. Examples of the Second Empire style can be found in almost every Pennsylvania town, usually in the form of single residences, duplexes or rowhouses. Second Empire mansions or public buildings are often elaborately detailed, but many other buildings of this style have only the curving lines of the shingled mansard roof to mark them. Other commonly seen details are a bracketed cornice beneath the mansard roof, round arched windows, decorative dormer windows, iron cresting at the roofline, and columned porches or porticoes. Second Empire buildings tend to convey a sense of largeness and their facades are typically solid and flat.<sup>64</sup>

John McArthur, Jr. was the most prominent architect to design in the Second Empire style in Philadelphia (*Figure 19*). He is chiefly remembered as the architect of Philadelphia City Hall (1871-1901), the tallest and largest public building in the United States at the time of its completion. McArthur was born at Bladnock in the western lowlands of Scotland; and he came to Philadelphia at the age of 10 to live with his uncle, the master builder John McArthur. Apprentice to a house carpenter, he also attended classes at The Carpenters' Company architectural school. He also attended Thomas Ustick Walter's lectures at the Franklin Institute. Walter would write in 1854 that, after John Notman, McArthur was the best architect in Philadelphia.

At the age of 25, McArthur won his first competition for the Philadelphia House of Refuge (1848). From that point he secured a steady stream of commissions. In the 1850s he designed three hotels in Philadelphia: the Girard House (1852), La Pierre House (1853), and the Continental Hotel (1858). He also designed churches, private residences, and commercial structures. During the Civil War, McArthur was responsible for designing and erecting twenty-four temporary hospitals as architect for the Quartermaster General's Department in Philadelphia. Following the war, he became Architect to the Department of the Navy and in 1871 Superintendent of Federal buildings under construction in Philadelphia.

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<sup>64</sup> This summary of the Second Empire style is drawn from Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, "Second Empire/Mansard Style 1860 – 1900," <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/second-empire.html>

During the post-War years, McArthur designed several structures notable for their mansard roofs, including the residence of Dr. David Jayne (1865), the Public Ledger Building (1866), the residence of George W. Childs (1869), and Pardee Hall at Lafayette College (1873). In 1874, McArthur was offered the position of Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department when Alfred B. Mullett resigned. McArthur declined the appointment, stating that the Philadelphia City Hall project, now finally underway, was of "more account to any architect than the management of the public buildings of the United States at a beggarly salary, and hampered and pestered by political intriguers." McArthur devoted the balance of his life to the Philadelphia City Hall and died on January 8, 1890, a full decade before his chief monument was completed.<sup>65</sup>

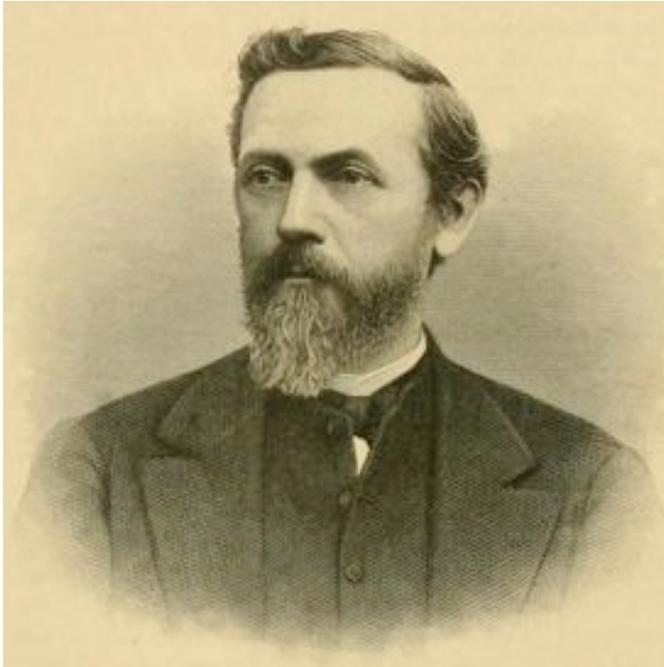


Figure 19. John McArthur, Jr., 1823-1890.

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<sup>65</sup> Roger W. Moss, "Biography of John McArthur Jr.," Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Website, [https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar\\_display.cfm/27058](https://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/27058)

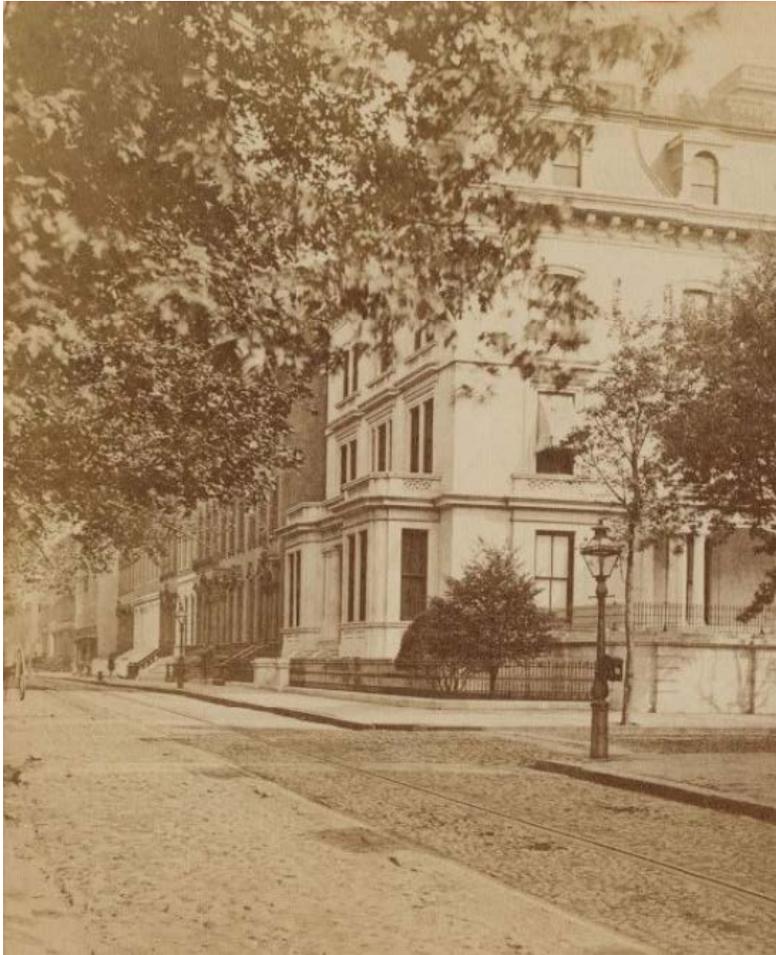


Figure 20. Looking east on Chestnut Street toward the Jayne Mansion at 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, James Cremer, photographer, c. 1880. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia, Print Department, stereo, unidentified, Streets, P.9208.4.

Architect John McArthur Jr. designed and built one of Philadelphia's earliest and most influential Second Empire buildings, a mansion for Dr. David Jayne, a wealthy purveyor of patent medicines (*Figure 20 and Figure 21*). Unfortunately, Dr. Jayne did not get a chance to occupy his impressive house; he died from pneumonia on March 5, 1866, while construction was being completed. McArthur as well as George W. Childs, the publisher of the *Public Ledger*, for whom McArthur erected a mansion and publishing house, both in the Second Empire style, served as pall bearers at Jayne's funeral.<sup>66</sup> Completed soon after Jayne's death, the marble-clad mansion was described at the time in great detail by the *Evening Telegraph*:

The grand edifice now approaching completion occupies four lots at the southeast corner of Chestnut and Nineteenth streets. Its erection was commenced in December, 1863. ... The building itself is 60 feet front, by 106 feet in depth, including the fine conservatory in the rear. ... It is four stories in height, of pure white marble, every block of which was brought from the celebrated quarries at Lee, Mass. There is nowhere in this city a more imposing exterior. Marble is not a material that is greatly improved by excessive ornamentation, and the projector has

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<sup>66</sup> "The remains were then carried to the hearse by the following pallbearers: ... John McArthur, Jr., George W. Childs...", reported in "Obsequies of Dr. D. Jayne," *Evening Telegraph*, March 10, 1866, p. 8.

shown good taste in omitting filigree work, and depending on massiveness for effect. The Chestnut and Nineteenth street fronts are composed of solid marble, and are certainly the very perfection of beauty. It is proper to say that the whole design of the building was made by John McArthur, Jr., aided by his efficient assistants Messrs. Andrews, Summers, and Pierson, in constant consultation with Dr. Jayne himself, who had a keen and cultivated appreciation of propriety and fitness in all such matters. ... While there is nothing gaudy or offensive to good taste about it, the brilliancy is of so overwhelming a character as to almost defy description.<sup>67</sup>

At the turn of the century, Moses King observed that “This great white marble mansion—still unsurpassed—has been one of Philadelphia's most noticeable structures for a generation.”<sup>68</sup> McArthur's marble-clad mansion exhibited all of the characteristics of the Second Empire style, including a solidity and massiveness, arched window openings with elaborate window surrounds, double-hung windows that appeared as casements, a strong bracketed cornice, and, most importantly a concave mansard roof with dormers and cresting. One block east of the site where the marble rowhouses at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street would be erected in 1869, McArthur's Jayne Mansion undoubtedly exerted a strong influence on the design of the trio.



Figure 21. Jayne Mansion, Nineteenth and Chestnut Streets, 1866, photographed in 1901. Source: King, Moses, *Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians* (New York: Blanchard Press, Isaac H. Blanchard Co., 1901), p. 64.

<sup>67</sup> “A Philadelphia Home: The Palatial Residence Built by the Late Dr. David Jayne,” *Evening Telegraph*, June 6, 1866, p. 8.

<sup>68</sup> Moses King, *Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians* (New York: Blanchard Press, Isaac H. Blanchard Co., 1901), p. 64.



Figure 22. Public Ledger Building, John McArthur, architect, 1866; Bartlett & French, photographer, c. 1868. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia, Print Department, stereo, Bartlett & French, Business, P.9466.2.

The Public Ledger Building, which stood at the southwest corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, was one of Philadelphia's first large, commercial, Second Empire style buildings and exhibited many of the characteristics and features of the style (*Figure 22*). John McArthur designed the Public Ledger Building for George W. Childs, who had purchased the *Public Ledger* newspaper with partner Anthony J. Drexel in December 1864. Upon buying the paper, Childs completely changed its policy and methods, making it one of the most influential and respected newspapers in the country. Construction began in July 1866 and the building was completed one year later in June 1867.<sup>69</sup> McArthur's six-story building featured a five-story stone façade with a mansard at the sixth story. The stone façade was heavily articulated with tall arched openings with casement windows. A broad, bracketed cornice topped the stone façade. The convex mansard with corner pavilions was clad in slate, included dormers, and topped by cresting. Despite the high glass to stone ratio, the building was robust and powerful. In 1867, *Scientific American* observed that:

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,

<sup>69</sup> "The Building Burned," *The Times*, December 7, 1892, p. 2.

which, by aid of a Mansard roof, has a height of twenty-one feet. ... There is not a more complete newspaper establishment in the world.<sup>70</sup>

Not long after constructing the Public Ledger Building for publisher George W. Childs, McArthur designed a white-marble-clad, Second Empire mansion for Childs (*Figure 23*).<sup>71</sup> Located at the southeast corner of 22<sup>nd</sup> and Walnut Streets, the mansion was completed in 1869, the same year as the marble-fronted rowhouses at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street. Child's mansion was famous for its social events. Guests included President Ulysses S. Grant, Brazilian emperor Dom Pedro II, and author Oscar Wilde. Like the nearby Jayne Mansion, the Childs Mansion was emphatically Second Empire in style, with solid, symmetrical facades of white marble ornamented by tall windows set within window surrounds and topped by a convex mansard with dormers and cresting. McArthur's gleaming white marble mansions for Jayne and Childs set the standard for elite dwellings in the Rittenhouse neighborhood in the 1860s.

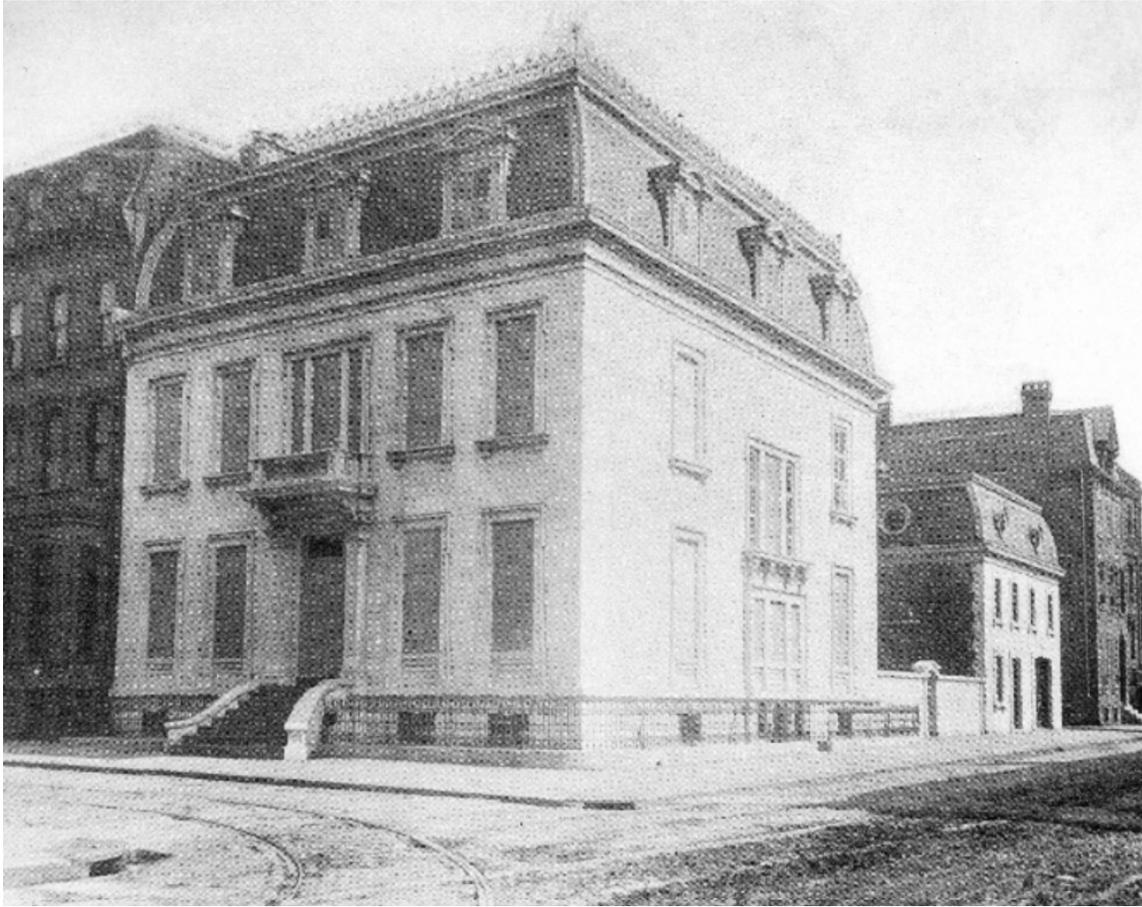


Figure 23. The George W. Childs Mansion, 22<sup>nd</sup> and Walnut Streets, c. 1890. Photographed in 1960, apparently from George E. Vickers, *The Katharine Series, Story of An American City, 1892-1893*, 1899; City of Philadelphia, Department of Records, Asset ID 296.

<sup>70</sup> "A Philadelphia Newspaper Establishment," *Scientific American*, July 6, 1867, v. 17, no. 1, p. 10.

<sup>71</sup> In 1887, Childs commissioned McArthur to design monuments for the graves of United States Army war heroes buried at West Point. See "Monuments for Heroes' Graves," *Semi-Weekly New Era* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania), June 18, 1887, p. 5.

McArthur's most famous Second Empire building is unquestionably Philadelphia's marble-clad City Hall (*Figure 24*). In 1869, McArthur won a design competition to plan a new city hall building in Philadelphia to be constructed on the site of William Penn's original Centre Square at the intersection of Broad and Market Streets. Construction began in 1871 and lasted 30 years, although the building was first occupied in 1889. Completed in 1901, the Second Empire style building is adorned with over 200 sculptures and topped with the famous bronze statue of William Penn designed by Alexander Milne Calder. With its bold, solid, symmetrical, marble-clad facades, classical architectural ornament, extensive sculptural system, tall windows in surrounds, corner pavilions, and complex mansards with dormers and ornate radius hips and ridge caps, City Hall is one of the grandest Second Empire style buildings in the nation and the apotheosis of the style in North America.



Figure 24. Philadelphia City Hall looking to the southwest, c. 1910. Source: Unknown.

Although more modest than McArthur's Public Ledger Building, Jayne and Childs mansions, and Philadelphia City Hall, the rowhouses at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street exhibit the essential

characteristics of the Second Empire style. The white marble facades were solid, powerful, and even massive, with tall proportions. The tall windows at the lower three floors were set in simple surrounds that ornament the façade. The windows themselves were originally two-over-two double-hung windows with wide center muntins, to give the appearance of casements. The marble facades were topped by broad, bracketed cornices and mansards with dormers. While the building at 2006 Chestnut Street has been lost and the other two have been altered slightly, the survivors at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street still exhibit their Second Empire style. The buildings at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street embody distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire architectural style, and thereby satisfy Criterion for Designation D.

### Criterion C: The Marble Front

Satisfying Criterion for Designation C, the Second Empire rowhouses at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street reflect the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style. The houses were erected at a moment in history when marble facades were “all the rage.” According to marble historian Michael Austin, “highly compressed calcium carbonate,” marble, “was a social statement of wealth and opulence” in the 1860s and 1870s.<sup>72</sup> The houses at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street are two of a small number of buildings with marble facades that survive in Center City Philadelphia from the years during and immediately after the Civil War and, as such, adroitly reflect the environment of that moment that was characterized by the gleaming white, chaste, elegant, marble front.

At the start of the nineteenth century, the marble industry in the United States was small in scale, owing to obstacles and costs associated with quarrying, cutting, and transporting the stone with human and animal power. Marble was typically reserved for more expensive buildings, and even then used sparingly for steps, lintels, sills, and other trim. In Philadelphia, inferior local marble was used instead of better marble from far-flung places like Massachusetts and Vermont, owing to transportation difficulties. With the advent of steam engines in the first half of the nineteenth century, the marble industry progressed very rapidly. As Elise Madeleine Ciregna explained in her doctoral dissertation, *The Lustrous Stone: White Marble in America, 1780-1860*, steam power technology revolutionized the marble industry in the United States between 1830 and 1860. Although canals already facilitated the movement of heavy cargos in the early nineteenth century, the advent of steam-powered railroads in the 1830s truly changed the marble industry. Railroads offered many advantages over canals. Railroads were less dependent on the seasons and weather conditions; they operated year-round in all kinds of weather and were less impacted by flooding. With the standardization of railroad track sizes, freight cars, and associated components, stone could easily be moved from the quarry to the processing facility without the loading or unloading required by canals. Railroad lines could be run into the hearts of cities, where labor and markets were located. Marble historian Michael Austin put the dramatic change instigated by the development of railroads into perspective.

Prior to 1852, before the railroad came to the Rutland [Vermont] area, marble was hauled by horses or oxen to the lake [Champlain] and the canal in Whitehall, New York, for shipment to other markets. Because of the cost of such transportation and the limitations of horses or oxen, the amount of marble shipped out of the area was small. The building of the railroads helped solve much of the transportation problem for the marble industry. In 1839, for example, marble production in quarries in West Rutland was valued at barely \$10,000, but a little over a decade later, by 1850, the value had risen to \$297,000. The marble industry, with more workers, more demand and better transportation, had entered a boom cycle.<sup>73</sup>

Steam not only powered the trains that transported marble, it powered the new machines to cut, polish and carve marble. “Taking advantage of rapid improvements in steam power technology, marble and stone works developed new types of equipment that eliminated much of the onerous manual labor of cutting and sawing blocks of marble. ... With specific processes and functions divided into specific departments—including sawing, rubbing, polishing, and carving—elements and products could be replicated quickly and uniformly, maximizing production and minimizing the need for manual carving. ...

<sup>72</sup> Michael Louis Austin, *Carving out a sense of place: The making of the Marble Valley and the Marble City of Vermont* (University of New Hampshire, Durham, Doctoral Dissertation, 2002), pp. 39-40.

<sup>73</sup> Michael Louis Austin, *Carving out a sense of place: The making of the Marble Valley and the Marble City of Vermont* (University of New Hampshire, Durham, Doctoral Dissertation, 2002), pp. 16-17.

[I]ncreasingly, firms had taken advantage of improvements in steam power technology in other industries, notably railroads, to develop new types of equipment that could mechanize much of the initial manual labor of cutting and sawing blocks of marble, and other steps along production. The prevalence of large marble concerns was most evident in Philadelphia; these firms were especially known for their progressiveness in acquiring and developing modern machinery. ... One of the earliest of the new, progressive marble yards was that of Edwin Greble."<sup>74</sup>

Writing of Philadelphia's manufacturing industry in 1859, Edwin Troxell Freedley declared that:

Marble, as a building material, is used more extensively in Philadelphia than in any other American city. ... There are now about sixty marble yards in Philadelphia, employing on average, about eight hundred and forty hands, and executing work to the amount of \$860,000 annually. ... The trade in Marble, as an important pursuit, is of comparatively recent origin; but probably in no other has the adoption of improved facilities been more rapid or general. Less than twenty-five years ago, all Marble was sawed by the friction of a saw, aided by sharp sand, pushed backward and forward by manual force. Now, Marble is sawed, rubbed, and polished by steam power. ... The rapidity with which a rough block of Marble can be converted into highly-finished product is ... astonishing. There are now six steam mills in Philadelphia for sawing and preparing Marble; and some of them are the most extensive, complete, and best-arranged mills of the kind in the entire Union.<sup>75</sup>

Freedley identified William Struthers, "successor and representative of the house of John Struthers, and J. Struthers & Son," as "the most successful and eminent of the workers in marble in Philadelphia." Freedley listed the many marble buildings in Philadelphia and elsewhere executed by the Struthers family, including "many of the elegant stores and mansions which enhance the architectural beauty of the city."<sup>76</sup> The Struthers maintained a marble yard two blocks west of the buildings in question, on the 2200 block of Chestnut Street (*Figure 25*).

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<sup>74</sup> Elise Madeleine Ciregna, *The Lustrous Stone: White Marble in America, 1780-1860* (University of Delaware, Doctoral Dissertation, 2015), pp. 177-178, 295.

<sup>75</sup> Edwin Troxell Freedley, *Philadelphia and Its Manufactures: A Hand-book Exhibiting the Development, Variety, and Statistics of the Manufacturing Industry of Philadelphia in 1857* (Philadelphia: Edward Young, 1859), 360-367.

<sup>76</sup> Edwin Troxell Freedley, *Philadelphia and Its Manufactures: A Hand-book Exhibiting the Development, Variety, and Statistics of the Manufacturing Industry of Philadelphia in 1857* (Philadelphia: Edward Young, 1859), 366.

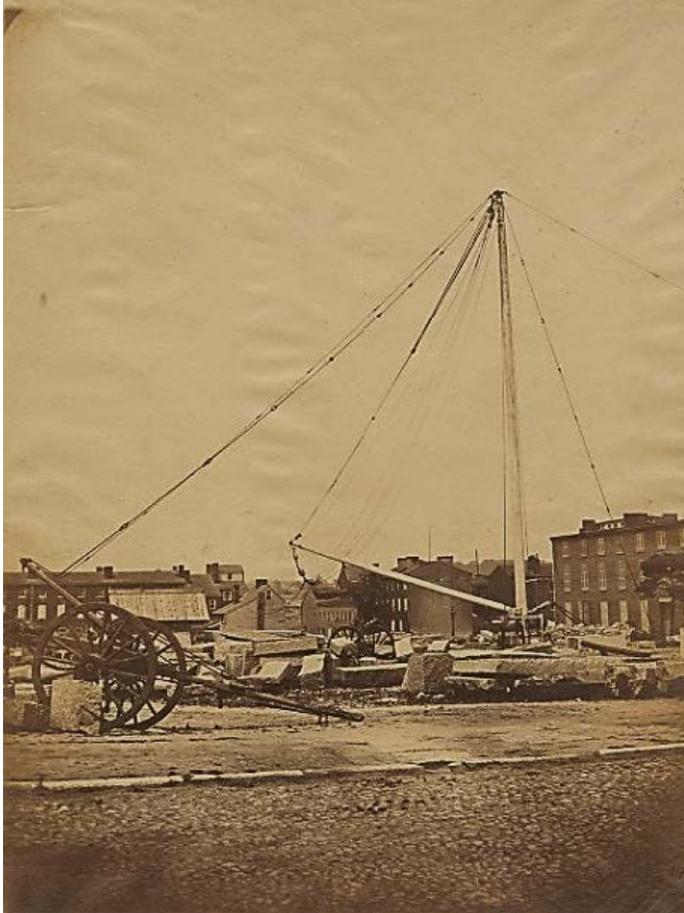


Figure 25: J. Struthers & Sons, marble yard, 22nd and Chestnut Streets, August 1858. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia.

A review of the marble industry in 1870 identified Philadelphia as the primary marble processing and distribution site in the country.

The preparation of marble for architectural purposes was not improved in method until a comparatively recent period. The pick, saw, and chisel were for ages the only instruments; but as the finish of the finer kinds of marble required extra labor, it was no wonder that this country of labor-saving machinery was the first to introduce contrivances to perform the process of sawing, grinding, and polishing with more expedition and less expenditure of manual skill. One of the principal establishments in the United States where this has been introduced is that of John Baird, in Philadelphia. That city is a depot for the supply of adjacent States, principally those south and west. Baird's marble-works have two steam-mills, one of which is claimed to be the largest in the United States. ... The works erected in 1865 by Mr. Baird on the Schuylkill River are the largest ever constructed. The main building is 255 feet long and 75 feet wide, contains eighteen gangs of saws, eleven rip-saws, and is capable of sawing a hundred thousand cubic feet of marble a year (*Figure 26*). ... The locality of these works is unsurpassed. The competing railroad lines, and the navigation of the Schuylkill River, are a perfect guarantee against transportation monopolies.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> "Marble Manufacture," *The Manufacturer and Builder*, vol. 6, no. 2, June 1870, 161-162.

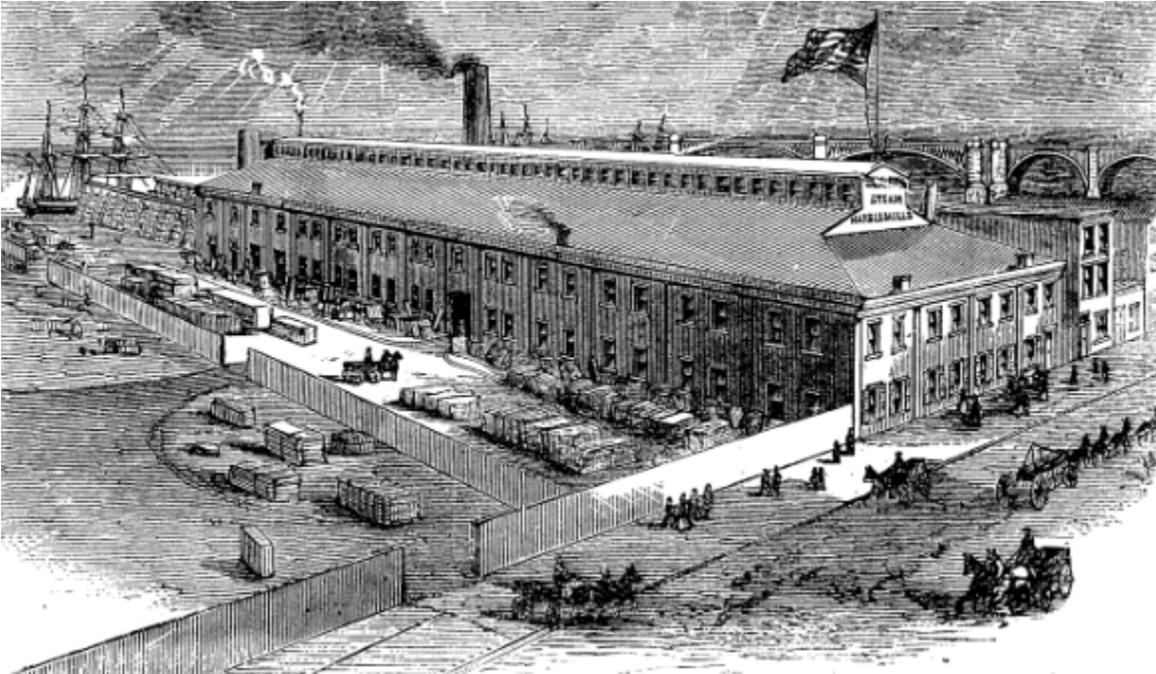


Figure 26. John Baird's marble yard at 24<sup>th</sup> and Locust Streets on the Schuylkill River, the largest in the United States, 1870. Source: "Marble Manufacture," *The Manufacturer and Builder*, vol. 6, no. 2, June 1870, 161-162.

By 1869, when the marble-fronted mansions at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street were erected, marble fronts were "all the rage." Musing about Clark & Biddle's new jewelry store at 1124 Chestnut Street, an anonymous observer noted in the *Evening Telegraph* in 1869 that "Well, then, since of late marble is all the rage, of course Messrs. Clark & Biddle have a marble front. It rises to the height of four stories, chaste and simple, yet sufficiently ornamented to save it from the accusation of absolute plainness."<sup>78</sup> An announcement for the opening of a new hotel at Broad and Thompson Streets proclaimed in 1870 that "The Hotel ... has A MARBLE FRONT ON BROAD STREET, and presents a most chaste and elegant exterior."<sup>79</sup> In 1875, Philadelphia stone distributor Caldwell & Camp advertised "pure white marble from Beaver Dam Quarries" to "architects and builders," with the claim that "A MARBLE FRONT will add three times its cost to the value of their property, besides inducing quick sales."<sup>80</sup> Not everyone was seduced by marble facades. In 1869, *The Workingman's Advocate*, the official organ of the National Labor Union, warned about the dark side of conspicuous consumption. "Rich and poor all about us. And which are the happier? God knows. We know. The brownstone fronts – the marble fronts – the expensive palaces are all well enough, but they are filled with more furniture than happiness."<sup>81</sup>

In the 1860s and early years of the 1870s, several Second Empire residences with marble facades were constructed in Philadelphia. The Marble Terrace on the south side of the 3200-block of Chestnut Street typified the developments (*Figure 27*). Described at the time as "elegant full marble-front dwellings," the Second Empire rowhouses were constructed by C.M.S. Leslie, "a prominent builder and skilled

<sup>78</sup> "Clark & Biddle's new jewelry store," *Evening Telegraph*, April 30, 1869, p. 8.

<sup>79</sup> "New Hotel and Restaurant," *Evening Telegraph*, May 4, 1870, p. 4.

<sup>80</sup> Caldwell & Camp advertisement, *The Times*, June 19, 1875, p. 4.

<sup>81</sup> *The Workingman's Advocate*, April 24, 1869, p. 1.

conveyancer,” and John Rice, “who was extensively interested in real estate in West Philadelphia,” in 1870.<sup>82</sup>



Figure 27. The Marble Terrace on the south side of the 3200-block of Chestnut Street, C.M.S. Leslie and John Rice, developer and builders, 1871. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia, Print Department, stereo, Newell, Residences, P.9299.25.

At the same moment in the 1860s and early 1870s that developers were erecting marble-fronted houses in Philadelphia’s elegant residential neighborhoods around Rittenhouse Square and in West Philadelphia, they were constructing marble-fronted stores in the city’s burgeoning commercial district centered on Market and Chestnut Streets east of Broad Street. In 1862, the *Inquirer* reported that “the old Burd Mansion is now daily crumbling beneath the stroke of the hammer, and its venerable face of massive, but modest simplicity, will be replaced by tall marble fronted stores, bright, brilliant and emblematic of the youthful present.”<sup>83</sup> The Burd Mansion, which stood at the southwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, was demolished for an elegant, marble-fronted, commercial building. When completed, the structure was described by one guidebook as a “marble palace” and “one of the most elegant stores in the country.”<sup>84</sup> Designed by architect John McArthur Jr. and constructed by developer John Rice and marble mason William Struthers, the tripartite store housed three of Philadelphia’s most prestigious retail establishments, Howell & Brothers’ wallpaper showroom, J.E. Caldwell & Co., jewelers, and J.F. and E.B. Orne’s carpet showroom (*Figure 28 and Figure 29*).

<sup>82</sup> Real estate advertisement, *Evening Telegraph*, April 18, 1871, p. 5; “An Ex-Recorder’s Troubles,” *The Times*, May 15, 1877, p. 1; “Deaths of Prominent Citizens: John Rice,” *Inquirer*, February 4, 1880, p. 2.

<sup>83</sup> “The Old Burd Mansion,” *Inquirer*, June 3, 1862, p. 8.

<sup>84</sup> John Dainty, *Guide to Philadelphia: Its Public Buildings, Places of Amusement, Churches, Hotels, Etc., Including the Many Cemeteries in the Vicinity, with a Map of the City and Numerous Illustrations; Also, a Guide to the Principal First-class Stores in the Various Lines of Trade* (Philadelphia: John Dainty, 1866), 126.



Figure 28. Engraving of the stores at the southwest corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, where the Howell & Brothers flagship wallpaper store was located. Source: John Dainty, *Guide to Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: John Dainty, 1866).



Figure 29. Robert Newell, photograph of the stores at 9<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, ca. 1866. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia, Print Department, stereo, Newell, Streets, (6)1322.F.95c; (8)1322.F.27h.

The Howell & Brothers marble-fronted flagship store and adjacent stores burned to the ground in an enormous conflagration on January 14, 1869, just five years after it opened (*Figure 30*). In the aftermath of the fire, marble mason William Struthers, directed the shoring of the building, which was in imminent danger of collapse.<sup>85</sup> Owing to a loss of life in the fire, the coroner conducted an inquest. Architect John McArthur testified that he had “personally superintended the construction of the stores.” He provided “copies of the specifications of the three buildings” and “testified to the excellent construction.” Developer John Rice, who also constructed the Marble Terrace, testified that he “built the stores according to a contract that was rigidly adhered to.”<sup>86</sup>



Figure 30. A.H. Bosch, lithographer, Duval & Hunter, publisher, detail from Washington Hose Company of Philadelphia certificate showing the fire at stores at 9<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Street on January 14, 1869, c. 1870. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia, Print Department, Certificates - Fires and fire fighting, P.9303.11.

Elise Madeleine Ciregna observed in her doctoral dissertation, *The Lustrous Stone: White Marble in America, 1780-1860*, that “by the 1870s, while not quite a thing of the past, the urban white marble yard was quickly becoming subordinate to a newer material: granite.” She explained that:

A number of factors were responsible for the rapid decline of the ornamental marble market in the 1860s and 1870s. The most immediate and serious problem was the visible and unsightly deterioration of marble in the outdoor environment, especially in the Northeast. The qualities so prized in white marble—its lustre and translucency—proved to be significant disadvantages to its long term use....<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> “Fire on Chestnut Street,” *Evening Telegraph*, January 16, 1869, p. 8.

<sup>86</sup> “Inquest,” *Evening Telegraph*, January 29, 1869, p. 1.

<sup>87</sup> Elise Madeleine Ciregna, *The Lustrous Stone: White Marble in America, 1780-1860* (University of Delaware, Doctoral Dissertation, 2015), p. 345.

The soot and smoke in the urban industrial areas of the Northeast quickly degraded marble, which is a relatively soft and porous stone. Even Edwin Greble, who was one of Philadelphia's premier marble masons before the Civil War, turned against the stone for which he was known. Testifying to the Public Buildings Commission about the construction of City Hall in 1875, Greble, "attack[ed] at great length the manner in which the marble of [City Hall] is being put up." He stated that "I am of the opinion even at this late date it would be advantageous to change from marble to granite." Noting the color, size of slabs available, and the durability of granite over marble, Greble concluded that "the commission cannot fail to agree with me that granite is the material that should be used in the construction of [City Hall]. Pay the contractors for what they have done, remove the marble, substitute granite..."<sup>88</sup> Marble's moment had ended. The Brown Decades had begun.

The houses at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street were erected at a moment when marble facades were "all the rage." Built by William Howell, whose wallpaper showroom was housed in a marble palace, the rowhouses were likely designed by architect John McArthur Jr., who not only designed the marble wallpaper palace but also marble Rittenhouse mansions for Jayne and Child and who would design Philadelphia's marble-clad City Hall. The surviving two houses of Howell's marble-fronted row on Chestnut Street reflect the environment of Philadelphia's city center in the post-Civil War era, which was characterized by elegant, chaste, gleaming white marble buildings.

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<sup>88</sup> "Public Buildings Commission – How a Million Dollars Can Be Earned," *The Times*, July 7, 1875, p. 1.

### Criterion J: The Development of Northwest Rittenhouse Square

Until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Center City west of Broad Street was virtually undeveloped; the area was comprised mostly of open fields, pastures, clay pits, and scattered clusters of housing and industry with wharves along the Schuylkill River. As the John Hills map of 1796 documents, excepting brickyards, there was little development west of Broad Street at that time (*Figure 31*). The Hills map shows 11 clay pits and tempering facilities but few other buildings west of Broad Street between High and Cedar (Market and South Streets). The area was dedicated to producing building materials for the urban market to the east along the Delaware River.<sup>89</sup>

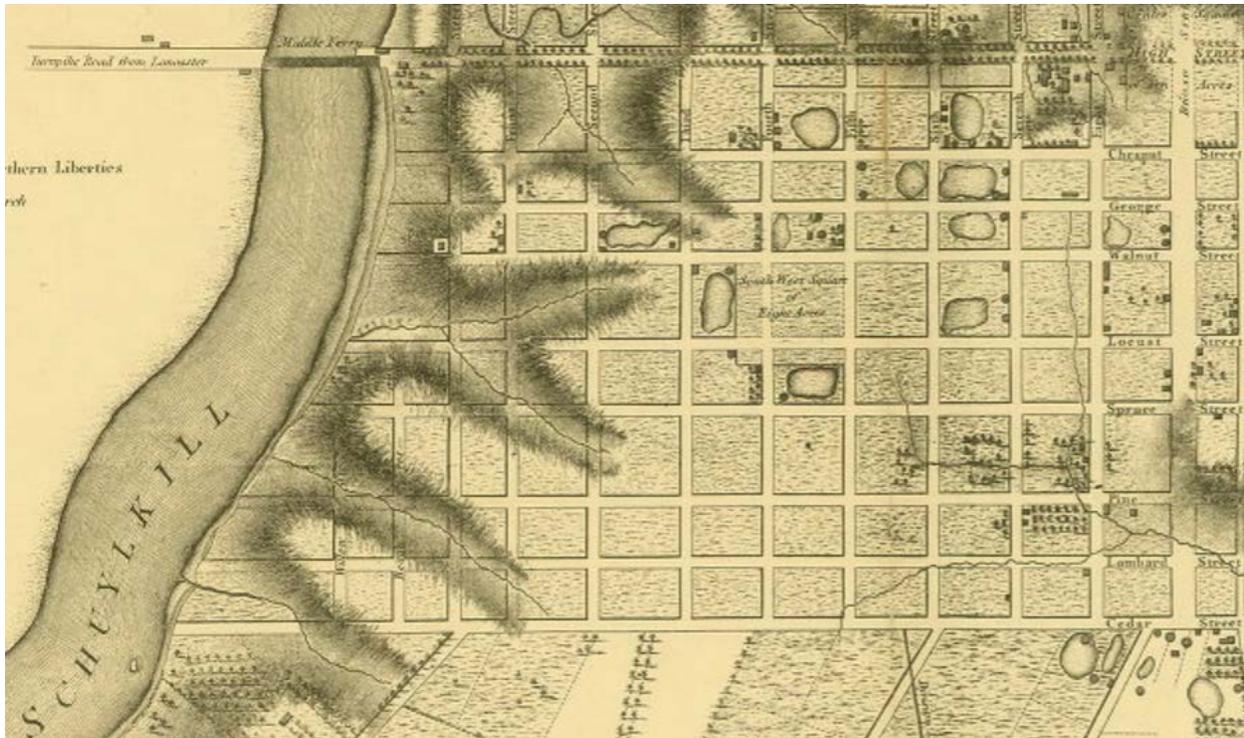


Figure 31. Detail of Philadelphia from Broad Street to the Schuylkill River and Market Street to South Street from the John Hills map, 1796. The clay pits are shown as irregular oval-shaped features. Source: Philly Geohistory.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a few industrial enterprises joined the claypits in the area, including manufacturers of earthenware, porcelain, glass, white lead, and chemicals. Most of the residents of the sparsely populated zone were laborers in the factories and at the associated docks along the Schuylkill; most rented substandard housing. By the 1830s, a wave of residential construction pushed from the east crossed Broad Street, owing to development pressure from the city's growing business district that was spreading west (*Figure 32*). Middle and upper-class Philadelphians began constructing houses, churches, and cultural institutions west of Broad Street. They employed prestigious architects, including John Haviland, who designed the 1830's Colonnade Row at 15<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, and Thomas U. Walter, who designed the porticoed Epiphany Episcopal Church opposite

<sup>89</sup> The best history of the development of the Rittenhouse neighborhood can be found in Bobbye Burke, "History and Development," in Trina Vaux, ed., *Historic Rittenhouse: A Philadelphia Neighborhood* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 1-35.

Colonnade Row.<sup>90</sup> However, development was limited to the blocks just west of Broad Street. The zone to the west to the Schuylkill River remained largely open.

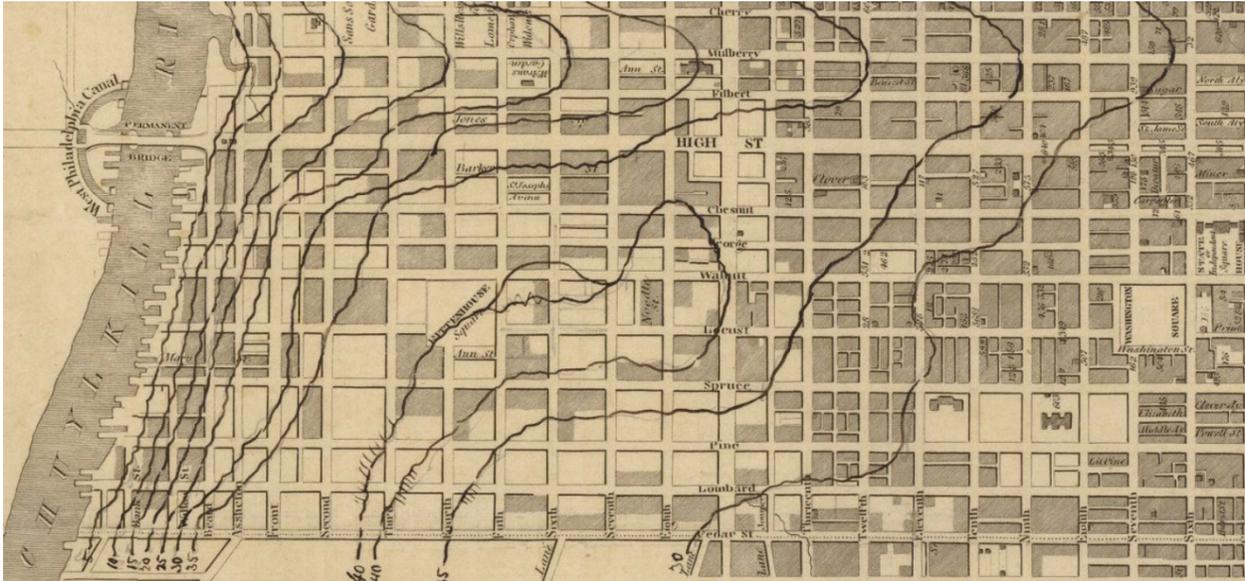


Figure 32: Detail of the *Map of the City of Philadelphia*, 1831, showing nearly complete development east of Broad Street and spotty development west of Broad. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.



Figure 33. David Johnston Kennedy, *Watercolor of Schuylkill Third and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia, 1838*. Source: Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>90</sup> Caroline A. Benenson and Jefferson M. Moak. "Center City West Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, 28 September 1987.

In 1838, when watercolorist David Johnston Kennedy captured the view from Market Street looking southwest toward the intersection of 20<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, the area was undeveloped except for a cluster of two and three-story buildings at the southwest corner of the intersection (*Figure 33*). As Kennedy noted, the block at the northeast corner of the intersection (bottom left in the watercolor) was a fenced cow pasture with a small brick building, from which milk could be purchased. In the haze of the distance, Kennedy depicted the ships and warehouses of the port district on the banks of the Schuylkill. Between the lonely cluster of buildings at 20<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut and the wharves, the land was flat, open, and undeveloped. J. C. Sidney's *Map of the City of Philadelphia* of 1849 showed that development continued to move westward from the core of the city east of Broad Street. However, excepting the buildings at the corner of 20<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, shown in the Kennedy watercolor, few structures stood on Walnut and Chestnut Streets west of Rittenhouse Square at the midpoint of the century (*Figure 34*).



Figure 34: Detail of the 1849 J. C. Sidney *Map of the City of Philadelphia*, showing development slowly creeping westward. By this time, a few buildings stood on the 2000 block of Chestnut Street. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

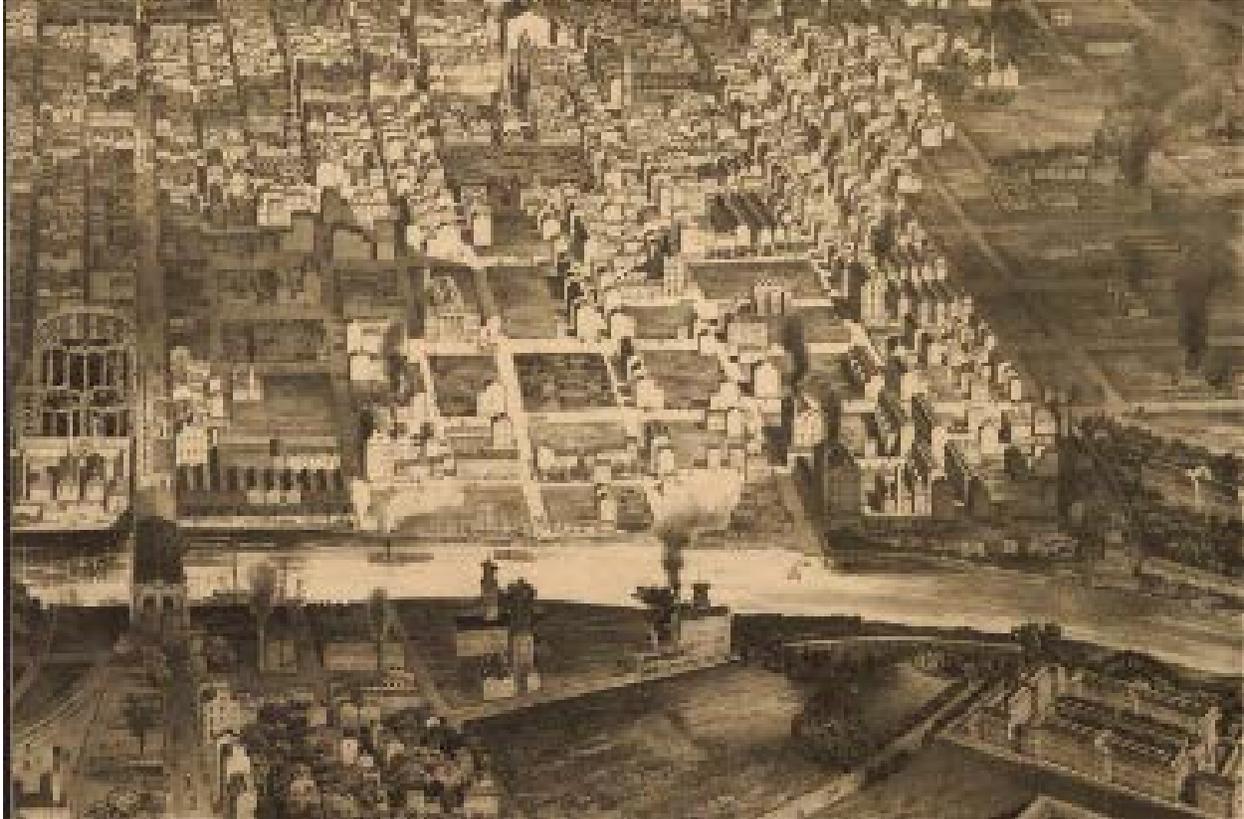


Figure 35: Detail from *Bird's Eye View of Philadelphia* with Market Street with the bridge on the left and Rittenhouse Square in the upper center of the image, John Bachmann, delineator, 1857. Source: Library of Congress.

John Bachmann's 1857 *Bird's Eye View of Philadelphia* (Figure 35) and the 1858 Hexamer & Locher map (Figure 36) document that the western edge of the Rittenhouse Square area, west of 19<sup>th</sup> Street and south of Market Street, had evolved into an industrial and commercial zone dedicated to building materials companies before the onset of the Civil War. Marble, bluestone, soapstone, sandstone, and granite yards occupied entire blocks. Lumber yards, planing mills, carpet mills, wallpaper manufacturers, carpentry shops, and sash and door manufacturers occupied other large sites. The area was close to customers at construction sites and serviced by transportation networks. Raw materials and finished goods moved by boat on the Schuylkill and train on the tracks on Market Street.

In 1849, the same year that J.C. Sidney published his atlas showing residential development creeping westward from Broad Street toward 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets, Edwin Greble relocated his marble yard from South Philadelphia to the 1700-block of Chestnut Street (Figure 37). Greble, one of Philadelphia's premier marble masons, was born on October 13, 1806, in Philadelphia, apprenticed to a marble mason in New York, but returned to Philadelphia, where he spent his adult life.<sup>91</sup> In 1829, Greble opened a

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<sup>91</sup> Greble was a director of the Franklin Institute and served as a Select Councilman from the 8<sup>th</sup> ward. He had several children including John Trout Greble, a graduate of West Point, who was killed in the early days of the Civil War in 1861, at the Battle of Big Bethel, Virginia. After his son's death, the elder Greble was very involved in activities supporting the Union cause during the Civil War and, in 1863, raised a company for the defense of Philadelphia. Greble was deeply involved in the construction of Philadelphia's City Hall, not as a supplier of stone products but as a critique of the design and vendors.

marble yard on Passyunk Road below Catharine Street, where he manufactured tombs, statues, mantels, and cemetery ornaments and cut stone, especially marble, for construction. For example, Greble advertised an Italian marble tombstone for sale at his yard in June 1835.<sup>92</sup> In 1843, Greble opened a steam-powered marble sawmill on the Willow Street Railroad between 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets. At the mill, he offered “foreign and domestic marble in the block or slab, for sale at such prices as will be satisfactory to the purchaser.”<sup>93</sup> After Greble’s yard on Passyunk Road burned in 1849, he opened a new yard at 1708-14 Chestnut Street (*Figure 38*).<sup>94</sup> Greble added a large open yard for granite on the 2000-block of Chestnut Street, at the northeast corner of 21<sup>st</sup> and George (Sansom) Streets, in 1852 (*Figure 36*).<sup>95</sup> Greble’s marble and granite yards on Chestnut Street epitomized the lifecycles of the building materials manufacturers, processors, and distributors that settled on the western edges of the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood in the decades before the Civil War. They stayed in the area for about a generation, occupying relatively cheap, open land while providing building materials for the construction projects to the east, and then selling that land for residential redevelopment when the wave of development caught up with them two and three decades later.

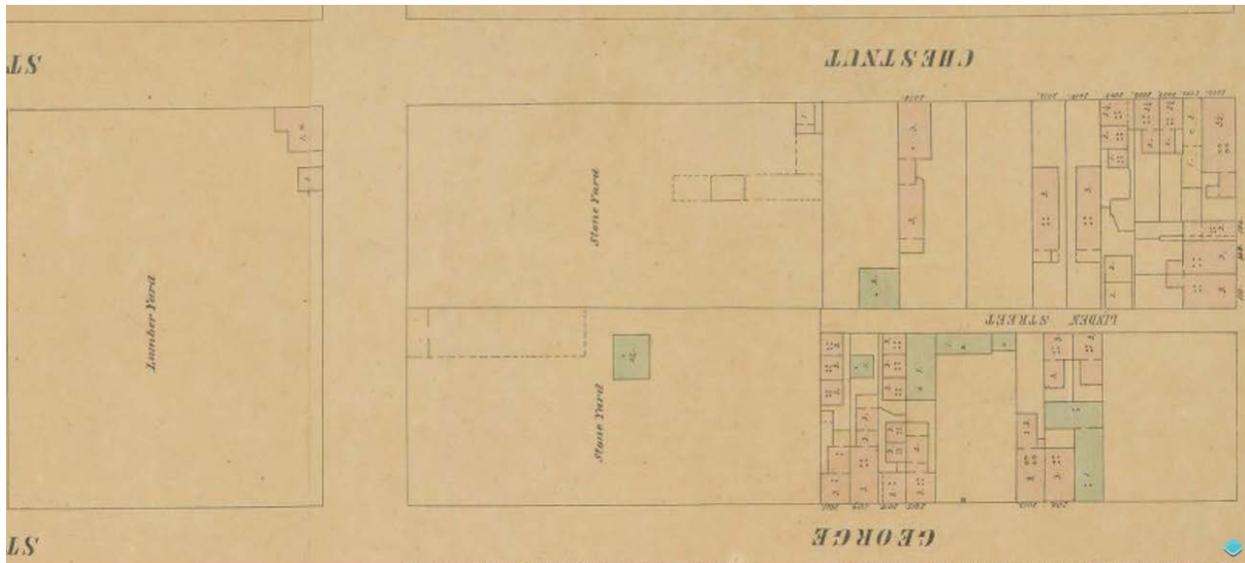


Figure 36. This map of the south side of the 2000 and 2100-blocks of Chestnut Street shows rowhouse development pushing up against two stone yards and a lumber yard. Greble’s granite yard is located at the center bottom of the image, at the northeast corner of 21<sup>st</sup> and George (Sansom) Streets. The subject properties are located at the top right corner of the detail, at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street. Hexamer and Locher, *Maps of the City of Philadelphia*, Volume 3, Plate 40, 1858. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

<sup>92</sup> “Marble Tombstone,” *Inquirer*, June 23, 1835, p. 3.

<sup>93</sup> Advertisement, *Public Ledger*, November 27, 1843, p. 1.

<sup>94</sup> The address of Greble’s yard is listed as “N W P[assyunk] road and Christian” in the 1849 city directory and as “Chestnut W Sch 6th” in the 1850 directory. Greble’s steam-powered marble sawmill experienced a devastating boiler explosion in 1849 but was apparently repaired. See: “Explosion of a Steam Boiler,” *Public Ledger*, December 1, 1849, p. 1.

<sup>95</sup> Deeds conveying the property from John G. Phillips et. Al. to Edwin Greble, March 27, 1852, Philadelphia Department of Records, TH-22-354-369.



Figure 37. Portrait of Edwin Greble, date unknown. Source: Ancestry.com.

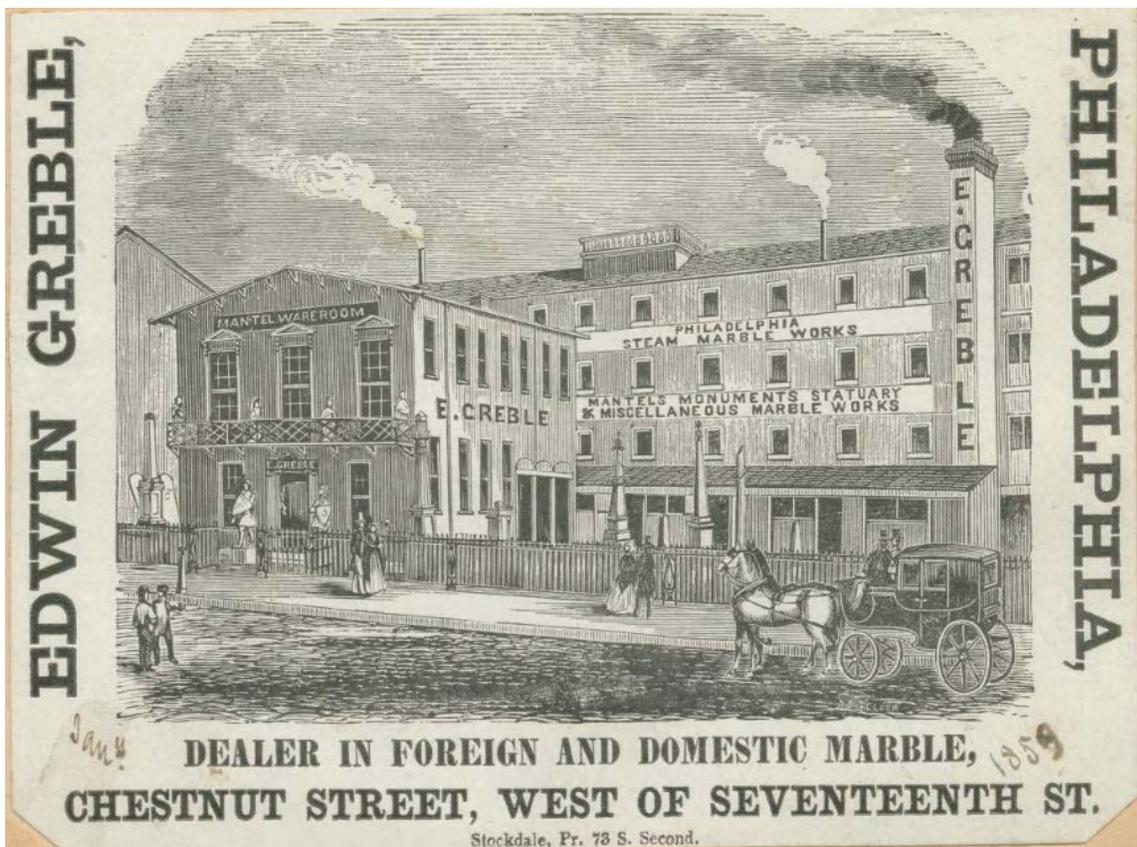


Figure 38. Edwin Greble Advertisement, 1859. Source: Charles A. Poulson, Philadelphia Scrapbooks, Library Company of Philadelphia.

In the years leading up to the Civil War, the 2000-block of Chestnut Street marked a transition from the new, fashionable residential development around Rittenhouse Square to the building materials zone to the north and west. Two large stone yards, one belonging to Greble, occupied the western half of the south side of the 2000-block of Chestnut when the Hexamer and Locher plate was drawn in 1858 (*Figure 36*). The northern side of the block was a mix of vacant lots and new large houses. To the north of the new houses, toward Market Street, coal yards, one with a charcoal pulverizing plant, predominated. To the west, on the 2100-block, several stone and marble yards as well as a sawmill and lumber yard provided building materials to the booming city. To the south, along Sansom and Walnut Streets, stood uninterrupted lines of rowhouses.

The redevelopment of the area west of Rittenhouse Square continued after the Civil War, as both the building materials industry and the less fortunate were displaced for expensive new dwellings. In 1869, the *Inquirer* documented the changes.

Yesterday a reporter of this journal took a ramble through what is familiarly known as the 'West End,' or that great centre of the wealth, fashion and aristocracy of the Quaker City, bounded on the east by Broad Street, on the west by the river Schuylkill, on the north by Market street, and on the south by Pine street. Within this space is clustered the major portion of what is technically termed 'Philadelphia Society' ... the recognized fashionable quarter where our merchant princes, aristocratic old families, and better classes generally 'most do congregate.' ... One reason why the value of first-class property is enhanced at the 'West End,' is the belief that the spread of stores in the westerly direction will cease at Broad Street on the line of Walnut, Spruce, and Pine streets, leaving those streets, or the western portions of them, for many years to come, for fashionable residences only. ... On the south side of [the 2000-block of Spruce Street] are several new brown stone residences, with Mansard roofs, which are marvels of external beauty, and interior comfort and convenience. They range in price from \$30,000 to \$60,000. ... In order to make way for one of these residences, a thickly populated court was demolished, and over one hundred persons lived huddled together on the site of a single residence. This neighborhood has been purified by the demolition of ten houses on the notorious Murray street, that runs between Twentieth and Twenty-first and Spruce and Locust streets, and the characters that infested that locality have had to seek other and more congenial quarters.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> "Building Improvements – The 'West End'," *Inquirer*, August 18, 1869, p. 2.

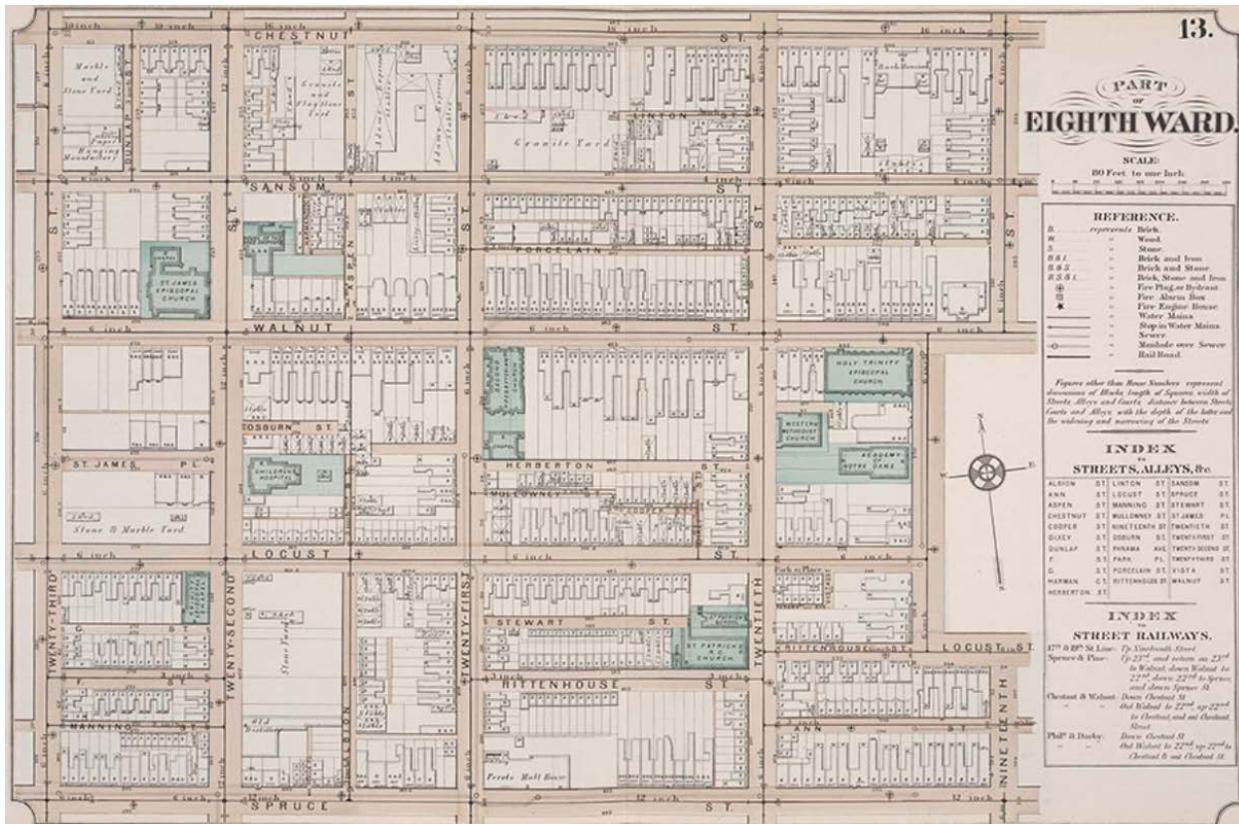


Figure 39. Plate 13 of the Jones and MacCormac Atlas of 1874, which depicts the area west of Rittenhouse Square between 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets and Chestnut and Spruce Streets, shows that most of the area had been redeveloped with rowhouses. G.H. Jones, publisher and Walter S. MacCormac, C.E., surveyor, *Atlas of Philadelphia, 5th, 7th & 8th Wards*, Plate 13, 1874. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia, Map Collection.

The Jones and MacCormac Atlas of 1874 indicates that, while the building materials industry continued to occupy the Schuylkill Riverbank and the adjacent inland blocks, residential development was spreading from the area around Rittenhouse Square to the north and west (Figure 39). During the decades after the Civil War, the construction boom facilitated by the building materials industry displaced that same industry, the stone and lumber yards and mills, dispersing them to less expensive real estate on the fringes of development. In his *Official Guidebook to Philadelphia* of 1876, Thompson Westcott narrated as he traveled west on Chestnut Street; he noted several new buildings including the Baptist Publication Society at 15<sup>th</sup> Street, the Colonnade Hotel and Reform Club to the west, and the Philadelphia Institute and Tabernacle Baptist Church at 18<sup>th</sup> Street. “Beyond,” to the west of 18<sup>th</sup> Street on Chestnut, Westcott observed, “is a succession of mansions of marble, brownstone and brick, some of them particularly large and costly.”<sup>97</sup> Erected in 1869, Howell’s marble-fronted row at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street were three of the new mansions that impressed Westcott.

The Jones & MacCormac atlas shows that marble mason Edwin Greble’s granite yard at the southwest corner of the 2000-block of Chestnut Street, at 21<sup>st</sup> and Sansom, was surrounded by new rowhouses by 1874, just five years after Howell’s marble-fronted row at 2006, 2008, and 2010 Chestnut Street was completed (Figure 40). A few years later, in 1877, Greble gave into the residential development pressure

<sup>97</sup> Thompson Westcott, *The Official Guidebook to Philadelphia: A Handbook for Strangers and Citizens* (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1876), 393.

and redeveloped his granite yard, as he explained in a fascinating letter to his son, which merits extensive quotation.

Business has been fearfully dull, I have had plenty of time to myself, have all the books posted up, bills made out, made drawings, estimates and offers to sell at very moderate prices, but made little success until within the last week. ... I have sold to Mr. Charles W. Budd, the builder, son of Mr. John Budd, the whole part of my granite yard [at 21<sup>st</sup> and Sansom Streets], 115 feet by 120 feet deep, he takes it on ground rent, the principal \$36,000. that is \$6,000 on each lot, he divides it into 6 fronts, the two outside ones being 19'.6", the four middle ones 19'.0". I am to advance him \$5,000 on each house, he has given me six mortgages each for \$11,000 which are recorded, the houses or rather the fronts are to be of white marble and green stone, the two center houses project 4 inches from the others, with a row of white marble quoins on each corner, as there will also be on the corner of the two outside houses. I am to do the Marble and green stone work, which will amount to about \$13,000. I take the corner house on Sansom St. in part payment; ... All who have seen the plans speak highly of them and think the houses will readily sell, they will be more commodious than those opposite built by Mr. Powers; and as to outside appearance, will far surpass them; they can be sold for about \$18,000, that of mine will sell for about \$1200 more. We have the lot cleared, the smith shop taken down, and the cellars are about half dug out. I shall have to purchase a very small portion of Marble beside the watertable and ashlar. I have three men selecting the Marble out of the stock, and it is astonishing the quantity of good Marble that has been covered up for years. I can get all the steps, platforms, sills, heads, quoins, base course required for the six houses. The green stone I shall have worked on the lot, when all of the Marble for the houses is got out, I shall enough room on the lot (115'.0" x 127'.6") for my wants.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Letter from Edwin Greble to his son in Zurich, who was travelling abroad for his health], September 23, 1877; *The Winterthur Library, The Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera*, Partial Transcription of Letter 1: acc. 84x77.1a-b.

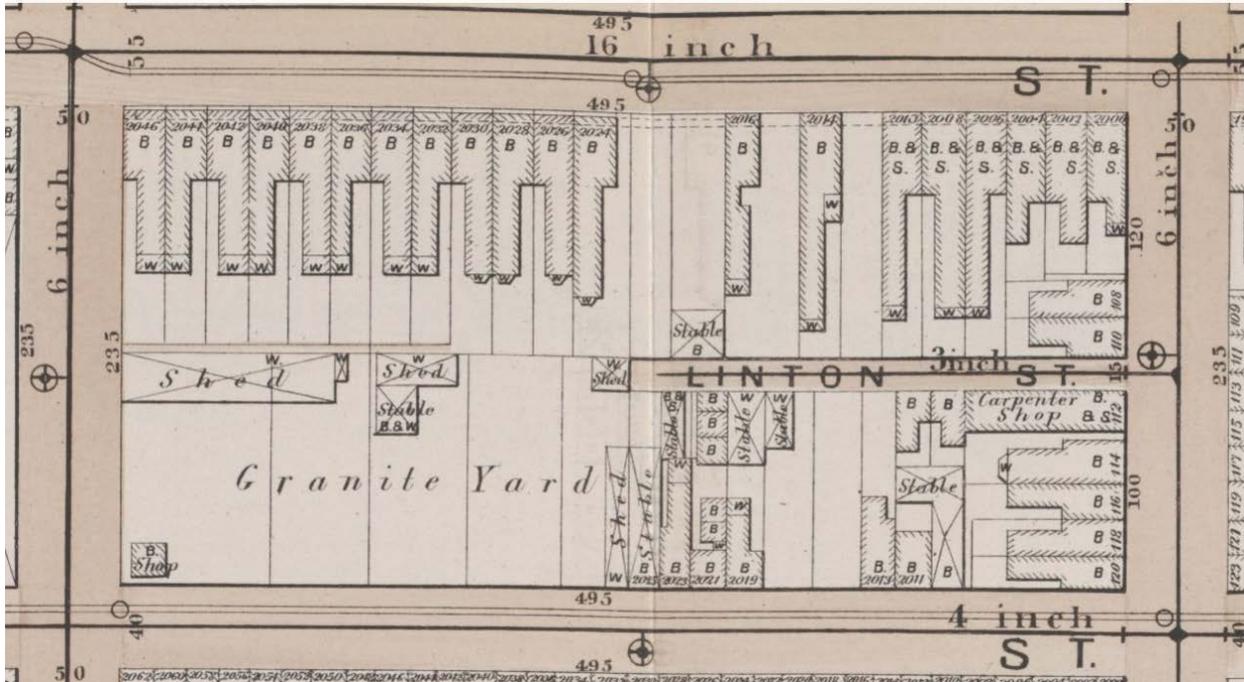


Figure 40. This detail of an 1874 map depicting the south side of the 2000-block of Chestnut Street and the north side of the 2000-block of Sansom (formerly George) Street shows that rowhouse development was overtaking the stone and lumber yards. Edwin Greble's "Granite Yard" at the southwest corner of the block was redeveloped soon after this map was published. G.H. Jones, publisher and Walter S. MacCormac, C.E., surveyor, *Atlas of Philadelphia, 5th, 7th & 8th Wards*, Plate 13, 1874. Source: Free Library of Philadelphia, Map Collection.

Real estate developer Charles W. Budd erected Second Empire serpentine-clad rowhouses with marble trim on Greble's granite yard in 1877 and 1878 (Figure 41). The Bromley Atlas of 1885 shows that the block bound by Chestnut, 20<sup>th</sup>, Sansom, and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets had been completely developed with large dwellings for the upper-middle class by that time (Figure 42). Greble died on October 23, 1883. In his will, the marble mason left his houses at 21<sup>st</sup> and Sansom, where his granite yard had been located, to his family. He left his marble yard on the 1700-block of Chestnut Street to his family as well, with instructions to either rent the business "or if found to be more advantageous to sell or rent the ground for building purposes."<sup>99</sup> His heirs elected to close Greble's stone yard on the 1700-block of Chestnut Street and redevelop the property. In 1886, the *Inquirer* reported that "a force of men are now engaged in demolishing the building attached to Greble's marble yard, on Chestnut Street above Seventeenth. The property has been sold, and a large business house will be erected on the site, thus doing away with another landmark."<sup>100</sup> Greble's heirs commissioned Willis Hale, who erected a "fine store" known as the Greble Building on the site, portending the next wave of redevelopment in the area.<sup>101</sup> Charles Caffrey erected a large brick building for his carriage showroom on the western half of the Greble site, at 1712-14 Chestnut Street. The 1895 atlas shows that the Greble and Caffrey buildings were early commercial incursions into the largely residential neighborhood (Figure 43). Over the next few decades, the commercial would overtake the residential neighborhood.

<sup>99</sup> Will of Edwin Greble, December 14, 1882, Wills, No 1024-1058, 1883, Pennsylvania, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1683-1993, Ancestry.com.

<sup>100</sup> *Inquirer*, July 30, 1886, p. 3.

<sup>101</sup> The Greble Building, which survives, was described as "five story and basement. The first story will be iron, the remaining will be of brick and rock-faced stone with terra-cotta set in. It is for the Greble (sic) Estate." *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders Guide*, vol. 1, June 14, 1886, p. 271.



Figure 41. The Second Empire rowhouses erected by Charles W. Budd in 1877 and 1878 on the former Edwin Greble granite yard at 21<sup>st</sup> and Sansom Streets. Greble provided the marble and serpentine stone for the project and retained ownership of several of the houses, which he willed to his family on his death. Source: Google Streetview.

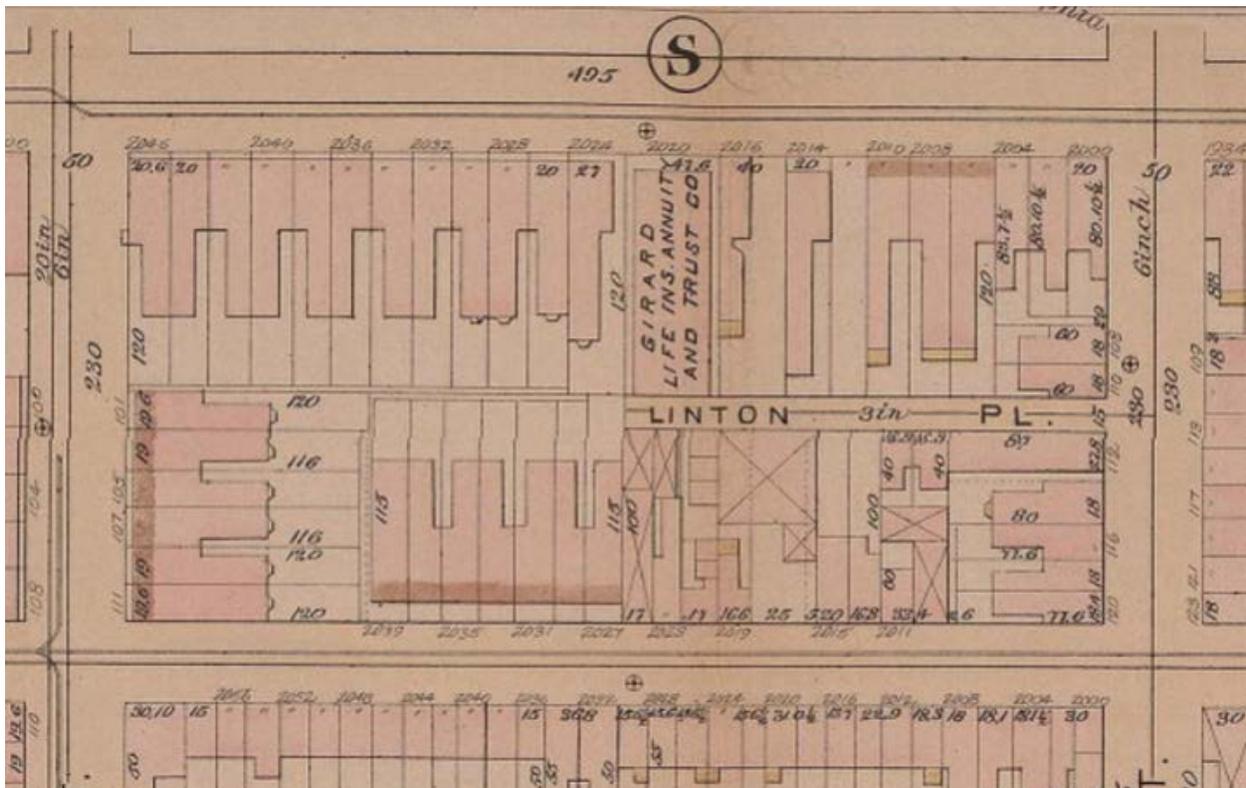


Figure 42. An 1885 atlas shows that the Edwin Greble granite yard at the southwest corner of the block had been redeveloped with rowhouses. Geo. W. & Walter S. Bromley, *Civil Engineers, Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*, Vol. 1, Plate R, 1885.



Figure 43. The 1895 Bromley Atlas shows that the area surrounding the 1700 block of Chestnut Street was developed primarily with residential rowhouses, excepting the Greble and Caffrey Buildings at 1708-14 Chestnut Street. George W. & Walter S. Bromley, Civil Engineers, *Atlas of the City of Philadelphia*, 1895, Plate 2.

The upscale residential neighborhood north and west of Rittenhouse Square lost its luster after about two generations. For example, architect John McArthur Jr. designed the white marble mansion for newspaper owner George W. Childs in 1869. Childs resided in the elegant mansion at the southeast corner of 22<sup>nd</sup> and Walnut Streets until his death in 1894. By 1899, the once-gleaming marble house, where presidents, generals, and Oscar Wilde had dined, was considered for reuse as the base of a high-rise apartment house (*Figure 44*). Under the headline “George W. Childs’ Famous Mansion to be Made a Sky-scraper Apartment House,” *The Times* reported that:

Another historic landmark falls before the encroaching trend of the New Philadelphia. The marble mansion at the southeast corner of Twenty-second and Walnut streets, in which George W. Childs lived and died, is to be turned into an apartment house.<sup>102</sup>

In 1907, under the headline “Its glory all gone,” the *Inquirer* reported that “Geo. W Childs’ famous marble mansion now vacant.” Less than four decades after its construction, by 1907, the white marble mansion was abandoned and decrepit.

At the southeast corner of Twenty-second and Walnut streets stands a white marble residence, for many years untenanted, that to the younger generation is simply a vacant house, and nothing more. But to the middle-aged and elderly it is full of the most interesting memories, and

<sup>102</sup> “George W. Childs’ Famous Mansion to be Made a Sky-scraper Apartment House,” *The Times* (Philadelphia), July 2, 1899, p. 19.

many shed a silent tear or two as they contrast its past glories with its present forlorn and dirty condition.<sup>103</sup>



Figure 44. “George W. Childs’ Famous Mansion to be Made a Sky-scraper Apartment House,” *The Times Philadelphia*, July 2, 1899, p. 19.

Likewise, John McArthur Jr.’s white marble mansion for patent medicine millionaire Dr. David Jayne, which stood at the southeast corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets and was considered the finest house in the city when it was completed in 1866, was vacant by 1901. It was marketed for redevelopment in 1911, when a real estate agent advertised it in the *Inquirer* as “just ripe for development, hotel, apartment house, or theater. Terms reasonable.”<sup>104</sup> In 1913, the Jayne Mansion was considered for adaptive reuse as a café and restaurant.<sup>105</sup> In 1915, a 15-story office building was planned for the site, but it was never erected. In 1919, the Jayne heirs permitted the American Legion to briefly use the vacant house for meetings. At the time, the *Evening Public Ledger* noted the change in the neighborhood, observing that “the fine old marble residence preserves a local atmosphere that is

<sup>103</sup> “Its glory all gone,” *Inquirer*, May 23, 1907, p. 2. The Childs Mansion survived until 1970, when it was consumed by fire. See: Fire Destroys Midcity ‘Marble Palace’ Where Presidents Dined,” *Philadelphia Daily News*, March 16, 1970, p. 4.

<sup>104</sup> “Jayne Mansion,” *Inquirer*, October 15, 1911, p. 42.

<sup>105</sup> “Review of Week in Real Estate,” *Inquirer*, September 7, 1913, p. 25; “To Alter Jayne Mansion,” *Inquirer*, October 17, 1913, p. 11.

becoming very rarified as structures which formerly used to give the town its distinctive character are passing away.”<sup>106</sup> In 1921, the marble Jayne Mansion was demolished for the Aldine Movie Theater (Figure 45). A columnist in the *Inquirer* reported in 1921 that “the old Jayne mansion at Nineteenth and Chestnut streets, which at one time was regarded as the most stately home in the city, but has been unoccupied for years, has at last been gobbled up by the movie magnates and will one of these days be transformed into one of the handsome playhouses devoted to the pictures.”<sup>107</sup> The property was sold in March 1921, the house was demolished in April, and the movie palace was quickly constructed.<sup>108</sup> In 1923, a commentator in the *Inquirer* lamented the change.

This city is rapidly losing a feature which was once conspicuous. The mansion, as it was styled, is becoming obsolete. Only a short time ago people pointed to the Baldwin mansion, the Yellow mansion, the Jayne mansion, the Bloomfield Moore mansion, the Childs mansion, the Pierce Butler mansion and the many mansions of other affluent citizens. Rarely now does anything that remotely resembles a mansion go up in this town. Apartment houses which rival in splendor and size a king’s palace dot the city in all sections. But old individual mansions are razed to make room for these gigantic hotels and no new ones take their place.<sup>109</sup>



Figure 45. The Jayne Mansion, southeast corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets, in 1921, just before its demolition. Source: City of Philadelphia, Department of Records, Asset ID 8839.

The marble mansion at 2006 Chestnut Street, the easternmost of the three grand houses built by William Howell in 1869, was also lost in the 1920s. Dr. James W. Holland, the Dean of the Jefferson

<sup>106</sup> “A Home for the Legion,” *Evening Public Ledger*, October 8, 1919, p. 10.

<sup>107</sup> “The Call Boy’s Chat,” *Inquirer*, April 3, 1921, p. 69.

<sup>108</sup> “Jayne Mansion Sold,” *Inquirer*, March 31, 1921, p. 9; “‘Aldine’ Theater for Jayne Mansion Site,” *Inquirer*, April 12, 1921, p. 2.

<sup>109</sup> *Inquirer*, October 30, 1923, p. 12.

Medical College, who had owned and occupied the marble-fronted house at 2006 Chestnut Street since 1891, died in 1922. Holland, who posed for a portrait by Thomas Eakins in 1899, was one of the last of the upper class to reside in the northwest corner of Rittenhouse Square, the elite enclave that only lasted about 50 years (*Figure 46*). The property was sold by the Holland family in 1923.<sup>110</sup> Its conversion to a rooming house was planned in 1926 but apparently not implemented.<sup>111</sup> The “four-story marble front residence” was sold again in 1927.<sup>112</sup> In 1928, the Second-Empire, marble-fronted rowhouse at 2006 Chestnut Street was demolished to make way for a diminutive Art Deco radio showroom designed by architects Silverman & Levy (*Figure 47*).<sup>113</sup>

Today, the houses at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street are the last of the marble mansions surviving on this section of the city. The Howell rowhouses are reminders of the transition of the neighborhood from marble yards to marble mansions in the 1860s. They are reminders of that moment in time when the marble-fronted building was an unmistakable signifier of wealth and sophistication. And, with the commercial building at 2006 Chestnut Street, which is already listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places for its Art Deco architectural qualities, they are reminders of the neighborhood’s transition from an upper-class residential enclave to a mixed-use commercial and residential neighborhood.



Figure 46. Thomas Eakins, *Dean’s Roll Call*, James W. Holland, Dean of the Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1899.

<sup>110</sup> “2006 Chestnut Street,” *Inquirer*, April 15, 1923, p. 12.

<sup>111</sup> “Rooming House,” *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, v. 41, 1926, p. 342.

<sup>112</sup> *Inquirer*, June 26, 1927, p. 16; July 2, 1927, p. 19.

<sup>113</sup> “Store Building,” *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, v. 43, 1928, p. 278.



Figure 47. The Art Deco commercial building that replaced the marble-fronted rowhouse at 2006 Chestnut Street in 2006. The surviving marble-fronted rowhouse at 2008 Chestnut Street can be seen on the right in this September 1994 photograph. Source: Department of Records Archive, Asset ID 3640.

## Conclusion

The properties at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street, known together with the lost building at 2006 Chestnut Street as the William Howell Marble-Fronted Row, are historically significant and should be listed individually on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The properties satisfy Criteria for Designation C, D, and J as delineated in Section 14-1004(1) of the Philadelphia Code. Constructed in 1869, the “marble-fronted dwellings” reflect the environment in an era characterized by buildings with marble facades, satisfying Criterion C. Additionally, the rowhouses embody distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire style, the most popular style in the decade after the Civil War, including their marble façades with decorative window and door surrounds, broad bracketed cornices, and mansards with dormers, satisfying Criterion D. Finally, the buildings at 2008 and 2010 Chestnut Street are emblematic of the transition of the area south of Market Street and west of Broad Street from vacant land and sites used by the building materials industry to a dense, upper-middle-class and upper-class residential neighborhood in the years after the Civil War and its subsequent transition to a mixed-use commercial and residential neighborhood a few generations later.

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