

ADDRESS: 723 CHURCH LN

Name of Resource: T. Ellwood Zell House

Proposed Action: Designation

Property Owner: Francis L. Bruno II

Nominator: Keeping Society of Philadelphia

Staff Contact: Alex Till, alexander.till@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes to designate the property at 723 Church Lane and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The two-and-a-half-story Wissahickon schist residential building was constructed in 1866 as the home of Lt. Col. T Ellwood Zell. The nomination contends that the building satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, I, and J.

The nomination argues that the house reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style and embodies many of the distinguishing characteristics of early Victorian Romantic architectural styles as seen on residential buildings, blending elements of the Gothic and Italianate, satisfying Criteria C & D.

The nomination also contends that the property satisfies Criterion I. The nomination asserts that the parcel is largely undisturbed land that may contain archaeological resources that may yield information important to history, specifically related to the Battle of Germantown, which occurred during the American Revolution in 1777. The claim of archaeological significance in the nomination is predicated on a newspaper article published in 1910 that reported that 20 skeletal remains of Revolutionary War soldiers were discovered on the site when the extant house was built in 1866. In December 2024, in a case known as Nadlan Properties v. Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Court of Common Pleas overturned the Historical Commission's determination that two properties in Germantown satisfied Criterion I; the Court opined that the decision "lacked sufficient evidence, and was broadly based on pure speculation." The staff suggests that the very short section on Criterion I in the current nomination, which is based on a very short newspaper article from 1910, is not sufficient to demonstrate that the property is likely to yield important information. To demonstrate that a property "may be likely to yield information important in pre-history or history" to the degree that the courts are requiring, a successful nomination of an archaeological site should provide an analysis that is equivalent to a Phase 1A archaeological assessment. This nomination fails to provide such an assessment. Moreover, the nomination proposes a Period of Significance of 1866 to 1905, which does not include the Battle of Germantown of 1777.

Finally, the nomination contends that the property satisfies Criterion J for its association with T. Ellwood Zell whose work and life impacted the economic, political, social, and historical heritage of the community.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the property at 723 Church Lane satisfies Criteria for Designation C, D, and J. The staff recommends that the nomination does not provide sufficient evidence demonstrating that the property satisfies Criterion I.



Figure 1: Photo of subject property at 723 Church Lane from Cyclomedia.

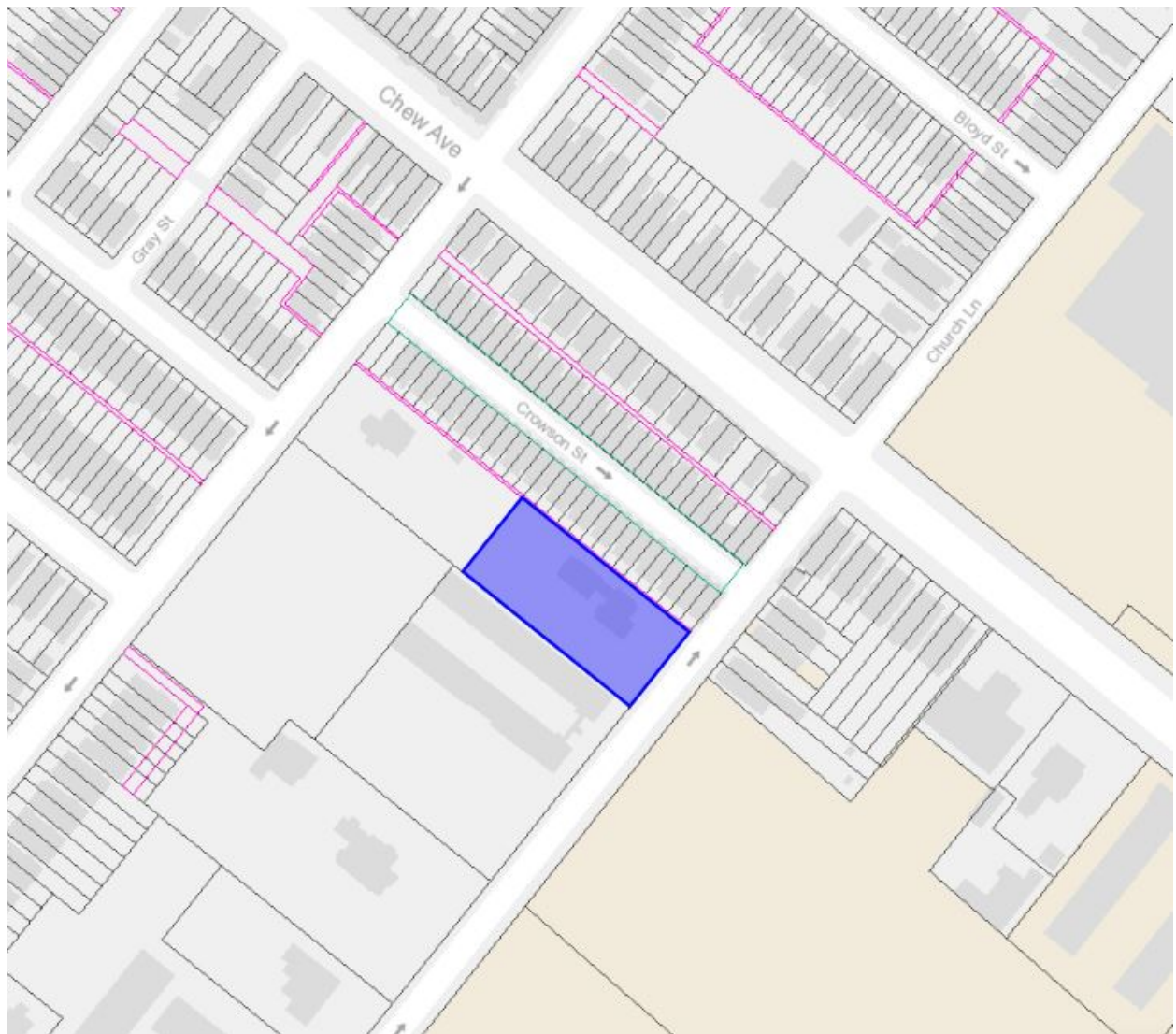


Figure 2: The subject property is located near the corner of Church Lane and Chew Avenue in the Germantown neighborhood.

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: **723 Church Lane**

Postal code: **19144**

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **The Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell House**

Current Name: **Unknown**

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building

☐ Structure

☐ Site

☐ Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☒ good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☒ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☒ unknown

Current use: 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): 1777; **1866 to 1905**

Date(s) of construction: **1866**

Architects: **Unknown**

Builders: **Unknown**

Original owners: **Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell**

Significant person: **Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell**

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: **Keeping Society of Philadelphia**

Author: **Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian**

Date: **27 August 2025**

EMAIL: **KEEPER@KEEPINGPHILADELPHIA.ORG**

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: August 28, 2025

☒ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: September 11, 2025

Date of Notice Issuance: September 11, 2025

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: FRANCIS L BRUNO II

Address: 21 Summingdale Ln

City: Hilton Head

State: SC

Postal Code: 29926

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: October 15, 2025

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: November 14, 2025

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

12/7/18

NOMINATION

FOR THE

PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES



Figure 1. The southeast elevation. Source: Keeping Society, 2025.

THE LT. COL. T. ELLWOOD ZELL HOUSE
ERECTED 1866

—
723 CHURCH LANE
GERMANTOWN
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA



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

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the designation of the subject property, known as 723 Church Lane, is as follows:

Beginning at the distance of two hundred feet (200') southwestward from the southwest side of Chew Street at a property known as 723 Church Lane thence extending along Church Lane southwestwardly one hundred feet (100') and extending in length or depth of that width between parallel lines at right angles therewith northwestwardly two hundred and twenty-six feet (226'), two inches (2").



Figure 3. The southeast elevation. Source: Keeping Society, 2025.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Built in 1866, the Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell House is a fine suburban “cottage-villa” constructed in a style that marries the local vernacular building stone (Wissahickon schist) to a picturesque, Gothic cottage form with Italianate details. As intended, the building is situated on a large suburban lot that retains its original configuration from the time it was purchased by Lt. Col. Zell in 1862. The house is recessed from the street with a generous front yard, separating it from Church Lane. While the entrance on the southwest elevation has been altered, the house was sited to face the interior of the lot, like many houses in Germantown in this period. Positioned on the northeast margin of the parcel, the building is not centered on the lot. A driveway is located at the south corner of the property, where it has been since the 1860s. The main volume is a two and a half story building, L-shaped in plan, with two side bays and a cross-gable roof. It is subdued in detail but contains the hallmarks of this era’s style found across the region. There is a two-story, contemporary addition with a gable roof that is connected to the original construction by a one-story, contemporary hyphen that serves as the accessible entry.

SOUTHEAST ELEVATION

The southeast elevation of the subject property presents the fullest expression of the era’s picturesque Gothic style. All wall planes are made of a random coursed, random cut schist with a distinctly heavy mica content. This elevation contains the different planes of the volume’s L-shaped plan.

To the viewer’s left is the gable-end, two and a half story extension with a three-faceted bay projection at the first level. The roof overhangs the wall plane by over a foot and is supported by several wood brackets, spaced closely together, and turned with light profiling; the brackets span the stone wall and the shallow wood eave board. Within the third floor, framed by the upside-down

V of the roof overhang, is a small, pointed-arch opening (painted wood) with a simple, stone sill and infilled with a rectangular, contemporary, double-hung window.



Figure 4. The southeast elevation. Source: Keeping Society, 2025.

At the ground level, the stone wall plane of the southeast elevation is broken by a centered bay of three faceted windows capped by a low-sloped roof. The roof is asphalt, and the coping is metal. Each bay facet contains a round-arched window opening (painted wood) above a simple, stone sill. The arched tops of each window opening contain ashlar-cut voussoirs with a slightly protruded keystone. Each opening contains a contemporary, rectangular, double-hung unit.

At the second level, there are two round-arched window openings (painted wood) with simple, stone sills and ashlar cut voussoirs with a slightly protruded keystone, spaced at the same width of the projected bay below. Each opening is slightly shorter than the bay windows below. The windows are contemporary, rectangular, double-hung units. Centered between these second-floor windows is a contemporary, black light fixture.

To the right of the viewer in this elevation is the recessed portion containing the entry door and a one-story porch, which replaced a larger two-story porch. The door is centered within the elevation, meaning close to the projecting part of the elevation; it is a paneled wood door (painted wood) capped with a transom lite. The door is accessed from a concrete porch slab with a shed roof supported by slender, unadorned columns; the roof slopes toward the front and is covered with asphalt shingles. The porch roof spans the width of the recessed part of the southeast elevation. Under the porch overhang to the right of the front door and a round-arched, false window opening (painted wood); it is infilled with the same building stone over a simple sill.

The second level is a continuation of the first-level wall plane. In it are two round-arched window openings (painted wood) identical to those at the second level of the projected wall plane in the

same elevation. They have simple, stone sills and ashlar-cut voussoirs with a slightly protruding keystone. Each opening contains a contemporary, rectangular, double-hung window.

The third level at this portion of the elevation is expressed by a wall dormer penetrating the roof slope. The roof pitch is covered in asphalt shingles ending in a metal gutter. The wall dormer is centered above the two windows below and features a gable-end roof over a small, contemporary, rectangular, double-hung window set within a field of painted siding.



Figure 5. The southwest elevation. Source: Keeping Society, 2025.

SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

The southwest elevation contains three bays in the two-story, schist wall plane, with the outer two bays capped by wall dormers protruding at the roof eave. At the first level, the outer two window openings (painted wood) are round-arched with simple, stone sills and ashlar cut voussoirs with a slightly protruded keystone; they each contain contemporary, rectangular, double-hung windows. The central window opening was formerly a door opening, which also featured an entrance hood that served the driveway. It has a flat, stone header with a slightly protruding jack arch. It has been infilled with a large painted wood infill frame with a contemporary, rectangular, double-hung window.

At the second level, all three window openings (painted wood) are round-arched with simple, stone sills and ashlar cut voussoirs with a slightly protruded keystone. They each contain contemporary, rectangular, double-hung windows. There is a black light fixture mounted at the springer of the center window.

The third level is expressed by two wall dormers continuing the schist wall plane and each containing contemporary sliding windows. The dormer roofs are gabled with deep overhangs. The

roof slope is covered in asphalt shingles and ends in gutters at the eaves; there are three metal downspouts installed at the wall. A brick chimney protrudes the roof ridgeline to the right of the elevation centerline.



Figure 6. Left: The northwest and southwest elevations. Source: Keeping Society, 2025. Figure 7. Right: The northwest elevation. Source: Keeping Society, 2025.

NORTHWEST ELEVATION

The northwest elevation is nearly a reverse image of the primary elevation in the same wall plane. To the right is the gable end with a roof overhang of a foot in depth. It is supported by several wood brackets, spaced closely together, and turned with light profiling; the brackets span the stone wall and the shallow eave board (painted wood). Within this framing, at the third level is a small, rectangular window opening (painted wood) with a contemporary, double-hung window. Spanning the first and second levels and centered within the schist wall plane is a double bay projection; the upper portion is painted wood, including beaver tail shingles above a squared brick bay with a bracketed eave. Each level of the bay contains side windows facing opposite directions and two centered windows in one opening (painted wood). The brick wall sits on a base of schist with slender openings infilled with contemporary windows.

In the center of this elevation, under the end of the roof overhang are two slender, round-arched window openings (painted wood), each containing a contemporary, rectangular, double-hung window. At the left side of this elevation is two levels of schist wall plane above which is a wall dormer at the far left, breaking the roof eave with a gable roof overhang and containing a pointed arch window opening (painted wood) within the schist wall; the window is a contemporary, rectangular, double-hung window above a simple, stone sill. At the right side, a shed-roof dormer set back from the roof eave and clad in vinyl siding with a contemporary, double-hung window.

At the second level, there is a rectangular window opening under the wall dormer infilled with a single pane of glass. Under the shed dormer is a painted wood frame with wood panel infill. The first level is hidden (or destroyed) by a contemporary, one-story hyphen with vinyl cladding accessed by a concrete ramp with metal railings that pass in front of the two-story bay at this elevation.

NORTHEAST ELEVATION

This elevation contains an open gable but was not accessible for inspection.

While the rear addition is connected to the historic building, it is non-contributing in terms of being part of the historic fabric.



Figure 8. Looking north at the contemporary addition in the rear of the main volume. Source: Keeping Society, 2025.

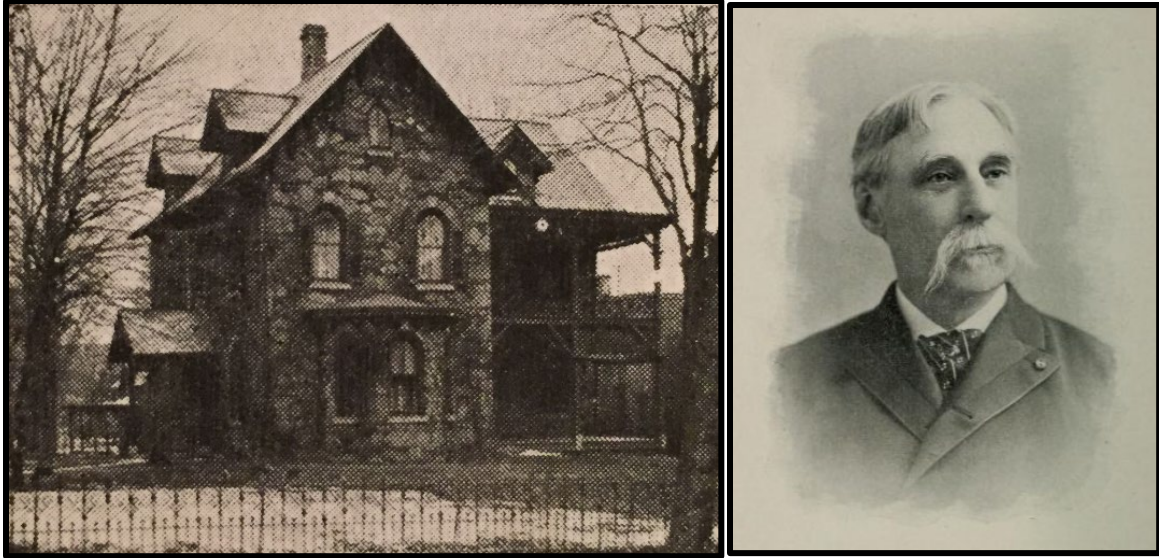


Figure 9-a. Left: The subject house as advertised for sale in the 1910-20s. Source: Germantown Historical Society. Figure 9-b. Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell in the 1890s. Source: John Levering. Levering Family: History and Genealogy. (Indianapolis: Wm. B. Burford, 1897), 236.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell House at 723 Church Lane in Germantown is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The subject building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation, as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style;
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; and
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

Period of Significance: 1777 and 1866-1905. The period of significance for Criteria C and D relates to the design and construction of the subject house in 1866. The period of significance for Criterion J relates to Lt. Col. Zell's occupancy of the subject house from 1866 to 1905. The period of significance for Criterion I dates to 1777, at the time of the Battle of Germantown.



Figure 10. Left: The southwest and southeast elevations of the subject building. Source: Keeping Society, 2025. Figure 11. The 1871 Germantown Atlas, showing the subject property (see dashed rectangle) at 723 Church Lane with the home of Lt. Col. Zell's sisters to the northwest, facing Locust Avenue. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

CRITERIA C & D

The Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell House, located at 723 Church Lane, is representative of the aesthetic ideals fostered during the Romantic Era that ultimately embodied an important aspect of architectural style in Germantown during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, when the area was undergoing significant suburban development. On May 5, 1862, Lt. Col. Zell purchased a lot at 723 Church Lane (then known as Mill Street) from Lower Stackhouse, a Philadelphia merchant, for \$800 under certain terms and conditions in the newly developed subdivision of Linden Place.¹ This was essentially an early suburban development of land that had once belonged to the Boyer family. According to Lt. Col. Zell, his property was associated with a larger Germantown lot that was originally granted to his ancestors—the Levering family.² The large lot, measuring 100 feet front by 225 feet in depth, was laid out for one detached house, as was specified in the deed. The subdivisions created by the various landowners that formed Linden Place sold their lots to wealthy industrialists, merchants, and other respectable, monied people. In 1866, the subject building was constructed on the site in cut Wissahickon schist featuring distinctive elements of the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles. This hybrid of Romantic Era aesthetics was not unique at the time; it was ultimately an early Victorian vernacular that influenced many other houses in the immediate vicinity and throughout the German Township. While the specific designer is not known, the subject house is evocative of the work and influence of local architect James Charles Sidney (1819-1881), commonly known as J.C. Sidney.³

The Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell House exemplifies a well-known hybrid of the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles, popularized by Andrew Jackson Downing, the eminent American landscape designer and tastemaker. Downing's writings, especially The Architecture of Country Houses

¹ Deed: Lower Stackhouse, et. al. to T. Ellwood Zell, 5 May 1862, Philadelphia Deed Book A.C.H., No. 49. Source: City Archives of Philadelphia (CAP).

² John Levering. *Levering Family: History and Genealogy*. (Indianapolis: Wm. B. Burford, 1897), 939.

³ Arielle Harris. *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places (PRHP) Nomination: The Mary * Frances Wister Studio, 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, Germantown, Philadelphia, PA.* (2017).; and Amy Lambert and Angelina Jones. *PRHP Nomination: 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue, Chestnut Hill, PA.* (Philadelphia: Chestnut Hill Conservancy, 2017).

(1850) and Cottage Residences (1852), influenced the evolution of American architecture, educating architects and builders, as well as citizens generally, with a wide range of building forms and applicable stylistic motifs. His wide array of specimens influenced the design of dwellings for the working, middle, and upper classes, further popularizing terms like cottage and villa for numerous house types. Downing insisted that a well-appointed dwelling of any cost or size could elevate moral character and cultivate social refinement, a didactic approach to improving popular taste. His ideals resonated with all walks of life, but specifically those who were part of creating charming, stylish, and often exclusive suburban enclaves. As a publisher, Lt. Col. Zell was certainly familiar with Downing, as well as other local influencers such as J.C. Sidney and Samuel Sloan, the eminent architect. J.C. Sidney was also involved in early pattern book publications, though he was not as prolific or popular as Downing. Sloan too authored several publications that influenced design and construction in Philadelphia and beyond, including Sloan's Homestead Architecture (1861). Lt. Col. Zell's residence fits the profile of what Downing termed a "Cottage-Villa" (Figure 12), occupying a finite place between a quaint cottage and a suburban villa that appealed to an emerging Quaker elite in Germantown.



Figure 12. Left: "A Cottage Villa in the Bracketed Mode," as shown by Andrew Jackson Downing, in his book, Cottage Residences (1842). Source: HathiTrust. Figure 13: Right: An "English Gothic Style" Cottage, as presented by Samuel Sloan, architect. Source: HathiTrust.

While perhaps not a cottage or a villa, Lt. Col. Zell's dwelling is decidedly picturesque, a status achieved through the employment of distinctive elements of style. The Gothic Revival is exhibited in the employment of a common cross-gable, "L-shaped" building form, as well as in its human scale and massing. Influencers like Downing, Sidney, and Sloan showed these building types in their publications (Figures 12 and 13). The front gable of the southeast elevation features a pointed arch window in the half-story, another hallmark of the Gothic taste. Otherwise, the house might be accurately described as "in the Bracketed Mode," featuring Italianate characteristics in its round arched windows and corresponding headers; bracketed gable ends; and the employment of a wall dormers on all visible elevations.



Figure 14. An illustration of a "Gardeners Cottage or Tenant House" by J.C. Sidney. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia.

In addition to being part of a local vernacular, the subject house also exhibits hallmarks of J.C. Sidney, the aforementioned architect, whose work greatly influenced the built environment of Germantown and the larger German Township. As an architect, Sidney was known for his cut stone buildings, usually Wissahickon schist, which often included rusticated facades of random ashlar. His designs featured two-and-one-half-story building forms that were characterized by Italian-inspired wall dormers on multiple elevations, as well as round arched openings. Sidney's taste for the Italianate can be seen in his designs for numerous school buildings throughout the City of Philadelphia. His characteristic use of the Gothic Revival and the Italianate can be found in documented examples of his designs, including Norwood, the Residence of Charles Taylor Esq. at Chestnut Hill; Tredegar, the Residence of C.W. Morgan, Esq. at Germantown; a residence on Clinton Ave., Brooklyn, New York; and a drawing created for a pattern book "Gardener's Cottage or Tenant House" (Figure 14).⁴ It is known that Sidney was commissioned to design at least two residences in the 5100 block of Pulaski Avenue in Germantown, at least one of which, the Judge Knox House (Figure 18), was akin to the subject building. Two known examples of Sidney's residential work exist in Chestnut Hill, dating to the period of his partnership with Frederick C. Merry, architect: the Moss House (1863-64; Figure 15) at 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue; and a Parsonage (ca.1864) at 18 East Chestnut Hill Avenue.⁵

⁴ James C. Sidney. American Cottage and Villa Architecture, No. 1. (Appleton & Co, 1850).; James C. Sidney. American Cottage and Villa Architecture, No. 2. (Appleton & Co, 1850).; and James C. Sidney. American Cottage and Villa Architecture, No. 3. (Appleton & Co, 1850).

⁵ Amy Lambert and Angelina Jones. *PRHP Nomination: 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue, Chestnut Hill, PA.* (Philadelphia: Chestnut Hill Conservancy, 2017).



Figure 15. Top left: The Moss House, 2 W. Chestnut Hill Avenue, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. Source: Amy Lambert and Angelina Jones. *PRHP Nomination: 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue, Chestnut Hill, PA.* (Philadelphia: Chestnut Hill Conservancy, 2017). Figure 16. Top right: The Mary & Frances Wister Studio, 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, Germantown, Philadelphia. Source: Arielle Harris. *PRHP Nomination: The Mary & Frances Wister Studio, 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue, Germantown, Philadelphia, PA.* (2017). Figure 17. Bottom left: The Robert Bessonnet & Emma Cabeen House at Baynton and Coulter Streets, Germantown, Philadelphia. Source: Germantown Historical Society. Figure 18. Bottom right: The Judge Knox House, 5124 Pulaski Avenue, Germantown, Philadelphia. Source: Germantown Historical Society.

In Germantown, there are several houses in the vicinity of the subject property that speak to the work of J.C. Sidney, as well as the hybrid of forms and styles that embody the subject building: the Charles W. Churchman House (1859-60) at Chew Avenue and E. Wister Street; the Robert Bessonnet & Emma Cabeen House (ca.1863-65) at Baynton and Coulter Streets; and the Mary & Frances Wister Studio (ca.1868) at 2101 W. Clarkson Avenue. These are just a sampling of many specimen.

With both Gothic Revival and Italianate characteristics, the Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell House at 723 Church Lane is part of a local vernacular in Victorian-era design; speaks to a specific house type and style evocative of the work of J.C. Sidney, architect; and is a distinctive dwelling and design, satisfying Criteria C and D.

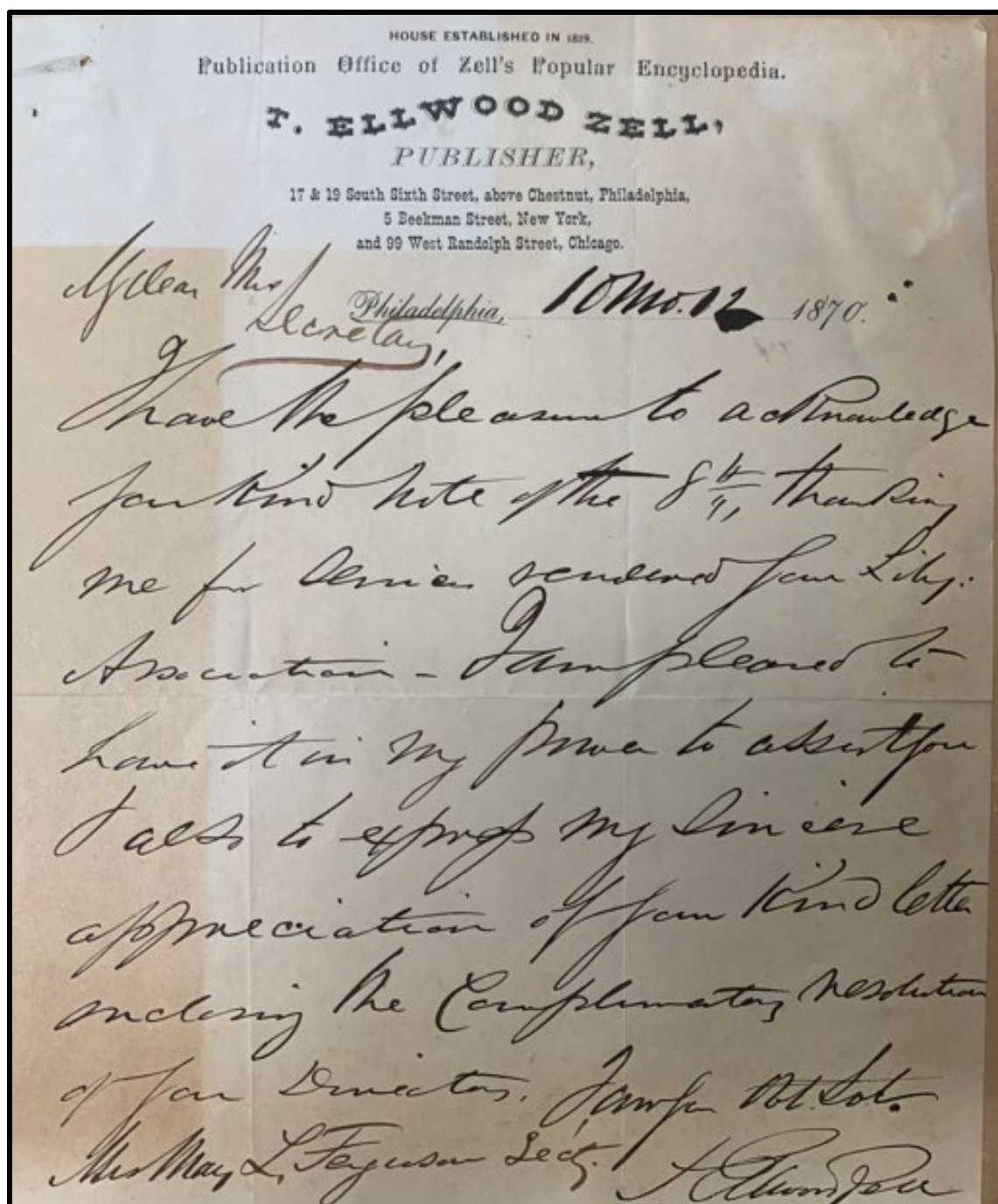


Figure 19-a. A letter to "My dear secretary..." from Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell on his company letterhead in 1870. Source: Germantown Historical Society.



Figure 19-b. Top: A carte de viste of Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell, taken during his service in the Civil War. Source: The Mary Pancoast Prichett (1845-1924) Albums, in possession of Leslie Coulson, via Laura Bligh of Cassidy-Fagan Cousins. Figure 20. Bottom: The signature of Lt. Col. Zell on his passport application in 1871. Source: Ancestry.com.

CRITERION J: LT. COL. THOMAS ELLWOOD ZELL (1828-1905)

From 1866 to 1905, the subject house was home to Lt. Col. Thomas Ellwood Zell, known commonly as T. Ellwood Zell. He was a prominent Quaker, publisher, and Civil War officer, whose life is representative of a class of prominent Philadelphians who built suburban houses in Germantown in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. As part of the development of Linden Place—a newly created subdivision in Germantown, Lt. Col. Zell purchased the property at 723 Church Lane in 1862 and ultimately commissioned his fine stone cottage in 1866, an act that speaks to the economic and social history of the Germantown community.⁶ Hailing from a wealthy

⁶ Immediately adjacent to his lot, facing the next street to the northwest, his spinster sisters Jane Meng Zell and Hannah Ann Zell built their own Gothic Revival cottage on a like-size parcel at 724 Locust Avenue, known as “Heartsease.” These two lots shared a “tree-lined driveway” from Church Lane to Locust Avenue along the southwest margin of the

and respected Quaker family, Lt. Col. Zell achieved greatness in the field of publishing at a time when Philadelphia was one of the important centers of that industry in America. In 1854, he entered the publishing business as a partner in Hayes & Zell. From 1860 to 1876, he operated as a sole proprietor: “T. Ellwood Zell,” a publishing house. Despite his absence during the Civil War, the business continued, and it was during the 1860s that he became the primary publisher of works related to the Society of Friends, as well as many works by women authors. In 1868, he published Zell’s Encyclopedia, Dictionary, and Gazetteer, a four-volume set that sold in the millions. This led to other high-yielding publications. In 1876, Lt. Col. Zell entered another partnership: T. Ellwood Zell, Davis & Co., which lasted until 1880. Upon taking a partner, he bought land in Orange County, Florida, which would become the town of Zellwood. He returned to a sole proprietorship in 1880, at which time he entered the field of “subscription publishing,” figuring prominently in that aspect of the industry in Philadelphia. He continued in the publishing business for some years, eventually retiring from active work. As the owner of a prominent publishing house, as a prominent publisher, Lt. Col. Zell’s accomplishments had important impacts on the economic, political, social and historical heritage of the community.

During the Civil War, T. Ellwood Zell enlisted as a Captain, raised his own brigade, and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, among other positions. After the war, he founded the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, the first entity of its kind for Civil War veterans—specifically officers.⁷ Lt. Col. Zell is recognized as the first resident and the de facto founder of Zellwood in Orange County, Florida, a footnote that gets the otherwise forgotten Quaker publisher good press even in 2025. In these endeavors, Lt. Col. Zell represented Philadelphia in the establishment of the first organization for Civil War veterans, and as the founder of a resort community that ultimately became a town on a new frontier, both achievements that could not have been accomplished without his great cultivation and success.

In the early twentieth century, a local writer penned an article on “Old Church Lane” and “IV. LITERARY CELEBRITIES,” which included the following description:

Among them may be mentioned Thomas Ellwood Zell, a big, genial man, author of “Zell’s Popular Encyclopedia” and other works. He was assisted in his literary work by his well known sister, Miss Hannah Ann Zell, historian and antiquarian, who’s home was in the rear of her brother’s. His old homestead, on Church Lane, near Chew street, has just been sold, and I was fortunate in obtaining the old nickel, or silver-plated, nameplate, which adorned the front fence for years and which bore the name: T. Ellwood Zell.⁸

From 1866 to 1905, the subject house at 723 Church Lane was the home of Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell, an important publisher, Quaker, Civil War officer, and progressive man of action, whose life impacted the economic, political, social, and historical heritage of the community, satisfying Criterion J.

property. Source: Deed: Abraham R. Bockius, et. al. to Jane M. Zell and Hannah Ann Zell, 1 January 1866, Philadelphia Deed Book J.T.O., No. 19, 124. Source: CAP.; and “Old Church Lane Reminiscently Considered,” *Germantown Independent Gazette*, 22 November 1914.

⁷ *Annual National Incampment: Official Souvenir*. United States, n.p., 1899.

⁸ “Old Church Lane Reminiscently Considered, IV. Literary Celebrities,” *Germantown Independent Gazette*, 1914. Source: Germantown Historical Society.



Figure 21. The 800 block of Market Street, including 800 Market Street, may have been the building where the elder Thomas Zell conducted his hardware business. Source: Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Database.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: THE LIFE OF LT. COL. T. ELLWOOD ZELL

At the time of T. Ellwood Zell's birth in 1828, his parents, Thomas Zell (1792-1848) and Hannah Ogden Zell (1789-1873) resided in the heart of Philadelphia, near the corner of Eighth and Market Streets, where at 272 High Street (later Market Street) his father was a successful hardware merchant. Originally from "Walnut Grove," a farm adjacent to the Merion Meeting House in Montgomery County, the elder Thomas Zell was a prominent Quaker, instilling in his children a strict moral compass and sense of charity.⁹ The Zells purportedly traced their ancestry back to Johannes Zellius or Zell, "who took part in the first Crusade and was knighted at Jerusalem in 1099." The Ogdens arrived with William Penn aboard the *Welcome* in 1684.¹⁰ In addition to T. Ellwood Zell, the elder Thomas Zell and Hannah Ogden Zell had four other children: Jane Meng Zell (1815-1875); Margaretta Esther Zell Smith (1817-1900); Hannah Ann Zell (1820-1911); and Mary Dorothea Zell Colahan (1822-1899).¹¹ In time, the elder Thomas Zell removed to 298 High Street (likely later 800 Market Street), situated at the southwest corner of Eighth Street—likely the building shown in Figure 21, where he continued his business, eventually entering into partnership with his son-in-law, Pemberton Smith (1816-1873), who married his daughter Margaretta Esther Zell in 1838. The partnership was known as Thomas Zell & Company, and later as Zell & Smith.¹²

⁹ *A Brief Memoir of Thomas Zell*. (Philadelphia: Merrihew & Thompson, Printers, 1859).; "Provident Society," *The National Gazette*, 13 January 1826, 2.; "Obituary Notice of Thomas Zell," *Burlington Gazette*, 3 November 1848.; and Mary Dorothea Fagan Cassidy. *Biography of Hannah Ann Zell*. (Unpublished, 11 January 1910). Source: Mary Knowles, a direct descendant of Mary Dorothea Fagan Cassidy, Hannah Ann Zell's grandniece.

¹⁰ John Levering. *Levering Family: History and Genealogy*. (Indianapolis: Wm. B. Burford, 1897), 939.

¹¹ LC Bligh Family Tree, Ancestry.com.

¹² *Genealogical and family history of western New York*. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912), 201.; and *M'Elroy's Philadelphia Directory for the Year 1840*. (Philadelphia: 1840), 284.



Figure 22. Left: A post-mortem photograph of Thomas Zell in 1848. Figure 23. Second from left: Hannah Ogden Zell in 1863. Figure 24. Third from left: Margaretta Zell Smith. Figure 25. Fourth from left: Pemberton Smith in 1866. Source: The Mary Pancoast Prichett (1845-1924) Albums, in possession of Leslie Coulson, via Laura Bligh of Cassidy-Fagan Cousins. Figure 26. Fifth from left: Mary Dorothea Zell Colahan. Source: Mary Knowles, a direct descendant. Figure 27. Right: Hannah Ann Zell. Source: The Mary Pancoast Prichett (1845-1924) Albums, in possession of Leslie Coulson, via Laura Bligh of Cassidy-Fagan Cousins.

Like his father, Lt. Col. Zell was a lifelong Quaker, which included his primary education at a Friends' School in central Philadelphia. In 1827, a year before the birth of T. Ellwood Zell, the great schism occurred within the Society of Friends over Elias Hicks and, ultimately, an official position on Slavery. Two factions of Quakers emerged: Orthodox and Hicksite, the latter being decidedly anti-slavery.¹³ While it appears that the Zells were initially Hicksite, T. Ellwood Zell would ultimately return to the Orthodox after the Civil War. He attended Central High School in Philadelphia.¹⁴ After graduation, he entered the hardware firm of his father, but soon disengaged in that line of work, taking a year to travel abroad. When he returned to the United States, Lt. Col. Zell made his way to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he tried at business for a short time. In the winter of 1853, he undertook an extensive tour of "his own country."¹⁵

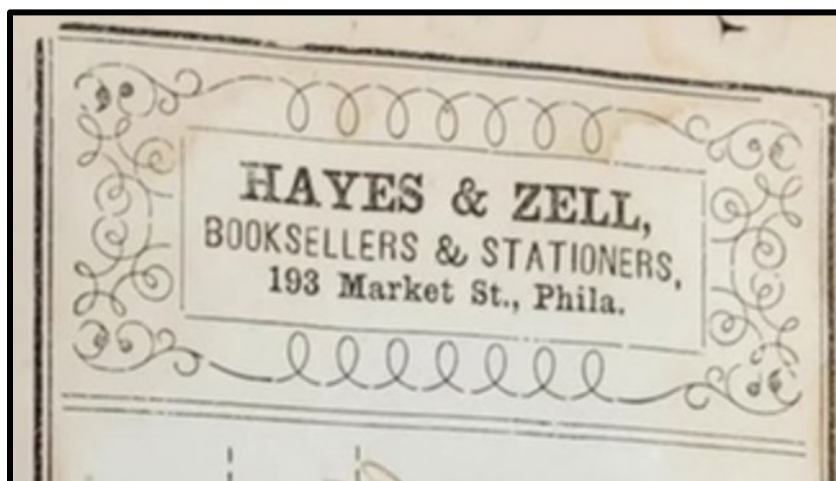


Figure 28. Letterhead of Hayes & Zell, Booksellers & Stationers, Lt. Col. Zell's first partnership in publishing. Source: Ebay.

¹³ A History of Green Street Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia.
<https://greenstreetfriendsmeeting.org/about.php#:~:text=A%20History%20of%20Green%20Street%20Monthly%20Meeting%20of%20Friends%20of%20Philadelphia> Accessed on 18 December 2022.

¹⁴ Lewis R. Hamersly, ed. *Who's Who in Pennsylvania*. (New York City: L.R. Hamersly Company, 1904), 819-20.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Upon returning to the Quaker City in 1854, Lt. Col. Zell established himself in the publishing business, purchasing the interest of John H. Troutman (1813-1865) in the publishing house of Troutman & Hayes. Incidentally, it was around this time that a young John Wannamaker, the eminent Philadelphia merchant, was working for the firm as an errand boy.¹⁶ Before 1852, the firm was known as Kay & Troutman.¹⁷ T. Ellwood Zell and Samuel C. Hayes (1819-1897) were in partnership throughout the 1850s. Hayes & Zell, Booksellers & Stationers, published more than thirty works, some examples of which include The Guardian Angel (1854) by T.S. Arthur; The American Gentleman's Medical Pocket-Book and Health Advertiser (1854); A History of the Late War between the United States and Great Britain (1854) by H.M. Brackenridge; Recollections of a Zouave before Sebastopol (1856), edited by Dr. Felix Maynard; History of the Moravian Church in Philadelphia (1857) by Abraham Ritter; and good old Poor Richard (1859), a reprint.¹⁸ Hayes would ultimately leave the partnership, afterwards becoming a relatively obscure book merchant.

There is evidence that T. Ellwood Zell was in favor of equality for African Americans, which corresponds with his family's status as Hicksite Quakers. While little is known of his precise or possible involvement, he did sign the "Petition For The Colored People of Philadelphia To Ride In The Cars" in 1861. The Petition was proffered by the Social, Civil, and Statistical Association of Colored People of Pennsylvania, asking that African American citizens be able to ride in passenger railway cars.¹⁹ The Petition was authored by abolitionists William Still, Stephen Smith, Isiah Wears, and Jonathan Gibbs.²⁰ William Still, "Father of the Underground Railroad," an author and coal merchant, may have become friends with Lt. Col. Zell at this time, as the Petition includes the signature of "T. Ellwood Zell, 17 & 19 S. 6th Street (his business address). It is clear that Lt. Col. Zell did not mind putting his name and the reputation of his business on this controversial advocacy document geared towards gaining equal rights for African American citizens. Still would later recognize Lt. Col. Zell, "his old friend," for advising him on the second edition of his book, Still's Underground Rail Road Records (1886), which was sold by subscription.²¹

¹⁶ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 13 December 1922, 2.

¹⁷ "Kay & Brother," *American Literary Gazette and Publishers Circle*, 15 August 1870, 233.

¹⁸ This is a list of books published by Hayes & Zell in the collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

¹⁹ *Petition for the Colored People of Philadelphia to Ride in the Cars*, 1862.

²⁰ William Still. Still's Underground Rail Road Records. (Philadelphia: William Still, Publisher, 1886), xxxv.

²¹ *Ibid*.

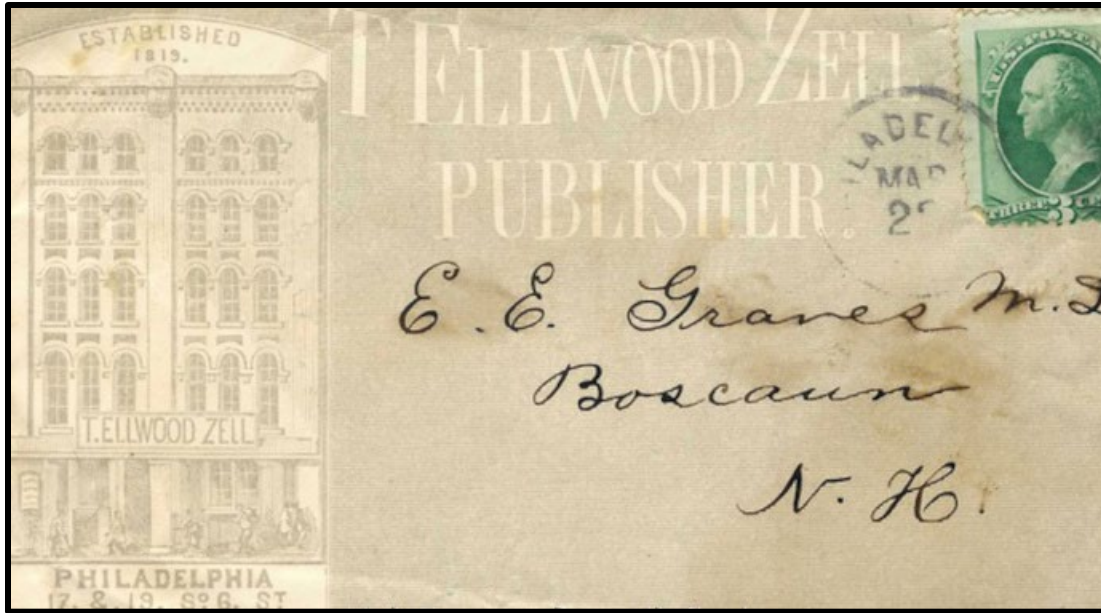


Figure 29. An envelope from T. Ellwood Zell, Publisher, showing his business headquarters at 17 & 19 S. 6th Street, less than a block from Independence Hall. Source: 19th Century Juvenile Series.

In 1860, “T. Ellwood Zell,” Publisher was formed as a sole proprietorship. In 1861, Zell was fortunate to gain many publications of the Society of Friends, taking over for some years the publication of the *Friends Intelligencer*, as the previous publisher, William W. Moore, retired due to a breakdown in health. In the first years, Zell published the following titles: An Inquiry into the Laws of Organized Societies (1860) by William Logan Fisher; A Retrospect of Early Quakerism (1860); A Treasury of Facts (1860) by Jane Johnson; Conversations, Discussions and Anecdotes of Thomas Story (1860) by Nathaniel Richardson; Conversations with Theodore and His Sister (1861) by Harriet E. Stockly; The Cloud with the Golden Border (1861) by Helen Hazlett; Union School Primer (1862); A Mission of the Indians (1862) by Martha E. Tyson; and The Nature of War (1862) by William Logan Fisher.²² It is important to acknowledge that Lt. Col. Zell published a high number of female authors in the early 1860s, which represents his progressive ideology, as well as Quaker ideals. Among Lt. Col. Zell’s authoresses was Elizabeth Ellicott Lea, who published her recipes in his successful publications. As a result, in the 1870s, Lea’s scrapple recipe became the most famous in the country.²³

²² This is a list of books published by T. Ellwood Zell in the collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia and HathiTrust.

²³ William Woys Weaver. A Quaker Woman’s Cookbook: The Domestic Cookery of Elizabeth Ellicott Lea. (Stackpole Books, 2004).

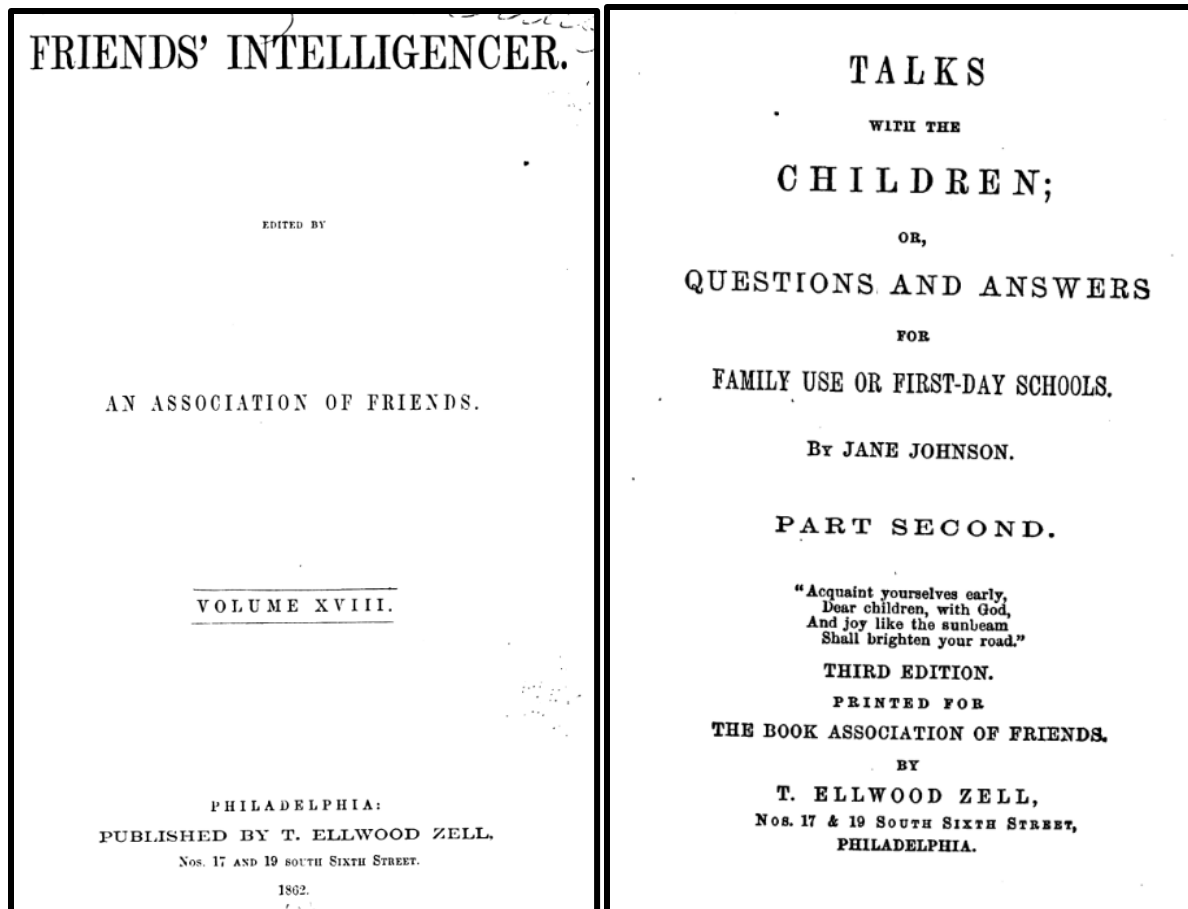


Figure 30. Left: *Friends Intelligencer*, published by T. Ellwood Zell in 1862. Source: HathiTrust. Figure 31. Right: *Talks With The Children* by Jane Johnson was published by T. Ellwood Zell in 1867. Source: HathiTrust.

In the early 1860s, Lt. Col. Zell appears to have relocated his business from Market Street to 17 & 19 S. 6th Street (Figure 29), at which time it was a modern, four-story, double-wide brick building.²⁴ This was not unlike other buildings in the neighborhood that served the publishing and printing industries. It was here that the Quaker publisher would spend the prime of his career. Incidentally, the building appears to have been owned by the Kay Estate from 1863 to 1887, a surname once associated with the firm that preceded Lt. Col. Zell's original partnership—Hayes & Zell; previously Troutman & Hayes; and before that Kay & Troutman.²⁵ The building was demolished in the mid-twentieth century for the creation of Independence Mall.

²⁴ *Philadelphia City Directory* (1862). Source: Ancestry.com.

²⁵ Reg. Plan 1-S-4-103, Historical Index, PhilaDox, CAP.

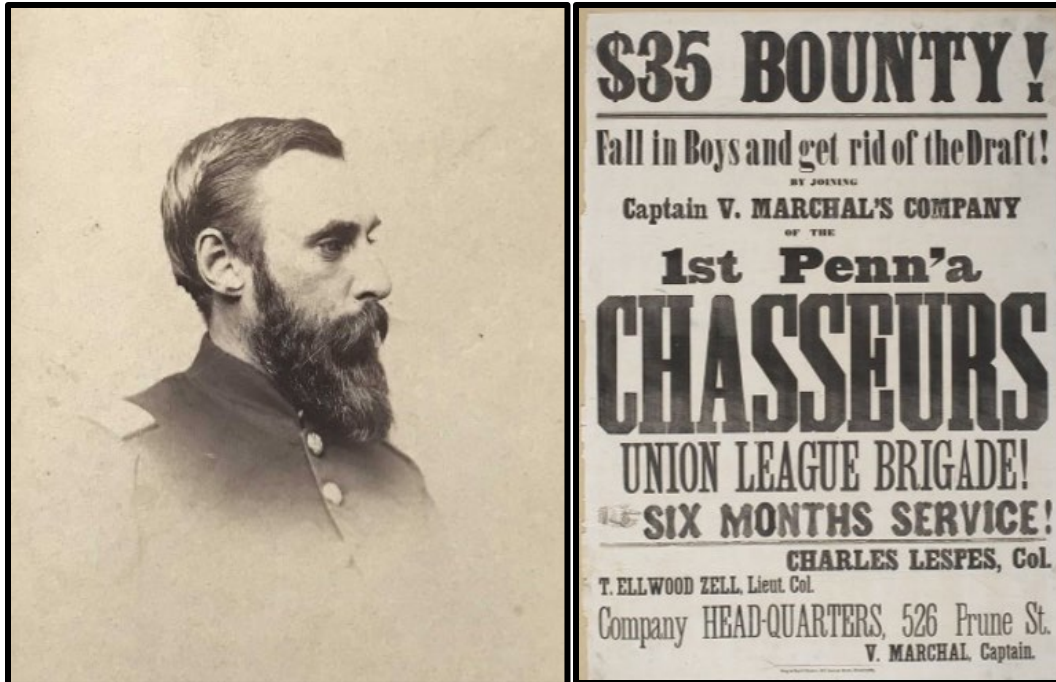


Figure 32. Left: Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell in 1862, wearing his uniform. Source: The Mary Pancoast Prichett (1845-1924) Albums, in possession of Leslie Coulson, via Laura Bligh of Cassidy-Fagan Cousins. Figure 33. Right: An advertisement for the Pennsylvania Chasseurs, a brigade raised by Lt. T. Ellwood Zell in 1863. Source: Library Company of Philadelphia.

Despite being in his thirties and a birthright Quaker, T. Ellwood Zell enlisted in Company “D” of the 121st Regt. Penna. Vols. on September 2, 1862, serving as Captain until his resignation on March 14, 1863, on account of his health. After a period of restoration, Captain Zell re-enlisted as the Lieut.-Col. Commanding 3rd Battalion Pa. Vols., which he raised “at his personal cost,” it being known as “the 1st Penna. Chasseurs.” Lt. Col. Zell would ultimately go on to serve as Chief of Staff to Brig.-Gen. William D. Whipple, United States Army, as well as Inspector of Cavalry, Assistant Inspector General, and Assistant Provost-Marshal. During his service, he witnessed “the naval engagement of Fortress Monroe between the rebel ram “Merrimac” and the “Monitor,” and the subsequent capture of Norfolk,” as well as the engagements at Big Bethel and Fair Oaks, Virginia.²⁶ He was honorably discharged in 1864.²⁷ On April 15, 1865, the day of President Abraham Lincoln’s death, he was walking near the corner of the 6th and Chestnut Streets, when he met up with a few of his fellow veteran officers. Lamenting the loss of President Lincoln, Col. S.B. Wylie Mitchel, and Capt. P.D. Keyser, M.D. walked the half-block to Lt. Col. Zell’s publishing house, where they founded the Military Order of the Loyal Legion (MOLL) of the United States. This was the first Civil War veteran organization founded in the United States, which was established as a tribute to the fallen president. Lt. Col. Zell was the first acting Commander of MOLL.²⁸

²⁶ *The Quaker Ogdens in America*. (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott Company, 1898), 92-93.

²⁷ *Pennsylvania Infantry. 121st Regt., (1862-1865). History of the 121st Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers...* Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Press of *Catholic Standard and Times*, 1905), 264.

²⁸ *Annual National Incampment: Official Souvenir*. United States, n.p, 1899.

After the Civil War, the Society of Friends investigated Lt. Col. Zell for “taking up arms,” which led to several interviews. Ultimately, he retained his membership after ample explanation of the reasons why he joined the service, expressing regret for the need to violate the sacred principles.²⁹

In 1865, Lt. Col. Zell married Anna Florence Clayton (1844-1920), the widow of Dr. Thaddeus Marcus Bostic, who had died a soldier in 1862. Florence, as she was known, was the daughter of Jonathan Clayton and Rachel Smith Shepherd. Their marriage likely also hastened the need for Lt. Col. Zell to complete his new residence at Germantown.

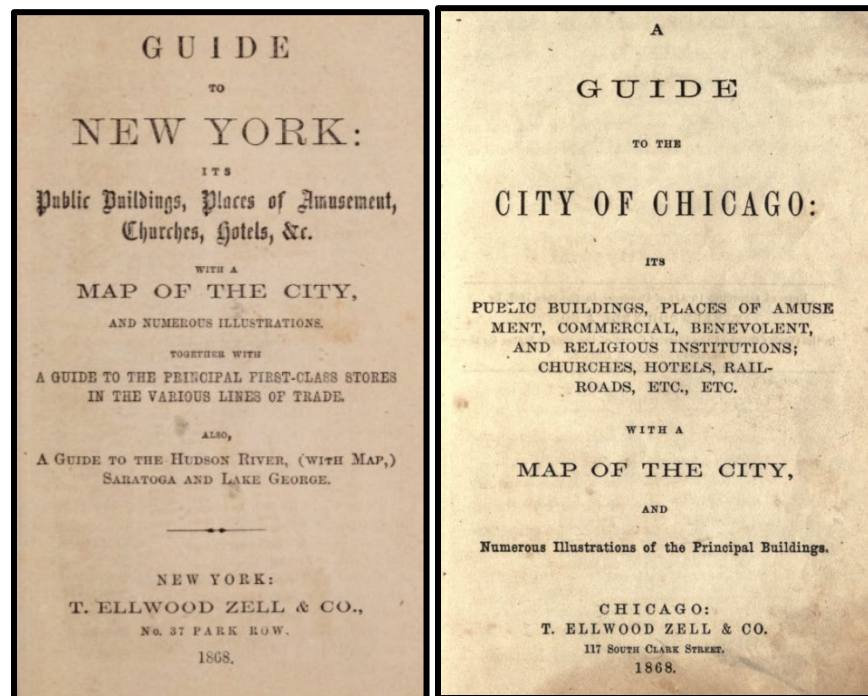


Figure 34. Left: Guide To New York, published in 1868, by T. Ellwood Zell. Source: HathiTrust. Figure 35. Right: A Guide To The City of Chicago, published by T. Ellwood Zell & Co. in 1868. Source: HathiTrust.

While his publishing house did not close during the Civil War, the business certainly suffered from the conditions caused by war. However, Lt. Col. Zell did not let this deter him from pursuing new lines of work. In 1865, he bought his first subscription book, a new edition of Mackenzie's Five Thousand Receipts, “which had a large and remunerative sale.” During this time, he continued his usual publishing business, which included atlases, books, illustrations, pamphlets, and other publications. Some important examples include the following: Memoir of Priscilla Cadwallader (1864); Journal of Rachel Wilson Moore (1867); Biblical History Familiarized by Questions (1867) by Ann A. Townsend; A History of Byberry and Moreland (1867) by Joseph C. Martindale; The Young Friend's Manual (1868) by Benjamin Hallowell; Among the Indians (1868) by Henry A. Boller; A Guide to the City of New York (1868); A Guide to the City of Chicago (1868); An Examination of the Causes which Led to the Separation of the Religious Society of Friends in America in 1827-28 (1868) by Samuel M. Janney; and Christian Casket or the Pearl of Great Price (1869) by E. Michener.³⁰

²⁹ Ancestry.com. *U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681-1935* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

³⁰ This is a list of books published by T. Ellwood Zell in the collections of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

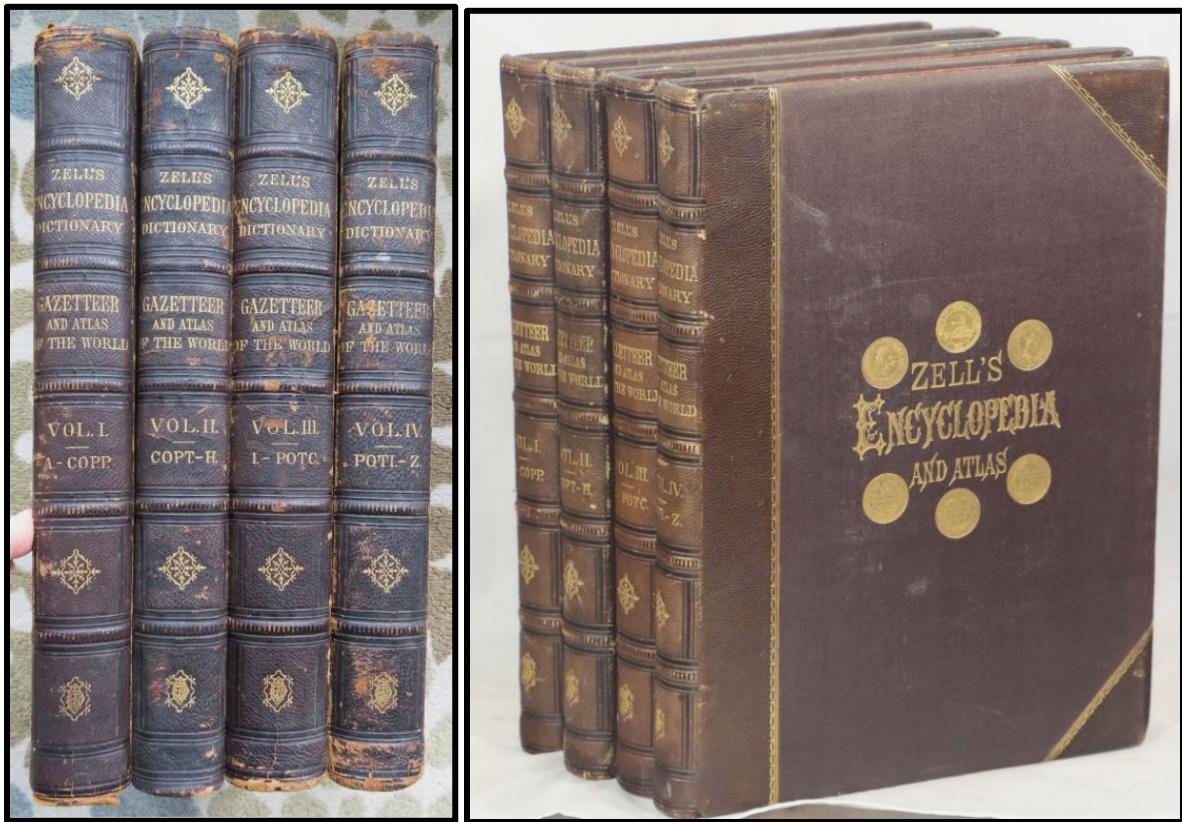


Figure 36. Zell's Encyclopedia and Atlas, published by T. Ellwood Zell. Source: Ebay.

In 1868, Lt. Col. Zell produced the work that gave him “his greatest reputation:” Zell's Encyclopedia, Dictionary, and Gazetteer, edited by L. Colange. The work cost the firm roughly \$150,000 to produce. It was essentially a bestseller that led to many reprints. It was during this time that Zell opened an office at 5 Beekman Street in New York City.³¹ According to The Quaker Ogdens in America, the success included the following accolades:

The grand gold medal of the Vienna Exposition of 1873 was awarded him [Lt. Col. Zell] for its excellence, and the Emperor of Japan sent him a pair of exquisite porcelain vases in appreciation of his work.³²

In 1872, Lt. Col. Zell began publishing “periodic literature,” setting afloat the *Bazaar*, an illustrated monthly of eight pages with approximately 24,000 copies per issue. By this time, nearly six million copies of Zell's Encyclopedia had been produced at a time when there were roughly 40 million in the country.³³

³¹ *Commercial and Financial Chronicle Bankers Gazette*, 1874, 536.

³² The Quaker Ogdens in America. (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1898), 93. Please note, Lt. Col. Zell donated the pair of vases of Satsuma, Japan, to the Pennsylvania Museum in 1908, which would later become the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

³³ *The Weekly Trade Circular*, 15 August 1872, 147.

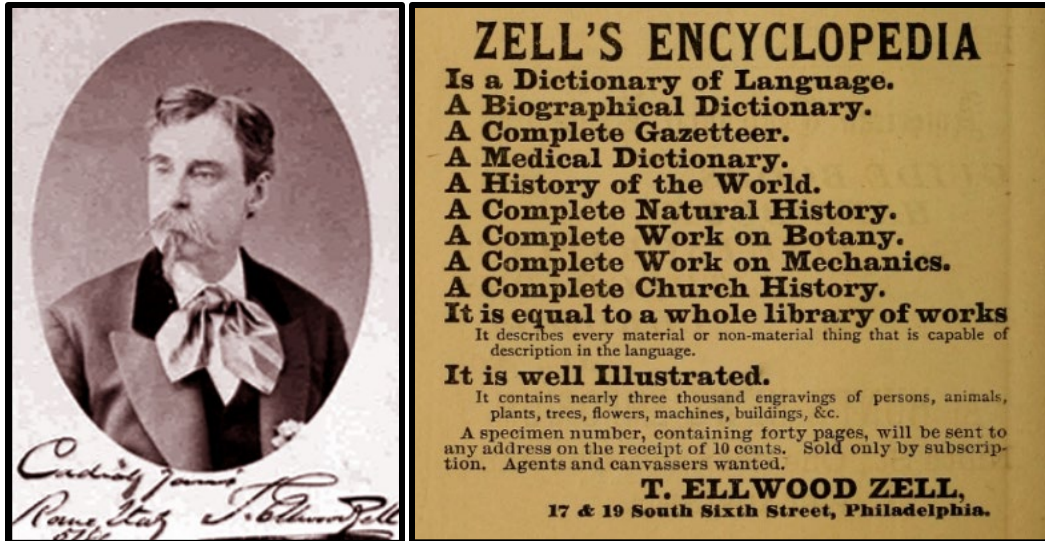


Figure 37. Left: Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell in Rome, Italy. Source: Gregory Speciale, 2007. Figure 38. Right: An advertisement for the works of T. Ellwood Zell in The New Pocket Guide and Street Directory of Philadelphia. (Philadelphia: John P. Hunt, 1876). Source: HathiTrust.

It appears that in July 1875, Charles H. Davis entered into partnership with Theodore W. Baker to form Baker, Davis & Co., at which time the newly formed firm purchased an interest in Lt. Col. Zell's publishing business for \$100,000. At this time, Baker also assumed some debts associated with the firm, and the sole proprietorship was dissolved on April 27, 1876.³⁴

³⁴ *The Horticultural Advertiser*, February 1876, 10.

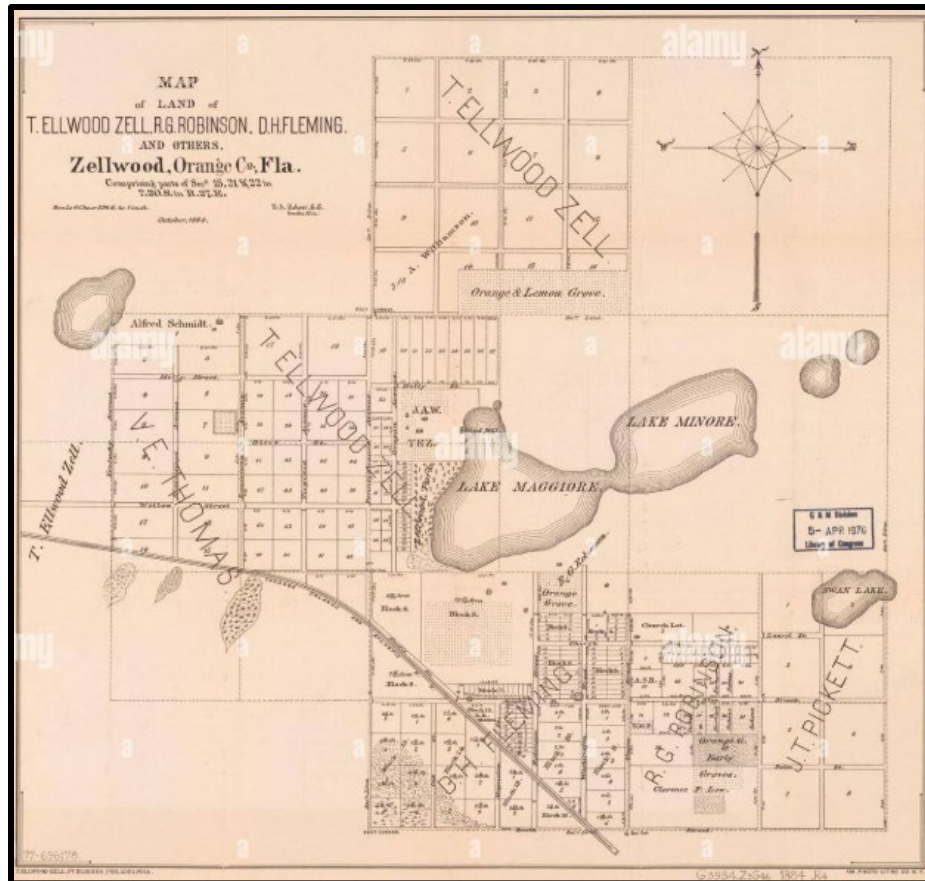


Figure 39. A map of Zellwood, Orange County, Florida, showing the land of Lt. Col. Zell. Source: Alamy.

Lt. Col. Zell appears to have used at least some of the proceeds from the Baker sale to purchase large tracts of land (Figure 39) in Orange County, Florida, in 1876. It was here that the Quaker publisher made his winter residence, which he called Zellwood. Lt. Col. Zell cultivated a “grove of orange and lemon trees,” and created a subdivision for other settlers on his land, as well as “Zellwood Park” on Lake Maggiore.³⁵ In time, he helped develop a settlement that to this day is named Zellwood. In the winter of 1884, Lt. Col. Zell built himself “one of the prettiest, most substantial and costliest homes in the county” (Figure 41), which was occupied by him until the time of his death. It stood on a parcel in Zellwood adjacent to Lake Maggiore.³⁶ His Zellwood house survived until 1956, when it was destroyed by fire.

³⁵ George M. Barbour. *Florida for Tourists, Invalids, and Settlers*. (1884), 3.

³⁶ *Florida, Orange County, Zellwood*. (Philadelphia: T. Ellwood Zell, 1885).

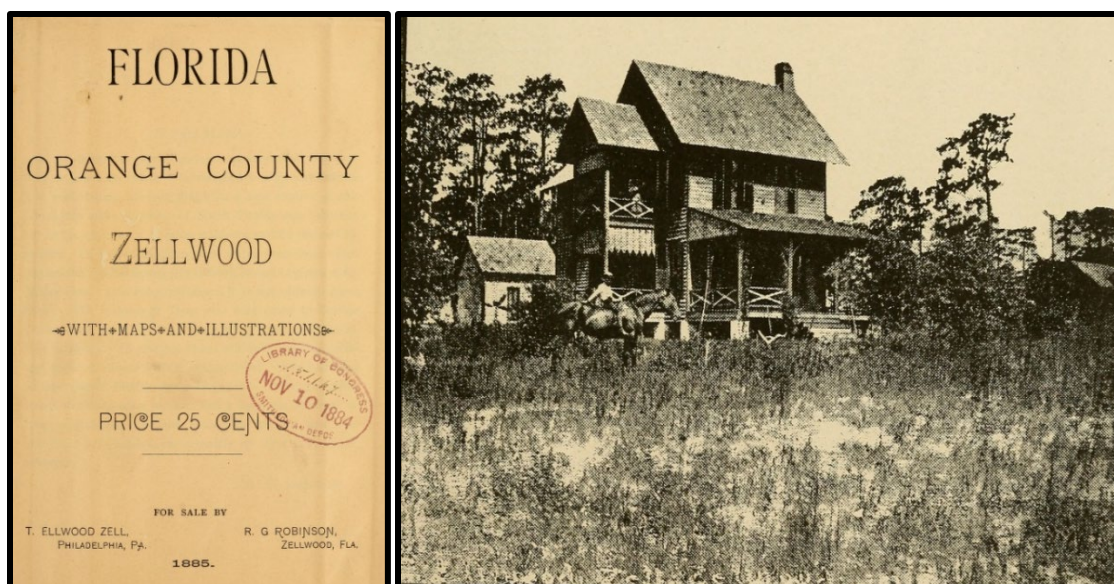


Figure 40. Left: The cover page of Florida, Orange County, Zellwood, which was published in 1885 by T. Ellwood Zell. Source: HathiTrust. Figure 41. Right: The Home of Lt. Col. T. Ellwood Zell on Lake Maggiore in Zellwood, Orange County, Florida, in 1885. Source: Florida, Orange County, Zellwood. (Philadelphia: T. Ellwood Zell, 1885).

Later that year, on October 17, 1876, Davis and Lt. Col. Zell entered a new partnership, forming T. Ellwood Zell, Davis & Co.³⁷ The new firm published the well-known Descriptive Hand Atlas of the World and Zell's U.S. Business Directory. Later, they produced the Cyclopedia of American Literature and Zell's Illustrated Bible. T. Ellwood Zell, Davis & Co., endured until 1880, when Davis left the partnership. The dissolution of this partnership led to a financial and legal dispute that would make its way to the Supreme Court.³⁸

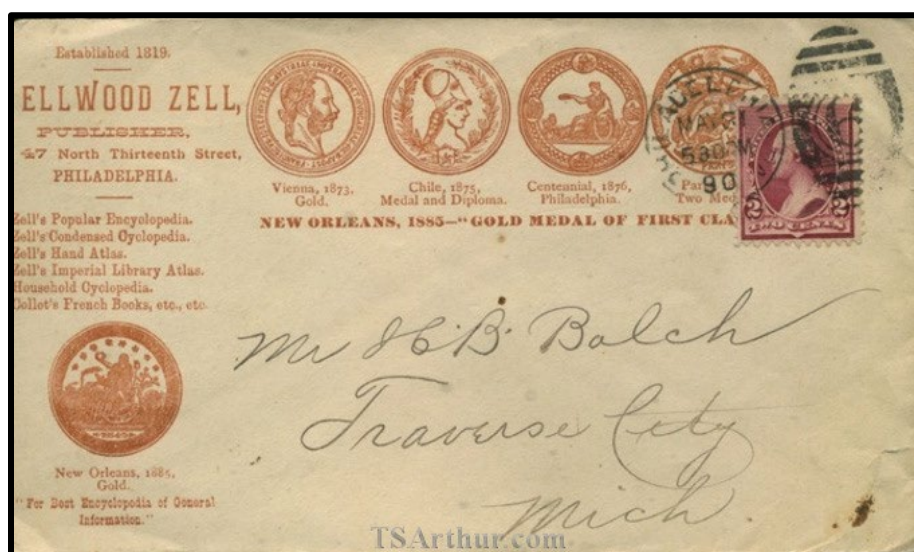


Figure 42. An envelope of T. Ellwood Zell, Publishers, when it was operating at 47 N. 13th Street, listing all the primary publications, etc., in 1890. Source: Ebay.

³⁷ *The American Bookseller*, 1 November 1876, 327.

³⁸ "Zell's Appeal," Pennsylvania State Reports. (United States, West Publishing Company, 1886).

After the end of T. Ellwood Zell, Davis & Co, in 1880, Lt. Col. Zell established his publishing house as a sole proprietorship, at which time he primarily worked in the field of “subscription publishing.” For example, in the 1880s, the firm continued to publish Mackenzie’s Five Thousand Receipts, which proved to be one of the best sellers. By 1883, it was during this time that Lt. Col. Zell removed his business from S. 6th Street to 47 North 13th Street.³⁹ In 1888, the firm announced the following publications:

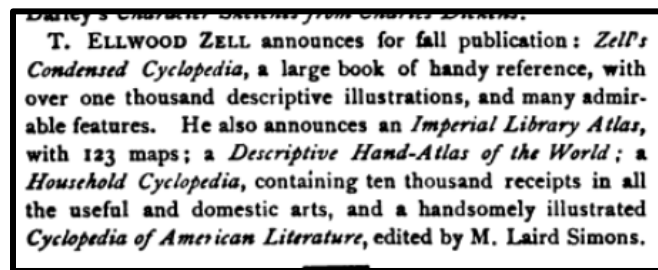


Figure 43. *The American Bookseller.*, 15 September 1888, 222. Source: HathiTrust.

Lt. Col. Zell’s publishing business continued into the 1890s. However, even after his retirement, some of his works continued to be published, making the precise end date of his career indiscernible. Ultimately, he divided his time between the subject house at Germantown during the summers and Zellwood during the winters. Lt. Col. Zell died on March 5, 1905, at Zellwood. His body was brought back to Philadelphia and interred in the Burial Ground of the Merion Meeting in Montgomery County. Florence Zell sold the store building at 47 N. 13th Street to William E. Fitz for \$17,000.⁴⁰ She continued to reside at the subject property until June 1911, when she finally moved to “Sell Historic House” to Jessica D. Hendrick for \$8,000.⁴¹

³⁹ Lorin Blodget. Census of Manufactures of Philadelphia: a Census of Industrial Establishments, And of Persons of Each Class Employed Therein, In the City of Philadelphia, for the Year 1882. (Philadelphia: Dickson & Gilling, 1883.).

⁴⁰ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1 April 1906, 33.

⁴¹ “Sell Historic House,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 May 1910, 9.; and “Real Estate Transfers,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 13.



Figure 44. Left: This is an excerpt from the larger “A sketch of the Battle of Germantown, fought on 4 October 1777...” illustrating the presence of troops along the easterly blocks of Church Lane in the neighborhood of the subject property. Source: A sketch of the Battle of Germantown, fought on 4 October 1777 between the British and Hessians, commanded by the Commander-in-Chief, William Howe, 5th Viscount Howe (1729-1814) and the Americans, commanded by General George Washington (1732-99), resulting in a British victory. *American War of Independence (1775-83)*. Via the Royal Collection Trust. Figure 45. Right: An article on the findings of bodies related to the Battle of Germantown that took place at 723 Church Lane. Source: “Sell Historic House,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 May 1910, 9.

CRITERION I

The parcel associated with 723 Church Lane is significant under Criterion I, as it has a high potential to contain intact archaeological resources that, in all probability, may yield information important to history, specifically about the Battle of Germantown, which occurred during the American Revolution.

The Battle of Germantown took place in the German Township on October 4, 1777, between the British and the Hessians, under the leadership of Commander-in-Chief William Howe, 5th Viscount Howe (1729-1814), and the Continental Army, led by General George Washington (1732-1799). According to a map conceived in 1777 (Figure 48)—now part of the Royal Collections at Windsor Castle, as well as various first-hand accounts of the Battle of Germantown, there was significant activity along the easterly blocks of Church Lane.⁴² While all of the precise locations along Church Lane have not yet been ascertained, past excavations have determined that

⁴² A sketch of the Battle of Germantown, fought on 4 October 1777 between the British and Hessians, commanded by the Commander-in-Chief, William Howe, 5th Viscount Howe (1729-1814) and the Americans, commanded by General George Washington (1732-99), resulting in a British victory. *American War of Independence (1775-83)*. Via the Royal Collection Trust.

some of the activity occurred on and within the vicinity of the subject property. In 1866, when Lt. Col. Zell commissioned construction of the subject house, the required excavation unearthed “the skeletons of twenty soldiers...,” who had been buried where they fell during the battle.⁴³ While fallen soldiers may have been removed for burial in the 1860s, it is unlikely that Lt. Col. Zell thoroughly excavated the entire property. Given this evidence, it is probable that the undeveloped land of the subject property at 723 Church Lane may yield archaeological resources, specifically, and not limited to, human remains associated with the Battle of Germantown. As a result, the subject property appears to be significant under Criterion I and should be listed in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

⁴³ “Sell Historic House,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 May 1910, 9.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Submitted by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia, the primary author was Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist, with assistance from J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Amy Lambert, Architectural Historian and Architect.

The following sites were used to create the nomination:

Cassidy-Fagan Facebook Page

Germantown Historical Society

Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network

Newspapers.com

Proquest Historical Newspapers

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William Still. *Still's Underground Rail Road Records.* (Philadelphia: William Still, Publisher, 1886), xxxv.

Figure 46. An article on Hannah Ann Zell's life at the time of her death. Source: "Hannah Ann Zell A Notable Woman," *Public Ledger*, 5 February 1911.