

SQUARE 1019: SUMMARY PROPERTY HISTORIES
EHT TRACERIES, INC.
DECEMBER 1999

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**1229 E STREET, S.E.
LOT 816 (FORMERLY 7), SQUARE 1019
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

The wood-frame structure at 1229 E Street, S.E. is a modest dwelling sited within the Capitol Hill Historic District. Dated to pre-1857,¹ it is one-story high, one-bay wide, and exhibits the characteristics associated with a 19th century vernacular dwelling form known as a "shotgun" house. The early date and rare form immediately draw attention to the importance of the building as significant contributing element to an understanding of Washington, D.C.'s architectural and social history.

The name, shotgun, is derived from the idea that the entire depth of the house could be transversed by a single bullet or "shot" from a gun through the open doors set in alignment along one side of the house, regardless of the number of rooms behind the one another. As is typical of the shotgun form, the narrow (14') dimension of this house is oriented to the front (north) where a single entry door is set to the side of the elevation, balanced by a single window at the other side. Two small rooms are set one behind the other. The interior door that connects these rooms is aligned with the entry door, as was the original rear door (now an interior connecting door). It is common to see this pattern followed regardless of the number of small rooms strung in a row from front to back; in this instance, the "shotgun" characteristic was extended with the construction of a third room with a dogleg form sometime before 1887.²

The dwelling as seen today is the product of a series of additions and alterations; however, the shotgun form of the original two-room block is clearly visible from the exterior. The rudimentary massing, simple fenestration, and the obvious change in roof forms establish the specific vernacular expression. The main roof, over the two-room, wood-frame block has the telltale gable geometry. A sloped roof at a wood-frame addition, a flat roof over the rear block constructed of brick, and a wood frame back porch are incremental extensions of the original building. Wood clapboard is extant beneath a layer of insulated siding installed in 1942. The series of three foundations (stuccoed to appear unified) and the walls of the rear block are constructed of brick in a five-course American bond.³ The front porch is missing, exposing the

¹ This date is based on maps and physical evidence. Deed research is presently underway to assist in the establishment of a more precise date.

² The initial addition (pre-1887) appears to have continued the form despite its dogleg footprint.

³ Although five-course American bond is typically found on mid 19th century construction, a DC building permit conclusively dates this addition to 1938. The owner's

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north foundation wall and the original windows (most likely 2/2) have been replaced by 6/1 wood windows dating to the 20th century. Examination of the interior supports the exterior analysis of a simply constructed building formed by an original two-room block, a dog-leg addition, a small infill, and a rear kitchen room. The house is intact in its plan and basic construction. The interior chimney is located at the center wall of the original two-room block. It led to a stove, whose pipe hole can be detected in the wall of the second room. The structural members of the interior wall are visible in a small closet. There are no circular saw marks, in keeping with the early 19th century date. Physical inspection of the interior indicates that the original two rooms and the one-room addition were wired for electricity, re-plastered over machine cut wood lath, and re-floored with oak during the 20th century; however, the wood trim around the doors, windows, and baseboard is typical of an earlier period. The 1938 kitchen block and the leg of the first addition (now a bathroom) could not be entered as the floor has completely failed.

Although research has not yet determined the original date or early history associated with the property, it is known that Ernst Tungel occupied the house in 1871. He is listed in Boyd's City Directories at 1229 E Street from that time until 1890. Mr. Tungel is noted to be a "Huckster" and later a "laborer." In 1900, property owned by Mr. Tungel and his wife Louisa at the time of their respective deaths and in trust since 1890 was sold to Cotter T. Bride, a Capitol Hill resident and businessman who is known to have been involved with "Real Estate." Deed research prior to and subsequent to this deed is not completed at this time; however, building permits and city directories add to an understanding of the property's history. In 1906, Daniel C. Hartley, Jr. was issued a building permit to construct a small shed (8' square).⁴ In 1917, Mr. Hartley was issued a building permit for a private garage at the rear of the property.⁵ In 1925, a DC Building Permit was issued to "C.C. Hertley" for a "new front porch."⁶ Drawings (elevation and plan) by local architect Thomas Medford illustrating the classically-derived porch design are included with the building permit. The existing house is described at 14' wide by 45' deep. In 1938, Mabel J. Hartley, believed to be the widow of Daniel Hartley, was issued a permit to build a brick

occupation as a bricklayer might explain the use of a traditional brick coursing.

⁴ This shed is depicted at the rear of the house on the 1903 Sanborn Map that includes undated corrections. It is no longer standing.

⁵ The history of the garage structure is included in this document as a separate section.

⁶ The architect completed the permit application and listed "C.C. Hertley" as owner both on the permit and on his drawings, however, so far we believe that Daniel Hartley, Jr. occupied the house during the period from 1906 through the 1930s. Deed research should clarify the ownership.

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addition, 14' wide x 17' deep. The existing house was described as 14' wide and 48' deep (3' longer than the 1925 permit description. The Hartley family appear to have occupied the house into the late 1930s. In 1942, W.C. Switzer was issued a repair permit to re-side the house with "Bird Insulated brand siding - Class C." This siding remains intact over wood clapboard. To date, the documentation of other occupants, owners, and changes remains to be uncovered.

The building is in poor condition.

Continuing research will shed light on the history of this property. At this point, however, it is clear that it is an extremely rare example of a shotgun house dating from the first half of the 19th century. Further, it stands today as the only remaining structure on Square 1019, a square within the original Federal City, depicted on the 1857 Boschke map of the District of Columbia. To conclude, the early date and exceptional form of this modest house mark its great significance to Capitol Hill and Washington, DC, and the importance of both recognizing this history and preserving it for the future.