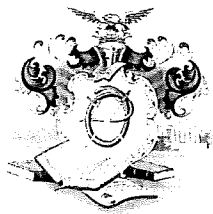




History
of
810 D Street N.E.

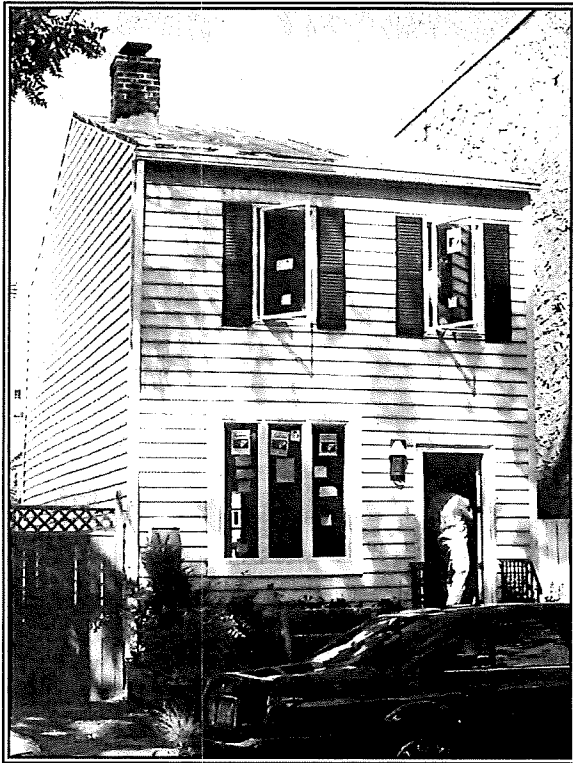


Historical Research
of
810 D Street, N.E.

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The Construction and Owners of 810 D Street

THE first documented owner of 810 D Street was James T. Keliher, who first appeared at the address in the 1870 City Directory.

The year previous, he had resided close by at 527 10th Street. 810 D Street was built for Keliher sometime in late 1869 or early 1870. At the time of his initial occupation, he indicated that he was employed as a clerk, when such a job was an appointed position in the government. He listed his address simply as "D near 9th Street, N.E." Much of the surrounding area at the time was vast open land, dotted with orchards and farm plantings.

By 1874, Keliher had changed his occupation to laborer. The tax assessment from that year listed his frame house with a value of \$550. It was situated on lot number 8 of Square 915 South. Other homes on the Square were valued that year from \$150 to \$1,000.

cor 13th and Boundary
Keliher James T. lab, D nr 9th ne
Keliher James grocer, 2039 L nw cor

The first census that captured residents of 810 D Street was enumerated in 1880. That record revealed that James Keliher lived at the house along with his wife Mary. James was then age 60, having been born in December of 1821 in Ireland, and was listed as a laborer. Both of his parents had also been born in Ireland. His wife Mary was then age 54, having been born in Virginia 1826. It was also the birthplace of both of her parents. She listed her occupation as "keeping house." The couple lived there along with their two children, James, Jr., age 22, and Margaret, age 20, both of whom had

Keliher James	24	M	60	
Mary	24	F	54	Wife
James Jr	22	M	22	Son
Margaret	20	F	20	Daughter

been born in Washington, DC. James Keliher Jr., listed his occupation as a carpenter, and would have been 12 years old when the family built a new house around the corner. Margaret listed no occupation.

Incredibly, The Keliher family would remain owners of 810 D Street for 90 years, until 1960, when James Keliher's granddaughter sold the house. Unfortunately, almost the entire 1890 census for the country was destroyed in a disastrous fire at the Commerce Building in January of 1921. Of the 62,979,766 persons enumerated in 1890, a total of 6,160 names could be extracted from the surviving schedules; the only remaining census information from that year for the District of Columbia that survives is a three block area along the 1300-1500 blocks of Corcoran Street, N.W.

810 D St	James Keliher Sr.	20 M	W M	1859	40	W
	Margaret C. Bresnahan	30 F	W F	1859	40	W
	Edward	20 M	W M	1877	12	S
	James	20 M	W M	1879	11	S
	Emma	9 F	W F	1880	9	S
	Robert	7 M	W M	1882	7	S
	Thomas	4 M	W M	1884	4	S
	James Keliher Jr.	12 M	W M	1878	12	W

The next census that captured the Keliher family at 810 D Street, however, was enumerated in

1900. Additional questions on that year's census revealed that James Sr., had immigrated from Ireland in 1848, when he would have been age 28. He was listed in the 1900 census as a 78-year-old widower. His daughter Margaret was listed as the head of the household in 1900, as a widow of Michael J. Bresnahan. She was then age 40, having been born in December 1859. She and her father lived at 810 D Street along with her five children. Margaret Bresnahan's children in 1900 included Edward, age 12, James, age 11, Emma, age 9, Robert, age 7, and Thomas, age 4.

810 D St	Keliher, James	Head - X	M	W	78	W
	Bresnahan, Margaret C.	Daughter	F	W	40	W
	Edward M.	Son	M	W	12	S
	James Jr.	Grandson	M	W	11	S
	Mary E.	Granddaughter	F	W	19	S
	Robert	Grandson	M	W	17	S
	Thomas	Grandson	M	W	14	S

The 1910 census enumerator recorded that James Keliher acted as the head of the household that year for 810 D Street,

then age 92. His daughter Margaret and her five children remained at the house, a few old enough to have accepted various jobs since the prior census was recorded. Edward Bresnahan was then age 22 and employed as an apprentice bricklayer for a builder, while 21-year-old James was a chauffeur for a delivery wagon. 19-year-old Mary was employed as a saleslady at a stationery store, and Robert, then age 17, worked as a driver for a delivery wagon. Even youngest son Thomas worked to help support the family, he too a driver for a delivery wagon.

The 1920 census revealed that only Margaret Bresnahan and her son Edward remained at the house; at the time he was age 32 and was employed as a fireman in the District of Columbia. However, the 1928 City Directory reveals that son James T. and Edward returned to the house. James had been living at 7 Rhode Island Avenue, N.E., and was employed as an office manager for Western Union Telegraph Company while

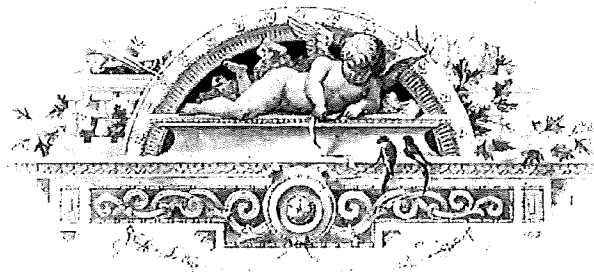
Edward was still employed as a bricklayer. In 1932, only daughter Emma was listed at the house, the widow of Albert Lawson. At the time, she was employed as a charwoman at the Southern Building, a building built at 15th and H Streets N. W. in 1910.

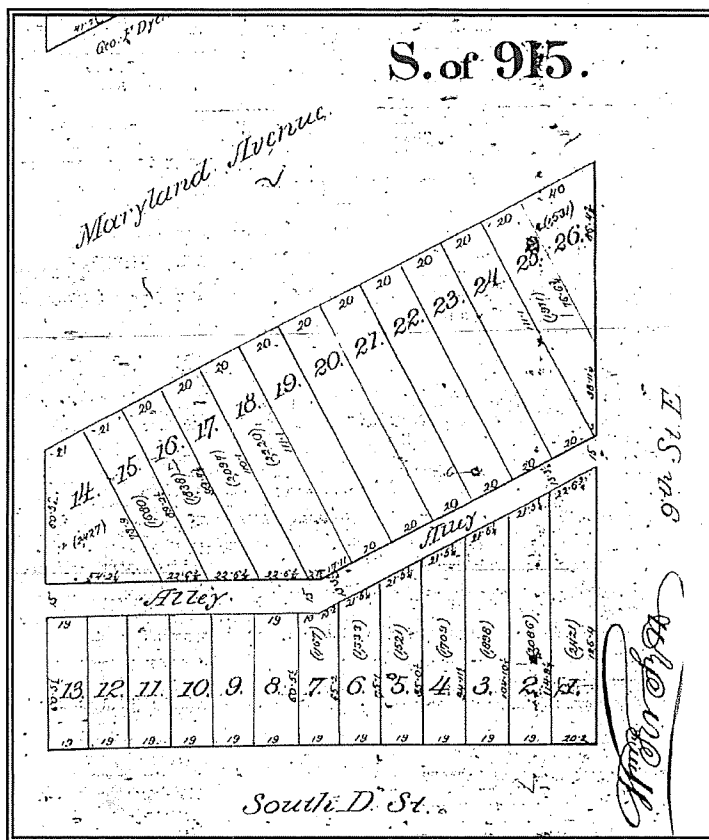
Beginning in 1950, Emma Lawson discontinued listing an occupation, likely spending her time at 810 D Street in retirement. On October 6, 1960, she sold the family home after 90 years of ownership to Corey W. Brincefield. He was the owner of the Brincefield Construction Company, which was then located at 5107 45th Street, with a satellite office at 11 H Street, N.W.

Just a year later, however, on March 28, 1961, Brincefield sold the house (likely after improvements were made) to the Home Mortgage Investment Corporation. They actually retained ownership of the house until selling it back to Brincefield on October 15, 1965. In the interim, the company leased the house to Mrs. Inez R. Isom, who listed no occupation while in residence.

From 1965 to 1972, when Corey Brincefield owned the house, it was leased to Helen E. James. On April 27, 1972, Brincefield sold 810 D Street to Andre and Barry N. Fields for \$25,000. The house experienced the next thirty years with minimal or no maintenance, and repeated financing and liens.

In 2002, however, the house was purchased by Lazarus LLC, who began a period of restoration and recreation by rebuilding and updating each amenity of the 132 year old residence, returning it to a welcome and inviting home seen today.





The Development of the 800 Block of D Street

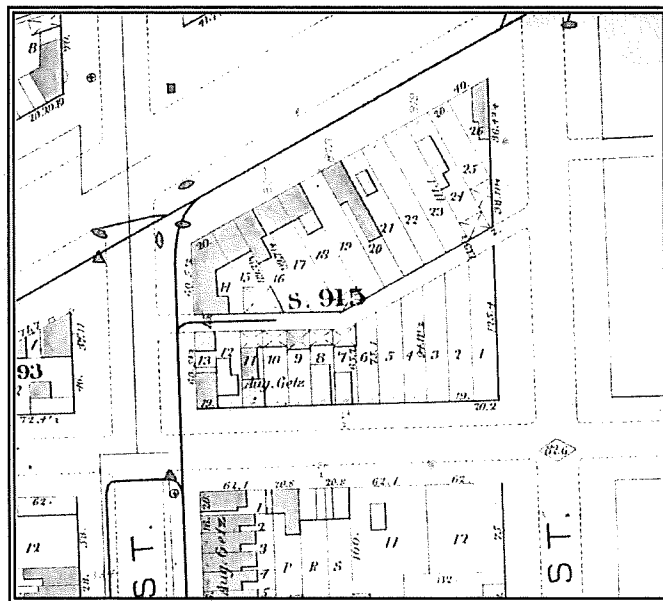


THE first map of Square 915 South was plotted in 1874, seen at left, showing the recent subdivision of the Square by owner George F. Dyer. He broke up the large parcel of land into lots numbered 1 to 26 on July 1, 1857. Actual building on individual lots was slow to commence, however, with the house at 810 D Street being one of the first wood frame houses built, on lot 8 in 1870; a house that remains to this day.

In 1874, the entire Square had only twelve residential buildings on it; seven of which were frame and valued between \$150 and \$800. The five brick structures were then valued between \$600 and \$1,000. In addition, the Square featured one stable valued at \$50 on lot 9. Homes along D Street included a brick house on lot 13, frame houses on lots 12 and 13, and frame house on lot 7.

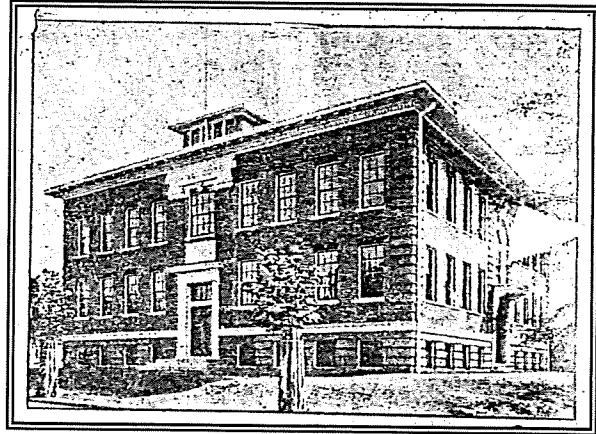
All of these buildings were constructed before the need of a Washington D.C. building permit, which was not a requirement until November of 1877. At right, the Hopkin's map from 1887 shows the addition of several new homes along the block, some of which replaced earlier frame dwellings.

The house at 800 D Street was awarded a permit to build on September 22, 1880, while a rear brick addition was added to the house at 804 D Street in March of 1883. The house at 814 D Street was built

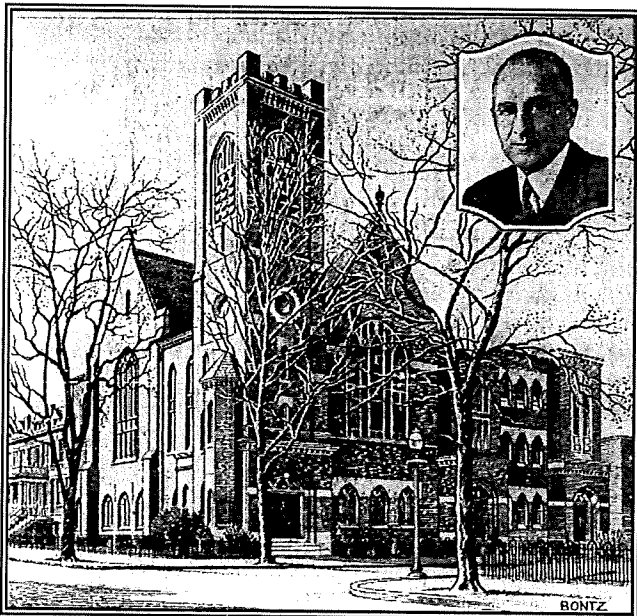


in 1887, while those at 816 to 826 were built simultaneously following the issuance of their permit on August 27, 1888. August Getz received a permit to build 806 D Street on February 4, 1892.

Close by, the Edmonds School at the corner of 9th and D Street was designed in 1902 by the architectural firm of Marsh & Peter. It was built the following year by the construction firm of Pavarini & Greer. Its image appeared in the *Washington Star* newspaper in 1903, illustrated at right.



The 9th Street Christian Church in the 800 block of D Street was built about 1910. It appeared in the *Washington Star* edition of December 2, 1944, along with a portrait of then Reverend Dr. Carroll C. Roberts, seen below. However, the Way of the Cross Church of Christ has been utilizing the building since 1963. In February of 1928, a small group consisting of five persons assembled together with express purpose of starting a church. This pioneer group, which had gathered themselves at the home of Deacon Charles Johnson, one of its members, consisted of the late founder Bishop H. C. Brooks (below) and Sisters Alice Johnson, Lovie Brown, and Rosa Bell Howard.



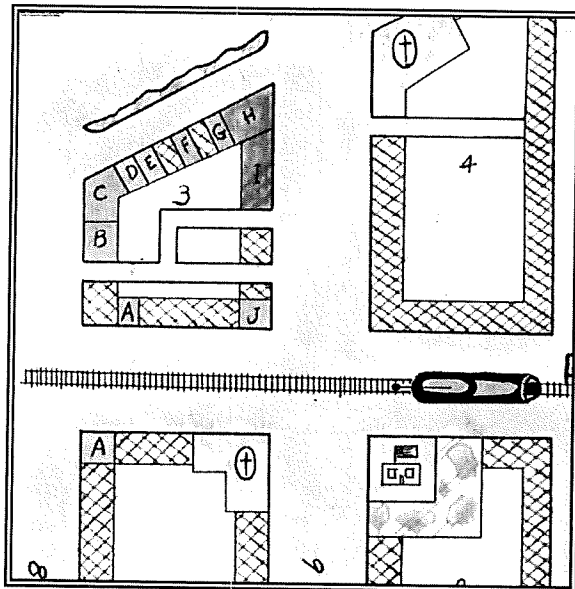
This new edifice seated twelve hundred people, and there were some who insisted that it was much too large.

In 1954 land next to the church was purchased for the building of an annex for which the cornerstone was laid on Labor Day 1955. The church continued to prosper and grow, but highway construction in 1963 brought to a close the glorious period of nearly

In December of 1933 the church was incorporated, taking to itself the power to establish and organize other churches, and to ordain Ministers. It was at this time that Elder H. C. Brooks was consecrated as Bishop. After five years at a 21st and M Street location, the membership soon exceeded the church seating capacity, and preparations began to raise funds for a down payment on another church. In May of 1935 the church relocated at 4th and Virginia Avenue, S.E., where it remained for the next twenty-eight years.

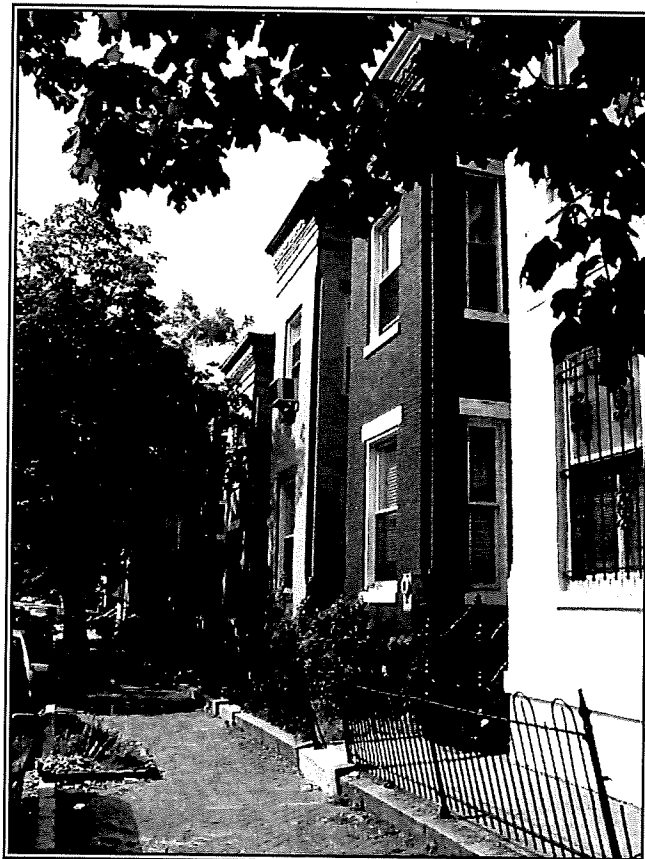


three decades which the church spent in its location at 4th and Virginia Avenue, S.E., forcing the church to move to its present location at 9th and D Streets. After pastoring the church 40 years, Bishop H. C. Brooks died at the location on June 12, 1967.



In May of 1947, Capitol Hill resident Theodore J. Rubin compiled information for his thesis on census tract #81, which included Square 915 South, seen at left and labeled block #3. To the immediate west of 810 D Street was the William Shike barbershop, while the corner of 9th and D served as a local market that year. The D Street trolley line No. 42 can also be seen, then traveling directly in front of 810 D Street. Across the street, the church building was then occupied by the 9th Street Christian Church.

- 3-
- (A) Wm. Shike - Barber
 - (B) D.C. Weatherstrip Co.
 - (C) Md. Acc. Cafe
 - (D) Hardesty's Service Mkt.
 - (E) New China Laundry
 - (F) R. Richardson - Plumbing
 - (G) American Delicatessen
 - (H) The Mardav (+ stories)
 - (I) The Barbors (+ stories)
 - (J) 9th & D Market





Capitol Hill: A Brief History

While the Capitol Hill neighborhood undoubtedly derives its name from its proximity to the United States Capitol, it is not in fact actually located on a Hill. The Capitol building is situated on the highest point of land between the Anacostia and Potomac rivers, hence the name

"Capitol Hill" for the campus surrounding the main building for the legislative branch of the government. The *neighborhood* known as Capitol Hill was developed on the high plateau extending east from the crest of the hill.

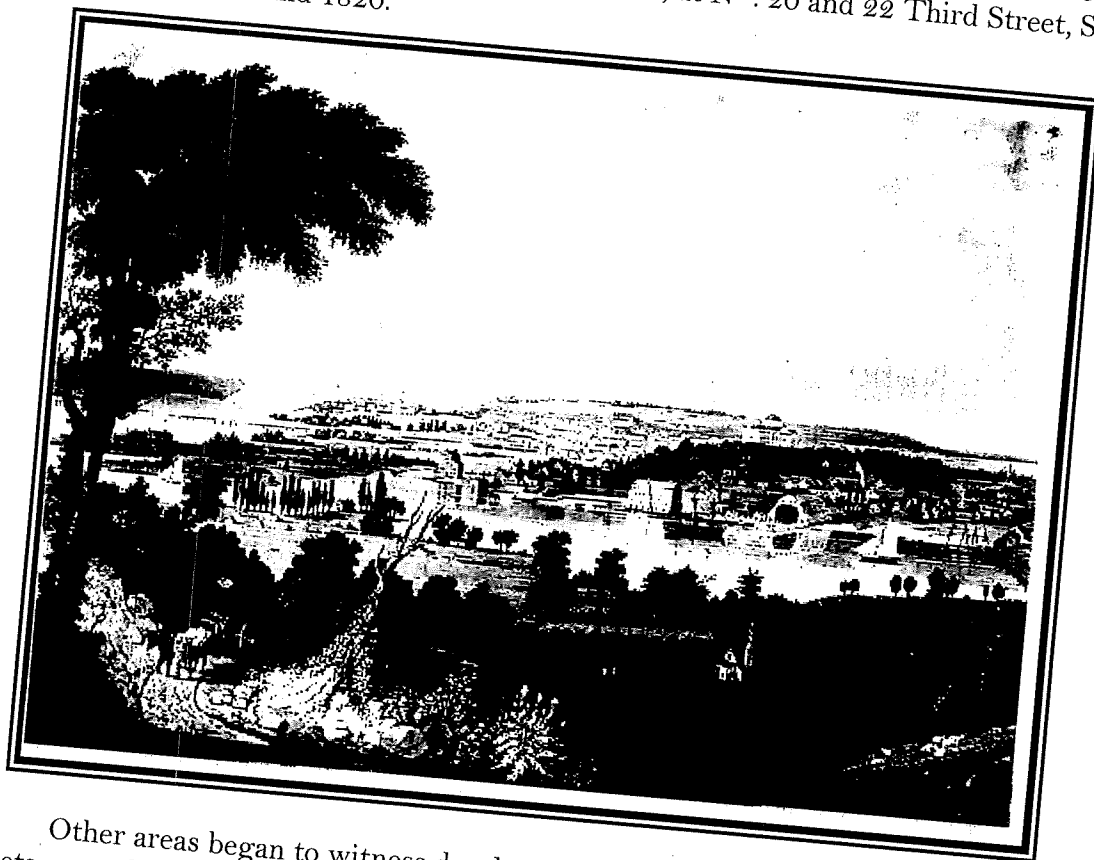
Originally, at the time that the Capitol City was designated in 1791, it was hoped that the deep waters of the Anacostia River would eventually become host to a significant seaport. Pierre Charles L'Enfant, the architect of the original plan for the Capitol City, designed East Capitol Street to be 160 feet wide, with the expectation that it would accommodate a major commercial strip, deriving its traffic from a series of ports to be developed along the shoreline. However, the Anacostia seaport never materialized; sediment churn in the water, from early urban development, caused the river to become marshy, and by the time the McMillan Plan of 1901-1902 was implemented, plans for a major seaport had long been abandoned in favor of filling in the shoreline to create much needed parkland.

By the 1920s and 1930s, the newly formed parkland had mostly been built upon, due to increasing pressures for housing. (This explains the fact that the building stock closer to the present-day edge of the river is all more recent than the stock further inland.)

At the midpoint of East Capitol Street, L'Enfant also designed a park (now Lincoln Park) to house a "historic column from whose station, [a mile from the Federal House], all distances of places through the Continent, are to be calculated." While the landmark column never materialized, the park that served as the outer boundary of the neighborhood in 1876 did receive Thomas Ball's Emancipation Monument, which was designed, built and erected solely with contributions from freed slaves.

The first neighborhood called "Capitol Hill" was a small cluster of homes located at First and Second streets along New Jersey Avenue, S.E., around 1800. Few Congressmen preferred to establish permanent residence in the city during the early years of the Republic and chose instead to rent rooms in one of the numerous boarding

houses located within walking distance of the Capitol. This cluster remained the primary residential area of the neighborhood for the first several decades of the 19th century. Two houses from this period still stand, at Nos. 20 and 22 Third Street, S.E., dating back to around 1820.

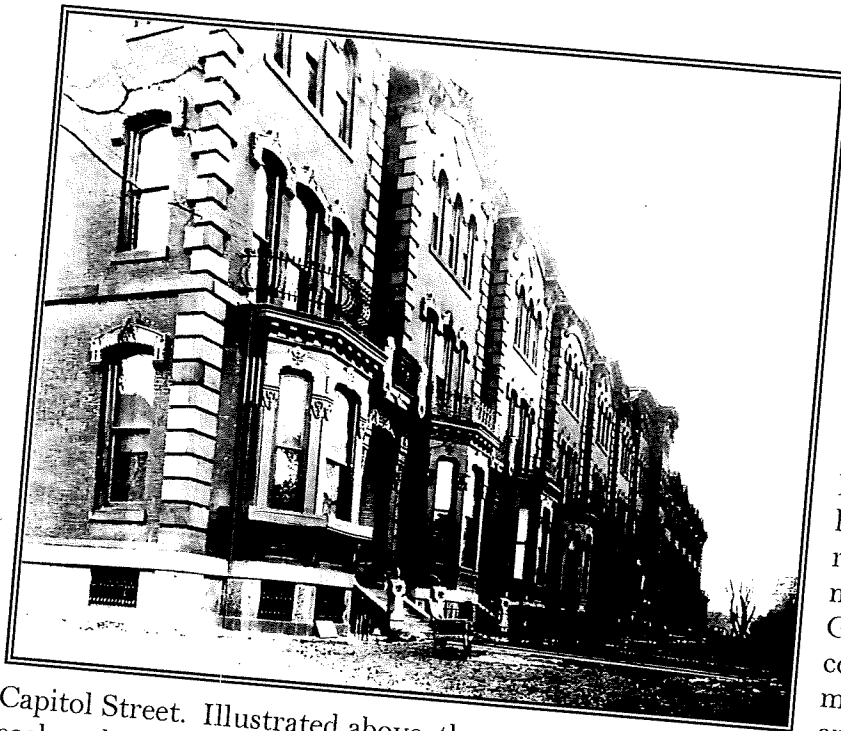


Other areas began to witness development shortly thereafter, including the streets around the Navy Yard and the nearby Marine Barracks. The illustration above, from an 1834 drawing by George Cooke depicting the Navy Yard, shows the sparse development beyond. In addition to the formal military architecture, many lower-quality homes were constructed in the surrounding areas to house skilled and unskilled construction laborers. The image below shows a wood frame officer's quarters at the Navy Yard in 1866.

Construction in southeast Washington remained slow during the first half of the 19th century, however. The boarding-house quarter close to the Capitol began expanding somewhat by 1850, and several merchants had begun to construct stores to serve the growing residential population around the Marine Barracks. A few of the homes dating from this period remain standing, perhaps the best known of which is located at 326 A



Street, S.E. Built around 1850, it was the home of Constantino Brumidi, an Italian artist responsible for most of the decoration of the U.S. Capitol, including the large frescoes in the main rotunda.

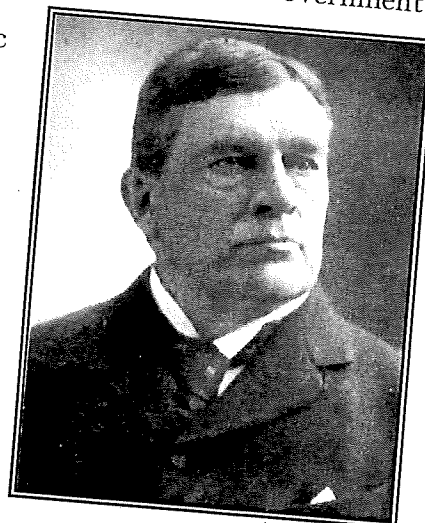


During the Civil War, when new construction was all but completely halted, many homes on Capitol Hill doubled up as hospitals and boarding houses. Following the war, builder Captain Alfred Grant attempted to develop an area of the Hill into a lavish and highly desirable residential neighborhood. In 1871, Grant speculatively constructed a row of 16 mansions along A Street and 14 mansions on East

Capitol Street. Illustrated above, they were designed to sell for an outrageous \$75,000 each and were leveraged, as was much of the speculative development at that time. The project failed, and the mansions were eventually demolished and replaced beginning in 1928 by the Folger Shakespeare Library.

That spectacular failure notwithstanding, Capitol Hill, along with the rest of Washington, experienced tremendous growth following the Civil War, as workers and freed slaves poured into the city to work for a rapidly expanding Federal Government.

Notorious vice president of the Board of Public Works, Alexander "Boss" Shepherd, illustrated at right, proposed a civic improvement scheme for Washington in 1871 that had a budget of \$6 million and stimulated new construction all over the city (before it ultimately failed under numerous allegations of scandals and kick-backs). Local building associations advertised the need for masons to gather and construct new housing as quickly as possible.



Federal employment spiked in 1883 with the passage of the Pendleton Act, which replaced the earlier method of hiring by appointment with a system based on competitive merit. With this shift, the quality and social stature of the federal workforce increased sharply, and the top salary for government employment increased to \$4,000, a substantial sum for the time.



Even with the brisk pace of development, however, the housing market could not keep pace with the influx of new workers, and many Capitol Hill homeowners built additions or rented rooms throughout the 1880s.

The area now known as the Capitol Hill Historic District was primarily built up on a speculative basis in the 1880s and 1890s. Several developers and architects collaborated to construct homes often one entire block at a time. These included such men as Diller B. Groff, Nicholas T. Haller, Nicholas Grimm, J.T. Walker, T. Franklin Schneider and countless others.

Ever a highly residential area of the city, Capitol Hill has seen commercial development in small waves through the years. Most of all, Capitol Hill is known for its placid residential streets and family-friendly atmosphere. More than any other part of the city, it enjoys a certain immunity to economic ups and downs, as it is so densely residential and positioned so closely to the United States Capitol.

