

**BUILDING, SAVING, PRESERVING, PLACING:  
The Richmond of Grace Arents and Mary Wingfield Scott**

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## INTRODUCTION

Two sets of row houses in Richmond, Virginia exemplify how two women, a philanthropist and a preservationist, shaped and carried out their vision for the built environment in the twentieth century. The Cumberland Street Housing built by Grace Arents (1848-1926) in 1904 and the Linden Row Houses preserved by Mary Wingfield Scott (1896-1983) in the 1950s, are architectural manifestations of their work (fig.1). Arents funded solid, fine architecture in a working-class neighborhood where she planned an acropolis of buildings for social welfare; Scott initiated Richmond's preservation movement and personally saved antebellum buildings from demolition and for the benefit of the city.

These two women shared neither generation nor profession, but they met in their awareness of architecture as a tool for social reform and in its power to effect social change and improve human behavior. Arents believed that good buildings could uplift working-class people, and Scott believed that historic buildings could connect people to a better past. The similarities in their backgrounds and circumstances and the differences in how they chose to bring about change within their communities provide a broader view of how women shaped the built landscape of Richmond. Beyond Richmond, their extraordinary work represents two ways that women influenced the city in this century before the architecture and planning professions were open to them.<sup>1</sup> Both women engaged in a specific activism that grew from their personal situation and reacted to their perceived needs of the city. It physically marked the landscape, came out of their relationship to history, was shaped by their views on segregation, and secured them a place in the story of their city.

Both women are Richmond legends; Arents is hailed as a generous and quiet

reformer; and Scott as the mother of historic preservation in Virginia's capital city. With very different public voices--Arents was reclusive, Scott campaigned--they each used the expressive power of architecture to influence the relationship of Richmonders to their environment. They both devoted their lives to saving and rescuing--Arents used buildings to save people, while Scott mobilized people to save buildings. In different ways, as city builder and as preservationist, these two women devoted their wealth, energy, and passionate interest in architecture to shape the built history and future of the city.

Beyond the two sets of row houses, their collective projects further defined their vision for Richmond and address how the issues of race, class, and awareness of history are caught up in a physical rearrangement of the city--either by building or by preserving. As a northerner who settled in this southern city rebuilding after the Civil War, Arents was not interested in a past that was not her own, nor in its old buildings that could not further her goal for a solid base of infrastructure within which to affect social change. She devoted her architectural and religious efforts to the uplift of Oregon Hill, a white working-class neighborhood, and this required a rearrangement of the existing building fabric and small black population. In contrast, Scott was a native Richmonder and she looked to old buildings as the city's most valuable resource. She understood the city as segregated by race and class but included the houses of blacks and working class whites in her surveys and areas of activism. Scott believed that the benefit of historic buildings was the responsibility and reward of all Richmond's citizens.

Both worked in a time when the city valued progress. For Arents' career, from the 1890s to the 1920s, Richmond was redefining itself as a southern city. This redefinition was

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<sup>1</sup> See Judith Paine, "Pioneer Women Architects," in *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*, ed. Susana Torre (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1977). 54-69, for early history of women in the architecture profession.



based in its roots as a glorious antebellum capital, but it also forced Richmond to pursue its progressive industrial, social, and commercial prowess. This growth and progress produced new civic problems and required new civic responsibility.<sup>2</sup> Arents' vision of building fit with this progress and her social work stepped up to this responsibility. During Scott's career, in the 1930s through the 1960s, Richmond was embracing the automobile--the suburbs it served, and the roads, parking lots, and filling stations it required. Scott resisted the destruction that this progress brought to the historic fabric of the city. Furthermore, in both periods, the city faced the issue of how to advance beyond the condition of slum housing. Both Arents and Scott agreed that slum housing was bad, but Arents demolished it and started fresh with higher-quality housing, whereas Scott advocated ways to improve the existing fabric except in the worst cases.

In many ways, these two women worked with opposing visions and actions for the built landscape of Richmond. By demolishing old houses to make a place for her monumental architecture, Arents effectively opposed preservation.<sup>3</sup> Scott preserved old buildings and disdained drastic changes to the landscape, even alterations that affected historical character. However, in other ways, both women did engage the work of the other. Arents built to preserve the character of the Oregon Hill neighborhood as a whole. She perceived that the neighborhood was threatened by rotting housing and black settlement. Effective preservation of Oregon Hill for Arents involved demolishing unworthy structures and rebuilding architectural anchors that would secure the future of the neighborhood. Scott saw Richmond neighborhoods threatened by rotting housing and she responded by

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<sup>2</sup> Gustavus A. Weber, *Report on Housing and Living Conditions in the Neglected Sections of Richmond, Virginia* (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1913), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Even if Arents had been active in the preservation movement during her time, her efforts would doubtfully have included the modest housing she demolished. The APVA, founded in 1888, was interested in preserving buildings that referenced a specific history of national and regional greatness and the working class houses of Oregon Hill, despite their age, would not have been a priority for preservation.

building a collection of survey materials, and encouraging restoration and reuse. This second patronage that Scott both engaged in and advocated was to build up existing neighborhoods with their old buildings as the material. They were both reacting to deteriorating urban fabric with different motives, actions, and results, based on their background and their time.

The differences in Arents' and Scott's careers were also based in the historical relationship of their families to the city. They both came from money and their families occupied the same elite Richmond neighborhoods. This common geography places them in similar social spheres and with similar palettes of architectural knowledge, even though they worked a generation apart. In the 1880s, Arents' uncle Major Lewis Ginter and Scott's grandparents Major Frederic and Frances Branch Scott lived nearby in a prominent area of downtown Richmond. They used similar houses to define their different roles in Richmond society as the recently arrived wealthy bachelor on the one block, and the well-established wealthy southern family on the other (fig.2). By the 1890s, both Ginter and the Scotts had again moved to nearby houses on a new and elite stretch of West Franklin Street (fig.3).<sup>4</sup> Ginter held on to his property further downtown, however, and also acquired more, for in 1891 he demolished the previous Scott house to develop new row houses on the site (fig.2). Ginter was rooting himself in his adopted city with architecture, while the Scott's already had their family roots there. Scott's grandparents and their children were active members of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA); Ginter was not. The work of their descendents, Arents and Scott, in the next century was shaped by the same connections to the city and awareness of history. While the two women did not interact directly, Arents demolished just the sort of houses that Scott later campaigned to save--

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<sup>4</sup> Ginter lived at 405 East Cary Street from around 1876 until he built his home at 901 West Franklin street in 1888-92. The Scott family lived at 101 South Fifth Street (built 1813-14) from around 1879 until they built their home at 712 West Franklin Street in 1883.

ordinary wood-framed antebellum structures. Scott admired Arents' socially progressive architecture but it did not have the age value to qualify for her survey of recorded and researched buildings.<sup>5</sup>

Neither Arents nor Scott married, and each shared their lives with a woman companion. In one way, they were both part of society Richmond--residing in the areas and enjoying the influence that money and lineage provided. But in another way, they were each eschewing traditional women's roles of their time by remaining unmarried and actively involved in the public sphere. They preserved their freedom to be activists without the obligations of conventional marriage, and they held onto the management of their own finances, which were the foundation for their philanthropy. They were independent and radical thinkers--each engaged in campaigns that surpassed the work of any other individuals in their field in the city either male or female. Both established a voluntary organization at the beginning of their careers through which they did much of their work: Arents founded the St. Andrew's Association in 1900, and Scott founded the William Byrd Branch of the APVA in 1935. Arents perceived her role through an Episcopal lens as building up an infrastructure for social good. Using professional architects and with her influence, Arents shaped the landscape of Oregon Hill. Scott perceived her role through the lens of history as preserving the built past for common benefit and to sensibly plan the city's future. With her training as historian, Scott advocated preservation policy and intervened in the private sector to preserve the city's landscape as she thought best.

Arents and Scott each also had a vision for the mapping of race within Richmond. Arents saw blacks living in old, poor-condition housing that embodied a past she did not

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<sup>5</sup> Mary Wingfield Scott, *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*. (Richmond: The Valentine Museum, 1950), 220. Scott references the "ambitious church-development" and the "plant" of buildings carried out by the

value. She carried out housing reform that displaced blacks from Oregon Hill and thereby made a statement about whose future she was shaping. Four decades later, Scott saw blacks living in old, poor-condition housing that detracted from a past she valued highly. She left blacks and whites in different areas of the city but worked to protect their housing stock from demolition or further deterioration. This action also may have effectively kept an encroaching black residential population out of downtown as she advocated rezoning of this area to allow gentle business instead of heavy commercial, or continued deteriorating residential use. However, with altered sensibilities four decades later, Scott knew not to condone displacement, regardless of the good intentions of the vision.

The history of Richmond is bound up with the Civil War and matters of race. When the city fell in 1865, it suffered physical devastation and struggled for several decades to rebuilding. This effort provided an opportunity for the city to redefine itself both architecturally and socially. Monument Avenue, which developed at the end of this period of rebuilding, manifested the pride of the city in its history as capital of the Confederacy with grand architecture, statuary, and planning. However, this history rather left the significant black population out of the city's story. As well as to design monumental spaces, the city used planning to place the African-American residents that remained in the city after the war. With the turn of the century, Richmond prioritized this segregation and used planning as its means of control. Zoning ordinances enforced residential segregation in the first decades of the twentieth century that was suggested already with traditional residence patterns.

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"generosity and creative imagination of a remarkable woman, Miss Grace Arents." Scott is the most interested in the 1875 frame St. Andrew's church.

With its urban core well enough rebuilt, the city focused on expanding its limits with streetcar suburbs that developed in the late nineteenth century. Successive annexations to the city limits began in 1906 and these measures gave Richmonders, especially wealthy whites, an alternative to living downtown. The Society for the Betterment of Housing and Living Conditions in Richmond (SBHLCR) that organized in 1912 reported on the concern of provision of housing for working people in the city. This perception and reality of dilapidated housing and unsanitary conditions in the urban center drew middle-class and wealthy whites out to the western suburbs. The tradition of freestanding and more architecturally various houses in the city on Monument Avenue, for example, continued west into the suburbs from the 1920s.<sup>6</sup> These houses contrasted with earlier downtown houses that were often attached brick or frame two-story, two-to-three-bay-wide and close to the street. Before long, Richmond, like most American cities, began to arrange its plans and its buildings to accommodate the car. The roads that this new transportation system required subsequently attacked the built fabric of the city. From the 1950s, Richmonders were provided with road networks that took them directly downtown from the suburbs without engaging the neighborhoods and historic fabric in-between. The preservation movement in Richmond initially developed in the 1930s in response to the houses threatened by neglect from the exodus from the city. It now rallied to protect the buildings in the path of new roads and of commercial expansion. The areas that dealt with the demolition crisis, Oregon Hill, Jackson Ward, and others, were generally working class and black neighborhoods with modest housing or housing in ill-repair (fig.4). That these neighborhoods were the most attacked suggests the sort of values that the city placed on its residents and its buildings.

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<sup>6</sup> For the development of Monument Avenue as a design and social phenomenon see Richard Guy Wilson, "Monument Avenue" in *The Grand American Avenue 1850-1920*, Jan Cigliano and Sarah Bradford

This overview of Richmond history frames the periods in which Arents and Scott operated, and the issues to which they responded.

The first chapter looks at Grace Arents--the buildings for which she was patron on Oregon Hill, and the motivations, context, and method of her architectural philanthropy. Chapter two discusses Mary Wingfield Scott--the buildings she fought to save, her research and publications on Richmond's historic architecture, and her vision and theory for the preservation of the city and its buildings. The final chapter will consider the two sets of row houses for which each woman was patron, and study them in the context of their work and of the city. This will include the formal and historical qualities of the houses as well as the motivations and methods of their patronage, and their relationship to the fabric and contemporary developments of Richmond.

## CHAPTER 1

### The Architectural Work of Grace Arents

In 1902 *The Times* newspaper featured an article on Grace Arents' work on the front page illustrated with a pictorial collage of St. Andrew's architecture (fig.5).<sup>7</sup> The text is surmounted by five pencil drawings that include St. Andrew's Church, rectory, school, teachers' residence and parish library. Each building is represented as a monumental piece of architecture with hash lines indicating the masonry, an oblique perspective view, and a minimal emphasis on the setting. These qualities all focus on the building as an important object, and suggest that the buildings are what made possible the good work of the church that the article describes. In January 1902, Arents had not yet built the brick Teachers' Home (1903), the Housing (begun 1904), the Arents Free Library (1908) or the Grace Arents School (1911) that all stood apart from their wood-framed neighbors. However, she was already acclaimed in the local press as a modest and saintly woman expending large amounts of money on buildings to help the local people. The article reads:

No one who has met her has failed to be impressed with the modesty and unassuming manner of this lady who is doing so much for Richmond. But the improvements that Miss Arents has made on South Laurel Street and her efforts to educate and uplift the young people in that vicinity cannot fail to attract the public gaze...[the improvements] have not only been the cause of the betterment of the condition of the multitude of people who live along that and neighboring streets but have advanced the value of every foot of land in that part of the city...This lady has spent scarcely not less than \$150,000 in the small radius of a square. This was for new buildings alone.

This halo of drawings indicates the Richmond public already understood that well-endowed buildings could be responsible for social change, and Grace Arents was linked with good architecture from her early days in Richmond. In a rare recorded discussion of the existing

housing, Arents indicated that she was pleased with the work of the Association that enabled "the beautifying of humble homes" in the neighborhood.<sup>8</sup> What she made, and how Richmond perceived it, contrasted with this humble infrastructure.

When northerner Grace Arents settled in Richmond, where she remained except for frequent travels until her death in 1926, she found a city rebuilding after the Civil War. She soon embarked on a career of philanthropy and social reform and carried out over ten projects on a monumental scale compared with the existing neighborhood of modest wood-framed housing. Born in New York in 1948, Grace Evelyn Arents moved south sometime after the war and following her father's death. With her mother, two sisters, and brother, she lived with her maternal uncle Major Lewis Ginter.<sup>9</sup> The family shared his house at 405 East Cary Street, a few blocks from St. Paul's Episcopal Church where they were all members or attendees. In 1873, St. Paul's began a mission in Oregon Hill, a mostly white working-class neighborhood to the west of downtown. They built a frame church named St. Andrew's and it was through this mission that Arents began her religious-inspired philanthropy. By 1900, when she founded the St. Andrew's Association, she was in charge of its work and in possession of Ginter's tobacco and real estate fortune to fund it.

Over three decades, from approximately 1890 to 1920, Arents carefully constructed a group of buildings in Oregon Hill that included the 1901 St. Andrew's Church and the adjacent 1903 St. Andrew's School and Hall, the 1903 Belvidere Street Mission Building, a series of housing projects that began with Cumberland Street in 1904, Linden Street in 1906 and 1910, and Taylor Street in 1909, the 1903 Teachers' Home that soon became the

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<sup>7</sup> "St. Andrew's Church and the Parish School Group," *The Times*, 26 January 1902, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 10 November 1910, p. 86; When the Arents Free Library is finally opened to the public in late 1913, Arents initiates a successful prize program to encourage the planting of lawns and gardens in the area and improve neighborhood conditions. St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 19 November 1913, p. 131.



headquarters of the Instructive Visiting Nurses Association, the 1908 Arents Free Library, the 1911 Grace Arents School, the 1913 Grace Arents Baths, and a home for young working women.<sup>10</sup> These building projects consistently displayed her favor for solid, monumental, richly endowed, architect-designed buildings, and she usually demolished or rearranged the existing wood-framed housing stock to make a place for them. Arents also rearranged the existing population. Her vision for the housing included not only demolishing the old and dilapidated housing stock on some blocks of the neighborhood, but it forced the displacement of those pockets of black residents in the mostly white neighborhood.

Arents was well aware of the primacy of architecture in the educational and social mission of the church. She began work in the neighborhood by organizing sewing and other schools and a library, but she soon began to acquire land and commission buildings.<sup>11</sup> Arents' first major project in Oregon Hill was the stone St. Andrew's Church built in 1901 to replace the original frame church (fig.6). This initiated her idea that a specific kind of architecture would encourage social uplift, and it set the precedent for two decades of monumental masonry construction in the neighborhood. After Ginter completed his new house at 901 West Franklin Street in 1892 and the family moved, Arents lived only six blocks north of Oregon Hill and it was logical that her efforts would continue so close to home. It was not only proximity that connected her West Franklin Street residence to the Oregon Hill neighborhood. From this house, Arents brought an awareness of fine and solid material,

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<sup>9</sup> Arents' mother, Jane Swain Ginter (1813-1890) married Stephen Arents (1809-1855) in 1833. Photocopies of family Bible are in the Virginia Historical Society Library.

<sup>10</sup> Several Oregon Hill streets changed name some time after buildings of interest to this paper were constructed on them. The street name at the time of construction is used in the text. Beverly Street became Idlewood Avenue, Cumberland Street was know for a while as Canal Street, Taylor Street became Parkwood Avenue.

<sup>11</sup> Arents ran a library with Annie Jeffreys in the 1870s on North Third Street and it was through Jeffreys and her own membership in St. Paul's Ladies Altar Guild that she became involved with the St. Andrew's mission in Oregon Hill. In 1890, she donated an organ in memory of her mother, which was her first official engagement with the mission.

spacious plans, and imposing street presence that informed the design and placement of her philanthropic buildings. These spatial and material qualities distinguished her buildings in Oregon Hill from the existing housing stock and imposed a kind of personal and civic pride in the residents.

Arents' death in 1926 at age seventy-eight was announced on the front pages of the Richmond newspapers for days. Her work was summarized thus: "It was to churches and hospitals and schools and libraries and refuges of rest and recreation that she chiefly liked to give, because she knew that all these contributed to lift up and better the condition of such humanity as came within the scope of her influence."<sup>12</sup> It was not just the institutions that Arents believed would uplift the community, but the nature of their architecture. Furthermore, she did not just give her money; she developed a specific vision for the neighborhood, influenced the placement and design of the necessary buildings, and gave her time and energy to the cause.

Miss Grace Arents [was] especially interested in the development of the Oregon Hill section of the city...[and] it generally is conceded that the improvement of this part of the city was due very largely to the efforts of Miss Arents.<sup>13</sup>

Arents founded the St. Andrew's Association in 1900 and consistently held leadership positions within it.<sup>14</sup> She headed the New Buildings Committee from 1900, and

<sup>12</sup> "Miss Grace Arents," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 21 June 1926. 'Women' section.

<sup>13</sup> "Admirers Pay Their Tributes to Memory of Miss Arents," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 21 June 1926, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> It is difficult to define exactly who was responsible for the St. Andrew's buildings; while it is quite certain that Arents consistently provided the funds, the structure of the St. Andrew's Association often obscures her direct hand in the projects. However, for several reasons, Arents assumes the title of patron here for many of the buildings that they constructed together based on the reasons described in this paragraph. Furthermore, it seems odd to describe a woman who funded architecture projects as a "patron." However, "matron" has the completely wrong connotation and an ungended term like funder or sponsor

reports suggest that her ebullience for good building projects promoted their rigorous building activity. She also retained the authority to pay the expenses, specifically of the Special Committee on New Buildings.<sup>15</sup> She handed over her Oregon Hill land to the Association and later they made purchases directly, but this did not diminish her control of the projects and instead provided a sensible system in which Arents could work without conflict of interest. Finally, several surviving architects' drawings and builders' documents for St. Andrew's projects explicitly named Arents as the client. While she worked within a team, Arents was the main patron--giving direction and financial support--for these philanthropic buildings in Oregon Hill.

The neighborhood of Oregon Hill that includes the majority of Grace Arents' architectural philanthropy developed in the 1830s, and first became an active mission site for the Episcopal Church after the Civil War. In 1873, the prominent St. Paul's Church of Ninth and Main Streets in downtown Richmond sent out a committee to find an area of suitable need in which to found a mission. They chose Oregon Hill, and the following year members of St. Paul's Church opened the Belvidere Mission Sunday school in the houses of parishioner Nannie Barksdale on the southeast corner of Spring and Pine Streets. Soon thereafter, Lewis E. Harvie, who owned a significant amount of land in Oregon Hill, sold a lot on the corner of Laurel and Beverly Streets to some members of St. Paul's and here they built a chapel (fig.6). Richmond architect Marion J. Dimmock designed the chapel with lancet windows, white vertical batten-board siding, and a belfry in the entrance tower. In 1876 St. Paul's reported that the St. Andrew's Church was one of the "neatest edifices in the

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reduces her influence to solely a financial one. I therefore use the accepted term of "patron" to define Arents' relationship to the St. Andrew's buildings.

<sup>15</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 17 June 1902, p. 34; 21 June 1904, 52.

Diocese, and its mission field is the most promising."<sup>16</sup> St. Paul's conveyed the church to St. Andrew's in 1895, and their independent work began.<sup>17</sup>

When the St. Paul's Mission began, the distinctive plan that cuts diagonally into the grid of the city defined Oregon Hill (fig. 7).<sup>18</sup> The neighborhood was bounded by the built and natural boundaries of the Kanawha Canal and James River to the south, Hollywood Cemetery to the west, and B. H. Latrobe's Virginia State Penitentiary to the east of Belvidere Street.<sup>19</sup> In the late eighteenth century, to thwart plans to build the new Penitentiary near his home and on the future site of Linden Row, local developer Thomas Rutherford had sold twelve acres of land overlooking the James River to the state on which they built the Penitentiary.<sup>20</sup> The foundation of the Tredegar Iron Works in 1838 required and prompted the construction of nearby housing for ironworkers and their families. That year, Oregon Hill developer Benjamin Green built nineteen small brick houses on land bought from Harvie on the east side of Belvidere Street and these modest, three- or four-room houses were the first buildings to determine the architectural type of Oregon Hill.<sup>21</sup> The houses in this small, southeastern section of Oregon Hill are older and initially more densely built than the rest of the neighborhood.<sup>22</sup> Approximately one quarter of Oregon Hill's blocks were owned by J. B. Harvie and remained undeveloped, but many of the streets were lined with houses. The curvilinear plan of the Hollywood Cemetery, laid out in 1848, contrasted with the standard, rectangular blocks that provided 150 feet long lots serviced by alleys. The built

<sup>16</sup> St. Andrew's Parish Record, Easter 1901, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> Deed Book 154 C, p. 465. 25 May 1895. St. Paul's Church to St. Andrew's Church. In William N. Glenn, *St. Andrews Episcopal Church and its Environs*. (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1978), 20.

<sup>18</sup> The physical descriptions of Oregon Hill around the time of the St. Paul's Mission in 1875 are based on the 1876 Beers Atlas.

<sup>19</sup> In 2000, Oregon Hill is generally defined as the area south of Cary Street, east of Hollywood Cemetery, and west of Belvidere Street.

<sup>20</sup> Scott, *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, 205.

<sup>21</sup> Mary Wingfield Scott suggests this in her chapter on Oregon Hill in *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, 206.

fabric of Oregon Hill was, and is, predominantly wood-framed row houses--two-story, two-bay structures with porches that connect the houses to the street and the inhabitants to each other. The entrance of a two-bay house opens directly into the parlor which withholds the privacy and more complex differentiation of space afforded to three-bay wide houses of this type that have a side hall. When Arents built housing in the neighborhood, the houses followed the form of this typical housing stock but featured three-bay façade plans organized around a side hall. The long lots in Oregon Hill provided room for additions to the rear of houses and the alley network accessed the frequent outbuildings at the end of the lots. The physical boundaries of the James River, Hollywood Cemetery, and Belvidere Street, as well as the angle of the grid, contributed to the insularity of the Oregon Hill neighborhood.

With the frame St. Andrew's Church established, Arents was concerned about a rectory to house the vicar. She purchased the lot next to the church in 1892 and two years later conveyed it to the St. Andrew's Trustees and she, or they, built a brick dwelling on this site in 1897 that was demolished around 1900 to accommodate the new stone church.<sup>23</sup>

Around this time, Arents hired the contractor, William B. Newell, to build a rectory on Cherry Street. Richmond architect D. Wiley Anderson designed this building and his work, contemporary with the St. Andrew's Church, marks the arrival of architects in Oregon Hill.<sup>24</sup>

In 1894, Arents also purchased a lot just north of the church and rectory that, when conveyed to St. Andrew's Association in 1903, included the two-story house that served as St. Andrew's Parish Library on this site.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Mary Wingfield Scott focuses her chapter on Oregon Hill almost exclusively on this area in her detailed study of pre-Civil War Richmond houses. The 1876 Beers Map indicates the difference in built density.

<sup>23</sup> Deed Book 147 C, p. 349. 22 December 1892, \$4110. Philip and Emma Blummer to Grace E. Arents. Deed Book 160 C, p. 363. 19 December 1894, \$5; Grace E. Arents to Trustees of St. Andrew's Church; 1901 Parish Record

<sup>24</sup> Agreement written 22 November 1900 between Miss Grace E. Arents and William B. Newell. Signed Feb. 1901. In St. Andrew's School archive.

<sup>25</sup> Deed Book 151 C, p. 264. 7 April 1894, \$2250. Henry W. Furcron to Grace E. Arents.

In 1899, when the Trustees of St. Andrew's Church decided to replace their frame church with a stone edifice, they hired Indiana architect A. H. Ellwood to improve the site. Ellwood designed a rusticated early English Gothic Revival church that made a statement of wealth, solidity, and timelessness (fig.6). The cornerstone for the new St. Andrew's was laid in March 1901.<sup>26</sup> Work orders from A. H. Ellwood specify that the new church and other buildings were to be built "as per instructions of Miss Arents." Furthermore, when legal complications arose with the contractor, L. M. Smalley & Co., Arents managed the contracting herself. Early in the design process, Arents exhibited her management skills and wrote from her home at 901 West Franklin:

I expect to receive the bids for building the new church. It seems likely to cost far more than I at first contemplated, and I have had many doubts as to whether it was desirable to erect such a costly building. The plans have been some what modified and it is possible, that in some one of the ways suggested, the church may be built...[Regarding] the care of the new building--it will require the continuous service of at least one man--white men in Richmond do not understand this kind of work and do not do it well. I should not be content to see it badly done and I should wish to have the power to employ such a man as I might think best...Such a building as is proposed will be costly to take care of and keep up--its being built by one member and not by the whole body makes the situation a little peculiar. I do not want to put a burden upon the church it is unable to bear, it is therefore my purpose to take this on myself while I live and to make a provision for it afterwards.<sup>27</sup>

Arents clearly assumed that a white man would be employed for the management of the church just as blacks were employed for its construction. However, she was not confident that she could leave the running of the church to a man at all, and the firm hand that she had shown in the planning and patronage of her projects apparently continued after they were built.

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Deed Book 196 D, p. 523. 18 July 1903, \$10. Grace E. Arents to St. Andrew's Association.

<sup>26</sup> St. Andrew's Parish Record, Easter 1901, p. 8.

The excavation for the new church was carried out in part by black laborers who may have been the same individuals listed as resident in the block of Cumberland Street where St. Andrew's Association would soon build its housing.<sup>28</sup> James Davis, Richard Mosby, and Hunter Smith may have walked three blocks each morning to work on the foundations of this monumental church.<sup>29</sup> St. Andrew's Association decided to move the existing frame church instead of demolishing it. In 1900, Arents had purchased land at the corner of Grove and Rowland Streets in the adjacent neighborhood of Sydney and it is to this land that they decided to move the church.<sup>30</sup> On its new site the church was renamed and it was declared at Arents' death that "She alone built [this] Church of the Holy Comforter."<sup>31</sup> Specifications required that the rectory's bricks along with those of the church's foundation should be saved to use in the interior of the new church's walls. Construction notes specify the task of "Removing Rectory – cleaning and piling brick carefully for use in ch[urch] building" for which Arents received a monetary credit. This reuse of material was likely for economy but it was a rare example of Arents preserving the past in the work that is guided by a vision of building new. What made her buildings extraordinary were their qualities of monumentality, solidity, and change. They architecturally represent a break from the vernacular past and symbolize a focus on the future with their permanence. While she had an extraordinarily keen sense of the existing built environment, Arents did not generally exhibit any interest in saving the past. In fact, she consistently demolished ordinary structures to make way for her new monumental architecture: in 1902, "the New Hall, to occupy the site of the present Hall," in 1903, "the St.

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<sup>27</sup> Letter from Grace Arents to Mr. Howells, September 1900. In St. Andrew's School archive.

<sup>28</sup> "Memo. Of Cost of Excavation," Feb. 1901. In St. Andrew's School archive.

<sup>29</sup> These men were living on the 900 block of W. Canal [Cumberland] Street in 1900. The 1900 City Directory indicates that they are black laborers.

<sup>30</sup> Deed Book 167 B, p. 368. 4 April 1900, \$5970. John P. Lea to Grace E. Arents; Deed Book 177 B, p. 227. 7 May 1902, \$5. Grace E. Arents to Trustees of Holy Comforter Church.

Andrew's Mission Building which is to replace the present buildings,"<sup>32</sup> and the list goes on. It was, however, precisely her awareness of the extant architecture that likely motivated her work. What existed was not adequate for the success of her vision, so she cleared and built again to work toward her own goals.

A series of transactions between Arents and St. Andrew's as they developed the other side of this block along Cherry Street highlight Arents' role in their shared construction vision. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, Arents accumulated three lots on the east side of Cherry Street, beginning at the corner of Beverly.<sup>33</sup> She quickly conveyed the largest of these lots to the church trustees but reserved the right to use "and control for church work" the house and land "so long as she may desire."<sup>34</sup> In 1900, the trustees returned the land to Arents but they reserved the right to use the existing buildings for the Sunday school and "all buildings which may hereafter be erected thereon at any time by the said Grace E. Arents." Arents immediately returned this corner lot plus the two adjacent parcels that she had purchased to the newly formed St. Andrew's Association. With this final transaction, the Association owned the land on which the school was to be built but Arents "expressly reserve[d] the right, at her own expense, to remove any of the buildings now on said land or to alter the form or structure thereof, or to erect other buildings thereon...but with all such removals, changes, improvements or additions to said buildings shall be made with the view to aid and advance the objects and purposes for which...St. Andrews Association was incorporated."<sup>35</sup> It is apparent that the multiple

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<sup>31</sup> "To Hold Funeral of Miss Arents Tuesday at Noon," *Richmond News Leader*, 21 June 1926, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> St. Andrew's Association minutes.

<sup>33</sup> Deed Book 156 C, p. 369. 10 February 1896, \$5. Lewis H. Blunt to Grace E. Arents; Deed Book 163 B, p. 67. 14 May 1899, \$2300. Thomas Jenkins Trustee for Elizabeth Jenkins to Grace E. Arents; Deed Book 163 B, p. 74. 21 January 1898, \$2400. W. H. Garthright to Grace E. Arents.

<sup>34</sup> Deed Book 156 C, p. 369. 10 February 1896, \$5. Lewis H. Blunt to Grace E. Arents. Deed Book 161 A, p. 87. 13 July 1897, \$5. Grace E. Arents to Trustees of St. Andrew's.

<sup>35</sup> Deed Book 168, p. 12-16. 26 May 1900. Trustees of St. Andrew's to Grace E. Arents.



transactions of this land, the founding of the Association by Arents, and the caveats for use and construction were each thoughtfully organized to give maximum benefit to the church and maximum control to Arents.

Of the four wood-framed houses on this combined parcel of land in 1900, two were demolished and two were moved nearby to serve as the new rectory and as the teachers' residence.<sup>36</sup> This latter building was the six-room house on this corner of Cherry and Beverly Streets that had served as the school since 1897 (fig.8). Its removal made space for the new stone and brick St. Andrew's School on the same site for which the church architect Ellwood made drawings in 1901 (fig.8). The resident teachers now lived next door on Cherry Street but soon Arents would enable the same architectural progression for the teachers' residence as she had done for the school. In 1903, a large brick building, the Teachers' Home, was constructed one lot north of the frame residence (fig. 9). The structure, designed by Noland and Baskervill, fit with the scheme of the Church and School recently built on the same block. Arents consistently preferred brick to wood framing as an appropriate building material as the appearance and the reality of its longevity fit nicely into her vision for the neighborhood. She also preferred architect-designed buildings and the properties built in this decade show Noland and Baskervill as court architects for Arents and the Association.

The St. Andrew's Hall and the Library underwent a similar architectural progression. In 1898, St. Andrew's built a framed structure known as St. Andrew's Hall on Beverly Street. This building adjacent to the school housed such activities as sewing and embroidery school and singing (fig.10).<sup>37</sup> However, by 1903 it was too small and had "to be rebuilt to

<sup>36</sup> Table of City Lots for the year 1889. Clay Ward, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> Glenn, 29; St. Andrew's Association Parish Record, Easter 1901.

correspond with the other buildings.”<sup>38</sup> It was replaced with a large brick and stone hall designed by Noland and Baskervill that physically and stylistically connected to the St. Andrew’s School (fig.8). The framed hall was moved to Belvidere Street where Noland and Baskervill renovated it to serve as the St. Andrew’s Mission (fig.10). This renovated building in turn replaced the smaller frame buildings on the Belvidere Street site that had served as the mission buildings since 1900. The Library was one of the first services that St. Andrew’s provided in the neighborhood. In 1894, it moved into the framed house at 230 South Laurel Street adjacent to the original St. Andrew’s Church on the corner (fig.11). It was made a free circulating library, the first in the city in 1899, and its success led the Association to report in 1902 that “it only needs...a new building to become one of the features of the Association’s work.” It soon moved into the old teachers’ residence made vacant by the 1903 Teachers’ Home construction, and eventually moved to brick quarters when Arents funded the monumental Arents Free Library across the road in 1908 (fig.9). Noland and Baskervill designed this brick building that served the city as well as the neighborhood in one of her finest architectural projects. Six frame houses were demolished to build this library with its large windows, built-in bookcases, stone and copper gothic revival portal, and setback from the street (fig.11).

Arents described a community of women in two buildings on South Cherry Street that were owned by St. Andrew’s but which she considered selling to raise money to build more housing. These two communities are the “Teachers’ Home” at 223 South Cherry that was used by the Instructive Visiting Nurses Association, and 206 South Cherry across the street, the rectory that had become a home for working girls. Arents was really pleased with this latter project. Fifty young women lived in the house in 1916, known as “Restover,” and

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<sup>38</sup> St. Andrew’s Association Minutes, 17 June 1902, p. 36.

there was a long waiting list for the subsidized rental property (fig.9). Only young women who earned less than eight dollars a week were eligible and Arents seemed particularly proud of this home and the need it was addressing. The domestic qualities of the building--its porch, gable, and dormers, and masonry material--made it a comfortable and welcoming respite in the city. Ironically, a few years earlier and a block away, there were four black working women heads of household in a group of four houses. Arents described their housing as "tumble down" and suggested its purchase for replacement with solid housing, a project that subsequently displaced these black families. Arents did not value the rights of *these* women to live in solid, comfortable, affordable housing. Her vision was particular; she supported working women, but not black working women.

In 1899 and 1900, Grace Arents purchased approximately nine parcels of land in Oregon Hill worth well over \$15,000. After she and other church officials chartered the St. Andrew's Association in 1900, Arents conveyed these parcels of land to the Association for five dollars.<sup>39</sup> This conveyance included the land on the corner of Belvidere Street and the recently widened Maiden Lane on which the St. Andrew's Mission and the Grace Arents Baths were soon constructed (fig.10).<sup>40</sup> In the two frame houses on this site, St. Andrew's held Sunday school, a parish school and other classes for the residents of eastern Oregon Hill. When they improved this mission by moving the framed hall from Beverly Street, Arents commissioned Noland and Baskervill to renovate it.<sup>41</sup> The next improvement for this area was the Grace Arents Baths constructed adjacent to the Mission building on the site of two framed houses (figs.10 and 12). In 1913, Arents and the Committee on New Buildings

<sup>39</sup> Glenn, 34-5; Deed Book 169 A, p. 359. 28 December 1899, \$5. Grace E. Arents to St. Andrew's Association.

<sup>40</sup> Deed Book 168, p. 263. 27 March 1899, \$1700. H. F. Grimmell to Grace E. Arents.

<sup>41</sup> "Parish Building at Co. of Belvider St., & Maiden Lane. For Miss Grace Arents." Richmond, Va." Feb. 1903. Noland & Baskervill. In Baskervill and Sons architectural drawing collection at Virginia Historical Society Library Archive.

arranged for a brick addition to the Mission Building. This addition included an apartment for the Deaconess and "twelve baths and also laundry tubs...for the use of the public."<sup>42</sup> The public bath building provided over eleven thousand baths in 1917, and the washing tubs in the basement, "where women can do their washing, [added] much to the comfort and sanitation of their own homes."<sup>43</sup> This brick building housed the Baths until 1952 when the City of Richmond, which had managed the Baths since 1920, closed them to the public. Richmond's two other public bathhouses built by local philanthropist J. K. Branch in 1908 and 1913 had also closed in the 1950s all apparently on account of diminished demand.<sup>44</sup> A central hipped dormer, like those at the Teachers' Home and the St. Andrew's School, distinguished the Grace Arents Baths from much of the housing in Oregon Hill. These buildings were also similar in their brick fabric, although the Baths were less monumental and more domestic in appearance. The Baths were physically attached to the existing Mission building and both were set back from, and raised above, the sidewalk. As a unit, they monumentally marked the corner and stood in contrast to the dense community of small and often adjoined wood-framed row houses. The Mission was torn down in the 1950s and the Baths succumbed during the 1960s.

The 1900 conveyance to St. Andrew's also includes part of the land for the 1911 Carneal and Johnston Grace Arents School (fig.13).<sup>45</sup> In 1908, Arents contributed \$5000 in the name of the Association toward the construction of this public primary school at 600 Pine Street and was praised for this introduction of the first public school facility in the neighborhood. Arents closed the St. Andrew's School temporarily in 1911 when the public

<sup>42</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 19 November 1913, p. 133.

<sup>43</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 20 November 1919. Memorandum #2, p. 160. Report of Rev. Ribble.

<sup>44</sup> "Old Main St. Bathhouse Is Sold Again," *Richmond News Leader* 4 December 1962. Branch Bath No. 1 built 1908 at 1801 E. Broad Street and Branch Bath No. 2 built 1913 at 709-711 West Main Street.

<sup>45</sup> Deed Book 165 B, p. 173. 30 March 1899, \$3900. Philip Whitlock to Grace E. Arents. Deed Book 168 C, p. 247. 22 June 1900. Virginia A. Wade to Grace E. Arents.

school opened and she praised the work of her companion, the "very efficient principal, Miss M. Garland Smith" who resigned at that time.<sup>46</sup>

Grace Arents' home on West Franklin Street informed her goals for, and the nature of, her projects in Oregon Hill. She and her uncle, Ginter, stopped off in Washington D.C. on their 1888 journey around the world to attend to business and dinner with Harvey Lindsley Page, the Washington architect who designed the house.<sup>47</sup> When Ginter and his sister's family received five hundred guests at the newly built mansion, the party in this house, "free and imposing in its architecture lines," made the front page of the *Richmond Dispatch*.<sup>48</sup> The clustered chimney, ornamental iron grilles at the recessed windows, and the organic terra cotta panels defy the solidity of the rounded arch entrance, two-story bay window, and bulky, asymmetrical massing (fig.14).<sup>49</sup> It was grounded in historicist and picturesque principles but also informed by a modern sensibility, and the city viewed it as both. An 1897 newspaper said it was "of [a] Gothic style of architecture and modeled after a handsome English rural mansion;" its large corner site provided the space that suggested this rural quality.<sup>50</sup>

Grace Arents headed the household at 901 West Franklin Street for two decades after her uncle's death in 1897. She shared her property with eight other people in 1910; Cardwell T. Wood, her black butler to whom she left \$2500 in her will, and his wife nurse

<sup>46</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 19 June 1909, p. 78; 10 November 1910, p. 89; Report of M.G. Smith 16 June 1911; "Arents has just handed him her check for \$5000" to pay the City toward the Pine Street School, 23 November 1911 p. 102.

<sup>47</sup> 1888 Grace Arents Travel Diary p. 1; Dale Wheary, "'The Sense of Truth and Beauty': Harvey L. Page Builds a House for Lewis Ginter." In *The Architecture of Virginia: New Findings from Virginia Commonwealth University*. Abstracts of the 1994 Architectural History Symposium.

<sup>48</sup> "Magnificent Entertainment," *Richmond Dispatch*, 10 February 1892.

<sup>49</sup> Wheary.

<sup>50</sup> "Death of Major Ginter," *The Sun*, Baltimore, 4 October 1897.

Rosa E. Wood maintained the household.<sup>51</sup> The coachman, Roland D. Young, his wife Pattie, and their seventeen-year-old daughter Elta also lived at the house, and there was one additional servant, a thirty-year-old black woman named Ellen Saunders. In addition to the staff and their families, Arents lived with two white "residers," a thirty-five-year-old woman, Bessie Davison, and a three-year-old boy, Theodore Carner Ridout, to whom Arents left \$10,000 in her will. This property, on the elite West Franklin Street, was two-thirds black, and Arents engaged in daily interactions with these individuals although her black servants probably lived in the rear section of the house and she in the main part. Inside 901, the level of ornament changes dramatically at the central circulation space (fig.15). This central hall matches the reception rooms with their wood-paneling and decorative wall treatment. The corridor that leads to the rear of the house from this hall, however, has plain plaster walls and exposed pipes. These interior finishes indicate that the users of the rear of the house were different from those in the front. Although Arents did not build this house, it is clear that, as the place where she lived, it affected her understanding of spatial segregation. She knew blacks and whites in separate spaces and this understanding informed her vision for the neighborhood of Oregon Hill. It seemed reasonable and was important to Arents to transfer the sorts of materials and quality of the rooms she used at 901 to the white working-class residents of Oregon Hill.

This conveyance of material reveals Arents' ideas for the role that architecture played in social reform. Oregon Hill residents were used to rooms with modest ornament, if any, and cramped quarters. The average number of residents per Oregon Hill house in 1910 equaled or surpassed that in a house on West Franklin Street the same year, and the enormous difference in size of these houses confirms the higher density in the first

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<sup>51</sup> Toby C. and Rosa E. Wood were residents and employees at 901 W. Franklin Street in 1900, as well. In

neighborhood. The disorder that such density produced is revealed in a 1931 photograph of a typical Oregon Hill house on South Cherry Street (fig.16). The plaster walls are unadorned with paneling, or even a cornice or picture rail; the fireplace mantel is simple, as is the trim surrounding the door and window. In turn, the hanging laundry, unmade bed, and simple dishware on the table suggest shared use of rooms and a congested existence. The interior of the Arents-funded housing in this neighborhood, however, with its wainscoting, picture rail, decorative fireplaces, and sliding doors between parlors allies it more with the kind of interior in which she was used to living herself. A photograph of a Monument Avenue residence contemporary with the South Cherry Street view suggests the order, cleanliness, and dignity that a finely dressed room encouraged (fig.16). That these photographs were staged to make a point at the time about living conditions emphasizes their value.<sup>52</sup>

Reformers believed that these two kinds of interiors expected certain kinds of behavior. This was precisely Arents' motive almost thirty years earlier when she specified the materials for her housing project. By transferring the material culture of her refined world to a working-class community, she hoped to also encourage the behavior of the culture she was used to in elite, educated, and dignified Richmond.

Richmond architects Noland and Baskervill designed four known projects in Oregon Hill, each facilitated by Grace Arents or the St. Andrew's Association. None of these projects, however, receive mention in catalogs of the firm's work.<sup>53</sup> These voids suggest that

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1900, they and Arents lived alone. 1900 Richmond City Population Census No. 1. ED 56, Sheet 12.

<sup>52</sup> Sara B. Bearss and Patricia D. Thompson, *Foster's Richmond* (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1991) 91. These two photographs are from the Foster's photographic studio that operated in Richmond from 1890 through the twentieth century. The Oregon Hill house, 341 South Cherry Street where Annie Monk lived, was photographed for a Community Fund advertisement. That Foster's son was director of public welfare at the time suggests that this photograph was advertising specific conditions of public welfare in the city.

<sup>53</sup> William Churchill Noland and Henry Baskervill formed a partnership in 1897 that lasted through 1917 and was responsible for many important Richmond building projects including additions to the Virginia State Capital and the original News Leader Building. Wells, 328; L. Moody Simms, Jr. "William Churchill

either the firm, or their biographers, did not value their work in low-income neighborhoods as much as the residences and churches on Monument Avenue, for example. In 1903, the firm designed the "Teachers' Home for Miss Arents," the renovation of the relocated "Parish Building at the Corner of Belvider [sic] St. & Maiden Lane for Miss Grace Arents," and the new St. Andrew's Hall. In 1908, they designed the Arents Free Library. Noland and Baskervill had been consulting architects for the Chesterfield Apartments across the street from Grace Arents' house at 901 West Franklin in 1902, the year before they began work in Oregon Hill. This marked the beginning of their "monopoly on renovation on the street [West Franklin] with few exceptions."<sup>54</sup> Noland and Baskervill became the predominant architects on "the most select and fashionable thoroughfare" in Richmond, yet they took on the institutional buildings in a working-class neighborhood marked architecturally by modest row houses and the recently completed stone St. Andrew's Church.<sup>55</sup> They were not the only well known architects that Arents and St. Andrew's Association brought to Oregon Hill. In addition to the A. H. Ellwood designs for the St. Andrew's Church and School, Richmond architects D. Wiley Anderson, C. W. Davis and Bro., and A. F. Huntt all did designs for buildings in Oregon Hill commissioned by Arents and St. Andrew's.<sup>56</sup>

Grace Arents had an active role in the design of her buildings. She purchased the land, interviewed the designer and contractors, paid the bills, monitored construction, and

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Noland: Richmond Architect." *Richmond Literature and History Quarterly* 3 (Spring, 1981): 43-44; Karen D. Steele, "Henry E. Baskervill: Eclectic Architect." *Richmond Quarterly* 7 (Summer 1984): 24-31. Christopher Vincent Novelli, "William Noland and Residential Design on Richmond's Franklin Street." Unpublished thesis, University of Virginia, 1996.

<sup>54</sup> Culhane, Kerri Elizabeth. "'The Fifth Avenue of Richmond': The Development of the 800 and 900 Blocks of West Franklin Street, Richmond, Virginia, 1855-1925." (Unpublished thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1997) 158, 169, 65.

<sup>55</sup> "Major Ginter Dying," *The Sun*, Baltimore, 28 September 1897, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup> Richmond City, Permit no. 2282, St. Andrew's Association, owner, A. F. Huntt, architect, for new brick structure on west side of Cherry St. between Beverly and Canal, 1911; Richmond City, Permit no. 1584, St. Andrew's Association, owner, C. W. Davis and Bro., architects, for new, brick tenement at 204-206 W. Linden Street, 1910. Permits courtesy of Richmond City Building Permits Department.



decided what style, materials, and level of luxury and domesticity to include. The interior arrangement of spaces and use of materials at 901 West Franklin, the Teachers' Home at 223 South Cherry and the Arents Free Library at 224 South Cherry reveal marked formal similarities despite differences in use (fig. 14).<sup>57</sup> Harvey L. Page designed 901 West Franklin in 1888, and the architects for 223 and 224 South Cherry Street were Noland and Baskervill in 1903 and 1908. These differences in designers and decades juxtaposed with the similarities in arrangement and materials suggests the common denominator in these projects, Grace Arents, informed the design of the two later buildings on South Cherry Street. That Arents was living at 901 during this work makes it an appropriate study to compare it to the buildings for which she served as patron.

The "Teachers' Home for Miss Arents" was built in 1903 to accommodate the deaconesses, matron and teachers of the St. Andrew's School next door who had previously lived in the wood-framed house that had served as the first school building (fig.8). The construction of the grand, new home indicates the success of the school and the desire to provide comfortable and spacious quarters for its staff.<sup>58</sup> Although she lived nearby, Grace Arents did not live among the people she served. She was, however, aware of that approach and carried it out to an extent with the teachers and matrons who lived on South Cherry. The Association reported that the home and its residents "served something of the purpose of a settlement house, bringing a refining influence into the neighborhood."<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> All three buildings still stand in 2000. 901 West Franklin Street is owned by Virginia Commonwealth University and used as the provost's offices. An addition houses the office of financial aid; 223 South Cherry Street is privately owned offices on the first floor and apartments above. 224 South Cherry Street is the William Byrd Community House that serves Oregon Hill, Maymont, Randolph and other Richmond neighborhoods.

<sup>58</sup> In 1902, the year before the Teachers' Home was built, the St. Andrew's Association Minutes described the home for the resident teachers: "It is a frame house which was moved from the corner, now occupied by the school building to its present position [225 South Cherry Street], and is intended to serve its purpose until a more substantial building is erected." St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 17 June 1902, p. 29.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

The design of the Teachers' Home that reflects the qualities of the school next door indicates that Noland and Baskervill either chose, or were instructed to match, the lines, scale, and material of the neighboring school with their new building. While the rectilinear windows and smooth-faced brick make the Teachers' Home cleaner and less historicist, it borrowed the pointed gables at the hipped roof and the light stone accents on brown brick from the school it served. The Teachers' Home was referred to as "The House." Its welcoming yet stately entrance beneath a recessed loggia, and attic story indicated by dormers and small lofty windows represent it as a domestic, rather than an institutional, building. It was one of a few unattached houses and the only "apartment" building on its block. Its symmetrical and brick façade, set back and free standing position, and its cleanly decorated style places it as an example of modern domesticity. Although 901 West Franklin has been used as an institutional building since the 1930s, it strongly reads as a domestic building. Again, an attic story, porch, variety of sizes of windows, and stacked chimneys suggest that people make a home inside. The first floor included a parlor, an office, and a large library that served as a sitting room for the Instructive Visiting Nurses Association (IVNA) that used the building from 1911 until the 1980s. This sitting room was furnished with wicker chairs and a writing desk and it likely served a social or office function. A kitchen and a dining table that seated nine were in the rear of the building, although at least fourteen bedrooms indicate that this table would not have accommodated everyone at once. Two staircases, a basement, and two upper floors with bedrooms served the teachers, and later nurses, and their servants.<sup>60</sup> The seven bedrooms each on the second and third floors must have been shared when the IVNA moved in because in 1920, there were nineteen nurses, all white single women, living at 223 South Cherry. There were also three black

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<sup>60</sup> "Teachers' Home for Miss Arents May 1903 Noland and Baskervill, Architects." In Baskervill and Sons

women (a servant, a cook, and a housekeeper), a white boarder and two white housekeepers.<sup>61</sup> The head nurse living in the IVNA building in 1920 was Nannie Minor, one of the original organizers of the Richmond IVNA in 1902, and the large room at the top of the stairs with the corner fireplace was reserved for her. In 1921, Emily B. Heard, who also lived there in 1920, assisted Minor as superintendent. She may have occupied one of the two rear rooms, each of which had a fireplace.<sup>62</sup>

Despite their stylistic differences, formally 901 West Franklin and the Teachers' Home had a lot in common (fig.14). Both of the three-story, three-part brick façade houses were the grandest on their block at the time of construction. The Franklin Street façade of 901 has Queen Anne styling with its asymmetrical bays and two heavy towers that do not match but balance each other as they frame the lower central section. Strictly symmetrical, the façade of 223 has three triangular dormers that emphasize the verticality of the building. The prominent entrances of both buildings directly address the street. At 901, wide stone steps pour out of a wider porch that accentuates the horizontality of the heavy masonry façade. Behind the porch there is a small wood-paneled interior porch that shelters the main front door. This second porch is elaborately decorated and prepares the visitor for the splendid decoration of the hall beyond the wide glazed and iron-grilled front door. The arcaded entry porch at 223 extends the width of the building and creates an inner shell that protects the main door. The main door of each building is wood paneled with a transom, decorative muntins, and side lites. The transoms are also upstairs both at 901 and opposite the Teachers' Home at the Arents Free Library where light enriches the circulation spaces.

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architectural drawing collection, Virginia Historical Society Library.

<sup>61</sup> Census, 1920. Richmond City, Enumeration District 64, Sheet 3a.

<sup>62</sup> The Bureau of Vocations for Women, Richmond, Virginia, ed. "Directory of Business and Professional Women in Richmond, Virginia, 1921." Issued by the Virginia Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs.

Inside, both buildings are organized around a prominent, wide hall (fig.14). At 901, the hall includes a large marble fireplace and a decorative header with panels of organic ironwork at the opposite end defines the space as a room in itself. The hall at 223 is not such a living hall but here, also, a header defines the space and the three chairs in the 1911 furniture inventory suggest a reception area. Double pocket doors open into the library on the right and the parlour on the left, and each of these rooms has a fireplace and a window that opens onto the front porch.

The 1892 opening reception at the new 901 West Franklin illuminates the function and decoration of the main rooms of the first floor. On the east side are two rooms, probably a reception room in front with a drawing room behind, in which several people, including Lewis Ginter, Grace Arents, and her mother, received guests. The drawing room, presumably accessible directly from the reception space as well, is connected to the hall by a double folding door that provided the same flexibility of space as the double pocket doors at 223. A fireplace warmed the reception spaces at both 901 and 223, and at 901 this room extended into a semi-circular bay window. The corner position of 901 allowed for two facades--on West Franklin Street, the asymmetrical towers and terra-cotta decoration is Queen Anne in style, but on Shafer Street, the house has Richardsonian Romanesque qualities, marked by ground-floor rustication, a two-story semi-circular tower, and a heavy rounded arch at the secondary entrance porch. The library and the "demi-salon" were to the west of the main hall at 901 and this is mirrored on the south side of 223. Mahogany bookcases lined the library at 901, and this element is particularly carried into the Arents Free Library at 224 South Cherry where the interior perimeter of the building was covered in dark wood bookshelves. The city purchased the house at 901 West Franklin Street for use as

its first public library.<sup>63</sup> The Library Board was pleased with the “ample reading space by daylight” that the spacious site afforded and this reuse suggests the qualities of her own home that Arents imparted to the Arents Free Library (figs.15 and 17).<sup>64</sup>

The central sections of the plans at 223 and 901 are also very similar. Both buildings have a service entrance on the side that enters the house underneath the landing of the main staircase. There are then a few steps up to the main floor on the south or stairs to the basement on the north side of the landing. The landing of the stairs is brightened with three casement windows at both 901 and 223 that also light the halls both upstairs and down. This central hall is the main intersection of both buildings and the main hall, stairs, dining room and service areas open onto it. The dining room at 223 is behind a double pocket door like the double folding door at 901. A secondary door in each dining room provides access for the nearby kitchen. The wide corridor off which the service areas of 901 are positioned is starkly different from the main hall. Just turning the corner presents a complete absence of wood paneling that is all the more apparent because of its density everywhere else. The service spaces are extensive as indicated by the footprint of the house and they must have been to accommodate the butler, nurse, servant, coachman and four “residers” who shared the house with Arents in 1910.

In 1905, the private Teachers' Home was set back further from the street than its row house neighbors. St. Andrew's School, in contrast, pushes to the outer limits of its lot and claims its authority in the opposite way, firmly marking the corner as a beacon of education. In turn, comparison of the lot of 901 West Franklin Street with the Oregon Hill block indicates the stark differences in housing. When placed next door to the Teachers'

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<sup>63</sup> “Library Board Favors Ginter Home Purchase,” *Richmond News Leader*, 30 January 1924 .

Home, 901 extends back to the existing alley, yet it covers twelve Oregon Hill row houses with its building and land. In addition to its expansive footprint, the three-story, three-part façade of the stone Ginter House dwarfs the type of house common to Oregon Hill. While the Teachers' Home and the Ginter House are entered on axis with a central hall, the typical Oregon Hill row house has a side entrance that opens either directly into the parlor or into a side hall. These differences further emphasize the prominence of these architect-designed buildings in a vernacular landscape.

The Ginter House is incomparable in its lavish decoration--every wall surface of the main part of the first floor is paneled with wood to shoulder height and covered in organic, richly colored decorative painting above (fig.15). These materials clearly identified the house to its visitors and guests as a place of importance in the city. The rich materials are carried over to the Teachers' Home and the Arents Free Library. The interior perimeter of the Library was dressed in dark wood shelving and the wood mouldings around the windows, doors, floor and ceilings of both buildings are high quality (fig.17). The brick exteriors of both buildings are grayish-brown like the nearby St. Andrew's School and this color contrasts with the red brick of the Oregon Hill houses as more subtle and refined. The windows are decorated with stone headers, some with keystones, that further refine the façade and make them look tidy and respectable. By carrying over the use of high-quality materials both on the interior and exterior, Arents was making several statements. The expensive materials and finishes would suggest to the people that used her philanthropic buildings that they were worthy of such splendor and should act accordingly. These buildings read differently from the existing housing stock when clearly identified as church

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<sup>64</sup> Six years later, the Richmond Professional Institute that would later become Virginia Commonwealth University purchased the property as its second building. Drew St. J. Carneal, *Richmond's Fan District*. (Richmond: Council of Historic Richmond Foundation, 1996), 155-156.

or Arents-funded buildings in their stone signage, they suggested the importance of the Episcopal church--and perhaps of Arents herself--to the welfare of the people.

Her consciousness of architecture and urban space revealed in her late nineteenth century travel diaries suggests that the similarities between her home and the buildings for which she was patron result from her participation in the design process. She was interested in good buildings and in the conveyance of their comforts. The dark wooden bookcases in her Oregon Hill buildings were an effort to create an environment for those who had few educational opportunities to participate in the comfortable consumption of literature.<sup>65</sup> The frequent use of transoms and sidelights diffused light through the buildings--symbols of the hope she was instilling. The high quality masonry elaborated with stone accents and eclectic flourishes manifested the permanence of social goodness in the neighborhood and the freestanding, setback position of these buildings emphasized its authority. These elements came from the world that Grace Arents inhabited on West Franklin Street and their transfer to the modest residential landscape of Oregon Hill marks a respect for the people and fabric of the place.

The large building campaigns that Grace Arents engaged in were likely influenced by the work of her uncle, Lewis Ginter. He came to Richmond in 1842, aged about eighteen, and began successful businesses in linens, notions, and toys. When the Civil War began, Ginter was reputedly worth \$200,000 but he gave it all up to fight for the Confederate cause despite his northern roots. Ginter served as a commissioned quartermaster and reached the rank of major, by which title he was known for the rest of his life. Although he returned to New York briefly to work as a banker shortly after the war, he was fiercely loyal to

Richmond, and when he died, a friend commented that "No one has ever done more for the city of his adoption."<sup>66</sup> By 1872, Ginter was again settled in Richmond and he joined with John F. Allen in a cigarette-manufacturing endeavour that eventually made him the richest man in Virginia. He soon began to make significant developments in the rebuilding of his adopted city. In 1876, he made additions to a house at 405 East Cary Street that was conveniently located two blocks west of the Allen & Ginter factory complex. The three-story and basement brick house offered three communicating rooms off the main entrance hall and was large enough to accommodate his sister's family when they arrived from New York. Arents joined her uncle, "one of the most hot-blooded of Southerners" in this "conservative district of the Confederate capital." His neighbor, "Major Fred Scott [Mary Wingfield Scott's grandfather] lived on the corner of Fifth and Cary" and "it was an alien atmosphere in which a New York girl was thrown."<sup>67</sup>

Ginter, who adopted a southern heritage with his war record and choice of neighbors, carved out a career building up the city. Richmond needed building up, both financially and architecturally, as it was only two decades since the destruction of the Civil War. This was not a time to value the materials of pre-Civil War Richmond. Instead, Ginter and his peers focused their energies and money on Richmond's future--growth, expansion, and monuments appropriate for a key city in the New South. Indeed, in 1890 he demolished the 1813 Hanover House that was home to Mary Wingfield Scott's grandparents a decade earlier (fig.3).<sup>68</sup> Ginter replaced the Scotts' three-story square house that hugged the corner of East Cary and South Fifth Streets with an attached row of nine two-story houses that

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<sup>65</sup> See Abigail A. Van Slyck, *Free To All: Carnegie Libraries and American Culture 1890-1920*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1995) for full detail on the transfer of materials with philanthropic libraries.

<sup>66</sup> "Major Ginter Dead," *The Richmond Dispatch*, 3 October 1897, p. 1-2.

<sup>67</sup> "That Good Part...." *Richmond News Leader*, 21 June 1926, p. 8



filled the lot. Two years later, he demolished the 1845 house of Tredegar Iron Works owner Joseph R. Anderson to build the Jefferson Hotel.<sup>69</sup>

His factory complex on East Cary included a five-story brick building that marked the corner of Sixth Street with its plain masonry façades (fig.2). Like other tobacco factories, separate entrances led to segregated interior spaces. Black employees generally worked on the upper levels where the manufacture began, and white workers occupied the lower levels where the tobacco arrived when it was ready for packaging.<sup>70</sup> Arents described the vicinity in 1888 as she and Ginter left for a voyage around the world: "On our way to the station we passed the factories and the farewell demonstrations were quite wonderful and touching. Every window of the two buildings was crowded with faces...there was a great waving of handkerchiefs" and the "band of colored men, employees of the firm" serenaded her and Ginter.

Arents' diaries from the 1888 trip around the world, and another to Britain in 1896, reveal her awareness of the natural and built world. When she arrived in 1888 Chicago, she wrote:

Uncle Lewis was busy so I went alone on foot--State St. seemed the principal St. and I found that it had many fine stores on it...We were much impressed with the number and size of the public buildings--Some are really wonderful specimens of architecture. One immense structure that looked like a prison was only a wholesale dry goods house--the streets are wide-traversed in every direction by the lines of cable cars--and the avenues lined with elegant residences called forth many expressions of admiration. A large new building intended for a hotel not yet finished called the Auditorium was very much decorated with bunting...Chicago has a great number of public parks--which I

<sup>68</sup> Houses of Old Richmond, 112-114. Major Frederic R. Scott owned 101 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street from 1877-1881. Ginter demolished it in 1891 when he was living a block west at 405 E. Cary. Scott and family were living at 712 West Franklin Street two blocks east of Ginter's new house under construction.

<sup>69</sup> Scott, *Houses of Old Richmond*, 230-231.

<sup>70</sup> Richard Love, "The Cigarette Capital of the World: Labor, Race, and Tobacco in Richmond, Virginia 1880-1890." (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1998), 75-77. Further architectural information on the factories in Andrew Morrison, ed. *Richmond, Virginia: The City on the James*. (Richmond: George W. Engelhardt, 1893), 118, 134.

believe are intended to encircle the city...and good use seems to be made of these.<sup>71</sup>

At each port, Arents made a point of taking a tour of the city, sometimes on foot and sometimes by car or train. In Melbourne, she rode the tram to the end of the line and reflected on the changing urban patterns from the city center out through the suburbs. Arents recorded descriptions of the houses in which they stayed, and the types of housing, public, government, religious and hospital buildings common in the different countries. All that is missing is a sketchbook, although her repeated descriptions suggest that she carefully recorded in her mind the layout of both cities and floor plans. She also noted building materials, sanitation systems, plants and trees, as well as education and the Episcopal Church. What Arents chose to discuss in her private diary suggests what she saw most clearly. She was also aware of what kinds of people can go to what kinds of places. She was intrigued by one train that locked men and women in separate sleeping areas. When they docked in Sydney, she commented that "there is a great prejudice against [Chinese] people in Australia" because the Chinese firemen from her ship had difficulty going ashore. She apparently moved freely and independently through the various cities and her keen eye for the different cultures and their architecture preluded her later work.

When they returned to Richmond after the journey, the plans for the new house were underway. Ginter's house at 901 West Franklin Street fit into the westward expansion of the city and encouraged the future of this section of the city as a prominent residential address. The new house was the place where "that opulence and taste and artistic ideals of this progressive city are externally manifest most."<sup>72</sup> As he built the house, Ginter also began developing residential suburbs such as Sherwood Park and Ginter Park on land to the

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<sup>71</sup> The "Auditorium" is Louis Sullivan's famous Auditorium building finished in 1888. The "prison" is likely Henry Hobson Richardson's Marshall Field Warehouse.

north of the city and made possible by the 1888 electric streetcar lines.<sup>73</sup> His distinct development projects shared that they were perceived as modern.<sup>74</sup> Some were on fresh land to the west and north of the city, but some demolished existing urban fabric--Lewis Ginter did not convey to his niece Arents any great ethic of preserving Richmond's early buildings.

When Ginter died in 1897, Arents and her sister, Joanna, inherited the house, its curtilage and its contents at 901 West Franklin Street.<sup>75</sup> Ginter had also given Grace, before his death, his interest in the Richmond Locomotive Works, which was valued at around \$500,000. He left \$110,000 to local charities, including the Spring Street Home for Women in Oregon Hill, the Sheltering Arms Hospital, and several religious and women's charities in the city. Arents remembered these same organizations in her will thirty years later. Three years after this bequest, in 1900, Joanna Arents conveyed her interest in the property at West Franklin to her sister as she returned to settle in New York City.<sup>76</sup> The house alone was valued at \$55,000 and the total property and buildings was worth over \$97,000. This was an extraordinarily expensive house, given that the typical value of buildings on lots in this ward, which included wealthy West Franklin Street and Oregon Hill, was under \$2000.<sup>77</sup> Arents lived at 901 West Franklin until 1917 when she moved to Bloemendaal, a house she had constructed out of her uncle's Lakeside Bicycle Clubhouse.

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<sup>72</sup> Andrew Morrison, ed. *The City on the James* (Richmond: George W. Engelhardt, 1893). 16,54.

<sup>73</sup> This 1888 electric streetcar in Richmond is the first in the country. David D. Ryan, and Wayland W. Rennie, *Lewis Ginters' Richmond*. (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1991).

<sup>74</sup> Ginter built urban and country residences for himself and row houses, suburbs, and a hotel for development.

<sup>75</sup> "Major Ginter's Will," *The Richmond Dispatch*, 7 October 1897, p. 1. Additional property conveyed in Deed Book 188 B, p. 190. March 1906. Trustees of Lewis Ginter to Grace E. Arents et al.

<sup>76</sup> Deed Book 168, p. 240. 31 May 1900, \$5. Joanna Bethune Arents to Grace E. Arents. Both of Arents' sisters Joanna and Minnie, and her brother, George, returned to New York City. Arents was the only family member left in Richmond after the turn of the century.

<sup>77</sup> Table of City Lots for the Year 1899, Clay Ward, p. 3 (Arents listing).

Many local citizens and clergy praised Arents highly for her work at the time of her death and she has been the subject of several newspaper articles and essays in the decades since. Those who describe her career consistently focus on her Christianity, her shy and modest nature, and her strong dedication to those in need. What was Arents' motivation for her charitable projects? It is common to suspect motives beyond pure and intense benevolence with architectural philanthropy. Charitable work is mutually beneficial--the needy receive housing, a hospital, or a community center, and the patron gains, beyond satisfaction or salvation for an enormous gesture of goodwill, a physical and permanent memorial to her benevolence. With Arents, however, there is a consistent wish to remain anonymous and it seems that perhaps she did have the extraordinary and humble generosity that her peers repeatedly describe. Arents was particular about keeping her name and the cost of projects out of the public eye. In an 1899 letter, Arents wrote: "I received your acknowledgement of my check yesterday- I should not think it was necessary to publish it, but if you must then let it be as you suggest "in memory of Lewis Ginter" but without my name...I am very glad to help your good work."<sup>78</sup> In another example, the Instructive Visiting Nurses Association described Arents as "a generous, public-spirited Richmond woman who does not wish her name to appear in connection with the work" when she turned the Lakeside Clubhouse (later Bloemendaal) over to their Association as a hospital for sick babies.<sup>79</sup> Arents may have been expressing Victorian modesty, but that her work was so aggressively in the public sphere contrasts with her apparent desires to not be public herself. The Arents Free Library was so named in her lifetime and visibly marked--the tudor

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<sup>78</sup> 17 June 1899 letter Grace E. Arents to Mrs. Bagby. In St. Andrew's School archive.

<sup>79</sup> Instructive Visiting Nurses Association Minutes, 3 April 1911. In Tompkins-McGaw Library of Medical College of Virginia.

arch portal is carved with her name.<sup>80</sup> Since Arents did have a particular interest in supporting literacy, perhaps the Library above all others was her monument, the message she wanted to leave with the world. She is specific about her intentions for the institution and left \$100,000 to the St. Andrew's Association for the:

Continuance and maintenance of the Arents Free Library...It is my earnest desire that this library should at some time become a part of the City Library systems. If this has not been accomplished at the time of my decease I would like the St. Andrews Association to offer it as a free gift to the City of Richmond. If it is accepted within two years of the time when the offer is made, I direct my Executors to transfer to the City the aforesaid one hundred thousand dollars to be used exclusively for the continuance and maintenance of the Arents Free Library.<sup>81</sup>

The City received the gift in 1927 and changed the name to the Arents Branch of the city of Richmond libraries.<sup>82</sup> Perhaps Arents, in her fifties at the height of her work, knew that she was not going to have children of her own. The architectural legacy that she established was, in one sense, her child-- that which she left behind to do good for others and to continue as a memorial to her existence. At her death, a contemporary of Arents suggested that it was the buildings themselves that would remind the city of her work: "Every one of the buildings, everyone of the systems, every one of the institutions, every one of the schools or libraries or hospitals, which she built or helped to build--every one of these is a memorial to her unceasing helpfulness."<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> The 1911 Grace Arents School was also so-named in her lifetime and her name is also engraved above the portal of this building. Arents donated \$5000 towards its construction and also persuaded the city to provide this first public school in the neighborhood. However, it was a municipal building and was not a project under her direct hand. It makes sense for the city to honour her by using her name, as she was the principal patron.

<sup>81</sup> Will Book 43, p. 1-5. Grace E. Arents will. Copy made 11-16-42 #311.

<sup>82</sup> "Gets Check for Library Upkeep," *Richmond News Leader*, 21 May 1926, p. 12. See A. Simpson Williams, Jr., "History of the Richmond Public Library," 1941. Unpublished paper. In Richmond Public Library vertical file.

<sup>83</sup> "Miss Grace Arents" *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 21 June 1926. 'Women' section.

To understand Arents' motivations, it is necessary to consider her role as outsider in this southern city that fiercely held on to its status as capital of the Confederacy. An editorial at the time of her death reads: "Had Miss Grace Arents acquired a distaste for her new home and a dislike for her neighbors, it would have been understandable. Had she left Richmond with the fortune that came to her after Major Ginter's death in October, 1897, she would only have done what many would have considered natural."<sup>84</sup> But she did not return to New York, as did her siblings. Instead, she remained in Richmond to continue her burgeoning work in Oregon Hill. When Ginter died, Arents had already begun purchasing land for the major building campaigns that were ahead of her. She perceived obvious need in Oregon Hill with its unpaved streets, old and modest housing, poor residents, and lack of accessible institutions. Arents also perceived a need to remove the even older and modest housing that pockets of blacks lived in, and to remove these laboring blacks from the neighborhood as well. Oregon Hill, with its established Episcopal mission, architectural and social need, was a perfect site for her to get to work. Arents may not have been interested in the southern society and its conservative interest in its history, but there was work to be done and her religion and her politics had a good venue to play out in turn of the century Oregon Hill.

Arents and St. Andrew's were at the forefront of charity work in Richmond. The recently developed Nurses' Settlement was compared in 1904 to the "much more adequately embodied philanthropy of St. Andrew's church."<sup>85</sup> Instead of its "historical associations [and] ancient landmarks," the Washington Associated Charities found that Richmond had a

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<sup>84</sup> "That Good Part," *Richmond News Leader*, 21 June 1926, p. 8

<sup>85</sup> Charles F. Weller, "Charity and Social Developments in Two Southern Cities" [Richmond and Raleigh]. *The Survey* 13, no.11 (1904), 466.

system of active and progressive charitable institutions in place, led by the work of St.

Andrew's and an unnamed woman:

Beautiful modern buildings [that] constitute a kind of social settlement united with a church and Sunday school. The modest donor who has provided the entire group of impressive stone and brick structures supported by herself in accordance with suggestions gathered by frequent visits to New York, has set a standard which must exercise a strong influence on the city's ideals.<sup>86</sup>

Again, as in the local article two years earlier, the buildings are emphasized as the source of her good work and as the public persona of Arents herself. The connections that Arents maintained with New York City apparently informed her building projects in her new city. Richmond did not have the immigrant population or tenement infrastructure of cities such as New York but instead a large African-American population and mostly wood-framed row houses in the urban center. However, the general needs of good housing, educational institutions, and provisions for healthcare and healthy leisure were shared between these two cities. In fact, across the country at the turn of the century, women urban reformers, especially, were developing a variety of schemes to help the poor and Arents linked this national activity to Richmond.<sup>87</sup>

In Arents' New York, examples of social reform work wrapped up in buildings were numerous. Vida Scudder founded the College Settlement in 1889 in which she and others from northern women's colleges moved into a settlement house in the Lower East Side. They renovated a house into which to welcome the poor immigrants in the neighborhood, and offered kindergarten, clubs, a public bath in the basement and a large library on the first floor. Arents' baths in the basement of the Belvidere Mission addition and her series of

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<sup>86</sup> *ibid*

<sup>87</sup> See Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City*, forthcoming, University of Minnesota Press, for a full history of women and voluntary organizations in the progressive American city and the spaces they organized and inhabited. Spain defines these places created and operated by women as "redemptive

library facilities reflected the efforts of these New York women. In both cases, the bath and library facilities were later absorbed into the city system, which indicates how pioneering these grassroots efforts were. Lillian Wald and Mary Brewster founded the nearby Nurses' Settlement in 1893 that provided nonsectarian healthcare to the urban poor and soon grew into three, three-story Federal style houses on Henry Street.<sup>88</sup> Arents brought the offshoot of the Richmond Nurses Settlement into Oregon Hill when she offered the Teachers' Home to the Instructive Visiting Nurses Association.

In contrast to this secular work, the social gospel movement was developing in late nineteenth century New York in which religion combined with sociology to confront urban problems. Scholar Martha Hagood has interpreted the work of Arents and St. Andrew's Association as a clear example of the institutional church work suggested by the programs of Social Gospel.<sup>89</sup> The St. Andrew's complex in Oregon Hill suggests that Arents was adapting the agenda of the institutional church--one that provided services to working class congregations--to Richmond. The spaces and services that the institutional church required--"parlors of the cultivation of the social life, reading-rooms, classrooms and shops for intellectual and industrial training...a gymnasium, baths..."<sup>90</sup> were all found within Oregon Hill. The industrial education class, with which Arents had been impressed on her 1888 stay in Australia, had been included in the St. Andrew's education program from its beginning, and the other building types followed after the turn of the century.

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places" that were created in response to needs developed in part by the influx of immigrants, African-Americans, and single working women to the city.

<sup>88</sup> Spain, Chapter 5: "New York City Headquarters, Smaller City Branches."

<sup>89</sup> Martha Hagood, "Grace Arents and the Architecture of the Social Gospel" (paper presented at the Women and Virginia Architecture: New Findings from VCU and UVA Symposium, September 29, 1995); Chapter on "Social Gospel" in Burrows, Edwin G., and Mike Wallace. *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.



In Chicago, Jane Addams' Hull House settlement was secular, in contrast to Arents' Episcopalian mission, but it compares as a complex of buildings. The settlement began in an 1856 house and Addams developed, with buildings funded by women patrons in the city, a complex of buildings that filled the block. Addams provided the county's first model playground in 1894 that she built on the site of slum housing that she demolished and moved. By 1907, the red brick institutional buildings included a public kitchen, playground, gymnasium, basement baths, coffeehouse, and apartments.<sup>91</sup> The pioneering St. Andrew's playground in Oregon Hill that was built across the street from their housing projects around 1910 also replaced houses. The playground project fit into their vision for tidying up those blocks and providing useful spaces in return for the demolition.

Unfortunately Arents did not write about Jane Addams when she traveled through Chicago a year before Hull House was founded, and she left no other papers to suggest what or who influenced her work. However, her actions, work, contributions, and friendships suggest that Arents was a feminist and an activist, even if she "did not join in demonstrations...or ask the Legislature for special legislation," or "she did not join in so-called clean-up movements."<sup>92</sup> This author is making specific reference to women who entered the public sphere through suffrage groups and voluntary organizations at the turn of the century, such as Municipal Housekeeping that worked to organize the city like the home.<sup>93</sup> Arents chose to work in the shelter of her church organization instead of being an active member of any women's groups and this quiet manner in which she managed to produce extraordinary change won her support from her conservative southern community.

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<sup>91</sup> Allan B. Pond designed the complex from 1889-1916. Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities*. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995), 167. See also Daphne Spain, Chapter 7: "Men Build Chicago's Skyline, Women Redeem the City."

<sup>92</sup> "Miss Grace Arents," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 21 June 1926.

<sup>93</sup> Daphne Spain, "The City- A Home, Clean and Beautiful," *Iris* 37 (spring/summer 1998): 29-34.

Grace Arents did, however, financially support women's organizations in the city. The first four groups to which she left \$5000 were the Instructive Visiting Nurses Association, the Spring Street Home for Girls, the Richmond Exchange for Womans Work [sic] and the Summer Rest Association, a working farm for girls in Albemarle County.<sup>94</sup> Wealthy and elite women in Richmond began founding social, cultural, and philanthropic institutions at the end of the nineteenth century, such as the 1883 Richmond Exchange for Woman's Work that helped poor women support themselves through handicraft, the 1887 Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the 1894 Women's Club, and the 1896 Home for Confederate Women.<sup>95</sup> The Woman's Club began as a literary and cultural association at 11 West Franklin Street near the residences of its founders. Within a few years, it expanded its discussions to include philanthropy and hosted an afternoon of speakers from the Female Orphan Asylum, Sheltering Arms Hospital, and the Day Nursery and Free Kindergarten, among others.<sup>96</sup> The Woman's Club, however, remained primarily a cultural organization and worked within the traditional structure of elite Richmond. Its members were frequently also active in local history groups like the APVA and the Hollywood Memorial Society, and this reflects the traditional roots of society Richmond. Grace Arents was not an active member of the Woman's Club--her activism fell outside the traditionalist confines of the group.<sup>97</sup> Her devotion to a working-class neighborhood,

<sup>94</sup> Grace Arents' will, p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Arents was an active member of the YWCA around the turn-of-the-century but she did not head a committee or serve as an officer. YWCA annual reports 1893-1904, Board of Director reports 1891-1908, 1908-1911. Richmond YWCA records are in Special Collections, Cabell Library, Virginia Commonwealth University.

<sup>96</sup> Sandra Gioia Treadaway. *Women of Mark: A History of The Woman's Club of Richmond, Virginia, 1894-1994*. (Richmond: The Library of Virginia, 1995), Chapter 1, especially p. 23 on philanthropy.

<sup>97</sup> Arents was listed as a member in 1901 and resigned in 1902. She was not a member again until 1924-5 and her death is acknowledged in the annual report for 1926-7. She never served as head of the philanthropy committee. Mary Winfield Scott was also a member in 1924 so for that one year they may have attended the same meetings or talks. Scott's grandmother, Frances Branch Scott is consistently a member as is Scott from 1918 along with her mother. Woman's Club records at the Virginia Historical Society Library.

Episcopalian motivations, and her dedication to the support of young white working women allied Arents more closely with reforming women's groups than society clubs. Richmond novelist Ellen Glasgow spoke sharply about her wealthy neighbors in the early twentieth century. She thought that these elite Richmonders, the sorts of traditionalists who attended APVA social functions, "lived in perpetual flight from reality" and shirked their moral responsibility to help the poorer residents of their city.<sup>98</sup> Although Arents resided in the same prominent residential area as these people, she was probably not a guest at the APVA balls that sustained Richmond society life around the turn of the century.

The Progressive era in Richmond reflected national trends with Lila Meade Valentine (1865-1921) leading the local suffrage movement, Maggie Walker (1867-1934) creating a thriving economy for black Richmond, and of course Grace Arents, founding a public bath, a free library, and a home for working women. Valentine, an active member of the APVA and the Woman's Club, energetically led the suffrage drive and also supported several avenues of reform in areas of healthcare and working women. The politics that she brought to the Woman's Club and the APVA, however, were not readily accepted and although she remained in the prominent social sphere, Valentine's causes were accomplished without the heavy support of other society women. Maggie L. Walker held leadership positions in the Independent Order of St. Luke benevolent society and encouraged economic empowerment of blacks with the 1903 St. Luke Penny Savings Bank. Other institutions that helped blacks were the Catholic church that engaged in social gospel work in Jackson Ward, black fraternal organizations, the Virginia Union University mission school, the Friends' Asylum for

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<sup>98</sup> James M. Lindgren, *Preserving the Old Dominion: Historic Preservation and Virginia Traditionalism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 74.

Colored Orphans, the Urban League, and the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA.<sup>99</sup> The 1929 report of the Negro Welfare Survey Committee found that the majority of social service agency budgets, like the Community Fund were spent on white Richmonders.<sup>100</sup>

Arents shared her later life with Mary Garland Smith (1868-1968) who served as principal of St. Andrew's School. Smith lived at the Teachers' Home at 223 South Cherry in 1910 but moved to Bloemendaal with Arents later that decade. In her will, Arents left \$50,000, the buildings at Bloemendaal Farm, and her jewelry, clothes, books, and other personal items to Mary Garland Smith, "the devoted friend and companion of my later years."<sup>101</sup> She offered these things to Smith "in token of my affectionate appreciation of her friendship." Arents specified that the property, when Smith died, was to go to the City of Richmond "as a public park and botanical garden in perpetual memory of my uncle Lewis Ginter to be known as the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden." Arents left \$100,000 to the St. Andrew's Association, the interest from which is for Smith and later, the City of Richmond to fund the maintenance of the property.<sup>102</sup> Arents thus carefully arranged a situation that provided for her dear friend, honored her dear uncle, and beautified the city.

For the last years of her life, Arents focused her efforts outside of the city--on the farm and farmhouse she built at Bloemendaal, and her uncle's Ginter Park where she funded a community center and other buildings. When she died in 1926, twenty-three rental houses solidly lined the streets of north Oregon Hill, in addition to the institutional buildings of church, schools, mission, library, and baths further south (fig.18). They stood apart from, and often replaced, the modest wood-framed houses that had lined the streets from its

<sup>99</sup> Tyler Potterfield; *The Negro in Richmond, Virginia: The Report of the Negro Welfare Survey Committee*. Richmond: Richmond Council of Social Agencies, 1929.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid p. 35-36.

<sup>101</sup> Grace E. Arents, WB 43 pp. 1-5, 26 July 1925/ 26 November 1926.

<sup>102</sup> Grace E. Arents, WB 43 pp. 1-5, 26 July 1925/ 26 November 1926.

nineteenth century roots. The buildings she had funded and arranged addressed great need in the neighborhood and the city with their uses, and then went beyond that to beautify and convey a sense of pride. When she last saw the neighborhood, her vision was complete. Her name remains in the city on the plaque at St. Andrew's Church, in the portal of the Arents Free Library and the Grace Arents School, and on her small tombstone in Hollywood Cemetery overlooking the James River and adjacent to the neighborhood in which she worked.

## CHAPTER 2

### The Architectural Work of Mary Wingfield Scott

Architectural historian Mary Wingfield Scott (1895-1983) shaped the city of Richmond as the preserver and thus as the second patron of fifteen pre-Civil War houses (fig.19). She used her education and interest in history to document the vanishing architecture of early Richmond, and devoted her financial resources to the purchase and preservation of buildings on the brink of demolition. Her solid roots in the city of Richmond and her personal background in fine Richmond architecture shaped her interest in history, and underpinned her extraordinary activism. The City of Richmond respects Scott as the primary recorder of its built past; and her work serves as a remarkable resource for scholars of the same. With thorough documentary research and over a thousand photographs, Scott wrote two books detailing the history of Richmond's pre-Civil War houses, many of which have since been demolished. Scott also founded an infrastructure for preservation and public education about local historic architecture. In 1935, she established the William Byrd Branch of the Association for the Protection of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), and from the 1940s until her death in 1983, she led walking tours, edited *Old Richmond News*, and authored several series in the local newspapers on Richmond houses and neighborhoods.

None of the buildings in which Mary Wingfield Scott grew up survives. She was born in 1895, at the corner of Fifth and Cary Streets. Within three years, her family moved to 706 West Grace Street where Scott spent her childhood in this three-story brick house. Her childhood home was one block north of her grandparent's house at 712 West Franklin Street. Mary Wingfield Scott's grandparents, Major Frederic R. and Sarah Frances Branch Scott, had come from nearby Petersburg, Virginia in 1872, around the time that Ginter

returned from New York. Sarah Frances Branch Scott's family was already established in the city and they temporarily lived in the house of her father, Thomas Branch, at 1 West Franklin Street. Within five years, they bought the 1813 house at 101 South Fifth Street near the Ginter House. Here they lived until they built their three-story brick house at 712 West Franklin in 1883, five years before, and two blocks east, of Major Lewis Ginter's new house at 901 (fig.3). The Italianate house impressed Scott, who remembered its spaces as "so huge, with a dark attic, a cupola, a long wing where the servants stayed, a cellar running under the whole house." By 1943 after sixty years of family ownership, the family had sold the house and Scott lamented this loss: "We have our own homes [now], but 712, our common stronghold, monstrous and dear, is a thing of the past."<sup>103</sup> The black servants that Scott described in detail lived in rooms above the stable. This is the same situation as in Arents' house at 901 two blocks away and in the same years--the first decades of the twentieth century. Scott's memory of her grandparents' house indicates that she too was aware of blacks and whites inhabiting separate private spaces even if they interacted publicly and daily. Her memories of the house also reveal her awareness of the importance and the solidity of a family base. Like Arents and most other white and black Richmonders at the time, Scott extended her understanding of private domestic segregation to the scale of the city.

When her father died in 1901, Scott was about six years old and she forged a close relationship with her mother and brother. The family was not impoverished by his death and beginning in 1908, the three Scotts toured Europe and its art galleries. These trips fostered an understanding and appreciation of art and history that Scott continued to develop. She studied at Bryn Mawr from 1914 to 1916 but did not finish her degree there, and instead moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where her brother was enrolled at

<sup>103</sup> Scott, 1943, *712... Hail and Farewell*, p. 1-8. At Valentine Museum Library.

university. Here, Scott "revived [her] interest in art and architecture" from her childhood trips, reading in the Boston Public Library and absorbing the historic built fabric of Massachusetts. Then after eight years away, the three Scotts returned to Richmond. Scott became active in St. Paul's church choir and the Women's Club, of which her relatives, Frances Branch Scott and Mary Munford had been two of the founders two decades earlier. Soon, however, Scott decided to complete her degree--this time in New York City at Barnard, the women's college of Columbia University.

At Barnard, Scott studied French and Spanish and she returned to an apartment on Richmond's Monument Avenue with her degree. After teaching locally, she left Richmond again for the University of Chicago and completed her M.A. and her Ph.D. with a dissertation on art and artists in the work of Balzac. In 1923 Chicago, she met Virginia Reese Withers. They became companions and Scott lived with her until Withers died in 1967. Both were scholars and Withers shared her interest in architectural history, serving on the board of the William Byrd Branch of the APVA along with Scott. Throughout her schooling and travel, Scott maintained an awareness of which women around her had attended college and how it had shaped their lives. Her esteem for education, and the respect she had for other women who attained it, guided Scott through her career as historian and preservationist.

After settling back in Richmond, Scott and Withers adopted two sons together in 1929. Both women had Walker family ancestors, so they chose this as their boys' surname. Withers started a nursery school next door to their home on Roselawn Road in the western extension of Richmond. This West End house was the base for Scott's preservation career, and it is out of the center of the city and a twentieth-century structure. In the 1920s, Scott bought her first house--an 1840s wood-framed structure in rural Alabama, which she and



her family used as a summer place. When Scott purchased her second building for preservation--the Craig House--in 1935, Withers was relieved that they were not expected to move into this "picturesque slum in Shockoe Bottom." They remained in their suburban house, and Scott focused instead on preserving the Craig House for the use of the black community that lived around it.

Scott's subsequent career as Richmond's most well known and influential architectural historian developed from these experiences in her native city and other southern cities, New England, and abroad. Scott defined herself as an architectural historian in the autobiography that she wrote to help her recover from a stroke later in her life.<sup>104</sup> Virginia Reese Withers wrote a biographical postscript to Scott's autobiography that is particularly helpful in understanding the making of this architectural historian. She writes:

Mary's attention focused rather on the buildings as she saw them. She avidly read any critical appraisal of their architectural value. She even grasped the idea that as a rule any inharmonious ornament marked the shifting taste from one generation to another. To her mind, this explained, but did not justify, replacing the original style of decoration by another that happened to be preferred at a later period. In this conflict of esthetic values, she found something that appealed to a definitely militant strain in her make-up. She became a passionate partisan of those who, wherever possible, would restore the original design, as against those who would cheerfully violate it with some fancied "improvement" in accord with contemporary taste... Mary was passionately convinced that every such house in Richmond that had been so disfigured deserved a better fate and that those so far untouched by "the blight" should be protected as essential documents in the city's social and esthetic history. This civic duty gradually became the central urge in her life.<sup>105</sup>

Scott was not interested in layers of history expressed in architecture--she valued the decisions of the original designer. Scott advocated the replacement of a missing original

<sup>104</sup> "The Making of an Architectural Historian," arranged by Elizabeth S. Scott and published in three successive *Richmond Quarterly* journals: V.8, no.1 Summer 1985; V.8, no.2 Fall 1985; V. 8, no. 3 Winter 1985; Complete typescript of the autobiography and Withers' chapter is in the Valentine Museum Library.

element on a house instead of a contemporary addition. This choice rendered the house visibly historic perhaps, but not an honest document of the city's architectural history. Scott's "civic duty" was at first defined by this obsession with visible historic harmony. As her activism progressed, however, she coupled this need for a tidy historic landscape with a profound sense that all people benefited from access to history through their everyday engagements with the built world.

Scott was a prolific writer on Richmond architecture--its history, formal qualities, and suggestions for its future use. In addition to a series of newspaper articles that popularized local architectural history, Scott published an article in the *Journal of the American Society of Architectural Historians*, and three books: *Houses of Old Richmond* (1941), *Old Richmond Neighborhoods* (1950), and *Virginia's Capitol Square: Its Buildings and Its Monuments* (1957). *Houses of Old Richmond* cataloged the city's architecture from its founding in 1737 until 1860. In the publicity for the book, Scott's personal connections to the city validate her authority: "the author was born in Richmond, with whose history her family has been closely identified."<sup>106</sup> Foundations and lineage were as necessary as thorough research in 1940s Richmond. In what is advertised as the first Richmond history written from primary material, Scott based her compiled histories of almost one hundred entries on deed searches, land books, Mutual Assurance policy records, court order books, city directories, journals, newspapers, and family papers. From these data, she offered insights into the initial construction and alterations to the buildings. She constructed the history around the residents; a contemporary reviewer praised her "womanlike accuracy in setting down the history and

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<sup>105</sup> Virginia A. Withers, "The Making of an Architectural Historian: Mary Wingfield Scott, *Richmond Quarterly* 8, no.3 (Winter 1985) p. 48, 50.

<sup>106</sup> Publication Trailer for *House of Old Richmond*, Valentine Museum publisher, 1941, Valentine Museum Library.

development of each house as a social center."<sup>107</sup> She was aware of the primacy given to great men in history and regretted that except for in the cases of men of national importance, her main source for other people is the often unreliable and hard to obtain family tradition. Scott offers formal analysis of the properties in which she judges the quality, details, and effect of both interiors and exteriors.

*Houses of Old Richmond* is a documented historical record of Richmond architecture, but Scott also considered the present and future life of the buildings. While many of the buildings she chose for the book were extant in 1941, she took the opportunity to discuss the causes and remedies for what she called "Vanishing Richmond." In her choices, Scott valued age, association, and architectural distinction--typically large, downtown houses built for Richmond's elite. In 1941 few families could afford to live in these enormous structures designed for a large service staff. Neither did Scott expect the wealthy to live downtown in deteriorated neighborhoods or in areas of encroaching retail, thus her residence in the West End. Scott compared the potential of Linden Row, the Greek Revival urban row houses she preserved, to New York's Washington Square, where houses were converted to multi-purpose structures, with offices and shops on the main story and apartments upstairs. Scott primarily proposed that the large residences be converted into apartments. She firmly believed that old houses must be reused in an economically and architecturally sensible way to "absorb [them] into the needs of the community and to make people realize that they are not only a great asset to the city as a whole but can be made to pay the individual or group to which they belong, materially as well as in intangible values."<sup>108</sup> Scott was comfortable with altering buildings to accomplish their continued viability but she limited this to interior work.

<sup>107</sup> "Family Album of Richmond Homes," *Richmond Times-Dispatch* 21 December 1941.

<sup>108</sup> Scott, *Houses of Old Richmond*, 313.

To preserve the character of historic neighborhoods, it was essential to Scott that their exteriors not be altered in material, form, or condition.

*Old Richmond Neighborhoods* (1950) relies on Scott's earlier book, walking tours, and newspaper articles devoted to the extant built past, but focuses instead on the city's architectural losses. It is a sad survey, but a glorious record, of hundreds of photographs taken mostly by Scott. Her photographs in both books mostly record the façade of the building in its context but some are more artistic renderings of the picturesque qualities she admired in historic architecture (fig.20). The focus on neighborhoods highlights broad collections of buildings and includes a record of more modest houses than did *Houses of Old Richmond*. It is a disconcerting book; the text and photographs accustom the reader to a specific landscape, but this is snatched away with the simple line, "Demolished 1910" or 1925, or just "Demolished" that labels the images. This is Scott's intention--it is an urgent attempt to make people aware of the destruction caused by the spread of business and slums, and by property owners who endanger architectural character with insensitive alterations. The policy that she and the William Byrd Branch of the APVA proposed to remedy the deterioration of historic houses and the fabric of the inner city was called the Intermediate Business Zone. This provided for specific adaptive reuse such as offices or certain retail that could work within historic structures without altering the façade. The façades of buildings were with what Scott was most concerned. The unsuccessful fight for this zoning ordinance was the premise for Scott's purchase of Linden Row, where the city proposed unlimited commercial use. The several antique shops that occupied Linden Row in the 1940s did not offend Scott who likely considered their historical contents appropriate, but most importantly because they could function within the original exterior fabric. Scott saw the demolition or alteration of a building for commercial use as the beginning of

neighborhood blight; one filling station or altered façade would enable and encourage others. The 1975 reprint of *Old Richmond Neighborhoods* lists the forces that later attacked Richmond's fabric in the 1950s and 1960s. Now, the threat was urban renewal--interstate highways, the Metropolitan Authority's downtown expressway, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and local government construction.

Scott felt a duty to engage in Richmond's nascent preservation movement based on her family's roots, her art history background, and a need to make efficient and enjoyable use of existing resources. In 1935 Scott and a group of concerned colleagues adopted an activist agenda in response to rampant demolition. Several houses that Scott later profiled in *Houses of Old Richmond* had been razed. The 1815-1816 Cunningham-Archer House reputedly designed by Robert Mills was demolished in 1927, the 1813 Alexander-McRae House in an unusual plan of three octagons fell in 1929, and the late eighteenth century Patrick Gibson House that had become dilapidated was knocked down in 1931. The 1787 Craig House was also in bad condition and on the brink of demolition. Scott, frustrated with the conservative values and mostly administrative role of the APVA, decided to start a local chapter to address the fate of the remaining antebellum houses herself. In 1935, she bought the Craig House and started the William Byrd Branch of the APVA.

The early preservation movement in Richmond, as in the United States, was initiated, advocated, and staffed by women.<sup>109</sup> The APVA, which had primarily female membership, was founded by Mary Jeffery Galt in 1888. Mary Wingfield Scott's grandmother, Sarah Frances Branch Scott was a member from the 1890s, joined by her daughter Frances Branch

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<sup>109</sup> Barbara J. Howe, "Women and Architecture." *In Reclaiming the Past: Landmarks of Women's History*. Page Putnam Miller, editor. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992. pp. 27-62; Richard T. Couture *To Preserve and Protect: A History of The Association For The Preservation of Virginia Antiquities*. (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1984); James M. Lindgren, *Preserving the Old Dominion: Historic Preservation and Virginia Traditionalism*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993; Daniel

Scott (1862-1937) after the turn of the century. Frances Branch Scott, Mary Wingfield Scott's aunt, continued on to serve as director of the APVA from 1910 until her death in 1937 when the home at 712 West Franklin Street sold out of the family. The APVA focused its efforts on sites of national and regional patriotism, particularly Jamestown, which they valued as the birthplace of the nation fortuitously located in their state. The state-wide efforts of the APVA focused on Richmond in 1890 when member Mrs. Joseph Bryan founded a separate group, the Confederate Memorial Literary Society, to save the White House of the Confederacy. The society gained ownership of the house and opened it as a museum of Confederate history in 1896. The APVA acquired the Old Stone House, known as the oldest house in Richmond, in 1895 and it went through a series of interpretations in the early twentieth century, from Washington's Headquarters to a shrine for Edgar Allen Poe. By Mary Wingfield Scott's generation, the Richmond preservation scene was still dominated by a network of women. Scott's partners in the Richmond effort included her cousins Mary Scott Reed (1901-1985) and Elizabeth Scott Bocock (1907-1991), as well as Louise Catterall.<sup>110</sup> The support that Richmond's women offered to the William Byrd Branch is suggested in a 1945 issue of *Old Richmond News*, "Does your husband belong to the William Byrd Branch? Suggest to him to join."<sup>111</sup>

Scott's preservation work was also philanthropy. She donated her financial resources to save built and social fabric, just as Arents did in her quest to save community. That preservation work by women was perceived as kind of philanthropy is evident from its beginnings. In 1855, when Ann Pamela Cunningham had organized funds from southern

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Bluestone, "Academics in Tennis Shoes: Historic Preservation and the Academy," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 58 (September, 1999): 300-307.

<sup>110</sup> "Preservationist Mary Reed dies" *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 18 January 1991, b.2; "Mary Wingfield Scott," by Virginius Dabney. *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 12 August 1983, p. A-14. See Melissa Zimmerman's paper on Scott, Bocock and Reed in the Valentine Museum Library.

<sup>111</sup> *Old Richmond News*, 2, no.1, 1 January 1945.

women to save Mount Vernon from possible development as a hotel, the governor of Virginia called their efforts a "noble purpose [on] the brow of female philanthropy."<sup>112</sup> Scott's first public preservation project, the Craig House, reflected this philanthropic bent to her preservation work. Scott valued the late eighteenth-century frame house for its age as well as associations with Edgar Allan Poe. This second oldest house in Richmond had been used for a while as a Methodist mission in a mostly black and immigrant neighborhood in Shockoe Bottom--the "picturesque slum" that Withers described. Scott juxtaposed the "many charming early nineteenth century houses being occupied by a low class of Negroes or by Polish and Russian Jews," and she described the desperate state of the house when she, Withers, and Works Progress Administration laborers began working on it. Scott reopened the Craig House as the Negro Art Center that served blacks in the neighborhood.<sup>113</sup> The goal of the William Byrd Branch was to interest local people in Richmond's history and thereby encourage their support of preservation. By engaging local blacks in their first preservation project, Scott made a statement about preservation itself. She understood that even in Richmond, obsessed with its Civil War past, "we cannot multiply shrines and museums indefinitely."<sup>114</sup> Instead, she believed, buildings should be reused out of respect for the fabric itself and for the needs of the community.

Scott paid close attention to racial residence patterns in the city. She believed in just distribution of the city's housing resources, even if they remained segregated, and advocated in 1946 an "agreement between white and Negro leaders on a fair division of decent places to live, particularly for the poor of both races. Nothing creates worse race-relations than

<sup>112</sup> Barbara J. Howe, "Women and Architecture." In *Reclaiming the Past: Landmarks of Women's History*, ed. Page Putnam Miller, 27-62. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 29.

<sup>113</sup> Couture, 98-99. Couture, 235-237; "Home of Poe's Helen to Be Restored As Modern Community Center Here," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, November 1, 1936.

<sup>114</sup> Scott, *Houses of Old Richmond*, 313.

inequitable exploitation of housing-space.”<sup>115</sup> Scott devoted one large part of *Old Richmond Neighborhoods* to Jackson Ward, “the largest Negro section of Richmond.” It was also the largest section of extant pre-Civil War houses and these 473 buildings are her primary interest in Jackson Ward. While Scott was concerned by the “ill-judged repair” of the black residents and the poor condition of many of the houses in Jackson Ward, her more immediate concern was the proposed Express Highway. Scott perceived that with maternal guidance that her authority provided she could reach the residents of old houses and encourage them to act sensitively, however, mass demolition by the state was irrevocable and of great concern. The Express Highway project, tabled as she wrote *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, and eventually built as the Richmond-Petersburg Expressway in the 1950s, was proposed to follow Jackson Street and provide an efficient route around the north of the city. Scott was concerned that the demolition of at least fifty houses that the construction would necessitate would “have a more far-reaching effect than any event in the history of Richmond except the Evacuation Fire.”<sup>116</sup> Scott did not specifically address the massive human displacement that such demolition would bring, and she was initially more concerned with the architectural history that the road would wipe out. She repeatedly invokes the impending doom of the Express Highway in the Jackson Ward section of her book and wrote that it would, “eliminate all the atmosphere” on Jackson Street, cause the unaltered old houses of Catherine Street to “pass from memory,” and those on Leigh to “become only a memory.” However her published architectural histories show that her understanding of memory was not only about the buildings but it included an awareness of people interacting with place, both in history and the present.

<sup>115</sup> *Old Richmond News*, 3, no.1, 1 February 1946.

<sup>116</sup> Scott, *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, 225.



In her history of Jackson Ward, Scott frequently cited places of interest to black history such as the headquarters St. Luke's Society, founded by Maggie L. Walker, "that remarkable colored woman." Scott also mentioned ordinary black people and free blacks that lived in these houses. By recording specific people in actual buildings, Scott was effectively writing black Richmonders into a real place in the history of the city. When she published a list of pre-Civil War houses built by free blacks in Richmond, Scott made a connection between contemporary living conditions, and an empowering history that could offer blacks a vested interest in preserving part of Richmond's built past.<sup>117</sup> When she led a walking tour through a neighborhood developed by free blacks, Scott focused on the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) plans to clear the area, including a 1790s house built by Abraham Skipwith, a free black man, that she described as "most interesting, both architecturally and historically" in the area."<sup>118</sup> With this kind of interest and activism, Scott extended the repertoire of the APVA beyond the kinds of buildings it chose to represent the history of the state.<sup>119</sup> As residents of much of the city's old housing stock, Scott considered Richmond's blacks to be good candidates for preservation education. On her photographic expeditions in the city, she tried "to talk to the occupants of old houses and give them some conception of the beauty of line, of detail and of surrounding trees." This sounds like Scott was only interested in formal and beautification aspects of preservation. Her attempts to engage the occupants with their environment, however, indicate a deeper understanding of the social benefits of preservation. She wrote that "the problem of preservation is linked with that of better ways of living," and that anyone who

<sup>117</sup> *Old Richmond News*, 2, no. 1.

<sup>118</sup> "Fay to join Walking Tour Wednesday," *Richmond News Leader* 9 April 1951; Scott, *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, 257. Scott's cousin, Elizabeth Scott Bocock, also a noted preservationist, moved this house to her farm in Goochland County when it was threatened by the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike.

<sup>119</sup> W. Brown Morton III, "What Do We Preserve and Why?" in Robert E. Stipe and Antoinette J. Lee, eds. *The American Mosaic: Preserving a Nation's Heritage*. Washington: US/ICOMOS, 1987.

sees preservation as stuffy and removed, "need only go on such a photographing expedition to realize the close connection between mankind's dwellings of yesterday and his life today."<sup>120</sup> This expressed one of Scott's motivations for preservation work. She was primarily interested in protecting the city's historic architectural fabric because she valued its historical importance, quality of material and form, and its picturesque charm. However, Scott also believed that the preservation of old buildings provided physical and important ways for people to connect with history and to begin to understand their lives within a broader historical context. Mansions built before the Civil War were no longer the exclusive domain of their initial patrons, as large single-family houses were split into apartments and used by diverse community groups. Preservation could no longer be justified as the cause of Richmond's elite and Scott's efforts to popularize it through education and diversification of projects were highly effective.

This extends the philanthropic definition of her work beyond a purely financial contribution. By devoting her money, time, and expertise to the preservation of history and buildings, Scott accomplished several benevolent aims. She saved and provided places ripe for adaptive reuse that were also rich in historical layers. This made the benefits of history accessible to the wide-ranging organizations that would use the buildings—the navy League, the American Red Cross, and the Black YMCA, for example. Scott believed that more than the history of white wealthy Richmonders should be preserved for the consumption of that history by their descendants in a museum setting. She advocated preservation of diverse building types, as long as they had age value, from mansions to outbuildings, and in all neighborhoods of the city—black, white, wealthy, and poor.

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<sup>120</sup> Mary Wingfield Scott, "APVA tries to save old Richmond," *Journal of the American Society of Architectural Historians* 3, no.4. (October, 1943).

Scott very specifically detailed which streets are inhabited by blacks and sometimes uses language like "taken over" in reference to their residency, but she was not generally disparaging about Jackson Ward as a black neighborhood. She was concerned with what she saw as neglect and improper improvements, but the major threats that Scott perceived were not the habits of the black residents. The greatest threats to the architectural fabric of Jackson Ward, other than the Express Highway, were the spread of commercial structures and the attendant spaces they required such as service entrances and parking lots.

Twentieth century Richmond also faced the spread of slums and addressed this issue in different ways. The 1913 Society for the Betterment of Housing and Living Conditions in Richmond report concluded that the city's greatest need was new, "modern dwellings to replace the thousands of ramshackle houses that are unfit to live in."<sup>121</sup> These houses were especially necessary within walking distance of industrial areas for workers, and both white and black areas were studied.<sup>122</sup> This was the context for Arents' housing projects that provided model housing, but only for white workers. In 1929, the Negro Welfare Survey reported that a "large number of the very old houses in Jackson Ward could only be described as generally dilapidated and hardly fit for human habitation" and two-thirds of the black housing needed major repairs.<sup>123</sup> A Public Works Administration survey a decade later confirmed that housing conditions in the inner city had worsened and demolition in black neighborhoods was not being replaced with new construction. Slum clearance proposal abounded but they were not carried out until the city founded the Richmond Housing Authority in 1940 that quickly demolished an eight-block area in Jackson Ward and constructed a plain block of public housing. The Authority focused on cleaning up the built

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<sup>121</sup> Weber, 13.

<sup>122</sup> "Society Finds That Richmond Needs New Homes," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 10 May 1913, p.1.8.

fabric of the city, but had no interest in the social fabric that the architecture of the traditional neighborhoods encouraged.

In 1952, the Department of Public Health issued a booklet on housing conditions that they titled, *Out of the Past*. In the past, it wrote, housing problems resulted from urban overcrowding, decline in property values when business and industry moved in, and neglect that led to deterioration.<sup>124</sup> The kind of housing that resulted from these "past" conditions was not fit for a progressive Richmond that needed a solid and sanitary housing and road infrastructure "to meet its pressing needs." It was logical to the city to build the necessary roads through neighborhoods of dilapidated housing. In the mid-1950s, the Richmond-Petersburg Expressway cut through Jackson Ward and forced the displacement of more than seven thousand blacks.<sup>125</sup> Scott believed that it was unfair to penalize the poor who would have difficulty finding affordable housing if their homes were demolished for the road. According to Scott, proposed roads should consider first the historic resources, and then the vulnerability of poor residents in the housing stock considered unimportant. Instead of demolishing large tracts of even "valueless shacks...and solid brick buildings that have stood a hundred years or more," as was the plan for the toll road through Jackson Ward, Scott and the William Byrd Branch recommended enforcing the sanitary code. This required renovations to bring the housing up to habitable standards, especially through the provision of indoor plumbing, and would work within the existing built fabric for improvements without demolition.

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<sup>123</sup> The Negro in Richmond, Virginia, 72. Christopher Silver, *Twentieth Century Richmond: Planning, Politics, and Race*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 125.

<sup>124</sup> "Out of the Past," booklet issued October 1952 by Richmond's Better Housing Program, Bureau of Sanitation, City Department of Public Health.

<sup>125</sup> Silver, 185.

Scott's career began a second and even more activist phase around 1947. She resigned as director of the William Byrd Branch, a position she had held since 1935, but continued with her duties of publication and research and as editor of *Old Richmond News*. The newsletter, which started in 1944, educated its members in lively briefs about the four properties under William Byrd Branch membership, recent demolition in the city, and upcoming preservation events such as the walking tours. Scott led organized tours of the city from the early 1940s through the 1960s. These tours of different neighborhoods, such as Oregon Hill, focused on the oldest buildings initially, but they began to be coordinated with public policy debates. When the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority proposed razing an area between Fourth and Seventh Streets north of Marshall, Scott and her branch protested. They organized public walking tours to examine the old houses in the area and Scott proposed they be saved with the city's sanitation laws, through which houses would be renovated up to habitable standards, rather than forsaking them for demolition.<sup>126</sup>

The William Byrd Branch involved itself in local preservation and planning politics. Its main concerns were the route of modern roads through the city, the beautification of the city, and prevention of slum growth. In 1947, Scott and the mayor joined in effective opposition to a proposed expressway through Monroe Park. She was unsuccessful in her proposals for the former elite downtown neighborhood of Gamble's Hill where she proposed that the large houses be converted into apartments instead of demolished in city sponsored slum clearance.<sup>127</sup> She also opposed the toll road through Jackson Ward that demolished about one quarter of the Pre-Civil War houses there until the 1940s. When faced with a defeat, Scott and her branch took direct action. When the Planning

<sup>126</sup> "Expert on Old Richmond Opposes Downtown Razing," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 26 October 1961.

<sup>127</sup> "Mary Wingfield Scott," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 21 April 1957, p. A21.

Commission rezoned Linden Row for unlimited commercial use, Scott bought seven of the eight houses to save them from demolition and façade alterations.

The William Byrd Branch gained another three houses after the Craig House project. In 1943 they acquired the 1810s Ann Carrington House in Church Hill, in 1947 the 1841 Ellen Glasgow House, and the 1856 Pulliam House in Gamble's Hill in 1953. These houses were each preserved under their second patronage through the William Byrd Branch at least a century after they were originally built. The Carrington House was converted into three apartments, which was just the sort of reuse Scott advocated. Suitable with its "identification with a distinguished Virginia woman," Scott favored leasing the Ellen Glasgow House to a local women's group in need of headquarters.<sup>128</sup> Restoration of the Pulliam House was funded by an adjacent tobacco company for their use, but in the late 1960s, however, it was threatened by the construction of the Downtown Expressway. In contrast to most of the Arents Housing that was demolished for this road, the Pulliam House was successfully moved and rebuilt by a combined effort in Church Hill. Despite their different re-use, these four houses saved by the William Byrd Branch shared that they were initially constructed before the Civil War and were significant in their style or associations--these were the main qualities that the APVA generally valued. The William Byrd Branch could not legally own these properties that they helped to save and restore, however, and even gifting required a complicated transaction that was not efficient in last minute preservation battles. To accommodate these restrictions, the William Byrd Branch founded the Historic Richmond Foundation in 1956 to share the mission of preservation in the city.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>128</sup> *Old Richmond News*, V.4, no.2, 25 April 1947.

<sup>129</sup> *Old Richmond News*, 1 November 1956.

The recipient of many local and national awards, Scott has been hailed for her scholarship and activism. In 1951 she received honorary membership in the Virginia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and in 1967 the National Trust for Historic Preservation acknowledged her work. The APVA gave Scott its first Historic Preservation Award to an individual, thus suggesting her actions were comparable to that of whole city governments, corporations, and county supervisors. As a private citizen, not an official of the government, Scott inspired community-level action. She was repeatedly described as a pioneer, an authority, and even as a militant activist. While Scott was "a member of one of Richmond's oldest and influential families," she professed no interest in her lineage and was not generally confident in her fellow Virginians' support of preservation.<sup>130</sup>

Mary Wingfield Scott also focused her work on the neighborhood of Oregon Hill. In 1939 a *Richmond Times-Dispatch* editorial on the city's slums proposed that sixteen blocks west of Belvidere Street to Linden Street and south of Idlewood Avenue to the James River be cleared for a housing project. This area included most of Oregon Hill.<sup>131</sup> Six years later the idea still circulated, and Scott defended Oregon Hill from the Housing Authority's slum-clearance plans. In defense of Oregon Hill, Scott cited the age of many of the neighborhood's houses (1840s and 1850s) and the fact that twelve had recently been restored. Scott did not oppose all slum clearance projects, however. She disparaged run-down houses and valued those with historical or what she referred to as "picturesque" qualities. In defending this area of Oregon Hill, she offered another section of the city

<sup>130</sup> "Mary Wingfield Scott Dies," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 10 August 1983, p. B-1.

<sup>131</sup> "Human Misery in Slum Area Presents Problem to Richmond," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, January 1939, p. 1, section 4.

immediately to the east as a suggestion for slum-clearance. Here, she writes, the only interesting buildings could be "assimilated into the development."<sup>132</sup>

Scott owned four houses in Oregon Hill proper--in the triangle of land east of Belvidere Street. She purchased 26 Maiden Lane and 518-520 Church Street in 1944 (fig.12). In 1958 she conveyed these properties to Historic Richmond Foundation, which immediately conveyed them to local citizens to fund their other efforts. The whole area was demolished in 1967 for the eventual construction of headquarters for the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority.<sup>133</sup> Scott also owned 600 Church Street, which she sold in 1948, and which perished with the rest of the block in 1967.<sup>134</sup> The house at 26 Maiden lane was part of an 1838 development of nineteen small brick structures that Scott suggested was the source of the overall modest architectural character of the neighborhood. The two-story, two-bay houses were set back from the street and the row was visually connected by shared chimneys and the pattern of repeated windows. 518-520 Church Street was a duplex built a decade later, and 600 was a typical wood-framed house built around 1862.<sup>135</sup> This section of Oregon Hill interested Scott, mostly because of its early houses, but also because of its connection to the historic Tredegar Iron Works and the picturesque qualities of its buildings. The steep topography here forced the row houses to connect in interesting stepped ways as the land sloped down to Tredegar and the James River. When the 1955 War Memorial cut through "the almost intact century old workmen's village of

<sup>132</sup> *Old Richmond News*, 2, no. 2, 1 April 1945.

<sup>133</sup> 518, 520 Church Street: Deed Book 443 C, p.387 15 June 1944 Kelly to Scott. Deed Book 590 B, p.597 19 December, 1948 Scott to Historic Richmond Foundation (HRF). 26 Maiden Lane: Deed Book 442 B, p.227 Williams to Scott. Deed Book 590 B, p.595 Scott to HRF.

<sup>134</sup> 600 Church Street: (uncertain purchase date) Deed Book 505 B, p.535; 7 May 1948. Scott to Williams.

<sup>135</sup> Notes from MWS boxes in Valentine Museum Library that include the photographs and notecards of each building she studied: "Oregon Hill Possesses a Quaint Charm," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 11 November 1942.



Oregon Hill [proper],” Scott mourned its loss, partly as one of the few neighborhoods of small houses in Richmond still inhabited by whites.

Although all the buildings were constructed after her cut-off date of architectural interest, Scott briefly discusses the St. Andrew’s complex in Oregon Hill. She writes that the “ambitious” church development of St. Andrew’s “was done for the people of Sydney and Oregon Hill through the generosity and creative imagination of a remarkable woman, Miss Grace Arents.”<sup>136</sup> While Scott did not publicly mention the preservation of Arents’ buildings in her defense of Oregon Hill, her properties on Maiden Lane and Church Street abutted the Belvidere Mission building and the Grace Arents Baths. When the Mission and Baths were demolished in 1968, so were the Scott’s former properties on Maiden Lane and Church Streets. That Scott was aware of Arents’ work raises questions about how she felt about her late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings. Arents demolished at least thirty antebellum wood-framed structures for the construction of her masonry buildings in Oregon Hill. For the housing projects in particular, Arents described the “tumble down” houses on the site that were demolished and replaced with “permanent improvements.” This is the kind of housing that Scott mourned when the Downtown Expressway cut through the city. Would Scott have campaigned to save the original houses that Arents demolished had she been active in preservation in the first decade of 1900? As architectural fabric, their age value might have rendered them more important in Scott’s eyes, but the philanthropic and social factors, as well as the quality of the architecture of the Arents and St. Andrew’s projects suggest an additional importance to the houses that replaced them. The houses that Arents demolished would perhaps be qualified as “slum housing” in Scott’s day. Would

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<sup>136</sup> Scott, *Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, 220.

Scott disdain Arents' intention to control racial residence patterns by building, just as the city controlled them through demolition?

### CHAPTER 3

#### The Cumberland Street Housing and Linden Row

In this study, the Cumberland Street Houses are significant because they were built; the Linden Row Houses are significant because they were preserved. Furthermore, that this building and saving was done by women in the early twentieth century renders them useful projects for analysis of women's work and history.<sup>137</sup> Each set of houses represents a landmark in the city--one as the first subsidized housing, the other as a famous preservation project, and each represents the motives of their advocates. The Arents Housing is modest compared to Linden Row, but it is larger and more solid than the housing stock that surrounds it. While these rows have very different stories of initial patronage and architectural history, they are connected by their building type and as major projects of these two women.

In 1905, J. B. Elam & Co. advertised twelve of their properties available for rent. The properties were located in different areas of Richmond and varied in size and cost. The most expensive house for rent, 104 East Franklin Street, is part of Linden Row and its twelve rooms were offered at \$800 for the year. One of the least expensive, 912 Cumberland Street, is part of the Arents Housing, and Elam & Co. asked \$240 per year for this six-room house. This house is half the size and less than one third the rent of the Linden Row house and in this respect they have little in common. However the rows to which these two houses belong are the subjects of this chapter. Linden Row and the Cumberland Street Housing share their building type--urban row house; and these two

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<sup>137</sup> See Susana Torre, ed. *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*. New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1977; Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995.

projects architecturally represent the motivations of Arents and Scott, which accounts for their formal differences.

The Cumberland Street Housing (912-924 Cumberland Street) was the first of a series of housing projects that Grace Arents and the St. Andrew's Association constructed to accommodate working people who could otherwise not afford good housing (fig.1). The Society for the Betterment of Housing and Living Conditions in Richmond, of which Arents was a director, studied Richmond's new houses built between 1908 and 1912. They found that over half of these houses were "constructed at a cost which placed them beyond the reach of the average clerk, salesman, or wage-worker who constitute the bulk of the population of Richmond."<sup>138</sup> The Arents Housing responded to this need in Oregon Hill, a traditionally white, non-immigrant, working-class neighborhood. There were, however, several families of free blacks living in Oregon Hill before the Civil War, and as the history of Cumberland Street indicates, there were also patterns of black residents in late nineteenth-century Oregon Hill. South Linden Street, for example, is black north of Cary, south of Beverly, and in number 314 for over three decades. Black residents occupied the section of Cumberland Street where Arents built her housing from at least 1876 until the housing was constructed in 1904. After this project, the architecture and the population of the block changed drastically and both these facts contribute to an understanding of Grace Arents' vision for the neighborhood.

Cumberland Street cuts through Oregon Hill at its northern end. It was originally named Canal Street because as it continues east, it parallels the Kanawha Canal that served the city. Today Cumberland Street is barely part of the neighborhood, severed by the

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<sup>138</sup> Weber, Report on Housing and Living Conditions in the Neglected Sections of Richmond, Virginia, 12.

Downtown Expressway, but until the late 1960s it was at the heart of the St. Andrew's complex (fig.21). The block on which St. Andrew's built its first housing is on the western edge of Oregon Hill in the 900 block of West Cumberland Street.

The seven brick houses at 912-924 Cumberland Street are not all attached, but they "read" as a set of row houses (figs.1 and 22).<sup>139</sup> They were designed as a unit, and Grace Arents and the St. Andrew's Association built all seven of them in 1904. They are also visually connected to the duplex, built soon after, across Linden Street. Cumberland Street presently serves almost entirely as an entry ramp to the Downtown Expressway that separates these houses from the rest of their neighborhood. In fact, the construction of the Expressway in the late 1960s removed another duplex on Linden Street and a set of row houses on Taylor Street, all part of the Arents Housing. The two-story, three-bay Cumberland Street houses beginning at the corner of Linden Street, are attached in groups of two and three. Each house is formally similar with a one-story wooden porch covering an off-center entrance, and three bays of large windows on the second story. While yellow brick facades unify the row, the architectural detailing differs for each set of houses. 924 and 922 each have a mansard roof with a central ogee-shaped vent, and cut granite lintels above the second-story windows. The three center houses, 920, 918, and 916 are finished with a parapet wall distinguished by a corinthian frieze and cornice. Floral swags in the frieze are positioned above each of the bays. The third set of houses, 914 and 912 have a cross-gable mansard roof, and curved brick lintels surmount the windows. This roof detail allies the houses with the style used at St. Andrew's School and the Teachers' Home. The yellow brick is also consistent with the Teachers' Home and these stylistic similarities connect the

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<sup>139</sup> These seven houses 912-924 Cumberland Street and also 200-202 South Linden Street are still extant in 2000 and are undergoing renovation. The Richmond Coalition for Better Housing is responsible for the

houses to the buildings of shared patronage in Oregon Hill. This applied variation adds interest to the row houses as seen in rows in Richmond's Plan District.<sup>140</sup>

The large windows that face Cumberland Street also frame a good view of St. Andrew's Church tower and the roof of the Teachers' Home two blocks away from inside the houses. The interiors of the houses are extraordinary, especially when they are considered as subsidized housing, and when compared with the typical residence in Oregon Hill (fig.23).<sup>141</sup> The off-center entrance opens into a side hall and stair, with a double parlor opening off the hall. Sliding pocket doors separate the two parlors as seen in the Teachers' Home. A stair in the rear of each house from the kitchen provides secondary access to the second floor. There is one bathroom upstairs and three bedrooms each fitted with a fireplace. These spaces are connected by a spacious corridor lit by a skylight at the top of the main staircase. The plan is similar to the typical row house in Oregon Hill except for the three bays and entry hall. This wide hall shields the parlor from the entrance, and provides circulation to upstairs and to the kitchen in the rear. The three-bay width also allows for the house to narrow halfway back and provide additional light to the parlor. The size of the rooms, the light from the tall windows, light wells, and skylight, and the amount of trim differentiate these buildings from their neighbors.

As was the pattern in many late nineteenth-century cities, widespread deterioration affected Richmond housing and this decay was a significant problem by the beginning of the twentieth century. In reaction, the city chose to focus on suburban expansion, rather than beautification and sensible organization of the existing urban center. In the first decades of

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project. They are restoring the houses, using both federal and state tax credits, and will rent the houses to low-income residents in the tradition of Grace Arents.

<sup>140</sup> Carneal, 157-8.

<sup>141</sup> The St. Andrew's Association subsidized rents of their property to enable working-class residents to afford the high quality housing.

the century, Richmond expanded its land area by 400 percent, and the population almost doubled. Proponents of annexation argued that it was a solution for the overcrowding and subsequent housing decay in the city.<sup>142</sup> Annexation promoted white migration to the suburbs that began with expansion to the areas in the north such as the 1890s Ginter Park, and to the west after the turn-of-the-century. As whites left the city, much of the existing housing stock was turned into multi-family housing, and the population that remained in the central city was shaped by the racially segregated housing market.

With a series of zoning ordinances in the first decades of the 1900s, Richmond expressed a broad consciousness of what kinds of buildings, but also what kinds of people, should settle where. In 1908, it debated and rejected a proposal to hire a landscape architect to "lay out the parks, streets and extensions...and to provide a plan by which the future growth of the city may be regulated and developed."<sup>143</sup> The city did that year, however, adopt a basic zoning plan that regulated building placement and height. Three years later, it increased its control with a residential segregation ordinance that declared "a block is white whereon a majority of the residents are white and colored whereon a majority...are colored."<sup>144</sup> Until this point, blacks and whites had somewhat self-segregated although this was not strictly organized. Free blacks lived in various areas of the city before the Civil War, including Oregon Hill, but their residences were mostly concentrated along the commercial Broad Street and north of Broad in what would become Jackson Ward (fig.4). After the war, the black population remained scattered in pockets throughout the city and not in one area exclusively. While this new zoning law did not retroactively force blacks living in a white-majority neighborhood to leave, it was intended to keep the black population from

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<sup>142</sup> Silver, 64-65.

<sup>143</sup> Silver, 104. This 1908 plan for Richmond came one year after John Nolen's plan for Roanoke.

<sup>144</sup> Silver, 110.

expanding into white neighborhoods and instead encouraged consolidation of existing black neighborhoods.

Racial segregation of the city was strengthened in 1911 with an ordinance that ensured strict "domiciliary segregation of the white and colored population."<sup>145</sup> This regulation was soon followed with the report and citywide clean up of the Society for the Betterment of Housing and Living Conditions in Richmond (SBHLCR). They recruited volunteers to visit both black and white households located throughout Richmond and their findings led to the suggestion that a hundred or more homes be built for working people as subsidized rentals.<sup>146</sup> Apparently the city was not to be responsible for this new construction, but rather the individuals who had funded the investigation would finance the model housing. St. Paul's Church had initiated the investigation and while the housing efforts of Arents are not mentioned, her presence on the board and her decade of experience with just the sort of housing they proposed suggests that she was fundamental in the organization.<sup>147</sup>

With a considerable population increase in the first decade of the twentieth century, Richmond faced the inevitable concerns of its growth such as adequate housing for all its residents.<sup>148</sup> The SBHLCR reported that "perhaps the most important problem of the rapidly growing city is the housing of its working people," and it proposed laws to limit the area of a lot permitted for building.<sup>149</sup> The Society also stressed the need for affordable housing with plumbing, fresh air, and sunshine to make the population healthy and

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<sup>145</sup> Silver, 71.

<sup>146</sup> The SBHLCR surveyors visited 682 households that earned less than \$15 per week in 1912.

<sup>147</sup> "Society Finds That Richmond Needs New Homes," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 10 May 1913, p. 1, 8.

<sup>148</sup> Richmond's population was 80,000 in 1900 and increased to 127,000 in 1910.

<sup>149</sup> Weber, *Report on Housing and Living Conditions in the Neglected Sections of Richmond, Virginia*, 9.



efficient.<sup>150</sup> Their survey illuminated the unsanitary conditions of many areas of housing, and prompted a 1913 citywide clean-up. The penchant for tidiness was seen not only in the condition of streets and houses, but also in the layout of the city's residents as the zoning ordinances reflect.

The Grace Arents Housing projects that began with the 1904 Cumberland Street Housing also reflect this desire to keep the neighborhoods housing and residents in a specific order. The five houses on the site in 1904 were probably the same houses there in 1876. They were clustered near the front of the lots with a typical setback that brought them quite close to the street. 910 was a free-standing house with an L-shaped plan and its neighbor 912 shared the plan but was attached to 914, a long thin house with its short end to the street. The other two, 916 and 918 were smaller attached houses. In 1876 Henry Brown, a black laborer, was a boarder at 914 West Cumberland Street, and Frank Pride, a fellow laborer lived next door. Neither owned the land on which they lived; nor did their neighbors in the three other houses on this part of the block.<sup>151</sup> W. B. Brown owned 910 but he lived four blocks away at 334 South Pine Street. It is likely that these neighbors, too, were black boarders because for the next three decades, a pattern of black laborers rented these five houses from white landowners who lived elsewhere. In 1876, these houses were relatively isolated with large blocks of undeveloped land to the west, and several empty lots for immediate neighbors. There was a dense string of row houses at the opposite end of the block at Cherry and Cary Streets, a tidy set of duplexes on the west side of Cherry on the site of the future Arents Free Library, and St. Andrew's Church was two blocks to the southeast.

<sup>150</sup> The main need was housing for both blacks and whites that rented for between \$6-\$12 per month and \$12-\$20 per month.

<sup>151</sup> 1876-7 Richmond city directory, matching names from 1876 Beers Atlas, none of them show up in the directory.

In 1889, the situation was not greatly changed. Charles Davis, a laborer, shared the house at 910 West Cumberland with three other black men who also worked as laborers or as drivers.<sup>152</sup> Their black neighbors at 912-918 did similar work. They also had in common that they rented their houses from white landowners who lived elsewhere in the city. Davis, for example, who still lived in the house four years later in contrast to the other houses with more frequent turn-over, paid rent to Thomas French who lived three blocks north on West Main Street.<sup>153</sup>

Fifteen years later, plumber William R. Fensom based his plumbing, heating, mantels and tiles business at 902 West Cumberland and lived six blocks south at 134 South Cherry Street. Fensom remained at 902 the following year, but his neighbors, eight black male and female heads of household did not. In 1904, St. Andrew's Association acquired the final parcel of land in this section of the block, in the middle of lots they had owned for three years, that cleared the way for their building project (fig.11). One evening in February, the Association board members gathered at Grace Arents' house for a special meeting, and agreed to buy this land without which it was "impossible to permanently improve the present holdings of the Association."<sup>154</sup> They were unhappy with the "very old and about non tenantable" houses existing on the neighboring lots they owned, but since they wanted to improve the area with a block of housing, rather than piecemeal, they had let these houses and their black renters remain. There was "a little discussion" about the proposal. Perhaps they talked about the poor housing on the site and how they could now tidy it up; perhaps they speculated about ideas for further housing once this was successful; perhaps they questioned whether the black residents should be allowed to stay in the new houses. They

<sup>152</sup> While the 1889 Baist only shows two houses, the City Directory confirms that the five houses 910-918 (probably those) seen on the 1876 Beers Atlas are still present.

<sup>153</sup> Thomas W. French lives at 1018 West Main Street in 1893-4.

approved the funds and also agreed to purchase two additional lots on the south side of West Cumberland Street. Grace Arents and three others were appointed to investigate having this property "permanently improved." Arents and the St. Andrew's Board often invoked this statement which generally meant to demolish the existing wood-framed buildings on the site and build again with high-quality, masonry architecture. By June, the Special Committee on New Buildings had received estimates for these "permanent improvements." "Permanent" was how they were intended; the seven brick houses would cost over \$17,000 and Arents offered to lend the money to the association without interest for "the erection of the buildings."<sup>155</sup>

So it was that the houses in which James Davis, Robert Mosby, Lucy Brown, Susan Griffin, Thomas Page, William Watson, and William Turner lived were cleared off the site and these individuals and their families were scattered. In 1905 James Davis, a laborer and resident at 909 West Cumberland the year before, was living at 1117 State Street in a section of that street that exclusively housed black residents.<sup>156</sup> Susan Griffin either left the city or moved into a house in which she was not head of household. However, within the decade she moved back to Oregon Hill, and was again threatened with displacement. The others are less easy to track as there are several blacks with the same names living elsewhere in the city in 1905. However, the general pattern indicates that they did not go to a common area of housing that was organized by the Association to help them in their displacement. Instead they sought accommodation in other completely black sections of streets in the city (fig. 24).

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<sup>154</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 11 February 1904, pp. 49-50.

<sup>155</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 21 June 1904, pp. 51-59.

<sup>156</sup> 800-1400 State Street have black occupants in 1905. 1905 Richmond City Directory.

As a religious organization, St. Andrew's Association was exempt from taxation on their numerous properties, but in 1905 that fortuitously changed. This change made public the improvement on the site and correlates the date of the construction with the dramatic change in residents.<sup>157</sup> The renters who moved in after the new houses were built differed in race and occupation from those who left. The first tenants after the new construction were all white and the men held jobs such as printer, attorney, machinist, and policeman. While some of these jobs are "blue-collar" in status, they are different from the consistent laboring population on this block in the previous three decades.

A comparison of the population and housing stock on this section of the block before and after St. Andrew's built the housing illuminates the change. The five pre-1876 houses present in 1900 were valued at about \$1000 total, while the seven new houses were worth about \$12,000.<sup>158</sup> In 1900, forty-eight blacks lived in the five houses, and in 1910, fifty-two whites lived in the seven new houses on the same site. The blacks held positions such as wash woman, laborer, servant, and driver. The whites worked as salesmen, policeman, inspectors, and clerks. Most of the households in 1900 took in boarders or shared their houses with other families, whereas in 1910, there were no boarders and only extended family in each of the houses. After moving to other areas of the city, these black residents disappeared from the purview of the Association. Arents and the Association made an obvious decision to value not only a specific kind of domestic architecture but also

<sup>157</sup> While the 1905 tax assessment directly records a \$12,000 improvement since 1904, the minutes specify that this housing will cost \$17,000. The \$12,000 improvement and the \$12,000 present value indicate that they cleared the site and then built new. The land tax books for these years are in the Library of Virginia State Records Annex Building and are not yet microfilmed.

<sup>158</sup> 1899 and 1905 land tax records. In 1905, the city values the *land* at \$2195 which is \$1000 less than the cumulative amount that St. Andrew's paid for the four separate parcels in 1901 and 1904. This suggests that the houses in which Davis, Mosby, Brown, Griffin, Page, Watson, Turner and their families were living, were worth about \$1000.

a specific kind of tenant. They were not only improving the built fabric of the block, in their eyes they were improving its social fabric as well.

Arents and her Committee on New Buildings must have been looking for new sites on which to improve and build, because the year after the Cumberland Housing was built, she reported on another housing project. At an annual meeting in June 1906, Arents submitted plans for two new houses at the corner of Linden and Taylor Streets.<sup>159</sup> These attached houses were stylistically similar to those built on Cumberland Street with their yellow brick three-bay façades with attached porch. Four years later, the Association funded two attached houses next door at 204 and 206 Linden Street. C. W. Davis & Bro. Builders constructed these brick houses "for Miss Arents" that were to match 909-911 Cumberland Street also "owned by Miss Arents."<sup>160</sup> After 1924, the Association completed this block with seven additional, smaller brick row houses, 208-220 South Linden.

In 1913, Arents reported that they had completed work on the corner of Taylor and Beech Streets "improving the homes of working people." They removed the ten rectangular row houses on the site. Each two-bay house had a front porch and attached outbuilding in the rear. Arents described the "ten new and attractive buildings [that] had been erected in their place. . . These houses were most attractive looking and modern in every respect" (compare footprints in fig.25).<sup>161</sup> She had built another ten row houses that were twice the length of the original houses and that narrowed half-way back to allow light into the house. The row was framed with a longer house on each end that provided a protected area behind the houses serviced by a new alley, rear porches, and not cluttered with outbuildings. The monumental placement and formality of the new row contrasted with the meekness of the

<sup>159</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 20 June 1906, pp. 64-65.

<sup>160</sup> Letter from J. Lee Davis to O. H. Funsten 15 April 1910. In St. Andrew's Association archive;

<sup>161</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, 19 November 1913, pp. 131-132.

original buildings and as part of a large scheme, Arents also proposed grading the street in this area. These brick houses, 1011-1029 Taylor Street pushed the western boundary of Oregon Hill. Their heavy cornices and prominent porticoes separated them stylistically from the typical Oregon Hill house, but also from the earlier Arents Housing that fit in style, if not in scale, with the nineteenth century houses in the neighborhood (fig.25).

Grace Arents had a vision for the neighborhood that valued certain residents over others. She wanted to keep blacks out of Oregon Hill and used housing development as a means to do so. Arents associated blacks with poor housing, for which she had no tolerance, and in order to improve the architectural stock, she had to clear what existed which included the people as well. However, Arents also used architecture as a means to improve the living conditions of many other people and the infrastructure of the neighborhood. She explained what they were up to in 1916:

One reason for thinking of the possible sale of these houses [Teachers' Home and Rectory] is the need of funds to build more small houses in the neighborhood of St. Andrews. By a long slow process much of this neighborhood has been freed from the possibility of its being given over to a colored settlement. During this time there was one piece of property on Beverly St. near Linden which could not be bought because it had not a good title. Recently that title has been cleared and the land is now offered us at a low price. If we do not take it houses for colored people will no doubt be built there. There are now very few houses on that square and these are very tumble down and occupied by colored families, the only ones left on the square. I therefore recommend that we buy this land--using certain loans which are about to fall due.<sup>162</sup>

Arents was referring to three attached houses along an alley on the western edge of Oregon Hill. When she wrote, there were three black households--those of Frank Cheatham, an ironworker, Susan Griffin, a laundress, and Ernest Anderson, a presser--in the three houses. Susan Griffin was one of the residents displaced from the Cumberland Street

<sup>162</sup> St. Andrew's Association Minutes, November 1916.

site eleven years earlier. At the meeting, Arents' fellow board members agreed, and in 1917, they purchased the property on Beverly Street. By 1919, the houses had been demolished.

Arents' activism was guided by progressive reform--offering educational, literary, and domestic advantages to the working class; and racism--limiting the recipients of her philanthropy based on their race. Richmond was racially segregated throughout her life in the city. Zoning ordinances, laws, and strict social mores kept blacks and white in separate spaces even within close service relationships. Her goal to keep blacks out of Oregon Hill was not unusual in her time. But Arents stepped up to civic responsibility in ways far, far beyond her wealthy peers in so many other ways. She looked outside comfortable society life and to desperate need. She worked to uplift the working class with education and religion, to support working women, and to improve housing conditions. She did not, however, take the extra step that would have provided for blacks also in desperate need, and even made life much more difficult for some by forcing them out of their homes.

Arents responded with housing to two needs that she saw in Oregon Hill: to clear away dilapidated housing inhabited by laboring blacks, and to provide affordable, high-quality housing to working class whites who had traditionally filled the neighborhood. Other philanthropists in late nineteenth century America focused on improving housing conditions, although their human and architectural infrastructure was different. In New York, for example, the distinctive tenements and their immigrant population provided different conditions for reform to Richmond that did not develop such housing and whose population was mostly white and black native-born Virginians. However, despite these differences, the fundamental premise of funding housing reform fit Arents into a larger national program in the Progressive era.

When Arents left New York in the 1870's, tenements with bad sanitary conditions and little municipal protection plagued the city. One philanthropic reformer, Alfred T. White responded in Brooklyn with three groups of model tenements built between 1877 and 1890.<sup>163</sup> These buildings, ranging from tall apartment buildings to row houses, included lots of natural light, a sink, and a water closet for each apartment. White intended the policy of "philanthropy and 5 per cent" to inspire other capitalists to provide affordable housing and maintain a profit for themselves. However, those with enough capital to invest were not generally interested in such a return for the difficulties of low-income tenants, and New York was not inundated with such philanthropic housing projects. Arents and St. Andrew's rented their housing at subsidized rates, which provided only a small income for the church work.

Grace Arents built up the city without a desire to protect the past, especially a past that was not necessarily her own. While she did move the original St. Andrew's church for reuse in another neighborhood, financial efficiency and preservation of the St. Andrew's lineage probably motivated this decision. For construction of the Teachers' Home, the Arents Free Library, the Grace Arents Baths, and the housing, Arents removed the existing framed houses to make space for her new monuments. There were plenty of wood-framed row houses lining Oregon Hill's streets, and she valued solid, permanent, set-back, masonry, architectural landmarks that would provide services, define a sense of place, and physically represent good church and social work.

However, more than framed houses were displaced to accommodate her vision. The black residents who left Oregon Hill had been just as much a part of the neighborhood's

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<sup>163</sup> Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City 1890-1917*. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1962), Chapter 2: "The Tenement Comes of Age, 1866-1890." pp. 25-48.



fabric as their houses. When Lewis Ginter began planning Sherwood Park in 1891, he received a proposal from Frederick Law Olmsted but did not agree with his modest plan for the fences. Ginter replied that "Unless this is done [fence in the whole area] we cannot prevent the property being made a Common by the large Negro population we have in the vicinity."<sup>164</sup> Two years later, he funded the remodeling of St. John's Baptist Church at the northern edge of Ginter Park, an all black church whose parishoners served the white residences in the area. Both Arents and Ginter interacted with black people daily; blacks ran their houses and black workers supported Ginter's tobacco factory. However, just as they lived in separated spaces within their house, they believed they should inhabit separate spaces within the city.

In 1968, St. Andrew's Association conveyed twenty-four houses to the Richmond Metropolitan Authority in preparation for their construction of the Downtown Expressway.<sup>165</sup> These houses included the row of ten on Taylor Street that Arents built in 1909, and two duplexes owned by Arents on Linden and Cumberland Streets.<sup>166</sup> These houses that had been built in the name of progress were destroyed in the name of progress a generation later. Remarkably, the Cumberland Street Housing survived the Downtown Expressway that cut through Oregon Hill beginning in the 1970s. This Expressway that provided efficient access to downtown Richmond from the western suburbs destroyed a wide swath of the Oregon Hill's fabric and severed it south of Cumberland Street. The void

<sup>164</sup> Ryan, 34, 62. No source given for this letter.

<sup>165</sup> Properties conveyed to Richmond Metropolitan Authority Feb. 19, 1968: 202, 206 S. Cherry Street; 909, 911 Cumberland Street; 1011, 1013, 1015, 1017, 1019, 1021, 1023, 1025, 1027, 1029 Parkwood Avenue [previously Taylor Street]; 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 301 S. Linden Street; also Northeast corner of Grayland Avenue and Beech Street.

<sup>166</sup> Arents funded and organized construction of 1011-1029 Taylor Street in 1910, 909-911 Cumberland Street built by 1910; and 204-206 Linden Street.

of the sunken roadway isolated the seven houses on Cumberland Street and two on Linden Street from the cluster of St. Andrews's institutional buildings.<sup>167</sup>

Three decades after Arents and St. Andrew's Association replaced dilapidated, blighted housing with new, high-quality housing, dilapidation and blight threatened a row of antebellum houses six blocks further downtown. Linden Row originally consisted of ten Greek Revival, three-story brick houses that Mary Wingfield Scott admired for their architectural character and age value (fig.22). The integrity of the row, hailed as the finest example of Greek Revival row house architecture in the city, was first threatened in the 1920s when two houses were demolished for the construction of the seven story art deco Medical Arts building. The remaining eight houses were at the center of a heated zoning and preservation battle in the 1950s. Until Mary Wingfield Scott stepped up to purchase eventually seven of the houses, they were in danger of demolition for their lucrative sites in the expanding commercial district. The second patronage that Scott provided is an example of her philanthropic and activist preservation work. The story of these houses also chronicles the public debate over what kinds of buildings, patterns of residence, and historic character the city of Richmond valued in the face of mid-twentieth century progress.

Every history of the city acknowledges Linden Row as its prime example of Greek Revival architecture, and as a significant set of buildings in the city's architectural history. Tobacco merchant Thomas Rutherfoord purchased a hundred-acre tract of land west of the city limits in 1795. This included the site of Linden Row, which narrowly escaped being improved by the Virginia State Penitentiary in late eighteenth century. The land under

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<sup>167</sup> In 2000, the seven Cumberland street and two Linden street houses that remain are undergoing restoration by the Richmond Better Housing Coalition. With state and federal tax credits, the non-profit

Linden Row passed to other owners, including Charles Ellis who developed a lush garden on the site in the early nineteenth century. Ellis lived across Franklin Street and in the early 1820s he housed his business partner and his adopted son Edgar Allan Poe. City legend has Edgar Allan Poe remembering this garden in his poems and the historical importance of the site is layered in this popular nostalgia. Local businessman and developer Fleming James first improved the land in 1847 when he constructed five of the easternmost Linden Row houses. The land at the other end of the row passed back to the Rutherfoords and Thomas' sons Samuel and Alexander built the other five houses in 1853.

Richmond's first professional architect, Otis Manson, designed the houses in the mid-nineteenth century and although they were built five years apart in two sets of five houses, they read as a cohesive row. Each three-story and basement, three-bay house is red brick with white trim and the rhythm of the identical materials and forms is striking. A projecting Doric porch covers the off-center entrance, and the raised basement allows light into a fourth level, and requires the steps up to these main entrances. The floor plan resembles the Cumberland Street Housing with an entry hall to one side that provides access to the double parlor and the stair ahead. This stair leads both to the servant rooms and dining room in the basement, and the family bedrooms above. The parlors are connected by sliding doors and both rooms have a marble fireplace and a heavy cornice. The upstairs rooms also have fireplaces. The large windows that face East Franklin Street provide ample light to the parlors and there is a smaller window in the rear parlor. Although the interiors are richly trimmed, there is no great display of ornament on the exterior true to its Greek Revival style. Flat stone lintels distinguish the windows, and a plain cornice connects the

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organization is restoring the houses in an historically sensitive way for continued use as low-income rental housing. This nicely continues Arents' vision for the buildings.

houses in the row. The stolid porticoes and the bright red brick break the monotony of the repeated elements across eight identical façades.

In contrast to the Arents Housing, the nineteenth-century owners of Linden Row were also residents of the site. In 1889, 100-118 East Franklin Street were both owned and resided in by C. E. Whittock, W. A. Scott, R. Stiles, J. Pleasants, W. B. Isaacs, S. P. Lathrop, Dr. C. Tompkins, and J. H. Montague, and their families and boarders. These white men held positions like attorney, druggist, and chief clerk of their own businesses, and several of them had lived in and owned the same houses for at least ten years. A narrow alley separated the rectangular uniformity of the ten attached houses from the irregular service buildings and carriage houses behind (fig.26). Here, behind 110, was where George Payne, Thomas Woodson, and John Wood, three black laborers likely resided. Several of the houses were staffed with a black waiter and driver and Alfred West and George Bradshaw probably shared quarters above the carriage house behind 106.<sup>168</sup> This block structure suggests the kind of alternative housing and social culture that James Borchert describes in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Washington, D.C.<sup>169</sup> Behind the three-story brick row houses that lined Washington's streets, an alley network provided space for development of small brick houses. These alley row houses were not accessible from the houses on the main road that they resembled formally, if not in size and level of ornament. From the mid-nineteenth century, mostly absentee owners built these small houses to accommodate the needs of blacks settling in the city as they migrated from the rural South. In these behind spaces, a separate culture developed that used the alley itself as a communal room and operated in proximity but removed from the white middle-class residents on the outside

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<sup>168</sup> 1889 J. H. Chataigne's Directory of Richmond, Virginia and 1889 Beers Map.

edges of the block. While some of the blacks that lived behind Linden Row were employed by the house owners, others who worked as laborers probably just rented the rooms above the carriage houses and did not interact daily with the white residents. This pattern suggests that the alley culture of Richmond may have operated somewhat like that in contemporary Washington D.C. In fact, the Society for the Betterment of Living and Housing Conditions in Richmond, which had recently observed a low-income housing construction campaign in D.C., suggested in 1913 that Richmond's long lots be divided for the construction of sound alley housing:

If minor streets were run through the blocks the building frontage would be doubled, and by building shallow two-story houses, two or at most, three, rooms deep, there would be plenty of air and light and model conditions could be maintained. This would avert the alley house evil and would also remove the necessity for the tenement house which will otherwise arise in time as the city grows.<sup>170</sup>

The history of the residents and the pattern of the buildings indicate that the elite Franklin Street neighborhood did not belong solely to wealthy white Richmonders.

By the early twentieth century, the small alley had been filled in and over half of the Linden Row houses attached themselves to the outbuildings with additions (fig.26). The main alley remained, however, that cut the block in half and provided service access to the attached houses. In 1910, the first year that the Cumberland Street Housing made the census, the ten Linden Row houses had already sheltered Richmonders for six decades. That year, eighty-seven people lived in these ten houses, twenty-two of them were black servants; one fourth of the residents in this elite part of the city were black. Further west on Franklin Street at Grace Arents' house in this year, half her household was black. In Oregon Hill

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<sup>169</sup> James Borchert, "Alley Landscapes of Washington." In *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture*. Eds. Dell Upton and John Michael Vlach. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1986, pp. 182-191.

<sup>170</sup> *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 10 May 1913.

however, there were no black residents in the Cumberland Street Housing that year. And, only a few of the households in Oregon Hill had any black residents at all—even servants.<sup>171</sup> Richmond divided its neighborhoods by race, but only superficially. The wealthy white neighborhoods had many more blacks than the working class white sections of the city. The 1910 heads of household in Linden Row, however, worked as an engineer, banker, physician, novelist, and boarding-house keepers. These professions accorded with the style of the buildings—prominent and refined. Mary Johnston, the noted writer and suffrage activist lived in 110 with her two unmarried sisters and four black women servants. The property that these six women lived in was one block west of 211 East Franklin where the Woman's Club had moved in 1900 and where Johnston was honored with a literary award soon afterwards.

In the 1920s, the integrity of Linden Row was threatened. With no public debate, two of the original houses, 116 and 118, were demolished to make space for the seven-story Medical Arts Building on the corner of the block (fig.27).<sup>172</sup> This act foresaw the perceived threat of further demolition for commercial needs two decades later. When it was built in 1923, the Medical Arts Building was proclaimed as “unique in design and different from any other building of the skyscraper class in the city.” Its iron and terra-cotta decoration had “none of the over-hanging cornices or other decorative impediments” found on the city's older tall buildings.<sup>173</sup> That it was a progressive building type in a modern design obviously precluded public concerns about the demolition of part of Linden Row. In the 1920s, Richmond was still interested in constructing a modern image for itself. Even though it

<sup>171</sup> In a large sample of the Oregon Hill census in 1910, there are 6 households with black residents. One of these is a completely black household and the other five are black servants in a white headed household. One of the few households with black servants is the St. Andrew's rectory.

<sup>172</sup> The residents moved to other elite downtown addresses. Dr. J. and Mrs. B. Tompkins appear at 822 Cathedral Place in 1923, and A. D. Hennis, Jr. is living at 111 East Cary Street.

<sup>173</sup> “Award Contract for Medical Arts,” 12 July 1922, p.1. W. B. Bates was the architect and builder.

listed its "historic buildings" as important landmarks in this city that had "carefully guarded its relics," 1923 reported a record year of new construction.<sup>174</sup> The Medical Arts Building filled the entire lot, projecting right up to East Franklin Street and back to the alley. Windows on its west elevation indicate that the builders did not expect the rest of Linden Row to be demolished for tall buildings. It claimed the corner with its expanded footprint, height, and window placement. These features dwarfed the row houses and made a statement about the perceived merits of large and modern buildings.

When the controversy over the proposed rezoning of Linden Row was at its height in 1949, Helena Lefroy Caperton published a newspaper memoir of her years in one of these long-since demolished houses, 118.<sup>175</sup> Caperton wrote about the food cooked in outdoor kitchens "and brought to our house across the backyard, down the area steps, through the pantry, and into the dining room" by Mary Jefferson, their loyal cook. The food was, of course, always piping hot in this ideal world. The story that this memoir tells, and the timing of its publication, was intended to remind Richmonders of the importance of its history. The house that Caperton described was gone but the stories and the noble architecture of the other eight remained. They were, however, threatened by progress that was so antithetical to that way of life--commercial structures and black residents in an elite residential neighborhood traditionally thought of as white.

In 1947 the William Byrd Branch of the APVA first proposed an historic zoning ordinance, known at the time as "aesthetic zoning," for Richmond. This ordinance as proposed altered the zoning for residences in older parts of the city to both permit the use of historic downtown buildings zoned as residential for professional offices and antique

<sup>174</sup> Clarence E. Weaver, *Sketches of Richmond, Virginia, U.S.A.*, 1924, p. 5-7.

<sup>175</sup> "Linden Row of Long Ago: An Alumna Recalls It," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 17 April 1949, p. 1 section 4.

shops, as long as they could work within the existing fabric; and to prohibit the use of historic downtown buildings as parking lots, filling station, and shops that would demolish or alter the structure and "influence unfavorably the character of the neighborhood involved."<sup>176</sup> The debate at a 1949 public meeting centered on the city's proposal, supported by the owners, to zone Linden Row as a business district.<sup>177</sup> When the debate reached Linden Row its existing zoning was part commercial--the Medical Arts Building--and the rest residential. What the city and several of the owners of the residential part proposed was that the whole row be zoned for business use. The owners would then probably sell their properties for a high market value to business developers who would demolish the Linden Row houses in favor of lucrative downtown commercial structures. The Medical Arts Building had been built before zoning ordinances legislated the city, but the William Byrd Branch feared the same demolition for a progressive commercial building. They realized that Linden Row would not realistically be used as housing for wealthy whites any longer, and advocated a partial rezoning for sensitive business use such as offices and antique shops rather than heavy business that would likely require the demolition of Linden Row.

What was originally a fashionable part of the city was now encroached upon by business interests and commercial activity, and the houses were in disrepair. In 1950, the Linden Row block had thirty dwelling units, most of them rented, and only three of them considered dilapidated. However, the arguments for zoning the houses to business said that the houses had aesthetically decayed beyond their use as residences. All the residents on this block and on either side along Franklin Street were white, and these blocks also shared the low dilapidation percentages (fig.28). A few blocks to the north and south, however, the

<sup>176</sup> "Linden Row, Salaries On Docket," *Richmond News Leader*, 4 April 1949.

<sup>177</sup> "Linden Row Ordinance Poses A Far-Reaching Problem," *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 23 March 1949, p. 16.



situation was completely different--many of these blocks had majority dilapidated dwellings and black residents. Two and three blocks to the south, a stretch between Main, Cary, and Canal Streets had a majority of dilapidated units on each block. Four blocks south of Linden Row, all sixteen houses were considered dilapidated and blacks lived in all sixteen houses. To the north, crossing the mainly commercial Broad Street two blocks into Jackson Ward, the houses were almost all black although only some were considered dilapidated. This situation of housing conditions and race of residents suggests another layer to the concerns about the future of Linden Row. The threat of the spread of commercial properties into the residential neighborhood may also have been the threat of the spread of black residents into what had always been perceived as an elite white neighborhood.

When the ordinance failed and the Planning Commission rezoned Linden Row for unlimited commercial use in 1950, Scott began to buy the houses to prevent the demolition that she suspected. In 1950, she purchased 100, 102, and 104 East Franklin Street, in 1953 she bought 106, and in 1957 she secured ownership of 108, 110, and 112 East Franklin. Scott now owned seven of the original Linden Row houses.<sup>178</sup> Scott announced to the papers that she intended to restore the façades and put the buildings to use as described in their ordinance proposal. She said, "It definitely was not an investment" but was instead, a rescue mission. Scott, Withers, friends, and contractors restored the houses and their gardens. Concern continued that the houses be preserved in the context of their elite past. The year that the needs of the automobile displaced seven thousand residents in Jackson Ward, the city was concerned about the aesthetics of parking lots on Franklin Street. City officials were aware that the charm of the historic buildings on Franklin such as the

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<sup>178</sup> 100, 102: Deed Book 524 C, p. 36. 6 June 1950, Smith to Scott; 104: Deed Book 524 B, p. 191. 1 June 1950, Styles to Scott; 106: Deed Book 549 A, p. 274. 19 June 1953, Marsie to Scott; 108, 110, 112: Deed

Woman's Club, Linden Row, and the Jefferson Hotel "[spoke] of a Richmond spirit" and could, with attention to restoration and avoidance of parking lots, become for Richmond what "Georgetown is to Washington."<sup>179</sup> Scott conveyed the seven houses she owned on Linden Row, 100-112 East Franklin Street, to the Historic Richmond Foundation in 1980 to "assure the preservation" of the houses.<sup>180</sup> Scott conveyed the seven houses she owned on Linden Row, 100-112 East Franklin Street, to the Historic Richmond Foundation in 1980 to "assure the preservation" of the houses.<sup>181</sup>

As the debate about the historic zoning ordinance continued, Scott constructed a comparison that highlighted her values and biases, as well as those of the city. The historic zoning ordinance that Scott and her committee proposed involved twenty-five properties in or near the business section. The properties included the eight remaining Linden Row houses, the Woman's Club, several businesses, and only four houses occupied by their owners. Scott superimposed this situation with the city's condemnation of twenty-five buildings for the enlargement of a school. These included apartment buildings, small houses, and the estimated displacement of fifty black families. Scott was concerned with the attention the Planning Board gave to twenty-five property owners who opposed the historic zoning ordinance that Scott supported. She chastised the city for its haste to demolish small, inexpensive houses occupied by people who had little power in the planning structure. Her concern for the residents was now equal with that of the historic structures in which they

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Book 578 C, p. 393. 15 April 1957, Wright Contracting Co. to Scott. Scott never owned the eighth remaining house, 114.

<sup>179</sup> "Toward a More Beautiful City," *Richmond News-Leader*, 12 May 1956, p. 10.

<sup>180</sup> Deed Book 762, p. 495. 26 December 1979. Scott to HRF; MWS will, WB 129, p. 150. 1 December 1977, plus codicil. Proved 17 August 1983; "Foundation Given 7 Historic Houses." *Richmond News Leader*, 25 January 1980, p. 13, 18. The seven houses serve as the well-restored and accommodated Linden Row Inn in 2000.

<sup>181</sup> Deed Book 762, p. 495. 26 December 1979. Scott to HRF; MWS will, WB 129, p. 150. 1 December 1977, plus codicil. Proved 17 August 1983; "Foundation Given 7 Historic Houses." *Richmond News*

lived. Scott argued for a more representative board that would also realize the importance of residents as well as architecture. She pointed out that "only one woman has ever served on the Planning Commission. There has never been a Negro member."<sup>182</sup> The sensibilities that women and blacks could bring to the planning of Richmond's future are a part of Scott's vision for preservation.

Attempting progress with enlarged schools, expressways, and the eradication of slums, the city of Richmond had to make judgements about what to value. Arents and Scott had to make these same decisions that were informed by their time, place, and position. A generation apart, they both worked in a segregated city struggling with its past and its progress. In their shared efforts to create solid community, Arents worked as an outsider and in a time of rebuilding and chose to ignore history, whereas Scott, whose family was historically tied to the city, reacted to the demolition that progress brought and embraced history. But they met in their awareness of architecture. Both women used buildings as tools of social reform. They understood the way that different spaces, forms, and materials affected people whether by instilling pride of place in poor people with fine materials and comfortable spaces, or by empowering communities with a sense of history from original buildings and landscapes. They both wanted organized cities and neighborhoods and this extended beyond buildings and streets to people. Neither challenged the doctrine of racial segregation, although Arents more decisively encouraged it and Scott worked more carefully within it. Neither campaigned for women's rights yet they both engaged in extraordinary activism that effectively exemplified women's work and accomplishments. Grace Arents and

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*Leader*, 25 January 1980, p.13, 18. The seven houses serve as the well-restored and accommodated Linden Row Inn in 2000.

Mary Wingfield Scott are both significant for the examples they provide, both in the city they dramatically helped to shape, and in the larger context of the United States where examples of women building its history continue to be necessary and welcome.

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<sup>182</sup> "Miss Scott Favors Histo..." clipping of uncertain date, 1950. *Richmond News Leader*. In Valentine Museum Library.

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## APPENDIX

### Projects and Residences of Grace Arents and Mary Wingfield Scott

#### GRACE ARENTS

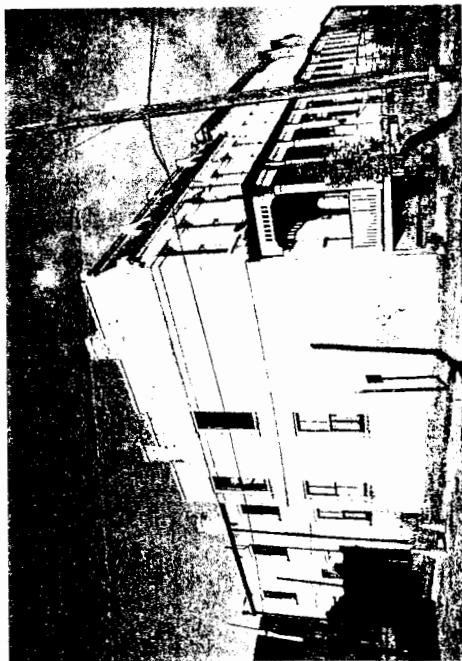
Address	Description	Date	Arch't
405 E. Cary St.	First Ginter residence	b.1875	
Beverly St. [Idlewood Ave.]	1 <sup>st</sup> St. Andrew's Church	b.1875	MD
901 W. Franklin St.	Ginter House	b.1888-1892	HLP
230 S. Laurel St.	1 <sup>st</sup> St. Andrew's Library	by 1894	
Cor. Cherry and Beverly Sts.	1 <sup>st</sup> St. Andrew's School	b.1897	
Beverly St.	1 <sup>st</sup> St. Andrew's Hall	b.1898	
Cor. Belvidere St. and Maiden Ln.	1 <sup>st</sup> St. Andrew's Mission	1900	
206 S. Cherry St.	St. Andrew's Rectory	b.1900	DWA
Cor. Laurel and Beverly Sts.	2 <sup>nd</sup> St. Andrew's Church	b.1901	AHE
Grove and Rowland Sts.	Holy Comforter Church	m/r.1901	
Cor. Cherry and Beverly Sts.	2 <sup>nd</sup> St. Andrew's School	b.1901	AHE
Beverly St.	2 <sup>nd</sup> St. Andrew's Hall	b.1903	
519-21 Belvidere St.	Mission Building	m/r.1903	N&B
223 S. Cherry St.	Teachers' Home	b.1903	N&B
912-924 Cumberland Ave.	Housing	b.1904	
909, 911 Cumberland Ave.	Housing	b.1904	
200, 202 Linden St.	Housing	b.1906	
224 S. Cherry St.	Arents Free Library	b.1908	N&B
1011-1029 Taylor St.	Housing	b.1909	
Cherry St.	Garden	1910	
Cor. Linden St. and Cumberland Ave.	St. Andrew's Playground (girls)	1910	
Clarke's Springs	St. Andrew's Field	1910	
Linden and Chaffin Sts.	St. Andrew's Playground (boys)	1910	
204, 206 Linden St.	Housing	b.1910	DB
Cherry St. bet. Beverly & Canal	Apartments in library	1911	AFH
600 S. Pine St.	Grace Arents School	b.1911	C&J
523 Belvidere St.	Grace Arents Baths	b.1913	
Bloemendaal	Renovated Clubhouse	r.1910s	
208-220 Linden St.	Housing	after 1924	

N&B=Noland and Baskervill; DWA=D. Wiley Anderson; AFH=Albert F. Hunt; C&J=Carneal and Johnston;  
 DB=C. W. Davis & Bro; HLP=Harvey Page; MD=Marion Dimmock  
 b=built; r=renovated; m=moved; date alone indicates in use on that space by that date but not necessarily built that year.

## MARY WINGFIELD SCOTT

Address	Description	Date Built/ Owned by MWS
101 S. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	1 <sup>st</sup> F.W./S.F.B. Scott residence	b.1813-14, d.1891
712 W. Franklin St.	2 <sup>nd</sup> F.W./S.F.B. Scott residence	b.1883
706 W. Grace St.	MWS childhood home	
6420 Roselawn Road	MWS home	
Adam Craig House	WBB-APVA property	b.1780s. a.1935
1615 E. Franklin St.	Inherited	MWS 1937-?
518, 520 Church St.	Oregon Hill houses	MWS 1944-1958
600 Church St.	Oregon Hill house	MWS ?-1948
26 Maiden Lane	Oregon Hill house	MWS ?-1958
Ann Carrington House	WBB-APVA property	b.1810s. a.1943
Ellen Glasgow House	WBB-APVA property	b.1841. a.1947
Pulliam House	WBB-APVA property	b.1856. a.1953
100 E. Franklin St.	Linden Row	MWS 1950-1980
102 E. Franklin St.	Linden Row	MWS 1950-1980
104 E. Franklin St.	Linden Row	MWS 1950-1980
106 E. Franklin St.	Linden Row	MWS 1953-1980
108 E. Franklin St.	Linden Row	MWS 1957-1980
110 E. Franklin St.	Linden Row	MWS 1957-1980
112 E. Franklin St.	Linden Row	MWS 1957-1980

MWS=years that Mary Wingfield Scott owned the property; b=built; a=acquired by William Byrd Branch of Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities; d=demolished.



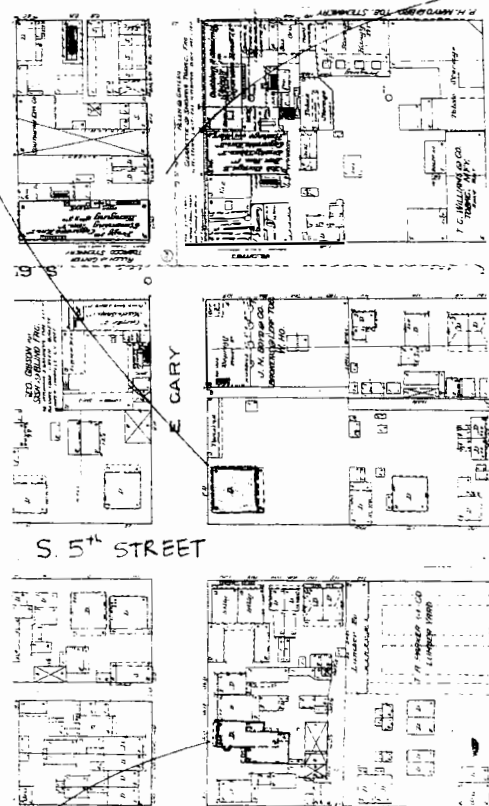
Cumberland Street



Linden Row

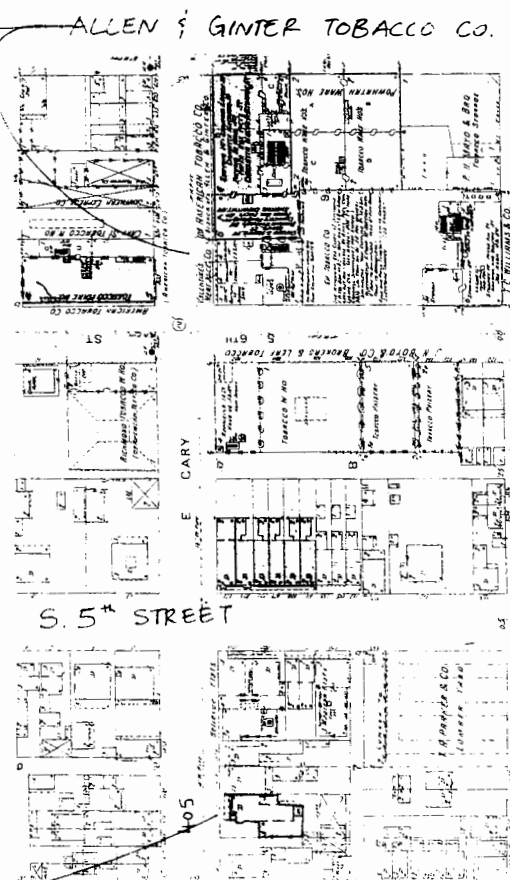


1. Cumberland Street Housing and Linden Row
  - 900-914 Cumberland Street façade and side elevation (Author).
  - 100-114 East Franklin Street façade (Library of Virginia) and side elevation (Author).



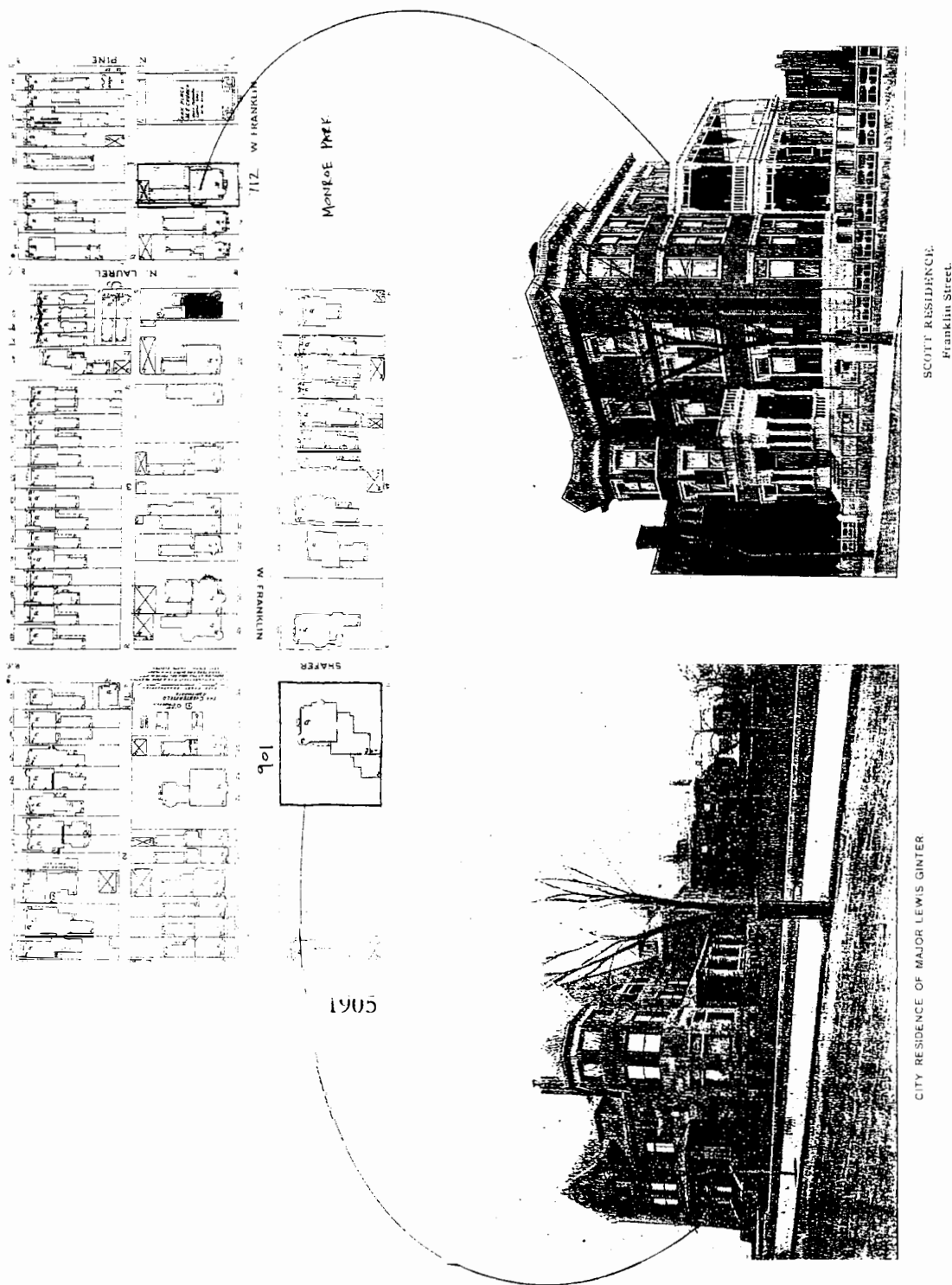
1886

405 EAST CARY STREET



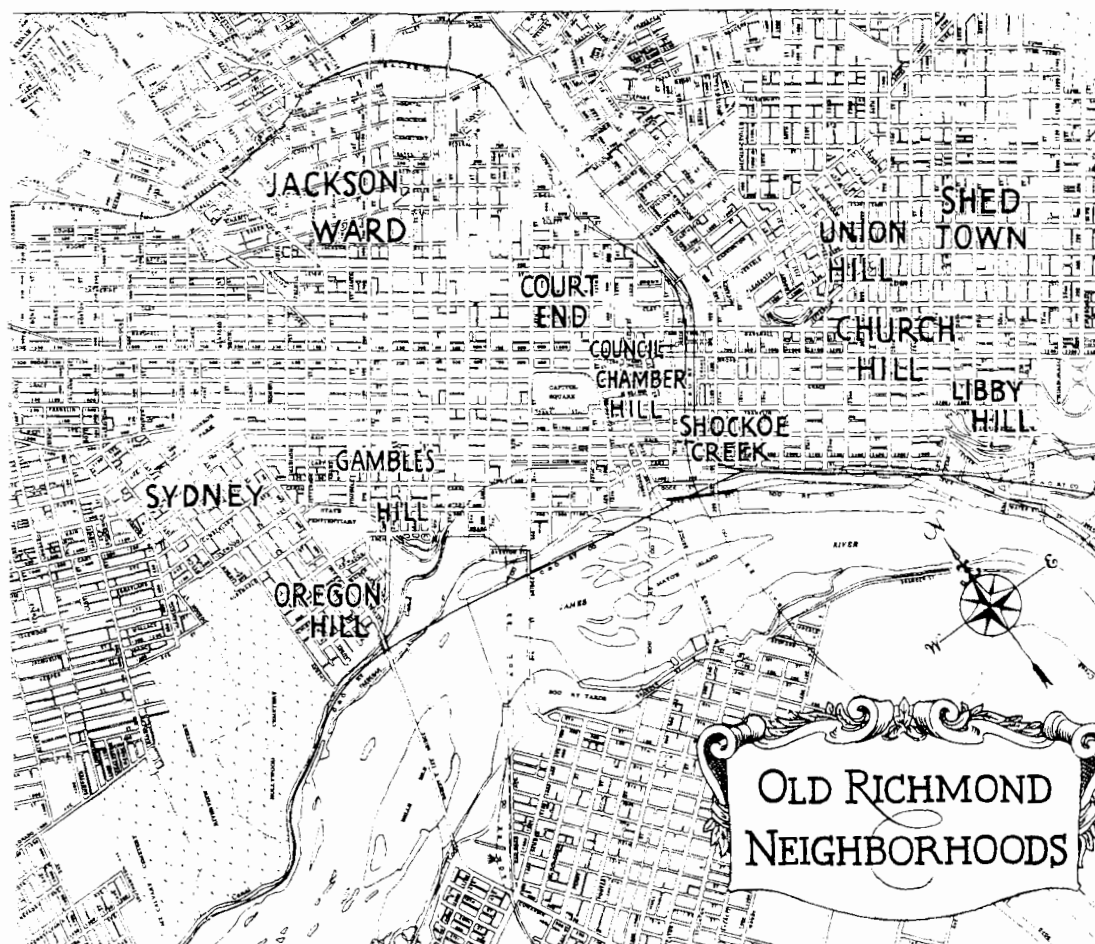
1895

2. Ginter and Scott Houses, 1886 and 1895
- Scott House, 101 South Fifth Street built 1813-1814. (*Houses of Old Richmond*, 113).
  - East Cary Street in 1886 and 1895 (Sanborn) identifying Ginter home at 405 East Cary Street, Scott home at 101 South Fifth Street, and Ginter and Allen Tobacco Co. factory complex at 600 block East Cary Street.



3. Ginter and Scott Houses, 1905

- West Franklin Street (Sanborn) identifying Ginter House at 901 and Scott House at 712.
- Ginter House (*City on the James*, 1893, 71) and Scott House (*City on the James*, 1902-3, 21).



4. Richmond Neighborhoods c.1950 (*Old Richmond Neighborhoods*).



5. Collage of Grace Arents' building projects, 1902 ("St. Andrew's Church and the Parish School Group," *The Times*, 26 January 1902, p. 1).





*St. Andrew's Church, Richmond, Virginia, 1895.*



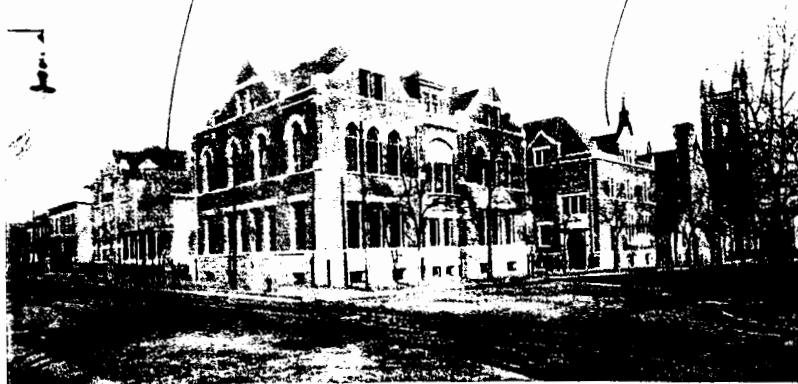
6. St. Andrew's Church
- Original church built 1875, pictured in 1895 (Library of Virginia).
  - Second church built 1901 with typical Oregon Hill housing opposite (Author).





MOVED C. 1900

REPLACED 1903



8. St. Andrew's School

- 1897 frame school at corner, 1898 frame hall to right, 1900 (Glenn, 17).
- 1901 St. Andrew's School at corner replacing frame school, 1903 St. Andrew's Hall at right replacing frame hall, 1897 frame school moved to north of school next to 1903 Teachers' Home (Glenn, 103).
- St. Andrew's School, Hall, and Church, 2000 (Author).



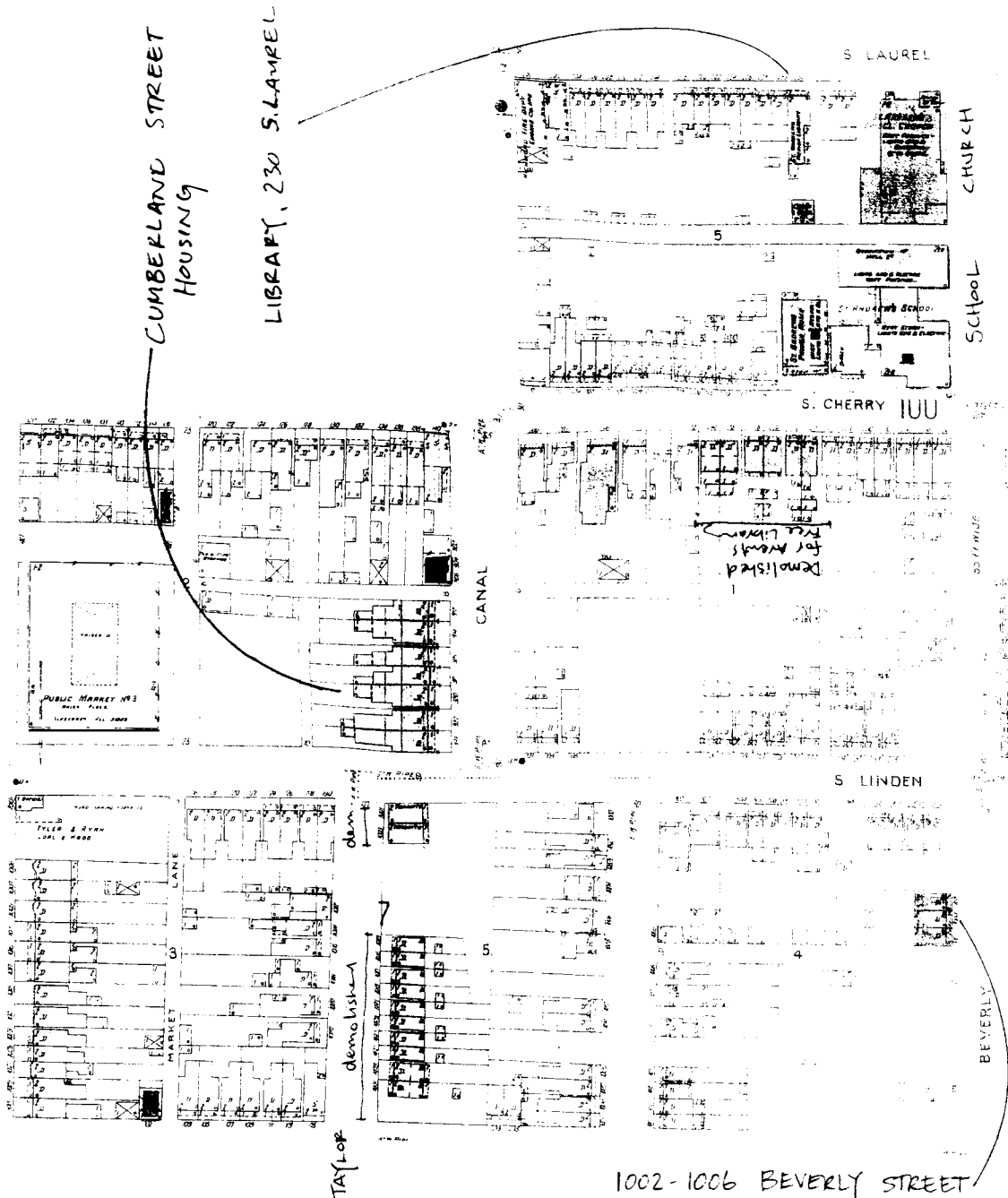
9. Grace Arents and St. Andrew's Buildings

- Teachers' Home, 223 South Cherry Street, designed 1903 Noland and Baskervill (Author).
- Arents Free Library (presently William Byrd Community House), 224 South Cherry Street, designed 1908 Noland and Baskervill (Author).
- St. Andrew's Rectory, 206 South Cherry Street (St. Andrew's Association).



10. Belvidere Street Mission Buildings

- Building on original site on Beverly Street built in 1898 as St. Andrew's Hall.
- Hall moved to corner of Belvidere Street and Maiden Lane in 1903 with Noland and Baskervill renovations and 1913 Grace Arents Baths addition to right (St. Andrew's Association).
- Grace Arents Baths addition (*Richmond News Leader*, 25 August 1952).



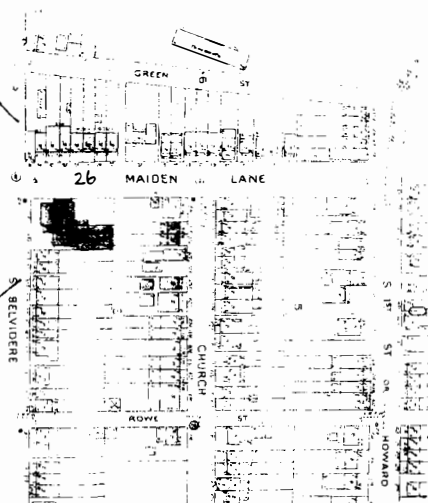
1905

11. St. Andrew's complex identified on 1905 map (Sanborn).



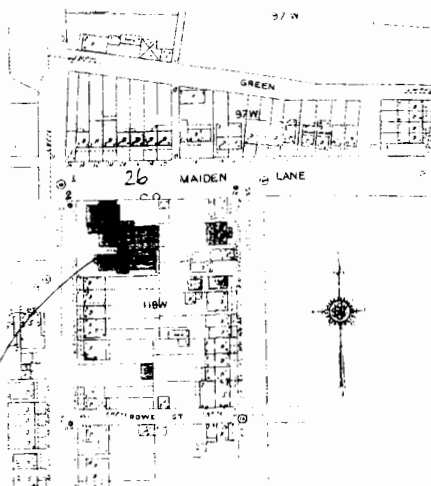
30 - 22 MAIDEN LANE

1905



SITE OF ARENTS BATHS

1924



AREN'TS BATHS NEXT TO MISSION

## 12. Maiden Lane and Belvidere Street Buildings

- 22-30 Maiden Lane. Mary Wingfield Scott owned 26 Maiden Lane in the 1950s (*Old Richmond Neighborhoods*, 207).
- 1905 and 1924 maps (Sanborn) identifying 22-30 Maiden Lane and St. Andrew's mission on corner of Belvidere Street and Maiden Lane.



13. Aerial View of Southern Oregon Hill, c.1928. Grace Arents School at center left, Belvidere Mission and Grace Arents Baths above (Library of Virginia).

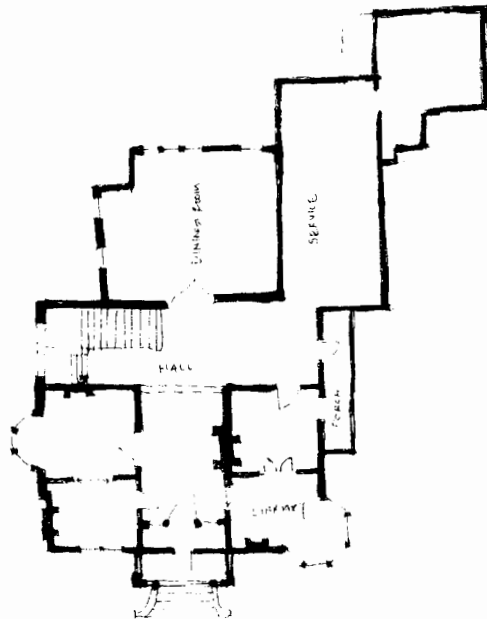
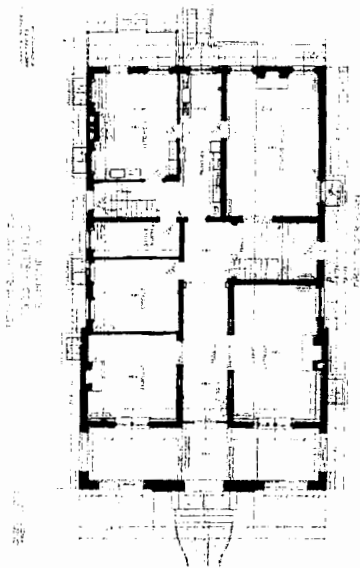




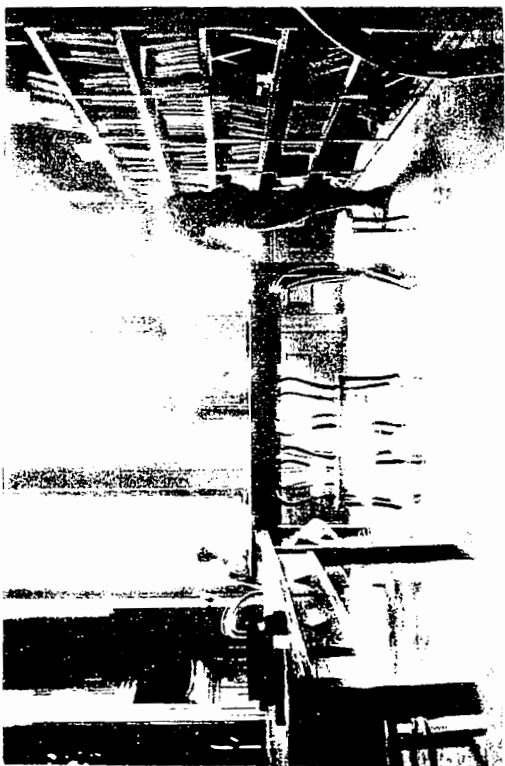
Teachers' Home



Ginter House



14. Comparison of Teachers' Home (1903) and Ginter House (1888-1892)
- Teachers' Home, façade (Author) and plan (Baskervill and Sons collection, Virginia Historical Society Library).
  - Ginter House, façade (Author) and plan (Author).



15. Ginter House interiors, 901 West Franklin Street

- 1924 as the Richmond Public Library [Virginia Historical Society reprinted in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 96 no. 1 (April 1988) 190].
- Front hall view to front door (Author).
- Center hall view to service hall (Author).



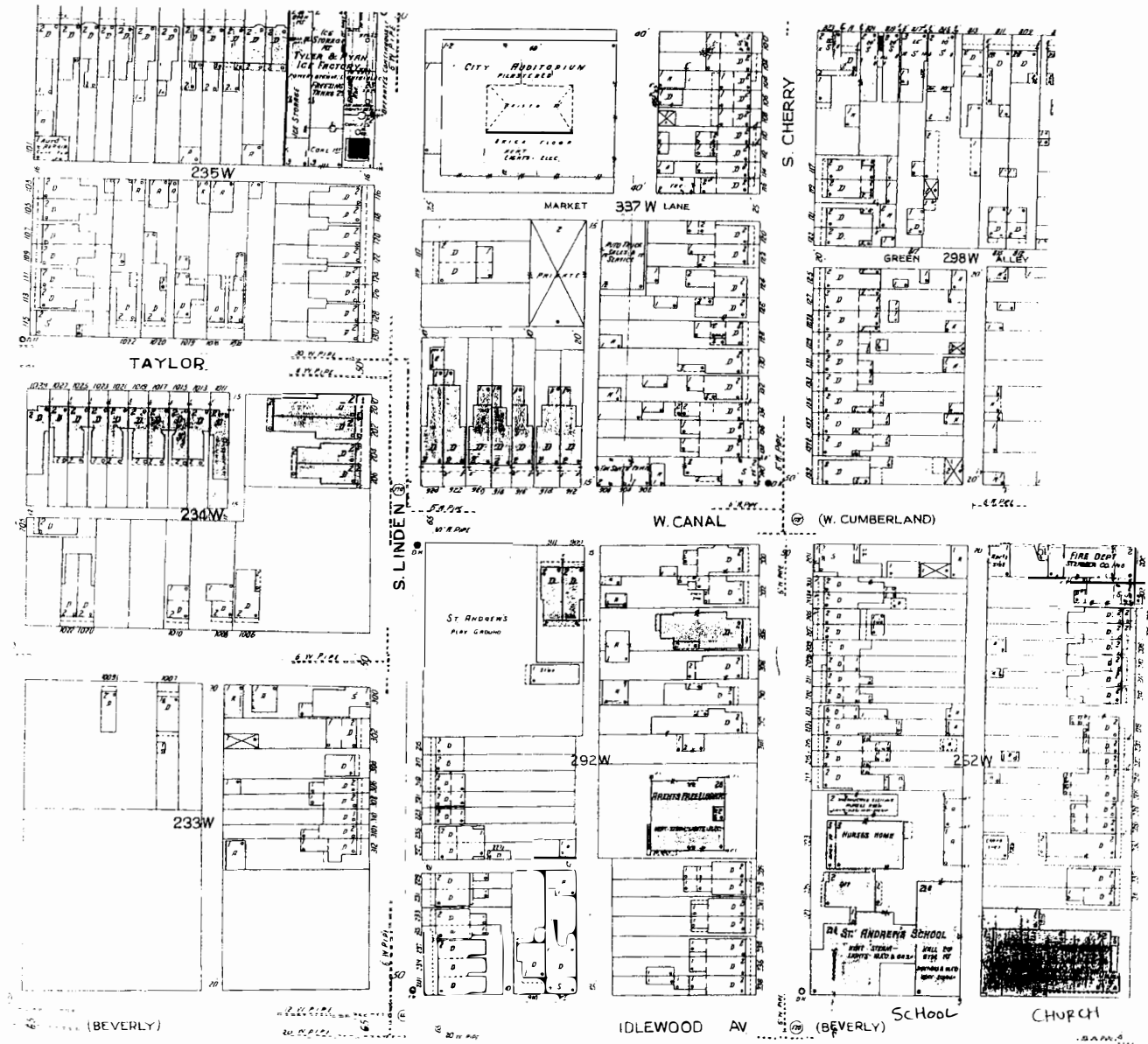
16. Dining Rooms (*Foster's Richmond*, 91)
- 341 South Cherry Street, 1931.
  - 2206 Monument Avenue, 1929.



17. Arents Free Library (presently William Byrd Community House) interiors
- Main library room (Author).
  - Second floor example of transoms, high-quality wood-trim, and large exterior windows. (Author).

18. St. Andrew's complex identified on 1924 map (Sanborn). Compare with fig. 11.

1924





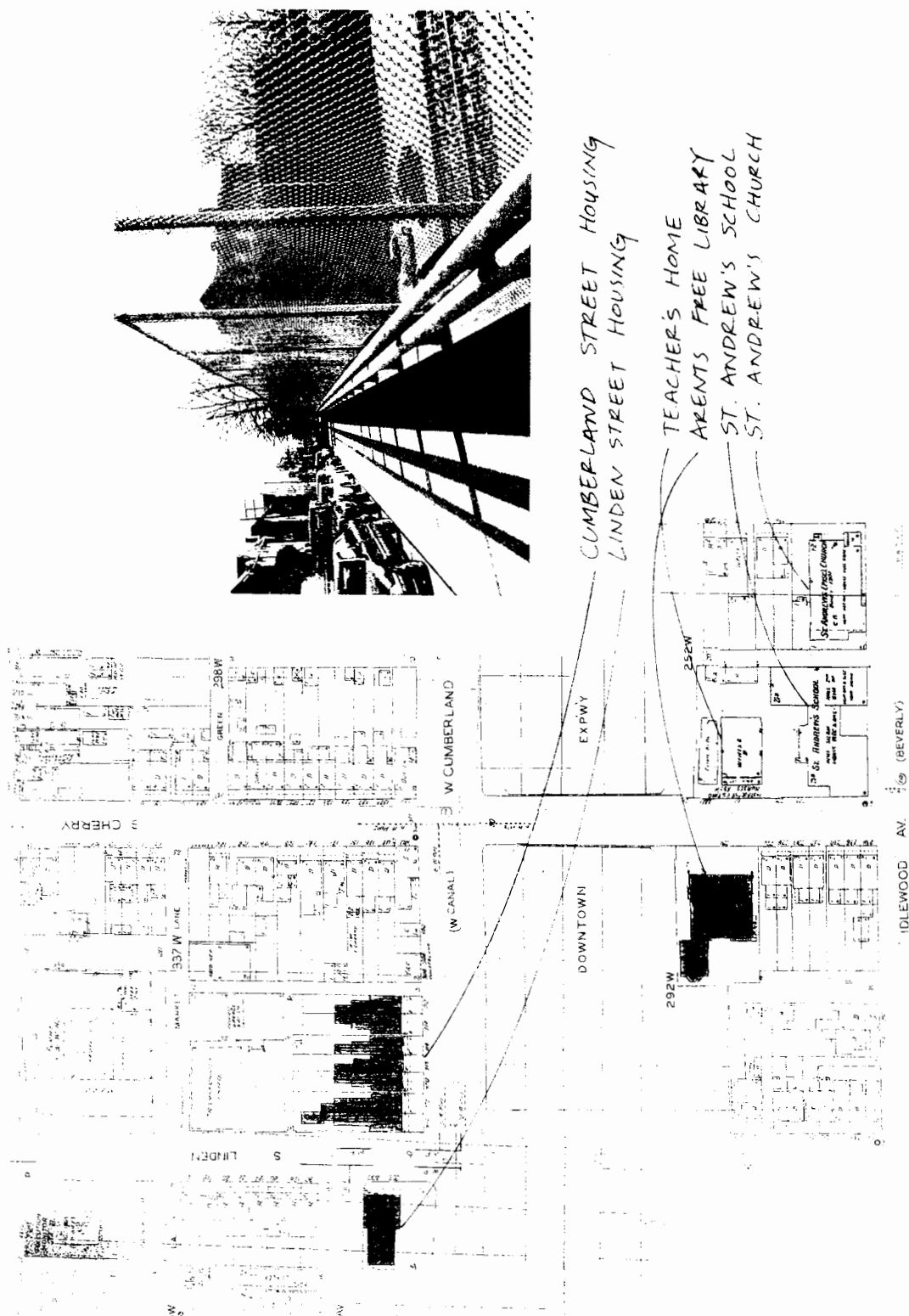
19. Mary Wingfield Scott
- Portrait (Valentine Museum).
  - Building walls behind Linden Row (*Richmond Times Dispatch*, April 11, 1951, 22).



Scott



20. Properties of the William Byrd Branch photographed by Scott
- Craig House, 1812 East Grace Street (*Houses of Old Richmond*, 209)
  - Ellen Glasgow House, 1 West Main Street (*Houses of Old Richmond*, 17)



21. Oregon Hill after Downtown Expressway constructed
- St. Andrew's Complex identified on 1971 map (Sanborn)
  - Downtown Expressway under Cherry Street. Teachers' Home, St. Andrew's School and Arents Free Library building on one side. Cumberland Street Housing behind camera (Author).





Linden Row

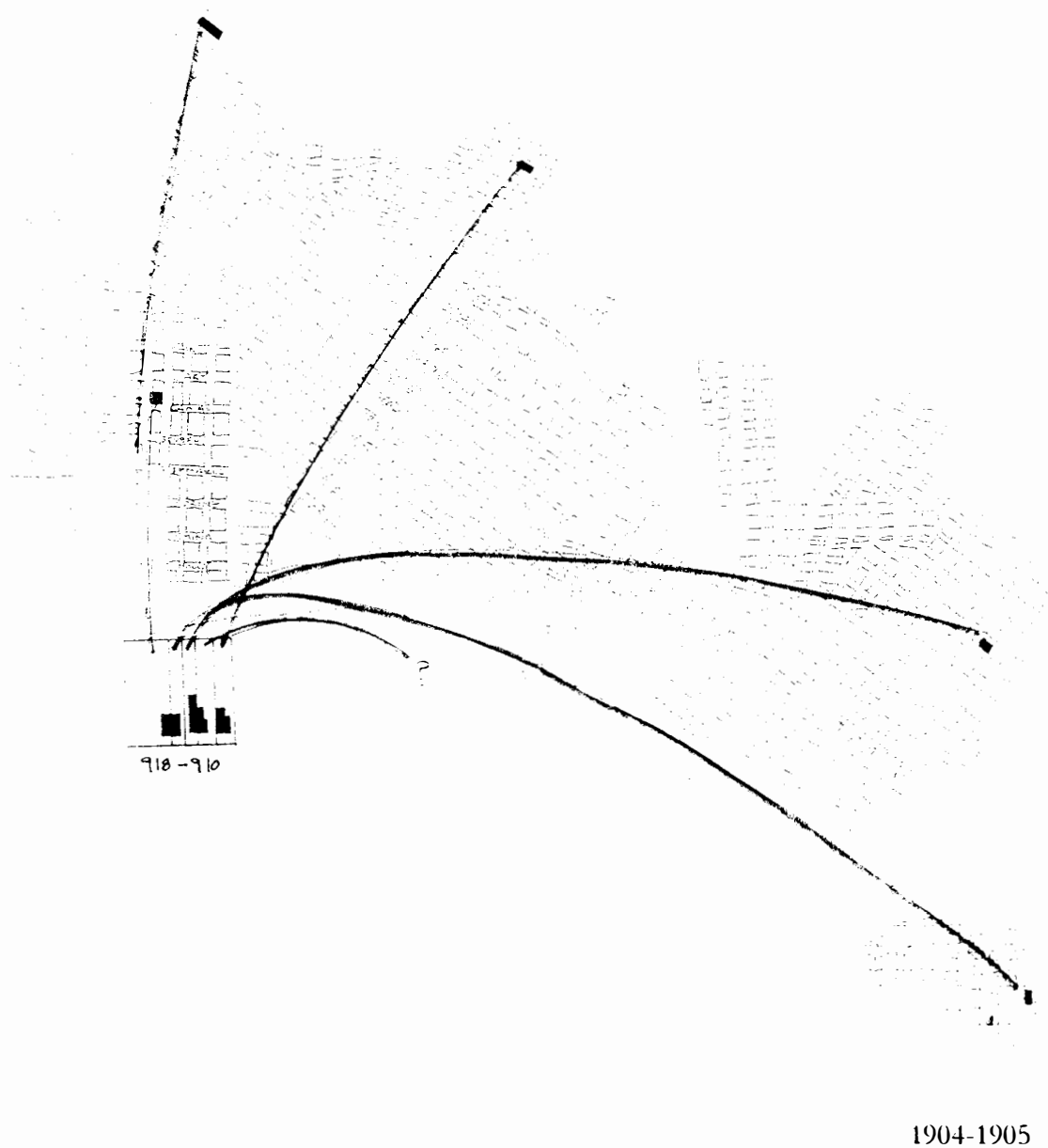


Cumberland Street

22. Cumberland Street Housing and Linden Row
- Cumberland Street house façade (Author).
  - Linden Row house façade (Author).



23. Cumberland Street Housing interior
- View to front from dining room (Author).
  - View from front parlor through sliding doors (Author).



24. Where the 1904 black residents of 910-918 Cumberland Street went when their houses were demolished for the construction of 912-924, the Cumberland Street Housing. Each resident went to an all-black block but in various parts of the city. (Author. Beers Atlas for footprint of houses before the new construction; 1904 and 1905 city directories for resident data).



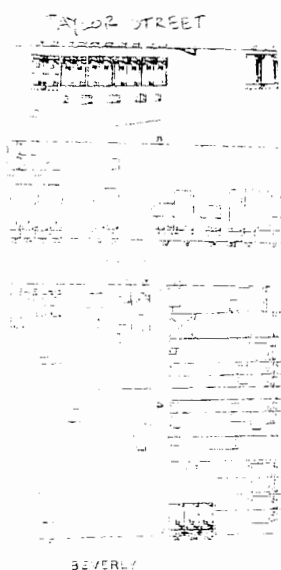
1011 - 1029 (built 1909)



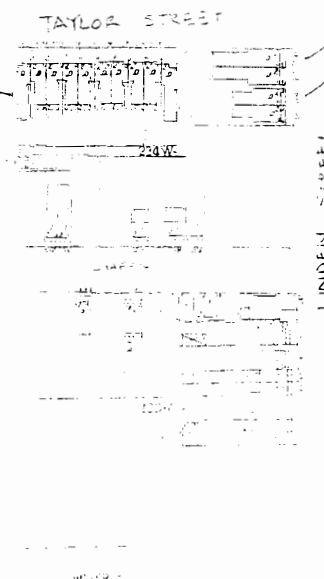
208

206 - 204

202-200



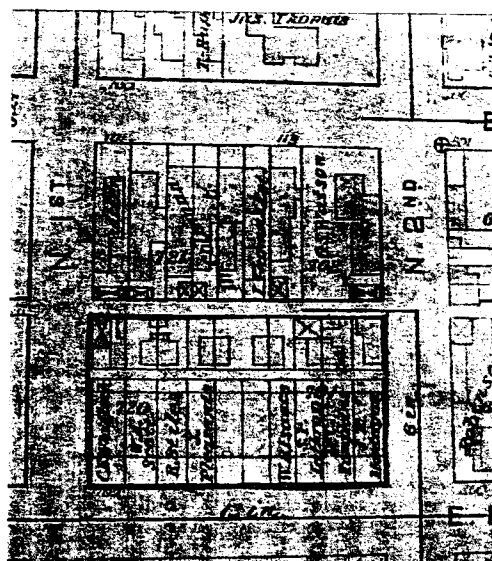
1905



1924

## 25. Arents Housing

- 208 Linden Street built after 1924, 206-204 Linden Street built 1906, 202-200 Linden Street built 1904 (St. Andrew's Association).
- 1011-1029 Taylor Street built c.1909 (St. Andrew's Association).
- 1905 and 1924 maps (Sanborn) identifying change in size and plan of Linden Street and Taylor Street Housing before and after construction.



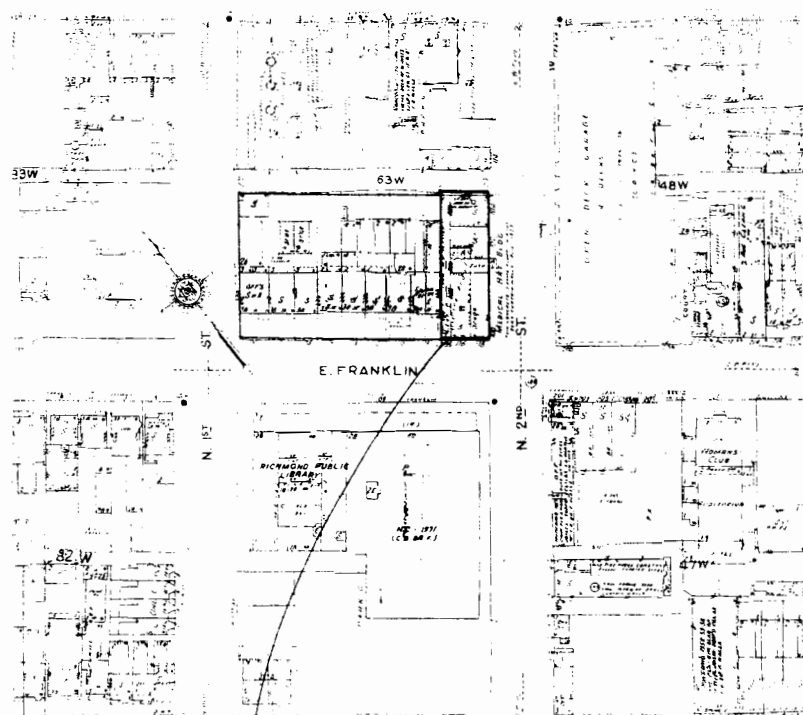
1889



1905

26. Linden Row

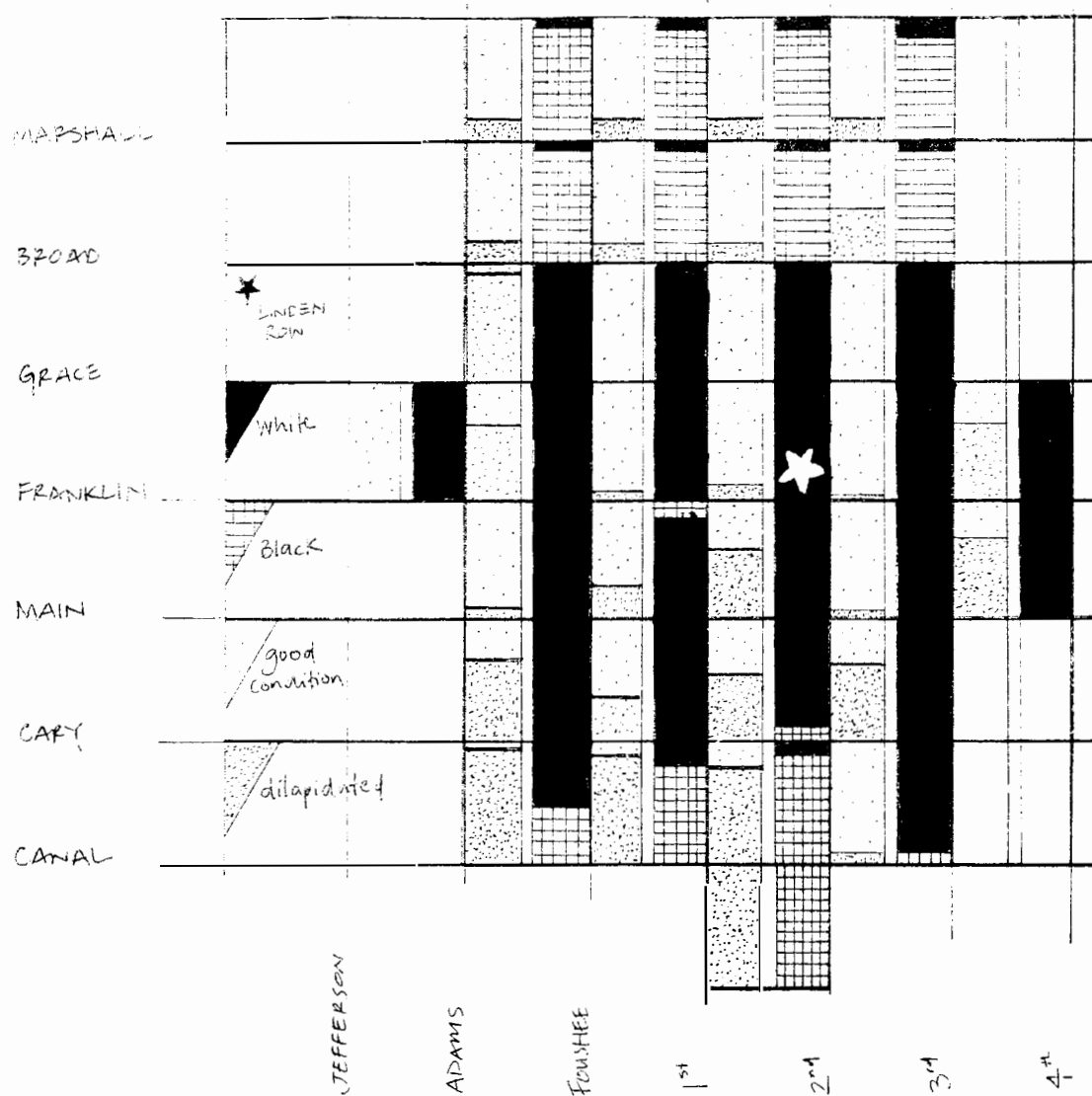
- 1899 (Baist Atlas, Library of Virginia map collection).
- 1905 identifying uniformity of row, and location of alleys and service buildings (Sanborn).



116-118 EAST FRANKLIN STREET

27. Linden Row

- 1975 map of Linden Row (Sanborn) identifying Linden Row after construction of Medical Arts Building in 1923.
- Medical Arts Building, 116-118 East Franklin Street (Author).



1950

28. 1950 blocks surrounding Linden Row. Identifies area two blocks to the north had majority black population, and one and two blocks to the south had majority dilapidated housing (Author. Block Statistics, Richmond, Virginia, 1950 Housing Census Report Volume 5, Part 158).