

NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)

1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: 23-25 W. Penn Street

Postal code: 19144 Councilmanic District: 8

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: Germantown Boys' Club (originally the Boys' Parlors Association)

Common Name: _____

3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Building Structure Site Object

4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: excellent good fair poor ruins

Occupancy: occupied vacant under construction unknown

Current use: Club House

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a description of the historic resource and supplement with current photographs.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from 1898 to 1909

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: Constructed in phases: 1898 and 1909

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Architect: Mantle Fielding

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Unknown

Original owner: Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown

Other significant persons: Marriott C. Morris

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

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

8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

9. NOMINATOR

Name with Title Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian Email oscar.beisert@gmail.com
Organization Penn Knox Neighborhood Association Date July 7, 2016
Street Address 5355 Knox Street Telephone 215.844.8024
City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, Pa 19144
Nominator is is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 8 July 2016
 Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 1 December 2016
Date of Notice Issuance: 16 December 2016
Property Owner at Time of Notice
Name: Germantown Boys Club
Address: 23 W Penn Street
City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19144
Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____
Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____
Date of Final Action: _____
 Designated Rejected

Nomination for the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places



Looking west. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

**The Germantown Boys' Club
Originally the Boys' Parlors Association
23 W. Penn Street
Germantown
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

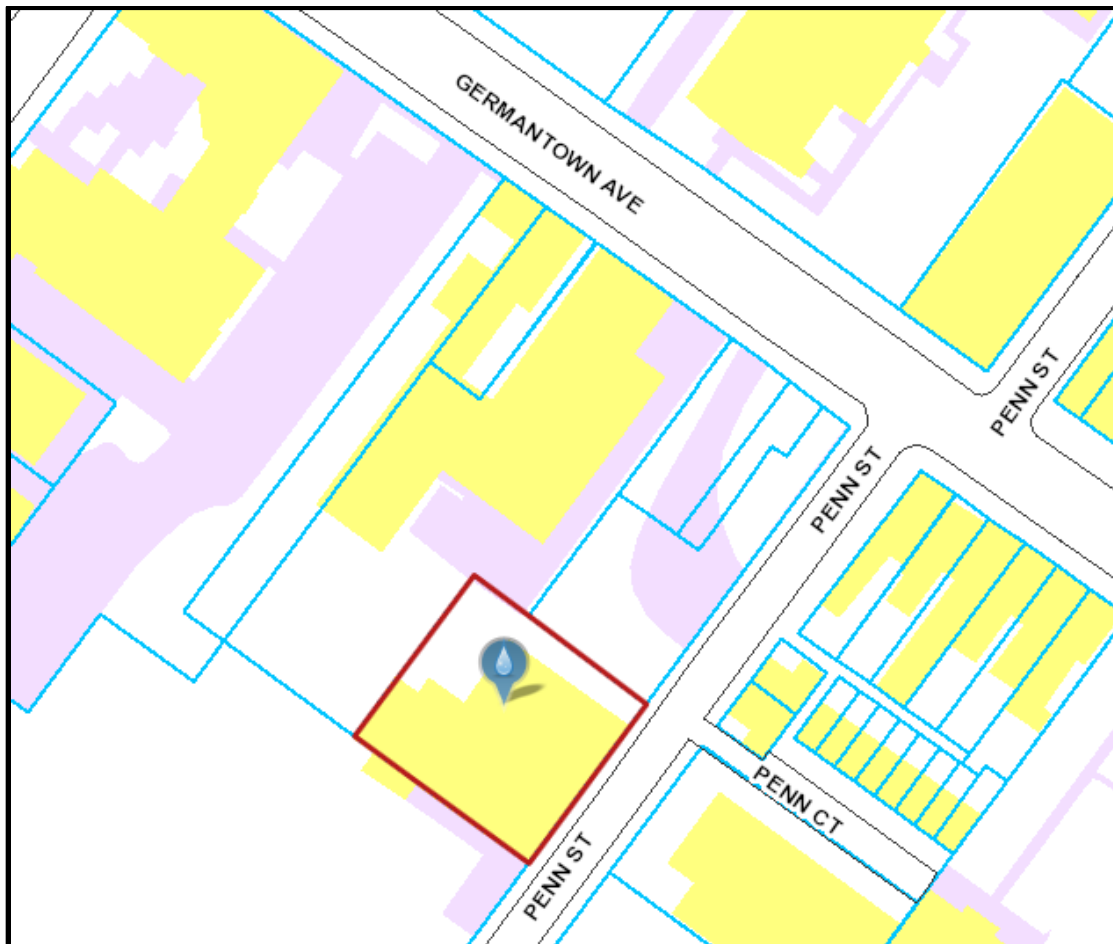
5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary description of the Germantown Boys' Club at 23 W. Penn Street is as follows:

All that Certain lot or piece of ground on the Northwest side of West Penn Street, Beginning at a point on the Northwest side of West Penn Street 184 feet 5.5 inches Southwestwardly from the Southwest side of Germantown Avenue being also a point in the Southwest side of 12 feet wide alley laid out Northwestwardly from W. Penn St and at right angles thereto, then Northwestwardly along the Southwest side of the 12 feet wide alley 73 feet more or less to a point in the Southeastwardly line of land formerly conveyed to Thomas C. Garrett, then Southwestwardly along the same land and parallel with West Penn Street 86 feet to a point, then Southeastwardly on a line at right angles with West Penn Street 73 feet more or less to the Northwest side of West Penn St and then Northeastwardly along the same 86 feet to the place of beginning.

Parcel Nos. 049N16-0108 and 049N16-0103

Tax Account No. BRT_ID 124011311



The boundary for the subject property is in red. Source: Philadelphia Water Department.



Looking west. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

6. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Situated just southwest of Germantown Avenue, the Germantown Boys' Club at 23 W. Penn Street is an impressive Georgian Revival clubhouse. At its highest elevation, the building stands three-and-one-half stories tall and was almost entirely constructed into two major phases—the original block in 1898 (1898 Block) and the addition in 1909 (1909 Addition).

The Germantown Boys' Club is a large structure of load-bearing, red brick masonry construction with a base course and foundation of Wissahickon Schist. The brick on the northeast, southeast and southwest elevations (those visible) is laid in a running bond, in which the headers and stretchers alternate in each course. The base course of Wissahickon Schist spans the northeast, southeast, and northwest elevations.



Looking southwest. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

1898 Block

The original portion of the building was constructed by the Germantown Boys' Club prior to the inception of its current "GBC" name, and, accordingly, the original name, the Boy's Parlors Association is still within the façade of 1898 Block. Designed by Mantle Fielding, Jr., the 1898 Block is at the north corner of the larger facility. The original running bond, alternating-course brick and the Wissahickon schist base course was first articulated in a two-and-one-half story clubhouse. This portion of the building is dominated by a gable-front third, half-half story, which features a classical cornice of dentil molding at the base and eaves of the gable. At the center of the gable is a fan light aperture with a replacement window. The fanlight is delineated by an arched brick lintel and a stone sill. The first, second, and basement floors are three bays wide. Symmetrically placed, the basement and first floors of the 1898 Block feature three windows per floor. The basement windows are set within the schist base course and feature lintels in a keystone format. Aligned above are the first floor windows. The northern most window on the first floor was originally a doorway and was adapted to this format in Mantle Fielding, Jr.'s design for the 1909 Addition. Between the center first and second floors is a stone plaque that reads as follows in raised stone lettering:

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Boys' Parlors
Association
Of Germantown
Founded 1887

This plaque was originally above the northern most window of the first floor, then the main entrance and was removed to this location within the façade in Mantle Fielding, Jr.'s design for the 1909 Addition.



Looking southwest. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

The roof of the 1898 Block was also changed as part of the 1909 Addition to create a cross-gable roof. The northwest elevation features symmetrical fenestration that spans roughly eight bays. The eight bays feature identical apertures at the first and second floors. The first bay from the north corner is a single aperture with a replacement window. The second, third and fourth apertures span six bays and feature replacement mullion windows, two per opening. Another single aperture with a replacement window makes up the eighth and final bay within the 1898 Block. The mullion windows at center on both the first and second floors are aligned with a central gable at the third, half-story. Featuring an otherwise identical design as its counterpart at the primary elevation, this gable repeats the mullion windows below at center. Windows are mimicked at the basement level and are also set within the stone belt course. Again, all of the windows appear to have been replaced.

An addition to the rear of the 1898 Block is contemporary to the 1909 Addition, but was not accessible nor visible from the public right-of-way. Just southwest of North corner of the 1898 Block is a marble or granite date stone within the stone base course, which bears the date: "1898."



Looking west, the date stone of the 1898 Block. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest, the 1909 Addition. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

The 1909 Addition

Looking southeast, the primary elevation is comprised of two sections: a medium-rise, three story section with a flat roof at center and the largest section, a three-and-one-half story section with a prominent gable-front in the fourth, half-story.

The building is centered on a three-story section at the center of the 1898 Block and the 1909 Addition. Within the central section is the entrance porch at the ground floor. A large, gracious archway opens onto a commodious entrance porch, which is delineated from the brick façade by a stone surround. Within the entrance porch is a finished plaster wall with a glossy white subway tile wainscoting. A double doorway featuring new, unsympathetic doors provide the primary egress; the fanlight above has been infilled. Within the central keystone of the arched doorway are the letters, “GBC,” needing no explanation.

In the second floor are two medium-sized apertures, which are delineated by stone sills, keystones and brick lintels. The second and third floors are delineated by stone coursing. Three

apertures are within the third floor with sills that are connected to form coursing. These windows have all been replaced.



Looking west, the entrance porch and doorway of the Germantown Boys' Club. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

The third, southern-most section of the primary elevation is dominated by a gable-front in the fourth, half-story, which features a classical cornice of dentil molding at the base and eaves of the gable. At the center of the gable is a fanlight with a replacement window which is delineated by an arched brick lintel, keystone, and a stone sill. The first, second, and basement floors are essentially four bays wide. Symmetrically placed, the basement and first floors feature two mullion windows per floor. The basement windows are set within the schist base course. The windows at the first floor are large mullion windows set beneath fanlights. The windows and fanlights are delineated by brick lintels, keystones and stone sills. Aligned above are two sets of mullion windows per floor. These are delineated in the same manner, but without arches and/or fanlights.



Looking west. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

The southeast elevation features a symmetrical fenestration that spans roughly ten bays. First from the east corner is a single aperture with a replacement window, which is accompanied by a stone sill and a keystone within a brick lintel. This window is repeated in the tenth bay, both of which are duplicated on the second and third floors above. Between the two single apertures are four mullion windows, spanning six bays. At the first floor the four mullion windows feature fanlights with stone lintels, and key blocking and stones within brick lintels. The fourth mullion window and fanlight at the first floor has been infilled. The mullion windows are repeated on the second and third floors, but without the fanlight motif. The brick lintels with keystones and the stone sills are also repeated. The second, third and fourth apertures span three bays and feature replacement mullion windows, two per opening. Another single aperture with a replacement window makes up the eighth and final bay within the 1898 Block. The mullion window at center on both the first and second floors are aligned with a central gable at the third, half-story. Featuring an otherwise identical design as its counterpart at the primary elevation, this gable repeats the mullion windows below at center. Windows are repeated at the basement level and are also set within the stone belt course. Again, all of the windows appear to have been replaced.

Just southwest of east corner of the 1909 Addition is a marble or granite date stone within the stone base course, which bears the date: "1909."



Looking northwest, the 1909 date stone. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.



Looking northwest. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

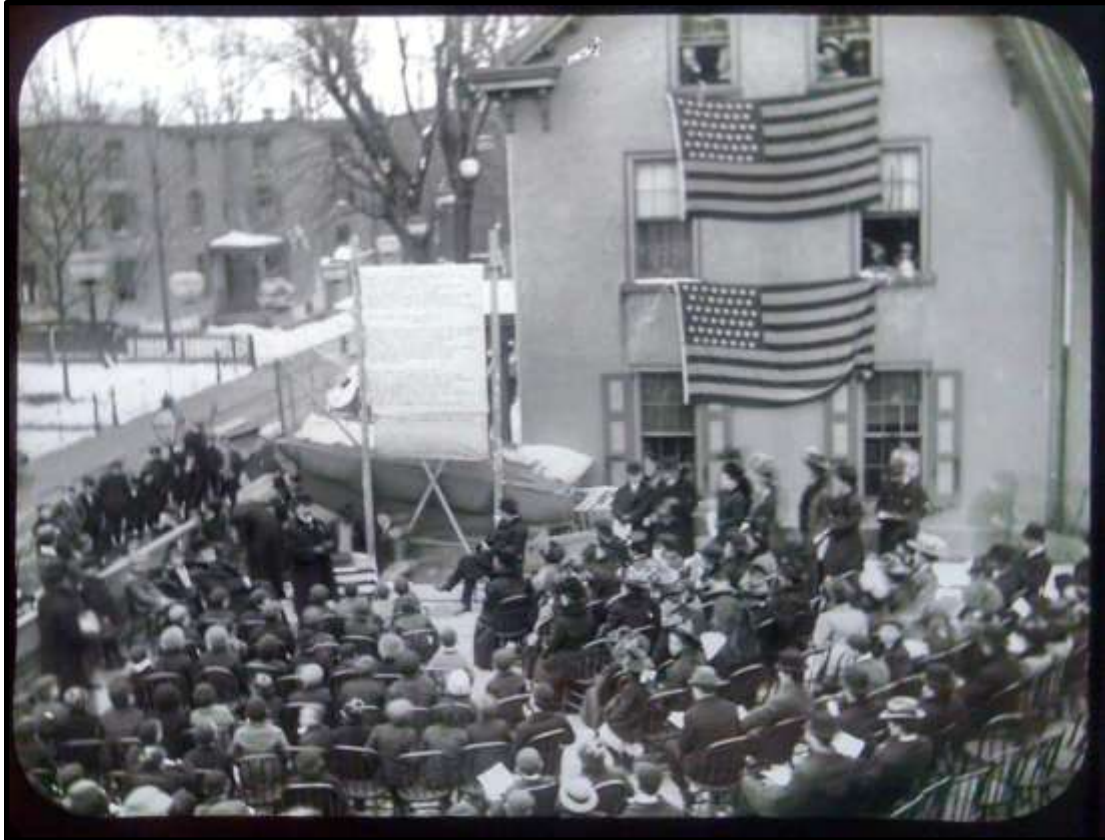


Looking southwest. Photograph by Oscar Beisert.

The rear elevation, as well as the south and west corners were not accessible and are not visible from the public right-of-way.



Boys' Parlors Association Camp at Wildwood, New Jersey, ca. 1910. Photography by Marriott Canby Morris.
Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Laying of the Cornerstone of the Germantown Boys' Club. Taken in 1909 by Marriot C. Morris.
Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Germantown Boys' Club at 23 W. Penn Street is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Located in the Penn-Knox section of Germantown, the building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- (a) Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; and
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.

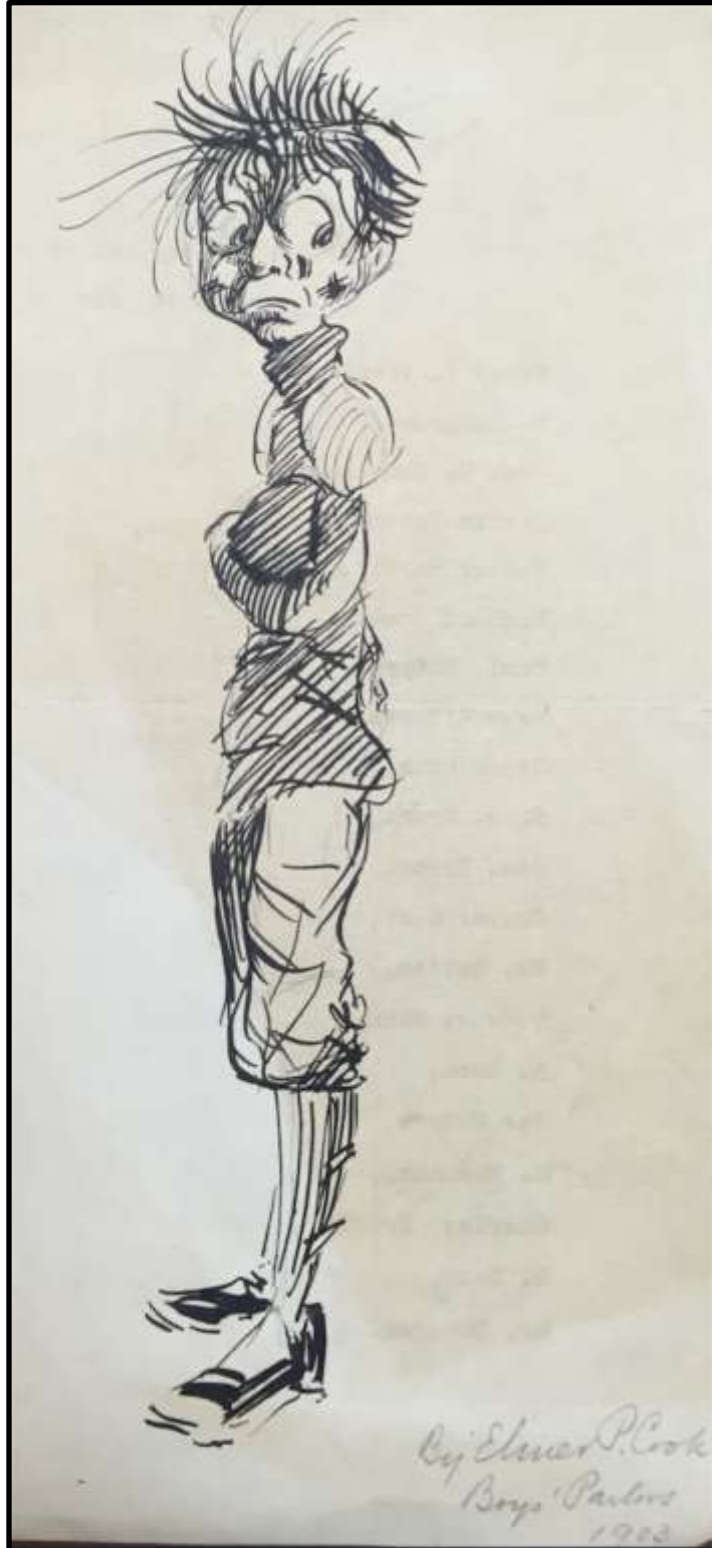
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Boys' Parlors Association in front of their first building at 29 Rittenhouse Street (now 54 Rittenhouse Street), ca. 1898. Photograph by Marriott Canby Morris. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

Criterion A and J

Founded in 1887, incorporated in 1894, the Boys' Parlors Association started at 29 E. Rittenhouse Street, and eventually moved to a slender two-and-one-half-story edifice at 25 W. Penn Street. It was here that the club was enlarged greatly, changing its name to the Germantown Boys' Club and finishing its current building with a "large and commodious" addition. Over the years it not only served as "parlors" for boys in evenings with indoor activities, but expanded greatly to include outdoor events and sports. The Germantown Boys' Club continues to serve the local population and also provides members with neighborhood activities, education, and a place of refuge. Members were even taken on out of town trips, including camping along the Upper Delaware River and to the Jersey Shore, where the Club eventually acquired their own clubhouse. The Germantown Boys' Club is an institution in the truest sense of the word and continues to represent and serve the community to-date.



Drawing of a Member of the Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown.
By Elmer P. Cook, 1903. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

Boys' Club Movement

The boys' club movement in the United States was the product of the industrialization of late nineteenth century America and the changes it brought to traditional family, work and societal structures for working class people. Long working hours and low wages forced lower-income parents to be out of the home for throughout the day and into early evening, which created problems their children after school. This became a more acute problem by the late nineteenth century as industrial expansion created higher population density in cities and in turn larger numbers of unsupervised children. The introduction of street lighting had the unintended consequence of providing children with more hours in which they could play or roam the streets unsupervised. Changing attitudes regarding children and childhood prompted many social reformers of this period to seek ways to find better protection for the welfare and moral development of children. As Peter C. Baldwin's study states:

...[B]eliefs about child development, coupled with the increased use and moral uncertainty of the nighttime street, were what motivated the middle-class concern about 'night children.' In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, social reformers and public officials strove to bring the blessings of a proper childhood to the urban poor and working classes.¹

One response to this concern was the creation of boys' clubs. The Dashaway Club was the first of these organizations. It was formed by a group of women from the Congregation Church in Hartford, Connecticut in 1860 to serve children in the slums. Though the club did not survive upheaval of the Civil War, it was followed by a number of other clubs after the War. The idea spread through in the 1870s and 1880s with clubs formed in Salem, Massachusetts (1869), New Bedford, Connecticut (1870), New Haven, Connecticut (1872), New York (1876), Hartford, Connecticut (1880), Bridgeport, Connecticut (1887) and Germantown (1887).²

One of the characteristics of these early clubs was to provide a home-like setting for boys to go to in the evening hours. Baldwin continues:

All of these early clubs attempted to mimic the atmosphere of a respectable home to compensate for a lack of domesticity in the lives of poor children. Typically, a club was furnished with a piano, books, and pictures to make it look more like a middle-class parlor. As in a parlor, the evening's activities included playing games and singing songs. ... The supervisors, many of them women, attempted not only to remove the children from the influences of the streets but also to provide moral training.³

An important distinction these clubs had from other contemporary movements to children, like the YMCA, was that they were non-sectarian in nature. This was fairly unusual for the 1870s

¹ Peter C. Baldwin, " 'Nocturnal Habits and Dark Wisdom': American Response to Children in the Streets at Night, 1880–1930," *Journal of Social History* 35 (2002): 598.

² R.K. Atkinson, *The Boys' Club* (New York: Association Press, 1939), 22–23.

³ Baldwin, " 'Nocturnal Habits' ," 598.

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and 1880s when most social welfare movements in America were primarily church-based and conversion focused.⁴

The Development and Early History of the Boys' Parlors Association—the Germantown Boys' Club

Germantown experienced rapid growth in the nineteenth century. The opening of the railroad in 1832 and its expansions in 1854 and 1882 brought profound changes in form of suburban as well as industrial development. Between 1860 and 1880 the population of Germantown almost doubled.⁵ In addition to new institutions such as churches and schools, a number of social welfare institutions were formed in Germantown during this period, such as Germantown Hospital (1864), YWCA (1870), YMCA (1871), Germantown Relief Society (1873), Workingmen's Club (1877), and Crusader's League (1887).⁶ While most of the organizations worked to assist the poor and working class population of Germantown they primarily focused on families or young adults and not boys.

The words of Samuel Rhoads, taken from his thesis, written while at Haverford College on "The Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown" probably best describe the late nineteenth-century sentiments that led to the founding of the organization:

First let us consider the influences that surround the street boy with his home amid the slums, such a boy as it is the purpose of the Boys' Parlors to reach. His first years are passed among mud flies in the gutter, accustoming himself to the sight of fights and drunkenness. As he learns to talk he learns to swear. When he arrives at the age of boyhood he joins a "gang" which sees what mischief it can get him into. Its meeting place where it perfects itself in chewing, smoking, pitching pennies, and gambling is [in] the street corner; its field of activity is the fruit tree in the back yards. At a somewhat more advanced age the boy frequents pool rooms and taverns gaining here his first introduction to politics from the Irish bar keeper. It certainly is evident that some other influence must enter if a boy with such a training is to become a moral, hard working man and an honest citizen.

It is in supplanting and counteracting the evil influences of the street and in supplying what necessarily is lacking in the home life that the Boys Parlors finds its usefulness. As expressed in a couple of leaflets the Parlors got out to advertise its work the object is, – "The Moral and Intellectual Improvement of

⁴ This is a point that Atkinson (who had a personal memory of the 1870s and 1880s) says was somewhat radical for that period (Atkinson, *Boys Club*, 26–29).

⁵ "Total Population of Philadelphia Wards, 1860–1960" in John Daly and Alan Weinberg, *Genealogy of Philadelphia County Subdivisions* (Philadelphia: City of Philadelphia, 1966), 100.

⁶ Edward W. Hocker, *Germantown 1683-1933: The Record That a Pennsylvania Community Has Achieved In the Course of 250 Years, Being A History of the People of Germantown, Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill* (Germantown: Edward W. Hocker, 1933), 244–249.

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Boys of the Poorer Class.” And again, –“The object is not that of a manual training school—it is the advancement and help of poor boys by means of bringing them under moral and Christian influences, with the purpose of making them truthful and truth-loving men.” The method employed to accomplish this result is to provided rooms sufficiently attractive to win boys from the streets. Here boys from nine to sixteen years of age can spend a pleasant evening with their friends playing games, looking at pictures, reading or in some of the manual training classes.⁷

The Germantown Boys’ Club was organized in 1887 as the Boys’ Parlors Association a result of a suggestion of John Forster Kirk, Jr., in 1886 to a meeting of the Young Women’s Christian Temperance Union (YWCTU) at the Germantown home of one of the founders of YWCTU, Hannah T. Whitall Smith. Education and preventative action for children were two of the areas of endeavor for the temperance movement. In its first years, the organization occupied rooms in various private houses. In 1890, the Germantown Boys Club rented its own building—a house at 29 Rittenhouse Street (later known as 54 Rittenhouse Street).

The “Boys’ Parlor” has opened its doors for the winter and those in charge make all welcome who desire to come and spend a pleasant hour reading or playing the various games provided by the kind managers.⁸

A year later, in 1891, YWCTU discontinued sponsorship of the Germantown Boys Club, which led to the official incorporation of the “Boys’ Parlors Association.” At the time of its independent establishment, the Germantown Boys’ Club consisted of forty-one members, all of whom were “workers in the institution.” An official charter was obtained in April 1894.⁹ Its purpose was stated as follows:

Aim: To provide attractive rooms where boys can spend a pleasant evening at playing games, hammock making, carpentry, etc., and where by means of personal influence and quiet talks they may be led to higher ideals and to give up their rough manners and bad habits.¹⁰

Even in their first years, the primary purpose of the Germantown Boys’ Club, as stated above, was to provide an “environment” for boys that perhaps did not have a better place to spend time. This was a reprieve from home life and perhaps an unpleasant street or neighborhood. As time went on, the activities offered would also evolve, going from “parlor” activities to include outdoor programs as well.

⁷ Samuel Rhoads, “The Boys’ Parlors Association of Germantown” (thesis, Haverford College, 1898). 3.

⁸ “Germantown,” *The Times*, Philadelphia, 5 October 1890, 14.

⁹ Rhoads, “The Boys’ Parlors Association of Germantown,” 4.

¹⁰ “The Boys’ Parlors Association of Germantown, 54 Rittenhouse Street, Germantown.” *List of Organizations Managed Wholly Or in Part by Members of the Society of Friends. Society of Friends. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.* (Philadelphia), 26.; and “Evening Pleasures For Boys,” *The Times*, Philadelphia, 3 November 1895, 4.

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Boys' Parlor Association in their first building at 29 E. Rittenhouse Street (now 54 E. Rittenhouse Street), ca. 1898.
Photograph by Marriott Canby Morris. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

After their official incorporation in 1894, the Germantown Boys' Club found that its quarters were too small for its growing membership. The Board of Managers explored the option of relocating to a larger new building, which they determined would require roughly \$5,000. In January, 1895 appeals were sent out to establish a building fund.¹¹ In April 1895, a fundraiser for the Germantown Boys' Club and an "invalid girl" called the 'Mistletoe Bough' was given at the Manheim Club, Germantown..¹² In November 1895, there had been over four thousand boys in attendance at events, and parlors were open 90 evenings per year with an average of 42 boys in attendance.¹³

¹¹ "Evening Pleasures For Boys," *The Times*, Philadelphia, 3 November 1895, 4.

¹² "Germantown," *The Times*, Philadelphia, 7 April 1895, 17.

¹³ "Evening Pleasures For Boys," *The Times*, Philadelphia, 3 November 1895, 4.



Photographs of the Boys' Parlors Association members at Wildwood, New Jersey, ca. 1890–1910.
Photographs by Marriott Canby Morris. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

In March, 1896, many of the old Germantown and Philadelphia families gather for a “Ye Olden Tyme” reception and “modern musicale” to benefit the new building fund. By the close of 1896, participants had increased to an average of 80 boys per every day open. Plans for a new building were still underway and according to the Club, a new building would allow for it to “be[ing] open 300 nights a year versus 100.”¹⁴

At the time Samuel Rhoads wrote his thesis in 1897–1898, the Germantown Boys’ Club had “...secured an option upon a well located lot, plans for building have been procured and about \$4,500 has been obtained by subscription toward the necessary \$8,200.00.”¹⁵ Receptions and fundraisers continued to be held in 1897 to raise funds for the new building.

¹⁴ “They Keep Boys Off the Street,” *The Allentown Leader*, 4 December 1896, 1.

¹⁵ Rhoads, “The Boys’ Parlors Association of Germantown.”

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One of the most elaborate and successful of the many musicales given at Manheim was held last evening for the benefit of the Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown. The worthiness of the object had much to do with attracting a large audience, but seldom has the public been so generously repaid for its interest.¹⁶

The Twelfth Annual Report showed that during the eleven years prior it had given aid to "...hundreds of street waifs...", sixty percent of which were between the ages of twelve and sixteen. Interestingly, the Germantown Boys' Club found many of them work in "mills, factories, and stores," then seen as a form of progress even for boys of that age.

Between 1897 and 1898, the Germantown Boys' Club bought a lot on West Penn Street and began constructing a new "clubhouse." By October 1897, Mantle Fielding had supplied the organization with designs for a Flemish Revival style building. The cost of this edifice was roughly \$8,200, only \$2,000 of which had been raised. The President of the Board of Managers at this time was H. Cameron Potts with Henry Ecroyd Haines as Secretary and nineteen additional managers. Alexander P. Simpson was the Superintendent.¹⁷ By May 1898, Mantle Fielding, Jr. had completed additional plans, which included a gymnasium and assembly hall and title to a lot on W. Penn Street was secured.¹⁸ Another appeal issued to prospective donors in September 1898. By then Marriot C. Morris was head of the Finance Committee with William W. Bacon as treasurer.¹⁹ Plans for the clubhouse were accepted from Mantle Fielding Jr. by September 1898 and construction likely commenced soon after.²⁰

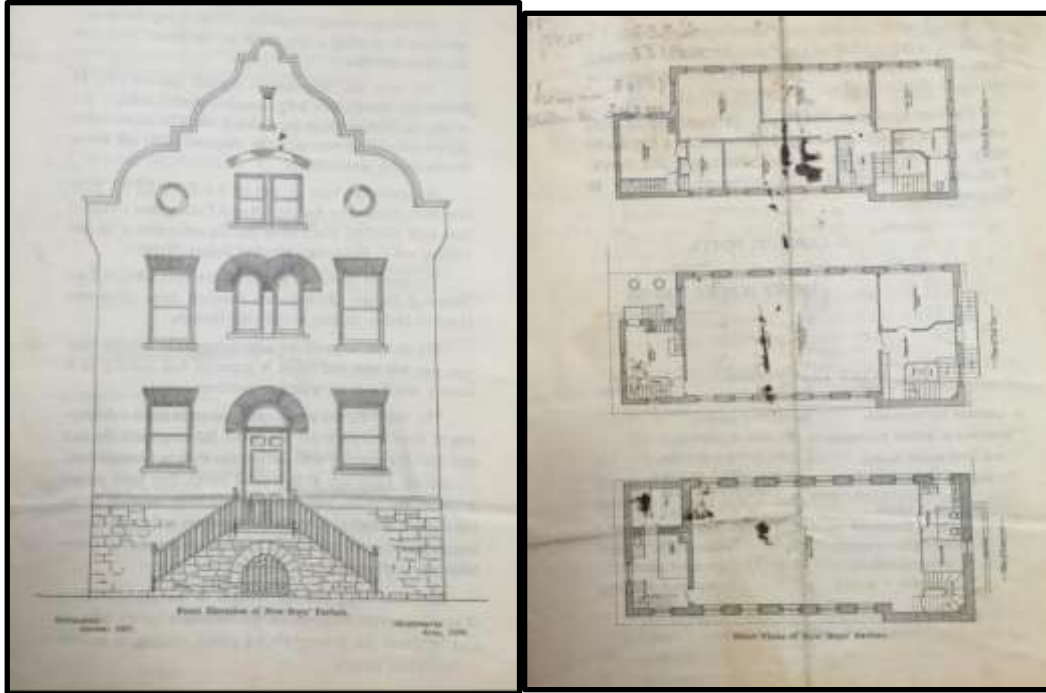
¹⁶ "Doings," *The Times.*, Philadelphia, 9 May 1897, 26.

¹⁷ "Appeal of the Boys' Parlors Association." Boys' Parlors Association. (Philadelphia, 1897). Germantown Historical Society Collection, Historic Germantown (hereafter GHS).

¹⁸ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 13, no. 18 (4 May 1898): 273; Deed: Philip C. Garrett and John B. Garrett, executors of the will of Thomas C. Garrett, to The Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown, 11 May 1898, Philadelphia Deed Book W.M.G., No. 292, p. 281, City Archives of Philadelphia (hereafter CAP).

¹⁹ "Appeal for Funds Towards The New Building of the Boys' Parlors Association." Boys' Parlors Association. (Philadelphia, 1898). Germantown Historical Society.

²⁰ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 13, no. 37 (14 September 1898): 589.



Front Elevation and floor plans of the "New Boys' Parlors," a design that was published, but never realized.
 Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

This [the new building]...will be large enough to accommodate 250 boys. It will be open year round, day and evening, and will afford instruction in necessary branches and games and amusements in variety.²¹

In October 1898, *The Times* reported that "the new structure" was fast approaching completion and that it would be open for use "early this winter."

The new house will be much larger and more commodious than the old one, and will have the additional features of conveniences on the top floor for practicing carpentry, scroll sawing, and other manual trades, so that boys who show any predilection in that direction can develop it, though the managers do not contemplate anything of the nature of a manual training school.

There will be reading rooms, lavatories, amusement rooms, with games of all kinds, and, in short, everything to make a boy comfortable during the winter evenings, a sort of boy's club, in short. The building is expected to cost about \$6,000 or \$7,000. It will be plainly built of brick, and will have three stories and a basement.²²

By the time of the Twelfth Annual Report was released in November 1898, the building was near completion. In fact, according to the "Report of the Building Committee in November

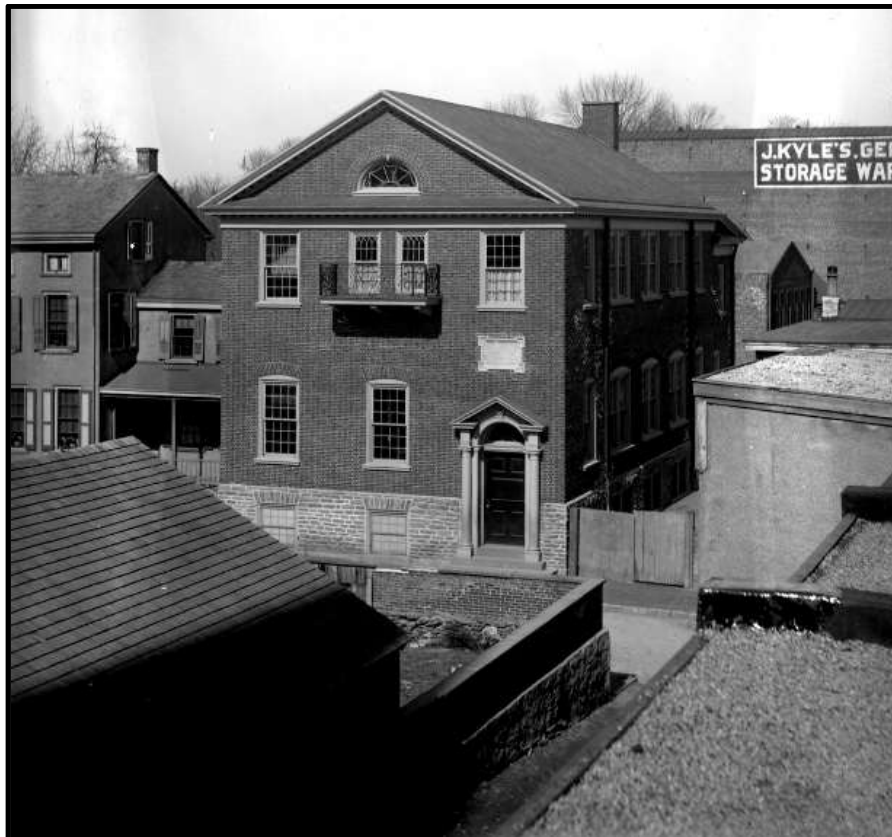
²¹ "Germantown Boys' Parlors," *The Times*, Philadelphia, 17 November 1898, 5.

²² "A Building for Boys," *The Times*, Philadelphia, 3 October 1898, 8.

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1898, "...plasterers have finished putting on the first Coat and are now waiting for it to dry...". By that date \$9,300 had been spent on the construction of the building.²³ In mid-December 1898, the first and second floors of the new building were ready for use and the furniture from the old building was moved to the new location.²⁴

On Tuesday evening, January 24, 1899, "Services of Dedication" took place.²⁵ A special report on the new building was completed by a special committee, which convened on February 20, 1899.²⁶ After the completion of the new building, the Club had a mortgage of \$2,000, which was paid off through private donations by March 1899.²⁷



The 1898 Boys' Parlors Association building at 25 W. Penn Street, Germantown. Photograph by Marriott Canby Morris. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

²³ Report of the Building Committee. Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown. (Philadelphia, November 1898). Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

²⁴ Report of the Finance Committee. Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown. (Philadelphia, 12 December 1899), GHS.

²⁵ Program for "Services of Dedication," Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown. (Philadelphia, January 1899), GHS.

²⁶ Report of the Special Committee. Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown. (Philadelphia, 10 February 1899), GHS.

²⁷ Report of the Finance Committee. Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown. (Philadelphia, 10 March 1899), GHS.

Located at 25 West Penn Street, the new building was complete in the winter of 1899. By the close of that year, the Thirteenth Annual Report of Superintendent Alexander P. Simpson showed 12,800 with an average nightly attendance of 75. The officers during its first year in residence at the new building were Marriott Canby Morris, President; Henry L. Hodge, Vice-President; Miss Anne Bacon, Secretary; and William Bacon with a larger board of thirty-five managers.²⁸ Naturally, those in attendance were largely of a white, Anglo-Saxon background with some Italian boys and other minority and immigrant populations that were “white.” The Morton Street Boys’ Club was similar, nearby organization for “white” boys. African American boys were not permitted requiring a separate boys club be established. The Penn Club was founded for “colored” boys.²⁹



Wicker class at the Boys’ Parlors Association, 25 W. Penn Street, Germantown. This is an example of indoor, “parlor” activities, ca. 1900. Photograph by Marriott Canby Morris. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

The Fourteenth Annual Report (still of the Boys’ Parlors Association) showed that the organization had roughly 350 members.³⁰ In the new clubhouse other activities became possible over time, including outdoor games and even sports.

These are very busy days down at No. 25 West Penn Street, where the Boys’ Parlor[s] Association meets every evening. The membership role is growing larger every night, and the class work is going on at a “strenuous” rate, while the work in the gymnasium, under the new physical director Warren Lackman, is

²⁸ “Work of the Boys’ Parlor Association,” *The Times*, Philadelphia, 21 November 1900, 8.

²⁹ “Germantown Meeting,” *The Westonian: A Monthly Magazine for Friends*, 13 (1906): 69.

³⁰ “Boys’ Parlor Association Successful,” *The Times*, Philadelphia, 21 December 1901, 8.

more than holding its own. What with the class work, with the dumbbells and the basket ball games, there's always something doing."³¹

Between 1901 and 1905, the "new building" became almost immediately cramped and limited in its usefulness, requiring plans for the erection of an addition. The tradition of the "Thanksgiving Feast" is amplified in 1902.³² The activities of the organization had evolved in the new building, including carpentry, scroll-sawing, basket-making, printing, basketball, quoits, shuffle-board, ping-pong, caroms and checkers, etc.³³

All of this led to the need for a larger building. The first step was procuring the neighboring lot, which occurred in early 1906.³⁴

Through the generosity Alfred C. Garrett and his sister, Francis B. Garrett, the Boys' Parlors Association of Germantown, has just been presented with the premises, No. 27 West Penn Street, Germantown, as a memorial to their father, Philip C. Garrett, lately deceased.

Plans are being prepared for a building measuring about 54 feet by 73 feet, to be erected on this memorial lot. This will contain additional class and clubrooms, a larger gymnasium and an auditorium with a seating capacity of 450 or 500, and will cost, when fully equipped, about \$15,000. Marriot C. Morris is president of the Association, and William W. Bacon is treasurer.³⁵

By June 1906, Mantle Fielding, Jr. was preparing plans for the 1909 Addition. However, revisions were apparently required as the planning phase lingered on through the fall of 1906.³⁶

The addition will have four stories, of brick with slate roof, open plumbing, steam heating, electric light fixtures, plate glass, etc. Estimated cost, \$250,000 [\$25,000].³⁷

³¹ "Boys' Parlors Association Continues Excellent Work," *Germantown Telegraph*, 6 November 1903.

³² "Jolly Crown of Boys' Parlorites Take A Big Fall Out of Turkey," *Public Ledger*, 28 November 1902.

³³ "Boys' Parlors Association: Annual Report Just Issued Shows Encouraging Results—Thanksgiving Dinner," *Germantown Telegraph*, 27 November 1903.

³⁴ Deed: Frances B. Garrett, Alfred A. Garrett and Eleanor Evans, his wife, to The Boys Parlors Association of Germantown, 25 June 1906, Philadelphia Deed Book W.S.V., No. 707, p. 185, CAP

³⁵ "A Memorial Gift from the Children of Philip C. Garrett," *The Friend* 80 (17 February 1906): 255.

³⁶ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 21, no. 44. (31 October 1906): 702.

³⁷ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 21, no. 27. (4 June 1906): 424.; "Building News," *The American Architect and Building News*, 92. (1907): 74.



Left: “The Runts,” one of many sports teams at the Boys’ Parlors Association around the time that it became the Germantown Boy’s Club, 25 W. Penn Street. Right: One of the earlier basketball teams of the Boys’ Parlors Association of Germantown, taken 1904. Photograph by Marriott Canby Morris. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.



Outdoor activities. These are both examples of changing, “outdoor” activities, ca. 1907. Photographs by Marriott Canby Morris. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

As early as April and as late as October 1907, Mantle Fielding, Jr. appears to have been receiving estimates and bids for the 1909 Addition.³⁸ Though the Garretts donated the lot, the building funds were raised through donation and subscription. Construction on the addition

³⁸ *Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 22, no. 16. (17 April 1907): 244; *Guide* 22, no. 42. (16 October 1907): 673.

began in 1908. The lot at 27 West Penn Street and the addition was to the west of the 1898 Block. The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin reported in January 1909 that “Boys’ Clubhouse Is Nearing Completion,” which they referenced “will cost \$36,000.” Despite earlier plans for the addition, the final measurements were 96 by 56 feet, more than doubling size of the building.

On the main floor of the clubhouse will be an auditorium with seating capacity for 600 together with offices for the superintendent of the club and space for various games. Class and amusement rooms will occupy the second floor, and the third floor of the new building will be a large gymnasium. When the building now occupied by the club was completed, in 1898, at a cost of \$12,000, the club had 125 members. Since then the number has increased to 740, and the average nightly attendance is 181. The club has a strong athletic association, of which John M. Boyton is president, and, besides its basketball teams, it maintains baseball, football and track teams. Last year the teams of the club won fifty-six cups and medals.

The officers of the club are: Marriot C. Morris, president; Thomas C. Potts, vice president; William W. Bacon, treasurer; Charles W. Bainbridge, Jr., superintendent, and Louis Lloyd, physical director.³⁹



Looking at 25 and 27 W. Penn Street, this photo shows the construction of the 1908 Addition to the Germantown Boys’ Club, designed by Mantle Fielding, Jr., ca. 1908. Photograph taken by Marriot Canby Morris. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

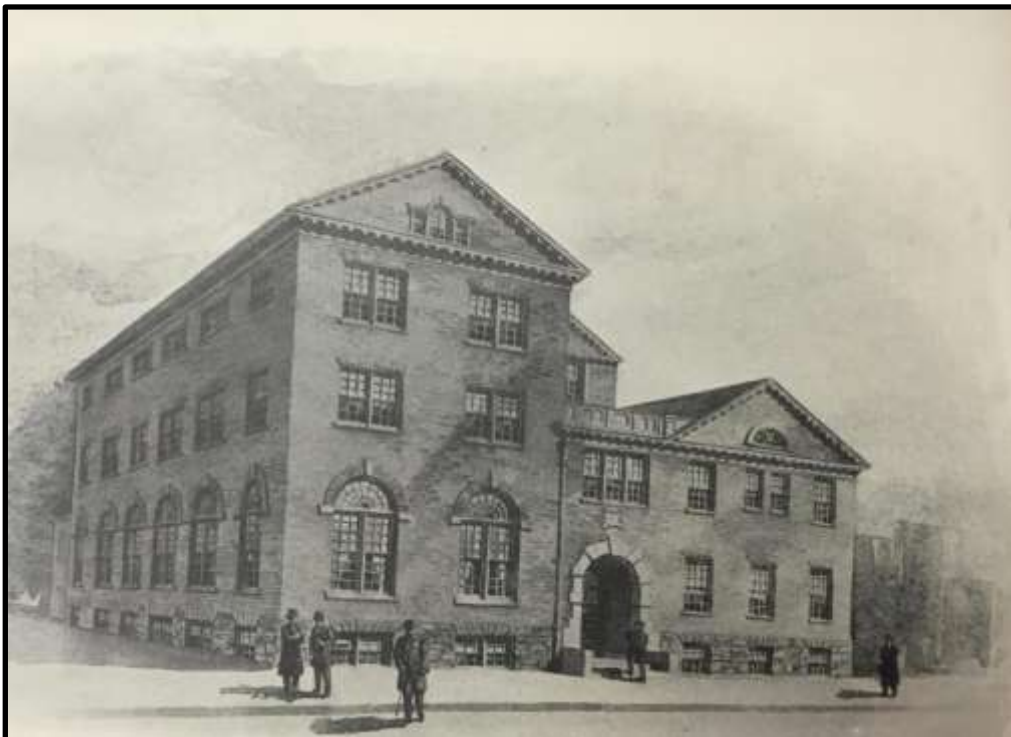
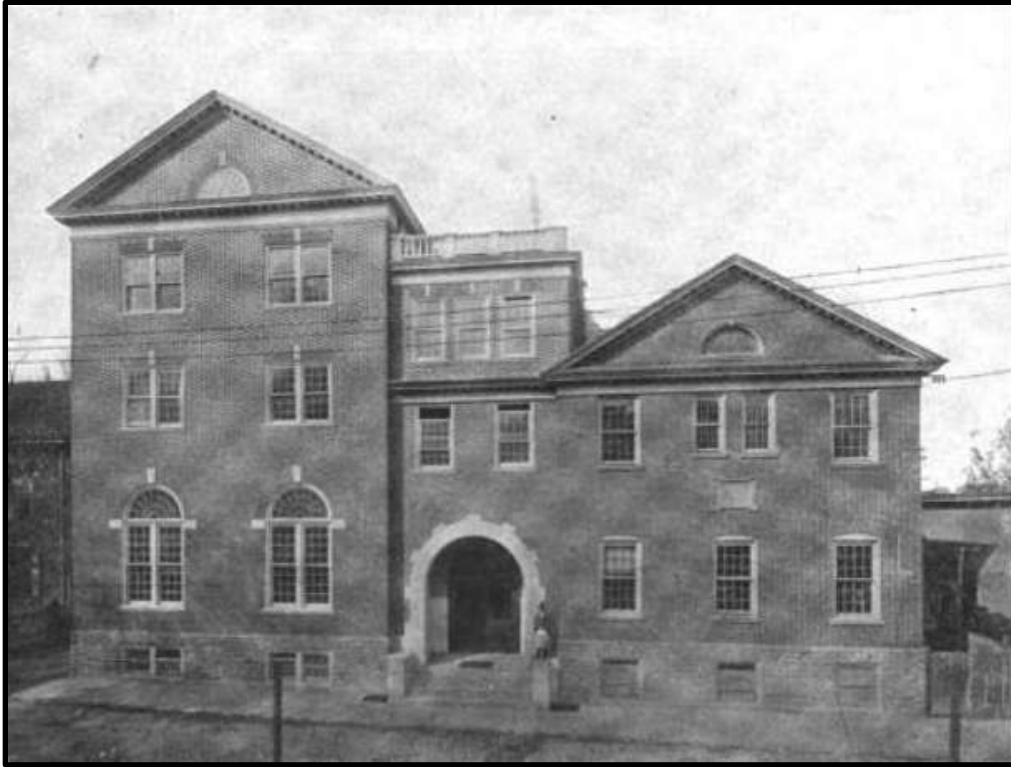
³⁹ “Boys’ Clubhouse Is Nearing Completion,” *Evening Bulletin*, 17 January 1909.



Laying the Cornerstone of the March 6, 1909 Addition with Fred Reider holding contents of cornersotne. Taken by Marriot C. Morris in 1909. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.



Photographs taken by Marriot Canby Morris of the construction of the 1908 Addition to the Germantown Boys' Club, ca. 1908. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Top: the Germantown Boys' Club as designed by Mantle Fielding, Jr. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Bottom: The Germantown Boys' Club at the time of its completion in 1908. Completed in 1898, the earlier building is incorporated on right. Source: Google Books.

*The Germantown Boys' Club (Boys' Parlors Association), 23 W. Penn Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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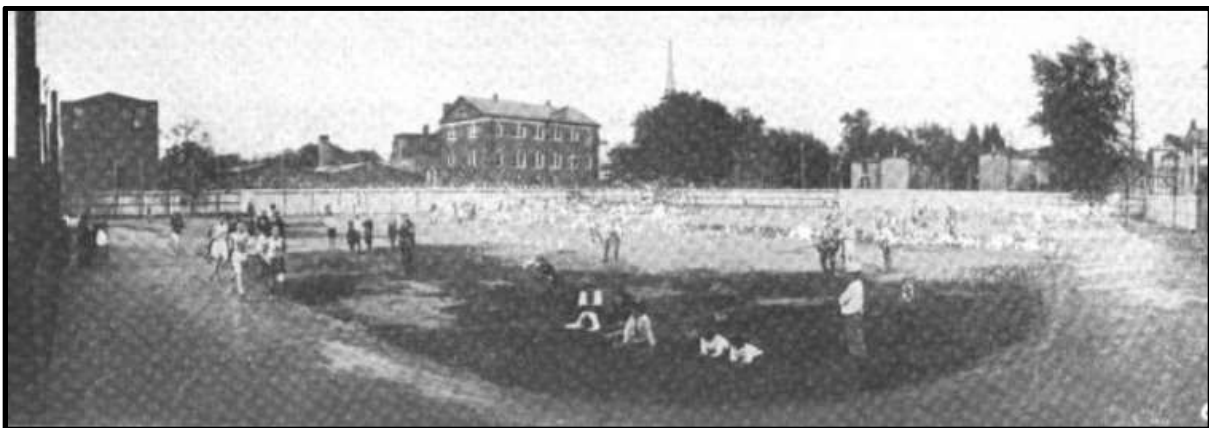
About a year after the completion of the addition, the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin reported that the total cost was \$54,000, claiming that the Germantown Boys' Club was "enjoying a period of unprecedented prosperity."

The Boys' Club had a very modest beginning, 24 years ago, when it was started in one room by the Germantown branch of the W.C.T.U. with the object of keeping the boys off the streets, but its growth has been so great that now it outnumbers both in active members and alumni many colleges who names are known from one end of the country to the other. The active membership of the club at present is 991. Add to this the 176 members in the men's department...⁴⁰

In the decade following the completion of the building in 1909, the Germantown Boys' Club furthered its interest and continued to enlarge its capacity to serve more boys in the area.

It is a remarkable fact that over 75% of all the Boys living within radius of 2 ½ miles attend this institution. Another interesting fact is that among the little group that was gathered into the Boys' Parlors Association that day, thirty-four years ago, was one Charles Bainbridge who was destined to play the important role of becoming Superintendent. For the past twenty years he has been the guiding genius of the Germantown Boys' Club.⁴¹

The history of the Germantown Boys' Club extends beyond this period to the current date. However, for the purposes of this nomination, the author(s) focused on the early years of its development, as well as its growth and the construction of its current building.

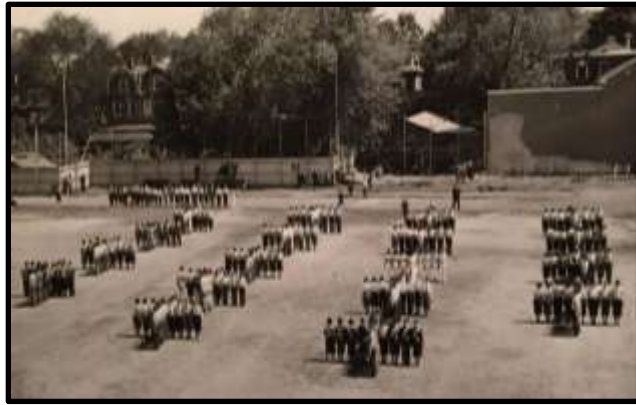


The Boys' Parlors Association, completed in 1898. Source: Google Books.

⁴⁰ "The Germantown Boys' Club," *Evening Bulletin*, 18 September 1910).

⁴¹ "Germantown Boys' Club, Philadelphia, Pa., Thirty-Four Years Old and Steadily Growing The Boys' First Love—The Old Members Shrine," *Boys' Workers Round Table*, January 1921: 5-6.

*The Germantown Boys' Club (Boys' Parlors Association), 23 W. Penn Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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Both photographs depict drills in the yard of the Germantown Boys' Club. Taken by the *Philadelphia Record*, 1930s. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Left: Pet Day at the Germantown Boys' Club. Taken by the *Philadelphia Record*, ca. 1930s. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Right: Youth Wedding at the Germantown Boys' Club. Taken by the *Philadelphia Record*, 1930s. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Conclusion: Criterion A and Criterion J

The Germantown Boys' Club and its members represents the development of Germantown, as it evolved to serve a growing working and middle-class community, as well as the increased focus on providing services to the poor. The Germantown Boys' Club also represents the cultural, economic, and social history of Germantown and Philadelphia in the late nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century as a community center for "boys" and, as it evolved, young adults and men.



An early photograph of the Boys' Parlors Association Building, the 1898 Block.
Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.



Looking at 25 and 27 W. Penn Street, this photo shows the construction of the 1908 Addition to the Germantown Boys' Club, designed by Mantle Fielding, Jr., ca. 1908. Photograph taken by Marriot Canby Morris. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Criterion C and Criterion D

Both the original 1898 Block and the 1908 Addition of the Germantown Boys' Club exemplify distinguishing characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, as articulated in public and institutional buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The 1908 Additional of the Germantown Boys' Club was designed by the eminent Philadelphia architect, Mantle Fielding, Jr., who influenced the architectural progression of Germantown.

The Colonial Revival Style

The Colonial Revival style was always popular in Philadelphia, but never more than in the period after the Centennial Exhibition in 1876. Architects and designers popularized the style as a modern rendition of national heritage and a statement of pride. Philadelphians embraced the style, as it had always been close to home, with the Federal style never having completely dying out. Both the 1898 Block of the Boys' Parlors Association and the 1908 Addition possessed distinguishing characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, which Mantle Fielding, Jr. joined to create an incredible institutional building with elements of the Georgian aesthetic and revivalism, as articulated in buildings of this period.

The completed, extant design of the Germantown Boys' Club contains the following characteristics, which adhere to the Colonial Revival Style:

- An accentuated front door, including a pediment;
- A façade based on a symmetrical fenestration of windows, which is partly asymmetrical with the inclusion of a central hyphen-like structure for the entrance that joins the 1898 Block and the 1908 Addition;
- Front-gabled roof, emulating true Colonial-era side-gable roof types;
- Red brick laid in a running bond pattern with glazed headers; and
- Windows with double-hung sashes with multi-pane glazing (no longer extant) and the use of Palladian motifs.

The Germantown Boys' Club and Its 1908 Addition by Mantle Fielding, Jr.

After the Boys' Parlors Association became the Germantown Boys' Club between 1907 and 1908, Mantle Fielding, Jr. designed a very handsome addition for the growing organization. The 1908 Addition was not just a commission that included a period appendage, but, rather, the architect greatly improved upon the attractive, original 1898 Block to form a complete whole. Mantle Fielding, Jr. was one of the great architects of Germantown and Philadelphia, having designed many buildings—commercial, institution, and residential. His completion of the Germantown Boys' Club created what had been started with the 1898 Block and served a design not only complimented the earlier building, but finalized the building.



The Germantown Boys' Club after its completion in 1908. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.



Mantle Fielding, Jr. Source: Ancestry.com.

Mantle Fielding, Jr. (1865–1941)

Mantle Fielding, Jr. was a Philadelphia architect, as well as an authority on colonial painting. Born in New York City, the son of Mantle Fielding and Anna M. Stone, he attended the Germantown Academy in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. Mantle Fielding, Jr. studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. After working as a draftsman and architect in Philadelphia, he launched an independent firm about 1886, which he operated through 1938. In 1886, Mantle Fielding, Jr. also joined the T-Square Club. Concentrating primarily on residential architecture, he had a strong interest in the Colonial Revival style.

After a decade or two in the field of architecture, Mantle Fielding, Jr. appears to have pursued an interest in art history.

The first of Fielding's numerous publications in the field of art history appeared in 1904. His best-known work, *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers*, was published in 1926, and reprinted several times. He also wrote about Gilbert Stuart, Thomas Sully, and portraits of George Washington.

Fielding was married to Amy Reeve Williams; they had two children, Richard M. and Frances. For many years, they resided in Germantown, where he died at the age of 76.

Conclusion: Criterion C and D: The 1898 Block of the Boys' Parlors Association and its 1908 Addition form the current iteration Germantown Boys' Club. This is a distinctive example of the Colonial Revival style as applied to institutional buildings of the turn of the twentieth century. The mastery behind the final product is the work of a master architect, Mantle Fielding, Jr. and is an important representation of his work in Germantown.



Summer Camp Scene of the Germantown Boys' Club, Ocean City, New Jersey, ca. 1910.
Courtesy of the Germantown Historical Society.



The Summer Retreat of the Germantown Boys' Club, Upper Delaware River, 1900.
Courtesy of the Germantown Historical Society.



The Summer Cottage of the Germantown Boys' Club, Ocean City, New Jersey, ca. 1910s. No longer extant.
 Courtesy of the Germantown Historical Society.



Photograph of the Gymnasium of the Germantown Boys' Club, published in *Boys' Workers Round Table* in January, 1921. Source: Google Books.



Germantown Boys' Club at Ocean City, 1933. Courtesy of the Germantown Historical Society.



Germantown Boys' Club Display, 1933. Courtesy of the Germantown Historical Society.



The interior staircase of the Germantown Boys' Club, 1979. Taken by Barbara Pachter.
Courtesy Temple University.

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