

**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: **5356 Chew Avenue**

Postal code: **19138**

Councilmanic District: **8**

2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name: **The Jonathan Graham House or "A Villa in the Second Empire Style"**

Current Name: **Good Shepherd**

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: **Charitable/Non-Profit**

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary. **SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

6. DESCRIPTION

SEE ATTACHED SHEET.

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

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

[See Attached Sheet]

Period of Significance (from year to year): from

c. 1872 to 1876

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration:

c. 1872-76 / c. 1900-20s

Architect, engineer, and/or designer:

Unknown

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan:

Unknown

Original owner:

Jonathan Graham, Grocer

Other significant persons:

Not Applicable

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

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

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or
- X (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,**
- X (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.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET.

9. NOMINATOR: THE KEEPING SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

Name with Title	Oscar Beisert	Email	Oscar.Beisert@gmail.com
Date	30 January 2017		
Street Address	1315 Walnut Street, Suite 732	Telephone	(717) 602-5002
City, State, and Postal Code:	Philadelphia, PA 19107	Nominators are not the property owners.	

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 31 January 2017

Correct-Complete Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: 15 March 2017

Date of Notice Issuance: 17 March 2017

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: Sisters of the Good Shepherd

Address: 5356 Chew Avenue

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19138

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 south. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

The Jonathan Graham House
A Villa in the Second Empire Style
5356 Chew Avenue
Germantown
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Jonathan Graham House—A Villa in the Second Empire Style
5356 Chew Avenue, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Nomination to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, Winter 2017—Page 1

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary description of the proposed designation is as follows:



The boundary for the subject property is in red. Courtesy Philadelphia Water.

Premises A (Block 53 N 21 Lot 208): BEGINNING at a point on the Southwesterly side of Chew Avenue (80 feet wide) at the distance of 310 feet 0 inches Southeastwardly from the Southeasterly side of Church Lane (40 feet wide); thence South 47 degrees 27 minutes 45 seconds East along the Southwesterly side of Chew Avenue and crossing a proposed 12 feet wide driveway easement leading Southwestwardly from said Chew Avenue to a proposed variable width easement area, the distance of 107 feet 3 inches to a point; thence South 42 degrees 09 minutes 15 seconds West the distance of 162 feet 4 inches to a point; thence North 47 degrees 41 minutes 45 seconds West partly crossing said proposed variable width easement area the distance of 83 feet 3 inches to a point; thence North 42 degrees 18 minutes 15 seconds East partly along the Northwesterly side of the proposed variable width easement area the distance of 40 feet 0 inches to a point; thence North 47 degrees 41 minutes 45 seconds West the distance of 24 feet 5-1/8 inches to a point; thence North 42 degrees 18 minutes 15 seconds East the distance of 122 feet 9-1/4 inches to a point on the Southwesterly side of Chew Avenue the first mentioned point and place of beginning.

Premises B (Block 53 N 21 Lot 209): BEGINNING at an interior point measured South 42 degrees 18 minutes 15 seconds West the distance of 122 feet 9-1/4 inches from a point

on the Southwesterly side of Chew Avenue (80 feet wide); which point is at the distance of 310 feet 0 inches measured Southeastwardly along the Southwesterly side of Chew Avenue from the intersection of the Southwesterly side of Chew Avenue with the Southeasterly side of Church Lane (40 feet wide); thence extending from said interior beginning point South 47 degrees 41 minutes 45 seconds East the distance of 24 feet 5-1/8 inches to a point; thence South 42 degrees 18 minutes 15 seconds West partly along the Northwesterly side of a proposed variable width easement area which communicates with a proposed 12 foot wide driveway which leads Southwestwardly from Chew Avenue the distance of 40 feet 0 inches to a point; thence South 47 degrees 41 minutes 45 seconds East partly crossing the proposed variable width easement area the distance of 83 feet 3 inches to a point; thence South 42 degrees 09 minutes 15 seconds West the distance of 81 feet 1-3/8 inches to a point; thence North 45 degrees 20 minutes 05 seconds West the distance of 107 feet 11-3/4 inches to a point; thence North 42 degrees 18 minutes 15 seconds East the distance of 116 feet 8 inches to a point the first mentioned point and place of beginning.

Tax Account No. **020-22960-05356-001**

OPA/BRT Account No. **776112000**



Looking west. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The buildings that comprise the property at 5356 Chew Avenue include the villa and three outbuildings. These buildings are situated on a largely open parcel of over half an acre. The villa and its grounds are much as they were historically, being a glimpse into the nineteenth century world that once was Chew Avenue.

The House

Built almost entirely of Wissahickon Schist, the villa at 5356 Chew Avenue is a three-story stone dwelling that is recessed from the street by a verdurous lawn ornamented with mature trees and other plantings. A concrete walk leads to the front porch and the primary entrance beyond, which is accessed by a short flight of three granite steps that are flanked by granite posts that no doubt date to the time of construction or shortly thereafter. Similar nineteenth century granite posts are also present at each end of the property line along Chew Avenue, one of which is lying on its side in the grass.

The subject house represents what was referred to as a “Villa” in the “Second Empire Style” due to the employment of the Mansard Roof and various other distinctive features. The house is a symmetrical, rectangular load-bearing, stone-masonry house with a concave Mansard roof sheathed with a combination of slate and slate line asphalt shingles that is pierced with dormers. The primary elevation features a symmetrical fenestration that spans three generous bays in width. All of the apertures are round-top or segmental arch in form. Most of the apertures feature lintels of Wissahickon Schist ashlar. While

some of the windows appear to have been replaced and/or are obscured by storm windows, the wooden architraves appear to be intact. At the center of the primary elevation are double- and/or paired-apertures, including what was likely a double door at the ground floor; a pair of two narrow, arched windows at the second floor; and a dormer with a pair of arched windows separated by a mullion in the third floor. Single apertures flank the double and paired windows at center. A veranda is present and occupies the entire first floor of the primary elevation. The porch is supported by Doric column that rest on stone plinths and are separated by wooden balustrades with heavy turned balusters. The porch supports may have been upgraded at the turn of the twentieth century. Covered by a flat or slightly pitched roof, the verandah also features a cornice of heavy wooden brackets that correspond with the primary cornice that delineates the second and third floors. This type of full-length verandah was especially popular in suburban and/or rural areas in the design of nineteenth century villas. Also a sign of the period, the single apertures that flank the primary entrance are emulative of jib-doors (windows).¹ Many of the features are repeated in the side elevations and even in the rear wing, which is particularly large for a house of this period. The entire building features a beautiful façade of finished Wissahickon Schist.

Two wooden additions that appear to be nineteenth century are also extant.



Looking south. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

¹ “jib-door,” Oxford English Dictionary. (1901).



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

The Jonathan Graham House—A Villa in the Second Empire Style
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Looking south. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

The Jonathan Graham House—A Villa in the Second Empire Style
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Looking south. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

The west-facing, side elevation features a symmetrical fenestration of windows—three windows with segmental arches at the ground and second floors, and two distinctive dormers within the third floor or the mansard area. A cornice is also present along the roofline and a chimney stack pierces the side section of the roof.



Looking east. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

The Jonathan Graham House—A Villa in the Second Empire Style
5356 Chew Avenue, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Granite post at the east corner of the property along Chew Avenue. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking south. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking west. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

Outbuilding 1: Immediately behind the villa along the northwest property line is a two-story, four bay red brick stable, with four vehicle openings at the ground floor and three apertures within the second floor. The central aperture contains double wooden doors, half-panel, half-light (divided into four panes), which is flanked by two-over-two wooden sash windows. A simple cornice with bartizans at each end grace the otherwise utilitarian outbuilding.



Detail of Photograph of the Germantown Dispensary and Hospital, Germantown, c. 1926.
Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Detail of Bing Map Imagery. Source: bing.com.



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

Outbuilding 2: At the south corner of the property is an L-shaped one-story office and/or former stable building. The building extends along the southeast and southwest property line. The component shown at the center of the southwest property line may be the original stable building and would be a contributing element to this designation. The building appears to be one-story, one or two bay red brick stable. Further photographs would be required to determine if it is contributing or non-contributing.



Detail of Photograph of the Germantown Dispensary and Hospital, Germantown, c. 1926.
Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Detail of Bing Map Imagery. Source: Bing.com.



Looking northwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.

Outbuilding 3: Opposite Outbuilding 1 along the southeast property line is a small, one-story outbuilding of load-bearing, red brick masonry construction. A simple cornice with bartizans at each end grace the otherwise utilitarian outbuilding. Further photographs would be required to determine if it is contributing or non-contributing.



Detail of Bing Map Imagery. Source: Bing.com.



Detail of the Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Volume 7, 22nd Ward, 1889. Created by George W. & Walter S. Bromley, Civil Engineers. Source: Greater Philadelphia Geo History Network.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The subject villa and its outbuildings at 5356 Chew Avenue in East Germantown constitute a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Located in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, the building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

- c) *Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; and*
- d) *Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen.*

Criterion D

According to Virginia & Lee McAlester's **A Field Guide To American Houses**, the Second Empire style's primary period of influence was 1855-1885, being a movement within the larger realm of Victorian architecture. The primary identifying features of the Second Empire style is the presence of a Mansard roof with dormers within a steep slope; moulded cornices; and decorative brackets beneath the eaves. The subject house is a symmetrical, rectangular house with a concave Mansard roof sheathed with slate that is uninterrupted except by dormers. The openings in the primary elevation are three-ranked with paired apertures at center, including what was likely a double door at the ground floor; a central duet of two narrow, arched windows; and a dormer with a pair of arched windows separated by a mullion. Single apertures flank the double and paired windows at center. A veranda is present and occupies the entire first floor of the primary elevation. This feature was especially popular in suburban and/or rural areas. Interestingly single apertures within the primary elevation are full length with jig windows. Many of the features are repeated in the side elevations and even in the

rear wing, which is particularly large for a house of this period.²

Beyond the larger national trends, Pennsylvania appears to have been particularly fond of the Second Empire Style. The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission's Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide describes the "Second Empire/Mansard Style" as being popular between 1860 and 1900, which is a longer period of time than recognized by McAlester. Though the PHMC recognizes that the style enjoyed immense popularity and employment in the 1860s and 1870s, as influenced by "well-attended exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867" becoming a modern architectural movement rather than a revivalist style like so many others. The PHMC recognizes houses, public or commercial buildings, and government offices as the most common building types. The style guide goes on to list the most identifiable features: 1. Mansard roof, 2. Patterned shingle roof, 3. Iron roof crest, 4. Decorative window surrounds and dormers, 5. Eaves with brackets, 6. One story porch, 7. Tower, 8. Quoins, and 9. Balustrades.³ The subject house features a mansard roof, decorative window surrounds and dormers, eaves with brackets, a one story porch, and balustrades. While the house does not appear to have every featured a tower, it retains slate cladding within the Mansard area, and some iron and/or copper finishes. Summarily, the house is an excellent local specimen of the Second Empire Style Villa, retaining most of the features listed by the PHMC.

Using both McAlester's A Field Guide To American Houses and the PHMC's Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, the subject house appears to embody distinguishing characteristics of the Second Empire Style of architecture.

² Virginia & Lee McAlester. A Field Guide To American Houses. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), p. 240-243.

³ "Second Empire/Mansard Style," Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, accessed January 24, 2017. <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/second-empire.html>



Public Ledger Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, c. 1867.
Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Criterion C

In Philadelphia and, specifically, within the German Township, the Second Empire Style and the Mansard roof was hugely influential in shaping the built environment. As previously stated, the PHMC’s Pennsylvania Architectural Style Guide recognizes the most common building types to be executed in this style, which include houses, public or commercial buildings, and government offices.⁴ The subject house is an example of a villa designed in the Second Empire Style as adapted to the German Township. The building represents an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style.

Historic Context: Evidence of the Second Empire Style in Philadelphia

As stated above, Philadelphia’s built environment features all manner of Second Empire Style buildings. Perhaps the most significant example of the Second Empire Style in America, Philadelphia’s City Hall was designed by John McArthur Jr., and constructed between 1871 and 1901 at a cost of \$24 million.⁵ Built earlier, just south of Center Square, the Union League of Philadelphia was completed in the Second Empire Style in

⁴ “Second Empire/Mansard Style,” Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide, accessed January 24, 2017. <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/second-empire.html>

⁵ Russ F. Weigley (editor). *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*. (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982).

1865.⁶ The building was designed by John Fraser, Architect, and still stands at 140 S. Broad Street. Unlike City Hall, this private club building resembles a large residence or mansion rather than a public building. Also privately financed, at the southwest corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets, the *Public Ledger* constructed the “new and splendid building” in 1867, which was also designed by John McArthur, Jr. The *Scientific American* said the following about the building:

The new *Ledger* building is one of the largest printing houses in Union, very beautiful in architecture, located on the corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets. Every portion of the establishment is complete with regard to light, heating, ventilation, and other comforts. The office and editorial rooms are furnished splendidly. The composing room is on the upper floor, which, by aid of a Mansard roof, has a height of twenty-one feet.⁷

Another important public building (no longer extant) was the Court House and Post Office, also designed in the Second Empire Style, by Alfred B. Mullet, Architect. The building was completed in 1874. It featured a complex, multi-level Mansardic roof structure at the center and a smaller, low-slung Mansard roof atop most of its four-story building.



Court House and Post Office, Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, c. 1874.

Source: the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Commercial and other private for-profit establishments styled both their buildings and their advertisements in response to the Mansard mania. Known to shy away from modernity—especially in style, even Old Philadelphians warmed to the Mansard roof. No doubt the inherent Quaker conservatism was satiated by the prospect of a low cost addition that allowed them to keep the existing building yet further formalize its

⁶ Walter L. Fleming, Documentary History of Reconstruction: Political, Military, Social, Religious, Educational, and Industrial, Vol. 2. (1906), p. 1-20.

⁷ “A Philadelphia Newspaper Establishment,” *Scientific American* (1845-1908). (New York: 6 July 1867), p. 10.

appearance. No greater specimen can be found than the Philadelphia Contributionship. The “Oldest Continually Operating Fire Insurance Company in America” commissioned Thomas U. Walter to design a commodious building for the establishment, which was designed in 1835 and completed soon after in 1836.⁸ It had the appearance of a large Greek Revival House with Federal antecedents. Later in the nineteenth century, the fourth, half-story was enlarged to accommodate a full floor—an enlargement that was achieved politely with a Mansard roof.

By 1883, Hagar & Campbell’s “New Dime Museum” was proudly advertised as opening on “Monday September 3d.” at the corner of Ninth and Arch Streets. The advertisement boasts a distinct four-story Second Empire Style edifice that is papers with advertisements for the museum.⁹ Just in time for the Centennial Exhibition, the Second Empire Style was so popular among Philadelphians and beyond that companies like Cunningham & Hill, Manufacturers and Retailers of Flags and Shields, used an edifice not entirely dissimilar in size, scale, and style from the subject in one of their advertisements.



Advertisement Card: “Hagar & Campbell’s Dime Museum, Ninth & Arch Sts. Opens Monday September 3d. 1883.” (The Stobridge Lithograph Co., 1883). Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.

⁸ “Company History,” The Philadelphia Contributionship. Accessed 25 January 2017. <<http://www.contributionship.com/history/tour.html>>

⁹ Advertisement Card: “Hagar & Campbell’s Dime Museum, Ninth & Arch Sts. Opens Monday September 3d. 1883.” (The Stobridge Lithograph Co., 1883). Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Advertisement of Cunnigham & Hill, 204 Church Street, Philadelphia, c. 1876.
Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.

The Second Empire Style was particularly popular in its application to Philadelphia’s residential architecture with a continual use in detached, semi-detached (twins) and row houses from the 1860s into the early twentieth century. Yet we understand that the French influence in local domestic architecture appeared earlier, if not just for brief moment. Purported to be the first Mansard roof in America, Robert Morris, known as the “Financier of the American Revolution,” commissioned the éminent architect, Pierre Charles L’Enfant, to design a mansion for him about 1794. However, after the project was well underway, he underwent major financial problems that prevented him from finishing the house. As a result, the building became known as “Morris’ Folly,” standing unfinished on a large parcel bound by Chestnut Street at the north, 7th Street at the east, Walnut Street at the south, and 8th Street at the west.¹⁰



Detail of “The Morris Mansion, Philadelphia, As It Was.” Source: PhiladelphiaBuildings.org.

¹⁰ Charles Rappleye. Robert Morris: Financier of the American Revolution. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).



Marble Terrace, 3200 Block of Chestnut Street, West Philadelphia, c. 1872.
Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.

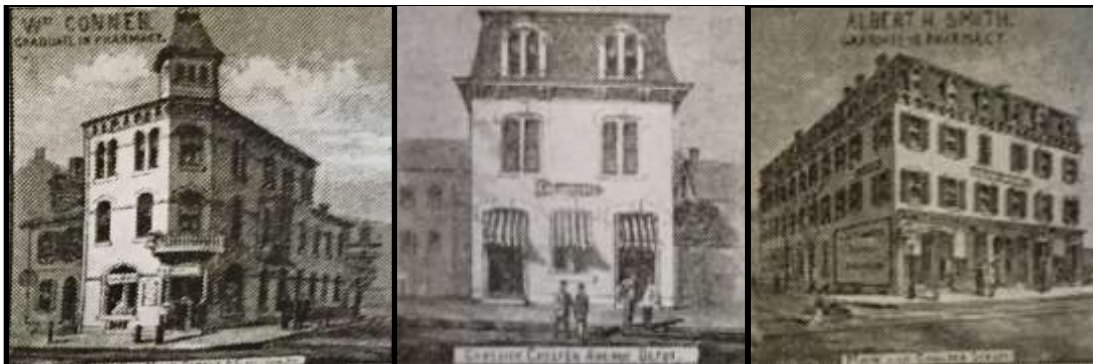
After Morris' Folley, the employment of the Mansard roof was almost entirely dormant until the period of the Second Empire. In the 1860s, one of the most impressive blocks to be constructed in Philadelphia was known as Marble Terrace, c. 1870. Located in the 3200 Block of Chestnut Street, the development was described in real estate advertisements as: "Handsome Modern Four-story Marble Front," a property that was, in fact, four stories in height—the fourth floor being a Mansard roof with a variation of dormer styles typical of high style designs of the 1860s and 1870s.¹¹ A similar marble-front development was completed in the same style on the northeast side of Ridge Avenue just below Girard Avenue, the last vestiges of which are being destroyed today. In West Philadelphia, the style was employed in both attached and semi-detached houses. Further south in West Philadelphia, the development of a street car suburb led to the construction of numerous detached and semi-detached houses. Many of these residences were designed in the Second Empire Style. One early section, the Satterlee Heights Development, began with several houses in the 4300 block of Osage Avenue. This block features an intact row of twin houses with Mansard roofs and verandahs, the first of these being built about 1871.¹²

¹¹ "M. Thomas & Sons. Auctioneers," *Legal Gazette*. (15 May 1874), p. 160.

¹² Oscar Beisert. "Nomination of a Historic Building, Structure, Site, or Object: 4300-03 Osage Avenue." Philadelphia Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Philadelphia Historical Commission, Philadelphia, 2015.



Detail from Satterlee Heights. Satterlee Hospital Grounds, 27th Ward. West Philadelphia., n.d. Note: the large detached house facing onto 42nd Street is labeled “12” and was the home of Samuel Sloan. Immediately to the north, a twin is labeled with two numbers, “13” and “14,” being the homes John F. Bush and Mrs. M. Harding. Each of these house appear to be designed in the Second Empire Style. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.



Detail views from The lithograph, “Germantown, Viewed from the Town Hall Tower, 1884,” including William Conner’s Pharmacy at the corner of Germantown and Cheltenham Avenues (demolished); Greenwood’s “Opposite Cheltenham Avenue Depot”, which appears to be extant at 153 E. Cheltenham Avenue; and Albert Smith’s Building, including his Pharmacy, at the corner of Germantown Avenue and E. Coulter Street (demolished). Source: the Scrapbook Collection of John B. Harting (in possession of the descendants).

Historic Context: Evidence of the Second Empire Style in the German Township

In Germantown, Mount Airy, and Chestnut Hill, the Second Empire Style and the Mansard roof were popularized in similar building types as in the larger realm of Philadelphia—primarily commercial, institutional and residential. The lithograph, “Germantown, Viewed from the Town Hall Tower, 1884,” makes a particularly good case in showing the popularity and subsequent employment of the style in that locality. It showcases three buildings that employed elements of the style: William Conner’s Pharmacy at the corner of Germantown and Cheltenham Avenues (demolished); Albert Smith’s Building, including his Pharmacy, at the corner of Germantown Avenue and E. Coulter Street (demolished); and Greenwood’s “Opposite Cheltenham Avenue Depot”, which appears to be extant at 153 E. Cheltenham Avenue. All of these buildings were added to the Germantown landscape between 1860 and 1880 and featured elements of style that emulate and reference the Second Empire Style. At 5706 Germantown Avenue, the Savings Fund Society of Germantown and Its Vicinity was erected by the organization in 1868 and later became the site of John S. Trower’s Restaurant, as well as the center of his

business affairs. Both the Greenwood's and the Savings Fund Society were designed in the Second Empire Style, emulating fully articulated buildings in dense sections of Germantown. These buildings are similar in form to the subject building—a basic rectangle or square form with a symmetrical façade, a decorative and/or bracketed cornice, and a fully articulated Mansard roof. Another building that was renovated to have the same appearance once stood at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Armat Street. The Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Germantown had “improved” a Federal style building to appear in the Second Empire Style, adding a brownstone façade and a Mansard roof.



On left is John S. Trower's Building (formerly the Savings Fund Society of Germantown & Its Vicinity). c. 1890. Source: the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Germantown, c. 1880.
Source: the Germantown Historical Society.

Institutional buildings throughout Philadelphia were completed in the Second Empire Style, and this was particularly true in Germantown. Immaculate Conception Church and St. Vincent’s College is a large complex of buildings that includes specimens of the subject style. This is a particularly poignant example as all of the buildings on the site are built of Wissahickon Schist. This gives the execution of the Second Empire Style a particularly local distinction. Another like-building was Little Sisters of the Poor in Church Lane below Chew Avenue. Designed by Ballinger & Perrot, Architects, this building was also constructed entirely in Wissahickon Schist and featured a fully articulated, complex Mansard roof. It was a magnificent specimen of a Second Empire Style institutional building.¹³

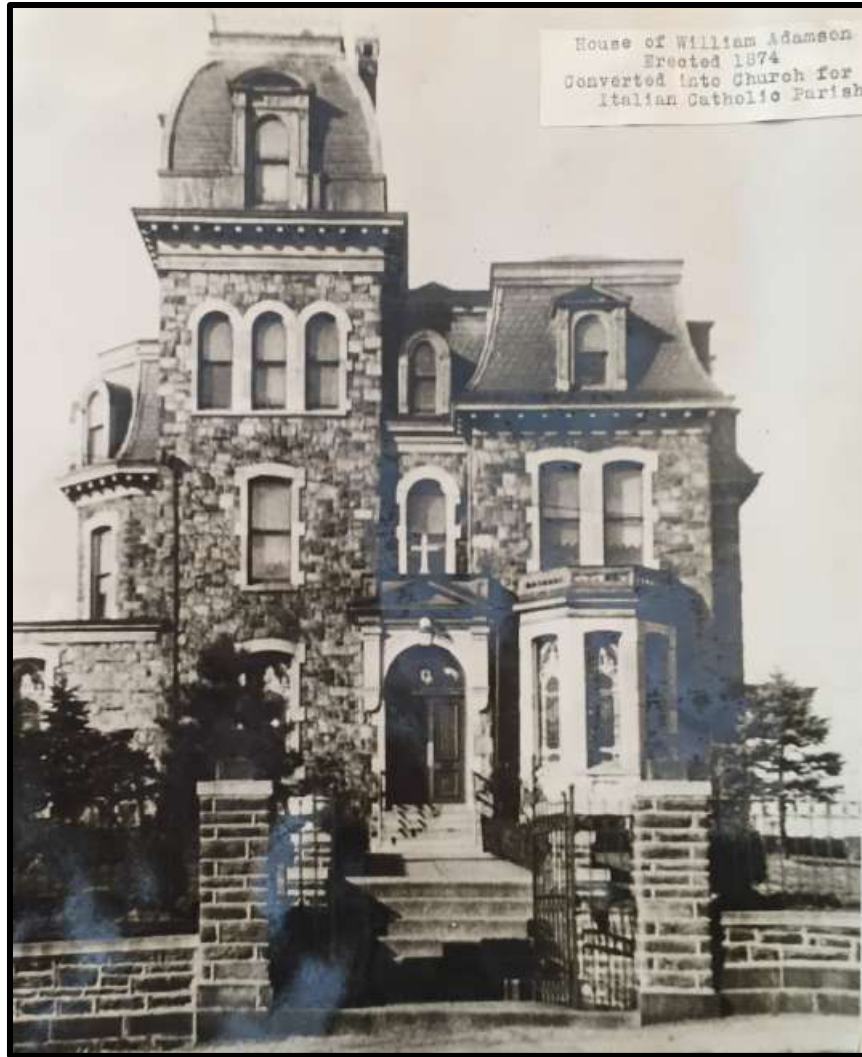


Immaculate Conception Church and St. Vincent’s College, Germantown, Pa., c. 1900-20. Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Little Sisters of the Poor, Church Lane, Germantown, Pa., c. 1900-20. (Destroyed)
Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia

¹³ Postcard: “Little Sisters of the Poor, Germantown, Pa.,” The Library Company of Philadelphia. (1900-20).



The William Adamson Mansion, 4811 Germantown Avenue, Germantown, Pa., c. 1920s.
Source: the Germantown Historical Society.

Most of the Second Empire Style buildings in the German Township are residential. These buildings range from mansions to large detached; semi-detached (twins); and row houses. Even some stables and outbuildings of domestic use were completed with Mansard roofs and bracketed cornices. A large percentage of the houses in Germantown, Mount Airy, and Chestnut Hill were built entirely of Wissahickon Schist, which communicates the Second Empire Style in a local architectural language. One of the grandest of the style erected in Germantown was the mansion of William Adamson, which is extant at 4811 Germantown Avenue. Built in 1874, the house not only had a complex Mansard roof, but it featured a tower. The building was later altered to accommodate an Italian Catholic Parish.¹⁴ A rival in size and scale, the Ebenezer

¹⁴ Photograph: "The William Adamson Mansion," The Germantown Historical Society. (Philadelphia: 1920).

Maxwell Mansion was built earlier in 1859 at 200 W. Tulpehocken Street, employing an eclectic mixture of Victorian-era features. One of these features is the Mansard roof; however, this house only borrows from the Second Empire Style rather than being a pure high style example like the Adamson Mansion.¹⁵



The Butler Mansion, c. 1890. Source: the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. (Demolished)

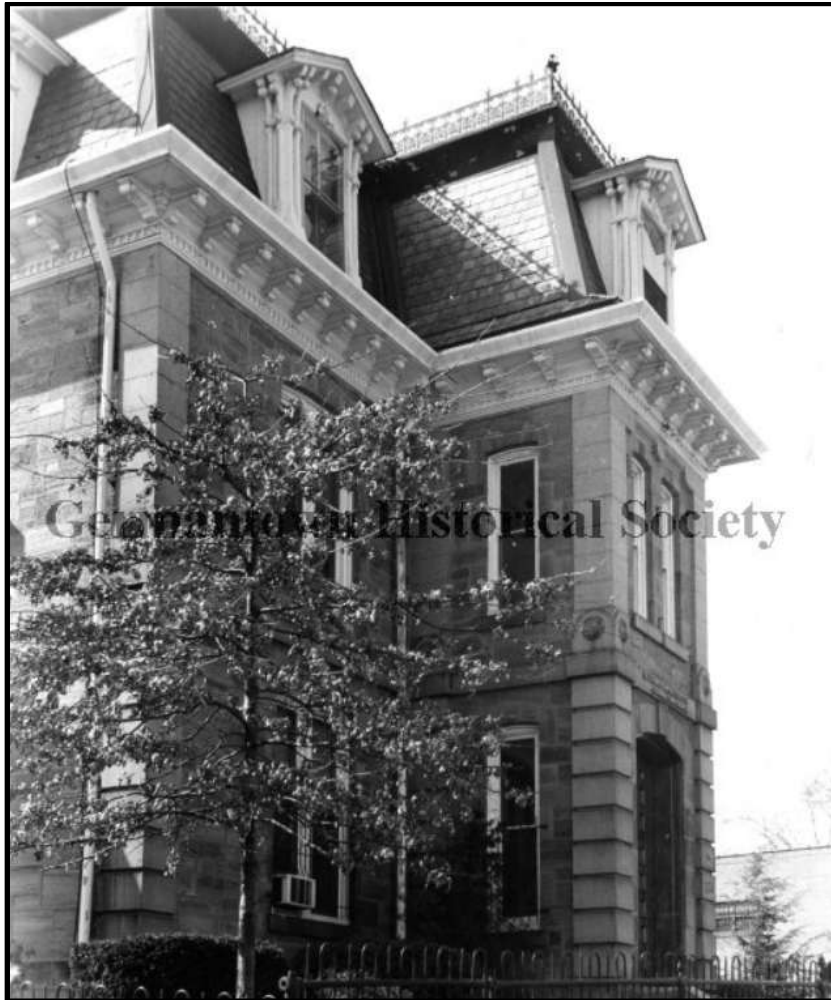
At the site of what is now Germantown High School, the Butler Mansion was erected on the “Old Rose Property,” at least in part, by 1868. The house is rather a hodgepodge of architectural styles and features, but among those components is a distinctive Mansard roof, much like that of the subject house. This building was demolished to make way for Germantown High School.¹⁶ Nearby is the familiar Germantown Music Settlement at 6128 Germantown Avenue. Originally a private residence, this institutional building has changed uses a number of times throughout its history. The building features a fully articulated Mansard roof; a bracketed cornice, and a smooth-faced stone façade with quoins. This building likely dates to the 1860-1880 period.¹⁷ Further up the Avenue in Mt. Airy was a famous old house known as “The Steamboat House” which got its name from a former owner, Erasmus James Pierce, a sea captain. During his ownership the house had a flat roof that was “framed into the appearance of the hurricane deck of a

¹⁵ The Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, 24 February 1971.

¹⁶ Photograph: “The Butler Mansion,” the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. (c. 1890s).

¹⁷ Photograph: “Germantown Settlement Music School,” The Germantown Historical Society. (1914).

steamer.” In a later period of ownership a large Mansard roof was added to the building, obliterating the original purpose of the name.¹⁸



The Germantown Music Settlement. Source: the Germantown Historical Society.

¹⁸ Samuel Fitch Hotchkin. *Ancient and Modern Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill*. (Philadelphia: P.W. Ziegler & Co., 1889), p. 353.



The Steamboat House, Mt. Airy., c. 1900. Source: the Germantown Historical Society.

Prosperous families followed the villa model as established by many architectural authorities of the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The subject house certainly fits into that model of house types executed in the Second Empire Style. It is, by definition, a large house, but not quite large enough to be considered a mansion. A similar house stands at the corner of E. Johnson and Morton Streets—originally owned by the Cummings family, it was later the “Residence of J. Henry Dunn.” This house features a Mansard Roof with dormers, is entirely of Wissahickon Schist, and has a full verandah. The cornice is different from the subject house, having exaggerated brackets that extend freely into the lower stone façade. The window configuration is also different in that the central apertures are single in width, while the flanking windows are paired.¹⁹



“Residence of J. Henry Dunn” at the corner of E. Johnson and Morton Streets. (1910)
Source: the Germantown Historical Society.

¹⁹ “Residence of J. Henry Dunn” at the corner of E. Johnson and Morton Streets. (1910)
Source: the Germantown Historical Society.

Similar versions of the subject house may be found throughout the German Township at the following addresses: 5321 Knox Street, Germantown (c. 1875); the Charles Musgrave House (known today as the Germantown Music Settlement) at 6128 Germantown Avenue, Germantown; the Emory House at 14 Summit Street, Chestnut Hill (c. 1862); and the John Allen House at 314 Wister Street, Germantown (c. 1870). A narrower version of this house type, much similar to the earlier commercial examples provided, stand at the following addresses: 11 W. Walnut Lane, Germantown (c. 1860); 114 W. Coulter, Germantown (c. 1880); 348 W. Allens Lane, Chestnut Hill (c. 1870); 410 E. Locust Avenue, Germantown (c. 1875); 6115 McCallum Street, Germantown (c. 1875); 6119 McCallum Street, Germantown (c. 1875); 6121 McCallum Street, Germantown (c. 1875); 6845 Germantown Avenue, Mount Airy (c. 1875).²⁰

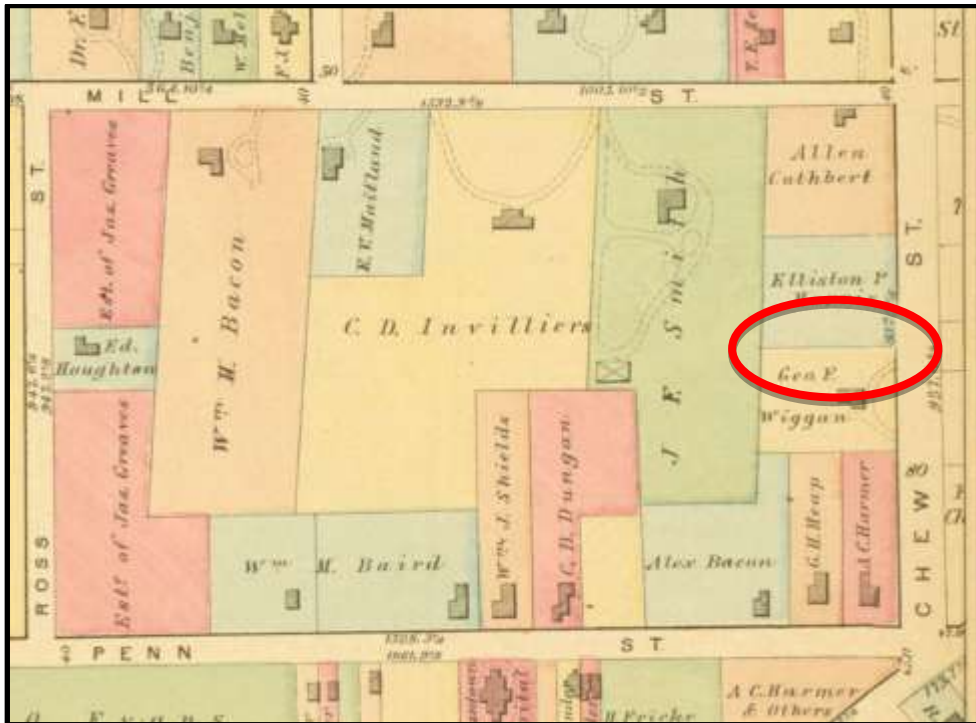


Showing the intended glimpse of middle to upper middle class grandeur of the period, this unidentified Twin was likely in Germantown, c. 1860-70s. Source: the Germantown Historical Society.

²⁰ Joseph Minardi. Historic Architecture in Northwest Philadelphia. (Schiffer Publishing, Limited, 2012).

Semi-detached houses, known as Twins in Philadelphia, are perhaps the most common house type in the the German Township to receive the Second Empire Style treatment and/or, at a minimum, the Mansard roof. Many of these buildings give off the appearance of the subject house, seeming at a distance to be a single house. The following twins are extant in the German Township: 51-53 W. Walnut Lane, Germantown (c. 1860); 120-22 W. Penn Street, Germantown (c. 1875); 324-26 Springfield Avenue, Chestnut Hill (1886); 330-32 Springfield Avenue, Chestnut Hill (1886). These are just a few of endless examples of twin developments in Germantown.²¹

The second half of the nineteenth century saw entire streets developed with twin houses featuring Mansard roofs, such as Maplewood Avenue and Wingohocking Terrace, among many others. Row houses too were also designed in the Second Empire Style and many more simply employed Mansard roofs. Early examples include the following extant buildings in the German Township: 4857-61 Germantown Avenue, Germantown (c. 1870); and a row of houses in E. School Lane.²²



Detail from the Atlas of the Late Borough of Germantown, 22nd Ward, City of Philadelphia, 1871, Plate 10. Created by G.M. Hopkins. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

²¹ Joseph Minardi. Historic Architecture in Northwest Philadelphia. (Schiffer Publishing, Limited, 2012).

²² Joseph Minardi. Historic Architecture in Northwest Philadelphia. (Schiffer Publishing, Limited, 2012).



Detail from the Atlas of the Late Borough of Germantown, 22nd Ward, City of Philadelphia, 1876. Created by G.M. Hopkins. Source: HistoricMapWorks.com.

Historic Context: History of Ownership

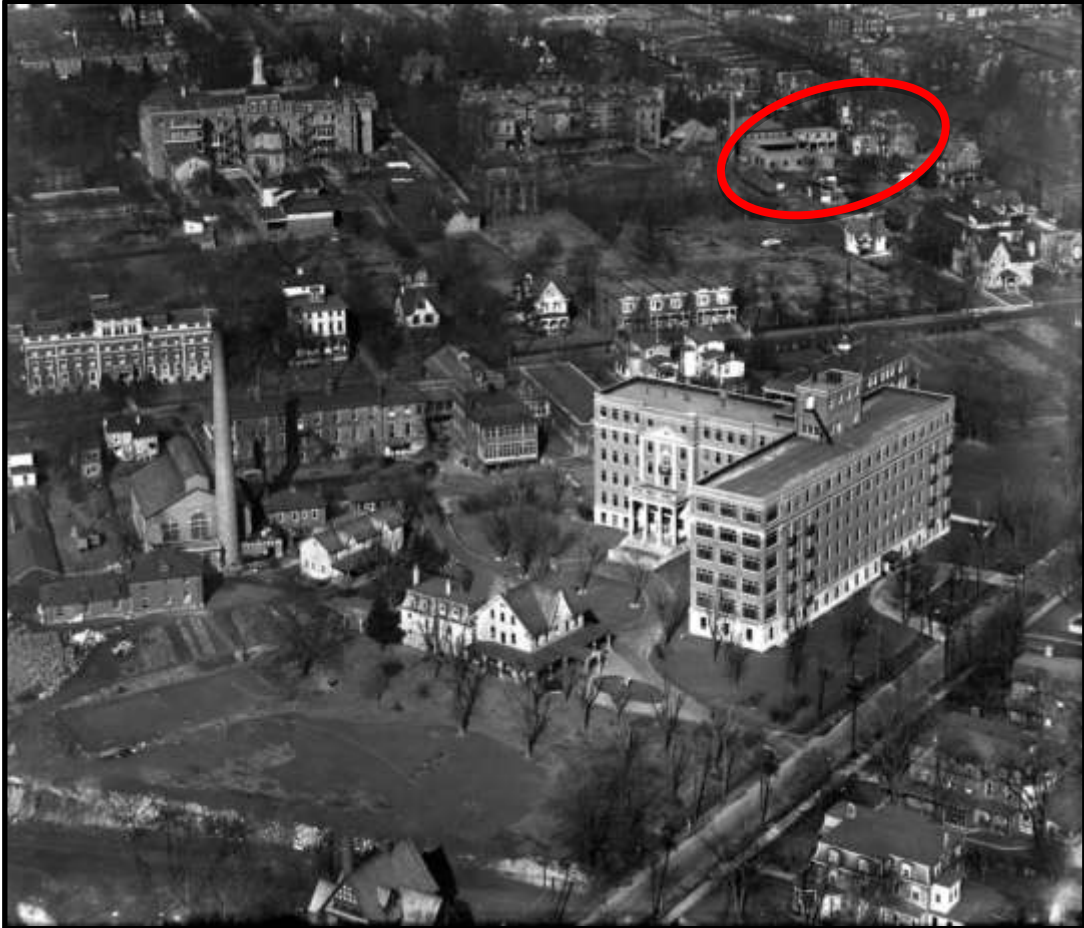
Elliston P. Morris, the well-known Germantown citizen, and his wife Martha owned numerous properties in Germantown, including a parcel in the 5300 Block of Chew Avenue. Morris subdivided his lot and sold the subject parcel to Jonathan Graham, a prosperous local grocer, which was finalized on May 15, 1872. Graham purchased the property for the sum of \$4,343.60.²³ A vacant lot in the Atlas of the Late Borough of Germantown, 22nd Ward, City of Philadelphia, 1871, Plate 10, the property appears to have been constructed soon after the sale. By the time of the Atlas of Philadelphia in 1876, the subject house and a single outbuilding were extant. The Graham Family lived in the house through the turn of the twentieth century.

In 1901, the Estate of Jonathan Graham sold the house to Elizabeth Ross Campbell for \$9,000.²⁴ Just six years later Campbell sold the property to John Petty in 1907.²⁵ After the Pettys the property changed hands a number of times until it was used for charitable purposes.

²³ Deed: Elliston P. and Martha C. Morris, of Germantown, to Jonathan Graham, of Germantown, Grocer, 15 May 1872, Philadelphia Deed Book J.A.H., No. 240, p. 529, CAP.

²⁴ Deed: Jonathan Graham Estate to Elizabeth Ross Campbell, of Bristol Township, brass founder, 1 April 1901, Philadelphia Deed Book J.V., No. 268, p. 5, CAP.

²⁵ Deed: Elizabeth Ross Campbell to John Petty, 4 June 1907, Philadelphia Deed Book W.S.V., No. 873, p. 259, CAP.



Photograph of the Germantown Dispensary and Hospital, Germantown, c. 1926. The subject house is circled in red. Source: the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Detail of the Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Volume 7, 22nd Ward, 1889. Created by George W. & Walter S. Bromley, Civil Engineers. The subject house is circled in red. Source: Greater Philadelphia Geo History Network.



Detail of the 1895 Philadelphia Atlas. Created by G.W. Bromley. The subject house is circled in red. Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.



Detail of the 1910 Philadelphia Atlas. Created by G.W. Bromley. The subject house is circled in red.
Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

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