

Miller House (Argyle Terrace)
2201 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

HABS No. DC-275

HABS
DC,
WASH,
217-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MILLER HOUSE
(ARGYLE TERRACE)

HABS No. DC-275

WASH, 217-

Location: 2201 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.;
on the northwest corner of Massachusetts Avenue and 22nd
Street (formerly Boundary Street). UTM: 18.322780 .4308800

Present Owner: George Howard Bechtel

Present Occupant: Lodgers

Present Use: Argyle Terrace (Rooming House)

Statement of
Significance: This brick structure was designed by Paul J. Pelz,
associate architect of the Library of Congress. The
residence is a late example of the Queen Anne and
Romanesque revivals, modified by 16th century north
European renaissance details. The house occupies a
prominent site at the northwest corner of a major
intersection, which includes 22nd Street, Massachu-
setts Avenue, and Florida Avenue. The property has
one of the city's earliest "automobile" houses de-
signed as an integral part of the architectural
scheme. [Floors as in plans and HABS D. C. Catalog.]

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Lot and Square:

The building is located in Square 2512, lot 800 (formerly part of
lot 1 in Block 7 of "Kalorama Heights").

B. Original and Subsequent Owners:

The following chain of title to the property shows the owners of
the present structure and of any known preceding structures on the
site:

1899 Deed November 27, 1899, recorded December 13, 1899 in
Liber 2475 folio 57

Anna E. L. Beaman et vir,
George H.

To

Alice Townsend Miller

"This Indenture made...by and between Anne E. Lovett Beaman
and George H. Beaman, her husband, both of the District of
Columbia (residing at the time of the making...of these
presents in the city of Paris, France) parties of the first
part and Alice Townsend Miller of said District party of the

second part: Witnesseth that the parties of the first part for and in consideration of Twelve Thousand five hundred (12,500) Dollars...conveyed...unto the party of the second part...Lot...(1) in Block...(7) 'Kalorama Heights' as per plat recorded in Liber County No. 7 folio 34 of the Records of the Office of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia..."

1913 Deed January 27, 1913, recorded February 1, 1913 in
Liber 3575 folio 476

Alice Townsend Miller
To
William F. Dennis

"This Deed made...by and between Alice Townsend Miller of New York City, party hereto of the first part, and William F. Dennis of the District of Columbia, party hereto of the second part;...Part of Lot...(1) in Block...(7) 'Kalorama Heights', as per plat recorded in Liber County No. 7, folio 34 of the Records of the Office of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia, described as follows: - Beginning for the same at the Southeast corner of said lot, and running thence Northwesterly along the Northerly line of Massachusetts Avenue,...49.82 feet to the Southeast corner of the part of said lot conveyed to Emeline D. Lovett by Deed recorded in Liber 2558, folio 167 of the Land Records of said District; thence along the Easterly line of the land so conveyed to said Lovett, North...23 degrees ...57 minutes East,...41.67 feet to the Northeast corner of the land so conveyed; thence along the North line of the land conveyed as aforesaid, North...66 degrees...3 minutes West,...18/100 of a foot to the Westerly line of said Lot...(1); thence Northeasterly, along said Westerly line...58.33 feet to the Northwest corner of said lot; thence Southeasterly along the North line of said lot,...5.56 feet to the Northeast corner of said lot; and thence South along the East line of said lot and the West line of Twenty-second Street...109.42 feet to the point of beginning..."

1923 Deed August 9, 1923, recorded October 5, 1923 in
Liber 5081 folio 473

William F. Dennis et ux,
Clara R.
To
James D. Hobbs
Thomas P. Bones
(joint tenants)

1925 Deed September 1, 1925, recorded September 23, 1925 in
Liber 5599 folio 185

James D. Hobbs
Thomas P. Bones
(joint tenants)
To
Gustave Nassauer

"...Subject to an encumbrance of record, which the party of
the second part assumes and agrees to pay..."

1926 Deed October 4, 1926, recorded November 17, 1926 in
Liber 5878 folio 266

Henry J. Robb
Howard A. Burns, trustees
To
Harry Wardman
Thomas P. Bones
(joint tenants)

"Whereas, Gustave Nassauer (widower) heretofore made and exe-
cuted a certain Deed of Trust bearing date on the tenth day
of September, 1925 and thereby conveyed the...land and pre-
mises...unto James D. Hobbs and Howard A. Burns...And whereas
default having been made in the payment of said debt, the par-
ties of the first part...on the 14th day of September, 1926,
...did sell same at public auction unto Harry Wardman and
Thomas P. Bones as Joint Tenants...for the sum of Twenty Thou-
sand (\$20,000) Dollars..."

1928 Deed September 20, 1928, recorded October 17, 1928 in
Liber 6236 folio 464

Harry Wardman
Thomas P. Bones
(joint tenants)
To
Lincoln Properties Company, Inc.

"...Subject to a duly recorded Deed of Trust of Forty Thou-
sand (\$40,000) Dollars..."

1932 Deed October 18, 1932, recorded October 19, 1932 in
Liber 6694 folio 137

William K. Quinter
James D. Hobbs, Trustees
To

Edward R. True, Jr.

"Whereas, Harry Wardman and Thomas P. Bones, joint tenants heretofore made and executed a certain Deed of Trust,...on the 15th day of December 1927...duly recorded in Liber 6038 at folio 127 and whereas, default having been made in the payment of said debt, the parties of the first part...did sell the same at public auction unto Edward R. True, Jr.,... for the sum of Forty-five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000)..."

1940 Deed February 7, 1940, recorded February 9, 1940 in
Liber 7439 folio 577

Edward R. True, Jr., unmarried
To
Evelyn C. Dodge
Rose B. Covington
(joint tenants)

1947 Deed May 12, 1947, recorded May 23, 1947 in
Liber 8495 folio 343

Rose B. Covington
To
Evelyn L. Dodge

"...All right, title and interest to...Part of Lot...(1) in Block...(7) of John F. Rodgers and Edward J. Stellwagen, Trustees' subdivision of part of a tract of land known as 'Kalorama Heights'..."

1960 Deed November 15, 1960, recorded November 22, 1960 in
Liber 11518 folio 25

Evelyn C. Dodge
Evelyn D. Kirk (formerly Evelyn L. Dodge)
(joint tenants)
To
Oscar Cox

1967 Deed July 5, 1967, recorded August 2, 1967 in
Liber 12781 folio 238

Louise B. Cox
To
Bernard Singer

"...Louise B. Cox, widow and not remarried, also known on record as Louise Black Cox, in her own right and devisee under the last will of Oscar Cox, (also known as Oscar Sydney Cox)..."

1967 Deed August 3, 1967 recorded August 7, 1967 in
Liber 12782 folio 562

Bernard Singer, widower
To
Claire Shinderman

"...an undivided one-fourth (1/4) interest in and to...Part of Lot 1 in Block 7..."

1973 Deed February 5, 1973, recorded February 13, 1973 in
Liber 13448 folio 452

Bernard Singer, widower
Claire Shinderman et vir,
Abraham
To
George Howard Bechtel

Source: Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C.

C. Date of Erection:

The building was begun in March 1900 and completed in 1901.

D. Building Permits:

The applications for the following building permits were filed by the architect, contractor or owner's agent and provide significant data:

No. 1330, March 27, 1900
Permit to build dwelling and "automobile house"
Owner: Capt. Frederick A. Miller, U.S.N.
Architect: Paul J. Pelz
Builder: F. H. Duehay
Estimated cost: \$35,000.

No. 3721, February 11, 1913
Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building
Owner: W. F. Dennis
Architect: Reginald W. Geare
Contractor: James J. Galvin

Estimated cost: \$300.

"The removal of a chimney breast now in place and the rebuilding of same in another position."

No. 4954, April 17, 1913

Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building

Owner: W. F. Dennis

Architect: R. W. Geare

Contractor: J. J. Galvin

Estimated cost: \$200.

"to erect an enclosed porch on the north side of residence at 2201 Mass. Ave. N.W.. Back of building line."

No. 2381, October 14, 1920

Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building

Owner: W. F. Dennis

Contractor: James J. Galvin

"build one 2-story tile conservatory 13' X 15' - make repairs to bay window projection 5' X 16'."

No. 229925, February 23, 1940

Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building

Owner: Rose Covington

Contractor: Jaffe-Dove, Inc.

Estimated cost: \$80.

How occupied: dwelling

"Cut opening through mansard roof, install window, patch roof, and plaster. One rafter will be cut and double header installed above and below window."

No. 275470, January 11, 1945

Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building

Owner: Evelyn Dodge

Designer: P. S. Dove

Contractor: Jaffe-Dove Const.

Estimated cost: \$900.

How occupied: rooming house

"Build 3 dormer windows in slate roof to replace old ones... Window area to be not less than 1/8 of floor area of room in which each is placed."

Source: Record Group 351, Records of the District of Columbia, Building Permits 1877-1949, Legislative and Natural Resources Branch, Civil Div. National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C.

E. Alterations and Additions:

According to building permits, the following alterations or additions were to be made: removal and rebuilding of chimney breast in 1913; erection of enclosed porch on north facade in 1913; and addition of a two-story tile conservatory in 1920. If they were built, the enclosed porch and tile conservatory were subsequently removed.

F. Architect: Paul J. Pelz, Washington, D.C.

Paul Johann Pelz (1841-1918), the son of Eduard Ludwig and Henrietta (Helfensrieder) Pelz, was born in Germany. His father went to New York in 1851 while Paul remained in Germany with his mother until his education was completed. After joining his father in Hoboken, N.J. in 1858, Paul was apprenticed to a New York architect, Detlef Lienau. By 1864 Pelz had become the chief draftsman for the firm. Two years later, he left Lienau's office and went to Washington, D.C. where he eventually became chief draftsman of the U.S. Lighthouse Board.

In 1873 Pelz and John L. Smithmeyer, another Washington architect, won a competition for the design of the Library of Congress. Thirteen years later, Congress authorized construction of the library. Smithmeyer was appointed architect of the project, but was removed after a disagreement over the choice of construction materials. Pelz was then retained by Gen. Thomas L. Casey, Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army, to carry out the original design.

Other buildings designed by Smithmeyer and Pelz were: Academic Building, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.; U.S. Army and Naval Hospital, Hot Springs, Ark.; Carnegie Library and Music Hall, Allegheny, Pa.; Administration Building at the Clinic Hospital, University of Virginia; and the Chamberlain Hotel, Fort Monroe, Va.. Independently, Mr. Pelz planned a number of residences and office buildings in Washington. (Withey, p. 466) One office building was the McGill Building located at 9th and G Streets, N.W. (destroyed in 1973).

Pelz was married twice. His first wife, Louise Dorothea Kipp of Hoboken, N.J., died in 1894 - leaving two children: Carl Eduard and Beatrice. February 23, 1895, Pelz married Mrs. Mary Eastbourne (Ritter) Meem.

Sources: The National Cyclopedia of American Biography, Vol. XXV, New York: James T. White & Company, 1936, pp. 424-425.

Who Was Who in America 1897-1942: A Companion Volume to Who's Who in America, Vol. I, Chicago: The A. N. Marquis Co., 1942.

Dumas Malone (ed.), Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XIV, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932.

Henry F. Withey and Elsie R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956.

The Sunday Star, 3-31-18, 3:4 (obituary).

G. Known Plans, Drawings, Elevations, etc.: none found.

H. Important Old Views:

Photograph: exterior view from east.

A History of the City of Washington, Its Men and Institutions,
by the Washington Post Co., 1903, p. 429.
(see reproduction)

I. Residents:

1. City and telephone directories list the following tenants:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1901-1907 | Frederick A. Miller |
| 1908-1913 | No listing found |
| 1914 | William F. Dennis |
| 1915-1917 | Charles N. Riker |
| 1918-1921 | William F. Dennis |
| 1922 | Vacant |
| 1923 | Costa Rican Legation Salvadorean Legation |
| 1924-1926 | Costa Rican Legation |
| 1927-1933 | Vacant |
| 1934 | William P. Blair, Farm Credit Adm. |
| 1935 | Mrs. Inez P. Poier, furn. rms. |
| 1936 | Ernest J. (Inez P.) Poirior, salesman |
| 1937 | Mrs. Inez P. Poirior |
| 1938 | Ernest J. (Inez J.) Poirior, restr. 1240 22nd; home 2201 Mass. |
| 1939 | Mrs. Inez Poirior |
| 1940 | Theodore (Hazel A.) Hoffman |
| 1941-1948 | Mrs. Evelyn C. Dodge |
| 1949-1968 | Argyle Terrace, rms. |
| 1969-1972 | Singer's Argyle Guest House |
| 1973 | Argyle Terrace |

2. The following residents were included in volumes of The Elite List: A Compilation of Selected Names of Residents of Washington City, D.C. and Ladies Shopping Guide:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1901-1902 | Frederick A. Miller, Lieut. Commander and Mrs. |
| 1903-1904 | Frederick A. Miller, Lieut. Commander and Mrs.; Miss Edith Miller |
| 1905-1907 | Frederick A. Miller, Lieut. Commander and Mrs.; Miss Edith Miller; Miss Alice Miller |
| 1908-1910 | F. A. Miller, Commander and Mrs. and drs. 2201 Mass. Ave. and Lakewood, N.J. |

- 1911 F. A. Abercrombie-Miller, Commander and Mrs.;
The Misses Abercrombie-Miller
- 1913 Mr. and Mrs. Walcott R. Tuckerman
Mrs. F. A. Abercrombie-Miller
Miss Miller
- 1914-1918 Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Dennis
Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Riker

3. Biographies of the residents:

Frederick Augustus Miller, the son of Frederick A. M. and Martha Mason Abercrombie Miller, was born in Elkton, Maryland on June 12, 1842. After his education in local schools and Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, he joined the Navy on September 11, 1861 as a master's mate. During the Civil War, Miller participated in several battles, including Donaldsonville and Mobile, Ala. - as well as skirmishes along the Mississippi River. He achieved the rank of lieutenant-commander in 1882; retired from active service as a captain on November 30, 1885; and for his Civil War service was promoted to commander in 1906.

After his retirement, Commander Miller lived in Washington, D.C. where he was treasurer of St. John's Orphanage; director of the Workingman's Club; a director of the Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital; a regent of the Blind Men's Home; and member of the board of directors of American Security and Trust Company. His social activities included membership in the Metropolitan, Cosmos, and Chevy Chase Clubs.

His home at 2201 Massachusetts Avenue was constructed between 1900 and 1901. Since few houses had been built this far west on the avenue at the time, Commander Miller was considered bold.

Frederick Augustus Miller...is one of the staunchest believers in the future of Washington, which he predicts will in the course of a few years not only be the most beautiful city in the world, but is fast becoming the Mecca for the wealth, fashion and culture of the United States. With the courage of his convictions, within the past few years Captain Miller erected at the northwest corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Twenty-second street one of the most beautiful homes in the national capital. No expense was spared in this work, and the house stands boldly forth on the bluff it occupies, as one of the best examples of the architect's (Pelz) art and skill... The hand carving which adorns the newels,

cornices and arches are works of art, while in design it is plainly discernible that Captain Miller's beloved profession furnished the theme for the many nautical figures that there abound... (A History of Washington, Its Men and Institutions, p. 429)

Miller died in 1909 leaving his wife Alice Townsend Miller and three children: Edith, Alice, and Townsend Miller. A letter filed with his will states that "Since the date of the execution of this will [1903] the testator's name was legally changed to Abercrombie-Miller, so that the will is filed as that of Commander Frederick Augustus Abercrombie-Miller, United States Navy."

Sources: American Biographical Directories, District of Columbia, 1908-1909, Washington, D.C.: The Potomac Press, 1908.

The Washington Post Co., A History of the City of Washington, Its Men and Institutions, ed. by Allan B. Slauson, Washington, D.C.: The Henry E. Wilkens Printing Co., pp. 429-430.

Countess Alice de Castellane, Commander Miller's daughter, died in 1965 at the age of 80. She had been graduated from the National Cathedral School in 1903 and married to Frederick A. de Peyster of New York in 1907. Having been divorced from her first husband, she remarried in 1930 to Count Bohdan de Castellane of Poland, a former Czarist cavalry officer. They lived in France until the Nazi invasion and then moved to Washington, D.C. The Countess was survived by five children: Frederick A. de Peyster, Jr., Woodbury, N.Y.; James A. de Peyster, Palm Beach, Fla.; Mrs. James Todd, Bedford Village, N.Y.; Mrs. Eric von Raits, Woodbury, N.Y.; and Mrs. J.S. Brittain Walker, Washington, D.C.

Source: The Washington Post, 5-28-65, B 7:5 (obituary).

William F. Dennis bought 2201 Massachusetts Avenue from Mrs. Miller in 1913 and owned it until 1923. The Evening Star, May 3, 1946 stated that Mr. Dennis, a resident of Washington for more than 35 years had been "prominent in the real estate business" in Washington since 1912. However, the city directories indicate that he and his family lived in the Massachusetts Avenue residence and apparently did not lease it as later owners were to do. Dennis also was a partner in the civil engineering firm of Rinehart & Dennis until his retirement in 1924. He died in May 1946 at the age of 85 - leaving his wife, Clara R.; two nephews, John and Albert Dennis; his son-in-law, Charles N. Riker; and his brothers, Albert and Percy Dennis.

Sources: The Evening Star, 5-3-46, 12:5 (obituary).
The Evening Star, 5-28-46, 7:5.
The Washington Post, 5-4-46, B 7:4 (obituary).

During the 1920's and 1930's the house changed hands several times: James D. Hobbs and Thomas P. Bones in 1923; Gustave Nassauer in 1925; Harry Wardman and Thomas P. Bones in 1926; and Edward R. True, Jr., in 1932.

James D. Hobbs, an associate of Harry Wardman, was at one point vice president of Wardman Real Estate Properties. (See biography of Harry Wardman under 2234 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.) He left the organization in 1930. Two years later, he filed for bankruptcy - having more than 100 creditors and debts over \$19 million. "The liability total includes liability on a suit brought against him and others in New York by Custave Nassauer for \$14,525,000." (The Evening Star, 6-4-32)

Sources: The Evening Star, 6-4-32, 16:2.
The Washington Herald, 5-25-32, 1:3.
The Washington Post, 6-4-32, 1:6.

Thomas P. Bones, born in South Dakota, came to Washington in 1900 at the age of 15 and worked as a carpenter with Harry Wardman. He eventually became Wardman's partner and vice president of his company until the late 1920's. "He directed construction for...Harry Wardman on the Carlton Hotel, the Hay-Adams Hotel, The Wardman Park Hotel and Cathedral Mansions. At the time of his death [in 1951] he was associated with the Henry J. Robb real estate firm here." (The Washington Post, 7-27-51)

Sources: The Evening Star, 7-26-51, 30:4 (obituary).
The Washington Post, 7-27-51, B 2:3 (obituary).

The residence was leased to the Costa Rican and Salvadorean Legations from 1923 through 1926 and then apparently left vacant until 1934. City directories show that "Mrs. Inez P. Poier" (or Mrs. Inez P. Poirior?) offered furnished rooms in 1935. Building Permit No. 275470, dated January 11, 1945, also shows that 2201 Massachusetts Avenue had become a rooming house - as it has remained to the present.

Oscar Sydney Cox, who bought the building in 1960, was the author of the Lend-Lease Act in 1940. "Mr. Cox, a native of Portland, Me., was one of the most popular personalities on the Washington scene during the war years. His unfailing good humor and ready wit made him a favorite of President Roosevelt and a frequent guest at informal White House dinners." (The New York Times, 10-6-66)

After working for a New York law firm from 1929 to 1934 and with the city's corporation counsel until 1938, Mr. Cox came to Washington where he served in the government until 1945. His government positions were: assistant to the general counsel of the Treasury Department, 1938-1941; general counsel of the Lend-Lease Administration, 1941-1943; general counsel of the Office of Emergency Management, 1941-1943; Assistant Solicitor General of the U. S., 1942-1943; and general counsel of the Foreign Economic Administration, 1943-1945. For his role in providing economic assistance to foreign nations, Mr. Cox was decorated by the governments of France, Belgium, Italy, and the United States.

He then entered private law practice in Washington and was senior partner of Cox, Langford & Brown when he died in 1966. Mr. Cox was survived by his wife, the former Louise Black, of Washington, D. C.; two sons, Warren J. Cox of Washington, D. C. and Peter W. Cox of Bath, Me.; two brothers, Sydney of Silver Spring, Md. and Morris of Portland, Me.; and a sister, Mrs. Samuel Goldsmith of Portland, Me.

Sources: The New York Times, 10-6-66, 47: 1 (obituary).
The Washington Post, 10-7-66, B4:1 (obituary).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This semidetached structure has an exterior with 16th century North European Renaissance details.
2. Condition: fair, with partitioning and plumbing installations.

B. Exterior Description:

1. Overall dimensions: The basement-and-attic, three-and-one-half-story structure measures 44'-0" from sidewalk to eaves. The three-bay east entrance on 22nd Street has flanking two-bay bows. The two-bay (34'-0") south elevation on Massachusetts Avenue has an east-end, first-floor bay window. The west party wall is 66'-0" and the composite east bay of the north elevation (34'-0") breaks back 8'-6".
2. Foundations: concrete footings and slab.
3. Wall construction: The raised basement has two stone bands of random rustication terminated at the top of the voussoir window lintels by a plain stone frieze capped by a first floor window sill string course. A plain, stone frieze separates the yellow Roman brick walls of the first and second floors. The frieze, interrupted by a swag panel at either entrance elevation bow, rests on first floor window lintel tablets and acts as sill for the second floor windows. A string course over the entrance serves as sill for the central third floor bay. A crossette swag panel separates the two third floor bays of either bow.
4. Structure: brick bearing walls with wood floor and roof systems.
5. Mechanical: The building has a hot water, hand-fired, coal heating system. The lighting is electric.
6. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: The stone entrance stoop and porch on 22nd Street is approached by two sets of risers, splayed out from center line and bordered by cheek walls and turned stops. They ascend separately six risers from the south and five risers from the north to separate midlandings from which five additional risers, with panelled balustrades and square posts, ascend to a common second landing which overlooks the street. From this second landing (with mosaic floor, rusticated retaining wall and decorative balustrade with posts), a final set of seven risers ascends over a basement areaway to the entrance porch, each side pierced by a single three-point arch flanked by composite piers on pedestals and capped

by a staggered entablature with fascia architrave, plain frieze, dentil cornice and balustrade with single decorative panels, pedestals and urns.

7. Chimneys: Visible from the street are two chimneys. The chimney set at right angles to the north wall retains its decorative terra cotta frieze capped by brick smoke vents.
8. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Each leaf of the oak, double door entrance has a raised rectangular panel intersected by a centered oval with scrolls at bottom and top.
 - b. Windows: Each basement window head has rounded corners and a voussoir lintel with panelled keystone. The first-floor has double-hung windows with transoms, each having a console-supported cornice and tablet cap. The second-floor double-hung windows have stone voussoir lintels and scroll keystones. The third-floor double-hung windows have stone sills (on brackets) and voussoir lintels.

The exceptions include:

- (1.) the first-floor, tripartite, southwest bay with its keystone and semicircular arch on panelled pilasters.
 - (2.) the 13'-6" wide, 4'-2" deep, southeast bay window. The frieze capping the rusticated basement wall is punctuated by panels over which single, composite pilasters separate each section of the side and facade openings; the bay is capped by a plain entablature and balustrade (with centered decorative panel) which is an extension of the building frieze;
 - (3.) the first-floor northeast bay, called the Admiral Farragut window, with a keystone and semicircular arch on panelled pilasters;
 - (4.) the casement window and transom over the entrance, in turn flanked by smaller casement windows without scroll keystones; and
 - (5.) the two casement windows with decorative flat hoods which flank the third-floor central bay over the entrance.
9. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The entrance elevation bows each have a conical slate roof which extends the depth of the building, both united by a central mansard pierced by a skylight and extended over the north elevation by a second mansard with a

quatrefoil and finial, stone parapet. The conical peaks each have a metal finial, their extended roof ridges capped by decorative copper flashing.

- b. Cornice, eaves: The entablature has an astragal architrave, a striated frieze punctuated by shell and ribbon panels centered over each bay, and an astragal, egg-and-dart, dentil and corona cornice with an acanthus cyma, copper gutter. The cornice does not extend over the central bays of the entrance.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Of the six dormers (two each over the south and north elevations and one centered over each bow) the three south dormers have been replaced. The original stone dormers each have flanking composite pilasters and a plain entablature capped by a swag tablet and a scroll pediment. The third-story central bay and the entablature frieze over the entrance break slightly forward for a dormer with splayed composite piers. The piers flank the window area and support a stone entablature and brick parapet with pedestal stops, centered pediment and finial.

C. Interior Description:

1. Floor plans: The basement floor is arranged along a north to south corridor with access to the former northeast kitchen, the east servants' hall and the northwest service stair; the remaining area devoted to mechanical and storage.

The east entrance vestibule and flanking window seat alcoves project into the central front hall which is separated from the west stair by a modillioned beam on fluted Ionic columns. The south drawing room has access to both the hall and stair, as do the northeast dining room and the northwest service stair and pantry. Bathroom partitioning occupies the southwest corner of the hall and the drawing room is partitioned into three rooms and a corridor. (See plan.)

The second-floor north-to-south corridor gives access to a southwest library and three bedroom suites on 22nd Street. The third floor is arranged similarly. The fourth floor contains servants' quarters.

2. Spaces:

Entrance vestibule:

- a. Flooring: centered mosaic medallion with Greek key border.
- b. Wainscot: 5'-0" high, green and brown mosaic with Pompeian swags on a grey ground.
- c. Walls: plaster painted white.

- d. Cornice: wood, cyma.
- e. Ceiling: oak, plain coffers.
- f. Doorways and doors: The wood double door to the hall has bevelled glass panels and a transom.
- g. Hardware: The street door has decorative brass oval knobs.
- h. Lighting: hanging glass globe in iron leaf and vine mesh.

Front hall:

- a. Flooring: basket weave parquetry with cherry border.
- b. Baseboard: 6", wood with cyma cap.
- c. Wainscot: oak-panelled, 4'-6" high. The remaining window alcove (north) has a bench with back rest, console arm and decorative rosettes.
- d. Walls: plaster painted white.
- e. Cornice: wood, cyma.
- f. Ceiling: 11'-8" high, plaster center. The corner coffers of the wood border have centered patters.
- g. Doorways and doors: The remaining window alcove (north) is framed by a semicircular arch on consoles. The wood, sliding double doors from the hall to the dining and drawing rooms each have a fascia architrave with flower basket frieze cap. There are single wood doors at the northwest and southwest. The single door under the stair is capped by a floral scroll pediment.
- h. Lighting: hanging, opaque glass globe in stair hall.

Stair:

The main stair ascends five risers to a square landing, one riser west to a second landing, fourteen risers north to a third, and four risers east to the second floor. The oak risers, treads and stringer have an obelisk baluster railing which terminates at the panelled newel in an acanthus scroll. The three story stair has a skylight.

- a. Cornice: third floor, alternating swag and flambeau frieze, with dentil cornice.
- b. Ceiling: skylight in paired diamond pattern with plaster rosette border.

Drawing room: (partitioned into three rooms and a corridor.)

- a. Flooring: basket weave parquetry with cherry border.
- b. Baseboard: 6", painted wood with cyma cap.
- c. Walls: plaster, painted.
- d. Cornice: dentils, egg and dart.
- e. Ceiling: 11'-8" high, plaster painted white.
- f. Doorways and doors: The wood, sliding double door to the hall has a fascia architrave with swag frieze flanked by modillions and capped by a cyma cornice.
- g. Windows: The southeast bay window has a raised-panel, wood dado and an architrave opening of fascia and rinceau capped by an escutcheon-centered scroll pediment.
- h. Lighting: There are two-light, tulip-cup-and-leaf base, bronze sconces.
- i. Heating: The west wall chimney mantel (6'-0" wide by 5'-0" high) has a green-veined white marble firebox surround, flanking paired and fluted Ionic columns, a ribbon and garland architrave, a shell and floral swag frieze, and an egg and dart shelf.

Dining room: (See photographs.)

- a. Flooring: basket weave parquetry with cherry border.
- b. Baseboard: 6", wood with cyma cap.
- c. Dado: two rows of raised wood panels, small over large.
- d. Chairrail: 5'-0" high, bead and fascia.
- e. Walls: plaster painted white.
- f. Ceiling: The 11'-8" high, plaster ceiling is bordered by wood beams and coffers and centered by two circles, their intersection framing an escutcheon and acorn spray rosette.
- g. Doorways and doors: The wood, sliding double door to the hall has a fascia architrave with fruit frieze flanked by rosettes and consoles which support a modillion cornice.
- h. Windows: The Admiral Farragut Memorial window on the north wall has a raised-panel, wood dado, a serving counter and five, green crown glass, casement openings between alternating panelled pilasters. The pilasters

support a semicircular, nautical transom of green and blue glass with a wood, console keystone, and shell and ribbon spandrels. The window is flanked by crossette-panelled pedestals each supporting paired Ionic pilasters below a plain architrave, a frieze and a staggered dentil and cyma cornice. The windows of the bow each have a fascia architrave with midpoint consoles.

- i. Lighting: There is a gilded leaf, crystal pendant, brass chandelier with four curvilinear arms and a light bulb crown.
- j. Heating: There are built-in, fret and quatrefoil, brass wall registers beneath each window sill.

The west wall chimney has a brown tile hearth and a cast iron shell and ribbon firebox. The wood mantel (7'-0" wide by 5'-6" high) has a brown tile firebox surround; paired flanking Ionic columns; a recessed dolphin, shell and floral frieze, broken forward in shell and ribbon over either set of paired columns; and a plain shelf with center swell. The bevelled overmantel mirror has a crossette architrave flanked by scrolls.

Library: (second floor)

- a. Flooring: 2", common hardwood.
- b. Baseboard: 6", wood with cyma cap.
- c. Walls: plaster. Flanking the west chimney wall are built-in cabinets which support bookcase bays (with doors of beveled glass painted over) bordered by paired composite columnettes.
- d. Cornice: denticulated.
- e. Ceiling: plaster painted white.
- f. Heating: The west wall chimney has a cast iron firebox. The wood (3'-6" high) mantel has a maroon tile firebox surround; flanking composite columns on pedestals; a plain architrave; paired consoles flanking a decorative frieze; and a cyma shelf. The overmantel mirror has flanking composite pilasters and cyma cornice capped by a roundel panel to ceiling height with flanking decorative consoles.

D. Site:

1. Setting and orientation: The building faces east on a lot

measuring 109'-5" on 22nd Street, 49'-10" on Massachusetts Avenue, 100'-0" on the west and 5'-7" on the north alley.

2. Enclosures: An oval guilloche stone balustrade borders on the south. Ten-foot-high brick walls connect the building to its north garage. Enclosing a courtyard the wall is pierced by a decorative iron street gate within a stone, semicircular archway. The lot is enclosed by a cyclopean stone retaining wall and an iron fence at the northeast.
3. Outbuildings: The northeast brick garage, with access from the north alley, has round corner projections, a semicircular-arched street entrance for dogs, a stone architrave with brick frieze and stone cornice, and a slate mansard roof with stone ridges and finials.
4. Walks: courtyard, concrete.
5. Landscaping: The lawn on Massachusetts Avenue has English ivy, with beech, linden, maple and spruce trees.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This document, made from records donated to the Historic American Buildings Survey by the Commission of Fine Arts, 708 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D. C., represents studies of prime, typical, diversified and sumptuous architecture erected primarily between the years 1890 and 1930, when American society and architecture were greatly influenced by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. The material, originally organized for adaptation to the Historic American Buildings Survey format, was first published in Massachusetts Avenue Architecture, Vol. 1, in 1973, issued by the Commission of Fine Arts, Charles H. Atherton, Secretary; Donald B. Myer, Assistant Secretary; Jeffrey R. Carson, Architectural Historian; Lynda L. Smith, Historian; and J. L. Sibley Jennings, Jr., Architect. Photographs were made for the Commission by Jack E. Boucher, Linwood, New Jersey; J. Alexander, Wheaton, Maryland; and the Commission of Fine Arts Staff. The material, donated December 1973, was coordinated for the HABS documented in 1978 by Lucy Pope Wheeler, HABS Writer/Editor.

Documentation of this property could not have been achieved without the cooperation of organizations and people concerned with the Commission's study-- Mr. George H. Bechtel, owner of Argyle Terrace; the late Mrs. Christina Hull, former resident manager, and Mr. John Hays, resident manager in 1973.