

Carriage House
1313 31st Street, N.W.
Washington (Georgetown)
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-250

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

CARRIAGE HOUSE

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Location: 1313 31st Street, N.W., (Georgetown), east side of 31st Street (formerly Congress Street) approximately ninety-three feet south of Dumbarton Avenue, Washington, D.C. (the northernmost of a pair of carriage houses)

Present Owner and Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Garrison Norton
3040 Dumbarton Avenue, N.W. (Georgetown)

Present Use: Private garage

Statement of Significance: This structure is one of the few remaining Victorian carriage houses in Georgetown that is relatively unchanged.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The deed of 1857 mentions the presence of side buildings, one of which may have been the carriage house. The actual carriage house is not mentioned until a deed of 1913 (Liber 3621 folio 213).
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The building is located in Square 1233, lot 828 (formerly a part of lot 66). The following is an incomplete chain of title to the property. The references are to the Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C.

1795 Deed February 14, 1795, recorded June 13, 1795 in
Liber B folio 224
George Scott
To
Thomas Turner
Conveys lots 66 and 67 in Beall's addition to
Georgetown beginning at the end of lot 59 and
running northerly on Congress Street 120',
then easterly on Dumbarton Avenue 60'
Consideration: 220 pounds

1851 Deed November 28, 1851, recorded January 8, 1852 in
Liber JAS 34 folio 174
Charles C. Thomas
To
John Marbury

Recites that Thomas Turner, deceased, did purchase from Catherine C. Thomas, mother of Charles C. Thomas, all of her interest in the above named ground...said Catherine Turner having died without conveying said property to Thomas Turner, Charles C. Thomas deemed it just and proper to release all his right and interest inherited in said ground from his mother to John Marbury, Trustee for the heirs of Thomas Turner...John Marbury was appointed trustee to sell above.

1855 Deed October 11, 1855, recorded March 29, 1856 in
Liber JAS folio 296
John Marbury, Trustee, 1st party
To
William Gody, 2nd party
To
Richard Cruickshank
Lots 66 and 67 situated at the southeast corner
of the intersection of Congress and Dumbarton
forming a square 120' on each side

1857 Deed March 7, 1857, recorded April 2, 1857 in
Liber JAS 131 folio 66
Richard Cruickshank et ux Ann Jane
To
William Berry
Lots 66 and 67 "...with the three story brick
dwelling house and side buildings and all other
improvements thereon..."
Consideration: \$10,000

1865 Deed December 5, 1865, recorded January 19, 1866 in
Liber RMH 3 folio 482
William J. Berry et ux Sarah E.
To
Louis Mackall, Jr.
Consideration: \$15,000

1962 Deed May 18, 1962, recorded June 19, 1962 in
Liber 947-99 folio 19348
Margaret Mackall Israel and Fiedler Israel
Louis Mackall and wife Julia C. Mackall
Lucy Haw Mackall
devises under the will of Lucy H. Mackall
To
Garrison Norton and Emily McM. Norton

4. Original plans and construction: None found.
5. Alterations and additions: The facade appears to have been added to the original structure at a somewhat later date.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

1. Dr. Louis Mackall, Jr.:

Dr. Louis Mackall, Jr., who lived in the house at 3040 Dumbarton Avenue (using the carriage house for many years), was a member of a family of early settlers of Calvert County, Maryland. The family moved to Georgetown, where the senior Dr. Mackall was born in 1802. He was a graduate of the University of Maryland Medical School. His wife was Sarah Somervell Mackall who died in 1831 shortly after giving birth to their only son, Louis Jr.

Louis Mackall, Jr., was born in Prince Georges County, Maryland, in 1831 but moved to Georgetown in 1839. He was educated at Mr. Abbott's Academy and Georgetown College. Like his father, he too graduated from the University of Maryland Medical School and then returned to Georgetown to aid his father in his prosperous practice. He was chosen a councilman and member of the board of health of Georgetown; he was made a director of the Potomac Insurance Company of Georgetown. Like his father he was a well-respected and prominent physician in the city. He eventually became a president of the American Medical Association. "...~~he~~ has been a prolific writer on medical subjects, and a frequent contributor to the magazines designed to promote a knowledge of therapeutics and the practice of medicine." (Eminent and Representative Men of Virginia and the District of Columbia of the Nineteenth Century, Madison, Wisconsin, 1893, p. 208)

Dr. Mackall was chosen to guard President Lincoln at his first inauguration.

In 1851 he married Miss Margaret McVean; they had nine children, but only six of them survived. The Mackall family home was at 43 Dumbarton Avenue (now 3040 Dumbarton), and the doctor's office was listed at the corner of Congress and Bridge Streets (now 31st and M Streets). One of the sons, Louis III, became a doctor and took over his father's practice.

For an excerpt of Dr. Mackall's writings, see HABS No. DC-249.

(Information on Dr. Mackall is taken from Eminent and Representative Men, and from Sally Somervell Mackall, p. 183.)

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: None found.

2. Bibliography:

a. Primary and Unpublished Sources:

District of Columbia Deed Books, Recorder of Deeds,
Washington, D.C.

b. Secondary and Published Sources:

Eminent and Representative Men of Virginia and the
District of Columbia of the Nineteenth Century.
Madison, Wisconsin, 1893.

Mackall, Sally Somervell. Early Days of Washington.
Washington, D.C., 1899.

Prepared by Ellen Schwartz
Architectural Historian
Commission of Fine Arts
August 1969

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This structure is one of the very few late 19th-century carriage houses remaining in Georgetown. (It is the northernmost of a pair of carriage houses.)
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in good condition. There have been a number of changes, however. The ground level floor is modern poured concrete, and the walls of both the first and second levels are covered with concrete. Many of the second level floor joists are recent, as is the flooring itself. The building seems to have undergone a major change in the late 19th century, when the present facade was added to an earlier structure, extending the structure about 9' to the west. This is surmised from the changes in the roof framing, and a crack down the south exterior wall at the point of the main north-south floor beam.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: This almost-square building measures 23'-9" north-south by 26'-5" east-west (interior). The two-bay, 1-1/2 story facade faces west. The first floor has an 8'-1" ceiling height; and the second, 6'-0" (to wall plate).
2. Foundations: Not visible.

3. Wall construction: Walls are load bearing brick, laid in common bond, 8" thick. They are now painted a yellow-tan. There is evidence of some rebricking on the facade and on the other two sides that are visible. Two star-shaped tie-rod plates are found on the west elevation and two on the east. The tie rods are located 21" from the outside walls, and about 1' above the second floor level; since no tie rods are visible on the inside, these plates are now purely decorative. In the south wall there is a crack which runs vertically through both joints and bricks about 9' from the west wall.
4. Framing: Floor joists for the second floor are 8" x 3" in the east section, and 8" x 2" in the west addition. Joists run east-west. At 8'-11" from the west wall is a north-south wood girder 7-1/2" square with two 2" x 8" reinforcements. It is supported at the north and south ends by 9-1/2" x 14" concrete covered piers, and a 5-1/4" square wood post near the center. The joists of the western section appear to be more recent.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: None.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The two entrance doors are not exactly the same size: the northern is 9' wide, the southern 8'. Both have segmental arch hood molds of three header rows, and side jambs which are continuous with them. These jambs are 13" wide at the sidewalk level. The doors are two leaf, two panel with chamfered rails and stiles. The north door has a backing of diagonal match boarding 1-1/2" wide (one bead) with some 3-3/4" replacement boards in the lower panel. The south door, which is considerably more worn and may be older, has 3" diagonal boarding but is otherwise the same as the north door. Both are 2-1/4" thick. At present the concrete floor provides the only sill.

A doorway to an elevated rear brick-paved yard is located in the midpoint of the rear wall, at the stair landing. This is apparently a modern opening, 3' wide with a brick sill, a wooden frame, and a modern 4-panel door.

On the second floor, in the west wall, is a loft door measuring 41-1/2" wide and 4'-8" tall (to the highest point of the segmental arch over it.) Two rows of header ends form the voussoirs. From the outside this door appears to be a two-leaf single-panel door, with diagonal boarding in each leaf. In fact, it is a single-leaf door with (modern)

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hinges on the south edge. The diagonal boarding is 3" wide. The sill for this door is gray granite, about 8-1/2" thick, painted yellow on the outside, but unpainted inside. The sill rests on two brick brackets formed of two projecting headers.

- b. Windows and shutters: The only window to be found is in the rear wall, 22" from the north wall. This is now bricked up but originally was rectangular, measuring 28" x 30", with a lintel formed of a flat arch of stretchers set diagonally toward the center.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The covering that is visible is standing seam metal. The rear portion of the carriage house has a low hip roof, which originally--before the west addition--had a low gable about 12' wide with a rise of about 15". This is visible only in the interior framing, and is now hidden by the present steep gable attached to the west, which rises considerably higher than the old roof. In this east section the roof framing is of 3" x 6" rafters 25" on center, with roof sheathing of 1 1/4" wide boards. The upper wall plate is 3" thick. The west section has 2" x 6" rafters about 23" on center, and roof sheathing of 12" wide boards. The wall plate is 2" thick.
- b. Cornice, eaves: There is a molded projecting gutter cornice around the front, and extending back about two feet on the south side. Other gutters are plain metal troughs. The facade gable has a heavy pseudo-machicolation composed of corbeled-out brick. The south and east sides have a strip of projecting bricks forming a simple band below the gutter. Downspouts are located at the north and south edges of the facade.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Both first and second floors are open spaces, 23'-9" x 26'-5". On the first floor the projecting wall piers and the north-south beam with center post 8'-11" from the west wall divide the space roughly into two unequal sections. On the second floor a similar division occurs, the beam (actually a former wall plate) being supported by three studs at the south half, and two at the north.

2. Stairways: The only stairs in the structure are against the east wall, a straight run from north to south of six 7" risers to a landing from which the rear door leads to the brick-paved rear yard. From the landing there is a run of 8 risers to the second floor. All but two of the risers are open; the tread is 3'-2" wide. The upper run, with 2" thick stringers, appears to be newer than the lower run and platform. The lower stringers are 3" thick.
3. Flooring: The first floor is concrete; the second, modern plywood.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: First-floor walls are concrete covered; on the south wall parts of the concrete have fallen away, revealing brickwork in common bond with header rows every six courses. Joists and rafters are exposed on both floors.
5. Doorways and doors: The inner sides of the two front doors have the diagonal sheathing as visible on the outside.
6. Decorative features and trim: None.
7. Notable hardware: Both of the first-floor doors appear to have their original strap hinges. On the north door, there are three on each leaf, 19-1/2" long, with the upper hinge curved to conform to the contour of the upper edge. On the south door there are only two per leaf, but these are 29" long. Although both floor bolts are new, the upper pull bolt of the north door is old, with embossed flanges; the central portion is coffered and contains rosettes. Near the southwest corner of the first floor is a modern drain.
8. Lighting: None.
9. Heating: None.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The carriage house faces west onto 31st Street about 92' south of Dumbarton Avenue. To the west is a public sidewalk, and to the east a private brick-paved space next to a driveway. To the north and south are other similar buildings.
2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: None.
4. Walks: To the west the structure abuts a herringbone brick public walk about 15' wide with a bluestone curb. (The portion of the walk in front of the north doorway is

now concrete.) To the south is a narrow walkway, 31" wide, which separates this building from a similar carriage house.

5. Landscaping: None.

Prepared by Daniel D. Reiff
Architectural Historian
Commission of Fine Arts
July 1969

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made in 1969 during a project to record 14 structures and a group of 16 items of "street furniture" in the Georgetown section of Washington, D.C. The project was conducted by the Commission of Fine Arts with the cooperation of the Historic American Buildings Survey. The resulting documentation was donated to HABS by the Commission and published in 1970 in HABS Selections Number 10, Georgetown Architecture: Northwest Washington, District of Columbia.

The project was under the direction of Mr. Charles H. Atherton, Executive Secretary and Administrative Officer of the Commission of Fine Arts. The recording team was composed of Miss Ellen J. Schwartz and Mr. Daniel D. Reiff, Architectural Historians, and Mr. William P. Thompson, Architect. The photographs were made by photographers J. Alexander and Jack E. Boucher under contract to the Commission.