

Potomac Lodge No. 5  
1058 Thomas Jefferson Street (Georgetown)  
Washington.  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-153

HABS  
DC,  
GEO,  
152-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. DC-153

## POTOMAC LODGE NO. 5

Location: 1058 Thomas Jefferson Street (Georgetown), Washington, D.C.  
West side of street, beginning 274 feet from corner  
of M Street and Thomas Jefferson Street, and on the  
C. & O. Canal towpath.

Present Owner: Doxiadis Associates.

Present Occupant: Same.

Present Use: Offices, drafting rooms, and conference rooms.

Statement of  
Significance: The earliest Masonic Lodge Building (1810) still standing  
in the District of Columbia. It has many associations  
with notable Georgetown members. The Lodge participated  
in laying the cornerstone of the Capitol in 1793.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The following information is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which this structure was built. The lodge occupies lot 1198, Square 800 (old lot 28, old Square 59) in the original area of Georgetown. References are to the Recorder of Deeds, District of Columbia.

1780 Deed April 13, 1780  
Richard Wootton et ux Martha  
To  
William Bayly  
Lot 59

1800 Deed April 4, 1800 recorded July 18, 1800 in  
Liber E folio 315  
William Bayly et ux Susanna  
To  
Notley Young  
Clement Hill  
Trustees of George Digges (deceased)  
and William Campbell  
To correct deed of May 5, 1787, Liber TBH folio 2  
in which lot 59 was called "lot 60".

1800 Deed April 10, 1800 recorded April 18, 1800 in  
Liber E folio 317

Notley Young  
Clement Hilo, Trustees  
To  
Anthony Reintzel  
Lot 59

1800 Deed May 19, 1800 recorded November 11, 1800 in  
Liber F folio 25  
Matthew Kennedy  
To  
Anthony Reintzel  
South part of lot 58 (adjoining 59 to west).

1801 Deed December 6, 1800 recorded January 10, 1801 in  
Liber F folio 163  
William Campbell et ux Rebecca  
To  
Anthony Reintzel  
One undivided moiety of lot 59 in Georgetown.

1807 Deed in Trust July 5, 1806 recorded January 3, 1807 in  
Liber Q folio 347  
Anthony Reintzel  
To  
Walter Smith  
Trust--\$9895. Among other property: "On the west  
side of Jefferson Street...one piece of ground 75 feet  
front. Beginning at the end of 274 feet from the  
corner of Bridge St. [M] and Jefferson St." N.8.:  
This 75 foot front extends south embracing the Masonic  
Lodge lot (27') plus the land of the subsequent  
C. & O. Canal.

1811 Lease September 20, 1810 recorded February 5, 1811 in  
Liber Z folio 490  
Anthony Reintzel  
To  
Alexander L. Joncherez  
John Hollingshead  
Vincent King  
Robert Craig  
John Wirt  
Lot in Georgetown on Jefferson Street: "Beginning at  
the end of 274 feet from the intersection of Bridge  
[M] and [Thomas] Jefferson Streets and running southerly  
with the west side of Jefferson Street 25 feet; thence  
westwardly parallel with Bridge Street 104' 9"....  
Lease 99 years to and for the use of members constituting  
Potomac Masonic Lodge No. 43...[with] annual rental  
of \$50 with privilege of purchase for \$500."

- 1811 Deed September 21, 1810 recorded February 5, 1811 in  
Liber 2 folio 492  
Anthony Reintzel  
To  
Richard Smith  
Same property as above, but subject to the above  
lease.
- 1812 Deed in Trust September 25, 1812 recorded November 9, 1812 in  
Liber AD folio 383  
John Hollingshead  
Vincent King  
John Wirt  
Robert Craig  
To  
Alexander L. Joncherez  
Same lot as above: "James Greer for the Masonic Potomac  
Lodge #5 (of which the Grantees are trustees) borrowed  
\$1500 of the Union Bank of Georgetown and this indenture  
is to secure the aforesaid \$1500."
- 1816 Deed May 6, 1816 recorded July 14, 1816 in  
Liber A0 folio 28  
Richard Smith et ux Covington  
To  
James Greer  
Lodge lot: "Subject to the terms and arrangements  
expressed in a lease from Anthony Reintzel to Alexander  
L. Joncherez et al., dated September 20, 1810."
- 1829 Deed May 13, 1829 recorded July 11, 1829 in  
Liber W8 26 folio 101  
James Greer et ux Mary Ann B.  
To  
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Co.  
Two pieces of ground in Georgetown: "for the boundary  
of one piece thereof beginning at the end of 299 feet  
drawn southerly on the west boundary line of Jefferson  
Street from Bridge Street it being at the southeast  
corner of the lot and premises on which is erected  
a Masonic Lodge, and run thence on said west boundary  
of Jefferson St. southerly 50 feet, westerly and  
parallel with bridge 104'9"...." (End of lots 58  
and 59.)
- 1844 Deed September 12, 1840 recorded July 22, 1844 in  
Liber W8 108 folio 461  
William Hayman  
Isaac Bartlett  
George W. Haller  
Trustees of the Potomac Lodge #5 of Georgetown

and  
John Myers  
Jeremiah Orme  
Trustees appointed in place of said Bartlett and  
Haller by majority resolution of said lodge  
To  
Philip Gormley  
Masonic Lodge lot (25' x 104' 9").

- 1894 Deed November 26, 1894 recorded in  
Liber 1952 folio 457  
Philip F. Gormley  
To  
Harrison S. Barbour
- 1902 Deed December 23, 1902 recorded December 29, 1902 in  
Liber 2701 folio 131  
Harrison S. Barbour et ux Annie G.  
To  
Mary Gormley
- 1927 Deed in Trust August 2, 1927 recorded August 3, 1927 in  
Liber 5923 folio 111  
Philip F. Gormley et ux Maud  
Charles E. Gormley et ux Nellie C.  
John J. Gormley et ux Nora  
To  
J. Leo Kolb  
Among other property of Mary Gormley, who died intestate  
June 30, 1927, lot 800.
- 1927 Deed October 11, 1927 recorded 17 October 1927 in  
Liber 6008 folio 273  
J. Leo Kolb, trustee  
To  
John J. Gormley et ux Nora  
Includes lot 800.
- 1947 Deed August 23, 1947 recorded October 28, 1947 in  
Liber 8610, folio 390  
John J. Gormley  
Helen R. Gormley  
Frances M. Gormley  
Nora Gormley, widow of John J. Gormley Sr. and  
trustee for Helen R. and Frances M. Gormley above  
Mary Ellen Gormley, wife of John J. Gormley  
To  
Marion H. Britt  
Includes lot 800.

1948 Deed December 18, 1947 recorded January 2, 1948 in  
Liber 8655 folio 366  
Marion H Britt  
To  
Carmon P. Demarco et ux Helen E.  
Tenants by entirety  
Includes lot 800.

1948 Deed December 23, 1947 recorded January 2, 1948 in  
Liber 8655 folio 372  
Carmon P. Demarco et ux Helen E.  
To  
Martin I. Isen  
Carey Winston  
Joint tenants  
Includes lot 800.

1962 Deed April 25, 1962 recorded April 26, 1962 in  
Liber 11790 folio 470  
Milton Isen et ux Adele  
To  
Doxiadis Associates Inc.  
(Delaware Corp.)  
Includes lot 800.

2. Date of Erection: The cornerstone was laid on October 18, 1810; the building probably completed early in 1811. (A Century and a Half of Freemasonry in Georgetown 1789-1939, Georgetown, 1939). The land was leased to the lodge by Anthony Reintzel (himself a mason) on September 20, 1810 (recorded February 5, 1811, Liber Z, Folio 490).
3. Architect: Unknown. Probably suggestions by members and the specific needs of Masonic rites.
4. Original plans, constructions, etc: None known.
5. Alterations and additions: The building has undergone considerable alteration. The facade recessed arch, pediment recess, and blind openings over the window were filled in at some time after about 1870. The roundhead windows on the facade were probably changed to shallow arches at this time. The bay windows were added some time after 1939, perhaps when made into apartments. When purchased by Doxiadis Associates in 1962, the interior had been divided into smaller rooms by light partitions. The renovation of 1962 gutted the interior, walled in the front door, and cut a new first floor window (southeast corner). It also joined the building to the one directly behind it (not in this study).

6. Important old views: A photograph in the Peabody Room of the Georgetown Public Library, "ca. 1870" shows the building as it must have appeared when built.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

1. History of the Masonic Lodge in Georgetown:

The Masonic movement was a popular one in the colonies and the new United States, and it is thus not surprising that Lodges were founded at an early date in Georgetown. The building at 1058 Thomas Jefferson Street was used for a period of thirty years as the center of their activity. Most of the following data is from A Century and a Half of Freemasonry in Georgetown 1789-1939, by Frederick W. Englert, Thomas L. Kidwell, and Ray B. Harris (Georgetown, Washington, D.C., 1939).

In 1789 the first Georgetown lodge (No. 9) was established by charter, and elected its first members in December. The Alexandria Lodge No. 22 (of which George Washington was Worshipful Master in 1789), Georgetown's Lodge No. 9, and Lodge No. 15 of the Federal City all participated in the laying of the cornerstone of the Capitol on September 18, 1793, at which time George Washington used the marble-headed gavel that the Georgetown Lodge still possesses. Lodge No. 9 ceased to exist, however, in 1794, in part due to the growth of Lodges No. 11 and 15 in the Federal City which drew away many of the members that, prior to their existence, made the journey to Georgetown for Masonic meetings.

On October 22, 1795 a petition was sent to the Grand Lodge of Maryland to establish another lodge, and among the signers were Anthony Reintzel, James Thompson, and Thomas Beatty Jr. all of whom had belonged to the earlier Lodge No. 9. The new lodge, given the title of Columbia Lodge No. 19, held its first meeting in Georgetown on November 7, 1795 with James Thompson as Worshipful Master. It had twelve members. This too ceased for some reason in January, 1797. Like the Lodge No. 9, no records have survived. In 1806 another attempt was made, and on submitting the petition twice a third lodge was established, the Potomac Lodge No. 43, the petition being granted on November 11, 1806. Again, many of the members from the previous lodges were signers.

This is the lodge that has continued until today. In 1811 it was given a new charter and was changed in name to Potomac Lodge No. 5, after delegates from the five District lodges met and "constituted the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia."

Valentine Reintzel, active in the Georgetown lodge, and Worshipful Master for a total of 5 years, was chosen the first Grand Master.

2. Origin of the Lodge building:

The following history of the Masonic Hall on Jefferson Street is on pp. 18 and 19 of A Century and a Half of Freemasonry in Georgetown.

"By the Summer of 1810 plans were under way to solicit funds for the building of a Masonic Hall, and by September 17th a committee was appointed and reported that it had partly agreed with Anthony Reintzel for a lot on Jefferson Street "to lease forever at \$2.00 per front foot per annum with the right of redemption by paying at any time \$20.00 per front foot or to purchase now at \$17, and requested the advice of the lodge." The Committee was instructed to lease the lot from Brother Reintzel and an additional committee was appointed to receive proposals and make contracts for the construction of the Hall. The lot consisted of 25 feet front and 103 feet deep.

On October 18, 1810, the lodge laid the cornerstone for its own Masonic Hall. The lodge formed in procession and met their Masonic brethren from the City of Washington, joined by the Mayor, Members of the Corporation of Georgetown and by "the Magistrates of the place", and proceeded to the site of the lodge on Jefferson Street where Worshipful Master Valentine Reintzel laid the cornerstone in ample Masonic form, after which the lodge went "to the Presbyterian Meeting House." Later the lodge returned to Jefferson Street where the Worshipful Master called his craft from labor to refreshment "and after they had all partaken of a collation prepared for the occasion, the lodge returned to its rooms..."

In December of that year plans were being consummated for formation of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, and by the following May the Lodge accepted its Charter from this new Grand Lodge and received its present name, "Potomac Lodge No. 5". The Charter was received from its own distinguished Past Master, Valentine Reintzel, first Grand Master of Masons in the District of Columbia.

Potomac Lodge continued to meet in its own Hall on Jefferson Street until 1840 when it was sold to Mr. Philip Gormley. Two years later it purchased a 3-story house on Washington Street, now 30th Street, opposite the Union Hotel, and by November 30th of 1842 had fitted the upper story as a Lodge, renting the lower floors. Ten years later, in 1852, the



Washington Street place was sold and the lodge rented the third story of "Forrest Hall" on what is now Wisconsin Avenue, just above the site of our present lodge hall."

3. A. L. Joncherez:

Alexander L. Joncherez was one of the prominent members of the Georgetown lodge. In 1810 he was Secretary of Potomac Lodge No. 43, in 1811 Senior Warden of Potomac Lodge No. 5, and in 1812 its Worshipful Master. Thus it is not surprising to find him among the group of members who in 1811 accepted the lease of the new Lodge building from Anthony Reintzel, and in 1812, when Master of the lodge, accepted the deed in trust. The Georgetown Assessment records for 1800 to 1807 (National Archives Microcopy No. 605, roll 7) have two entries for him, the earlier ("Alexander Lewis Johncherez") lists only one house, with a rent of \$100. The second ("A. L. Johncherry") lists 1 cow (\$15), 1 horse (\$40), and furniture (\$100) as the total assessable property. He was, then, not a man of any great wealth.

4. The Reintzel brothers:

The Reintzel family, active in Georgetown Masonic life, often appears in Georgetown real estate records. A building on M Street (3258) owned by Anthony and then Valentine Reintzel between 1813 and 1815 was recorded in 1966. (HABS No. DC-122). Anthony Reintzel appears again in two buildings of the present survey. From 1800-1808 he owned the land on which the house at 1072 Thomas Jefferson Street was built and from 1800 to 1807 the land on which the Potomac Lodge No. 5 was to be built at 1058 Thomas Jefferson Street in 1810. It is not surprising to find Anthony Reintzel connected with the Masonic lodge, for he was treasurer of Lodge No. 9 in 1792, Treasurer of Columbia Lodge No. 19 (same lodge, but under its second charter) in 1795 and 1796, and in 1797 was its Worshipful Master.

John Valentine Reintzel (presumably his brother) was also active in the Masonic lodge, and in 1792 was the Junior Warden of Lodge No. 9, and the following year its Worshipful Master. Under a new (third) charter as Potomac Lodge No. 43 he was Treasurer in 1806, and its Worshipful Master from 1807 through 1810. In A Century and a Half of Freemasonry in Georgetown 1789-1939 (Georgetown, 1939) a biographical note tells us that Valentine Reintzel was "an influential citizen and identified with many of the progressive movements of his day," (p. 47) held a good deal of land, was active in the Lodge. In 1791, at the first meeting of the Corporation of Georgetown he was a Common

Councilman. His father (John Valentine Reintzel Sr.) came from Hamburg at the end of the 18th century. The old family Bible, now in the Georgetown University Library, notes that Valentine was born February 26, 1761. He died in 1817.

Yet a third Reintzel is noted, a John Reintzel who was Secretary of Columbia Lodge No 19 in 1795, Junior Warden in 1796, and Treasurer of Lodge No. 43 in 1807 and 1808. A Daniel Reintzel was Mayor of Georgetown from 1806 to 1808. The spelling of his name varies and in Jackson's Chronicles of Georgetown (Washington, D.C., R.O. Polkinhorn, 1878.), as both Rentzel, and Reitzel.

The approximate wealth of these gentlemen can be gauged by the Assessment Records for Georgetown, of 1800 to 1807 (National Archives, Microcopy 605, Group 351, roll 7.)

Anthony Reintzel held the following:

|                             |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Lot No. 6 with improvements | 2400          |
| Part of lot No. 58 improved | 600           |
| Lot No. 62 Fishing Lane     | 1000          |
| Lot No. 59 Jefferson Street | 2000          |
|                             | <u>\$6000</u> |
| 1 horse                     | 50            |
| 1 cart and dray             | 30            |
| 1 negroe man, woman & boy   | 300           |
| furniture                   | 40            |
|                             | <u>\$420</u>  |

During this period various sales decreased it by \$770, and "for new house on corner" was added \$500, so the total assessment was \$6150.

Valentine Reintzel held the following:

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Land and improvements on Jefferson St. | 3500          |
| 2 negroe men                           | 300           |
| 3 do. women                            | 160           |
| 5 do. boys                             | 140           |
| 2 do. girls                            | 60            |
| 1 horse                                | 40            |
| 1 cow and calf                         | 20            |
| furniture                              | 300           |
|  | <u>\$4420</u> |

Daniel Reintzel also held property, a house, negroes (3) and livestock to a total of \$5465. At the beginning of this volume (1800-1807) is a page marked "additional assessments made by Daniel Reintzel" and the date May 19, 1807.

5. Washington Directories provide the following tenant information:

1896 Philip F. Gormley, carpenter (at 721 14th N.W.) res  
1058 Jefferson.  
1915-16 Mrs. Mary Gormley  
1917-27 Mrs. Mary Gormley, grocer  
1928-43 John J. Gormley, grocer  
1948-56 vacant  
1960 Mrs. Judith T. MacMillan  
1965 Doxiadis Associates, Inc.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources: Recorder of Deeds, District of Columbia.  
Washington City Directories.  
Assessment Records (National Archives).
2. Secondary and published sources: Frederick W. Englert, Thomas L. Kidwell, and Ray B. Harris, A Century and a Half of Freemasonry in Georgetown 1789-1939, (Georgetown, Washington, D.C. 1939).  
Records of the Columbia Historical Society.
3. Likely sources not yet investigated: District of Columbia Building permits.  
Masonic records (perhaps Alexandria Washington Masonic Memorial library).

Prepared by Daniel D. Reiff  
Architectural Historian  
National Park Service  
September, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: "Now remodeled as a planner/architect's office, the [Lodge] building ties down one corner of the city's most romantic single block." (A Guide to Architecture of Washington, D.C., Hugh Newell Jacobsen, AIA, Editor, 1965). The building demonstrated the use of various architectural motifs to create an interesting facade which has since been altered, but retains some of the earlier expression. An interesting barrel vault spans the interior, enabling the top floor to be partitioned without interference with a structural system.
2. Condition of fabric: The lodge has been fairly well maintained externally, but the interior has undergone complete modernization. Since 1870, a window has been added on the south, (in order to make the fenestration symmetrical,) and two bay windows on the

east side have been attached. The east door has been removed, round arch windows have been altered to segmental, and several blind openings concealed under a stucco veneer.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Rectangular layout, with parapet gable ends; 42' 8" by 21' 7" (not including the adjoining building now incorporated in the rear.) Three bay facade, and south side. Two stories, with sunken basement.
2. Foundation: Stone in ordinary rubble construction.
3. Wall construction: A veneer of scored stucco in smooth coursed ashlar covers the brick facade (east elevation). On the facade are two splayed projecting bay windows (not original) below a string course and blind arch (which in 1870 was a double blind arch). Extending up from the horizontally bisecting string course on the outer edges are projecting pilaster strips which ultimately merge into a triple projected brick course cornice. At the midpoint of the string course, spring two pilaster strips joined at the upper end by a round arch enclosing a blind arched opening. A false facade parapet extends above the roof line on the east side. The remaining walls are common bond brick with headers every six rows. All walls are painted a cream color.
4. Framing: The wooden framing resting on load bearing brick walls was apparently reinforced during the renovation in 1962.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc: Two steel bar grills beneath the bay windows cover two areaways, each opening to two modern metal windows containing a casement window and a fixed window, each with three lights. The retaining walls are brick. An old stone stairway leads down in the northern areaway.
6. Chimneys: A high brick stack located inside the north wall is capped with four projected brick courses, and a metal flue.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: On the east elevation, at the second floor level appears a blind arch, below which was the main entranceway. This was removed during the renovation in 1962. At present the main entrance opens onto the towpath (on the south side) and is enclosed by long narrow single pane transom and side panels. The door is six panel, of wood.

- b. Windows and shutters: A pair of flat black splayed bay windows are symmetrically placed on the east elevation. Each consists of four, six/six double hung wooden windows. Each bay is crowned with a hipped metal (standing seam) roof. Two/two double hung wooden sash windows repeat around the Lodge in openings created by steel lintels (first floor), and brick segmental arches and flat arches (second floor). Windows have wooden sills. Two panel fixed louver shutters (painted flat black) flank all windows, except the bay windows and those on the north.
8. Roof:
- a. Shape, covering: The east-west gable roof has raised brick gables on each end.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: A projecting corbeled brick cornice composed of a course of headers and two of stretchers crowns the east gable.
  - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.
- C. Description of Interior: Besides the second floor barrel vault and one mid 19th century mantel, the interior has been remodeled so that nothing remains to indicate its original state. The wooden framed barrel vault at present is covered with plaster.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: The Lodge is situated on the northwest corner of the intersection of the C & O Canal and Thomas Jefferson Street. With pleasant foliage and many early structures (including the canal) around it, the Lodge is in a choice location.
  2. Enclosures: In the rear is a wooden fence enclosing a small rear yard.
  3. Outbuildings: The brick addition (west end) was once a separate building.
  4. Walks: A common bond red brick public walk is on the east. To the South is the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and a cobblestone towpath.
  5. Landscaping: Hedges with ivy are between the towpath and the south wall.

Prepared by William R. Gwin  
Student Assistant Architect  
National Park Service  
September, 1967