

700-714 Spruce Street (houses)  
700-714 Spruce Street  
Philadelphia  
Philadelphia County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-253

HABS,  
PA,  
51-PHILA,  
321-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*

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

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. PA-253

700-714 SPRUCE STREET

- Location: 700-714 Spruce Street (south side), Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.
- USGS Philadelphia Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.486840.4421480.
- Present Owner: Pennsylvania Hospital (1977).
- Present Use: Vacant, with the facades to be retained and the rest of the structures to be demolished for the Pennsylvania Hospital expansion plan.
- Significance: The four story brick townhouses were constructed between 1835 and 1839. 704-714 were built and occupied by Philadelphia tradespeople. 700-702 and eventually 704 were owned by the Roman Catholic Society of St. Joseph for Educating and Maintaining Poor Orphan Children. This group of structures is a noteworthy example of Greek Revival style, and is located in the once fashionable Society Hill area.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. 700-702 Spruce Street:

## 1. Physical history:

- a. Date of erection: 1835-1836, the property was purchased without a structure January 14, 1835; by November 4, 1836 there was a structure on the property (insurance survey, November 4, 1836).
- b. Architect: The architect was Thomas U. Walter of Philadelphia, noted for his design of the United States Capital dome. Mr. Walter has long been linked with these buildings but no conclusive evidence had been found. Recent evidence from a notebook in the collection of Robert Ennis securely places Walter as the architect of 700-702.

- c. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the structure and the land on which it stands. References are the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Recorder of Deeds of Philadelphia County, and the Philadelphia Department of Records.

January 14, 1835, Contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital to Lewis Ryan, gentleman. Two contiguous lots, S.W. corner of Spruce and 7th Streets (together-breadth E and W 49'6", length N and S 250') for \$1200.

February 16, 1835, Lewis Ryan to Roman Catholic Society for Educating and Maintaining Poor Orphan Children.

It is interesting to note that no sum is mentioned when Lewis Ryan deeded the property to the orphanage. It is possible that it was donated to the orphanage as a charitable gesture. Further, the hospital sold the double lot to Ryan for only \$1200, much lower than the sale price of other hospital-owned lots on the south side of the 700 Block of Spruce Street. This, too, was most likely a reduced price because of the nature of the structure to be erected. In 1887 the orphanage acquired 704 Spruce Street. The orphanage owned the structures until 1944 when they moved to Germantown. It was then used as a nurses home and as the Treasurer's Department for the Pennsylvania Hospital.

- d. Original plans and construction: The insurance survey (Policy Number 5480, Page 139, Number 6, Survey Number 4077, November 4, 1836) of 700-702 Spruce Street insured the structure for \$20,700. It describes the structure as three stories, with a rear three story structure and a piazza, all with zinc roofs. The main block of the house has four rooms on each floor with the interior trim consisting of marble mantels, interior shutters in the front rooms, and stucco cornices. The back building is described as having three rooms on the first and second floors, and two on the third. The trim includes marble mantels and stucco cornices. The piazza is open on two sides.

- e. Alterations and additions: Numerous alterations and additions have occurred throughout the years. Many can be dated through the Insurance Surveys; however, some can not.

By 1851 (insurance survey of October 25, 1851), the partition between the kitchen and dining room in the back buildings had been removed and the two rooms were used as a schoolroom. The kitchen and dining rooms had been moved to the basement. A furnace had been installed to heat the building.

In 1887 (insurance survey of October 26, 1887): "communicating doorways with adjoining building on west line in each story" were added.

In 1888 (insurance survey of October 10, 1888), a fourth story was added to the main building. In addition, iron fire escapes were added to the back elevation.

In 1914 (insurance survey of May 25, 1914), a new bathroom and three new toilet rooms were installed; part of the building was repapered and painted.

In 1915 (insurance survey of September 24, 1915) a new one story brick building 9'6" x 27' was added to the rear of the property; hot water was connected for a majority of the sections in the building.

Many of the alterations are difficult to date. It seems from the present appearance of the rear structures that many alterations and additions have occurred to them.

On the exterior of the main building the door and transom of the main entrance have been altered. The doors might be original with the glass panes cut in at a later date. The windows flanking the main entrance may have originally been tripartite windows which were narrowed and bricked in. On the second story it appears that the two windows flanking the center windows in the westernmost bay may have been added at a later date. Unlike the other windows they lack pintles for shutters.

On the interior there have been numerous alterations. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century stamped tin was installed on many of the ceilings and walls. This

was probably done to either cover cracked plaster or for fireproofing purposes. At a later date dropped ceilings were installed, tile was put on top of the floors, and fireplaces were covered up.

2. Historic events and persons connected with the structure:

- a. The Roman Catholic Society of St. Joseph for Educating and Maintaining Poor Orphan Children: The society grew out of the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1797, when the Catholic church placed children whose parents had died from the epidemic in private homes. Formally founded in 1806, the society moved from its home on Sixth Street (adjoining Holy Trinity Church) to Spruce Street circa 1836. Under the supervision of the Sisters of Charity, the society grew in size, and in 1887, took over the adjoining building (704). In 1944 the society moved to Germantown, where it now continues. Many notable citizens have been a part of St. Joseph's management.

3. Sources of Information:

a. Old views:

The 1927 Insurance Survey contains a small sketch plan and photograph of the structure.

b. Bibliography:

Cargas, Cynthia. "St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum: A Historical Chronology." (preliminary draft). Philadelphia: mimeographed copy from Save Spruce Street committee, includes a good bibliography.

Desilver's Philadelphia Directory: 1835-1836, 1837.

Insurance surveys, Policy 5480: November 4, 1836; October 25, 1851; August 3, 1881; November 15, 1881; October 26, 1887; October 10, 1888; May 25, 1914; September 24, 1915; February 7, 1927.

B. 704 Spruce Street:

1. Physical history:

- a. Date of erection: Between March 4, 1835 and 1837.

- b. Architect: Not known.
- c. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the structure and the land on which it stands. References are the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Recorder of Deeds of Philadelphia County, and the Philadelphia Department of Records.

March 4, 1835, Contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital to William Wilson, Grocer. A lot on Ss Spruce Street 49'6" W of Ws 7th Street, Front 24'9" Depth 250'.

William Wilson died on November 7, 1835. The estate was divided among his six children: John, William Jr., Francis, Nicholas, the children of James (deceased), the children of Catharine (deceased). Transfers of interest were made to William Wilson Jr., who eventually bequeathed the structure to his nephew Joseph Lapsley Wilson (John's son).

May 2, 1887, John Lapsley Wilson, Trustee under will of William Wilson Jr., to Roman Catholic Society for Educating and Maintaining Poor Orphan Children, for \$20,000.

The society remained in the structure until 1944; the building was subsequently owned by the Pennsylvania Hospital and used as the Treasurer's Department.

- d. Original plans and construction: This structure was originally built as a three-bay front, four story residence with a three story rear wing.
- e. Alterations and additions: The original entrance to 704 was bricked-up circa 1887. Physical evidence indicates that the door was in the westernmost bay of the house. In that position, it would have been a pair to 706's door and similar to the paired doorways of 708-710 and 712-714. Changes in the brickwork and water table support this explanation. In the interior, however, the windows of the right and left bays have interior shutters and Ionic pilasters, while the central window has no interior shutters and a simple surround. It is likely that the surrounds and shutters were moved in the interest of symmetry. Another alteration occurred in 1887 when connecting doors were cut through the east party

wall. Since then the interior of 704 has undergone alterations similar to those of 700-702.

2. Bibliography:

Desilver's Philadelphia Directory: 1835-1836, 1837.

C. 706 Spruce Street

1. Physical history:

- a. Date of erection: Between 1837-1839.
- b. Architect: Not known, however it is believed that the iron railing around the front was designed by Thomas U. Walter, architect of the United States Capital dome.
- c. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the structure and the land on which it stands. References are the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Recorder of Deeds of Philadelphia County, and the Philadelphia Department of Records.

March 4, 1835, Contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital to John Haseltine (Hazeltine), merchant. A lot on Ss Spruce Street 74'3": W from Ws of 7th Street Front 24'9" Depth 250' to Delancey Street for \$6,000.

March 11, 1876, Elizabeth L. Haseltine, widow of John Haseltine to Mary A. Inman, widow. A four story brick dwelling house.

March 16, 1876, Mary A. Inman, widow, to Bigby, wife of George L. Bigby.

July 2, 1906, Mary Warner, George Bigby, Charles Ernest Bigby, and Mary h/w (his wife) to William Stewart.

July 2, 1906, Robert M. Shenkin and Rose h/w to Joseph B. Horenstein.

January 13, 1930, Joseph B. Horenstein, sheriff's sale to Marie Schuster.

February 14, 1930, Marie Schuster to Philip Price.

March 19, 1943, Philip Price and Sara h/w to Harry Glass and Tillie h/w.

There is no listing in the City Directory for a Bigby between 1876 and 1906, nor is there a listing for Joseph B. Horenstein in 1907 or from 1925 to 1927. This as well as the 1930 Sheriff's sale is a strong indication of the decline of the area.

- d. Alterations and additions: The house is reasonably intact. The front doors have been replaced. On the interior, the tile facings were added to the fireplaces in the last quarter of the nineteenth century; it is possible that they are from the Mercer Tile Works.
2. Historic events and persons connected with the structure: 706 Spruce Street was built for John Haseltine, an original member of the Union League in Philadelphia, and his wife Elizabeth Shinn, who was known as a great beauty. They had eleven children, three of whom were prominent artists, William, Charles and Henry, and a numismatist John W. A statue by Henry, American Honoring Her Fallen Brave, is on display at the Union League. William was lauded in Antiques Magazine, and Charles was an early dealer of Thomas Eakins (Haseltine Art Galleries, Chestnut Street).

3. Bibliography:

Desilver's Philadelphia Directory, 1837.

McElroys Philadelphia City Directory: 1839.

Wallace, Philip B. Colonial Ironwork in Old Philadelphia.  
New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, Inc.,  
1930.

D. 708 Spruce Street:

1. Physical history:
  - a. Date of erection: 1835.
  - b. Architect: Not known.

- c. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the structure and the land on which it stands. References are the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Recorder of Deeds of Philadelphia County, and the Philadelphia Department of Records.

March 4, 1835, Contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital to Romulus Riggs, merchant. A lot on Ss Spruce Street 99' W from W side of 7th Street, Front 24'9" Depth 250' to Delancey Street for \$6,000.

October 20, 1849, Open District Court granted lot and premises to John Elliot their having been seized, taken in execution, and sold as the property of Romulus Riggs, deceased.

June 6, 1850, John Elliott, New York City, accountant and wife to Samuel Welsh, Philadelphia, merchant. Four story brick dwelling messuage or tenement, back building, and lot for \$16,700.

December 10, 1890, Anna L. Welsh (estate of Samuel Welsh) to Mary Cotes.

March 31, 1891, Mary Cotes to Church Training and Deaconess House of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

The Church Training School remained in the structure until the 1940s, at which time it became an apartment house.

- d. Alterations and additions: In 1900 the Church Training and Deaconess House purchased the adjoining structure (710) and connected the two buildings. The vestibule was changed and floored in marble. Doorways were cut into the party wall to connect the structures. A light well was cut from the roof of 708 to the second floor ceiling to serve what appears to have been a library. The first floor spaces in both the main and back buildings have been divided up by partitions.

2. Historic events and persons connected with the structure:

- a. Samuel Welsh: Samuel Welsh was the son of the founder of the Philadelphia Bank. He died at the age of 87 in 1890 and was the first man in Philadelphia to have an annual

income of \$100,000. He served on many boards, including the Pennsylvania Hospital and was a trustee of the Mutual Assurance Company, and a Rector's Warden of St. Peter's Church (Episcopal).

- b. The Church Training and Deaconess House: The Church Training School (familiar name) was an Episcopalian organization whose purpose was to train young women for missionary work in the United States and abroad. The organization stayed at 708-710 Spruce Street until the 1940s, when it merged with the Divinity School at 42nd and Spruce.

3. Bibliography:

Desilver's Philadelphia Directory: 1835-1836, 1837.

E. 710 Spruce Street:

1. Physical history:

- a. Date of erection: The structure was completed by June 4, 1835 when it was surveyed by the Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia.
- b. Architect: Not known.
- c. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the structure and the land on which it stands. References are the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Recorder of Deeds of Philadelphia County, and the Philadelphia Department of Records.

April 1, 1835, Sampson Sams, china merchant, Ann H. h/w to Erskine Hazard, gentleman. A lot on Ss Spruce Street between 7th and 8th Streets 123'9" from Ws 7th Front 24'9" Depth 250', for \$2,500 and a mortgage for \$4,500.

November 20, 1838, Erskine Hazard, gentleman, Mary h/w to Alexandre Fullerton, Jr. druggist, message on the above lot for \$20,000 and a mortgage debt of \$4,500.

May 20, 1878, Alexander Fullerton Jr. by will to Sara A. Fullerton to descent Hettie F. Milliken, Mary F. Weaver, Alexander Fullerton, Spencer Fullerton above premises 23'6" by 250'.

May 20, 1878, Samuel Milliken, Hettie F. h/w, James B. Weaver, Mary F. h/w, Alexander Fullerton, Spencer Fullerton to John McCrea Hilderburn, salesman.

January 2, 1879, John McCrea Hilderburn and wife to Samuel Hilderburn.

December 1, 1880, Samuel Milliken et al to Samuel Hilderburn in trust.

April 26, 1881, Adele Barton Hilderburn to Samuel Hilderburn in trust for Adele Barton Hilderburn.

September 1, 1900, Adele Barton Hilderburn to Church Training and Deaconess House of the Diocese of Philadelphia.

December 11, 1942, Church Training and Deaconess House of the Diocese of Pennsylvania to Harry Glass, Tillie h/w.

- d. Original plans and construction: A precis of the Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia's survey of June 4, 1835 clarifies the original design. The exterior is described as a four story brick dwelling, piazza and three story back building. The facade has a marble water table, steps and platform front, with marble window sills and heads. On the interior the entrance vestibule has a groined and arched ceiling. The first floor has two rooms, carved caps to all doors, and white marble pilaster mantels in each room. Plasterwork includes stuccoed cornices and paneled ceilings. The height of the ceilings is 14'.

The second floor is described as having two rooms, white marble mantels, stucco cornices, and a ceiling height of 14'. The third story has two large rooms with plain white marble mantels, a small room with a stove and a ceiling height of 10'6". The fourth floor has three rooms and a ceiling height of 9'6". The house was also described as having stairs with mahogany rails and twelve light windows. The building was insured for \$5,000.

- e. Alterations and additions: In the 1873 insurance survey the only major changes were the installation of a hot-air furnace, two ranges in the kitchen, and hot and cold

running water. Later surveys show that the loft was made into two rooms, a double oven range with broiler was installed, and a five gallon iron boiler was placed in the kitchen along with an iron sink with hot and cold running water. Finally an 11'6" addition was constructed as a summer kitchen. At an unknown date the circular end of the back building was altered, and the hallway connecting the two buildings removed. The hallway of 708 now serves as the connector. The interior was extensively altered after it was purchased by the Church Training School for use as dormitory accommodations. The staircase was removed, doors were cut through the party walls, and partitions installed.

2. Historic events and persons connected with the structure:

- a. Erskine Hazard: Erskine Hazard was born November 30, 1789 in New York. After attending Princeton, Hazard worked with Josiah White, a Philadelphia industrialist, in setting up an iron rolling and wire mill at the Falls of the Schuylkill. At the mill they began experiments with anthracite coal, and its use as a fuel in the formation of pig iron. Hazard was one of the founders of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. He conducted many technological experiments, and was a prolific author on a variety of subjects. He purchased the three lots at 710, 712, and 714 Spruce Street in 1835 and within five years sold them. They were clearly purchased for speculation. Hazard died in 1865.

3. Sources of information:

a. Old views:

The 1835 Insurance Survey contains a small sketch plan of the structure.

b. Bibliography:

Cargas, Cynthia S. "Some Biographical notes on Erskine Hazard, 1789-1865." Philadelphia: Save Spruce Street Committee, mimeograph, May 12, 1978.

Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia.  
Insurance Surveys of June 4, 1835; 1873; 1881; 1885.

F. 712 Spruce Street:

1. Physical history:

- a. Date of erection: 1835.
- b. Architect: Not known.
- c. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the structure and the land on which it stands. References are the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Recorder of Deeds of Philadelphia County, and the Philadelphia Department of Records.

March 4, 1835, Contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital to William Christie, Philadelphia, upholsterer. A lot on Ss Spruce Street 147'7" from Ws 7th, Front 26, Depth 250'.

March 30, 1835, William Christie to Erskine Hazzard.

September 1, 1840 Erskine Hazzard, Philadelphia gentleman, and Mary h/w to William R. Thompson, Philadelphia, merchant (insured as "new" in July, 1840 by Mutual Assurance Company) for \$12,500 and \$15,000 mortgage money.

William Thompson died in 1865 leaving his estate to five children: Anne Waller, Cornelia Thompson, Emma Thompson, Ellen Thompson, Frank Thompson. These heirs upon their deaths left their interests to Robert Waller Jr. and William Waller, son of Anne. Robert Waller (her husband) relinquished his interest by deed pole March 20, 1905.

April 28, 1905 Robert Waller, Jr., New York City, banker, and Emily Stewart h/w and William Waller, New York City, auditor, to William West, Camden. 712 and 714 Spruce Street (south side) Philadelphia Pennsylvania for \$13,000.

May 1, 1909, William West, Philadelphia to Morris Miller, Newark for \$1.00 and \$73,000 mortgage money.

November 23, 1909, Morris Miller, Newark and Bertha h/w to William West, Philadelphia for \$1.00 and \$48,000 mortgage money.

October 7, 1915, William West and Rose h/w to Joseph Schultzback for \$1.00.

April 13, 1916, Joseph Schultzback to Clifford T. Weihman for \$1.00.

October 21, 1916, George Gochnauer and Mary h/w to Charles Reber, Jr. for \$1.00 and \$30,000 mortgage money.

October 27, 1916, Charles S. Reber, Jr. to George Gochnauer for \$1.00 and \$45,000 mortgage money.

May 14, 1918, George Gochnauer, Harrisburg, and Mary h/w, to Joseph Bellmore for \$1.00 and \$45,000 mortgage money.

August 27, 1918, Joseph Bellmore and Bertha h/w to Frederick Long Shissler for \$1.00 and \$30,000 mortgage money.

May 2, 1922, Frederick Long Shissler and Margaret h/w to William Weber for \$1.00 and \$69,000 mortgage money.

May 2, 1922, William Weber to Nathan Fisher and Henry Feldman for \$1.00 and \$69,000 mortgage money.

February 2, 1923: Nathan Fisher granted his one-half interest unto Henry Feldman in fee.

July 17, 1923, Henry Feldman to Costas Christake for \$1.00 and \$69,000 mortgage money.

October 25, 1928, Costas Christake and Merope h/w to Anthony George.

August 12, 1929, Anthony George, Costas Christake, Anthony Achillas, sheriff's sale to Lester B. Lasin.

December 29, 1930, Lester Ellwood Building and Loan Association to Rose Weinstein.

May 1, 1931, Rose Weinstein to Fidelity Mutual Life Insurance Company.

August 30, 1944, Fidelity Mutual Life Insurance Company to James V. Ross.

August 30, 1944, James V. Ross to Spruce Street Hotel, Inc.

January 24, 1947, Spruce Street Hotel Inc. to Morris Morganstern and Joseph Cutler.

February 5, 1947, James V. Ross to Spruce Street Hotel, Inc.

April 30, 1951, Morris Morganstern and Joseph Cutler to Joseph Cutler and Rose h/w.

- d. Original plans and construction: The Franklin Fire Insurance Company survey of June 4, 1835 describes a four story brick house with piazza, back building and stable. The house is further described as having marble mantels, stucco cornices and inside shutters. The dwelling was insured for \$4,700 and the stable for \$300. On July 23, 1840 the house was subsequently insured for \$10,000.
- e. Alterations and additions: By 1840 heating had been installed in the building. At some point after 1907 the party wall with 714 was demolished on the first floor and replaced by iron columns.

2. Sources of information:

- a. Old views: The 1835 Insurance Survey contains a small sketch plan of the structure.
- b. Bibliography:

Franklin Fire Insurance Company of Philadelphia,  
insurance surveys of June 4, 1835; June 23, 1840.

McElroys Philadelphia City Directory: 1924-1928.

G. 714 Spruce Street:

1. Physical history:

- a. Date of erection: 1835.
- b. Architect: Not known.
- c. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a chain of title to the structure and the land on which it

stands. References are the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the Recorder of Deeds of Philadelphia County, and the Philadelphia Department of Records.

March 4, 1835, Contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital to William Anderson, merchant, and Ann h/w. A lot on Ss Spruce Street 173'3" W from Ws 7th, Front 24'9" Depth 250' to Delancey Street.

May 26, 1835, William Anderson, merchant, to Erskine Hazzard, Philadelphia, gentleman and Mary h/w (insured June 1835 for E. Hazzard by Franklin Fire Insurance company for \$4,500 mortgage money.

November 18, 1838, Erskine Hazzard to Thomas Wharton.

November 24, 1838, Thomas Wharton, Philadelphia, gentleman to Joseph Lapsley, Philadelphia, carpet merchant. Messuage for \$4,500 and \$20,500 mortgage money.

June 2, 1868, Richard B. Brinton, Philadelphia and B. Franklin Pyle, trustees under will of Joseph Lapsley to Thomas Searle, Philadelphia. Four story brick messuage for \$20,000.

June 2, 1868, Thomas R. Searle, Philadelphia, and Eliza h/w to Joseph Watson, Georgetown, territory of Colorado, messuage or tenement building for \$10,000 mortgage money.

February 24, 1869, Joseph W. Watson, Georgetown, territory of Colorado, gentleman, and Francis h/w to Edward A. Turpin, Philadelphia for \$14,000 and for \$10,000 mortgage money.

Edward Turpin left premises to wife who became Mr.s George Harvey.

September 29, 1886, George Harvey, Bel Air in Bermuda, gentleman, and Sallie S. h/w to George Gebbie, Philadelphia, Publisher for \$42,000 and for \$10,000 mortgage money.

July 22, 1907, estate of Mary Jane Gebbie to Charles H. Baruch, for \$2,125 and for \$12,000 mortgage money.

July 22, 1907, Charles H. Baruch to William West for \$1.00 and \$12,000 mortgage money.

For Chain of title from May 1, 1909 on see 712 Spruce Street.

- d. Original plans and construction: The insurance survey of June 4, 1835 shows the same room arrangements as the others. The mantels are not noted as elaborate, just as marble mantels. Also mentioned is the piazza, zinc roof, and stucco cornices.
- e. Alterations and additions: The insurance survey of 1891 notes that walnut sash were installed and a wash house or summer kitchen was added. A bath had been installed on each floor, and they were described as having copper tubs encased in wood, water closets, china wash bowls and so forth. In addition, a cooking range, water boiler and galvanized iron heater were installed. The back building was replaced by one of a similar design.

Around 1907 the two properties were connected. This was done by removing the party wall on the first floor.

2. Sources of information:

a. Old views:

A sketch plan of the house is in the 1835 Insurance Survey.

b. Bibliography:

Franklin Fire Insurance Company, Survey of June 4, 1835.

Insurance surveys of November 24, 1838, December 22, 1874 and November 9, 1891.

- H. Historical context: 700-714 Spruce Street were constructed in the Greek Revival Style. The style had been used successfully in Philadelphia for both public buildings and residential structures prior to 1835. The main example of this was the construction of Portico Row in the 900 block of Spruce Street in 1832-1833. This block was developed as a unit and is intact today. The 1000 block of Spruce Street was developed with similar structures in 1839, and these are also largely intact. It is uncertain whether

the 700 block was developed as a unit or not. While the chains of title do not indicate that it was, the similarity in design of 708-714 suggests that at least part of the block was developed as a unit.

A review of the history of social migration in Philadelphia shows a steady movement westward for most of the nineteenth century. By the time of the Civil War, the area east of Broad Street had been largely abandoned by the upper classes, with the Rittenhouse Square area being favored. It can be assumed that many of the wealthy and fashionable had already moved west of 8th Street to newer areas such as Portico Row by the time that the 700 block of Spruce Street (south side) was developed. Those who resided in this block were largely well-to-do merchants, not high society.

A list of the residents of that specific area underlines this point: 700-702, an orphanage; 704, William Wilson, grocer; 706, John Haseltine, merchant; 708, Romulus Riggs, merchant, and later Samuel Welsh, merchant; 710, Erskine Hazzard, gentleman, later Alexander Fullerton, druggist; 712, Erskine Hazzard, gentleman, later William R. Thompson, merchant; 714, Erskine Hazzard, gentleman, later Joseph Lapsley, carpet merchant.

It was common practice at that time to list individuals in the City Directory by occupation. Society figures were listed, however, as gentlemen. Erskine Hazzard and his partner were dealers in anthracite coal in 1818 but by 1835 he had become a "gentleman." His tenure, however, in the 700 block was of short duration. He purchased his three properties within a three month period and sold them within five years. They were clearly purchased for speculation.

Samuel Welsh, as previously noted, was the first individual in Philadelphia to have an annual income of \$100,000. He too is listed in City Directories as a merchant. The list of boards on which he served is impressive, but it is possible that he was not considered a member of society. There is no question, though, that the 700 block remained a desirable address for the well-to-do merchant class until the latter part of the nineteenth century.

By the 1890s the large properties of what are now known as Society Hill and Washington Square West were sold, resold, cut into small, overcrowded apartments and decay set in. By 1900 the block was no longer a desirable address. The depression of the 1930s and the influx of people into Philadelphia for work during

World War II contributed further to the physical decline of the structures in this area.

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Community Planning and  
Development Division  
Philadelphia Area Office  
Department of Housing and  
Urban Development  
December 27, 1977

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This row of seven townhouses, built from 1835 to 1839, presents a unified streetscape. The structures, with their simple, unadorned facades of red brick with Schuylkill marble trim are in the Greek Revival Style. The interiors are more ornate, featuring marble mantels, molded plaster cornices, and mahogany trim.
2. Condition of fabric: The structures are in good condition, although alterations have hidden some of the original interior features.

### B. 700-702 Spruce Street:

1. Description of exterior:
  - a. Over-all dimensions: The four story main block of the building is rectangular and measures 50' (three-bay front) x 56'. The fourth story was added in 1888. There is a rectangular rear wing attached to the eastern side of the back. It is in two sections; the portion nearest the house is three stories and measures 21' x 64', the other section is one story and measures 21' x 83'. There is a rectangular building to the rear of the property which measures 76' x 26'. The Insurance Survey of 1836 lists the front block as being 49'6" x 56', the original back wing measuring 23' x 64', with a Piazza (no measurements given) to the rear of it.

- b. Foundations: The foundations are surfaced with Schuylkill marble with the same marble for the water table and belt course.
- c. Wall construction, finish, color: The walls are of Philadelphia brick laid in Flemish bond.
- d. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls with wooden partitions and wooden floor joists.
- e. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: There is a stoop with ten steps at the center bay on the north (front) elevation. It is of Schuylkill marble and has cast iron railings that are similar to the others on the block.
- f. Chimneys: There are four chimneys on the main block of the building; seven on the rear wing.
- g. Openings: The main entrance is through double doors with transom. Stylistic evidence indicates that the doors are original, or very early, and had the glass panels cut in at a later date. The doors are framed by Schuylkill marble trim consisting of pilasters and a cornice with a slight pediment. There is a side entrance with transom on the east elevation.

The windows on the north (front) elevation have Schuylkill marble sills and molded lintles. The first floor windows have been narrowed (see Part I, A, alterations and additions). All windows are double-hung sash, six over six lights. There are generally three openings per story with the exception of the second story. The windows on the east elevation are of the same type except they lack the molded lintel. On the fourth story of the east elevation, there is an arch filled with two windows, a band of decorative brickwork topped by four smaller irregularly shaped windows. This dates from 1888 when the fourth story was added.

The openings on the south (rear) elevation are of the same general description except those on the first floor. The door has a fan light and sidelights, the windows have semi-circular arched heads.

- h. Roof: There is a flat gable roof, originally covered with zinc, on the main building. The three story back

building has a shed roof (originally roofed in zinc), while the later addition has a gable roof. Later additions were roofed in tin. The roof is now covered with a bituminous material

There is a simple wood cornice across the front elevation.

2. Description of interior:

- a. Floor plans: The first floor of the main building has a central hall plan with two rooms on either side. The second and third stories have similar arrangements as, presumably, does the fourth. The back addition originally had three rooms on the first and second floors and two on the third.
- b. Stairs: The description of the stairs in the main buildings is nearly illegible in the 1836 Insurance survey. It appears that the handrails and balusters are of mahogany. The balusters are very simple, with square bases and tapered shafts. The stairs for the back buildings originally consisted of three flights of closed, straight flight stairs.
- c. Flooring: The flooring is of yellow heart pine boards. The floors in the garrett were of rough white pine boards with one of the rooms in the back building floored in brick. Linoleum tile was laid over some of the wood floors at a later date.
- d. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are originally of plaster and lath with stucco cornices. Some of the walls and ceilings have had stamped tin added while others have been papered.
- e. Openings: Many of the original doors remain in the structure, and are described as folding doors in the insurance survey.

The window openings on the front side are recessed, framed by pilasters and topped by a cornice. The niche into which they are recessed are paneled above, on the sides and below the window. The window itself originally had folding interior shutters, which were paneled. A few of the shutters are remaining.

- f. Decorative features, trim: There were originally several marble mantels in the building with cast iron firebacks.
- g. Mechanical equipment: At the present date the building has electric lights and hot water heating. The original method of heating the building was by the fireplaces. The 1851 Insurance Survey describes the heating system as: "Connected with this is a furnace, in a brick chamber arched over, the gas pipe leads into a chimney, the heated air conveyed in a brick flue and let out in the different stories through apertures in the chimnies and walls. Covered by iron valves."

The first privy was described in the 1836 Insurance Survey as a "Large double brick privy" located in the piazza. By 1851 (Insurance Survey of October 25, 1851) a more sophisticated system had been installed which consisted of "Eight water closets divided off by planed and grooved board partitions, no doors in front, seats and lids to each, large hopper of pan at bottom with water and lever to empty pan." In 1914 new porcelain water closets were added, and again in 1915.

- 3. Site: 700-702 Spruce Street is located on the south side of Spruce, on the corner of Spruce and 7th Streets. It is a part of a row of townhouses. In the back there is an enclosed yard with brick walks.

C. 704 Spruce Street:

- 1. Description of exterior: The rectangular four-story building has a four story piazza, three story rear wing and measures roughly 26' (three-bay front) x 56'. The walls are of Philadelphia brick, the foundations have a Schuylkill marble veneer. The windows are double-hung sash with six over six lights. The molded lintels and sills are of Schuylkill marble. Originally there was a door and entrance stoop at the westernmost bay which has since been removed (see Part I, Section B, alterations and additions). There is a simple wooden cornice and a flat gable roof on the main building. The back building and piazza have hip roofs.

The rear elevation has fire escapes across the main building and a one story addition to the back building. The back building and piazza are mirrored by those of 706 Spruce Street.

2. Description of interior: The interior of the building was originally more ornate than that of 700-702 Spruce Street. It is assumed that the first story was a side-hall plan with two rooms. There are elaborate plaster cornices with egg and dart moldings next to the ceiling. Ionic pilasters flank the main windows. Many original doors and elaborate marble fireplace surrounds with cast iron firebacks are still in place. The stair rail and spindles are mahogany and original.
3. Site: 704 Spruce Street is on the south side of Spruce Street, and is part of a row of townhouses. The back yard is continuous with that of 700-702.

D. 706 Spruce Street:

1. Description of exterior: The rectangular four story building roughly measures 26' (three-bay front) x 52'. It has a four story piazza and a three-story rear wing. The building is of Philadelphia brick; the foundations are veneered with Schuylkill marble. Schuylkill marble steps lead up to the one bay entrance portico. The steps are flanked by arms which are probably replacements of the original cast and wrought iron rails. The denticulated cornice of the portico is supported by columns with modified Acanthus capitals. The door is flanked by Doric pilasters and has a transom. It is a later addition. The windows are double-hung sash, one over one light. They have Schuylkill marble sills and molded lintels. There is a flat gable roof and a simple wooden cornice. The piazza and back buildings have hip roofs. An ornate cast and wrought iron fence runs across the front.
2. Description of interior: The first floor is a side hall plan. The doorways have Ionic pilasters and denticulated cornices of mahogany. The doors are paneled. The original moldings and cornices are in place. There is an egg and dart molding at the cornice, a chair rail and a baseboard. An arch emphasized by mahogany trim leads from the hall to the stairway, which has a mahogany handrail and spindles (similar to those of 704). The flooring is of yellow pine boards. There are marble mantels with cast iron firebacks. Tile facings were added to the fireplaces in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.
3. Site: 706 Spruce is on the south side of Spruce Street, and is part of a row of townhouses. Its back yard, which is continuous with that of 708-710 is composed of brick walks.

E. 708-710 Spruce Street:

1. Description of exterior: The structure was built as two separate residences with a unified facade. Information is drawn from the June 4, 1835 Franklin Fire insurance survey of 710 (no survey has been found for 708).
  - a. Over-all dimensions: The four story structure is rectangular with a piazza and a three story central rear wing. It measures 48'3" (five-bay front) x 53'2". The back wing measures 32'1" x 96'4". The insurance survey states that 710 measures 23'16" x 52', the piazza 9'6" x 20' and the back building 15' x 48'.
  - b. Foundations: The foundations are brick and stone surfaced with Schuylkill marble. The water table and belt course are also of the same marble.
  - c. Wall construction, finish, color: The walls are of Philadelphia brick laid in Flemish bond.
  - d. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls on stone foundations with stud partitions, and oak and spruce floor joists. The insurance survey describes the roof framings as: "double pitch roof 10 feet pitch, two principal rafters with king posts and braces and cross rafters or purlins."
  - e. Porches: A Schuylkill marble stoop with nine steps leads up to the main entrance. The stoop has cast and wrought iron railings.
  - f. Chimneys: There are five chimneys on the main block of the building and four on the back section.
  - g. Openings: The main entrance is through double doors with a transom. The door is flanked by four Schuylkill marble Doric pilasters with inset panels. Side lights are between the pilasters. This is crowned by a pedimented cornice of the same marble.

The windows are all six over six light double-hung sash. The sills and lintels are of Schuylkill marble. There are square designs carved into either end of the lintels.

- h. Roof: The roof of the main building is a flat gable, originally covered with zinc. By 1873 all the roofs were

covered with tin (insurance survey, 1873). The eaves and cornice are of wood. There is a single dormer on the 710 side of the building. The piazza has a hip roof, while the back building has a mansard roof which was added at a later date.

2. Description of interior: The interior description is based on information from the 1835 insurance survey of 710 and the measured drawings of 708. The insurance survey mentions 708 as a "similar house" so it can be assumed that it was a mirror image of 710 with minor variations.

- a. Floor plans: The insurance survey of 1835 describes the first floor of the main building as having a side hall plan with two rooms. The ceiling height is 14'. The second floor is also composed of two rooms with entry into the back room. The ceiling height is again 14'. The third and fourth floors have three rooms, two front and one back with the entry from the back room. The ceiling height for the third floor is 10'6", that of the fourth, 9'6".

The back building was originally composed of two rooms on the first floor with a closet in the circular end. The two rooms were used as a kitchen and a washhouse. The second story also had two rooms and another circular closet. The third story was composed of two rooms with closets between the rooms.

The plan and cross section of the first floor of 708 (see HABS measured drawings sheet 2 of 4) shows that the spaces along the first floor have been divided by partitions; furthermore the circular closet to 710 has been replaced by a square addition and the hall that originally led from 710 to the back building is no longer there (see Part I, Section E, alterations and additions).

- b. Stairways: The stairs are described in the 1835 insurance survey: "The stairs from the first to fourth story are continued rail, scroll and curtail step, mahogany rail, 3 turned ballusters on a step, open string, return nosings, fancy bracketts, 3 landings, and a doorway from the 2 lower landings into the back building, square heads and pilasters to them, heart pine steps and rizers, 3 feet 8 in going, paneled wainscoting first story."

The stairs in the back building are described as "open newell, winders and square steps, open string, return nosing, turned newells and ballusters, heart steps and rizers 3 feet going and mahogany handrail, a flight of plain stairs to the cellar with plain ballusters and cherry handrails."

710's stairs were removed circa 1900, and the stairs of 708 function for both structures.

- c. Flooring: While the flooring is not mentioned in the 1835 survey, in the 1873 survey it is described as yellow pine, with a brick floor for the cellar.
- d. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are plaster and lathe. The insurance survey describes the structures as having stucco cornices and moldings. The entry vestibule had a groined arch ceiling. The hallway had two arches with carved brackets. In the first floor rooms there are stucco cornices, bedmolds and a paneled ceiling. The second story had cornices and moldings, with the entry through an arch with brackets. The third story had stucco cornices, and the fourth had "quick ovolo mouldings and washboard (baseboard)."

The wall and ceilings for the back building are not as ornate. The first floor had baseboards; the second had stucco cornices and baseboards; and the third had moldings and baseboards.

The present condition of the walls is deteriorated. Many of the brackets at the arches are missing, and the paint is peeling off of several walls (see HABS photograph PA-253-18).

- e. Openings: The door and window trim is quite ornate. The original entrance door to 708 has been replaced by a later door with frosted glass panels, sidelights and transoms (see HABS photograph PA-253-16). The original entrance was described as "a square head front door frame, fan sash and pannel door, inside circular sash and carved brackets to arch in entry." The other doors on the first floor are described as "plank double worked passage doors and folding doors, square heads and frieze, cornice and bedmoulds, pilasters and carved caps." The upper story doors have pilasters and cornices, the trim appears to be mahogany.

The windows facing Spruce Street are set into a paneled niche, which is flanked by pilasters. They have interior paneled shutters with a shutter latch of wrought iron (see HABS photograph PA-253-19).

- f. Decorative features, trim: The fireplaces have white marble mantelpieces with cast iron firebacks. The mantels have pilasters with egg and dart bands. The firebacks have ornate floral designs. Fireplaces are in the first and second floors with the third floor of both buildings having plainer mantels.
  - g. Notable hardware: The latch for holding the shutters in place was made out of a piece of flat wrought iron attached to the lower shutters. The latch pivoted up and down, and hooks into a catch on the second to last shutter. The circular elements on the top hit the upper shutters at the joint and hold them in place; the main apex of the latch also hits the center shutter joints and holds them securely in place (see HABS photograph PA-253-19).
  - h. By 1873 the house had heating similar to that of 700-702.
3. Site: 708-710 Spruce Street is located on the south side of Spruce and is a part of a row of townhouses. There is an enclosed yard with brick walks to the rear.
- F. 712-714 Spruce Street: While insurance surveys exist for both structures, it is more feasible to consider them as one building. This is due to the fact that their interiors are mirror images of each other, they have a unified facade, and they were converted into one structure around 1907.
- 1. Description of exterior:
    - a. Over-all dimensions: The four story structure is rectangular with a four story piazza, and a three story back building. Various additions have been attached to the back building, and in 1891 a new back building replaced the old one of 714. The main building measures 48'3" (five-bay front) x 53'2". In the insurance survey of 1835 the main buildings each measure 26' x 52', the piazzas 9'6" x 20', the back building for 712 18' x 48', the back building for 714 16'6" x 48'.

- b. Foundations: the brick and stone foundations are surfaced with Schuylkill marble. The water table and belt course are also of the same marble.
- c. Wall construction, finish, color: The walls are of Philadelphia brick laid in Flemish bond.
- d. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing wall on stone foundations with stud partitions, and oak and spruce floor joists. The insurance survey describes the roof framing for each structure as "double pitch roof 10 feet pitch two principal rafters with king posts and braces and cross rafters or purlins."
- e. Porches: A Schuylkill marble stoop with nine steps lead up to the main entrance. The original cast iron railings are no longer in existence and have been replaced by a simple metal rail and marble arm projections.
- f. Chimneys: There are two chimneys on the main building and five on the back building.
- g. Openings: The main entrance is through double doors (the originals were replaced in 1874, see Part I, G, alterations and additions) with a transom. The doors are flanked by Schuylkill marble Doric pilasters with inset panels. Side lights are between the pilasters. This is crowned by a pedimented cornice.

The windows were originally six over six light double-hung sash. They are now one over one or one over two lights. The sills and lintels are of Schuylkill marble. There are square designs carved into either end of the lintels.

- h. Roof: The roof is a flat gable, originally covered with zinc. The eaves and cornice are of wood. There is a hip roof on the piazza and a mansard roof on the back building.
2. Description of interior:
- a. Floor plans: The 1835 insurance survey describes the first floor of each building as having a side hall plan with two rooms. The ceiling height is 14'. The second floor is also composed of two rooms with entry into the

back room. The ceiling height is again 14'. The third and fourth floors have three rooms, two front and one back with the entry from the back room. The ceiling height for the third floor is 10'6", that of the fourth, 9'6".

Each back building was originally composed of two rooms on the first floor with a store room in the circular end. The two rooms were used as a parlor and kitchen. The second story had three rooms as did the third. In 1874 the back building of 714 was replaced with a new back building of a similar layout.

- b. Stairways: The stairs are described in the 1835 Insurance Survey: "The stairs from the first to fourth story are continued rail, scroll and curtail step, mahogany rail, 3 turned ballusters on a step, open string, return nosings, fancy bracketts, 3 landings, and a doorway from the 2 lower ones into the back building, square heads and pilasters to this, heart pine steps and rizers 3 feet 8 inches going, paneled wainscoting first story, a strait flight of cellar steps, open strings, cherry rails and plain ballusters. The stairs were located in the piazza at the back of the main building.

The stairway for the back building was originally located between the sitting room and kitchen. It is described as "the stairs from the first to third story are 2 flights of square steps with 4 winders at the top of heart pine boards, mahogany rail and turned newells and ballusters to upper flight common plain stairs to the cellar."

- c. Flooring: While the flooring is not mentioned in the 1835 survey, yellow pine boards were typical for the houses.
- d. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are plaster and lathe. The insurance survey describes the structures as having stucco cornices and moldings. The entry vestibule had a groined arch ceiling. The hallway had two arches with carved brackets. In the first floor rooms there are stucco cornices with coffers, bedmolds and a paneled ceiling with Greek Revival moldings (see HABS photograph PA-253-26). The second story had cornices and moldings with the entry through an arch with brackets. The third story had stucco cornices, and the fourth had "quick ovolo mouldings and washboard (baseboard)."

- e. Openings: The door and window trim are quite typical of the block. The doors are "plank double worked passage doors and folding doors, square heads and frieze, cornice and bedmolds, pilasters and carved caps."

The windows facing Spruce Street are set into a paneled niche, which is flanked by pilasters.

  - f. Decorative features, trim: There are white marble mantelpieces with cast iron firebacks.
  - g. By 1873 the house had heating similar to that of the others on the block with the exception that instead of having only iron valves they also had brass valves.
3. Site: 712-714 Spruce Street is located on the south side of Spruce and is a part of a row of townhouses. There is an enclosed yard with brick walks to the rear.

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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation was provided by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.) in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Executive Order 11593, and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The project was a mitigative effort in the Pennsylvania Hospital expansion plan and H.U.D. Project #PA-A-4-21 in the Washington Square East Urban Renewal Area. The measured drawings and photographs were compiled by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority. The buildings were measured and drawn during February 1978 by the firm of John Milner Associates of West Chester, Pennsylvania. John Milner, AIA was the principal-in-charge; Richard Klepfer, the project architect; and John T. Parks, the architect. The photographs were taken by Jules Schick of Philadelphia in October and December, 1977. The historical written data was prepared by Edwin C. Bramble of the Community Planning and Development Division, Philadelphia Area Office, H.U.D., in December, 1977. The architectural written data was prepared in the HABS office by Mary Beth Betts in July 1979 from research compiled by Mr. Bramble. John A. Burns, AIA, was HABS project coordinator.