

The East Ender

A Publication of the East Liberty Valley Historical Society

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Spring 2020



Shakespeare in East Liberty

Patricia Lowry

It is possible, for some little while longer, to stand at the corner of Penn and Shady avenues and imagine the rural landscape that came before -- before the wide, open parking lot and its low-rise Shady Hill shopping center likely give way to a seven-story apartment, retail and parking garage development that covers most of the land.

The Giant Eagle grocery store's address here, 6320 Shakespeare Street, exists mostly on letterheads and a Google map. There is no street sign for Shakespeare, indeed there are few signs of a street at all. But turn into the parking lot at the traffic light at the top of Ellsworth Avenue and you're on the recreated remnant of a street whose name recalls the 19th-century inn, pleasure garden and great stone school that once stood here.

The story of their rise and fall begins with Penn Avenue's early days as the Greensburg Pike, the local portion of the main road between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, whose taverns provided food and shelter to travelers and a gathering place for locals. In the East Liberty Valley, the most prominent in the early 1800s were Samuel Peebles' Black Horse Tavern;¹ John Beitler's tavern;² and Thomas McKeown's Point Breeze Tavern.³

The Shakespeare hostelry's first known mention comes in Harris's Business Directory of 1837, when James Wilson is listed as running both the Shakespeare House -- an inn and boarding house, apparently, which he'd opened the year before on the site of Heinz Hall Downtown,⁴ and the Shakespeare "Pleasure grounds" in East Liberty⁵ -- the ornamental garden that distinguished his inn and tavern there from the other nearby establishments. Two years later in the Gazette, Wilson advertised that the Shakespeare Garden was in need of an experienced gardener, young man preferred.⁶

What do we know of James Wilson? In 1840, he lived in a group of 10 people just outside the village of East Liberty.⁷



View of Shakespeare School, September 1915. Source: Detre Library and Archives, Sen. John Heinz History Center

We know, too, that he was a supporter of presidential candidate William Henry Harrison, for in July of that year, James and Henry Wilson of the Shakespeare Garden were among 10 men whose names appear in the Gazette under a notice announcing formation of a local pro-Harrison association and extending an invitation to the opposition: "Those of our democratic friends, who are tired of Van Buren, will please attend."⁸

Harrison, the Whig party candidate, had lost to Martin Van Buren in 1836 but was ready to try again against the Democrat, who was still struggling to turn around the depressed economy after the Panic of 1837.

Wilson must have been a Whig of some renown; in August 1840, the Warren (Pa.) Democratic Advocate newspaper, in ridiculing some of the signers of the July advertisement in the Gazette, mocked his Shakespeare Garden as "the grand resort of the whig nobility when bank facilities were easy," implying Wilson duped a bank into thinking his establishment was worth backing.⁹

The Advocate was right about one thing, and possibly two -- the Shakespeare Garden seems to have been as much a country resort

as a travelers' inn, and likely built by Wilson to both accommodate his family and attract travelers and local diners and drinkers.

But in a few years the Wilsons, for unknown reasons, seem to have left the building. The Shakespeare Garden was in new hands by May 1844, when "Mrs. Eliza McDonald" of Peebles Township petitioned the court to grant her a license to operate a public house of entertainment in "her dwelling house" for travelers and others.¹⁰ Was she Wilson's daughter or unrelated? She could not be reliably traced.

A Few New Proprietors

In January 1845, McDonald announced in the Pittsburgh Daily Post that she had opened the "Shakspeare Gardens," retaining the name but dropping an e and adding an s, "for the accommodation of visitors during the summer season."

"The beauties of the situation, and the perfect manner in which every arrangement is made about this establishment that will contribute to the pleasure of visitors, are well known to the public..."¹¹

Perhaps so, but in 1847 the business had another new innkeeper, Sam McClelland, who advertised that "This beautiful place of resort having been greatly repaired, the proprietor is now ready to receive BOARDERS [sic], by the day, week, or month."¹²

As McClelland tried to shift the inn's clientele from transients to residents, he also, the 1847 city directory shows, changed its name to the Shakespeare Hotel.

Three years later it had a new owner, Henry Landwehr, the Bavarian-born proprietor of a restaurant in the Diamond.¹³ In 1850, he offered the East Liberty property for rent as a private home, with most of its eight acres continuing to be leased to current tenants as market gardens; only the "Mansion House and Garden attached" were available, "being a splendid and delightful residence."¹⁴

A Pittsburgh Press article on early taverns describes it in 1896, when it was still standing, as a two-story brick house "built in the style of those early times, with a large hall running through the center" – what we would call today a center-hall Colonial.¹⁵

From his Market Street establishment under the sign of the Swan, Landwehr sold at wholesale and retail French brandy, champagne and other imported liquors; his house featured oysters and sardines.¹⁶ But by 1857, he was, apparently, all in as tavern keeper at the Shakespeare Garden, when the

Pittsburgh directory lists him there but not in the city.¹⁷

In 1868, when Landwehr would have been about 65, the directory identified him as a gentleman living at Shakespeare Gardens, suggesting he was no longer working. His sons, Henry and John, a gardener and grocer respectively, still lived there,¹⁸ and in May 1869 his daughter Sophie married John Roup Baum there.¹⁹ In 1873, the Landwehrs were seeking to lease the Shakespeare House and Gardens, with 23 furnished rooms, a bar, stabling and sheds, and two and a half acres with ornamental trees and shrubbery.²⁰ By the middle of the next decade, they had found an innkeeper.

In a 1933 letter to the Post-Gazette, C.M. Harvey of Wampum, Lawrence County, recalled the hotel in the mid-1870s, when his uncle, William Stoughton, was proprietor:

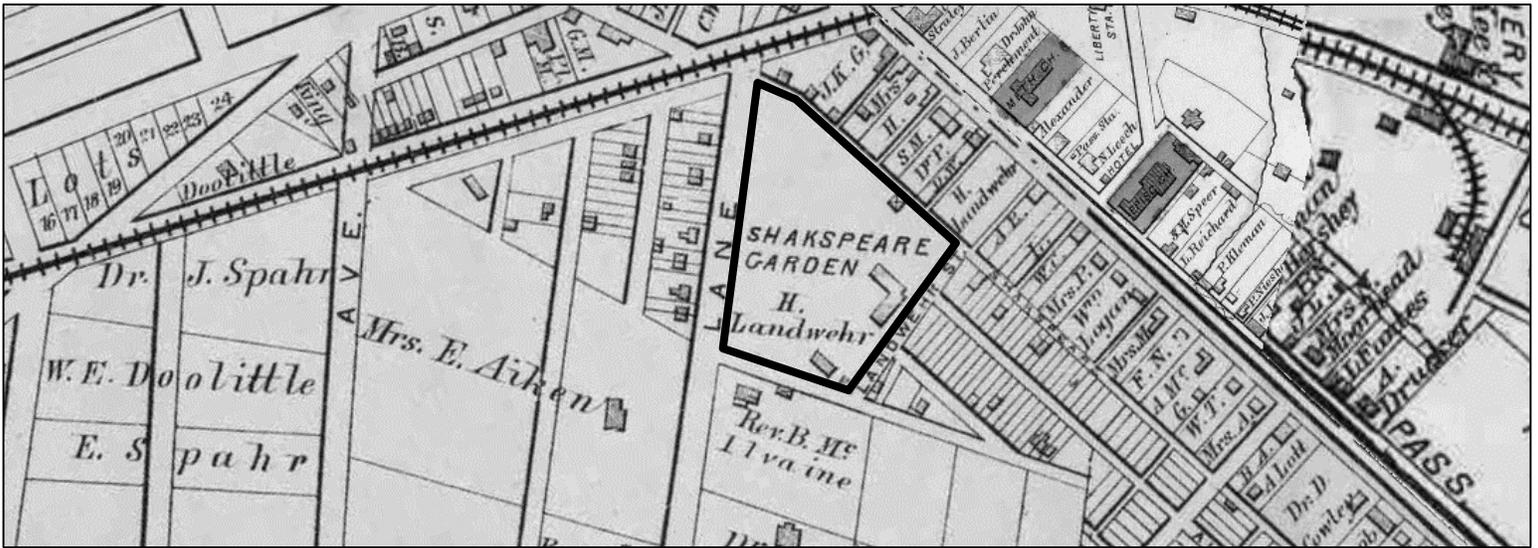
"I lived with him at the Inn about a year. It was quite a place for parties of Pittsburgh's elite.

"In connection with the inn there was a stable for the horses and rigs of guests who would drive out from the city. There was quite a lot of ground around the building: it was filled with grape arbors and orchard trees. A grove of ornamental trees, mostly buckeyes, was located between the inn and the stables. In this grove was a mound of considerable size which the children of the neighborhood said was an old Indian mound. It sticks in my memory that there was a summer house placed on top of the mound; this was built of latticework."²¹

By 1872, several streets had been cut through the Landwehr property: Shakespeare, Landwehr, and an unnamed one soon to be called Hawkeye, later Aurelia. Although Henry Landwehr had died in 1880,²² the Shakespeare Hotel was still operating in 1887 at 6326 Shakespeare Street.²³

Between 1882 and 1890, Hopkins maps indicate, the Landwehrs had sold off the building lots along Shady Lane (now Shady Avenue. At 203 Shady stood the office of the Home Monthly magazine, where Willa Cather worked in 1896-1897). In 1872 Landwehr's heirs still owned a large double lot along Penn, suggesting their acreage had extended to the Greensburg Pike and occupied that entire corner at Penn and Shady avenues. The heart of the property was the last to go, in 1888 when the old tavern building was converted to a school – the first of two Shakespeare Schools on that site -- to accommodate the East End's booming population.²⁴

Did the Shakespeare Garden ever incorporate a traditional Shakespeare garden, with flowers and plants mentioned in Shakespeare's sonnets and plays? I thought so in 1996, when I wrote a Post-Gazette story about the hotel. But now that newspaper archive digitization has brought its earlier history to light, I'm not so sure. James Wilson, its presumed first owner and



Above: Map depicting the “Shakspeare Garden” property (bold line) and surrounding area, circa 1872. Source: G.M. Hopkins Company Maps.

Below: Map depicting the Shakespeare School property (bold line) and surrounding area, circa 1906. Source: G.M. Hopkins Company Maps.



builder, may have simply borrowed the name from his Shakespeare House inn Downtown. Perhaps the name reflected its patronage; it may have catered to traveling actors. Shakespeare’s plays were being staged professionally in Pittsburgh as early as 1815 at the Theater on Third Street.²⁵

Historic maps give conflicting evidence of the footprint of the old inn. The 1872 map shows it as an L-shaped building, while in 1882 it’s a T-shaped brick structure with a frame addition. The 1890 map shows a simple brick rectangle, just before the building was moved to a far corner of the lot to make way for a new Shakespeare School.²⁶

Schooled by Richardson

The new school’s architect was Thomas D. Evans,²⁷ a Welshman who came from a family of house builders going

back at least to his paternal grandfather.²⁸ Born in 1844, Evans immigrated in 1856 with his parents and siblings. By 1860 they were living in East Birmingham (South Side); his father was a carpenter and Thomas a student carpenter.²⁹ But the younger Evans soon apprenticed himself with the prolific architectural firm Barr & Moser,³⁰ and by March 1870 was advertising his own practice Downtown at 42 Fifth Ave.³¹

Among his first commissions in the early 1870s were two elegant schools in the fashionable Italianate style: Springfield School, now the 31st Street Lofts apartments at 3080 Smallman Street, Strip District,³² and Morse School, now Morse Gardens Apartments at 2416 Sarah Street, South Side.³³

Over the next 30 years he designed churches and houses as well as office, school and commercial buildings for numerous clients, including the Edgar Thomson Steel Works, state reformatories at

Canonsburg and Huntingdon, South Side and West Penn hospitals and the Bluff's most prominent landmark, Duquesne University's Old Main administration building.³⁴

Evans' Shakespeare School was a great romantic castle of a building, part of a wave of robust, rusticated stone structures here inspired by H.H. Richardson's Allegheny County Courthouse of 1888. Asymmetrical with equally prominent elevations facing Shakespeare, Landwehr and Aurelia streets, the building had turrets, tall chimneys, balconies over porches with wide Syrian arches, 10 classrooms and a lantern-like central stair tower illuminated at the top by stained glass windows.^{35, 36}

Richardson had used the lantern scheme atop the courthouse tower and also, at Trinity Church in Boston, to shelter the entire auditorium, a plan further developed in Pittsburgh's East End by other architects,³⁷ at Shadyside Presbyterian and First United Methodist churches.³⁸ In adapting it to a school, Evans elevated the building's aesthetic and spiritual character, no doubt seeking to stir the imaginations and nourish the souls of students and teachers alike.

"It was almost like a cathedral," former teacher Helen McIntyre, who taught there for 41 years, recalled in 1958; Carnegie Tech architecture students visited to study its details. She also remembered how the demolition had revealed its stone-over-brick construction: under the stone they were removing, "you could see a lovely little red brick inner building."³⁹

In a 1934 autobiographical story in the *New York Daily News*, the school's most famous former student, Evelyn Nesbit, recalled the kind words of another teacher, her favorite Miss Florence Burdette, who complimented her mother on the clothes she designed and made for Evelyn in the late 1890s, after her attorney father's early death cast them into poverty and forced a move from Allegheny City to the East End.⁴⁰

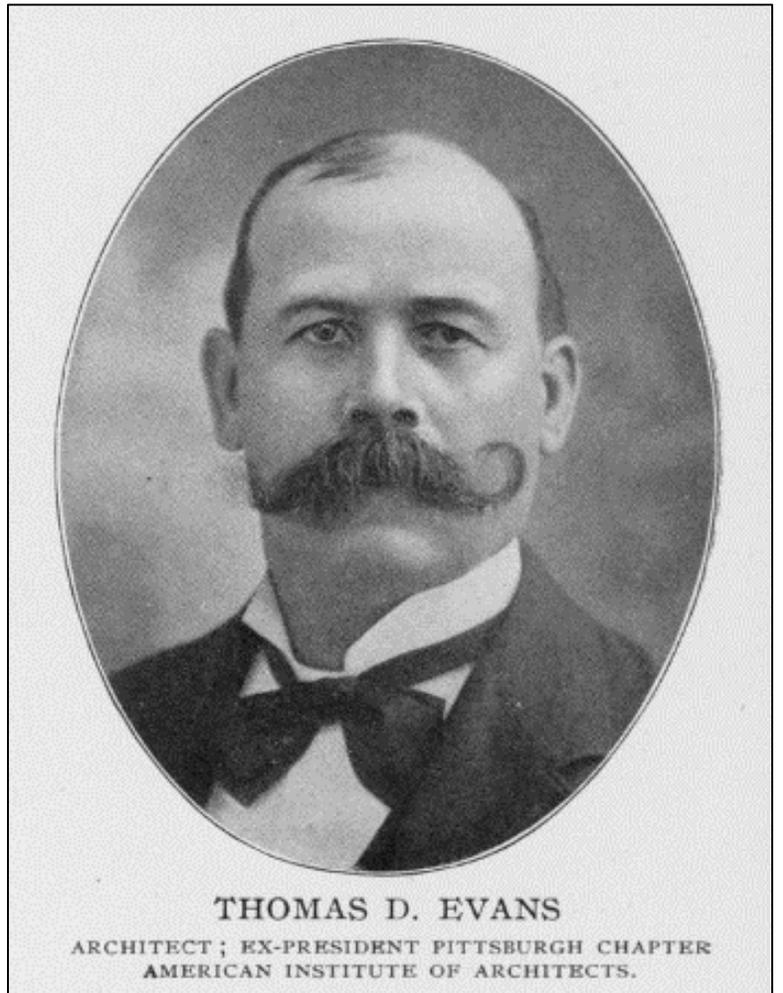
In the 1930s, students grew vegetables in the school garden under the direction of science teacher Harriet Kincaid – hundreds of bushels in 1933, when they were exhibited for parents.⁴¹

The old inn, dwarfed by its namesake neighbor, carried on into the 20th century as a manual training center for cooking, housekeeping and woodshop. It was razed sometime between 1932, when its porch was removed,⁴² and 1939, when it no longer appears on the Hopkins map.⁴³

After World War II, three aluminum Quonset huts were set up on that corner of the school grounds to teach diesel auto



The former Shakespeare Garden inn and tavern is at far left in this 1903 view of Shakespeare School, as seen from Aurelia Street. Source: "Views of Pittsburgh"



Thomas D. Evans as he appeared in 1901. Source: "Notable Men of Pittsburgh and Vicinity"



View of Shakespeare School with Quonset huts. Source: Detre Library and Archives, Sen. John Heinz History Center

repair to veterans⁴⁴ and remained on site until the school was demolished.⁴⁵ With the lawn littered with cars in various states of repair, this worthy program was a serious blow to the school's park-like setting, which had been praised in 1914 by the Russell Sage Foundation's Pittsburgh Survey for its broad lawns and mature trees.⁴⁶

Thomas Evans, after a career that included fellowship distinction in the American Institute of Architects and presidency of the local chapter, died at 58 in 1903, a few days after suffering a paralyzing stroke.⁴⁷ His wife Sarah had died four years before of influenza at age 38, leaving him to care for their three pre-teen children.⁴⁸

Evans was stricken while returning to his office after an evening meeting with the Allegheny County commissioners on his design for a new memorial for soldiers and sailors who fought in the Civil War.⁴⁹ With Evans, a veteran of that war, unable to develop his rough sketch into specific plans, the commission was cancelled,⁵⁰ opening the door for Henry Hornbostel's iconic Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum.

Newspaper stories about the installation and removal of a time capsule bookend Shakespeare School's 63-year lifespan. The envelope was filled with coins, newspapers and school and community booklets and ceremoniously placed in the cornerstone on the evening of May 23, 1893, accompanied by a speech and music from a children's chorus.⁵¹ When demolition workers happened on it in 1956, it also was found to contain an architect's sketch of the school, notes on its construction and this caution:

"The Board of Directors in the construction of this building has attempted the most complete and substantial school building in

all its details that can be erected, and if the reader of these lines finds fault with the designs or workmanship thereof, let him remember that it was modern when built."⁵²

Evans' landmark school, lacking a gym and auditorium and no longer considered modern, was taken apart by Hamilton Avenue wrecking contractor Art Levenson, who offered for sale its stone, windows, doors, fence, blackboards, desks, chairs and more, as well as the three Quonset huts.⁵³

Were the figurative stained glass windows in the tower saved? Who designed them, and did they depict scenes from Shakespeare's plays? All questions still to be answered.

Trees were cut down, lawns were paved and in the summer of 1958, a Loblaw's self-service supermarket opened where the school had stood.

Six decades on, some of us who were children then still lament its loss.

Patricia Lowry wrote about art, architecture, local history and food for 31 years for The Pittsburgh Press and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

A Call To Action:

What will happen to the long-submerged history of the Shakespeare School site, which speaks so clearly of East Liberty's early days and its evolutionary growth from pioneer stringtown and rural village to modern shopping mecca?

The East Liberty Valley Historical Society proposes that it not be reburied and forgotten, but recognized and celebrated.

We propose that the new development's vehicular entrance, which will be approximately where Shakespeare Street was located, be called Shakespeare Way.

We propose that the City Planning Commission and City Council require recognition of the site's history, acknowledging Shakespeare Garden and Shakespeare School in a prominent and public place in the development and including images of the tavern and school.

And we propose that the city Planning Commission and City Council require the investigation of the potential for archaeology on the site, and if it is promising, to pursue it.

Do you have photographs of Shakespeare School or the Shakespeare Garden tavern?

We would love to see them!

Write us:
eastlibertyvalley@gmail.com | P.O. Box 4922, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Endnotes:

1. Georgina C. Negley, "East Liberty Presbyterian Church: with historical setting and a narrative of the centennial celebration, April 12-20, 1919," East Liberty Presbyterian Church, p. 40. The Black Horse Tavern existed as early as 1808 and was on the site of Frank Arday's residence, shown on the 1872 Hopkins map on the northeast corner of Penn and Rebecca (now Aiken Avenue). Today that corner is occupied by the Penn-Aiken Dairy.
2. *Ibid.* John Beitler's tavern began as Thompson's Tavern, a log building described in an Aug. 21, 1889 Pittsburgh Dispatch story by Hiram Schoch as having existed in the first decade of the 19th century. A Mar. 3, 1907 Post-Gazette story about Beitler gives an 1814 construction date. Beitler later replaced it with a brick tavern.
3. Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette, Jan. 6, 1832, p. 3; Pittsburgh Gazette, Mar. 5, 1835, p. 3. The Point Breeze Tavern, later called the Point Breeze Hotel, likely was built between 1832, when Thomas McKeown (McKown), its first owner and proprietor, was living in the city of Pittsburgh and elected to its Common Council, and 1835, when he was living at the corner of Greensburg Pike and the coming Fourth Street Road (Fifth Avenue) -- the toll road that began Downtown as Fourth Street and was known corporately as the Pittsburgh Farmers and Mechanics Turnpike Road, with a board of directors overseeing its development in the mid-1830s. Bids were solicited in 1835 to complete the grading and build bridges and culverts from the city line on Fourth Street to "the Pittsburgh and Greensburg Turnpike Road at or near the house of Thomas McKown."
4. Pittsburgh Gazette, Aug. 10, 1836, p. 1.
5. "Harris' Pittsburgh business directory for the year 1837," Isaac Harris, p. 88.
6. Pittsburgh Gazette, Sept. 19, 1839, p. 3.
7. Ancestry.com, 1840 U.S. Census for Peebles Township, Allegheny County, Pa., p. 505. The 1840 census also records a younger James Wilson, in his 20s, living nearby in the village of East Liberty with a woman and three children (p. 503). He is engaged in manufacture or trade.
8. Pittsburgh Gazette, July 30, 1840, p. 2.
9. "The acres of changes in Allegheny!!," Warren Democratic Advocate, Aug. 7, 1840, p. 2.
10. Pittsburgh Daily Post, May 2, 1844, p. 2.
11. Pittsburgh Daily Post, Jan. 13, 1845, p. 4.
12. Pittsburgh Daily Post, Oct. 15, 1847, p. 1.
13. Fahnestock's Pittsburgh Directory for 1850, George Parkin & Co., Pittsburgh, p. 54.
14. Pittsburgh Daily Post, Feb. 2, 1850, p. 3.
15. The Pittsburgh Press, Mar. 28, 1896, p. 3.
16. Pittsburgh Daily Post, Oct. 21, 1851, p. 4.
17. Directory of Pittsburgh & vicinity for 1857-1858, George H. Thurston, p. 123.
18. Directory of Pittsburgh and Allegheny Cities, 1868-1869, G.H. Thurston, p. 231.
19. Pittsburgh Daily Post, May 21, 1869, p. 1.
20. Pittsburgh Daily Commercial, Feb. 18, 1873, p. 2.
21. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Feb. 14, 1933, p. 8.
22. Pittsburgh Daily Post, Dec. 30, 1880, p. 4.
23. "J.F. Diffenbacher's Directory of Pittsburgh and Allegheny Cities," 1887-1888, Diffenbacher & Thurston, p. 857.
24. George Swetnam, "Cornerstone of Wisdom," Pittsburgh Press Family Magazine, July 13, 1958, p. 4.
25. Lynne Conner, "Pittsburgh in Stages: Two Hundred Years of Theater," University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007, p. 14.
26. The 1872, 1882 and 1890 G.M. Hopkins Co. maps are available on the Historic Pittsburgh website.
27. "The Shakespeare School," Pittsburgh Dispatch, Jul. 3, 1892, p. 3.
28. Obituary of David T. Evans, Y Drych, the oldest national Welsh newspaper in America, Utica, N.Y., Jun. 4, 1891.
29. Ancestry.com, 1860 U.S. Census for East Birmingham, Allegheny County, Pa., p. 137.
30. Lu Donnelly, Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form for Samuel F.B. Morse School, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1985, p. 2.
31. Pittsburgh Daily Commercial, Mar. 3, 1870, p. 1.
32. Attributed by Martin Aurand, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form for Springfield School, 1986.
33. Lu Donnelly, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form for Samuel F.B. Morse School, 1985, p. 1.
34. Mary Beth Pastorius, "Thomas D. Evans, Architect, 1844-1903," research paper, 2016.
35. Photograph, unknown photographer, "Shakespeare School," 1915, Pittsburgh Public Schools Photographs, Detre Library & Archives, Heinz History Center, HistoricPittsburgh.org.
36. Photograph, Samuel A. Musgrave, "Shakespeare Auto Diesel School," 1950-1953, Pittsburgh Public Schools Photographs, Detre Library & Archives, Heinz History Center, HistoricPittsburgh.org.
37. James D. Van Trump, "The Lamp of Demos," Charette, Vol. 42, No. 3, Mar. 1962, p. 22. Van Trump notes that Shakespeare School's "central cupola which was erected on great stilted brick arches made the structure something of a minor architectural tour-de-force."
38. Walter C. Kidney, "Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture," Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 1997, pps. 388 and 427. Shadyside Presbyterian Church was designed by Richardson's successor firm, Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge of Boston, Mass., and completed in 1889, with later additions. First United Methodist was built in 1891-1893 as Christ Methodist Church, designed by Weary & Kramer of Akron, Ohio.
39. George Swetnam, "Cornerstone of Wisdom," Pittsburgh Press Family Magazine, Jul. 13, 1958, p. 4.
40. Evelyn Nesbit, "Evelyn Nesbit's Untold Story," New York Daily News, Jun. 5, 1934, p. 29.
41. "Parents See Garden Crops of Students," The Pittsburgh Press, Sep. 23, 1933, p. 16.
42. Letter to the editor signed "Neighbor," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Feb. 13, 1933, p. 8. Neighbor states the porch was removed the previous year.
43. G.M. Hopkins Co. map, 1939, HistoricPittsburgh.org.
44. "Peak Passes in High School Vet Attendance," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, May 21, 1947, p. 13.
45. "Wrecking Shakespeare School," advertisement, Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph, Jul. 12, 1956, p. 37.
46. Lila Ver Planck North, "Children and the City," part of "The Pittsburgh Survey: Findings in Six Volumes," edited by Paul Underwood Kellogg, The Russell Sage Foundation, 1914, p. 253. "As compared with those of many cities, the site and immediate surroundings of Pittsburgh school houses are unusually favorable ... the Shakespeare building in the Liberty district stands in a whole square, a small park indeed, surrounded by large shade trees and grassy lawns ... The children were not permitted to use any of this space for play lest they might injure the grass; but the space was there."
47. "Architect Evans at Death's Door," Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette, Jun. 20, 1903, p. 6. Death notice, Pittsburgh Daily Post, Jun. 22, 1903, p. 5.
48. Death notice, The Pittsburgh Press, Apr. 26, 1899, p. 11.
49. "Architect Evans III," Pittsburgh Daily Post, Jun. 20, 1903, p. 2.
50. "Judge Is To Explain The Stand Taken," Pittsburgh Daily Post, Dec. 18, 1903, p.8. Evans' memorial was described a week before his death in the Pittsburgh Daily Post, Jun. 13, 1903, page 2: "The design approved is that of a granite building of two stories and a basement ... The architecture is rotund, and a central dome and a colonial entrance, with four large columns extending to the top of the upper floor, add an imposing grace to the building."
51. "Shakespeare School: The Corner Stone of the Structure Laid With Impressive Ceremonies," The Pittsburgh Press, May 24, 1893, p. 9.
52. George Swetnam, "Cornerstone of Wisdom," Pittsburgh Press Family Magazine, July 13, 1958, p. 5.
53. "Wrecking Shakespeare School," advertisement, Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph, Jul. 12, 1956, p. 37.

Q & A: Ask E.L.V.H.S.

Justin P. Greenawalt

Is it true that church in East Liberty stored munitions during World War I?

- Tony Indovina, Squirrel Hill Historical Society

Stockpiling instruments of national defense is nothing new for the East End. Since 1911, the monumental Alfred E. Hunt Memorial Armory has sat nestled amongst the maple and catalpa trees of Emerson Avenue. The 18th Regiment Armory once proudly anchored the corner of Thackery Avenue and O'Hara Street in Oakland. But did an East End church actually store artillery during the Great War? If so, it would certainly give fresh meaning to Kay Kyser's 1943 hit *Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition*. The prospect may seem audacious, but it's true.

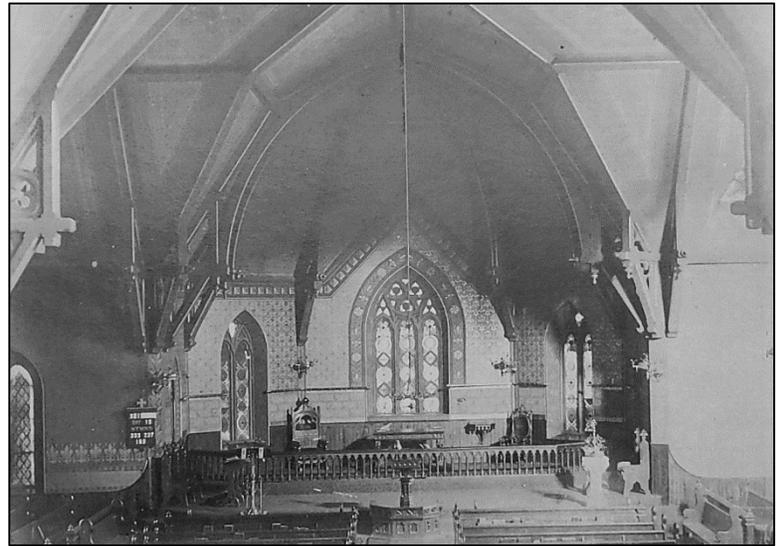
Well, sort of...

A word of caution: if you're looking for a story about holy hand grenades, I regret to inform you that this is not that story. There were no hymnals stashed side-by-side with howitzers. But there was a church. And it did become an armory. You see, adaptive reuse of former religious buildings isn't a 21st century phenomenon. We've been doing it for hundreds of years. And in the process, we created some first-rate East End lore.

The church in question was Calvary Episcopal. No, not the one on Shady Avenue. The one before that. Calvary Episcopal Church was established in East Liberty in January 1855.¹ At first, the congregation rented space from the German Lutheran Church on Collins Avenue. But in 1859, it purchased a lot on Penn Avenue at Station Street (what is now the parking lot of Trader Joe's).² There, the congregation built a new church... or rather, part of a church. Consisting only of a small nave with room for 250 parishioners, the building was dedicated to divine service in 1861.³ Over the next 40 years, the congregation continually expanded and improved the building. By 1900, the church had evolved into a substantial stone-clad building with a nave, a transept, side aisles, an apse, a chapel, and a brick-clad Sunday school and parish house.

In December 1904, facing the prospect of a rapidly growing congregation, the vestry of Calvary Episcopal Church made the decision to sell the Penn Avenue property and build a new church elsewhere.⁴ In 1905, the architectural firm of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson was engaged to design a new edifice on Shady Avenue.⁵ The last services in the Penn Avenue church were held on December 14, 1907.⁶

The Calvary parish remained in possession of the Penn Avenue property for several years after relocating to Shady



Above: Calvary Episcopal Church c. 1870. Source: "A Descriptive Guide of Calvary Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania," 1925.

Below: Interior view, Calvary Episcopal Church. Source: Parish Archives, Calvary Episcopal Church.

Avenue, but in 1913, it decided to part with the old church.

On September 29, 1913, Allegheny County Commissioners adopted a resolution to appropriate \$45,000 for the 14th Regiment of the Pennsylvania National Guard to purchase the old Calvary property at Penn Avenue and Station Street.⁷ Initially, the plan was to demolish the building and erect a new armory on the site -- an unusual proposition considering that the massive Hunt Armory had just been completed a mere quarter mile away. But the Hunt Armory belonged to the Battery B 107th Field Artillery Unit of the Pennsylvania National Guard. The 14th Regiment needed a home of its own.

By late 1913, plans to demolish the old Calvary Episcopal Church were abandoned. Instead, the building was adapted to serve its new use.⁸ Alterations were complete by October 1914 and the building was renamed *Penn Armory*. The building remained home to the 14th Regiment throughout the 1930s, but by the late 1940s, it had become the headquarters of the Pennsylvania National Guard's 645th Engineers Combat Battalion.⁹ The last in-print mention of the building occurs in 1950. Oral histories recall the building as being vacant and derelict by the late 1950s. It vanishes from historic aerial imagery after 1958.

Endnotes:

1. Richard G. Badger, "Calvary Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania," The Gorham Press, Boston, 1908, p. 15.
2. Ibid, p. 18.
3. Ibid, p. 18.
4. Ibid, p. 26.
5. Ibid, p. 26.
6. Ibid, p. 27.
7. "\$45,000 For 14th Armory," Pittsburgh Post, Sept. 30, 1913, p. 7.
8. "Proposals for Alterations to Building for Fourteenth Regiment Armory," Pittsburgh Press, Jan. 14, 1914, p. 27.
9. "Guard Parade Honors Duff," Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph, Jul. 17, 1949, p. 14.

Cather's relation to Alfred McClung and his wife Mary Mellon McClung, to offer a new reading of Cather's most famous, and arguably, most controversial narrator, Jim Burden. Dr. Jaap is a Teaching Professor of English at Penn State Greater Allegheny and a member of the Board of Governors, Willa Cather Foundation in Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Date To Be Rescheduled

Liberty, the Mysterious Township

Tom Powers and **Jim Wudarczyk** from the Lawrenceville Historical Society explore a short-lived Allegheny County municipality that existed only between 1864 and 1868. Liberty Township comprised part or all of today's Pittsburgh neighborhoods of Bloomfield, Friendship, Point Breeze, Regent Square, Shadyside and Squirrel Hill, and contained the homes of such eminent Pittsburghers as William Frew of Standard Oil, Robert Pitcairn, U. S. Senator William Wilkins and Andrew Carnegie, among others.

Date To Be Rescheduled

Pittsburgh's Gilded Age Conservatories

Phipps Conservatory and The Frick Pittsburgh's Clayton greenhouse are glittering reminders of a bygone era once characterized by such ornate crystal palaces. Clayton docent **Sue Morris**, who blogs about local history as The Historical Dilettante, will share images and stories about Pittsburgh's Gilded Age plant conservatories, many of which were in the East End. These buildings were both lifestyle statements of the city's elite and responses to the worrisome effects of industrialization on urban life.

Friday, June 5, 2020 | 7:00PM

From Peabody High to the Heart of American Literature: How Malcolm Cowley Guided the Course of 20th-Century Culture

Malcolm Cowley and his boyhood friend Kenneth Burke grew from avid readers at the Carnegie Library in Oakland and top scholars at Peabody High School to leading figures in the country's literary life. Burke was known in academic circles, but Cowley was a journalist and book critic for the New Republic in the 1920s and '30s and later an influential editor in American publishing as well as a chronicler of the literary scene in his memoir, "And I Worked at the Writer's Trade." He was an intimate observer of the "Lost Generation" in 1920s Paris and singlehandedly rescued William Faulkner from obscurity to a Noble Prize. Cowley's father was a physician with offices at Centre and Highland avenues. Retired Post-Gazette book editor **Bob Hoover** will chronicle Cowley's life and times.

Do *you* have a question about the history of
Pittsburgh's East End?

Ask the E.L.V.H.S.

Write us at:

eastlibertyvalley@gmail.com

Lecture Line-Up and Synopsis Spring 2020

Friday, March 6, 2020 | 7:00PM

"The Only Daughter of a Distinguished [Pittsburgh] Man": The McClungs, the Mellons and Willa Cather's *My Antonia*

Willa Cather published her most famous novel, *My Antonia*, long after she left Pittsburgh, yet there are a variety of connections in the novel to her Pittsburgh life. In this talk, **James Jaap** will explore these connections, specifically

Mystery Photo



Do you recognize this handsome East End street?

Clue: This street was the first of its kind in Pittsburgh when it was planned by a wealthy real estate developer and shoe merchant in 1887.

The first three respondents who correctly identify this street *and* its location will win a free 2020 membership to the East Liberty Valley Historical Society.

Please email all responses to eastlibertyvalley@gmail.com. Responses will be accepted until June 1, 2020. The answer will be revealed and winners will be recognized at the last lecture of the Spring 2020 Series on Friday, June 5, 2020.

Did you identify the Mystery Photo from our last issue?



The Saints Peter and Paul School still stands behind Saints Peter and Paul Church on Larimer Avenue; the rear of the school (formerly the front facade) overlooks Enright Court. The building was built c. 1905-06 by architects Ernst & Hanselmann.

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Your Membership Matters!

Your East Liberty Valley Historical Society membership supports quality programming, reinforces a commitment to high-caliber research and documentation, and demonstrates dedication to the indispensable historic assets of Pittsburgh's greater East End.

Join or Renew for 2020

Questions? Write us:
eastlibertyvalley@gmail.com

East Liberty Valley Historical Society

P.O. Box 4922
 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15206

Pittsburgh's East Liberty Valley

Few places in Pittsburgh can claim the historical significance that is found in the East Liberty Valley; even fewer can claim the resiliency to constantly adapt and reinvent.

Over the past 200 years, the only constant in the Valley has been change. From farm community, to railroad hub, to commercial and industrial center, to urban renewal experiment, to pioneer in urban renaissance, the East Liberty Valley has boldly endured.

The East Liberty Valley Historical Society. Who we are.

The East Liberty Valley Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the unique history of the Greater East Liberty Valley.

Through the preservation of our history and the education of the public, we aim to enhance a sense of self and place within the residents of the East End; to encourage community esteem. We work to develop a renewed awareness of the area's significant sites, historical events, and momentous contributions. But most importantly, we strive to foster future growth and development through a broad understanding of our past.



What you can do.

As someone who cares about the history of your community, your membership is critical to the preservation and promotion of the East Liberty Valley. We welcome your participation; as a member, as a donor, as a committee member, or as a contributor to our various publications. It is through **your** participation that we are able to accomplish our mission.

If you have any additional questions, please write us at P.O. Box 4922, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 or email us at eastlibertyvalley@gmail.com.

Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/EastLibertyValley/>



Interested in Becoming a Member?

Tell Us About Yourself!

Name _____

Address _____

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Please make all checks payable to:
East Liberty Valley Historical Society

Choose a Membership Level:

Student \$10

Adult \$20

Business,

1-10 Employees \$35

11-30 Employees \$100

30 + Employees \$200

I am interested in potentially serving on a Committee.

Online Donations may be made with Debit, Credit, or PayPal at: <https://tinyurl.com/ELVHS02>