

2900 Saint Paul St.

(AKA 2902 Saint Paul St. in older newspapers)

- I have to give credit for some of this research to the Baltimore Architecture Foundation. I reached out to them based on my thoughts as to who the architect might have been.

Built: 1878-1879

Style: Victorian, 3 levels, .21 acre fenced (original fence), 5 'garages'

Location: Charles Village/Abell Historic District 'Contributing' property

Architect: Charles Emmett Cassell (1838 -1916)

Other noted works

- Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, Baltimore, MD
- The Greenaway Cottages in Roland Park, currently owned by Roland Park Place
- The naval waterworks at [Old Point Comfort, Virginia](#)
- Country house for [Albert Hutzler](#)
- Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) in 1992, as a [contributing building](#) in the [Onancock Historic District, Onancock, Virginia](#).^[4]
- 1881: Immanuel Chapel, [Virginia Theological Seminary](#)
- 1883: [Christ Episcopal Church and Cemetery \(Cambridge, Maryland\)](#), listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.^[4]
- 1885: [The Chapel, University of Virginia](#)^[5]
- 1894: [Davis Memorial Presbyterian Church, Elkins, West Virginia](#), listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.^[4]
- 1894: [The Stafford Hotel](#) in Baltimore^[6]
- 1899: [Stewart's Department Store, Baltimore, Maryland](#), listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.^[4]
- 1904: [Chamber of Commerce Building \(Baltimore, Maryland\)](#), listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.^[4]
- 1911: [First Church of Christ, Scientist \(Baltimore, Maryland\)](#), listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.^[4]

[National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form](#) on the Charles Village / Abell Historic District. It was written in 1983 by Fred Shoken. It does not list an architect for 2900 St Paul St. but does state it was built in 1879.

Here is the passage from the NRHP Form on the property:

p.6: *Another early building in the area is the restrained Victorian house at 2900 Saint Paul Street, built 1879. The house combines a stone rubble first floor with a shingled second floor level capped by a steeply hipped and gabled roof with overhanging eaves. The building features asymmetrical massing, gabled dormers, a simple front porch, restrained decorative woodwork, and a patterned slate roof. This is the earliest extant, large individual house in the area. It was built twenty years before the area underwent urbanization.*

The Evening Sun 12/30/1976, p40, see column third from left

Between The 'City' And The 'Country'

Charles Villagers Got Together And Made Themselves A Neighborhood

By Michael Hill

It's been less than a decade since a bunch of residents of a North Baltimore area decided they should join the neighborhood bandwagon.

Baltimore has always had its neighborhood orientation. If somebody asks you where you're from, you don't say, "Out Eastern avenue," you say "Highlandtown."

One city neighborhood was getting famous. The folks had themselves a neighborhood, but they just didn't have a name for it. Who had heard of Peabody Heights? Students at the Johns Hopkins University called it the student ghetto, but that wouldn't do. So they decided to call themselves Charles Village.

It's a collection of streets east of Charles between 25th and 33d streets. When they picked out the name, it seemed kind of artificial, trying to make up a neighborhood out of thin air.

But it stuck, because it didn't come out of thin air. There was a neighborhood there, an interesting combination of old

residents, student transients, young professionals and back-to-the-city types who were attracted by the convenience and charm of these early Twentieth Century townhouses and rowhouses.

It's an interesting place to walk. The streets date from automobile and street-car days, so they remain at their original width. This preserves the integrity of the relationship between the houses and the street: The columned porches, the small front yards, the sidewalk and the street still live in correct proportions.

Perhaps the reason that Charles Village never achieved neighborhood status naturally is that its heritage somehow doesn't seem to take us to the dark and dusty past.

There's little romanticism involved. The area was the product of cut-down-the-trees-and-build-the-houses developers, the same type that we know for subdividing suburbia today. And indeed that's what Peabody Heights, the name it was sold under then, was in 1900: suburbia.

A good place to start a walk would be

in the 2700 block of St. Paul street, since it was here that Charles Village had its start. Most of these houses were built in 1897, though a couple date back to the 1870's and represent the earliest structures built on the land of the development company.

The early development extends for the next three blocks north, though at 2900 St. Paul is one of the earliest structures, a free-standing house built in 1879.

Attempts at developing the area had been under way since the 1870's, but it wasn't until these houses in the 2700 block St. Paul sold—for \$4,000 to \$7,000—that the townhouses and rowhouses grew on the adjoining streets like kudzu.

The architecture wasn't of the most imaginative type but provides an interesting page of history in the art of pragmatic construction.

These were good, solid middle-class homes, like a rancher in the suburbs today. They varied from the "swell-front" structures you can see along St. Paul to the "Philadelphia plan" houses, those with



the porch-fronts that caught on and line the sides of Calvert street south of 29th and much of Guilford avenue.

The early neighborhood meetings were much like community association meetings of today—fighting overdevelopment, keeping the houses set back from the road, looking for street improvements, better schools, opposing commercial development.

For many, Charles Village is nothing more than part of the endless wall of buildings that line the roadway for the drivers that head up St. Paul when the city flushes out its automobiles each afternoon.

But on a walk, from 25th to 33d street, crossing over between St. Paul, Calvert and Guilford, you can see how it was built: a nice neighborhood for the already-under-way exodus of the middle class, a neighborhood that defined the border between city living and the country estates of Roland Park that lay beyond.

In many ways, it's still doing that today.

From Fred Shoken:

"Most of the information from the Charles Village/Abell National Register nomination form came from Jaques Kelly's work on Charles Village, much of which is included in a booklet, Peabody Heights to Charles Village: The Historic Development of a Baltimore Community by Jacques Kelly, 1976 (published through the auspices of Equitable Trust Bank). It is available from the Maryland Department of the Enoch Pratt Central Library - F190 .7 .C5 K44. Unfortunately the only mention of 2900 St. Paul Street, is a single sentence on page 10, "The land lay unimproved, save for W. Stewart Polk's 1879 cottage at 2900 St. Paul Street and a pair of houses in the 2700 block of the same street."

Owners:

(Based on the historical info and MDLandrec)

William Stewart Polk (1827-1917) – original owner

Lucile Stewart Polk (daughter) & William Ernest Carter – Married in Baltimore January 29, 1896. Her daughter Lucile Polk Carter, born October 20, 1898. Son William Thornton Carter II (Billy). The family, along with 2 pets, boarded the Titanic April 10, 1912. First class ticket number 113760 in cabins B-96 & B-98. The Titanic sank on April 14-15, 1912. The children and their mother Lucile Polk Carter made their way on to life boat #4. Mr. Carter also managed to get into another life boat. They all made it to safety on the Carpathia.

The Baltimore Sun
Sat, Apr 12, 1879 - Page 4

A Peabody Heights Cottage.—A very novel cottage, in medieval style of architecture, is being built at Peabody Heights for Mr. Wm. Stewart Polk. To the second-story level the walls are of Falls road stone, of select color, with black joints; above this level the work is of frame, covered with green and red slate. The roof is blue and red slate, in ornamental bands, terra cotta cresting and iron finials. Inside the walls will be decorated in color, and the wood-work treated in oil on the natural surface. Mr. C. E. Cassell is the architect.

Next article from Baltimore Sun 4/16/1912

NO WORD OF MRS. CARTER

Mr. And Mrs. Polk Anxious To Hear
From Daughter.

A NOTED BALTIMORE BEAUTY

Her Marriage Some Years Ago A
Big Social Event — Brother Off
For New York.

At a late hour last night no word had come to Mr. and Mrs. William Stewart Polk, of 2902 St. Paul street, Baltimore, as to the safety of their daughter, Mrs. William E. Carter, the only Baltimorean known to be on board the Titanic, who was before her marriage Miss Lucile Polk and a noted Baltimore beauty.

Mr. Anderson Polk, a brother of Mrs. Carter, who lives at Roland Park, left for New York last night to seek news of his sister and Mr. and Mrs. Polk are anxiously waiting to hear from him tomorrow.

Mr. Polk, father of Mrs. Carter, said that if the passengers who were rescued from the Titanic before she went down were first-class passengers, and they presume that they were, they are reasonably sure of the safety of their daughter.

They were without any news at all, however, except newspaper dispatches and these they scanned eagerly in each edition of the papers. They had thought all afternoon that all of the passengers were taken off safely, as the press dispatches of the afternoon indicated, and when the night dispatches poured into the newspaper offices indicating that but a small part of the passenger list had been saved, their anxiety was increased.

There was no definite assurance in the dispatches that the passengers taken off before the ship sunk were of the first class.

"It is usual in such cases," said Mr. Polk, "that the first-class passengers are given the preference. If the dispatches are true that the women and children were taken off first, then Mrs. Carter must be among that number. We are without any news at all and will be until we can hear from my son, Anderson Polk, who left for New York tonight."

Mrs. Polk said that she had not seen her daughter for nearly a year.

"She left this country in May of last year, nearly a year ago," said Mrs. Polk, "and went to England with her family, where they took a manor outside of London. My daughter visited me here several times in April before she left and I had also seen her in March."

With Mrs. Carter on the ship was her husband, Lucille Polk Carter, her daughter, and son, William Polk: a governess and a number of polo ponies, which Mr. Carter had used while in England. It was the intention of the Carters, when they returned to this country, to go at once to Bryn Mawr, Pa., where they have a country home.

Mrs. Carter was one of the reigning Baltimore belles 16 years ago and her marriage to Mr. Carter was considered one of the social events of that season. Her parents still reside in a beautiful old-fashioned home, which stood there years ago before the suburban development of the city threw up blocks of houses all about it.

W. E. CARTER BETTER

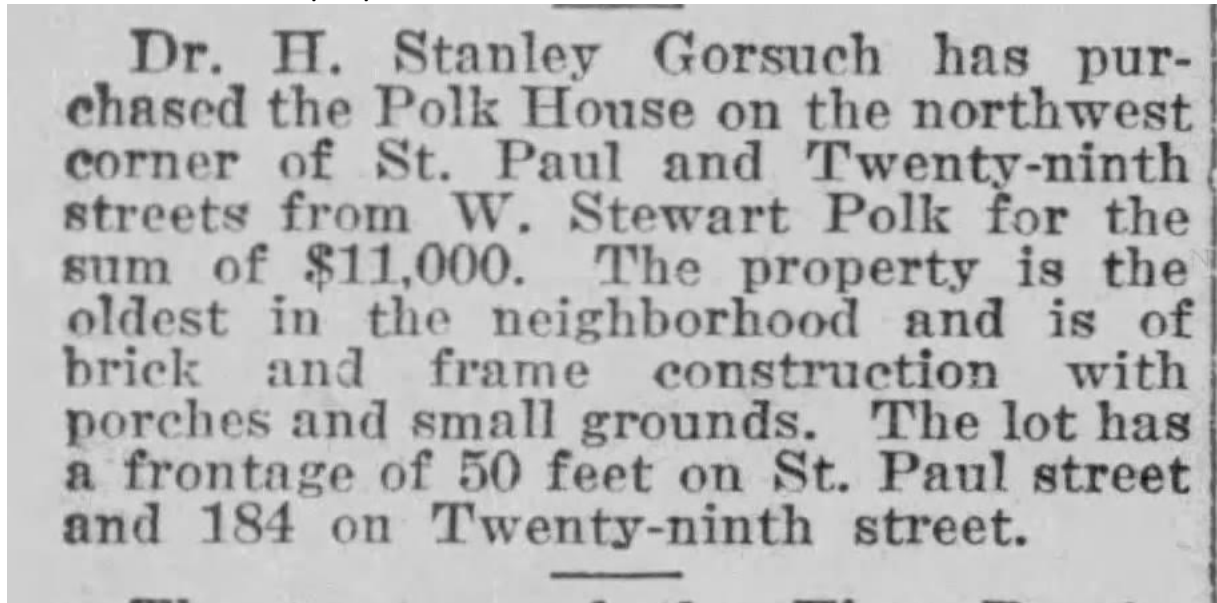
Titanic Survivor Who Married Miss
Lucile Polk, Of Baltimore,
Hurt At Polo.

William E. Carter, a Titanic survivor, well known in Baltimore, who was seriously injured while playing polo on Bryn Mawr polo field yesterday, when he was thrown from his pony, is expected to recover unless internal complications set in, according to advices today from Philadelphia. His condition today was reported improved. Mr. Carter is suffering with concussion of the brain.

Mrs. Carter, who was also saved from the wrecked Titanic, was Miss Lucile Polk, of Baltimore. Her parents live at 2900 St. Paul street.

Dr. H. Stanley Gorsuch – Bought the house in 1916 and added the porch and made other alterations to utilize a portion of the property for a doctor's office. Closed the front entrance to use the front room as office.

The Baltimore Sun 6/30/1916



Dr. H. Stanley Gorsuch has purchased the Polk House on the northwest corner of St. Paul and Twenty-ninth streets from W. Stewart Polk for the sum of \$11,000. The property is the oldest in the neighborhood and is of brick and frame construction with porches and small grounds. The lot has a frontage of 50 feet on St. Paul street and 184 on Twenty-ninth street.

Albert R Bowen Jr & Emma Bowen to William & Hyacinth Strauff (half?)

December 27, 1956

Liber 10309 folio 192

J. Britain Winter, Surviving Trustee (half?)

July 19, 1962

Liber 1318 Folio 174

Hyacinth Strauff

August 4, 1976

Liber 3377 folio 776

John L Greene Sr

June 8, 1978

Jane S Greene

10/2/1978

??? - addition added rear at some point – 2 apartments created at some point – additional kitchen in the basement at some point

Richard & Leona Trulove –

10/2/1978, liber 3674 folio 784

Per the listing when the Truloves were selling the property in 1985:

Two family home with 2 restored apartments

New plumbing

Pella windows

Updated electric

Paula Jaworski (current owner) – July 1985

Opened second floor and added new stairs to return to single family home.

Interior trim original

Fence original

Hand screen printed Bradbury & Bradbury wall paper added throughout

AC not working right in 1985 and not used.

There is duct work in the third floor that was not ever used

Roof has been maintained “regularly”. Repair done in the last 6-9 months.

Masonry wall added next to garage at alley

Completed multiple updates, however over time it has been let go.