

SAVE OUR BLOCK

*“WE ARE YOU.
YOU ARE US.”*

“

WE ARE YOU.

”

YOU ARE US.



Poppleton is not just a community. It is a home. We've raised our children here. Everybody has become one big home. Now we are asking you for your support. Because we are you and you are us. Because one day you are going to be in this situation. And we are gonna be supporting you. So come out and support us. Thank you.

—Angela Banks, displaced from 1132 Saratoga Street, 2018
Sarah Ann Street Five-Minute History, Baltimore Heritage, July 2021

Angela Banks grew up in Poppleton and lived at 1132 W. Saratoga Street until her landlord sold the home and kicked her out in 2018. Angie and her children were briefly homeless. She saw her neighbors in Poppleton as family. Today 1132 W. Saratoga Street is still standing vacant. Angie's dream is to be a homeowner.

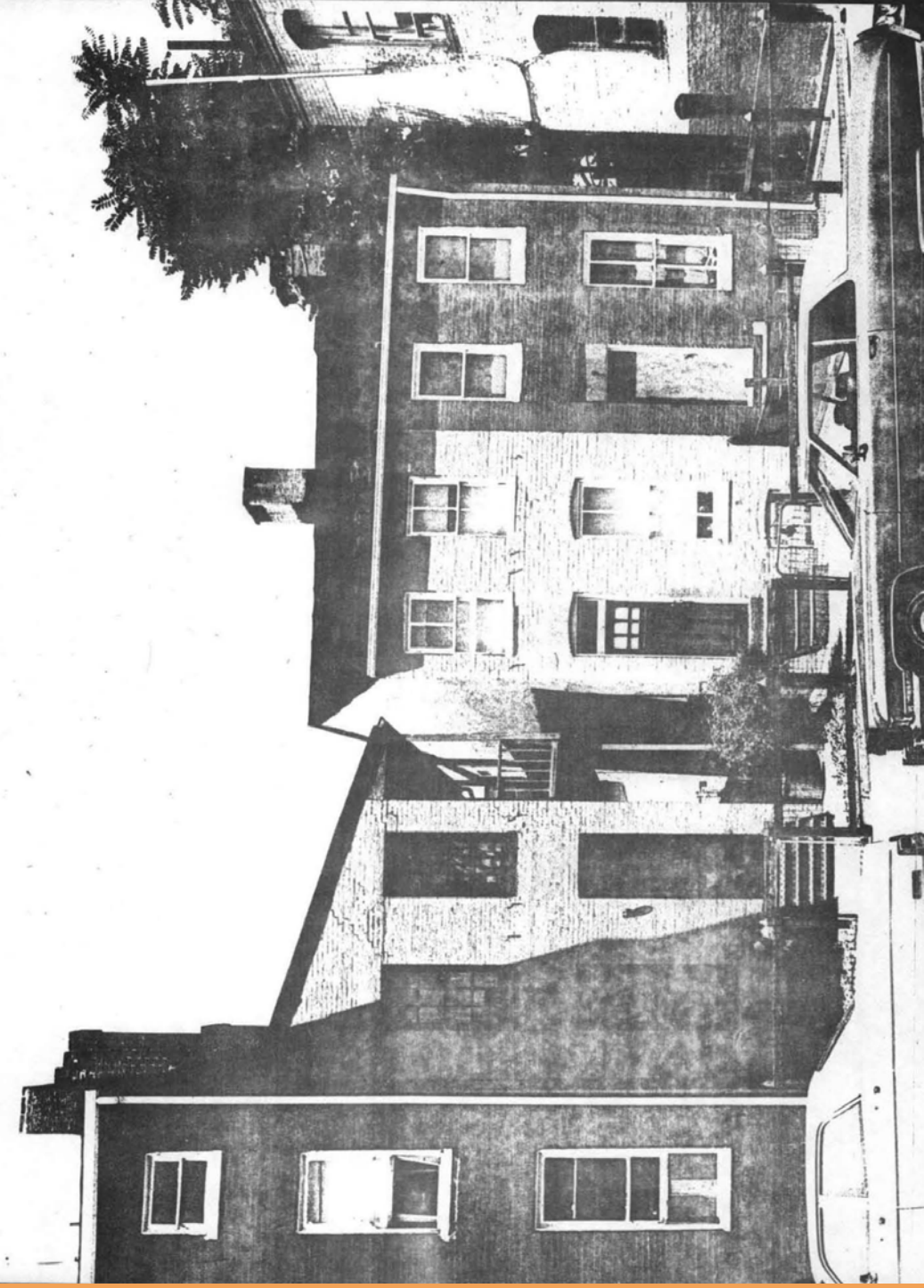


During the Fall 2021 semester, students in **AMST 380: Community in America** continued to work on the **A Place Called Poppleton** project. Students created a digital timeline on Poppleton. We continued to document, analyze, and preserve the stories of the block where the Sarah Ann Street alley houses and Eddy rowhomes are located.

We want to thank the people who took time to talk with us from Poppleton...

Angela Banks - Paulette Carroll - Sonia and Curtis Eddy - Curtis Eddy II - Shae McCoy - Mildred Newman - Francina Walker

AMST 380 Students: Emily Chetelat - Eduardo Orellana - Karla Press-Porter - Sophia Shaikh- Brian Tregoning - Maria Morte Costea (grad student collaborator)



1910: Baltimore passed the nation's first residential segregation ordinance

1930: "Slum clearance," people's homes are taken for development of public housing

1940: Poe Homes opened as the first public housing complex (298 units) in Baltimore City

1958: The Lexington Terrace public housing high-rise apartments (667 units) opened

1960-1975: The Highway to Nowhere cuts off Poppleton north of Franklin-Mulberry

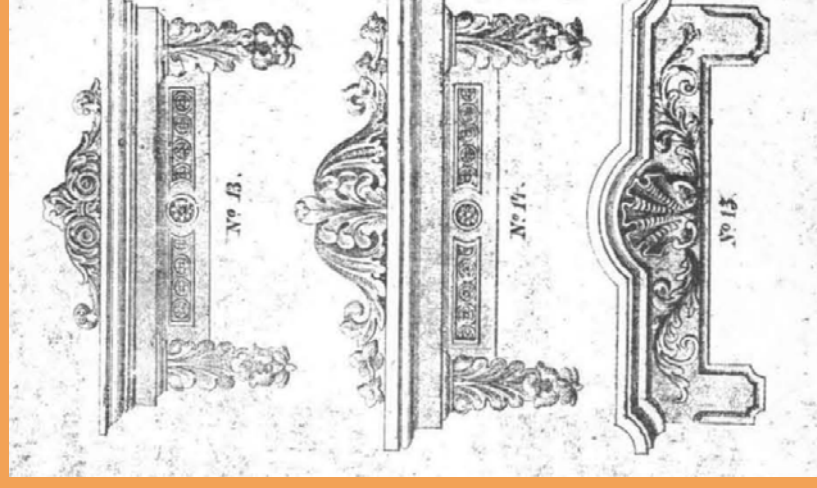
1970s: Federal Government tears down homes for the Greater Model Park and Recreation Center (1975-1996)

1975: Poppleton Urban Renewal Area created + Phoebe Stanton's Poppleton Study

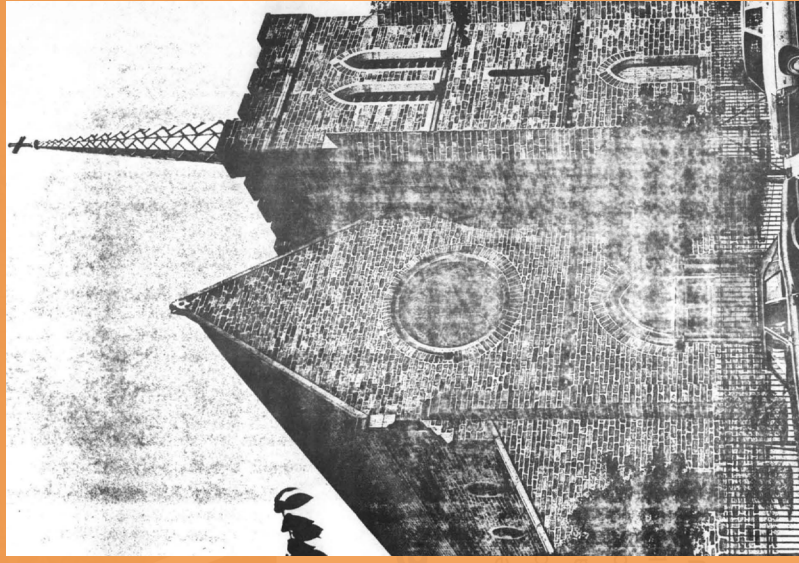
1982: MLK Jr. boulevard expressway opens cutting Poppleton off from downtown

1995: Poppleton becomes part of Baltimore's Empowerment Zone \$100M federal program

2004: Groundbreaking for the UMD BioPark (university crosses expressway)



- 2004:** City plans to use eminent domain to clear & redevelop 14 acres in Poppleton
- 2005:** La Cité (Poppleton I LLC) is awarded the right to develop the parcel
- 2006:** Land Disposition and Development Agreement is signed by City and Developer + Memorandum of Understanding for preservation of historic properties
- 2007 - 2012:** La Cité Project stalled // City clears land using eminent domain
- 2012:** City cancels development deal with La Cité
- 2013:** La Cité sues and wins back right to redevelop Poppleton
- 2015:** La Cité is given a \$58M Tax increment financing (TIF), a public financing method that is used as a subsidy for redevelopment, infrastructure, and other community-improvement
- 2017:** Groundbreaking for La Cité Center West apartments
- 2018:** Transform Poe - The Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) will redevelop the City's oldest public housing complex
- 2019:** Center West apartments open after a delay due to water damage & mold
- 2020:** City seeks condemnation of the Eaddy home for La Cité development
- 2021:** Sarah Ann street residents are relocated for La Cité development + developer announces Black-owned grocery store Market Gourmet coming to Center West



On Site: Jane, Planning, is on Planning, Milwaukee
 The grant will be used to develop a comprehensive neighborhood plan to leverage public and private resources to improve housing, access, resident success, and neighborhood vibrancy. Development of the plan requires extensive commitments from a highly qualified team of committed partners.

AUGUST 2004

Sonia Eaddy works with her neighbors to petition to Save Our Block

August 5, 2004

To the Baltimore City Council:

This is a formal petition to have the 300 block of Carrollton Avenue restored to its originality. We would like to restore our block where approximately five (5) homes were torn down. We all agree that the homes on this block should not be apartments, but family homes, preferably homeownership. We have a beautiful tree lined two story westside and three story eastside block. The foundations of the homes are in excellent condition and the fronts are unique with their variations of bricks and form stone. So if we could preserve this piece of West Baltimore's history we would be ever so grateful to you. Thank you in advance for you cooperation.

The Homeowners and Residents of the 300 block of North Carrollton Avenue (between Mulberry and Saratoga Streets.

P.S.

Signatures and addresses of Petitioners attached.

Save Our Block



And 17 years later...

JULY 10, 2021:

Save Our Block Rally in Sarah Ann Street Park



BROKEN

PRESERVATION

PROMISES



The Boss Kelly Row of homes were supposed to be preserved, rehabilitated, and offered for homeownership according to the 2004 development deal... BUT just 48 hours after our Save Our Block rally the homes were demolished by Baltimore City on July 12, 2021

WHAT'S PRESERVED AND WHY?

"And one question I have, why is it that so many of the historic structures [in Poppleton] were torn down when that didn't happen in Union Square and in Franklin Square?"

– **Jane Mayrer, Historic Preservation Committee, Southwest Partnership**

"You got blocks of abandoned homes, that the city could work on that other than tearing down blocks, making people move out of their homes and you tear down their houses-- houses that people worked so hard for."

– **Munira Swann, past resident**

"We need to be able to preserve whole neighborhoods. Cause I mean, it's families, friends. And they're destroying it when they take it away."

– **Sonia Eaddy, current resident**

THE MCFADDEN HOME



Parcha McFadden

I've been here in Poppleton since I was five. My dad moved in here, he bought a house for us to stay in. So we wouldn't have to move from place to place because when he was little, he always had to move from house to house and he said, if he ever had children, that he would make sure he paid off the house for us to stay in. So we wouldn't have to move from place to place. And he did it so, he did just that.

On being relocated from her home for development...

It's kind of hard. Cause I've been here for so long and I was hoping to pass it down to the grandchildren. Yeah. My daughter loves home where she is staying... That's a special place for us, cause we all... the grandkids had ideas of making part of the house into a studio so they could make their music. Yeah. I mean my father's purpose of him paying for the house, so we going to be there and don't have to struggle and starting all over and a paying mortgage on a house and stuff.



I just pray in the future that it won't be a repeat of moving neighbors out of their community, when they work so hard to build right there. Now they have to keep starting over. We got the pandemic, we got people losing their jobs. It's kind of hard to... You got single parents. Do things planning on they look out for everybody, not just pushing people out because they want a certain area to build certain things. Make it new with the people in it.



SAVE OUR BLOCK, PRESERVE OUR BLOCK

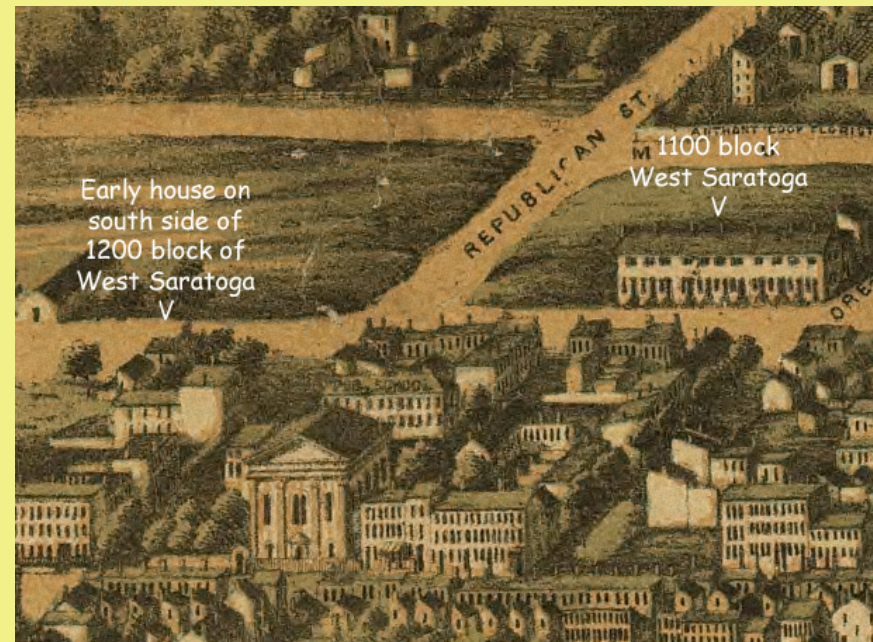
BLOCK 155 CHAP LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT:

319 AND 321 N. CARROLLTON AVE. AND 1122 - 1102 SARAH ANN ST.

What Is a CHAP Local Historic District Designation?

The Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) works with historic neighborhoods to pursue local historic district designation. Designation helps to protect and celebrate a neighborhood's rich history. It also provides an effective and transparent design review process that preserves the neighborhood's historic character.

The boundaries for Block 155 are Carrollton / Mulberry / Arlington / Saratoga and includes the 1100 block of Sarah Ann Street and the Eddy home at 319 N. Carrollton Avenue.



WHAT ARE WE PRESERVING?

PEOPLE'S HOMES

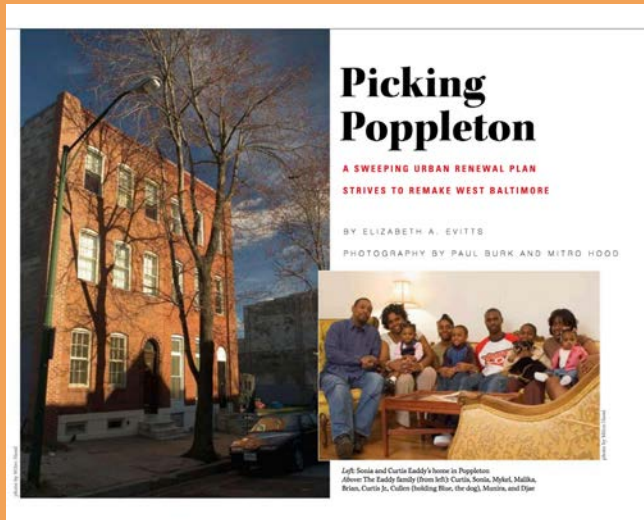


Buildings only matter because of the people who built, inhabited, and gave them meaning. People make buildings homes. *That is what has been going on here on this block for over 150 years.*

Baltimore was home to the largest free-Black population of any city in the U.S. from 1810 - 1860. The Sarah Ann Street homes were built in 1870 (when this alley was called Harmony Lane) and these were always homes for working-class Black Baltimoreans... for over 150 years.

This row of homes represents an important history, made even more significant because these houses and the residents who built inhabited, and gave them meaning survived through slum clearance, urban renewal, racist redlining, destructive road construction and disinvestment. #BlackNeighborhoodsMatter

**BLACK HISTORY &
HOMEOWNERSHIP IN
OLD POPPLETON**



Picking Poppleton

A SWEEPING URBAN RENEWAL PLAN STRIVES TO REMAKE WEST BALTIMORE

BY ELIZABETH A. EVITTS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BURK AND MITRO HOOD



Left: Sonia and Curtis Eaddy's home in Poppleton. Above: The Eaddy family (from left) Curtis, Sonia, Mikal, Malika, Brian, Curtis Jr., Cullen (holding Blue), the dog, Miaquin, and Tyler



The Eaddys restored the plaster ceiling medallion in their entry hall.

URBAN RENEWAL: TAKE ONE

By the 1850s, West Baltimore was a diverse neighborhood with a mix of working class and wealthy residents and a breadth of architectural styles. The infamous Ross Kelly, who ran the West Baltimore Democratic Club in the early 1900s, made his home on West Saratoga Street. H.L. Monahan lived there. So did Edgar Allen Poe.

Decline began when the middle class gradually succumbed to the siren song of the emerging suburbs, and the deterioration was expedited by the first wave of government-funded urban renewal thirty years ago: high-rise public housing went up. Rows of historic Poppleton, and the reassigning of traffic along Martin Luther King Boulevard blocked its Eastern border.

Sonia Eaddy, 48, grew up in Poppleton and remembers when the neighborhood was still vibrant. She and her cousins would walk to the corner store to buy sunflower seeds and gather in front of their grandfather's house to play jacks and hopscotch. "One thing about growing up in the inner city: You could sit out on the front stoop and somebody's always walking by," she says.

Sonia and Curtis moved out of Poppleton to raise their young children. As the children grew older, the family of seven began looking for a new home. The Eaddy's had a choice of where to live. They hunted in the country, but Sonia didn't much like the suburbs. "It was too secluded," she says.

She decided it was time to come home. "This block was just always special to me," Sonia says of Carrollton Street, and she and Curtis bought the house in

Meanwhile, Metroventures, a Baltimore-based development company, has had surprising success with their new Camden Crossing project in the neighboring Washington Village Empowerment Zone. The neo-traditional market-rate houses developed on an 8-acre brownfield site sold out in 30 days at prices higher than expected. The average went for \$250,000, and 65% of the new homeowners are transplants from D.C. suburbs. "Baltimore is becoming an alternative to Washington, D.C.," says Suzanne Graham, Metroventure's vice president. "We looked at communities in Alexandria, Virginia, for example, and produced something of quality that would attract a 35-to-45 professional market. With the competition, you have to build what people want to buy."

What the market wants, many say, are amenities not available in existing city houses. Consultant Rachel Eddy is a former Baltimore City planner who worked with the community to consider how a housing plan could fit into its

The urban renewal amendment for Poppleton, which did not officially pass the City Council until November 2004, says the clearance will happen to create "substantial affordable housing" while "promoting historic and architectural preservation." Of the 526 properties to be acquired for clearance, the City estimates that roughly 134 are occupied. Some forty houses are owner-occupied while ninety-six are rental properties. (The City says it will work with any displaced homeowners who want to relocate back into the neighborhood.)

The language of the two documents has clear discrepancies about the purpose for taking and clearing the Poppleton properties. Austin says that the balance between affordable versus market-rate housing in the new development has yet to be decided. A city housing official involved in the project, who wished to remain anonymous, stated that sections of the renewal amendment language were incorrect and must have been left over from prior amendment proposals.



The Sarah Ann Alley houses in Poppleton, designated an "endangered building type" in Baltimore, are slated for demolition.



The Poppleton redevelopment site. Blocks outlined in red are slated for demolition.

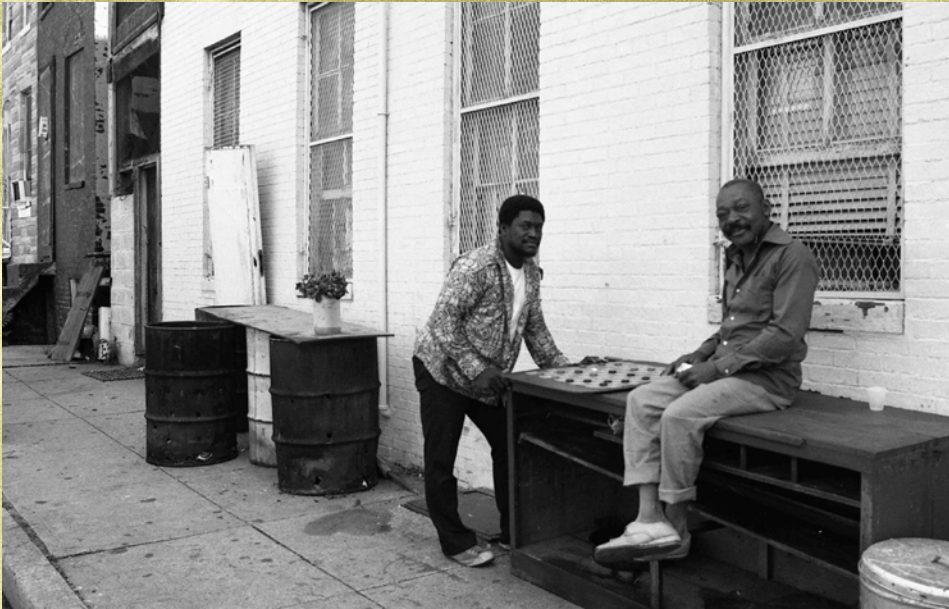
The interrupted group of a dozen row and alley houses beginning on 319 N. Carrollton Avenue and ending at 1102 Sarah Ann Street provides a significant representation of the under-documented Black history and homeownership in Poppleton. This connected row of homes were built circa 1870 and include both traditional Baltimore row and alley houses.

Due to a long-delayed development project dating back to 2004, this block is one of the few remaining contiguous rows of homes of this diverse type and character in solid condition in Poppleton. The Sarah Ann Street alley houses were always listed as homes that were to be preserved and rehabilitated for homeownership from the beginning of the development agreement. Now 17 years later, the Carrollton Avenue homes add to the important architectural and social significance of this surviving row of homes representing Black homeownership in West Baltimore along the Highway to Nowhere.

The Sarah Ann Street alley houses provided affordable housing for Black Baltimore residents in the period right after the Civil War while the larger three-story Italianate rowhouse on 319 N. Carrollton Avenue, which has been owned by two Black families since 1928, demonstrates the perseverance and upward mobility of Black homeowners in the early 20th century.

We are very concerned about what will happen to this important block of homes and the families who have lived in them for many decades. Residents and supporters are taking on the responsibility of preserving these important historical resources that speak to Black history and homeownership. Preserve these homes with the people in them.

BLACK PEOPLE LIVED HERE, 1880



An analysis of the fourteen families living in the twelve houses at 1102-24 Sarah Ann Street in 1880 shows that four Black heads-of-household drove coal carts; one was a porter in a hotel; one worked in a brickyard; and five were laborers. One of the boarders was a waiter in a hotel. There were two female heads of household—one kept house, while the other (and her daughter) were dressmakers. Of the ten wives listed, only four worked outside the home—three as washerwomen and one in service. All of the school-age children of the Black families attended school.

These occupations attest to the fact that the Black families making their homes in this block of Sarah Ann Street were reasonably well off by the standards of 1880. Two of the men worked in hotels and two of the women were dressmakers, both status occupations in the Black community of that time. Driving a cart was also a respected occupation.

The significance of the surviving alley houses in the 1100 block of Sarah Ann Street is thus heightened because 1) there were never that many alley streets in the city that traditionally had Black residents in the late nineteenth century, and 2) many of these houses were located in West Baltimore where wholesale demolition of alley houses has taken place. A number of blocks of alley houses, dating from the late 1840s to the 1880s, survive south of Baltimore Street and north of Pratt Street, but few survive north of Baltimore Street.

Examples of this simple, first Italianate-influenced Baltimore style of small alley house are rare indeed.

PAST PEOPLE OF POPPLETON: STRONG BLACK WOMEN HOMEOWNERS

Court okeys \$25,000 will of woman who lived in rags
Afro-American (1893-1988); Oct 6, 1956; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Afro-American
pg. 18

Court okeys \$25,000 will of woman who lived in rags

BALTIMORE
The second of two bizarre desires of the late Mrs. Luberta Williams, aged recluse who died here, neared fulfillment, this week when the first administration account was passed by Orphans Court.

The Mayor of Baltimore City and the City Council seemed likely to receive more than \$25,000 to be used for indigent patients in City Hospitals.

The first, that she be buried in a new white satin dress, new white shoes and gloves and a fancy white casket, had been carried out upon her death.

That she had the burial place of her desire and the kind of marker for her grave had been seen to by Mrs. Williams before her death.

In a first administration account, filed this week in Orphans Court, the executors, J. Nicholas Shriver, Jr. and the Mercantile Safe Deposit and Trust Company, listed a gross estimate of \$26,001.25.

Only debt listed was a funeral bill to the Holland Funeral Home of \$85.50.

WITH THE exception of the run-down barn-like house in the 1700 block of McCulloh St. in which Mrs. Williams lived in one room and a built on shed, the estate was in cash and gift-edged stock and bonds.

\$8,335.75 was in the securities which included 147 shares of Baltimore Gas and Electric, 20 shares of General Public Utilities, four shares New York State Electric and Gas Corp., 20 share Pennsylvania Water and Power and 10 shares First National Bank.

\$14,012.76 was on deposit in three city banks.

Three neighbors, who cared for her during her last illness, filed claims for services, but the executors have rejected their pleas.

Mrs. Williams had, neighbors said, promised to remember them in her will. When the will was probated it showed that she had left a \$50 insurance benefit to four: Mrs. Maggie J. Wise, Mrs. Marie Walker, Allen Taylor and the late Nelson Burrell.

Seeking reimbursement for services were Mrs. Martha Frazier, Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Wise. They asked for \$2,937.25, \$11,586.25 and \$1,492.50, respectively.

MRS. WILLIAMS was a familiar figure on the streets of Baltimore. Usually wearing pants, sweaters and a battered hat, she was often seen dragging along a load of tools, including equipment for paper hanging.

There was little thought that she owned more than the meager rent that the rooms in the McCulloh Street house brought in rental.

Persons close to Mrs. Williams now recall that she often took on the repairing of run-down properties, doing all the work from repairing the roofs to papering the walls. They now deduce that she accumulated her money through buying the houses, fixing them up and then selling them.

The acquisition of money was the only thing that Mrs. Williams was close-mouthed about. She had been married and was the mother of a daughter, Josephine, who died some years before her.

What happened to Mr. Williams she never said, the neighbors disclosed. That he is also dead was discovered in a search for him after her death. She is listed as a widow.

She was also mum on her age. Neighbors say she always avoided discussing how old she was.

The desire to be a beautifully dressed corpse and be buried in a well-cared for grave,

though she lived in squalor and without sufficient clothes for comfort, did not, however, run away with her sense of thrift.

Her will also directed that her funeral, including flowers and limousine, cost not more than \$1000.

She allotted \$140 for a vault, having already purchased a lot in the Saints Rest area of Mt. Auburn Cemetery and placed a headstone there.

ABOUT 10 persons attended the funeral services held last November in the Holland Funeral Home. There were two floral designs. But the satin dress, white accessories and burial coach were according to specification.

The part of the will that disposed of the cash said:

"All the rest I give absolutely to the Mayor and City Council to be expended at Baltimore City Hospitals for care of indigent patients."

MRS. EVA M. BURRELL, widow of Nelson Burrell, who died a year ago, and who was one of the four to whom she jointly willed proceeds from a \$50 policy with the Macedonian Immediate Relief Society, told the AFRO, this week.

"My husband and she belonged to the Macedonian Relief. That was an organization something like the Elks. Each officer was to get \$10. She should have left a portion of her money to her own group.

"If you had seen her you wouldn't have thought she had a penny. She lived in that great big barn. She owned the house and rented out rooms.

"My husband said she had lots of money, but he didn't know how much she had. She went to church now and then". The house, Orphan Court records show, has been sold to Stanley L. Abrahams. It brought \$4,225.

On January 18, 1873, Catharine (or Kate) Kennedy, a Black woman, purchased 1102 Sarah Ann (old #120 Harmony Lane). Kennedy was a laundress and cook. She owned 1102 Sarah Ann Street for some 13 years before selling it in 1886. City directory listings indicate that Kennedy lived at 1124 (with some gaps) with other people, presumably her tenants. Those people were almost exclusively Black, and included men and women who worked as laundresses, porters, hostlers, barbers, and laborers.

Luberta Williams left 1124 Sarah Ann by 1907, moving uptown into the 1200 block of Druid Hill Avenue. Her neighbors there included Harry S. Cummings, a lawyer who in 1890 had become Baltimore's first Black city councilman. Williams initially ran a lunchroom there but by 1910 she identified her occupation as a dressmaker. In the early 1920s, Williams ran into trouble with her neighbors after she was accused of running a disorderly house and violating the Volstead Act.

By the time of her death in 1956, Luberta Williams was characterized in an Afro article as a colorful and eccentric recluse who had somehow amassed an estate worth \$26,000, with all but \$1,000 left to care for the indigent of Baltimore city. The Afro reporter wrote: "Mrs. Williams was a familiar figure on the streets of Baltimore. Usually wearing pants, sweaters and a battered hat, she was often seen dragging a load of tools."

ALLEY HOUSES PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Rose Wagner's *Baltimore Sun* story [Alley houses, now an 'endangered species,' were once the core of working-class Baltimore](#) (July 29, 2021) details the significance of alley homes. She cites Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward's award winning book, *Baltimore's Alley Houses: Homes for Working People since the 1780s* (Johns Hopkins Press, 2008).

Hayward wrote that alley houses "led to one of the largest homeownership ratios in the country by the late nineteenth century" as well as racially integrated communities. Alley house neighborhoods forged a sense of community among residents, as a place "where children could play without fear of onrushing traffic and where stoop-sitting neighbors could easily converse as well as look after each other's houses."

According to Johns Hopkins of Baltimore Heritage "only a few hundred [alley houses] remain standing, threatening the preservation of Baltimore's history." However the preservation of historic alley and row houses is not just an issue of the past but something to fight for now to make Baltimore a more inclusive and equitable city with housing opportunities for all residents, especially the city's Black legacy residents:

What we are losing is affordable housing... We are missing something by not taking an opportunity to look into historical houses with this rich history and function that is just as needed today as it was when they were built.



“

WHAT WE ARE LOSING IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING... WE ARE MISSING SOMETHING BY NOT TAKING AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK INTO HISTORICAL HOUSES WITH THIS RICH HISTORY AND FUNCTION THAT IS JUST AS NEEDED TODAY AS IT WAS WHEN THEY WERE BUILT.

”

SAVE THE EADDY HOUSE:

319 N. CARROLLTON AVE.

For the past 93 years, since 1928, 319 N. Carrollton has been home to two Black families, the Sewells and the Waugh/Eaddys. As such, 319 N. Carrollton Avenue speaks volumes about the little-known and under-documented history of Black homeownership in Baltimore. From the Sarah Ann Street alley houses to the grander three-story homes on N. Carrollton, we have a strong and significant example of Black homeownership that spans three centuries.

The three-story Italianate style home at 319 N. Carrollton Avenue was built in 1871 and is 150 years old. Carrollton Ave was originally named Republican St. The name change occurred by 1874. The earliest street address was 84 N. Republican (then Carrollton). It was renamed 319 in 1889 when Baltimore's modern ordinal house numbering system was adopted.

For more than half of its lifetime, this classic Italianate-influenced Baltimore rowhouse has been owned by two African American families—for the past 30 years the Eaddys. Built in 1871 by local carpenter George Mallonee, 319 N. Carrollton was part of a group of eight rowhouses erected on the half-block stretching from Sarah Ann to Mulberry streets.

The Eaddy home was built in 1871 when N. Carrollton Ave. was called Republican St., and its first owner was J. Thomas Scharf (1843-1898) noted historian, author, lawyer, politician who was also a Confederate soldier and sailor who fought for slavery (showing the tensions of 19th century West Baltimore). After Scharf, the house changed hands often until a new pattern of stability emerged in 1882. Since then, 319 N. Carrollton has been owned by only four families (some of whom rented it out at various times). The first two were white and the next two Black.

Donald "China" Waugh purchased the home in 1992. He still lives in Poppleton just around the corner. He was one of the early arabbers at the Carlton Street stable. He is featured in Roland Freeman's iconic book *The Arabbers of Baltimore* (1989) and the film *We Are Arabbers* (2004) among other research on Baltimore arabbers. The Waugh family purchased the home to build generational wealth.

Curtis Eaddy Sr. is a small business owner and a minister and Sonia Eaddy is a dedicated community volunteer, mother, and grandmother. The Eaddys raised their five children and now host their many grandchildren in their rowhouse, which has been meticulously restored and maintains its historical integrity. After a 2012 fire, the Eaddy family built and restored their home with City permits and want to stay and continue the work to build a better future for Poppleton and West Baltimore.



Eddy house & Family in Poppleton



Together this uninterrupted row of houses represent 150 years of Black homeownership in West Baltimore... that is an amazing testament to the spirit of this City and its residents and should be honored and preserved. **We must preserve the building with the people in them.**

Preserving this block means we honor this history by letting the Eaddy family stay in the beautiful home they have owned for almost 30 years.

Preserving this block means rehabilitating the Sarah Ann Street alley houses for homeowners, and that past residents have the first Right to Return.

SAVE OUR BLOCK
Black Neighborhoods Matter

**"Losing my home is like a
death to me. Eminent Domain
law is violent."**

- Sonia E...





Help us fight for Development **Without** Displacement

SAVE OUR BLOCK

Black Neighborhoods Matter

"Losing my home is like a death to me. Eminent Domain law is violent."

—Sonia Eaddy, 2021

[Baltimoretraces.umbc.edu/poppleton](https://baltimoretraces.umbc.edu/poppleton)

Facebook: A Place Called Poppleton @organizepoppleton

Twitter: @organizepopple1

Instagram: organizepoppleton

Please sign our petition:

<https://www.change.org/p/baltimore-city-council-save-our-block-in-poppleton-baltimore>

