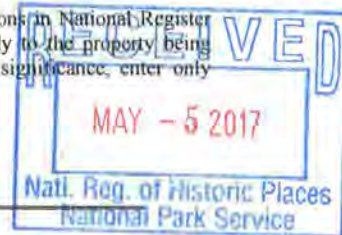


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

56-1213

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Scheele-Brown House

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 2207 Foxhall Road NW

City or town: Washington, D.C. State: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

<u>DAVID MALONEY / DC SHPO</u>	<u>4/28/2017</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<u>DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE</u>	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Patrick Andrews  
Signature of the Keeper

6/19/2017  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object



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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/Vernacular/Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century Farmhouse

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Stucco over wood

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Scheele-Brown Farmhouse is located at 2207 Foxhall Road NW on Lot 855 in Square 1341 in the Foxhall neighborhood in northwest D.C. Located on the east side of the road and facing west, the farmhouse is a two-story, three-bay (nearly 32 feet), side-gable balloon-framed house with a rear ell, a full front porch, and an enclosed, rear, kitchen porch. With its rear wing, it is roughly L-shaped in plan. The main block is one room deep (approximately 17 feet), with a center hall flanked by two rooms. The building's area is 1,680 square feet, with the main block nearly seventeen feet deep. It is stuccoed in a fawn color, with white-painted wood trim. It has a symmetrical façade with a central main entrance with sidelights. This entry, the flat-board frieze beneath the eaves, and the low-pitched roof are suggestive of Greek Revival-style influence, but the building is very much vernacular. The house has later small additions at rear, including a one-story sunroom, a small extension of the rear wing, and a second-story bathroom.

The building stands about 55 feet east of Foxhall Road NW. Because it was moved in 1903, its foundation dates to that time, as does the front porch. While the chimneys were probably replaced in the move, they appear remarkably close to the form and placement depicted in an 1865 photo of the house under construction. The fireplace mantels appear date to 1903 as well.

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The surrounding development has diminished the farmhouse's integrity of setting, but the house, though moved, remains on its original parcel and retains its original orientation.

The present lot measures 75 feet along Foxhall Road and 155 feet deep. It is largely landscaped, but there is a gravel driveway along the south side of the front yard and a brick lead walk to the front door. The only accessory structure is a corrugated metal shed in the northeast corner of the rear yard.

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## Narrative Description

### Site

The Scheele-Brown Farmhouse stands at 2207 Foxhall Road NW on the east side of the road, about 55 feet from the roadway and facing west. Three bays wide, it sits on a parged brick foundation with no basement. The foundation dates to the 1903 removal of the house from its original site, a point about 150 feet north-northeast. The move was occasioned by the fact that the new owners of the parcel wished to construct a larger modern house on that spot, but retained and rented out the older one. Although closer to the road than the original site, the house was moved within the same parcel to a similarly level site, and retains the same westward orientation. The method of the move is not certain, but the relocation of smaller houses and outbuildings was common in the nineteenth century for reasons of economy.

The site is mostly lawn with several ornamental and shade trees and shrubs. Foundation beds and plantings surround the house. A gravel driveway runs perpendicular to Foxhall Road, along the south edge of the property, separating the house from the old Donaldson house, 2203 Foxhall. A brick-paved lead walk runs from and perpendicular to the driveway, along the front of the porch and to the entry steps.

### Exterior Description

The main block is two stories tall and has a relatively low-pitched roof (less than four in twelve), now clad with asphalt shingles. A historic photograph of the house under construction suggests that the roof had skip sheathing, and thus was probably originally covered with wood shingles, as was common in the exurbs of the District. The roof is set low, with the eaves just higher than the second-floor windows, suggesting a second-floor ceiling height of no more than eight feet, and still lower at the rear portion of the building.

The house is skinned with stucco, and the trim is white-painted wood, with the exception of the front doors and the rear sunroom framing, which are reddish brown. The rake boards have been wrapped with aluminum. The trim is mostly simple flat "one-by" boards, but the corner boards, window and door casings, and skirt boards have applied back band moldings that serve as a bounding edge to the applied stucco layer. Beneath the eaves and across the tops of the window casings in front and back of the main block is a plain frieze board. The shallow eaves hold typical modern aluminum gutters and rain leaders.

Across the front of the building is a full-width porch with a hipped roof, also clad with asphalt shingles, and supported by four nine-inch Tuscan columns and by the front wall of the house

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itself. The columns rest on brick piers, between which are wood-lattice apron panels. The framing, decking, ceiling and stairs of the porch are all of wood, with a traditionally low wood balustrade of widely spaced, square-section pickets, and cruder modern wood handrails on each side of the steps. The decking is of true-three-inch tongue-and-groove boards.

The main entrance is centered in the façade, sheltered by the porch roof. A typical Victorian four-panel painted wood door swings inward beneath a single-light transom and between two deeply set, three-light-over-one-panel sidelights. An old wood screen door partially obscures the main door behind it. Electrical and telephone supply lines run from poles at the street and are attached at the second story of the north side of the main block, led by exposed conduits to an exterior meter and to the rear of the house. A gas riser and meter appear at the foot of the north side.

The rear wing consists of a low two-story bedroom-over-kitchen catslide-roofed ell, with a porch off the south side which was enclosed before 1938 with six-over-six double-hung wood windows over a white-painted, beadboard-clad knee wall. A wood apron screens the cavity beneath. With the house's ell offset to the north end of the main block, the building's footprint takes an L shape. This is accentuated by a one-story shed addition attached to the ell's rear elevation, set in from the north corner and clad in stucco and trim to match the main block. Its location and consistent materials suggest that it was added shortly after the house was moved; it was certainly there by 1938. It stands on piers, like a porch, with a cavity beneath that has been covered with an apron partly of corrugated metal and partly of wood. It does not otherwise look like a porch, however, suggesting that it may have been added as the house's first attached bathroom, and perhaps scullery, after the building was moved. An alternative is that it could have originated as a pantry, especially as the cavity beneath would expose water pipes to potential freezes, but it seems that it must serve as a bathroom today. Abutting the rear (east) end of the kitchen porch and the south side of the shed addition is a one-story wood-framed sunroom, mostly glazed, added after 1962. A bathroom addition, likely added in late 1942 when the house was replumbed, stands atop the rear porch. It has eight-inch-exposure weatherboard siding.

The south end of the main block contains only a single window on each of the floors, one directly above the other, located near the front corner of the house to accommodate a chimney centered in the elevation. The north side, lacking the chimney, has a single second-floor window centered under the roof ridge. Directly below it on the first floor is a wider opening, containing double-ganged windows, probably an early twentieth-century alteration.<sup>1</sup> The north side of the ell continues the plane of that of the main block, and it has smaller single windows on each floor, set lower to account for the lower ceiling heights. Only a third of the rear wall of the main block is exposed, and it contains single windows on each floor, again aligned vertically, reflecting the house's primary three-bay division.

There is a single square-section interior end chimney of brick in the main block, and a similar one in the rear, kitchen wing, about the same size and locations as the 1865 originals, but with

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<sup>1</sup> This area is obscured in an 1865 photograph of the house under construction, but double-ganged windows and such large openings were typical of a later era.

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modern crowns and caps. All of the windows are wood and of six-over-six-light, double-hung configuration, except for two small rear windows—one in the second-story bathroom and the other on the south side of the second story of the ell—that are circa 1950s double-hung windows of two-over-two configuration with horizontal muntins dividing the glazing. The sunroom addition has its own sort of fenestration: single-light floor-to-ceiling windows integral to the scratch-built wood framing.

### Interior Description

The house has a center hall flanked by the two front rooms. The main block is single-pile, with the stair located in the hall. The wing is accessed from the rear of the hall, and the kitchen also communicates with the north room, a dining room. The original mostly pine floors remain. The chimney fireboxes were rebuilt and surrounded by oak mantels when the house was moved in 1903.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE



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AGRICULTURE  
COMMERCE  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**  
1865-1915  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**  
1865; 1903; 1915  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Scheele-Brown Farmhouse, named for the first two families that occupied the building and farmed the surrounding land, was constructed in the latter half of 1865. It is one of a few remaining farm dwellings standing in the District of Columbia. A simple side-gable vernacular house with traces of Greek Revival influence, it represents the modest farmhouses that typified the rural areas surrounding the City of Washington before the proliferation of suburban subdivisions after the 1870s.

As there are no farms remaining in the District of Columbia and only a handful of farmhouses and very few agricultural outbuildings left, the Scheele-Brown house stands for its vanished small farm, and by extension, the others that have been lost. It also represents Washington's early meat industry, particularly the business of butchering, in which most of the farmers immediately north and west of Georgetown, including the Scheeles and the Browns, were engaged from the mid nineteenth century to the early twentieth. Such farms were the entrepôts for cattle purchased at and driven from the larger farms of Maryland and Virginia. They were processing centers to get meat, beef and mutton especially, from the hoof to market, performing a crucial service to a rapidly increasing urban population after the Civil War. In addition to generating greater self-sufficiency and additional family income from raising diversified products, butchers' farms provided fodder and water for their cattle, space for stock pens and slaughterhouses, and a buffer between these slaughterhouses and neighbors.

Although agrarian Washington County was relatively sparsely populated, modest farmhouses were ubiquitous there, occupied by the small landholder and more numerous than the estates of the wealthy. Yet, because they were modest, such buildings were more commonly moved and demolished as the tide of suburbanization swept over fields, pastures and woodlots. The last District farms vanished in the 1950s, but large estate houses have been better preserved as homes or institutions.

The property meets National Register Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development, Agriculture, and Commerce for its associations with diversified farming for local consumption--particularly to butchering and the trade in beef and mutton, an industry that dominated the lands surrounding Georgetown from at least the second quarter of the nineteenth century until the first quarter of the twentieth. Few of the homes of prominent butchers remain today, even around Georgetown, the primary butchering area in the District from the 1840s until at least the 1880s, but still important after the turn of the century. This one housed two butchering families who also worked the surrounding farmstead.

The property also meets National Register Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a period and type of construction, namely, a modest nineteenth-century vernacular farmhouse and farm-workers' quarters necessary for the operation of a farm and suited to the limited means of the average farm family. In that sense, it stands for all the similar homes and farms that have been lost in the District of Columbia and for a broader category of

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nearly vanished farm structures. It is one of perhaps three dozen true farmhouses, in all states of integrity, remaining of hundreds.

The house was moved in 1903 from a spot about 150 feet north-northeast of its present location. The move was within the same parcel, then surrounded by the same farm and orchard, and the building retained its original orientation. The move meant, of course, a new foundation, a new porch, and new chimneys. But the building retains the feeling of a modest, mid-century farmhouse, set back on a large lot, adjacent to an open space on the property abutting to the north, part of the former farm. In comparison, of the few remaining farmhouses in the District, many have been moved, some reoriented, and all have greatly suffered a loss of setting, including the development of the former acreage and the demolition of outbuildings.

The National Register criteria “limit the consideration of moved properties because significance is embodied in locations and settings as well as in the properties themselves.... One of the basic purposes of the National Register is to encourage the preservation of historic properties as living parts of their communities.” Criteria Consideration B addresses moved properties, offering a limited number of circumstances in which a relocated property may be considered, if they otherwise retain sufficient integrity. The first and most pertinent of these is “[a] resource moved from one location on its original site to another location on the property, during or after its Period of Significance.”

The Period of Significance for the property extends from 1865, its construction date, to 1915, the date when Walter M. Brown, the last farmer-butcher occupant of the property moved away. Shortly thereafter, the parcel was sold and the former farmhouse became a suburban residence, like those around it, although it remained a four-acre lot until subdivided for house lots in 1961.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Like much of America, the District of Columbia was once covered with farms. The baroque Washington City plan devised by Pierre L’Enfant was imposed upon a landscape of wheat and tobacco farms, market and kitchen gardens, meadows and pastures, marsh and woods. Georgetown and a few hamlets were the only “urban” intrusions into a rural landscape. It was then a landscape of slave-worked plantations, substantially smaller than estates farther south, and of small freeholds and tenant farms, and with many landless laborers. Initial areas of development in the federal city—around the Capitol and the Navy Yard, the White House and near Rock Creek—were separated by active farms and fallow meadows. Much of the trade of the preindustrial city was in agricultural products, especially as an urbanizing population needed sustenance.

As the national capital grew, it would eventually crowd out farmland, but this evolution took a century and a half. In 1850, assuming the U.S. Census reports were exhaustive, there were 282 farms and truck gardens within the District of Columbia, comprising about 90 percent of its land

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area.<sup>2</sup> Washington City's Fifth Ward, which then included Capitol Hill, still contained more than 87 acres of farmland, but it was a distant second in cultivated area to the city's Sixth Ward along the Anacostia River.<sup>3</sup> Still, agriculture within the city was an economic afterthought compared to that in the surrounding Washington County, where it was nearly the exclusive economic activity.

Established by the Organic Act of 1801, Washington County was a municipality governed by a Levy Court of presidentially appointed justices of the peace. The county included all of the territory of the District of Columbia on the Maryland side of the Potomac, exclusive of Washington City and Georgetown. The Levy Court's principal responsibilities were the raising of revenues through property taxes and the expenditure of these revenues on the construction and maintenance of roads.<sup>4</sup> Some of these roads had originated before the District as Indian paths, post roads, and tobacco rolling roads that ran along the fall line or connected stream fords and river ferries. Others were convenient lanes within or between farms that were given over to, or taken for, public use.

Tobacco culture had been replaced by wheat in the eighteenth century. By the nineteenth, county farms tended to be diversified, raising some livestock and growing animal feed alongside produce for the urban markets. Even farmers concentrating on a particular cash crop were mindful of their families' self-sufficiency. A farm might produce wheat, rye, corn, oats, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, apples, peaches, grapes, vegetables, butter, hay, and even grapes for sale. Most had a milk cow and a few hogs, principally for home use. Many had reserves of unimproved acreage set aside for future cultivation. These were often too uneven or too marshy to farm, but they could potentially be filled or cleared, and then sowed or planted as orchards.

Such areas often included woods, whose trees limited soil erosion, served as windbreaks, and provided fuel and materials for construction and tool manufacture.

Washington County of the mid nineteenth century (population 3,320) was not as segregated by income and race as the area is today; wealth was not concentrated within the present northwestern quadrant, and the poorest slaves lived near their affluent masters. Northwest had some of the most extensive landholdings, but many of the grander country houses stood nearly due north of the Capitol, not far beyond the city's boundary. The largest pre-war slaveholder owned the most extensive farms in Southeast. There was also mobility of landowners between different parts of the county, and ownership continuing across the boundary into Maryland.

Large and small farms were neighbors. Big farms may have possessed certain economies of scale, and they frequently had large forces of enslaved laborers. But even ostensibly rich owners of extensive tracts were frequently cash-poor and over-extended. The best measure of the

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<sup>2</sup> This figure is based upon adding up the acreages of the individual farms and comparing it with the total land area of the District at the time, which was a little smaller than today, because of subsequent filling along the rivers. Of course, farm acreage tended to be overestimated a bit, so it might be more accurate to call 90 percent the proportion of rural land to urbanized land, which seems to correspond pretty well to what one sees on the 1861 Boschke map.

<sup>3</sup> Farming continued in the Sixth Ward until at least the 1870s.

<sup>4</sup> The county developed a series of public schools, for white children, only in the 1850s.

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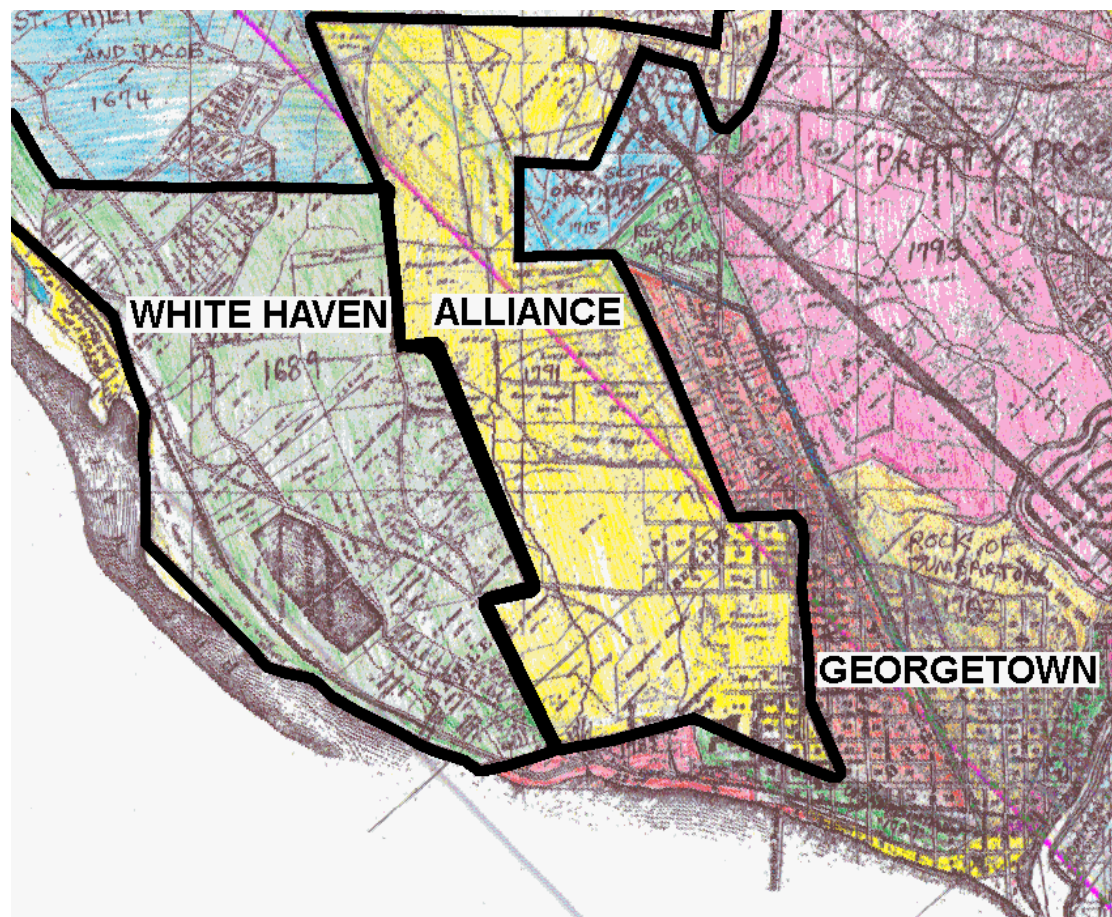
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qualities of a farm—its soil, its water sources and drainage, its topography, location and aspect, and the management abilities of its owner—was its assessed value per acre.

One of the largest farms at the western end of the county had been White Haven (or Whitehaven), a seventeenth-century patent, granted to William Hutchinson and Colonel John Addison in 1689. Originally consisting of 759 acres, it included today's Palisades neighborhood. Reduced by only a few dozen acres, the tract passed to Addison's son-in-law, the first William D.C. Murdock, in the eighteenth century, and much of it remained in the Murdock family until the late nineteenth.



*A detail of "Maryland Land Grants within the District of Columbia in or after 1800 and Their Date of Survey" compiled by Priscilla McNeil.*

At its eastern edge, Whitehaven met another large tract known as "Alliance." Henry Threlkeld and his son John reassembled much of the old "Salop" grant, culminating in the 1790s as a farm of about 1,000 acres including, according to Carlton Fletcher, "what is now Georgetown University, Visitation Convent and School, Duke Ellington High School, the Washington International School, Foxhall Village, Burleith, Hillandale, Wesley Heights, Whitehaven Park, Glover-Archbold Park, and much of Glover Park." Among other things, the Threlkelds raised Merino sheep there, and they had extensive orchards. The property was worked by at least a

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couple dozen slaves. Presumably on the strength of having amassed such wealth, John Threlkeld served as alderman and then mayor of Georgetown and a director of the Bank of Columbia. He was later appointed one of the justices of the Washington County Levy Court. But Threlkeld had taken a series of loans from the Bank of the United States and the Union Bank of Georgetown, possibly for capital investment or land speculation elsewhere. A financial panic in 1823 followed a four-year depression and brought a spate of bank collapses, widespread calling-in of loans and restriction of credit. Threlkeld's own bank failed in 1826, and he found himself in arrears on property taxes owed to the Corporation of Georgetown. Although huge, his Alliance estate, much of it of soil "thin and stony," could not produce enough ready cash to bail him out. So he sold a few parcels to raise funds, and then rolled some of his debts into a new loan from Clement Smith, director of the Farmers and Merchants Bank, putting up a third of the original extent of Alliance as collateral. Threlkeld defaulted, and the property was auctioned in 1827, with creditor Clement Smith the high bidder. By 1830, Smith began to sell off portions. That same year, John Threlkeld died in his boyhood home on the Georgetown Heights, "Berlieth" (or Burleith), with his property reduced to more or less where his father had begun.

The Murdock family was subject to its own financial pressures and began to sell off pieces of Whitehaven before midcentury. The Threlkelds' and Murdocks' misfortunes proved a boon to hungry newcomers who were not content to be tenants. The break-up of large estates unlocked land for smallholders and reduced dependency on slave labor. Parts of both Alliance and Whitehaven were snapped up by German-American and Irish-American families of farmers and butchers. Especially with the establishment in the 1830s of Drover's Rest, a stockyard for cattle driven in from Virginia and Maryland, the northern and western approaches to Georgetown became processing centers for meat.

### **The Garritys**

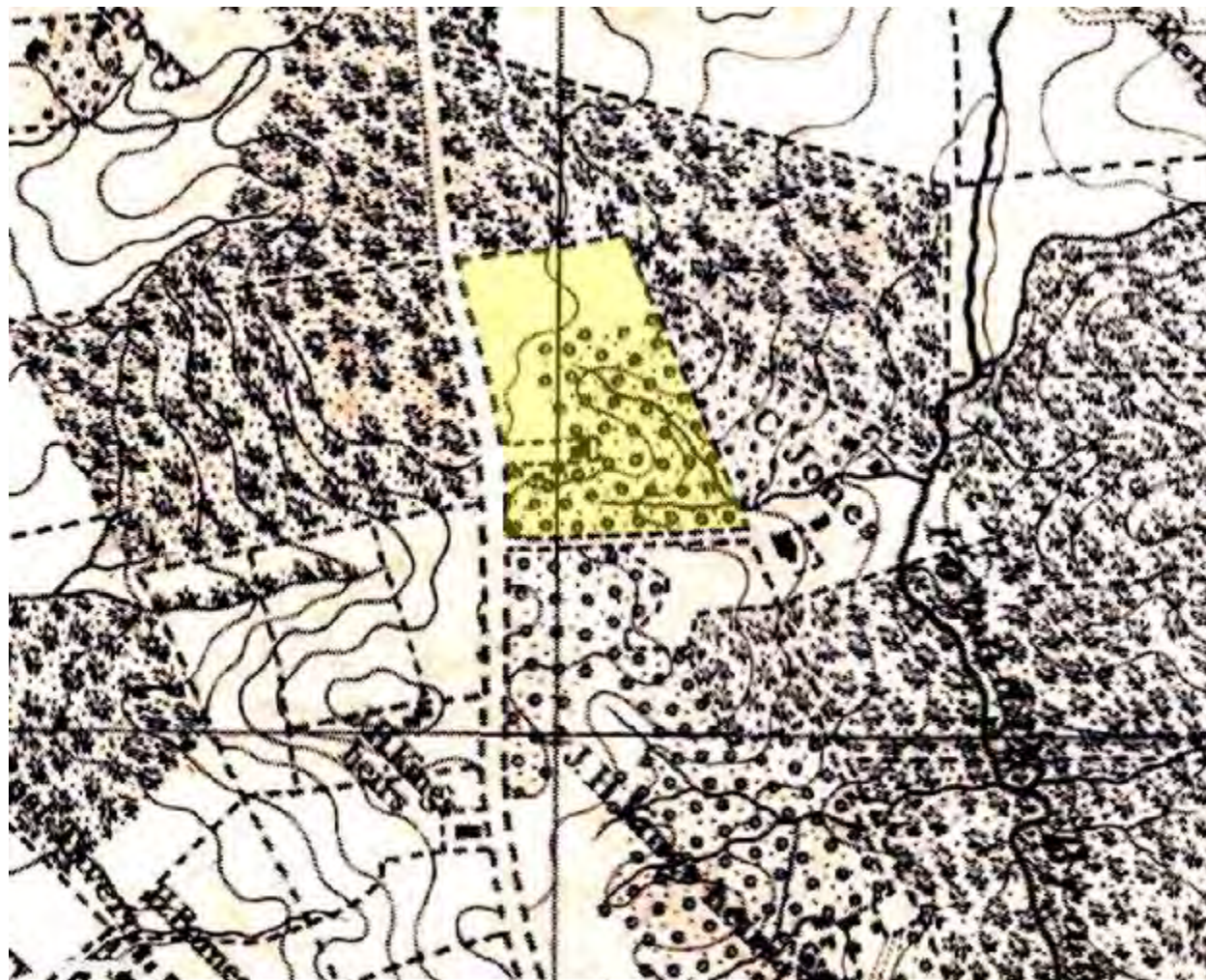
In 1831, creditors of the late John A. Murdock instituted an equity suit to recover more than \$500 of debt. Murdock's widow and son were in possession of his 68 acres along the east side "the ridge road" that connected Foxhall Road and the "New Cut Road" (also known as the Seventh Street Road and later as Reservoir Road) from Georgetown with the Loughborough Road and Tenleytown.<sup>5</sup> This estate was divided into four parcels and auctioned off. Banker Clement Smith, who had earlier acquired and sold much of the Alliance estate, purchased an 11.88-acre parcel for only \$15.25 an acre, the lowest price of the four tracts. The property lay at the eastern edge of the old Whitehaven tract, two miles by road from the commercial center of Georgetown, but shorter as the crow flies and literally overlooking the town. It had good drainage, but the least level land of the available parcels. Smith likely rented out the property for the next seven years, but decided to auction it in 1838.

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<sup>5</sup> Ridge Road was initially a customary name reflective of the fact that the road ran along the high ground between the Foundry Branch and Maddox Branch valleys, a ridge that continues to Tenleytown. It was not until 1864 that the Washington County Levy Court made the name official. But there were two other roads in the eastern portion of the county that shared the name during the nineteenth century. Although this road continued the alignment of Foxhall Road, the latter name first applied only to the thoroughfare south of Reservoir Road, because it had originated as a lane through Henry Foxall's estate. It was not until 1932 that the District of Columbia commissioners renamed Ridge Road as Foxhall Road.

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*A detail of the 1861 Albert Boschke "Topographical Map of the District of Columbia" shows the Garrity family's nearly twelve acres planted mostly as orchards.*

The farmstead had a rolling topography, beginning at the high ground of the aptly named public road and falling off in swales to the east toward Foundry Branch, a creek named for its outlet at the former Foxall foundry west of Georgetown. Relatively flat areas near the road provided suitable building sites for a home and outbuildings. According to a later sale advertisement, these spots were "handsomely situated, having a commanding view of Washington and Georgetown, the Potomac river, Analostan Island, the swelling hills of Virginia, and the course of the rivulets from the unbroken plains." A wedge-shaped parcel to the rear, owned by Navy captain R. Clarendon Jones by the mid 1850s, cut off the little farm from direct access to the stream. Jones's lane formed the southern boundary of the property, dividing it from the John H. King farm, "Valley View."

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Patrick and Catherine Garrity, new immigrants from Ireland, purchased the property for \$300, a healthy profit to Smith.<sup>6</sup> The Garritys had settled in Georgetown with two small children sometime between 1830 and 1833. The parents were illiterate, and Patrick likely worked as an agricultural laborer or tenant farmer before putting aside enough money for at least a down-payment on his farm. At the time of their move to Ridge Road, the family numbered seven—more than two tenths of one percent of the sparse county population of about 3,000. Their property was likely underdeveloped at the time, perhaps mostly woods. It is not known if a house already stood on the parcel, but the Garritys’ “small frame house” was already described as “old” in 1865, perhaps not unusual after 30 years for a weather-beaten, frame farmhouse covered with whitewashed, possibly pit-sawn planks. Patrick undertook the clearance of the land and planted most of the farmstead in fruit trees. The rest was fields of wheat, Indian corn, hay for the animals and, not surprisingly, “Irish” potatoes.<sup>7</sup>



*The Garrity house photographed in 1865 and demolished in the 1880s. The massive chimney indicates that the kitchen was in the tallest, shed-roofed wing at left. This is a detail of a photograph taken from behind Battery Parrott by William Morris Smith, one of Alexander Gardner’s men. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)*

<sup>6</sup> In period records, their surname is variously spelled Garity, Garaty, Garety, Garetty, Garretty, Gaharty, Gaherty and Gaharity.

<sup>7</sup> Cultivation of the potato originated in South America, but it had become a staple in Europe and the principal crop of Ireland. As the Garritys had come from Ireland in the early 1830s, they may have cultivated back home the Irish Lumper potato, which was ubiquitous for its hardiness in poor soil—until the blight of the 1840s.



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At less than twelve acres, the Garrity farm was small. Although there are no detailed figures available on farm size in the District for 1838, the federal census of a dozen years later recorded each property. In 1850, the median acreage of cultivated land was 39 acres.<sup>8</sup> But many farms also had considerable reserves of unimproved land that included woods or marsh or meadow. In fact, including such lands, the median farm measured fully 59 acres. Early on, the Garritys acquired by lease an added fifteen acres of unimproved land, and these were likely the woods to the north of their initial purchase. Patrick Garrity probably intended to commence clearing and cultivating it, but he died in 1846 or 1847, leaving behind a pregnant wife and six children.<sup>9</sup>

The oldest Garrity children were now teenagers, and Catherine took over management of the farm with their help. The family found itself in straitened circumstances. Catherine managed to purchase a house lot in Georgetown in 1853, but to pay for it, she apparently sold or terminated the lease on nine of the fifteen unimproved acres. By the eve of the Civil War, the farm's value had increased, but only as a consequence of the rising value of real estate in general. The production of the Garritys' orchard had fallen off since a decade earlier, as had the potato and vegetable crops. Wheat cultivation had been given up for a smaller patch of beans. The family had only about half the livestock as in 1850, having recently slaughtered some of their pigs for cash. The bright spot was a tripling of the yield of hay, a relatively low-value product, but one in great demand as war came. The family had also undertaken some kind of cottage industry, selling \$50 worth of unnamed "manufactured products" in 1859-1860, possibly butter or cheese, and they likely cut and sold wood for fuel to supplement their income.

The war may have been good for business, but it was likely hard on the Garritys' land. In 1862, troops and probably African-American laborers constructed Battery Parrott immediately west of the Ridge Road to defend against a river crossing or an artillery attack from Arlington Heights. The battery stood on a knoll on the farm of widow Ellen King, one of the highest points south of Tenleytown. Initially manned by the First Maine Heavy Artillery, Battery Parrott served as an army signal station from March 1864. Ridge Road, repaired and re-graded in 1857-1858, was trampled by thousands of troops, horses, wagons and gun carriages over four years. There is no record of the army cutting trees from the Garritys' land, and the military authorities tried to prevent depredations by their troops, but it seems that little could frustrate the soldiers' demand for firewood, the most convenient source of which was the nearest fence. Near war's end, the Garritys' fence line along Ridge Road was described as "tolerably good, but... the back part [of the farm] it has no fence of any account."

The rest of the property had also seen wear and tear, and much may have gone to seed. The house was "old," and the outbuildings were said to be "very inferior." The overall condition was "very poor now; but being a small place, easily improved [and close to the cities], it would bring a good price," about \$200 an acre.

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<sup>8</sup> Because of the remaining huge tracts, the *average* size was significantly larger, at 60 acres.

<sup>9</sup> In an equity suit to divide his estate nearly two decades later, Patrick Garrity was said to have died in 1846, but his youngest daughter was born at least a year after that time.

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The property's cash value had become an issue, as the Garritys now had to sell. The little farm had provided a meager enough living for a single family, but it could not support the families of the grown children. By 1865, only one child was still a minor, and three of the oldest had already moved away from Washington. Without their labor and that of the late Patrick, the farm had become more difficult to manage, and it seemed advantageous to convert it to cash. But Patrick Garrity had died without leaving a will, meaning that his wife and children all possessed partial claims, with the size of each to be determined. And the property was too small to be of much practical use physically split among the family members.

As the youngest Garrity child, Chantelle, was still a minor and unable to consent to a contract, the family members could not each simply agree to a portion of the proceeds of the sale. An equity cause was instituted, and a guardian *ad litem* was appointed for Chantelle. The court took testimony on the value of the property, appointed a trustee to auction it off, and apportioned widow Catherine Garrity only a tenth of the estate "for her dower interest... [as she] is advanced in life," with the remainder divided between the children.

The farm was auctioned June 15, 1865, ten months after the suit was initiated. The winning bidder was James L. Carbery, with an offer of \$3,425. The amount was more than the court-appointed auditor had expected, but the end of the war a month earlier may have encouraged optimism for real estate and agriculture. While the conflict brought about a depression of land values in the South—buoyed somewhat by carpetbaggers and immigrants—the proximity of a large, urban market was obviously attractive. Carbery, with a farm near Conduit Road, did not mean to take possession of the farm himself; he assigned his bid to friend Augustus D. Scheele. Scheele paid the trustee \$2,075 up front and promised to pay the balance when the court ratified the sale. Catherine Garrity and three of her daughters moved to a new home on their Georgetown lot, 160 Fayette Street, later known as 1817 35<sup>th</sup> Street NW and now the site of Hardy Middle School.

### **The Scheeles and the Meat Business**

Augustus Daniel Scheele<sup>10</sup> was the third son of a German immigrant of the same name. The senior Augustus Daniel was born in Lower Saxony in 1780 and generally went by his middle name. Emigrating about 1800, he arrived in Georgetown by 1804. He was a blacksmith by trade and served in the District of Columbia militia during the War of 1812. In 1828, the 48-year-old Daniel married Margaret, the 21-year-old daughter of market gardener and small-time distiller Peter Colter, a resident of the "Wilberforce" subdivision east of High Street (Wisconsin Avenue) opposite Holy Rood Cemetery.

The Scheeles likely lived with the Colters in Wilberforce and there had three sons, two of whom lived to adulthood. Augustus Daniel was their youngest, born in 1835. He and brother Andrew Frederick trained as butchers, probably apprenticed to one or more of the German-American

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<sup>10</sup> As evidenced by a memorandum book of his still in the possession of his descendants, "Scheele" was the proper spelling of his surname. As a German, he presumably pronounced it SHEE-luh, as suggested by some misspellings, but SHEE-lee was adopted early on by neighbors and is used by the family today. The name appears in nineteenth-century documents as Scheele, Sheele, Sheale, Sheeley, Shele, Shela, Shely, Shealy, Schealy, Schiely, Scheill, Shielly, Shiely, Schyly and Shirley.

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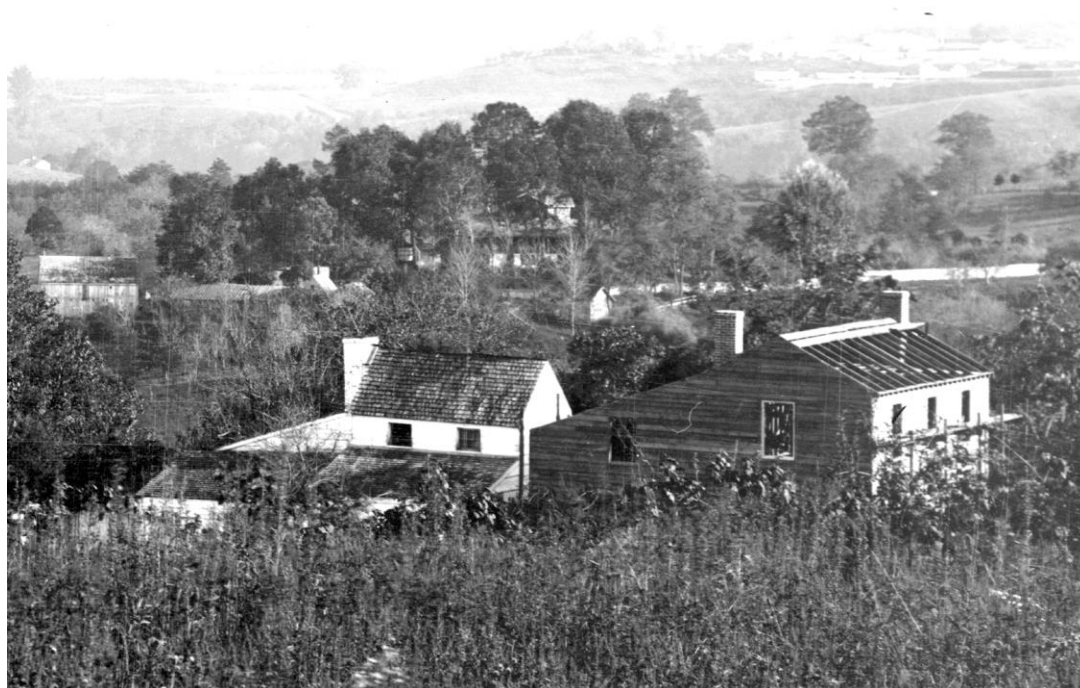
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families of meat dealers in Georgetown Heights—the Weavers, Homillers or Kenglas—and they may have begun their careers bringing meat to the Georgetown market house. As the older brother, Frederick Scheele went out on his own earlier, opening a stall at Washington's Center Market by the beginning of 1854. Five years later, he was among the long list of District butchers who petitioned the area drovers to change the regular cattle auction day from Friday to Wednesday. Augustus may have worked for his brother at this time.

Augustus Scheele married Maryland-born Mary Hilliary, a second-generation Irish-American, in the late 1850s. The couple purchased a little house lot in early 1860, located on the west side of today's Wisconsin Avenue, next to butcher William Homiller. They erected a two-story frame house, painted "drab" or fawn-colored with white trim and green shutters. But the Civil War had been good to suppliers of staples like meat, as long as they were not too harmed themselves by inflation of labor costs and other inputs. By war's end, the Scheeles were ready to buy their own farm.

Four weeks after the auction of the Ridge Road farm, Augustus and Mary Scheele sold their house above Georgetown and delivered to the Garritys' trustee the balance of the price. The court confirmed the sale, which was recorded in September, and by then, the Scheeles' new home was under construction.



*View of the Scheeles' house under construction about September 1865. This is a detail of a photograph taken from behind Battery Parrott by William Morris Smith, one of Alexander Gardner's men. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)*

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The new house was a modest frame, likely similar to the Scheeles' Georgetown one. Three bays wide and two stories tall, it was L-shaped, with a rear kitchen wing under a catslide roof. Two chimneys, one rising at the parlor and the other from the kitchen, vented cooking and heating stoves. A remarkable image taken by William Morris Smith, one of the professional photographic chroniclers of the war, captured the Scheele house under construction, already framed out, but not wholly roofed over and still lacking its porches and windows. Although it is hard to make out finer details in the image, the house's walls are clad with milled planks, likely intended as exterior weatherboards rather than as sheathing. Today, the exterior walls are stuccoed, which was not rare at that time, but was far less common than painted siding, so it may be a later cladding. Still, it may be more than a coincidence that the present color scheme, fawn with white trim, closely matches that of the Scheeles' earlier Wisconsin Avenue home, a possible clue that the same hues were applied to the new farmhouse. The color scheme suggests the influence of early to mid-Victorian architectural taste, as would the use of stucco, and both treatments would have contrasted with the rougher, whitewashed Garrity house of the late 1830s, which remained standing until at least 1875, and perhaps until the late 1880s.

The Scheeles turned a quick buck on the 1866 sale of the southwest corner of their parcel to William Donaldson for an undisclosed sum. With a 35-foot frontage on the Ridge (Foxhall) Road, that lot ran 155 feet east along Captain Jones's lane, today's W Street. Sometime between 1868 and 1872, William and Elizabeth Donaldson built a home, which is the core of 2203 Foxhall Road.<sup>11</sup> Little is known about Donaldson, but he, like August Scheele, was a butcher, with a stall on Dumbarton Street in Georgetown by late 1856, and another at Washington City's Center (or Centre) Market by 1870. He was a member of the same Odd Fellows and Red Men lodges as Scheele.

By 1870, early suburbanization and the withdrawal of land for federal government and military purposes were beginning to diminish the size of the average farm in the District. Coupled with population growth of Washington and the beginning of suburbanization, land values were increasing. If the census figures are reliable, the number of District farms had been slowly decreasing since 1850, while remaining about the same size. Despite the sale of the Donaldson lot, the value of the Scheele farm had probably increased significantly. In 1868, the parcel was valued by the county at \$2,300, not including the two houses, outbuildings and fences, which added another \$1,200. This total was only about what Augustus had paid, before he had built his house. This is a low estimate because the assessed value of agricultural land for tax purposes typically lagged the market value; the Garritys' assessment for their land had been only \$575 until the Scheeles bought it for several times that figure. On the other hand, perhaps Augustus had overpaid. On the other hand, the federal census of 1870 reported a value of \$8,000, a grossly inflated figure when compared with the values of much larger farms. This was surely a mistake or copying error, but the Scheele farm must have appreciated, as Augustus had improved it, and not only with the house and new outbuildings.

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<sup>11</sup> The frame, side-gabled Donaldson house has been more dramatically altered than the Scheele house, today partly obscured by side and rear additions and a brick façade. Although William Donaldson was a butcher, his house was never associated with a farm.

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When the Scheeles moved into their new home they had a single child, the one-year-old Alice Margaret. They would have two more daughters, Clara (born 1867) and Mabel Ardella (born 1874), while in residence. The children may have first attended the one-room schoolhouse built about 1855 along Tunlaw Road, the section that is now the portion of New Mexico Avenue at the eastern edge of the Horace Mann Elementary School lot. But by the intermediate grades, they attended a public school on Prospect Street in Georgetown. Their business and social interests lay in Georgetown, too, at least initially. It was two miles by road to the market house there, but the nearest boundary of the corporation was half that distance. The closest farms on the west side of Wisconsin and the Tunlaw Road extended to Foundry Branch, down the hill from the Scheele farm. From their home, the Scheeles could view the buildings of the college, and they had to go into town for their mail and any necessities. Augustus was a member, and occasionally an officer, of several fraternal lodges, including the Improved Order of Red Men, the Knights of Pythias, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and the Independent Order of Mechanics.

Augustus kept the Garritys' orchard and hay and potato fields, but abandoned the cultivation of corn and possibly beans, adding a small patch of sweet potatoes. The family also brought in a lot of revenue with the production of butter and the sale of vegetables from their market garden.

As small as their farm was, and with only little children in the household, the Scheeles needed help, especially because it was not their crops that became the principal business of the farm, but cattle butchering. The 1870 census indicates that the household included Eliza Chew, an eighteen-year-old African-American house servant, and her probable father or grandfather, Robert Chew, a 73-year-old farm hand. It is possible that Augustus periodically hired additional help, as there was some seasonality to the meat business, and more so for the other cycles of farm life. Given that the Scheele house was not very large, it seems likely that the Chews resided in the old Garrity house, whose wings may have served as a summer kitchen and agricultural outbuildings.

We have no description of the location and appearance of Augustus Scheele's slaughterhouse, but it must have had an adjacent cattle pen accessible from the road, and it likely stood in one of the swales that drained the farm—and the effluent from butchering—toward Foundry Branch. Slaughterhouses were a common appurtenance of large farms, essentially any that killed livestock regularly enough to justify the expense of a specialized space. They are often mentioned among the outbuildings in newspaper advertisements for the sale of District agricultural land. Slaughterhouses were often found near or attached to barns. Most were frame, but the more prosperous estates had brick ones. They would frequently have a brick floor for easier cleaning, as is the case with a slaughterhouse recently discovered by archaeological investigation at the south end of Old Town Alexandria. Until butchering reached an industrial scale in the late nineteenth century, slaughterhouses remained quite small, but exact dimensions are hard to come by. A sale at war's end of some surplus Army structures near Chain Bridge included a 20- by 24-foot slaughterhouse, but that had likely accommodated a greater scale of activity than the average farm or commercial facility. As a clue to the production of commercial slaughterhouses, we have at least one estimate of such an operation in 1875, located at 13<sup>th</sup> and K Streets SE: "some ten or twelve beeves and some twenty-five smaller animals are killed every week..."

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There had been commercial butchers as long as there had been urban areas in the District of Columbia, and there had undoubtedly been farm butcheries that sold their surplus still earlier. An 1873 newspaper article claimed that the District contained 95 slaughterhouses, “all around the outskirts of the city, from the Eastern branch to Rock Creek, and even to the Potomac river.” With his apprenticeship in the early 1850s, Augustus Scheele had joined a large fraternity of butchers living beyond the corporate boundaries of Georgetown. Augustus and his brother Andrew were unusual within the group in that they were the first generation of their family in the trade. Georgetown was surely home to butchers from the time of its incorporation, but the most established clan in the trade at the time of Augustus Scheele’s career was the Kenglas. Sources differ on whether Lewis Kengla was an immigrant from Germany or Luxemburg, or the son of an immigrant.<sup>12</sup> He arrived in Georgetown from Pennsylvania by way of Frederick, Maryland at the turn of the nineteenth century, and had set up a meat stand at the Georgetown market by about 1806. His three sons, Lewis Christopher, Henry and Jacob followed their father into the meat trade, as did Lewis Christopher’s sons Jacob (“Drover and Cattle Dealer”), Joseph, William and George. The Kenglas acquired a sizeable chunk of the Alliance tract, and their farms dominated upper Wisconsin Avenue and the Tunlaw Road. For a time, they were neighbors of Augustus Scheele’s butcher brother, Andrew Frederick Scheele.

Michael Weaver’s (*né* Weber) story resembled Lewis Kengla’s, and the men could have been acquainted in Frederick, where Michael was purportedly born. A little younger than Kengla, Weaver probably arrived in Georgetown after the War of 1812 and settled in the Wilberforce subdivision. When he passed away in 1872 at the age of 86, he was the oldest butcher in the District of Columbia. Sons Henry and Joseph also entered the meat trade, and it was Henry’s 1848 marriage to the widow Mary Ann Barnes that placed him in control of the Barnes cattle corral at Drovers’ Rest.

The Pennsylvania-born Michael Homiller may have been carrying on his own family’s tradition when he opened a shop in Georgetown in the early 1820s. His three sons, William, Jacob and Charles, and then Charles’s sons, Armistead and Michael, followed in the footsteps of the patriarch as master butchers. Of course, there were many others in and around Georgetown and elsewhere in the District. The Georgetown-area families tended to intermarry, to partner in business, and to buy property from each other. William Homiller’s brother-in-law, Joseph Duvall, was his business partner. The Homillers also married into the Poore family, the Poores into the Kengla family, and the Kenglas into the Homillers and the Yeabowers. George Kengla, Joseph Weaver and John Kelley established a Georgetown soap factory, using as the main ingredient tallow, a by-product of butchering. And Andrew Frederick Scheele sold his Wisconsin Avenue farm to the Weavers.<sup>13</sup>

The location of so many butchers north and west of Georgetown was no accident. The town presented a considerable market for meat, and it was adjacent to the larger Washington City. As early as 1870, a quarter of the retail butchers at Washington City’s Center Market (Pennsylvania

<sup>12</sup> The German surname was probably Künle(r), with his first name originally spelled Louis.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew’s descendants included the proprietors of the long-lived Scheele’s Market in Georgetown.

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Avenue between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets NW) were from the vicinity of Georgetown. In 1820, the town enacted an ordinance banning new slaughterhouses south and east of today's 36<sup>th</sup> Street and Whitehaven Parkway, pushing butchers north and west. But the principal factor was that the town was located near the supply of cattle. The District's primary wholesale cattle depot, Drovers' Rest, lay just upriver of Georgetown, adjacent to the Distributing Reservoir and at the intersection of today's Reservoir Road and MacArthur Boulevard. It drew from Virginia and Maryland farms, whose cattle was brought across Chain Bridge and down the Rockville Turnpike. Apparently established in the 1830s by Horatio Barnes, it soon included cattle corrals and slaughter yards, as well as a hotel and tavern for drovers and buyers.<sup>14</sup> In 1855, the *Evening Star* informed readers that, "It may not be generally known that most, if not all of the beef consumed in this city, is purchased at Drovers' Rest, on the hoof; therefore it must be regarded as an important mart."

The lists of butchers in the decennial censuses of manufactures show the extent to which Washingtonians were eating mutton, as well as beef and pork. Yet sheep were nearly invisible in the agricultural census schedules for the District, and local farms sustained far too few steers to feed the population, let alone support so many butcher shops, stands and slaughterhouses. Assuming good soil, good weather and good vegetation, a farm might support a steer per acre, perhaps a little more. Supplementation with hay or oats, as most farms could provide, would make it possible to raise more (or provide a cushion in case of drought), but at a cost. A hayfield itself removed scarce land from daily pasturage or from cultivation for grain or produce. As a consequence, nearly all the cows counted in the agricultural census on relatively small District farms were exploited for milk and butter production, with the occasional calf slaughtered for food.

The beef and mutton consumed in the District mostly arrived from Northern Virginia and Montgomery County, Maryland. Much of the livestock trotted over the Potomac on Chain Bridge, goaded by their Virginia drovers. This was a scene reminiscent of cattle drives in movie Westerns, but at a smaller scale. The sixth Chain Bridge, familiar from Civil War photographs, washed away in the flood of 1870 and was replaced with a light steel-truss bridge in 1872-1874. Years later, the first keeper of the replacement bridge recalled "the 'drove days' when the cattle were brought to town, unusually heavy because they had been watered at Pimmet's [sic] Run, and only 20 were allowed to cross at a time." Most sales from Drovers' Rest occurred at auction on a particular day of the week. As few as 100 head might change hands in a week, and perhaps 800 at the maximum, but usually in the range of 200 to 600 head. The butchers would then have their purchases herded back to their slaughterhouses. They responded to residents' complaints of cattle roaming the streets—and trampling whatever lay along them—by promising to confine the drives to the wee hours of the morning. According to the newspapers, they committed thereafter to "employ [drovers] at the rate of one man for every five cattle," where some butchers had previously hired "a few boys and irresponsible men to do driving because it could be done cheaply."

<sup>14</sup> There was a circa 1840s "Farmers and Drovers' Rest" in the southwest quadrant of Washington City to market cattle brought across Long Bridge. But it was removed earlier than Drovers' Rest because of development in that neighborhood. There was also a smaller livestock trade at Washington City's Center Market after the war, and Lewis Means had a small drove yard at Tenleytown before relocating to Benning Station about 1880.

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With the arrival of several railroad lines, Washington developed another major cattle depot along Benning Road, in the northeastern portion of the county. It was encouraged by the wartime closure of the river crossings and the washing-out of Chain Bridge in 1870. The railroad was initially a boon to meat dealers and consumers alike, as more cattle could be delivered inexpensively. But it proved inconveniently distant to butchers around Georgetown and would ultimately steal business and undercut the prices offered by local cattle farms.

During this period, butchering became more specialized, with slaughterhouses increasingly handling hogs *or* cows and sheep. The reasons were practical: swine could not be herded long distances and needed less space and less specialized fodder, so pork butchers could remain in the city. The smaller animals could be transported by wagon from a wholesale market such as “Clark’s depot,” which operated next to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad depot in the early 1870s.

Augustus Scheele was not among the largest or most successful of the butchers; he was probably of the middling sort, not necessarily a leader of the informal, local industry lobby, but respected enough to judge the election of directors of the new Northern Liberties Market (5<sup>th</sup> and K Streets NW) in 1878. Like his neighbors, he probably had a presence at the Georgetown Market before the “market war” of the mid to late 1860s. After the completion of a new market house in 1864 (the present landmark building), the Georgetown butchers purchased the temporary structure that had been used for the market during construction. They intended to remain in the latter building and requested of the Common Council a license extending the boundaries of the market to include their space. The councilmembers refused. The nature of the dispute appears to have been more political than an expression of dissatisfaction with the new building. Carlton Fletcher suggests that there were hard feelings between the conservative Democrat butchers—led by Lewis, Henry and Jacob Kengla, Joseph Weaver and William Homiller—and the town’s new Republican government. The corporation issued licenses, but whoever controlled the market houses could effectively limit access to the town’s meat trade. Consequently, many of the meat dealers relocated across Rock Creek, beyond Georgetown’s boundaries and inside Washington City. The butchers did not return to their own Georgetown market house, the “Butchers’ Market,” until the Organic Act of 1871 united the entire District under a single government and dissolved the Georgetown Common Council.

If the meat dealers had not already established a presence in the Washington markets, they did so now. The city directories contain no entries for Augustus Scheele prior to 1871, but by the end of 1870, he had stalls at both the Western Market (21<sup>st</sup> and K Streets NW) and Center Market. A year later, he withdrew to just his space at Center Market.

Their farm and meat business offered independence for the Scheeles, but an independence perhaps more theoretical than real, bought and maintained only with hard work, and subject to the vagaries of the weather and the economy. An 1873 financial panic was triggered by the collapse of Jay Cooke & Company and other banks that had traded in overvalued railroad equities. A deeper cause of the subsequent depression was a restrictive monetary policy instituted by the federal government, which had moved to a gold standard, no longer backing dollars with silver as well. The depression lasted 65 months, until 1879. While many Americans



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suffered directly from bank and stock losses, many more were hit by the contraction of the money supply and the consequent tightening of credit. Even when banks did not call in loans, debtors struggled beneath the burden of payments that consumed an ever greater proportion of revenues. And farmers were nearly always debtors.

The specifics of the Scheele family's debts are unknown at this remote date, but it is clear that they had run into some financial embarrassment by the mid 1870s. The Scheele businesses, or at least finances, may have been closely entwined, as brother A. Frederick Scheele was simultaneously experiencing his own difficulties, leading to the sale of his Wisconsin Avenue house, farm and slaughterhouse. Frederick first offered his seven-room house and barn in mid 1873, but not getting his price, the property went to auction two years later—not a good sign.

Augustus was in arrears on his own farm's property taxes from 1876, not paying them off until the land was sold in 1881. He had taken a mortgage to secure a debt in 1874 and defaulted almost immediately. In fact, the property was to be auctioned in June 1875 to satisfy the debt, but the sale was narrowly averted. Either the trustee or Scheele himself instead soon leased the farm to the 25-year-old Walter Brown, a fellow butcher not long past journeyman. The Ridge Road houses may not have been occupied by Brown immediately. The two Scheele families may have doubled up there to save money, as Frederick's son, George, was born there on Christmas Day 1876.

An advertisement for the aborted auction provides the most detailed picture of the farm's improvements during the Scheele tenure. The property included the "comfortable and nearly new" main dwelling, with a "fine well of water at the door"; the "small House and grounds adjoining... on the south" (i.e., the Garrity house); a barn; a corn crib; and "all necessary outbuildings," including, of course, the slaughterhouse.

The Scheeles moved to Foggy Bottom—where their fourth child, the third Augustus Daniel Scheele, was born—and they would thereafter lead a peripatetic life, residing in a succession of apparently rented homes and taking in boarders to earn more income.

Ironically, Augustus's financial problems resulted in, or at least coincided with, an expansion of his retail business. Freed of the burden of operating the farm and in need of replacement revenue, he added a second stall to his space at Center Market and rented another at the new Northern Liberties Market for perhaps a decade. But Augustus disappears from the Washington city directories in 1885, suggesting that an illness may have kept him from business during the final year of his life. He died in 1886. His wife, Mary, passed away around 1890.

### **The Browns**

In failing health, the 76-year-old Joshua D. Brown may have been trying to set up his son in life when he purchased the Scheele farm in 1881. The elder Brown was born in Maryland, married Ann Stone at Baltimore in 1833, and acquired his first farm at Howard in Anne Arundel County, where fourth child Walter was born in April 1850. The family moved to another farm near Elk Ridge Landing, Howard County in the 1850s, and finally, after the war, to Laurel, Prince George's County. Despite a lifetime in the Old Line State and still owning the Laurel farm,

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Brown is oddly described as a resident of the District in the deed from the Scheeles' trustee. The error is probably due the fact that his son was already farming the Scheele land, and Joshua periodically stayed with him.<sup>15</sup>

Walter Brown<sup>16</sup> had been living with his parents into his mid twenties, but he married the 24-year-old Mary Ellen Ford in 1875, and the young couple had to make a home and a living for themselves. It was then that Walter leased the Scheele farm, as city directories show him in the neighborhood about the time the Scheeles move. A November 1875 newspaper item indicates that he had found four stray cattle near Drovers' Rest and already had a stall at Center Market. It may not have been until 1877 or 1878, however, that he took up residence in the Scheeles' Ridge Road house. He soon rented another 24 acres—either Captain Jones's farm to the southeast, or a portion of John H. King's former "Valley View" estate to the south—and had under cultivation twenty acres of hay, three of corn, and one each of oats, rye and potatoes. Forty apple trees and 75 peach trees produced 220 bushels of fruit for sale in 1879, supplementing the revenue from a sizeable market garden, dairy products, and eggs. A handful of hogs were largely for home use. The farm was large enough that the Browns had to hire laborers (a total of five man-weeks in 1879), probably helping mainly with picking, mowing, reaping and threshing in summer and fall. By 1880, the Brown household included two house servants and three boarders: 68-year-old German-American widower John Hunchberger, 21-year-old D.C. native Frank Willson, and the 24-year-old Swiss-American William Loeffler, all butchers and not farm laborers.<sup>17</sup> The five could have resided in the Garrity home, which probably functioned as a summer kitchen and bunkhouse.

As the presence of these butchers would indicate, the products of the farm were sidelines to the Browns' main business: meat. Walter Brown had learned butchering at the knee of his father, and unlike his older brother, Oliver, pursued it as a lifelong profession. The little Scheele farm was probably attractive for having a modest slaughterhouse. It was also favorably situated to permit entry into the fraternity of butchers serving Washington; butcher neighbors included William Donaldson, Robert Smith, Morton Lowry, Charles Merkel, Leonard Killian, John R. Dale, Frank Elliott, etc. Like these neighbors, Brown reaped additional income selling the byproducts of his work: hides to leather-makers, bones to fertilizer mills, and fat for oleomargarine manufacturers and other uses. In 1885, he was elected one of the directors of the Butchers' Hide and Tallow Association.

In April 1881, when the Scheeles' debts forced them to give up their land for good, the Browns snapped it up. Although the Scheeles had obviously improved the property, Joshua Brown purchased it from the trustee for only \$2,600—less than Augustus had paid—assuming a mortgage for about 37 percent of the price. The large down payment may have come from Joshua's sale of his own farm, as the 1880 census suggests that his household—his wife, Ann, and their son Oliver's family—was now resident in the village of Laurel, and he had retired.

<sup>15</sup> Although Walter would later be a member of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of D.C.

<sup>16</sup> Most sources offer no middle name or initial for Walter Brown, but one advertisement for his business, published after his death, gives his middle initial as "T". That is the reason why his son, Walter Milton Brown, is no "junior."

<sup>17</sup> Hunchberger died of heart disease at the home the following year, and the coroner performed a post-mortem examination there.

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Nine days after Joshua's purchase, he and wife Ann sold the farm to Mary Ellen Brown, Walter's wife, for \$3,000. The thirteen-percent profit is likely explained by the younger couple being already in debt to Walter's parents while setting up the leased farm. More unusual is the fact that Walter was not named in the deed—in an era during which wives, not husbands, were frequently omitted from property documents. It may be an indication that Mary Ellen brought more wealth to the marriage; her parents' Chautauqua County, New York farm had been valued somewhat higher than the Browns' Maryland one, and the Fords had possessed considerably more personal property.<sup>18</sup> Mary Ellen may have been bankrolling Walter's businesses.

By the time Mary Ellen and Walter acquired the Scheele farm outright, they had had two children, Walter Milton and Matilda, both born in the Scheele house, in September 1875 and November 1877, respectively. Mary Ellen was pregnant with their third child, Edwin Lovell, and a fourth, Gertrude Fay, would follow in late 1888. The children were largely cared for by a middle-aged Virginia-born African-American nurse, Rosa Kelley. She likely tended to Joshua Brown, too, as he lay dying at the house in late 1882. A teenaged black servant, Kate Barnes, cooked for the family in the early 1880s. That the Browns had house servants and hired farm and slaughterhouse laborers is an early indication of the growth of Walter's meat business and the family's affluence. Their income, and the size of the household, likely necessitated the \$150 worth of work undertaken on the former Scheele house in 1885.

Five years after the purchase of the Scheele farm, the Browns acquired 22 adjacent acres, Captain R. Clarendon Jones's old farm, part of the still-older "Alliance" tract, and today a considerable portion of Glover-Archbold Park. The Browns may have already been farming the land under lease, and they soon demolished the modest house there. The combined parcel was larger than the shrinking median farm size in the District. The Brown property now stretched across Foundry Branch, wrapping around the Valley View estate of Dr. Daniel Boone Clarke (formerly owned by John H. King) and abutting parcels owned by Henry Kengla and Georgetown College. The purchase brought more cultivable land and direct access to the water course. It also added a woodlot, "a cluster of pines [along Foundry Branch] near the southern edge of the Brown clearing..., a great resort for blackbirds." But perhaps the greatest advantage was the ability to construct a new slaughterhouse, much farther from the family home. Although it is only known from an alteration permit of three decades later (for a poured-concrete floor and a raised roof), Walter Brown's slaughterhouse was described as near "New Cut Road," i.e., Reservoir Road. Although hundreds of yards away, Reservoir was the nearest crossroad; the slaughterhouse was likely accessible from the footpath that ran up Foundry Branch, as well as from Captain Jones's former lane, which ran along the south side of the Donaldson lot and later became W Street.

The Browns soon commenced even more substantial improvements at the northern edge of the farm, on an eminence at the farthest possible distance from the slaughterhouse. In May 1888, they obtained a building permit for the construction of a new home. To stand two stories tall on

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<sup>18</sup> Joshua Brown's farm in 1860, for instance, was a modest affair, 25 improved acres valued at \$1,400, including all tools and livestock (a horse and a mule). It produced 50 bushels of potatoes, 30 bushels of buckwheat and seven tons of hay the previous year.

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a stone foundation and under a mansard roof, the frame house measured 42 feet wide and 60 deep, with an almost-square main block and a rear kitchen wing. The permit did not identify an architect or builder, and the mansard suggests that its probable Second-Empire architecture may not have been positively *au courant*, but the construction was estimated at \$8,000, probably as much as the entire farm had cost the family. If not a mansion by today's standards, it was certainly a substantial house, reached by a semicircular driveway off the Ridge Road, and with a large carriage house standing behind the garden. The Browns named the house, or rather the whole estate, Lovell Crest, after Mary Ellen's mother's family. Unfortunately, it is unknown exactly when it was completed—and when the Browns moved from the former Scheele house—because extant tax records for the county do not cover the years 1882 to 1892, and none of the maps of the late 1880s and early 1890s depict the new house. It is known, however, that the family was ensconced in the new Lovell Crest by mid 1893.<sup>19</sup>



*A detail of the 1894 Hopkins atlas shows the extent of Walter Brown's farm that he was likely farming by the late 1870s. It better reflects the appearance of the property before the Browns built a new house at its northern edge, as that structure is not shown*

<sup>19</sup> In 1918, Mary Ellen Brown attested that she and her husband had built the house "about thirty years ago."

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*A detail of the 1903 Baist real estate atlas showing the Browns' new house at the northern edge of the farm, plus their carriage house and a barn, all north of the former Scheele house in its original spot. Unfortunately, such maps seem to be the only extant images of the circa 1888 house, as it was demolished in the 1930s, probably even before being captured in aerial photos.*

The new house, and the social pretension implied by a named estate, signaled the arrival of the Browns. Although their wealth was still modest, and a butcher would never be admitted to high society, the family appeared in the newspaper society columns for the county. Even before they moved from the Scheele house, Walter and Mary Ellen celebrated their ninth wedding anniversary by inviting 400 guests. As no home could have accommodated so many, the party must have had the character of an autumn evening picnic. Mattie Brown's surprise "sweet sixteen" party in 1893 received a brief write-up, and Mrs. Brown's leadership role in the local Woman's Christian Temperance Union chapter received numerous mentions, including of a luncheon she hosted in the home for Mary Harris Armour, the W.C.T.U. president. Although Walter Brown was probably no member of the Chevy Chase Hounds, he permitted their foxhunts to traverse his land. He did take a personal interest in hunting, however, probably of upland game birds, as he raised setters on the property. He also raised a flock of Plymouth Rock homing pigeons that were sold off after his death. Walter also took a natural interest in the physical condition of Ridge Road, sometimes complaining to the District of Columbia Commissioners about its drainage, or carrying petitions for better county roads in general. He was soon head of the Committee on Roads and Highways for the West Washington Citizens' Association, ultimately agitating for lighting on Ridge and the opening of W Street from

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Georgetown to Ridge and Conduit Roads, in partial fulfillment of the Highway Plan.<sup>20</sup> In the wake of the Panic of 1893, the Brown house was the meeting place for area residents worried about protecting their property from “Coxey’s Army” of unemployed men approaching Washington to demand more spending on public-works jobs and freedom from the gold standard.<sup>21</sup>

And the Browns now had plenty of property to worry about. Their 1893 tax assessment valued the improvements—including the new house and stable, the slaughterhouse and the other outbuildings—at \$5,700<sup>22</sup>, and more than 32 acres of land at \$300 an acre.

As their household both prospered and grew, the Browns continued to augment their staff. Although we do not have the 1890 census records, those for 1900 show John Veal, a young black farm laborer among the household, and William Owens and Willie Coleman, also African Americans, were servants of some sort by 1910. It is possible that they or other farm laborers lived in the former Scheele house, once vacated by the Browns. The old home surely had some tenant, and the Garrity house seems to have been razed by the time the new house was finished. Mrs. Brown had a succession of cooks and housekeepers, advertising for them when necessary. And the family employed a coachman, George Stanton, until both coach and coachman were replaced by an automobile in the 1910s.

The larger workforce was engaged in the family business, the meat shop that paid for the operation of the estate. The slaughterhouse remained on the farm into the twentieth century, with the occasional cow or lamb straying from the property and wandering into Georgetown. And for decades, the retail store was located in one or more stalls at Center Market. Walter Brown raised sons Walter and Edwin to be butchers. Except for the younger Walter’s brief attempt to strike out on his own, they worked for and with their father, in a business that came to be known as Walter Brown & Sons. But not just the sons were involved. The 1910 census identifies 22-year-old daughter Gertrude as secretary for the meat shop.<sup>23</sup> And there were other helpers and journeymen who migrated through the business, including the sixteen-year-old Preston Jones and Sophia Rinker, a clerk and cashier at Center Market. A boy named Albert Sakers was working for Walter Brown in 1891 when crushed by an elevator at the market. Ralph T. Weaver, one of the extensive Weaver clan of butchers, later worked for the firm before starting his own competing business in the market hall.

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<sup>20</sup> Brown himself was less enthusiastic about a leg of W Street to be built through his own farm. He also later unsuccessfully claimed damages from the city constructing a sewer along the Foundry Branch valley.

<sup>21</sup> Walter Brown also once rescued a teenaged girl from the 60-foot-deep well of the next-door Donaldson house. She had apparently attempted suicide and then thought better of it. He heard her screams when passing by.

<sup>22</sup> Which may be compared to the \$1,000 worth of improvements during the Scheele tenure, or to the \$100 valuation of the Donaldson house next door.

<sup>23</sup> Excluded from mention in relation to the meat business is Mary Ellen Brown, Walter’s wife. Direct involvement in that sort of commerce would not square with her apparent aspirations to a higher place in society, but it is difficult to believe that Mrs. Brown was not involved with the business and farm, especially in the early days; extant legal records suggest that she was a strong, and strong-willed, individual who, among other things, made loans to other family members.

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Although there were many meat dealers, Walter Brown made his reputation providing quality and service. Although he sold waste fats to oleomargarine manufacturers, he testified before a Senate committee in 1886 to the effect that oleo's purity was suspect; "the fats were of necessity dirty and flyblown and that he would not eat anything made from them." His company delivered to retail customers, which was not unusual in itself, but it adopted the automobile early, to carry sides of beef and sheep from the slaughterhouse to market and to deliver paper-wrapped cuts to the kitchens of its more affluent buyers. In June 1909, the meat dealer obtained a permit to operate its new, motorized Hart-Kraft delivery wagon. Three years later, the Browns replaced it or expanded the fleet with the purchase of a half-ton truck.

A couple of newspaper items indicate the prominence of Walter Brown in the meat trade at the turn of the century. In 1900 he was among three representatives of Washington's butchers to a "National Pure Food and Drug Congress" which was debating legislation to regulate the ingredients and production methods of comestibles and pharmaceuticals. Brown had among his customers the family of the British ambassador, Julian Pauncefote. Pauncefote is best remembered by Americans for having negotiated a treaty that acknowledged the right of the United States to construct a canal across Central America. He had just been elevated to a baronetcy when the Lady Pauncefote hired a new household cook. This cook soon visited Walter Brown's shop with a "demand for 10 per cent commission on the supplies" she would purchase for the household, or "she would take the trade away." Brown apparently took the latter option, as Lord Pauncefote sent for the butcher a few days later "to inquire why the roasts he was supplying had become so tasteless." Brown made clear that the latest cuts were not his. With the situation explained "and with the advent of a new cook [hired from New York,] the difficulty was remedied." This anecdote was one among several related in a 1903 *Washington Times* exposé of such kickbacks to household staff. Brown repeated it seven years later in his second appearance before a Senate committee, this time investigating the high prices of meat and other farm products in Washington.

This was still an era of "trusts," that is, industry monopolies, oligopolies and cartels, and some senators suspected that the uniformly high meat prices in 1910 Washington smacked of collusion among butchers. Walter Brown spoke for many of the local meat dealers. "Mr. Brown, who was the first witness, testified that he bought most of the meat he sold as live cattle from farms in this section of the country, killed the cattle in his own abattoir, and prepared the meat for sale." He explained that, with the exception of pork, meats were still about the same price as of five years earlier. He continued that local producers could not further lower their prices, because of the cost of inputs. As it was, the efficiency of rail transport and the economies of scale of the big Midwest meat packers meant that they could undercut local meat dealers, and then raise prices as their competitors were driven out of the market. Chicago's Armour & Company had even set up a branch next to Center Market.

The railroad wrought additional changes. A new Baltimore and Potomac Railroad line and a spur off Baltimore & Ohio's Washington Branch<sup>24</sup> arrived in the northeast section of the District in the 1870s and quickly shifted the main wholesale stockyard to Benning Station, north of

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<sup>24</sup> Known originally as the Washington and Point Lookout Branch.

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Benning Road. Increasing volume and lower prices of beef and sheep arriving by rail put the Georgetown-adjacent butchers at a disadvantage. To drive cattle from Benning Station was hard,

not to mention discouraged by residents along the routes, and an abattoir was developed next to the new stockyards.<sup>25</sup> During the last three decades of the nineteenth century, newspapers and the District government both encouraged the Georgetown butchers to establish their own common abattoir, to remove the scattered nuisances and improve upon the inefficiency of so many slaughterhouses. The District also instituted an inspection regime and zoning that restricted their locations. The Washington Aqueduct expressed an interest in purchasing Drovers' Rest, because the cattle yards polluted the adjacent reservoir. But although a large abattoir would ultimately be established in Georgetown, it would not be sanitary interests that would put an end to slaughterhouses north and west of Georgetown. Rather, it was the twin pressures of the industrialization and suburbanization.

Residential Burleith—the onetime estate of the Threlkelds—was platted in 1887, and Harlem, west of Foxhall Road and south of Reservoir Road, was subdivided before 1881. It was “Palisades of the Potomac” subdivisions No. 1 and No. 2, however, that brought the end of Drovers' Rest when they were platted in 1890. The butcher-farmers of the vicinity sold off appreciating land as the products of their farms became less profitable. They were not necessarily passive beneficiaries either; in the 1880s, butchers Joseph Weaver, Jacob Kengla and B.F. Hunt invested in a new Georgetown and Tenallytown Rail Road Company whose streetcars passed their Georgetown Heights farms. Still, the change was gradual; the Browns retained their farm well into the twentieth century and improved their slaughterhouse as late as 1908.

The first subdivision of the Brown land occurred in November 1902, when Walter and Mary Ellen sold a four-acre parcel to their new daughter-in-law. In 1899, their eldest son, Walter, had married Edith Louise Kengla, the eighteen-year-old orphan of George M. and Addie Kengla. George Kengla was the grandson of Louis (or Lewis), the supposed immigrant from Luxemburg. The Kengla men were nearly all farmers and meat dealers, the largest landowners around Georgetown in the late nineteenth century, and among the leaders of the butchers in the Georgetown “market war” of the 1860s. George and Charles Kengla (Edith's father and uncle) were partners in the 1870s and 1880s and shared a parcel of land on the Tunlaw Road. George had a stall at the Georgetown Butchers' Market for several years, and joined forces with brother Charles, Joseph T. Weaver and John T. Kelly to manufacture soap on the Georgetown waterfront. George and Addie Kengla both died in the early 1890s, however, and Edith and her brother and sister inherited their parents' estate, as well as shares of their grandfather's.

Upon their wedding, Walter and Edith Brown took up residence in a semidetached home belonging to Edith on Wisconsin above Georgetown. But city directories suggest that they resided on Ridge Road before 1903, long enough for the second of their four children to have been born in the Scheele-Brown house. Edith's purchase of the parcel on Ridge adjacent to the Donaldson lot included the old house and more than four surrounding acres. It seems unusual that the Browns' son did not receive an ownership interest, but it may have been for the same

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<sup>25</sup> In 1895, for instance, the driving of cattle across Benning's bridge was limited to nighttime.



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reason that Mary Ellen Brown had at first been sole owner of the former Scheele farm: Edith Kengla Brown brought more wealth to the marriage. Apparently, the senior Walter Brown had a large mortgage payment coming due at the end of 1902 and needed cash. According to Edith, her father-in-law “induced [her] to buy the property at an exorbitant price... [The land] is in a hollow, and was the least desirable portion of the tract... [A]side from the portion on which the house stands, which comprises only a fair-sized suburban lot... [it] is practically incapable of use.”

Whatever wealth the younger Walter might eventually earn or inherit from his parents, he was then making only \$25 a week. Edith had more resources, and it appears that Walter had an inclination to spend them. The price of what came to be known as Lot 6 in Parcel 19 was \$6,500, and in less than a year, Walter had persuaded his wife to relocate the old house about 150 feet southwest, nearer the road and next to the Donaldson residence, in order to build on its site a larger modern one. Including the cost of moving the farmhouse and the construction of a carriage house (later expanded as a garage/fuel shed), the total bill was about \$12,000. The two-story frame residence measured 38 feet wide and 28 feet deep and stood on a brick and stone foundation and under a slate-clad pyramidal roof surmounted by a room-sized belvedere. It consisted of ten rooms plus a bathroom, presumably a full basement, and full-width front and rear porches. The house was designed by prominent local architect Frederick B. Pyle, responsible for, among other commissions, the Equitable Savings and Loan Building and the addition to the Hecht Company Building.<sup>26</sup> The house was not a mansion exactly; the money poured into it was presumably expressed in the finishes, fixtures and systems, such as the hot-water heating system. The improvements made up the greater part of the value of the property. The old house was improved as well, with a new front porch and an addition to the kitchen that could have served as a pantry or as the house’s first indoor bathroom. The building would not have been long vacant. By 1910, the Browns had live-in servants, the eighteen-year-old Rosetta Jackson and the 24-year-old Mr. Slaughter, both African-American. They also had a boarder, Richard Badey. In 1914-1915, Richard Sunderland, who worked with Walter M. Brown in the meat business boarded at the property and accompanied him to work each day.

Although the topography of this corner of the farm made it difficult to cultivate, Walter planted an orchard on the east-facing slopes. A handful of fruit trees could never be more than a small sideline, of course, and with the backing of his wife, Walter initially sought to set up his own meat business, S. & S. Beef Company at 7<sup>th</sup> and B Streets NW. Yet, in 1906, he joined his father and younger brother in Walter Brown & Sons at Center Market, where he would earn \$40 to \$50 a week. Unfortunately, he grew a bit too attached to a clerk there, Sophia Rinker, with whom he had an affair and would ultimately marry. This relationship, as well as his spendthrift ways, resulted in the divorce of the Browns in 1918. But Edith had asked him to leave three years earlier, and unable to remain next door to her in-laws, she moved into the city and purchased a house at 1473 Monroe Street NW. Over the years, she acquired a few other small residential properties with her legacy, but she took a position as a clerk in the War Department to make ends meet.

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<sup>26</sup> The Hecht building was in the works at the same time as new Brown house.

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With the departure of Edith's husband, Walter M. Brown, 1915 was the last year that the Ridge Road property was associated with the meat business and with the surrounding farm and nearby slaughterhouse. Although Edith Brown's residence and the older Scheele-Brown house were subsequently rented out, possibly to farm laborers, there is no further connection documented.

With the deaths of Walter Brown and his younger son, Edwin, in 1910 and 1911, the eldest child, Walter M. Brown, became president of the newly incorporated meat business. He also partnered with another dealer in a meat-packing firm at the Northern Liberties Market, but they dissolved that company in 1915. Stepping into his father's shoes, he accepted a seat on the Board of Trade. He probably did not share quite the reputation of his upright father, as his meat-packing business was once accused by a competitor of insanitary practices, and a District health officer once charged him with violating the health laws. While the younger Walter still leaned on his mother for financing, he moved near Forest Glen, Maryland and raised a second family—until inheriting, with his sister Gertrude, their parents' estate. His new wife, the former cashier Sophie Rinker, became treasurer of Walter Brown & Sons, and Gertrude Brown served as company secretary. Walter M. Brown died in 1937, a little more than a decade after the business went strictly wholesale and moved out of Center Market.



*A 1926 National Photo Company image of a Walter Brown & Sons meat truck.  
(Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division)*

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### **After the Browns**

The departure of Edith and Walter Brown from their home was followed by their 1918 divorce. Edith almost immediately sold the property, and thereafter, aside from its unusually large lot size, it was little distinguishable from the suburban homes that were encroaching on the surrounding farmland.

Edith Brown's Lot 6 in Parcel 19 was first purchased by Jessie Fremont Greer Magee, a 57-year-old District native. She probably acquired it as an investment, as she then lived with her husband James Francis Magee, a Pennsylvania Avenue interior decorator, and two daughters on B Street NE. The Magees were prominent enough to receive numerous mentions in newspaper society pages. After James died in the 1920s, Jessie moved to Edith Brown's 1903 house (which became 2209 Foxhall Road), and resided there with daughter Lottie Pearl Magee, a high school English teacher, until her death in the late 1950s.

The family apparently believed in togetherness, as Jessie's daughter Avice and her husband, Karl Wallace Greene, lived next door in the Scheele-Brown house for a time, before moving to the old Donaldson home, where they remained until the Second World War. Avice graduated from Western High School and earned a degree at the George Washington University before joining the Treasury Department in 1917. She retired from Treasury in 1945, as chief of the Loans and Currency Division's correspondence section. She was an active member of the National Woman's Party, representing in turn its Young Women's Council, the Government Workers's Council, the District of Columbia Branch, and the New Mexico Branch. She was also a member of the Women's City Club and the Association of University Women. Avice had apparently met Karl Greene during a sojourn in the Southwest, when he was on the staff of the El Paso Herald. After their marriage and return to Washington, Karl was a government clerk and then an investigator for the Justice Department's Alien Property Office, who spent most of his 35-year career in Washington, but was posted to Hawaii and the Philippines for six years before his retirement.

For a time, the Greens shared the Scheele-Brown house with a cousin, the former Ella B. Greer. At the end of 1895, Ella had married David Francis Scheele, the founder of Scheele's Market in Georgetown, and a nephew of Augustus Scheele. David died in the late 1920s. By 1950, however, Amy Wood, an employee of the D.C. tax office and a third daughter of Jessie and James Magee, called 2207 Foxhall her home.

Aerial photographs of 1938 indicate that the Scheele-Brown farmhouse had changed little since its move 35 years earlier, or even much since its construction. A one-story bump-out appears at the rear of the kitchen wing. The kitchen porch had already been enclosed by this time. Remnants of the Browns' orchard remained, hemmed in by the native and volunteer trees that grew up the swales at the rear of the property.

The next-door Donaldson house had already seen several additions, but the most dramatic physical change to the immediate physical setting was the continuation of W Street east of Ridge Road. Platted in the Highway Plan of the 1890s, it was initially intended to cut through to Georgetown. Just before her death, Mary Ellen Brown had consented to extensions of both W

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and 44th Streets through her farm in 1925. Only a single block of W was constructed, however, and not until the 1940s, connecting to the north-south 44th Street before the latter was partly closed with the establishment of Glover-Archbold Park. The widening of what had been a farm lane trimmed the southern edge from Jessie Magee's property and the old Donaldson lot. Another nearly invisible, yet significant change was the official renaming of Ridge Road as the northern continuation of Foxhall Road in 1932.

By that time, agriculture had disappeared from this corner of the District, and the road had become suburban, albeit characterized by larger-than-average homes. Near where Battery Parrott had stood, Anna Thomson Dodge, widow of car manufacturer Horace Dodge, had Julian Abele design a classical limestone mansion, Marly, completed in 1931. At Valley View, immediately south of what would become W Street, Elinor Morse Ryan commissioned William Lawrence Bottomley to create a large Georgian Revival residence in 1936. Two years later, Morris Cafritz finished an Art Deco mansion as a gift to his wife, Gwendolyn, demolishing Walter and Mary Ellen Brown's house in order to take advantage of the vista from that spot. Documenting the physical state of the District of Columbia at mid century, avocational photographer John P. Wymer noted that "Along Foxhall Road residences are especially pretentious, some of them being virtually small estates." This trend continued until at least the 1963 construction of the Philip Johnson-designed Kreeger residence, 2401 Foxhall Road. But even as it ended, the march of higher-end "tract" housing continued, and eventually, the mansions would be taken over by institutional uses or demolished altogether.

Complicated series of transactions in the 1920s and 1940s temporarily shifted title to the comparatively modest Lot 6 in Parcel 19 and its old houses, but the property apparently remained held within the family and ended in the sole possession of Lottie Magee after the deaths of her mother and aunt. At the end of 1961, Lottie, now 71 years old, decided to sell off the rear of her tract to real estate speculator James W. Truver. Truver immediately flipped the property to a development firm doing business variously as Dolphin Investment Corporation, Andes Investment Corporation, Amazon Investment Corporation and Everest Investment Corporation (A.L. Wheeler, president, and Irving G. Rudd, secretary). The land had already been subdivided, on behalf of the Statewide Investment Corporation and American Investment Corporation, into twelve house lots lining W Street and a new cul-de-sac, Foxboro Place. Most of these were built upon and sold by the end of 1964.

Also in 1961, Lottie Magee sold 2207 Foxhall Road to James M. and Sylvia Kaplan Shugrue, a couple who had rented the house from at least 1958.<sup>27</sup> James Shugrue was an assistant to the Architect of the Capitol and the descendant of a longtime dairy-farming family in the Palisades.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> As confirmed by a newspaper item that illustrates the not fully suburbanized character of the block before the creation of Foxboro Place. That year Mr. Shugrue caught a copperhead snake in the yard.

<sup>28</sup> It was this purchase by the Shugrues that appears to have led to the more recent neighborhood tradition that 2207 Foxhall was *the* Shugrue house, meaning one of the Palisades-area farmhouses owned by the Shugrue family in the nineteenth century. The house most notably identified with the Shugrues, the Michael Shugrue house, was located on the property where Our Lady of Victory Church now stands, 4835 MacArthur Boulevard.

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Sylvia Shugrue had a passion for, and a masters in, fine arts. But she primarily applied her creativity to the development of innovative science curricula for elementary students, especially relating to astronomy and horticulture, both as a teacher in D.C. schools and as a member of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). One of her first assignments, in 1958, had been to set up a program of instruction for children resident at Saint Elizabeths Hospital. After nearly 40 years in Washington classrooms, a term as the NSTA president, and her husband's death, Sylvia retired in 1977. She remained in her home, which still evidences her interest in gardening, until her death in 2012 at nearly 99 years of age. Not only had she been a recipient of the NSTA's most prestigious Robert H. Carlton Award for National Leadership in the Field of Science Education, but the organization now annually presents a "Sylvia Shugrue Award for Elementary School Teachers" to an instructor who creates and makes use of exemplary, interdisciplinary, inquiry-based lesson plans.

The Shugrues had not much altered the interior or exterior of the Scheele-Brown house. The principal change was the addition of a one-story sunroom at the rear of the kitchen porch. The rear second-story bathroom addition was likely constructed during World War II, when housing demand was particularly acute, and Ella Scheele is known to have had plumbing work done. Nine months after her death, Mrs. Shugrue's estate sold her lot to Attias O Street Limited Liability Corporation. Prior to the conveyance, a sign was posted on the property offering it for resale and picturing a new larger home designed and to be built by a developer for an ultimate buyer. It suggested that a permit to raze the Scheele-Brown Farmhouse was in store.

The demolition of the farmhouse would signal a kind of end to the once-rural character of Georgetown Heights. The homes, barns, stock pens, slaughterhouses and farms of the butchers, prominent and obscure, have vanished, swept up in the platting of new streets and residential subdivisions, as well as in the relocation of government installations and educational institutions.<sup>29</sup> The Weaver family may have kicked off the trend on upper Wisconsin Avenue with the construction on their properties of several homes for their several generations. The Jacob Kengla home was demolished in 1911 for the extension of Massachusetts Avenue. Henry Kengla's and Charles Homiller's farms became the Glover Park neighborhood. B.F. Hunt's villa "Mount Alto," on Red Hill, was razed for a girls' school in 1916. Observatory Circle cut too near the slaughterhouses of Theodore Barnes and Robert Weaver. The intensity of residential, commercial and institutional development in the area may have even destroyed most archaeological evidence of such farmsteads, not to mention the rural setting and feeling.<sup>30</sup> The Scheele-Brown Farmhouse is, therefore, an anomaly recalling the area's remote history.

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<sup>29</sup> There are a few modest boxy, houses near the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Tunlaw Road, but these appear to date to the early twentieth century, when residential development was intensifying along the streetcar route founded by a syndicate of Georgetowners, including prominent butchers.

<sup>30</sup> There has been no archaeological investigation of the Scheele-Brown Farmhouse. Of course, the house's present site is at least 150 feet from the original one—and the original site was probably disturbed by the construction of the Field School parking lot. Evidence of the earlier Garrity house would have been spared by the parking lot grading, but as it stood a little way to the east of Scheele house, as well as south, its remains are unlikely to be on the present lot. Still, there could be remnants of outbuildings or other historic or prehistoric resources in the vicinity.

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Foxhall Road was spared longer because it lay further west, on a much less direct route between Georgetown, Tenleytown and Maryland. Farms were more slowly broken up as real estate and industrial millionaires acquired them as personal estates. But by the twentieth century, farmers' thrift in keeping, repurposing, and even moving houses, was giving way to an ethic of land clearance by owners for whom thrift was secondary to the underlying value of the land. And their estates have not been untouched by progress; hemmed in by suburban subdivisions, they have largely become institutional uses, with the Field School in the former Cafritz mansion; the Belgian ambassador's residence at "Marly"; and "Valley View" demolished for more houses. The former farm of butcher Leonard Killian eventually became the Mount Vernon College (now the Mount Vernon Campus of the George Washington University).

### **Conclusion**

The interplay of local conditions and macroeconomic forces had caused agriculture in the District of Columbia to evolve over the decades. Regional and even international demand for foodstuffs, falling tobacco prices, and soil unsuited for growing the best-quality tobacco brought the conversion of farmland to principally grain production in the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, with the explosion of wheat and corn cultivation on larger farms of the north and west, and ultimately the nation's prairie and plains, District farms became less integrated with the national economy. As less-perishable goods could be shipped in bulk by canal, river and railroad, local farms still specialized in furnishing fresh produce and dairy products to a next-door urban market. Eventually, refrigerated rail cars would make possible even the transport of perishables. D.C.'s small farms lacked scale economies, and their land values were rapidly rising when put to alternative uses, such as residential. Orchards and vegetable and dairy farms were soon to be found only in Maryland and Virginia.

The Great Depression probably prolonged farming in the District of Columbia for a few years, but agriculture would ultimately disappear in the 1950s. Although Conrad Springer kept up his eleven acres in Forest Hills until 1947, and there was a model dairy farm at the Soldiers' Home until about the same time, the last refuge of agriculture was in the far southeast quadrant.

Saint Elizabeths Hospital sold its dairy herd in the 1950s. At the same time, the Wahler family gave up its dairy farm on the east side of Wheeler Road, which had been in operation since the 1850s. Washington's final farm was likely that of the Linder family, 52 acres along Oxon Run between Wheeler Road and 4<sup>th</sup> Street SE. The Linders had arrived from Bavaria during the Civil War and initially raised vegetables, potatoes and apples. Proximity to the stream permitted them to create muck lands for celery in the early twentieth century. Toward mid-century they concentrated on beets, cantaloupes, cabbage and kale. A 1949 aerial survey of the District demonstrates that the remainder of rural land not already lost to development had become succession woodlands, much of it incorporated into the National Park Service's portfolio.

A recent survey by the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office suggests that there are only about 35 farmhouses left in the former Washington County, including a couple that were probably tenant houses. Not all retain their historic integrity. Adding in all agricultural outbuildings, extant country estates, and pre-1895 dwellings not obviously erected as part of

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suburban subdivisions, the total only doubles.<sup>31</sup> This figure is clearly a small subset of an unknown total of farmhouses that stood in the District of Columbia through its history.

The Scheele-Brown Farmhouse is significant enough to merit designation for its own history, namely its association of two families of butchers, their meat businesses, and their farms and orchards from 1865 to 1875 and 1875 to 1915. Further, the property's history illustrates in microcosm the economic advance of Americans, from the precarious existence of the immigrant, represented by the Garritys; to the children of immigrants, exemplified by the Scheeles, able to aspire to a middle-class standard of living but still vulnerable to macroeconomic forces; and finally, to the Browns, established in the country for generations, gradually amassing wealth, ultimately rising in both economic and social stature, and now part of the employer class.

Numbering perhaps 40 in all states of historic integrity, extant Washington, D.C. farmhouses are so few that this house is important as representative of a type and class of building, whether standing for all farmhouses in the District, or only for modest farmhouses; farmhouses of butchers or farmhouses of those overlapping geographic areas of Georgetown Heights, Whitehaven, or "West Washington."

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<sup>31</sup> The survey's central methodology was to compare the 1894 Hopkins atlas—produced contemporaneously with the District's Highway Plan—against recent aerial photos. Of course, this made it difficult to spot buildings that have been moved. It is expected that more rural resources will come to light, as houses and outbuildings were commonly moved by farmers, and homes were also relocated and reoriented when the city street grid was extended into the former Washington County.

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*The Evening Star.*

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** .27 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38° 55' 10.0482" | Longitude: -77° 5' 18.2792" |
| 2. Latitude: _____            | Longitude: _____            |
| 3. Latitude: _____            | Longitude: _____            |
| 4. Latitude: _____            | Longitude: _____            |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map): \_\_\_\_\_

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NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Scheele-Brown House at 2207 Foxhall Road is located on Lot 855 in Square 1341 in the District of Columbia.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Lot 855 in Square 1341 is part of the larger former Parcel 19/6, and of a former tract of land called "Whitehaven." The lot is the remnant of the former farm on the parcel and includes the farmhouse which is the only surviving building on the farm property.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Timothy Dennee  
organization: DCHPO  
street & number: 1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street SW Suite 650E  
city or town: Washington, D.C. state: \_\_\_\_\_ zip code: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail timothy.dennee@dc.gov  
telephone: 202 442-7600  
date: July 2013; revised March 2017

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Scheele-Brown House  
City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.  
County: State:  
Photographer: Kim Williams  
Date Photographed: January 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

View looking southeast showing north and west elevations  
1 of 12

View View looking east showing west elevation  
2 of 12

View looking southwest showing north elevation  
3 of 12

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View looking northwest showing south and east elevations  
4 of 12

View looking southeast showing north elevation  
5 of 12

View looking northeast showing south elevation  
6 of 12

View looking northeast showing porch off of east (rear ell)  
7 of 12

View looking west showing east (rear) elevation  
8 of 12

View looking skyward showing south end gable  
9 of 12

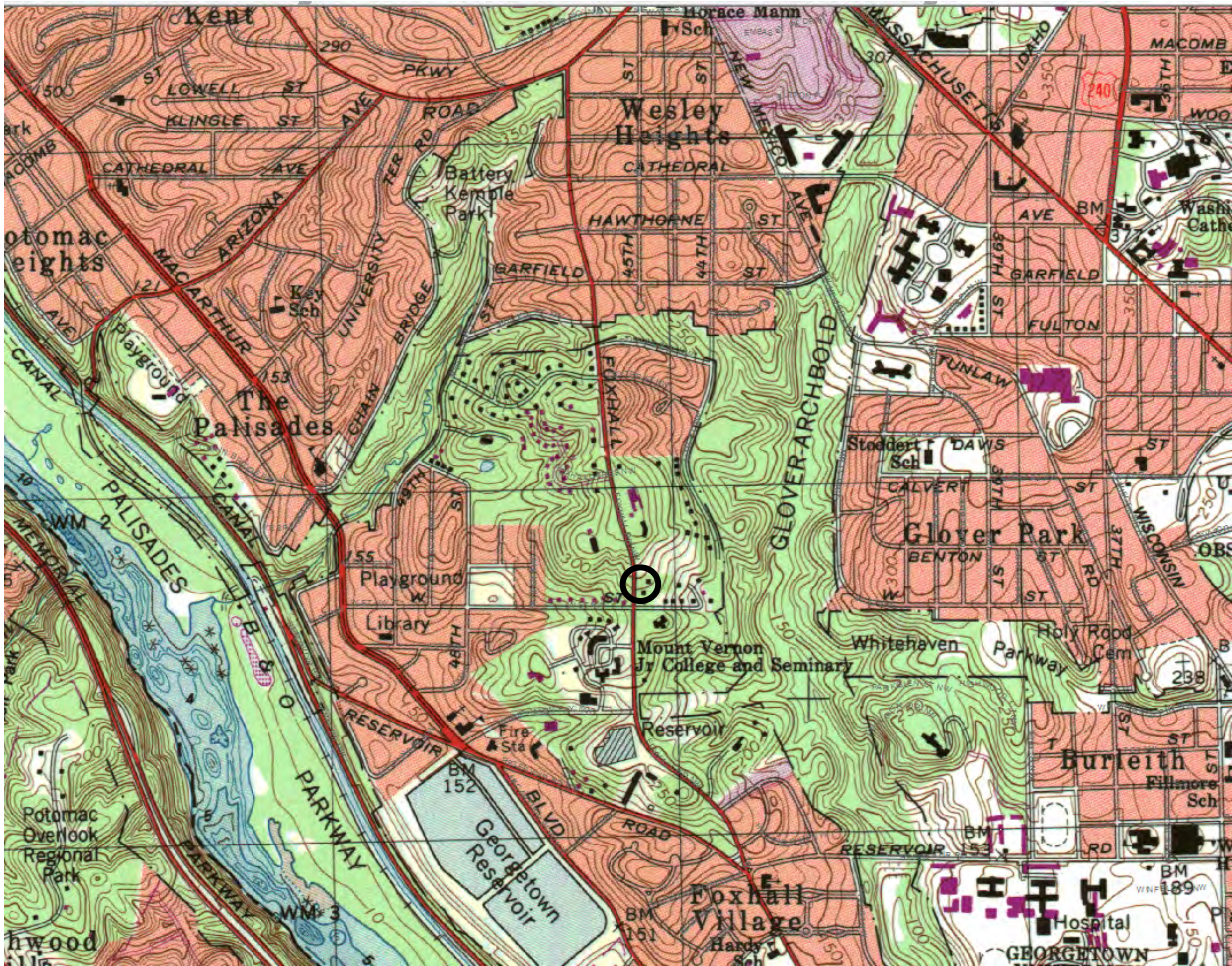
View of front (west) entry door  
10 of 12

View of the interior stair  
11 of 12

View of the front parlor fireplace and mantel  
12 of 12

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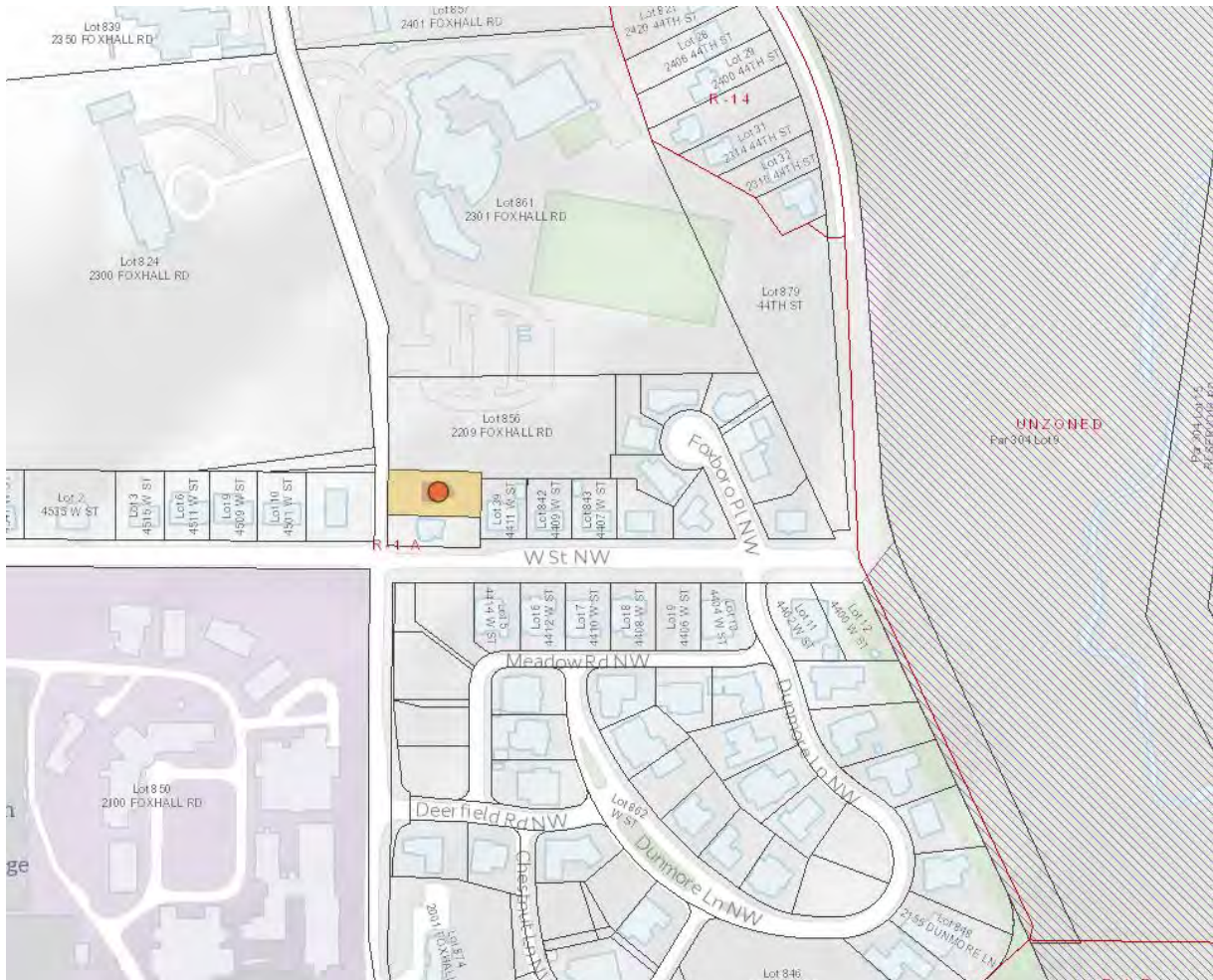
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Site Map of Scheele-Brown House at 2207 Foxhall Road  
(USGS Quad Map Washington West)

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Site Plan of Scheele-Brown House at 2207 Foxhall Road



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Site Plan of Scheele Brown House at 2207 Foxhall Road NW showing National Register Boundaries (Square 1341 Lot 851)

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### Key to Photographs

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Scheele--Brown House

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

Date Received: 5/5/2017      Date of Pending List: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 16th Day: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 45th Day: 6/19/2017      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100001213

Nominator: State

Reason For Review: \_\_\_\_\_

Accept       Return       Reject      6/19/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation/  
Criteria      Accept, National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer      Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus*      Discipline      Historian

Telephone      (202)354-2218      Date      \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: April 28, 2017  
TO: Patrick Andrus  
FROM: Kim Williams *KW*  
RE: Transmittal Letter for Scheele-Brown House

Please find enclosed two disks for the Scheele-Brown House National Register nomination.

The enclosed disk, Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Scheele-Brown House and the enclosed Disk 2 (of 2) contains photographs as per the NR photo requirements of the Scheele-Brown House.