

**MARYLAND TERRACE
UNIVERSITY CITY**

**Inventory of Historic Buildings
1994**

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with the assistance of Barbara Bernsen
for the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation
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RESEARCH METHODS

This inventory was conducted by Esley Hamilton, Preservation Historian, Ed Williams, Supervisor of Historic Sites, and Judy Little, former president of the Historical Society of University and former secretary of the University City Historic Preservation Commission. A map of the district was prepared by Pat Hays Baer, Cartographer.

University City has been the subject of numerous articles and studies since its beginning. Few of them, however, provide any useful information about Maryland Terrace. The best and most accessible general source is NiNi Harris, Legacy of Lions (University City: The Historical Society of University City, 1981). Individual histories have been written of several neighborhoods in University City, starting with Urban Oasis (St. Louis: Boar's Head Press, 1979), about the Parkview neighborhood. More recently, the Historical Society has published a series of neighborhood monographs: University Hills (1990), Ames Place (1991), and Linden-Kingsbury Historic District (1991).

The University Hills and Ames Place publications are based in part on previous inventories conducted under the auspices of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Other neighborhoods similarly studied have included University Heights Number One, the Delmar Loop-Parkview Gardens District, Parkview, and scattered sites in the northern half of University City. The first three of these resulted in National Register nominations. These studies contain more detailed information than any other sources.

Some preliminary research on Maryland Terrace was done in 1979 and 1980 by John Lindenbusch, under a citywide study grant from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. He located and transcribed a book of early building permits (c. 1914-1919) that are not indexed in the city's building permit files. This book is now in the archives of the University City Public Library. Later building permits are available through an index kept in the city's Planning Department, and a microfilmed summary kept in the library. The library also has microfilm of the actual building permit applications from about 1934 on. Further information is sometimes found in the St. Louis Daily Record, a legal newspaper available on microfilm at the St. Louis Public Library and on paper from 1907 though 1930 at the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation.

Information on early owners was obtained from street directories; surprisingly, more was often available in city directories than in county directories, when the subject worked in the city. The Missouri Historical Society had much biographical information, accessible through their invaluable "Information File."

Information on architects comes from the vertical files of the St. Louis Public Library, from the files of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and from Landmarks Association. Carolyn Toft's writings on the architectural resources of St. Louis were particularly helpful, especially, Compton Heights (1984). Several people named on these building permits as architects remain unknown, however; some worked in other aspects of the building industry, while others may have been architects practicing in other cities. Some were architects here who simply did not work in areas that have been studied to date. Included in this group are Neal C. Davis, Edward J. Gieseler, S. B. Goldman, C. H. Hargitt, C. Harrington, H. H. Hohenschield, Norman B. Howard, Fred J. Kolb, O. Kubaszky, John Lange, David K. Nicholson, W. N. Rombaugh, George Sokol, Charles H. Wray, and the firm Winkler & Grueninger.

The following inventory forms have been arranged according to the street addresses of the properties, alphabetically and numerically. The maps are taken from the records of the St. Louis County Department of Revenue. Inventory forms have been numbered according to St. Louis County's locator system. This nine-digit system is based on a coordinated grid that covers the entire county and gives each parcel of land a unique identification. Most county records are keyed to this system, and it is hoped that inclusion of it on these inventory forms will facilitate further research. All photographic negatives are in the files of the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation. Roll and frame numbers have been included on the inventory forms under item three. The roll numbers are assigned by the photo processing companies. Roll and frame numbers have also been marked on the backs of the inventory photos.

Houses in Maryland Terrace have been named for the first resident owner. This person (or, in nearly all cases, a married couple) was often not the person named on the building permit or the owner at the time of construction but rather purchased the house from the original developer (the Davis Realty Company or another speculative builder). Where the first resident owner moved away in a short time and the second owner was also a personage of interest, the house name has been hyphenated.

Terminology for style or design has been taken from preferred National Register classifications where possible (National Register Bulletin 16A, p. 26); hence Colonial Revival instead of Georgian Revival. In some cases, however, terms used by Virginia and Lee McAlester in their Field Guide to American Houses have been preferred as more accurately descriptive; for example Italian Eclectic instead of Italian Renaissance, where Italian Romanesque and Gothic details have been used instead of Renaissance ones. A fairly large group of houses here, as in other parts of University City and Clayton, must be classified as revival in style rather than belonging to so-called "American movements," but they use very few stylistic details or they mix details from more than one style, such as pedimented entries with leaded-glass casements. The term "minimal traditional" has been used in these cases, as in several previous surveys in this area.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Maryland Terrace is a subdivision located for the most part in the City of University City, but including seven houses in the City of Clayton. It is bounded on the east by Big Bend Boulevard and on the west by Jackson Avenue. The district is diagonally bisected about two-thirds of the way from Big Bend to Jackson by the Forest Park Parkway, which occupies the former right-of-way of the Rock Island Railroad. East of this division, the north boundary of the district is Millbrook Boulevard, while the south boundary is the north line of properties facing Lindell Boulevard. West of the Parkway division, the north boundary is the south line of properties facing Pershing Avenue; these properties, located in the University Hills No. 2 subdivision, were included in a previous inventory. The south boundary of this west portion is the former commercial lot occupied by the Famous-Barr Clayton store and now used by Washington University and some smaller retail and service buildings.

The two streets encompassed in this district, Maryland Avenue and Westmoreland Drive, have house numbers corresponding to four conventional city blocks, but they are only partially divided in that way by intervening streets. Williams Avenue divides the 7000 from 7100 blocks of Westmoreland and the north side of Maryland, but it ends there. Asbury Avenue, connects the south side of Maryland Avenue to Lindell between the 7100 and 7200 blocks. Forest Park Parkway, though intersecting the district, is constructed on differing grade levels and does not connect with either residential street. On the east side, Westmoreland curves southward to parallel the parkway, while on the west side, Maryland curves northward. These portions of the streets were originally designated Pratt Avenue, a name which still appears in some county records, but today the houses are numbered consecutively with their respective streets. One anomaly in the numbering system is that, while the 7200 block of Maryland ends on the east side of the parkway and the 7300 block picks up on the west side, 7291 and 7299 Westmoreland both find themselves on the west side of the parkway. On Westmoreland, the 7300 block continues to Jackson, but on Maryland, the 7400 block begins four doors east of Jackson to correspond to the change in the municipality from University City to Clayton. This 7400 "block," however, continues to be served by the University City post office and zip code, 63130.

Maryland Terrace has only one alley, a right-of-way that is not technically part of the subdivision but was once owned by the St. Louis Southwestern Railroad. Several walkways run north-south, connecting the two streets in their longer blocks, and extending north to Millbrook and Pershing. Like the cross-streets, they are offset rather than continuous. They do not appear in the original subdivision of Maryland Avenue, but were introduced with the resubdivision of Westmoreland Drive as Maryland Terrace Amended Subdivision No. 2 in 1911. Between 7171 and 7201 Westmoreland, a walkway leads north to a pedestrian tunnel under Millbrook. A second walk runs downhill between 7255 and 7265 Maryland to 7256 and 7262 Westmoreland. The third walk runs north between 7343 and 7345 Westmoreland and descends a lengthy staircase to come out between 7334 and 7338 Pershing; it continues across the street into the University Hills subdivision. The fourth walkway connects 7360 and 7370 Westmoreland with 7355 and 7359 Maryland. These walkways were a great convenience to people using the streetcar lines on Millbrook and Pershing, and even though the cars are gone, the walkways continue to be used today.

Thanks to the site work done by the original developers, Maryland Terrace has a fairly even topography. The ground rises from north, where it is actually somewhat lower than Millbrook, to south, and from east to west. This grade difference is most noticeable at Forest Park Parkway, which is higher than the houses to the east but lower than those to the west.

A long description of the district published in Reedy's Mirror, December 18, 1914 still holds true in many particulars: "The tract contains 274 lots, but as several buyers mean to utilize more than one lot each, the whole number of homes ultimately to be erected upon the 100 acres will not exceed 200 — thus assuring an average of one-half acre of open space to each home." Actually 206 houses were built, of which one has been torn down. No more than two buildable lots remain. "The narrowest lots are 50 feet wide; the shortest, 190 feet deep, each containing more than a quarter acre."

"Westmoreland Avenue is 80 feet wide, with a 15 1/2 foot parking between street and sidewalk, a six-foot walk, and a building line 60 feet back from the sidewalk. This gives a total of 220 feet of open space for sun and breeze between house lines on this avenue. On Maryland avenue, 60 feet wide, with 7 1/2 foot parking and a 50-foot house line, the distance between the house lines on opposite sides of the avenue will be 180 feet.

Davis Realty wrote, "No walls or fences will ever be built between the building lines and the street." This still gives the neighborhood an open and spacious appearance, but most of the lots now have fences in back, and a good number have front fences set back from the front building line.

Reedy's Mirror noted that it had been necessary "to erect entrance gates in keeping with the granite work in Washington University buildings." The Washington University campus, in the Collegiate Gothic style, is constructed primarily of red Missouri granite. The only building in that style visible from Maryland Terrace, however, is Francis Fieldhouse, the site of the 1904 Olympics. The Maryland Terrace gates, which should more correctly be called pylons, consist of octagonal rock-faced piers with ashlar tops supporting cast iron candlestick-shaped lamps with bulbous globes. The front faces of the piers have ashlar plaques inscribed with the name of the street. Wing walls connect these streetside elements with lower piers that flank the sidewalks.

In recent years, new pylons have been erected at the Jackson Avenue end of the district, on the north side of Westmoreland and one on the south side of Maryland. They consist of two piers of orange-toned brick tied together by three ashlar blocks and topped by a pediment-shaped stone cap. At right angles to the piers and running back toward the sidewalk, iron fences top low bases. They were initially designed by Andrew Trivers, then redesigned by Randall Comfort, the owner of 7346 Westmoreland Drive.

As the following inventory forms illustrate, the architecture of Maryland Terrace is varied in style and material. Nevertheless, certain generalizations can be made. All the houses are brick or stucco, and the presumption can be made that the stucco houses also have a masonry structure. While a few houses have front porches, more have the front door sheltered by being recessed behind the plane of the front wall. In addition to their front doors, many houses have French doors opening onto front terraces. Although many houses have garages, only a few have garage doors opening to the front near the front building line. Many houses have second-floor planter boxes supported by brackets or corbels. In contrast to most houses built today, care was taken here to keep the foundation materials from being exposed; even where the ground drops a full story to the back of the house, the brick or stucco walls are carried down to ground level.

The stylistic diversity of the district can be expressed statistically, based on the current survey. There are 45 Tudor Revival houses, 39 Colonial Revival or Neoclassical, with an additional 12 Neocolonial, 29 Italian Renaissance, 10 Spanish Eclectic (or the related Mission and Monterey styles), and 6 French Eclectic. Relatively few houses reflect the modern styles of the era, one Bungalow and 16 Craftsman houses. The largest individual number of houses, 46, have been classified as "Minimal Traditional," that is, having only a few, often mixed characteristics of period styles. Thus the overall impression given by the district is one of restraint.

Three developers built speculative houses here which, while not identical, have certain unifying characteristics. The houses Frank Gear built to designs of Sam Black or anonymous architects are usually Italian Renaissance in style. They usually have large multipane toplights over the front doors and over other front windows. Houses by J. H. Williamson, who apparently was his own designer, typically have front chimneys between windows, making the facades asymmetrical. William Glicker's four houses designed by Rudolph Beuc all have bracketed cornices and arched window openings.

Partly because of the larger lots and setbacks, the houses on Westmoreland are generally larger than those on Maryland, and the largest are on the western portion of Westmoreland, where the scale rivals that of the most exclusive private streets in the Central West End and Clayton. Several of the same architects worked here, including Marcel Boulicault, Angelo Corrubia, Lawrence Ewald, Gale Henderson, Maritz & Young, Nolte & Nauman, Study & Farrar, and Trueblood & Graf. T. L. Johnson, whose work set the standard for houses in University Hills, contributed three designs here.

Given the overall formality of houses in Maryland Terrace, some of the more asymmetrical and picturesque designs stand out for their quality. Ferdinand Peipers' design for 7291 Westmoreland is one of the most picturesque Tudor houses in the region. Study and Farrar's 7360 Westmoreland is in their gabled stucco mode (also seen in Skinker Heights and Edgewood) that reflects the influence of the British Arts and Crafts movement, and particularly of Charles Voysey. Henry Wright, better known as a landscape architect and urban planner, designed at least six houses here. His best designs, such as 7298 Westmoreland, also reflect Arts and Crafts ideals. Wright's design for 7145 Westmoreland, somewhat compromised by its current paint color, looks in black and white like an illustration from the Craftsman magazine. Two of the finest small houses were designed by Trueblood and Graf, and both were published at the time. The house at 7117 Maryland is Tudor, while 7135 Maryland is French Eclectic.

HISTORY

For a subdivision with so much apparent visual unity, Maryland Terrace has a complex history. It was actually composed of two separate long, narrow strips of land that had been in separate ownership since 1852. Both had been part of the farm of Robert Forsyth (1808–1872). when the northern part was purchased from Forsyth in 1852 by Theodore Prouhet. The southern part descended to Forsyth's daughter Mary E. Jones, later Merrill, when, after his death, his farm was divided into long, narrow strips. (Forsyth Boulevard was laid out between the two southernmost strips.) Both of the Maryland Terrace tracts changed hands several times, while the eastern part of Forsyth's farm was taken for Forest Park in 1876, and the central part was acquired by Washington University in 1899. To the west, the tracts were bounded by Martin Hanley's farm, which gradually began to be subdivided after the town of Clayton was established in 1878.

In 1905, the northern tract of 54.59 acres was acquired from Frank A. Walsh by Ashland Realty Company, one of many real estate entities managed by W. J. Holbrook and G. H. Blackwelder. George H. Blackwelder was the older partner, born in Montgomery County, Illinois in 1849. He began in the real estate business in Hillsboro, Illinois in 1869 and removed to Wichita, Kansas in 1884. There he associated with Walter James Holbrook, who had just come west from Colchester, Connecticut, where he had managed a general store. Holbrook had been born in Lebanon, Connecticut in 1861. The pair moved their firm, Blackwelder & Holbrook, to St. Louis in 1892. They incorporated in 1900 as the Holbrook–Blackwelder Real Estate Trust Company, which by 1912 had capital and surplus of one and a quarter million dollars. Blackwelder lived at the Buckingham Hotel after the death of his wife in 1906, while Holbrook lived on Cabanne Avenue in the Central West End.

From Ashland Realty, Holbrook and Blackwelder immediately transferred the land to another of their entities, the Portland Place Heights Realty Company. Then, early in 1910, the west twenty-odd acres were transferred to still another of their entities, Montclair Investment Company. The Montclair Subdivision, corresponding roughly to the present west portion of Westmoreland Drive, was laid out on October 25, 1910. It was surveyed by B. H. Colby to have 69 fifty-foot lots on 21.51 acres. Only two of the lots were sold at that time, however: lots 16 and 55, located on either side of the street in midblock.

The buyer was the Seventeenth Street Realty Company, whose president was George Warren Brown. Born in Granville, New York, in 1853, Brown had become, with his older brother Alanson Brown, the pioneer shoe manufacturer of St. Louis, founding the Brown Shoe Company in 1878. The success of his enterprise led St. Louis to become the greatest shoe market in the United States. Brown lived in one of the largest houses on Portland Place in the Central West End. Brown had an interest in the Montclair project, because he and his wife, Bettie Bofinger Brown, had purchased the old Mary Merritt tract immediately to the south about 1903. On January 31, 1911, the Browns subdivided that property as Maryland Terrace. Colby again acted as surveyor and engineer.

Within a couple of days, however, the Browns sold the whole subdivision to the Commonwealth Trust Company. Albert N. Edwards, the president of the company, was a son of A. G. Edwards, founder of the well-known stock-brokerage company, and he was a grandson of Ninian Edwards, the territorial governor of Illinois. He was a native of Kirkwood, born in 1867, and he was married to Sue Leffingwell, a descendant of one of that city's founders. He served as mayor of Kirkwood 1892–1896 and joined Commonwealth in 1903 (two years after the firm's organization), becoming president in 1908.

A new player entered the picture on April 24, 1911, when the Davis Realty Development Company bought two lots, lots 7 and 8, Block 5 in Maryland Terrace. This firm was headed by Everett Davis, a generation younger than most of the other investors, born in 1882 in Pikesville, Indiana. He was apparently not related to the other prominent Davis families of St. Louis — John D., the lawyer, and John T., the dry goods merchant. Everett Davis was raised in Ava, in Douglas County, Missouri, "which had only recently yielded to the profanation of a railroad," according to William Marion Reedy. Davis came to St. Louis in 1900, where he served as private secretary to George Warren Brown for over two years. He then established the Everett Davis Mail Order Company, which he operated until forming his real estate company in 1904. At the time of his first involvement with Maryland Terrace, he was living just east of Skinker at 6181 Westminster Place, with offices at 816 Olive.

On September 13, 1911, Montclair Investment transferred the remaining lots in their subdivision (all but two) back to Portland Place Heights Realty, and five days later, the property was sold, along with the remaining acreage east to Big Bend, to the Davis Realty Development Company for \$200,000. On December 12, Davis platted a revised subdivision, redesigning and renumbering the lots in Montclair, and extending the development east to Big Bend. Laid out by B. H. Colby, it was called Maryland Terrace Amended Subdivision No. 2. The street retained the name Montclair Avenue until after 1916 but was then changed to Westmoreland. (County records specify Westmoreland "Drive" rather than "Avenue" or "Place."). George Warren Brown signed the amended plat, too; his two lots were renumbered lot 14, block 6 and lot 14, block 9.

By the time Everett Davis became involved with Maryland Terrace, he was already involved in several other subdivision developments. All of them were situated close to streetcar lines, and, as with Maryland Terrace, he emphasized convenience of transportation as a key selling point. Vinita Park had originally been laid out by A. C. Stewart in 1905. Davis had resubdivided a good portion of it in 1910. It was located on the north side of Page Boulevard, west of the Midland Electric Railway, now Midland Avenue, which extended north west to Creve Coeur Lake. Davis also laid out an entirely new subdivision on the east side of Midland in 1910, Vinita Terrace, which was intended to be somewhat more exclusive. Both these subdivisions eventually became municipalities, Vinita Terrace in 1940 and Vinita Park in 1941. Rosemount, originally "Rosemount on the Suburban," was laid out in 1909 at the northwest corner of Natural Bridge Road and Carson Road, now North Hanley.

Like these earlier subdivisions, Maryland Terrace was praised for its high location, "a point in St. Louis County that transcends the dome of the St. Louis Cathedral in elevation," according to Reedy. Unlike them, however, it was intended to be "the SHOW PLACE of St. Louis," and the prices of lots were correspondingly high, \$45 per front foot and up in 1912, in contrast to \$28 in Vinita Terrace, \$14 in Vinita Park, and \$10 to \$18 in Rosemount. These figures come from the November, 1912 issue of the Davis Messenger, which survives in the collections of the Missouri Historical Society, giving a unique look into the marketing methods of the time.

By that time, the Davis Realty Development Company had nearly 400 stockholders, and the company was eager to report its progress on Maryland Terrace. "Practically all of the grading of the eastern portion has been finished — more than 230,000 cubic yards of dirt having already been moved. This enables us to begin the finishing touches. Teams and men have been, for days, leveling, harrowing, seeding and making of this property a beautiful lawn. More than ten car loads of fertilizer will be used. The rocking of Pennsylvania Avenue [now Big Bend Boulevard] is being rushed to completion. Concrete men will finish the east half of Maryland before snow flies."

"Improvement work and home building in the properties surrounding Maryland Terrace are proceeding rapidly, and are of such character as to inspire confidence in those who have bought homesites in Maryland Terrace, for they establish, beyond a doubt, the fact that the surroundings will be ideal in every respect.... The whole district, of which Maryland Terrace is the heart and center, is enjoying a building growth such as the west end has not seen in several years. And remember your Company owns nearly 100 acres of this choicest property. We could have no better security back of our investments."

This last statement was not strictly true. Commonwealth Trust continued to own the original Maryland Terrace land, while Davis Realty purchased the lots one or two at a time. A few private buyers purchased lots as well. It was not until October 31, 1914 that Davis Realty was able to purchase the over one hundred lots remaining. Two mortgages financed this purchase, one for \$144,869.75 and the other for \$50,000. One curious feature of this transaction is that Everett Davis is listed as vice president of the company, while Benjamin Franklin Knauft was listed as president. Born in 1866, Knauft was a native of St. Paul, Minnesota, where he had served on the city council, and he had only come to St. Louis in 1907. In 1912 he was manager of the real estate loan department of the Commonwealth Trust Co., and he also had his own real estate company. The expression "hand in glove" comes to mind in relation to many of the business dealings that led to the creation of Maryland Terrace.

The Davis Messenger waxed eloquent about the quality of Maryland Terrace's design: "The improvements are absolutely first class, conceived and installed under the supervision of engineers who have come in contact with the 'last word' of Europe and America in the making of residence parks. The two magnificent boulevards which extend through Maryland Terrace will become the fashionable thoroughfares of St. Louis. One is the widest in the city, with a parking nearly half as wide as many West End city lots.... Maryland Terrace extends from the western limits of the campus of Washington University to Clayton -- two-thirds of a mile long by one-fifth of a mile wide -- the largest highly restricted home site ever marketed in St. Louis. A million dollars' worth of St. Louis' finest residence property."

The spacious dimensions of Westmoreland Drive are certainly among its finest features. Davis also introduced several features in his amended subdivision that had not been present in the Browns' original Maryland Terrace, including midblock walkways and a new cross street. Williams Avenue was intended to line up with a street already extending north from Millbrook. To the south, however, the new Williams Avenue encountered parts of lots 37 and 38 in block 2 of Maryland Terrace. Davis purchased the adjacent lots from Commonwealth on September 20, 1911, even before his amended subdivision was formalized, and in that deed (book 281, page 339), Commonwealth Realty agreed to set aside this right-of-way. So far as is known, however, no amendments were ever filed with the county recorder of deeds, and even today, Williams Avenue is simply penciled in over the ink plan in the county plat book. Two of the three walkways intended to go through the block from Westmoreland to Maryland were similarly created simply by not selling their rights-of-way. The easternmost one, between lots 15 and 16, Block 10 was never built.

The biggest problem with the image of Maryland Terrace as the showplace of the west end was the right-of-way of the Rock Island Railroad that cut diagonally through it. The first subdivisions dealt with the situation by creating a Pratt Avenue paralleling the tracks on the west side, with large triangular lots on both sides. Pratt Avenue was originally intended to connect with Wellesley Avenue to the north, but that link was never made. Even worse, unless it was possible to cross the tracks at grade, something that would not be possible today, there would have been no access between Maryland and Westmoreland on the east side of the tracks. This problem was corrected in June 1916, when Everett Davis, once again president, laid out East Pratt Avenue on the east side of the tracks.

