

Cherry Street, S.E.

116-118 Cherry S.E. This was a 3-unit apartment house on a 46 x 50 lot when it was listed for sale from 1957 to 1968. Assessed valuation in 1968 was \$5500. The age of the house is listed as 35 years in 1961-62, but it appears to have been built well before 1926-27. There was no garage, but oak floors and a full basement. Demolished for parking. (Photos: top, December, 1962; bottom, June, 1961. GRPL, Real Estate collection.)



116-1803/24/70 3432 Capitol

135 Cherry S.E. This large 2-story frame house stood on a 65 x 50 lot at the northeast corner of Cherry and LaGrave. In 1958, the house's age was estimated at 50 years, suggesting a construction date of about 1908. It boasted a full complement of rooms downstairs, including a bedroom and bath; and four bedrooms and a bath on the second floor. The house had a fireplace, and hardwood floors on the first floor. It was heated by forced air from a coal furnace. A 1-stall garage was served by a driveway on the east side. Mr. & Mrs. Donald S. VanHuisen lived here in the 1950's and early 1960's. In 1961, the assessed valuation was \$5000.



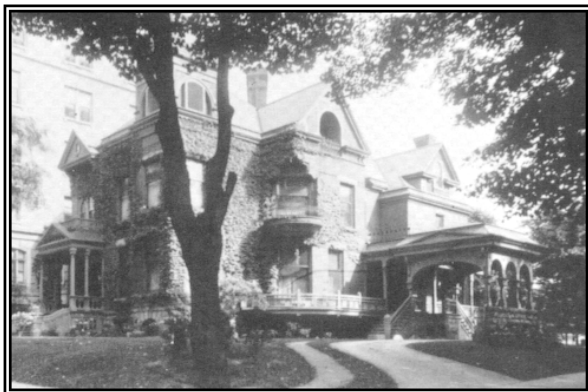
Demolished for parking. (Photos: top, June, 1949, showing at left the older homes along the east side of LaGrave; bottom, May, 1961. GRPL, Real Estate collection.)

135 09/05/61 494
Capitol

144

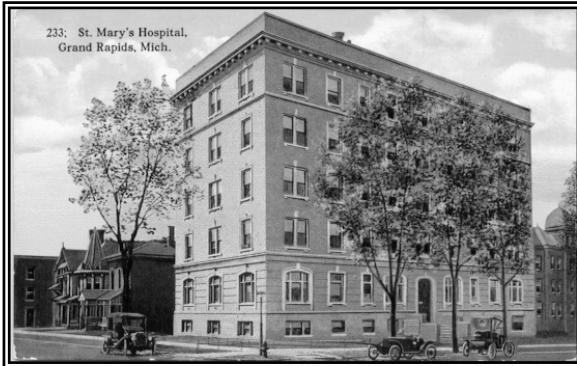
148-50	10/30/75	4973	Pitsch
215	01/21/83 No cutoff.	7187	Pitsch
220	06/30/60 Elmwood Hall.	----	
221	05/18/79	5742	Pitsch
230	06/30/60 McAuley Hall. Formerly D.A. Blodgett residence. (Photo: GRPL, Lorenson.)	----	
245	12/05/77	5449	Pitsch

248 Cherry S.E. The Amberg House. This magnificent residence was the home of the Julius Amberg family. In its later years it served as the convent for the Sisters of Mercy from St. Mary's Hospital. It was



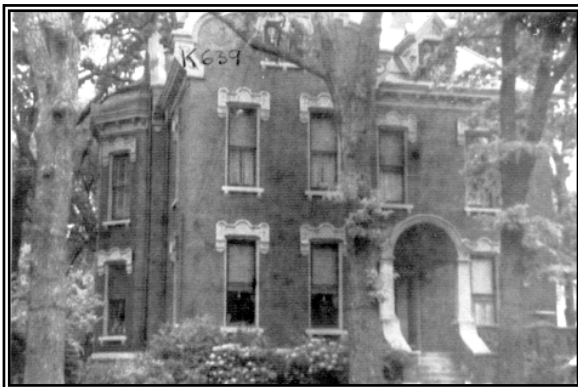
demolished on June 30, 1960. (Photos: GRPL, Morrow, of etching; GRPL, Robinson E2208; below, from St. Mary's Health Services *Centennial Report*, 1993, p. 4.)

250 Cherry S.E. Built in 1909 as St. Mary's Hospital, this structure gradually became obsolete with the hospital's expansion to the south and west. By 1998, it was slated for demolition. (Photos: top, Morrow postcard collection, c. 1909; bottom, GRPL 273 [Morrow], April 6, 2002.)

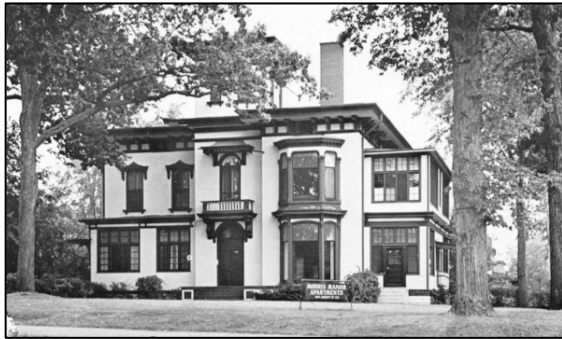


356 Cherry S.E. Built in 1885 for Charles Coit, a prominent Grand Rapids real estate broker whose wife was one of the organizers of the Grand Rapids Art Museum. The house was purchased in the 1920's by Axel P. Johnson, publisher of *The Grand Rapids News*. The Eastlake-ornamented Queen Anne house fell on hard times in the 1960's. This house, as well as three adjacent homes on Madison Avenue, was sold to a developer who planned to demolish the four buildings to construct a small medical building. The plans fell through; and although two of the houses were demolished, the Coit/Johnson house was rescued by the Heritage Hill Foundation. The house has a long list of previous owners. It was vacant and vandalized until purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Ted VanDuinen in 1976. The original slate roof had deteriorated beyond repair and was replaced by tar shingles. Major masonry repair was undertaken, and the east porch was restored. New heating, plumbing, and electrical systems were installed. More than 50 percent of the interior plaster has been replaced. The house was fancifully painted in the late 1980's. It is featured in the book *America's Painted Ladies: the Ultimate Celebration of Our Victorians*, by Michael Larsen and Elizabeth Pomado (New York: Dutton Studio Books, 1992). Officially designated the "Coit/Johnson House," it is on the National Register of Historic Places. Inside, the house is notable for its lavishly tooled woodwork, particularly in the dining room. Here there is a coffered ceiling with egg and dart molding, a plate rail, chair rail on top of oak wainscoting, and mitred oak floors inlaid with a triangular Eastlake design. A built-in window seat fills the west wall of the dining room. Owned and occupied in 1993 by Charles and Sandra Buffham.

427 Cherry S.E. Owned in 1954 by William G. Hyland of Grand Haven, this 3-story brick home was sold for its land value, with a list price of \$55,000. It was situated on a 110 x 280 lot, and was heated with a gas boiler and steam radiators. A double garage was at the rear of the property. (Photo: GRPL, Real Estate collection.)



434 Cherry S.E. The Morris Manor. Historian James VanVulpen says that early records refer to this stately giant as the "Gilbert Brothers' Palace."



His study further suggests that the house was built earlier than previously thought, in 1858 rather than by lumber baron Robert W. Morris in 1865. The imposing 3-story villa which dominates the southeast corner of Cherry and Morris S.E. was built on the 20-acre Bostwick homestead. Among his many other interests, Mr. Morris was part owner of the first steamer to make regular trips between Muskegon and Chicago. He had come to Grand Rapids from New York in 1837 and joined a partnership operating a sawmill. A year later, Morris moved to Muskegon where, for 27 years, he operated port-to-port lumber transportation between Chicago and Muskegon, being part owner of the first steamer service on Lake Michigan to make regular trips between Muskegon and Chicago. While in Muskegon, Morris married Sara Joslin (also of New York) and held the office of mayor of Muskegon for a term of six years. Returning to Grand Rapids in 1865, Morris

purchased the Gilbert palace and adjoining land for \$45,000, a princely sum in those days. Unfortunately Mr. Morris died a year later, but his wife Sarah persevered, and lived and entertained in the house as one of Grand Rapids' most popular hostesses for over 30 years. During that time, she sold incremental plots of land on which many of Heritage Hill's most prized homes now stand. D.D. Cody occupied the house in 1912. This is a rambling Italianate villa, with massive coffered front doors and an impressive pinnacled central tower standing over what is now divided into 23 separate apartments. Its brick exterior has been obscured by many layers of paint and, in 1928, by a stucco-like application. Typical of this style of architecture are the great bay windows and the many additions. Comparison of the photos clearly shows the large 2-story addition on the west side of the house. Also note the ornate fountain in the top photo where a mere sign stands on the front lawn in the bottom photo. (Photos: top, Baxter, p. 778; bottom, David and Marilyn Hanks, *The Homes of Heritage Hill* (Grand Rapids, MI: The Heritage Hill Association, Inc., 1970), p. 12.)

435 Cherry S.E. This large frame home had been divided into three apartments and seven private rooms by 1952, when it was listed for sale at \$26,500, just below its fair market value.



Seymour Wiersma was the owner and occupant at the time. It was situated on a lot 73 x 180, and was heated with coal and an FA Stoker. Built in about 1887, its woodwork still had the natural finish when it was demolished. A 2-car garage was at the rear. (Photo: GRPL, Real Estate collection.)

445 Cherry S.E. The Damon Hatch house was built in 1844-45, five years before Grand Rapids became a city. It is one of the oldest buildings in Grand Rapids. The graceful lines of its style are an adaptation of the classic philosophy of the square Greek temple with a hip roof and a skylight over a central atrium. The Greek Revival facade with its



symmetrical wings and colonnaded loggias is particularly noteworthy. It is constructed of Grand River limestone, covered with stucco. Mr. Hatch enjoyed sitting on his veranda watching the horsedrawn streetcars as they made their way to the end of the line at Eastern Avenue. His daughter Rose was the belle of Grand Rapids society, and Cherry Street was

once called Rose Street in her honor. In 1891 the house was occupied by J.D. Utley; in 1912 by Charles B. Judd. In 1979 the Hatch house became the home of a distinctive women's apparel shop, the Classic 1. (Old # 401. Photo: David and Marilyn Hanks, *The Homes of Heritage Hill* [Grand Rapids, MI: The Heritage Hill Association, Inc., 1970], p. 4.)

455 Cherry S.E. The Fox House. In 1884-89, the Fox brothers, Ethelbert Crofton and Charles, built their imposing 3-story Chateau-style castle with its crenelated corner tower done in the Norman style, adjacent to the spacious front porch entrance. Ethelbert



Crofton Fox moved to Grand Rapids in 1873 and clerked in a hardware store before entering the wholesale lumber business with Willard Barnhart and Smith W. Osterhout. Charles Fox earned his degree from the University of Michigan in 1875 and toured Europe before joining his brother's lumber business in 1876. In 1885, Charles founded the Grand Rapids Tie and Lumber Company, which serviced the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railway. The two bachelor lumber barons

accumulated vast wealth and, desiring to live like kings, literally interpreted the old saying that "a man's home is his castle." They commissioned architect William G. Robinson to design this massive structure, a variation on the Chateausque style. Unlike the French Chateausque design which Robinson used on the Voigt house a few years later, the Castle is modeled after a relatively simple interpretation of the styling of a Scottish baronial castle. The granite block of which the home is built was in fact imported from Scotland. There is a large bay window in the stair dormer or oriel on the west side of the house. The oriel, although it appears to blend perfectly with the stone exterior, is actually constructed of metal superbly crafted to simulate stone. The house was sold by the Fox brothers to Hal A. Nicholas and used as a center for many of the area's finest parties, social events, and recitals. Over the past century, it has been home to a variety of businesses, including medical, marketing, and insurance firms. In 1978 the Fox house was converted for use as a fine gourmet restaurant, The Castle. In 1993, the Castle has found renewed dignity under the direction of owner Herb Jacobs. With the help of graphic designer Roland Lasher, Jeffrey Parker Architects, and others, a full restoration has made possible 6,900 square feet of exquisite office space, now including a dentist's office; the Fidelity Guarantee Mortgage Co., a brokerage firm; and The Direction Source, among others. Parquet floors have been uncovered, paneled oak doors have been replaced, and customized windows installed. (Old # 413. Photo: *Grand Rapids Magazine*, unknown date, Heritage Hill tour insert, p. HH31.)

516 Cherry S.E. This large frame home had been divided into five apartments when it was listed for sale for \$22,500 by Dr. Louis Monger in 1952. It was situated on a lot 65½ x 119. The house had oak finish floors and hot water heat with an oil furnace. (Photo: GRPL, Real Estate collection.)



516 04/03/62 1034
Capitol

540 Cherry S.E. The Sanford House. This is one of Michigan's finest examples of Greek Revival architecture. This was the style of choice in the U.S. from 1830 to 1850,



and can be found in all areas settled by 1860. Moving west with the settlers, it become so popular it was called the "National Style." This house was built in 1847 by Samuel R. Sanford, the city's first pharmacist and one of the first county clerks, when Grand Rapids was yet a village. The columns were hewn by hand from trees harvested on the original 10-acre property. Nearly destroyed by fire in 1891, the house was rebuilt according to the original design, which gave each of the 17 rooms its own fireplace. Around 1907,

later owners Mr. & Mrs. Lewis T. Wilmarth modernized the home, adding interior plumbing and electricity, as well as rare French mural wallpaper by French artist Jean Zuber. (The only other existing samples of Zuber's work are in the White House Diplomatic Room in Washington, D.C., where the unique paper was restored and placed by Jacqueline Kennedy in 1962; and at Monmouth, in Natchez, MS.) Wilmarth wished his home to remain an architectural monument for all to enjoy, and placed it in trust for educational, charitable, or benevolent uses. Horace Philip Dix, a retired member of the executive committee of American Box Board Co., lived here in the 1960's. His parents, Horace and Mamie Dix, had moved to Grand Rapids with their family in 1895. His sister, Eulabee Dix (Mrs. Alfred Becker), was a world-renowned miniature portrait painter, and died in Waterbury, CT, in June 1961 (GRP 06/15/1961). Community Counseling has occupied the house since 1971. (Photo: David and Marilyn Hanks, *The Homes of Heritage Hill* [Grand Rapids, MI: The Heritage Hill Association, Inc., 1970], p. 5.)

547 Cherry S.E. Built about 1927 as gracious apartment living in the heart of the city, the Oakwood Manor employed its own telephone operator for its residents well into the 1960's. (Photo: Morrow postcard collection.)



560 Cherry S.E. The large 3-story residence of Nelson W. Northrop was built on the southwest corner of Cherry and Union in 1882-83. It was occupied by George E. Ellis in 1912. (Old # 470. Photo: Baxter, p. 776.)



600 Cherry S.E. The Metz House. Built in 1888 by George W. and Mary Metz, this is an outstanding Queen Anne / Chateausque home, another work of Grand Rapids architect William G. Robinson.



The asymmetrically placed tower with its onion-dome turret is typical of this type of architecture. The unusual detailing and the striking porte cochere on the east side of the house are significant features. The elaborately carved sandstone cornices over the windows are particularly noteworthy, as is the beautiful slate roof which still bears the original multi-colored, multi-shaped, and multi-sized design. Inside, a most distinguishing feature is the woodwork, elaborately enhanced by the 12-foot ceilings. Each room has a different type of wood; the doors between the rooms have a different type of wood on each side to carry the atmosphere through the entire room. The living room woodwork is mahogany, while the dining room is golden oak. Complimenting the wood are several Italian fireplaces, each displaying different mantels and masonry, from black marble to rose and ivory tiles. Light filters through beautiful stained glass windows, dancing along the walls and furniture. Mr. Metz, a pioneer in West Michigan, was born in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1839. Seven years later his family came to America. The family managed an



unsuccessful combination of a sawmill and tannery in Jericho, Michigan (also known as Hunter, in Geneva Township, VanBuren County), before Mr. Metz moved his business interests to Black Lake (Lake Macatawa) near Holland. In 1887 he moved to Grand Rapids and founded the Grand Rapids Leather Company at Mill Creek, now Comstock Park. Divided into several apartments in 1936, a lower-level apartment has been home to the Bill and Lynn Barrett family since 1988. (Photos: top [Union Avenue elevation], David and Marilyn Hanks, *The Homes of Heritage Hill* [Grand Rapids, MI: The Heritage Hill Association, Inc., 1970], p. 9; bottom [Cherry Street elevation], 1997 Heritage Hill Home Tour, p. 11.)

601 Cherry S.E. The Friant House. The stone towers and lion's head downspouts of this English medieval, Richardsonian Romanesque house stand proudly as tangible links



with one of Kent County's native sons. Thomas Friant built his stone chateau, with its towering chimney and graceful porte cochere, in 1892. The exterior is finished in a wild profusion of clapboard, brick, hewn stone, and shingles. The interior is adorned with oak and bird's eye maple woodwork, leaded and stained glass, and a parquet floor. The architecture of this home is as fascinating as the man himself, who began as a school teacher and amassed a fortune in the lumber business, which spanned the continent from Grand Haven, Michigan, to Friant, California. Mr. Friant was one of Grand Rapids' lumber barons. A colorful and strong-willed character, he was in partnership with Thomas Stewart White, whose son Stewart Edward became one of America's leading novelists. It is said that Friant served as the model for the hero in White's best-seller, *The Riverman*. Since 1969, the house has been the home of Grand Rapids mayor John H. Logie, his wife, Susan, and their family. The carriage house in the yard is as ornate as



the house itself. (Photos: top, Morrow postcard collection; bottom, Photo: David and Marilyn Hanks, *The Homes of Heritage Hill* [Grand Rapids, MI: The Heritage Hill Association, Inc., 1970], p. 10.)

635 11/18/70 3696 Cooke

645 Cherry S.E. The only office building in a residential neighborhood, this 2-story brick, 5,800-square-foot structure was built in the 1950's when it was presumed that the large, older homes in the area would gradually be removed to accommodate light professional and commercial traffic. For many years, it served as the legal office of Woodrow A. Yared, Kent County Circuit Court judge from 1978 to 1987. (*Check accuracy of this statement.*) Lott3Metz Architecture and The Highland Group bought the building early in 2008, and renovated it for their respective home offices.

650 Cherry S.E. Built 1914.

708 Cherry S.E. John Fetter bought this 4-bedroom house in September, 1990, for \$24,000 and thoroughly renovated it for about \$8,000. The spacious Dutch Colonial house was built in 1890, and boasts 10-foot ceilings. 708 and 710 are identical twin houses.

744 10/25/66 2293 Diamond

746 07/16/65 1984 Capitol

750 07/01/65 1968 Capitol

758 Cherry S.E. The former Fisher mansion, this large 2-story frame dwelling served as a doctor's office and as the Chris Apartments in 1948. It is now one of the homes of Project Rehab.

812-14 08/09/68 2807 Capitol

817 09/25/2001 9119 H & M
Cherry Hill Child Care Center.

823 04/28/88 7760

831 12/29/80 6051 Boerema

833 02/17/88 7740

841 12/01/69 3288 Barney Noordman Excavating Co.

907 04/11/80 5913 Boerema

919 01/23/61 192 Staggs

920 Cherry S.E. An 1872 photo of the Charles Barclay residence at this address, loaned by Mrs. L.V. Pilkington, is in the Grand Rapids *Herald*, December 26, 1948. The



house was removed in 1908 for construction of the D.A. Blodgett Home for Children, later converted into the first Mary Free Bed Hospital. Delos A. Blodgett was born of Scottish ancestry and modest means in New York. He eventually settled in Grand Rapids and became among the best-known of the city's lumber barons. Causes associated with children were important to him, and he helped to organize the Children's Home Society in 1887. The Society was chartered to "care for the homeless wards of the Juvenile Court, the sick and children who are temporarily disabled or without means." Together with his son, John W. Blodgett, he put forth the funds necessary to build and endow this impressive structure and its services. Designed by Chicago architect A.W. Buckley, the building was dedicated on November 21, 1908, just three weeks after Delos A. Blodgett died. Mary Free Bed took over the facility in 1948,



struggling to keep up with the demands of the polio epidemic. When the Blodgett heirs donated the building in 1952, it officially became Mary Free Bed Hospital. In the 1950's, large additions were made to the front and back of the building, obscuring much of the original façade and removing its magnificent portico with massive terra cotta columns and balusters. The majestic details of the 3-story neoclassical building include beautiful rose brick with elaborate terra cotta cornice work and window keystones. When Mary Free Bed moved to its new facility adjoining St. Mary's Hospital in 1976, the building at the southeast corner of Cherry Street and Raymond Place was used as a Lutheran church, as a storage building, as an alternative education program, and as shops and offices. Bethel Pentecostal Church purchased the property in 1997, and operated a charter school, the William C. Abney Academy, out of portable classrooms on the site. Vision Corporation, a Grand Rapids non-profit housing rehabilitation group, announced plans in October, 2002, for an \$8 million senior citizen housing complex, using just the old historic hospital building. By 2006, the Fairmount Square development had shifted to Second Story Properties, Bazzani Associates, and the Inner City Christian Federation, who were investing \$11 million into a mixed-use project of townhouses, commercial space, and the new ICCF offices. (Photo: top, Morrow postcard collection, c. 1910; bottom, Anna Moore Butzner, G.R. *Press*, Wednesday, October 9, 2002, p. D1. Story: Cf. Sam Cummings, "D.A. Blodgett Home for Children," *Grand Rapids Magazine*, August 2004, p. 26.)

926

934 10/02/78 5636 Cross

940 12/02/69 3291 Capitol

951-53 Cherry S.E. Built in 1870 at the halfway point between downtown Grand Rapids and Reeds Lake, the 3-story brick Boulevard House or Boulevard Inn once prospered as a house of ill repute. Historic landmark.

958 Cherry S.E. Built in the 1890's, this commercial building had served as a barber shop and beauty salon until 2001. Wesley Beck restored the original storefront in 2004-05.