

CRBIB #403071  
MAWA.003(C.2)  
479/134940

Maggie L. Walker  
National Historic Site

An Orientation

Prepared by  
Celia Jackson Suggs

## CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 1
Maggie Lena Walker	2
Business and Public Service Career	3
Family Life	6
The Maggie L. Walker House	7
Early Construction	7
Kitchen Addition c.1889	10
West Office Addition of 1892	10
West Facade Front Extension of 1897	14
Changes By The Walkers After 1904	14
Mrs. Walker's Major 1922 Expansion	17
1928 Renovations And Elavator Addition	17
The Maggie Walker House Today	17
Paint Colors	23
Floors	24
Light Fixtures	24
Summary	24
Bibliography	27

## Introduction

Information given in this report provides the basic data an individual needs to prepare and present a tour of the Maggie L. Walker House. Interpretive themes and interpretive objectives have been identified in the Interim Interpretive Plan for the park. This report supplements other park documents.

### Maggie Lena Walker

Maggie Lena (Mitchell) Walker was born in Richmond, Virginia, capital of the old Confederacy, on July 15, 1867, two years after the close of the Civil War. She became a business woman and civic leader whose public service career became a success through persistent toil and sacrifice.

During the post antebellum reconstruction period and the early twentieth century, the city of Richmond and the nation were experiencing difficult times. Negroes were striving forward in all areas of life in their attempt to gain intergration into American society. Jim Crowism, disenfranchisement, and denied access to the main economic and educational stream of life made life difficult for most blacks. The prevailing ideology of the times was that America should apply to all men the glorious principles and precepts laid down in her immortal Declaration Of Independence. A nation where every man is equal in the law, and could equally, exercise all rights, political and civil. To be able to vote meant the securing of rights as American citizens, and the establishing of the Republic on the eternal foundations of truth and justice.

National, state, and local leaders concerned with economic, social, and other issues affecting blacks organized and formulated plans to address the problems. It was in the church and fraternity that blacks found unhampered opportunity for social life and for the exercise of leadership. Religion played a very significant role in offering stability for the family. In religion one could find hope in meeting and surviving the ills of the time. Blacks were not allowed to join the average insurance company. When the average insurance company would not provide services, fraternal insurance companies were established to provide for the sick and needy, to offer a decent burial, to instill self help and racial solidarity, and to serve as a social outlet. Similar groups organized to aid the plight of blacks were women clubs, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the National Urban League.

Educational and financial institutions, as well as prospering business were perpetuated by prominent and lesser known national and local black leaders, among them were: Booker Taliferrio Washington, 1856-1915, educator, founder and president of Tuskegee Institute and the National Negro Business League; Mary McCleod Bethune, 1875-1955, educator, founded Bethune-Cookman College, and the National Council of Negro Women; William Edward Burghardt DuBois, 1868-1963, educator and author, cofounder of the National Negro Committee, which became the present NAACP, edited the "Crisis" magazine; March Church Terrell, educator, was the first president and elected three times in succession, of the National Association of Colored Women; John

Mitchell, Jr. 1863-1929, journalist, banker and politician, founder and president of the Mechanics Savings Bank, editor of the Richmond Planet, a weekly newspaper, now Richmond Afro-American, served on Richmond City Council from 1888 to 1896; and Mrs. Ora B. Stokes, educator, served as president of the Richmond Neighborhood Association before and after 1920 and organized a missionary society in Richmond.

### Business and Public Service Career

Maggie attended the public schools of Richmond. After graduating from Armstrong Normal and High School in 1883, she taught there for three years. At the age of 14, Maggie joined the local Right Worthy Grand Council Independent Order of St. Luke. This fraternal insurance society was established in Baltimore, Md. in 1867 by Mary Prout to administer to the sick and aged, and provide a decent burial for its dead members during the post-civil war era. The order encouraged self-help and personal integrity within its members and among the citizenry.

Being unusually intelligent with extraordinary leadership qualities, Maggie progressed quickly through the ranks of the order. She was elected a delegate to the annual St. Luke Convention in Petersburg, Va.

For three years she sold insurance on a part-time basis and participated in other St. Luke activities.

She was elected a National Deputy, which called for her to organize councils throughout Virginia and West Virginia. She was a member of the Committee on Grand Chief's which submitted a resolution in 1887 later adopted to re-establish and improve the Endowment System in the Order. In 1890, she was elected a Right Worthy Grand Chief, the Order's highest voluntary office. In 1895, she presented a resolution to have laws, rules, and regulations drafted governing the Juvenile Department resulting in the formation of the Juvenile Branch of which she was made Grand Deputy Matron in 1896 - 'early and late, rain or shine, sick or well, sacrificing time and home duties, giving her time and talent to the good of this Department. She has been to this Department, the alpha and the omega up to its present time, for without her aid, the Department would not have achieved its present success, since nobody can live without its head'. For the first year 1,000 juvenile members were recruited.

She was Secretary of the Committee on Constitution and Laws to make laws, rules, and regulations governing the National Organization having as its objective the development of race, intellectually, morally, and financially.

In 1899, Maggie L. Walker accepted the position of Grand Secretary after the refusal of William M. T. Forrester to further serve the Order. The organization was at its lowest ebb and about to fold. There were fifty-seven benefited councils and 1,080 financial members, with \$31.61 in the treasurer and bills amounting to \$400.00.

Under Mrs. Walker's leadership the order almost double in one year with 907 new members added and a balance of \$1,288.98 in the treasurer. An Executive Board and Board of Directors was established with members elected to have control and consult on matters pertaining to the good of the Order. In 1901 the turning point in the Order was marked for future progress. The Right Worthy Grand Secretary Maggie L. Walker in her report at the bi-annual convention, held in Richmond, Virginia called attention to the following: "Eternal Vigilance is the price of success. Increasing in membership at a rate which is without precedent in the Order, bringing into our ranks men and women of the highest intelligence, standing and character, to stand still and keep in the same old rut, would be a positive crime, and a downright refusal to use these powers, advantages and opportunities which God has given to make our Order the strongest; best, and most beneficial.

"What do we need to still further develop and prosper us, numerically and financially? First we need a savings bank, chartered, officered and run by the men and women of this Order. Let us put our money out as usury among ourselves, and realize the benefit ourselves. Let us have a bank that will take the nickels and turn them into dollars.

Who is so helpless as the Negro Woman? Who is so circumscribed and hemmed in, in the race of life, in the struggle for bread, meat and clothing as the Negro Woman? They are even being denied the work of teaching Negro children.

What we need is an organ, a newspaper to herald and proclaim the work of our Order. The business, no enterprise, which has to deal with the public, can be pushed successfully without a newspaper, a trumpet to sound the orders.

We want an executive to run a factory, run a paper, run a bank, that will develop something and give some of the noble women work."

The 'St Luke Herald' a weekly paper, began circulation on March 20, 1902. "IT'S MISSION" first editorial - 'see that the world, and the St. Lukes especially may be able to talk together, know each other and see one another through the medium of the ST. LUKE HERALD.'

The St. Luke Bank opened its doors Monday, November 2, 1903, with Mrs. Walker as President.

The Order continued to grow adding new members and additional chapters each year. The bank's capital increased steadily.

In 1915, a revision in the Constitution was adopted creating the position of Right Worthy Grand Secretary - Treasurer encumbered by Mrs. Walker.

Due to changes in Virginia's banking regulations requiring fraternal organizations and banks to operate as separate institutions, the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank was separated from the Order and renamed the St. Luke Bank and

Trust Co. with Mrs. Walker remaining President until 1931. She engineered, in the midst of hundreds of Depression caused bank failures, the merger of St. Luke Bank and Trust Co. with the Second Street Savings Bank and the Commercial Bank and Trust Company. The resulting corporation, the Consolidated Bank and Trust Co., stands today across the street from the site of the former bank at First and Marshall Streets. The Consolidated Bank and Trust Company was one of the Banks that opened on Monday, March 6, 1933, when the President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, declared the bank holiday closed. It was the only black bank opening on that day.

In 1927, the Order had 103,000 members in 24 states, and assets amounting to \$450,000. The Independent Order of St. Luke had weathered the storm of its infancy years under Mrs. Walker's leadership. During the pursuing years she worked to maintain growth and to insure a perpetual future for the Order.

Mrs. Walker was an advocate of better economic and social conditions for black women as reflected in her lectures and work. She once said, "if our women want to avoid the traps and snares of life, they must band themselves together, organize, acknowledge leadership, put their mites together, put their hands and their brains together and make work and business for themselves."

Although the Right Worthy Grand Council, Independent Order of St. Luke was her pillar, She had close affiliation and worked with many other groups and organizations which benefitted women and her race. She was a member of the Virginia State Federation of Colored Women's Club. In April 1912, Mrs. Walker organized and became President of the Richmond Chapter Council of Colored Women with its purpose to raise funds for the Colored Industrial School at Peaks, Virginia, started by Janie Porter Barrett; to establish and maintain a community house, and support and aid other relief organizations. Noted in the Eight Annual Report of the Virginia Industrial School For Colored Girls in 1923, 'Mrs. Maggie L. Walker for the Council of Colored Women gave her Christmas dinner: 25 pounds of cranberries, 1 crate of celery, 2 boxes of apples, 12 turkeys, 2 buckets of candy, 2 boxes of raisins, 1 box of nuts, 8 large boxes of pound cake.'

She was a member of the executive committee of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs and a Board of Trustee Member, (NACWC) responsible for the preservation and restoration of the Frederick Douglass Home, Washington, D.C. She served as a trustee of Hartshorn Memorial College for Women, Richmond, and the National Training School for Women and Girls, Inc. Washington, D.C. - Miss Nannie H. Burroughs, President. She helped organize the Richmond Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as well as participating on the National Board of Directors when James Weldon Johnson was Secretary and Dr. W.E. B. DuBois was editor of "The Crisis." Other affiliations include: Virginia Union University; Virginia Manual Labor School for Colored Boys, Hanover; National Negro Business League; Community Fund of Richmond; Richmond Urban League; Richmond Community Hospital; and Commission on Interracial Co-operation.

In 1930, she traveled to Daytona, Florida in response to a request by Mary McLeod Bethune to organize a national negro women's organization. It was thought not advisable to organize at the time. The idea was heartily and unanimously endorsed and a circular prepared by a committee (with Mrs. Blanch Beatty, Secretary and Maggie L. Walker, Chairman) was left with Mrs. Bethune to send out to the press and women organization. (Mrs. Bethune organized the National Council of Negro Women in 1935). As long as she knew there was something she could do to aid or effect the advancement of others Mrs. Walker was not content.

### Family Life

Maggie's Father, (white) Eccles Cuthbert, was a writer. Her Mother, Elizabeth Draper, a servant, married William Mitchell, a butler, May 28, 1868. They both worked in the household of Elizabeth Van Lew, formerly a Union spy during the Civil War. Bellevue School now stands on the site of the Van Lew Mansion in historic Church Hill. William later became a waiter in the Saint Charles Hotel and soon moved the family into their own home, a rented house in an alley downtown between Broad and Marshall Streets. Here Maggie grew up with Johnnie, her younger Brother.

One day William was found dead in the James River. This left Elizabeth struggling to support the family. Mrs. Mitchell took in washing. Maggie Johnnie, and her cousin "Ed", delivered the clothes. Maggie also helped with the marketing and looked after Johnnie.

Maggie started her own family on September 14, 1886, when she married Armstead Walker, Jr., a brick contractor who later became a postal clerk. Eventually, they had three sons, two survived. Russell Eccles Talmadge, the first son was born in 1890. Noted in her diary Wed. Dec. 9, 1925, "This day thirty-five years ago, \_\_\_ there came into the world a little baby boy. \_\_\_ His birth was unnatural in that he had to be taken by Dr. Ross, \_\_\_\_. We named him, "Russell Eccles Talmadge Walker." I was ill, \_\_\_ but happy. \_\_\_ I was so anxious for a little baby \_\_\_ to love, to rear, to follow by day and night, \_\_\_ to see develop into a great and useful man. \_\_\_ I see the back \_\_\_ bedroom at 709 N. 3rd St. \_\_\_ (the Walker's residence in Navy Hill), the beautiful yellow Chrysanthemums that were in the vases, \_\_\_ and the red hangings at the door and on the mantle, oh, that day. \_\_\_ so full of future responsibilities. \_\_\_"

Armstead Mitchell Walker, the second son died in infancy.

The third son, Melvin DeWitt, was born in 1897. Eventually both sons would help her at the St. Luke Order and the Penny Savings Bank.

In 1904, the Walkers purchased a new home from Dr. Robert Emmet Jones at 110 E. Leigh St. located in Jackson Ward, the center of Black social and business life in Richmond (now a National Historic Landmark District). Many personal and family tragedies were encountered during the residency on

Leigh Street. Russell accidentally killed Armstead in 1915, leaving Maggie with a household to manage. Her mother having lived with her all these years died in 1922 and Russell in 1923. The death of her loved ones caused her much sorrow, grief, and loneliness for the remainder of her life. When retiring one evening in \_\_\_\_\_, 1908, she fell and broke her knee cap. Suffering from creeping paralysis she was eventually incapacitated in 1928 and confined to the wheelchair for the remainder of her life. She carried on her life's work despite these tragedies.

She died at 8:30 p.m., Dec. 14, 1934, of diabetic gangrene in her bedroom. Her funeral procession was one of the largest ever held in Richmond. After hundreds viewed her body in state in the parlors of her home, they proceeded to the First African Baptist Church for the funeral services where many had lined the streets. The church was filled to capacity for the funeral services lead by Rev. William T. Johnson. Interment was held in the family section in Evergreen Cemetary.

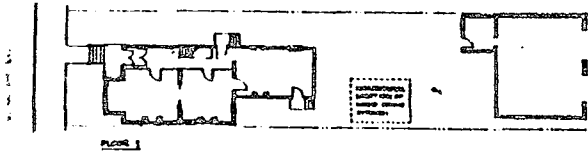
Acclaimed as one of the outstanding leaders, many honors and awards had been bestowed upon her during and after her life time. A formal program testimonial of love was rendered at the City Auditorium, Sunday afternoon, November 30, 1924, in honor of Mrs. Walker by Saint Luke members and as a gracious tribute from the citizens of Richmond. In 1925, she was given an honorary Masters of Arts from Virginia Union University for her contributions to the community. October 1927, was declared "Maggie Walker Month." Alabaster statues of her were placed in Black homes, schools, and businesses across the country in recognition of, "Maggie L. Walker Month," October, 1934. The Maggie Walker High School (now Marshall-Walker) was named in her honor in 1936, located on the former site of Hartshorn Memorial School for girls where she had served on the board of directors. In recognition of her achievements and life's contributions the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site was established by the National Park Service, Nov. 10, 1978.

### The Maggie L. Walker House

#### Early Construction

'The structural evolution of the Walker House falls roughly into five building stages'(figure 1). The original unit and four later additions. "The house at 110 $\frac{1}{2}$  East Leigh Street first appears in the city records in 1883. The unimproved lot was purchased by John Ferguson from the estate of Joseph Jackson in 1882. Ferguson's taxes rose sharply in 1883 from an appraised value of \$600 on the lot alone to \$2600, with a notation in the tax records that the rise was due to improvements. The building as constructed included the present two story, three bay, east section of the house, the parlors, 108 and 109; the vestibule and stairhall, 106 and 107; and the corresponding rooms on the second floor numbered 207 - 209, (figure 2). A single story ell containing the dining room, 110, extended from the north elevation. The dining room was originally one story, and the south wall of the second floor bath, room 211, was formerly an exterior wall.



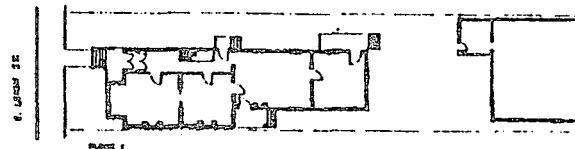


PHASE 1

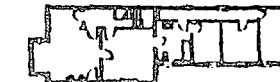


PHASE 2

PHASE 1 - 1883

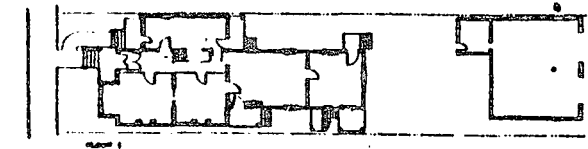


PHASE 1

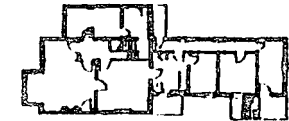


PHASE 2

PHASE 2 - 1889

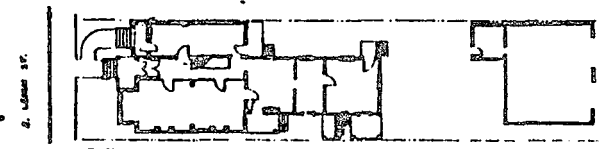


PHASE 1

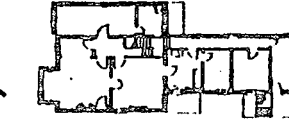


PHASE 2

PHASE 3 - 1892



PHASE 1

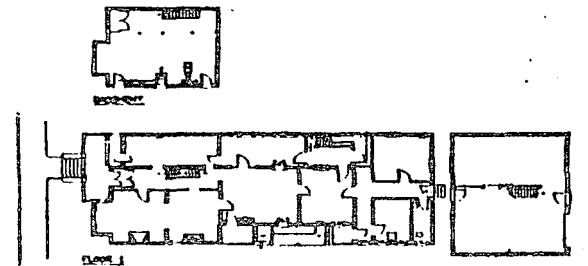


PHASE 2

PHASE 4 - 1897

PHASE 5 - 1922

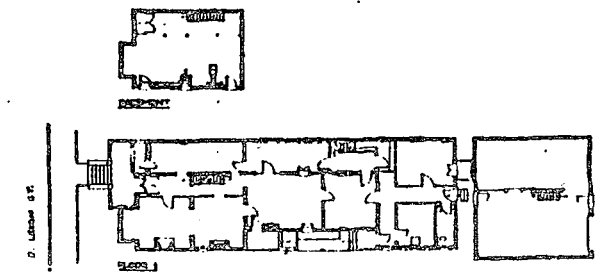
PHASE 6 - 1928



PHASE 1



PHASE 2



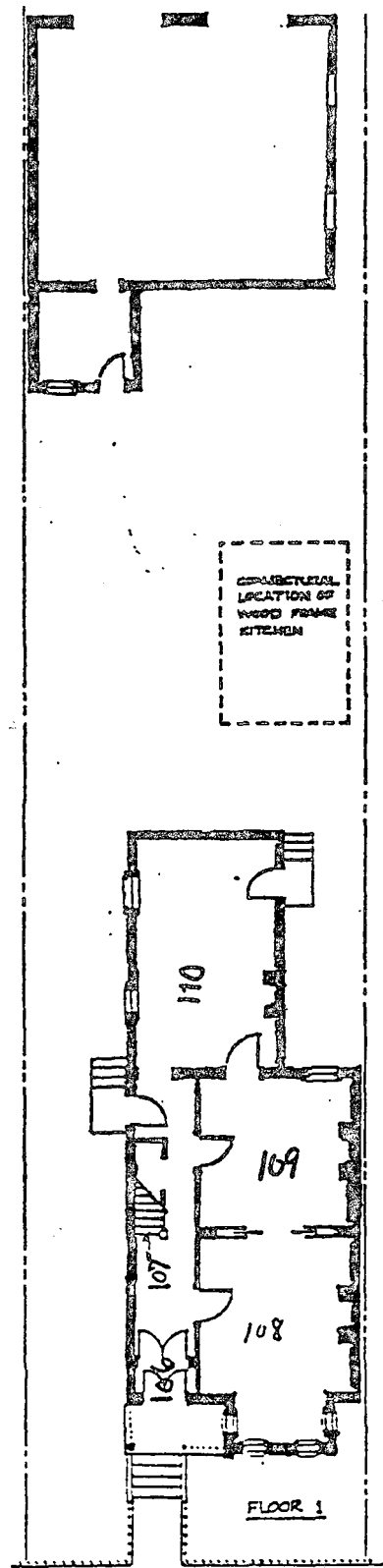
PHASE 1



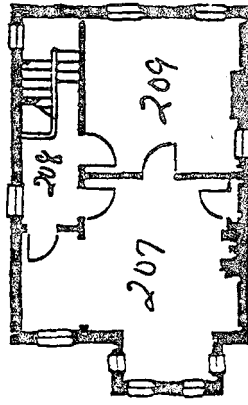
PHASE 2

8

Fig. 1



ONE STORY STABLE FROM 1895  
SANBORN MAP. SEE FIG. 22.



PLAN OF THE HOUSE AS CONSTRUCTED

Maggie Walker House - 1884

Fig. 2

Since there was apparently no kitchen in the house as constructed, it is probable like a few other properties in Jackson Ward, the Walker House had a detached kitchen at the rear of the property which was destroyed when the kitchen was added to the rear of the house.

#### Kitchen Addition C.1889

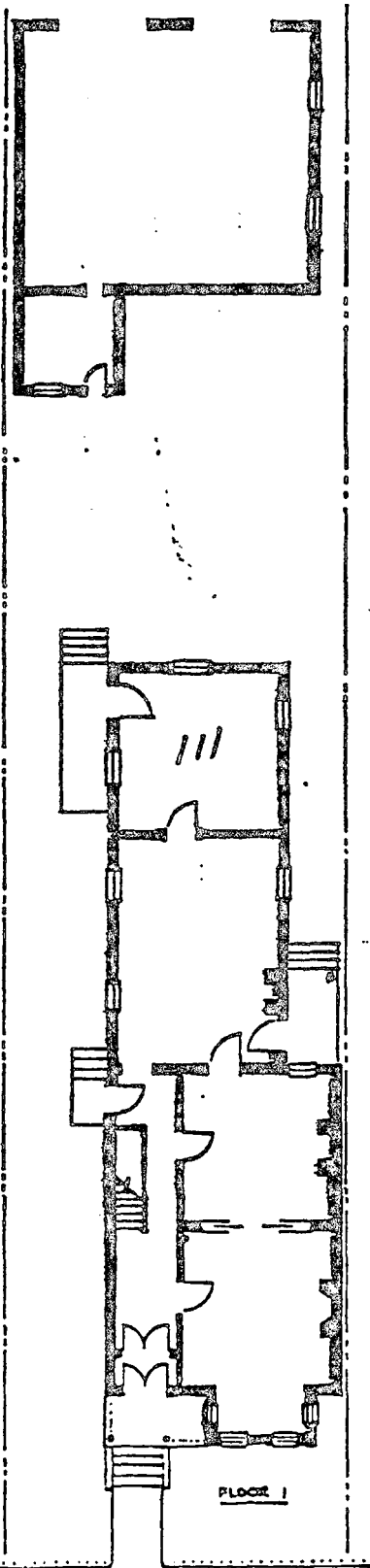
The present kitchen, 111, (figure 3) was added C. 1889 probably right after purchase of the property by Dr. Robert Jones, a physician. The kitchen was built onto the north wall of the dining room, and the dining room east wall rebuilt two feet eastward to match the dimensions of the kitchen addition. On the north wall of the dining room a floor to ceiling crack was evident in 1982 in the plaster corresponding with the seam where the north wall was extended. The seam measured 15" from the inside of the present wall. A second story, rooms 210-214, were added at the same time above the dining room and kitchen (figure 3).

The east wall of the dining room is not part of the original 1883 fabric. The window and door trim detail on the south and west walls of the dining room belong to the first phase of the construction of the house, except for the large door and sidelights on the west wall leading to the hall which apparently were added later. The door on the east wall next to the hearth was moved from an earlier location, perhaps from the original east wall where it provided access to the out-kitchen in the rear of the property. The trim of the east window appears to belong to the same period as the trim work in the existing kitchen. This alone suggests a simultaneous movement of the wall on the east and the construction of the kitchen wing. The similarity in trim between the kitchen addition and original construction and the difference in trim between the kitchen and library addition places the date of alteration between the first and third increments (1883-1892).

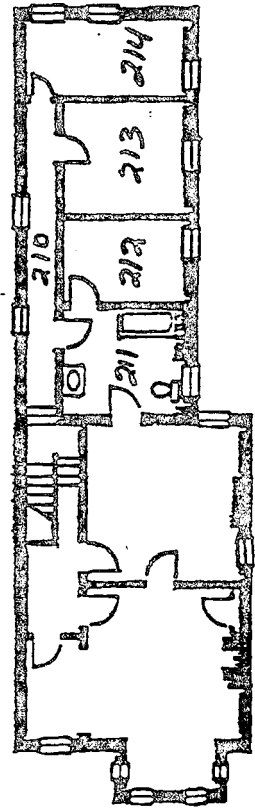
Traces of stairs and a landing along the east exterior elevation of the dining room in 1982 support the theory that there was a two story porch at the rear east side of the house.

#### The West Office Addition of 1892

The third major phase of construction is attributed to Jones. It involved adding a single room, 101, with two smaller rooms, 201 - 202 above, onto the west front of the original house (figure 4). 1892 Jones' assessment jumped \$300 which is the first such change in the records since 1883. The \$300 assessment rise would suggest the addition of the library and corresponding rooms above. According to Madison Jones, Dr. Jones, his Father, built the addition for an office. The office has a separate front entrance. The third stage of the house with the west addition is outlined by the 1895 Sandborn Insurance Map (Fig. 5). The map indicates that the west bay was set back from the south (original) facade about five feet. The woodwork in the library and rooms above are unlike the other sections of the house and



CARRIAGE HOUSE TAKEN FROM 1875 SANDSON MAP. SEE FIG. 22.

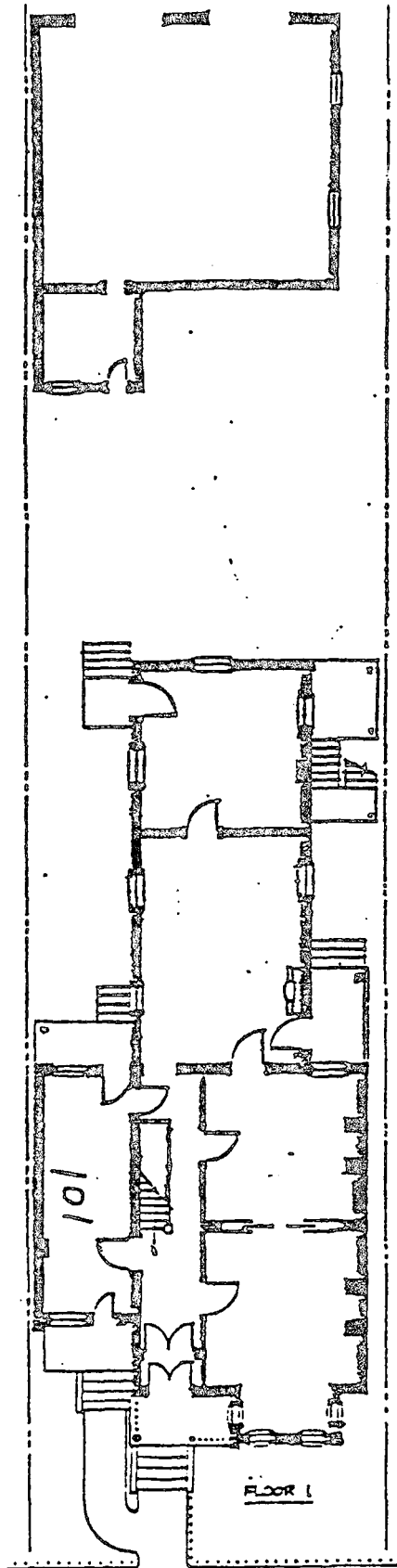


PLAN OF THE HOUSE SHOWING BIRVEN'S ADDITION



Maggie Walker House - 1889

Fig. 3



CARRIAGE HOUSE BASED ON  
1893 SANDER MAP; SEE  
PAGE 22.

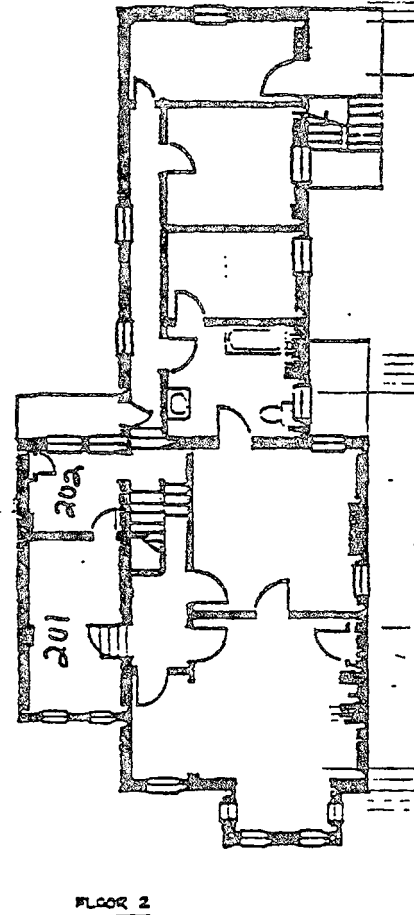


FIGURE  
PLAN OF THE HOUSE SHOWING  
FIRST WEST ADDN. SEE P. 22.

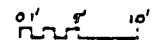
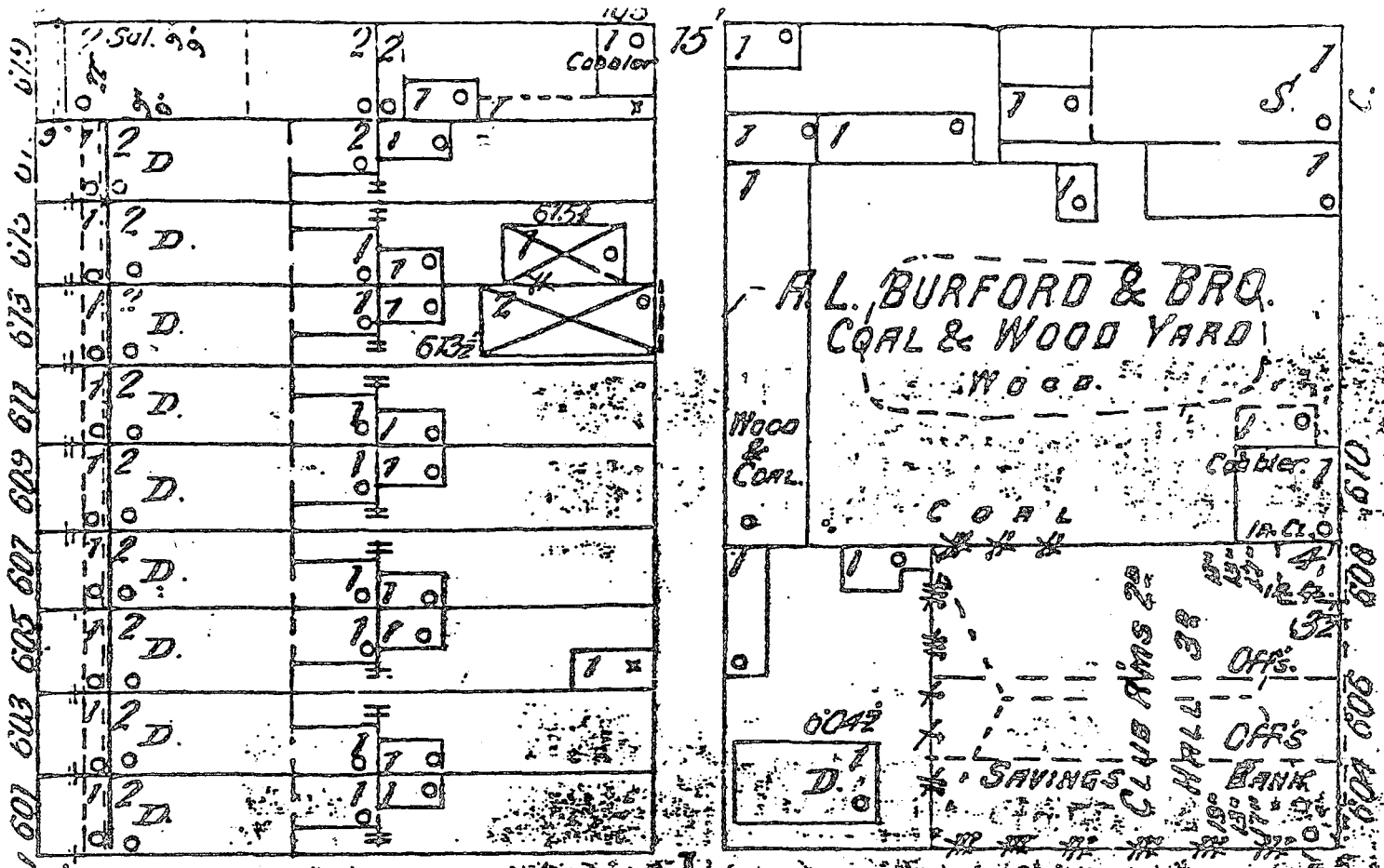


Fig. 4

12



Enlarged section of the 1895 Sanborn Insurance Map showing the north side of East Leigh between First and Second Streets including the Walker House (listed as 1103).

7.9.5

consist of symmetrically molded trim with corner blocks (Fig. 6). The 1895 map illustrates a single story porch protecting the west bay and construction of all other building in the 100 block of East Leigh Street by 1895. Possible concurrent with the west addition was a second story porch addition behind Room 202, with a single door providing access into the second floor hall, 210 (Fig.4).

#### West Facade Front Extension of 1897

Dr. Jones' taxes rose again in 1897. The front of Room 101 (library) probably was raised to the level of its present appearance. The roof was raised to the level of the original east section of the house, (Fig. 7). At the time the ceiling was raised Dr. Jones added a partition to divide Room 101, more likely to create a waiting room/office and separate examining rooms for his medical practice. The door located at the feet of the stairs between the front hall, 107, and the library, 101, was originally an exterior door with a transom.

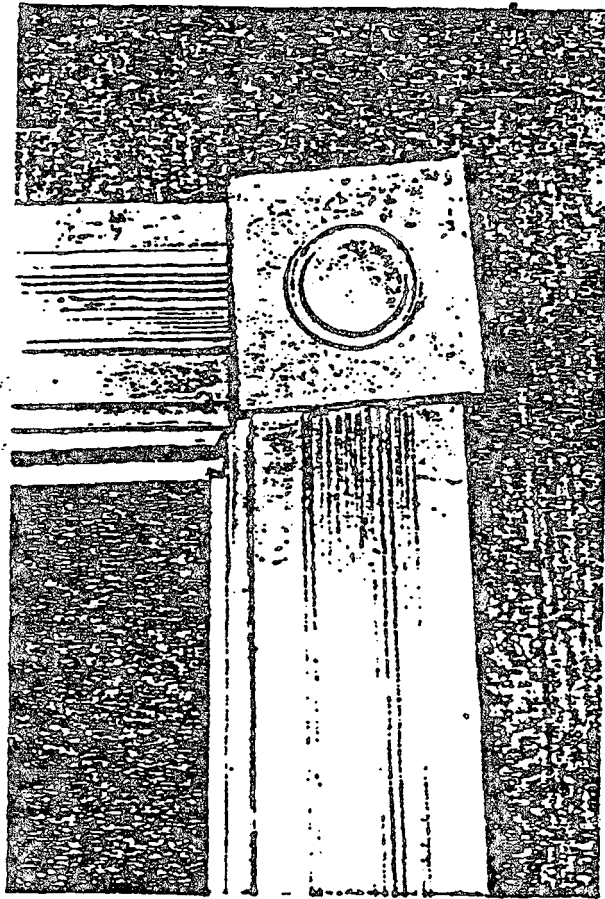
The fact that the north wall of Room 101 was the original exterior wall of this addition is supported by the existence of an interior window in the corresponding room above the library, Room 202. When Dr. Jones extended the front of the office in 1896 the facade assumed the appearance which it retained until 1922.

The central entrance located in the original unit was protected by a single story porch with decorative shingles supported on turned wood posts connected by a spindle freeze and turned balusters.

#### Changes by The Walkers after 1904

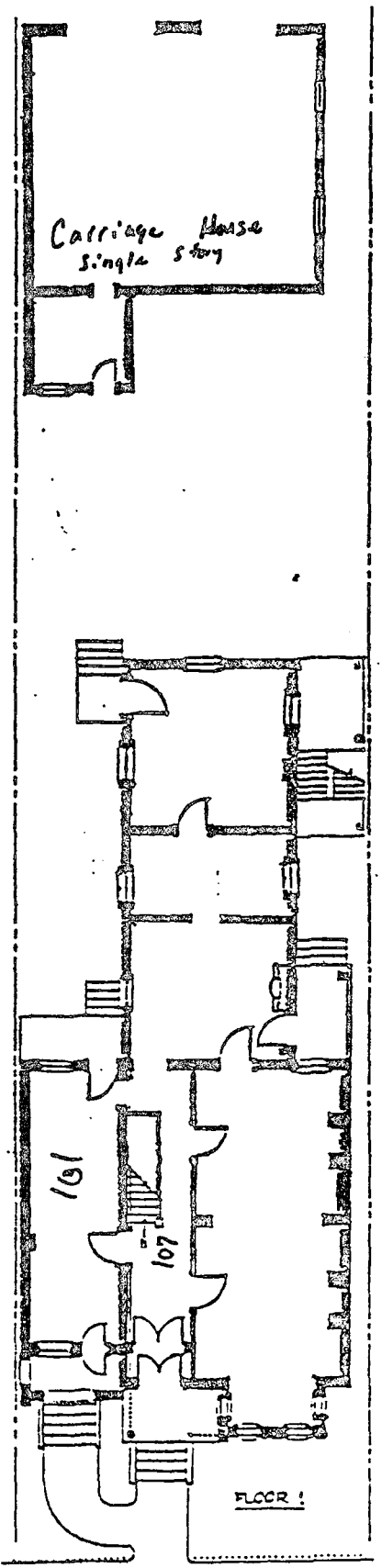
After Maggie Walker and her husband, Armistead Walker, purchased the house in 1904, it can be assumed that Mr. Walker, as a contractor, may have completed some of the interior alterations dating to the early twentieth century. A comparison of woodwork on the first floor show similarities to other Richmond interior homes. The cabinet mantel in the parlors are similar to the mantels in the Richmond Wood Working Co. catalog of 1902.

The gas fixtures in the house were connected to electricity of which many of the outlets are still present. Radiators were added around 1910 during the early years of their occupancy. The cellar/basement was dug out for a furnace. The earliest radiators, which have a torch design, are located in all the rooms that comprise the house at the time the Walkers purchased the property.

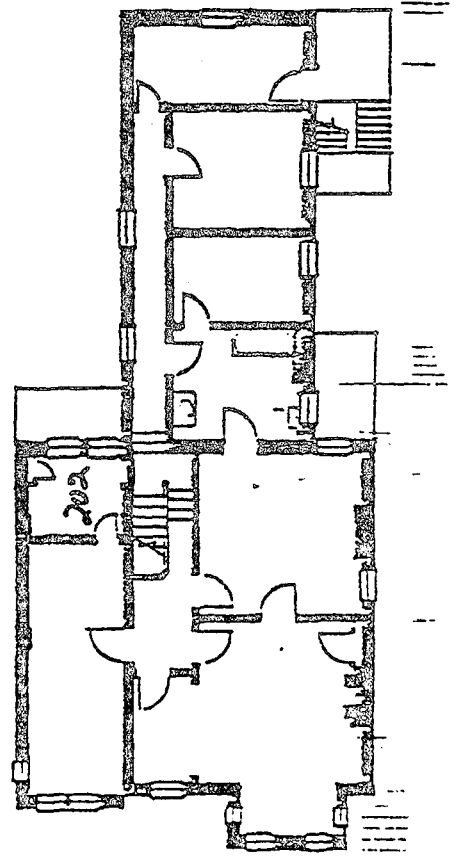


Symmetrically molded  
trim at door of library, east  
wall.





FLOOR 1



FLOOR 2

PLAN SHOWING 1897 EXTENSION OF FACADE OF WEST ADD'N: SEE ALSO FIG. 52.

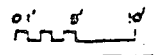


Fig. 7

### Mrs. Walker's major 1922 Expansion

In 1922, Mrs. Walker expanded the house to provide additional living space for her sons and families (Fig. 8). In her diary for 1922, Mrs. Walker recorded on December 31st that, "My house was remodeled for the comfort of the children and their families at great cost." An application for a building permit for additions to 110<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> East Leigh Street was filed by Mrs. Walker in 1922. Rooms on the numbered plan (Fig. 8) 102-105 and 112-114 as well as the second story rooms of 203-206 and 215 were added that year. The trim at openings in all of these rooms is uniform and differs from the rest of the house, plain boards with cornices surrounding the openings. Like the woodwork, the radiators in the rear section are consistent but vary from the rest of the house. Mrs. Walker changed some of the interior doors, including the multi-light doors and added the screen of columns between the parlors. The separate entrances and single story porch was replaced. The second story porch, P-2, left open by 1922 was enclosed by 1924. The carriage house was converted into a two story garage.

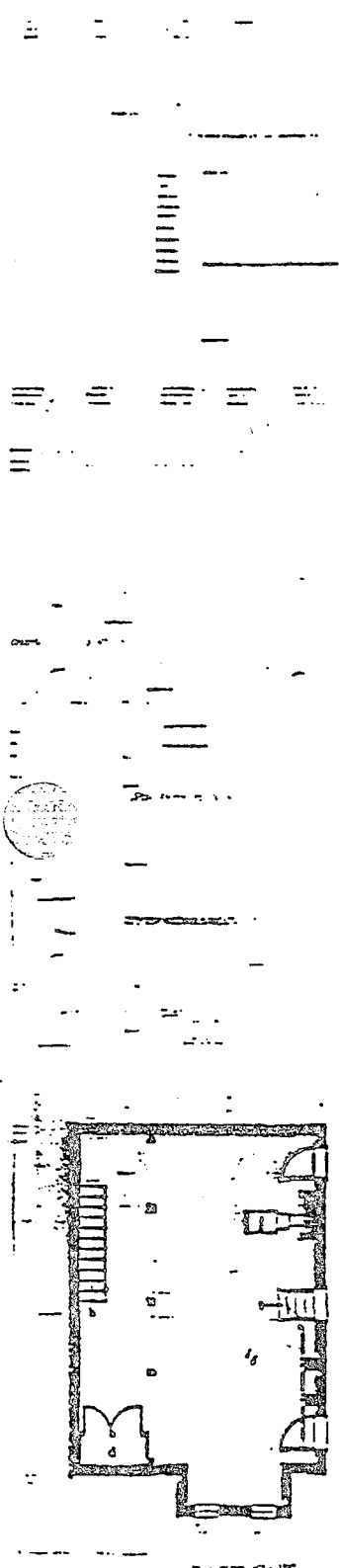
Although the architect of the 1922 additions is unknown, Mrs. Walker may have retained Professor Charles Russell of Virginia Union University, the first black licensed architect in Virginia. During the 1920's, Mrs. Walker mentions him as a frequent visitor to the House in her diaries.

### 1928 Renovations and Elevator Addition

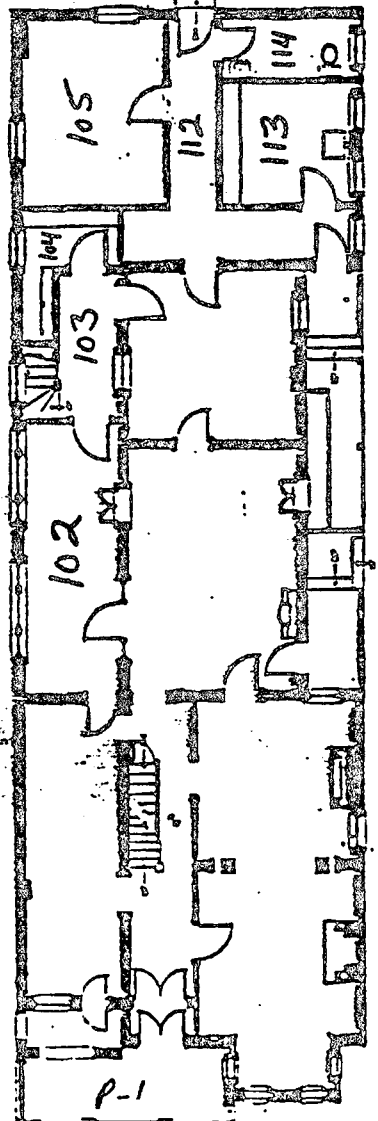
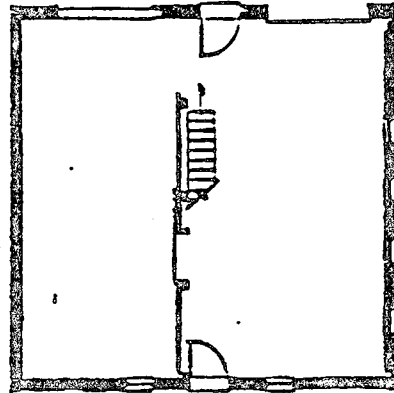
By 1928, when Mrs. Walker could no longer walk without assistance, she consulted Mr. Russell about the addition of an elevator, connecting the rear of the house with the garage. On Friday, January 13, 1928, she recorded in her diary, "Conference with Architect Russell in reference to elevator\_\_ starts to see about installing elevator." And by Saturday, February 18, 1928, she wrote that the "House at #110 E. Leigh still pulled to peices awaiting the installation of an invalid's lift." Thursday, March 1, 1928, she recorded that the elevator had been installed for \$1,500. The same year Mrs. Walker had the second story east porch enclosed, rooms 215 - 218, so that she could use the space for a small bedroom, kitchen, and dining area. A building permit application exists for March 5, 1928, when she applied for permission to have the "front porch already erected to be enclosed with sash 3' above floor. The architect listed on the application was Charles T. Russell. The Walker House stands today as it appeared after the final alterations in 1928, (Fig.9). Only the landscaping and interior decorative finishes had changed since 1934.

### The Maggie Walker House Today

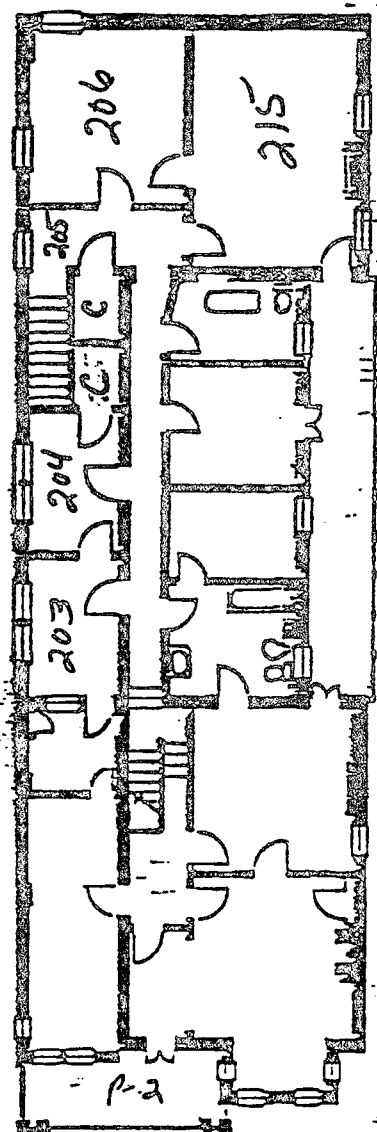
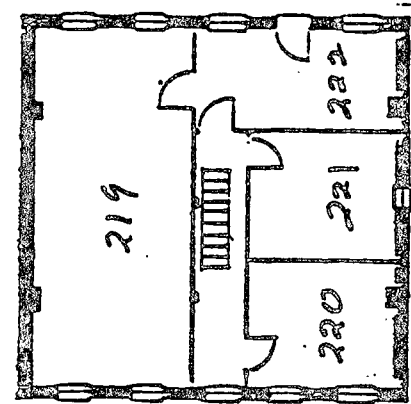
The house is essentially a two-story, four-bay, late Victorian building with Italianate detailing. The facade is of face brick painted red and has segmental-arched windows framed by painted tin held-mold type lintels with incised geometric ornament. A paneled frieze, articulated by decorative grille work broken by paired brackets outlines the three original bays. The roof structure at the front is a modified (mansard) covered with



BASEMENT



FLOOR 1



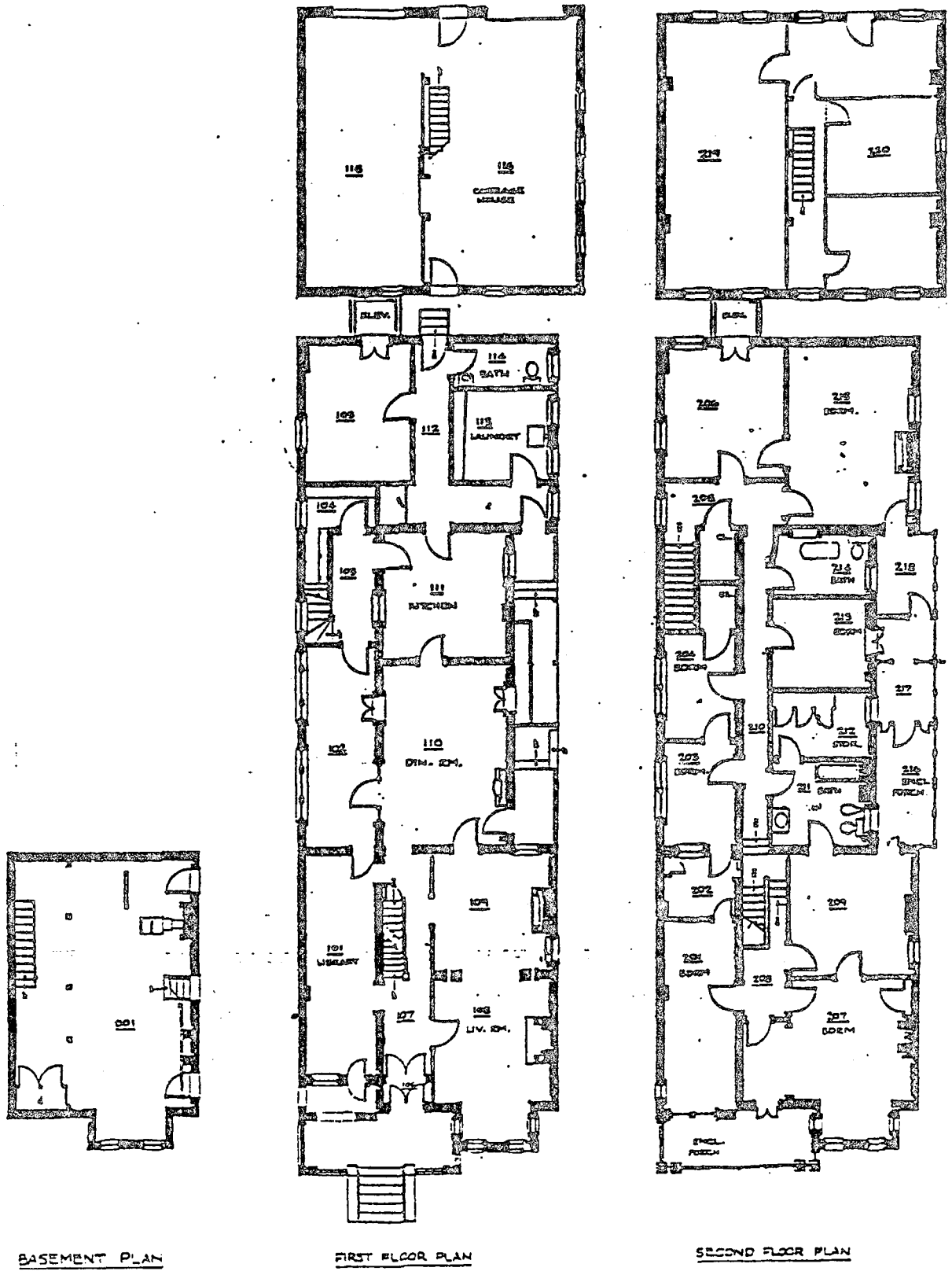
FLOOR 2

Fig. 8

18

PLAN SHOWING 1922 ADDN AND GARAGE

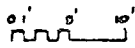
Maggie Walker House - 1922



BASEMENT PLAN

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SECOND FLOOR PLAN



**Room Identification Guide to Floor Plan**

**First Floor**

- 101 - Library
- 102 - Sitting Room
- 103 - Hallway
- 104 - Pantry
- 105 - Playroom-Exhibit Area
- E-1 - Elevator (Invalid's Lift)
- 106 - Front Entrance
- 107 - Entrance Foyer
- 108 - Front Parlor
- 109 - Back Parlor
- 110 - Dining Room
- 111 - Kitchen
- 112 - Back Hallway
- 113 - Laundry Room
- 114 - Public Bathroom
- 115 & 116 - Carriage House Maintenance Work Area

**Second Floor**

- 201 - Russell and Hattie Walker's Bedroom
- 208 - Hallway
- 207 - Maggie L. Walker's Bedroom
- P-2 - Enclosed Porch
- 209 - Maggie's Study
- 211 - " Bathroom
- 212 - " Closetroom
- 216 - " Diningroom
- 217 - " Kitchen
- 205 & 210 Hallway

Fig. 9-A

decorative slate shingles. The composition is capped by decorative iron cresting replaced by the National Park Service with new material.

A two-story Colonial Revival porch unites the two different sections comprising the facade. The porch, which dominates the front elevation, is supported on the first floor by paired Ionic Columns with stylized Roman Doric Columns in the second story. The first floor porch retains its original decorative tile floor. The second floor porch was first an open porch protected by a turned balustrade same as the first floor then later closed C. 1924 as it appear today.

The entire front of the house has been restored to its 1927 appearance. The National Park Service has recently repainted the entire front and installed new awnings.

The plan of the Walker house is complex reflecting the residence of the entire family and the use of the house. See floor plan (Fig. 9A). Interviews with Mrs. Walker's Grandchildren, neighborhood friends, and entries in her diaries provide information on family life and arrangement of the living quarters.

The main entrance, in the central bay-106, opens into a narrow hall-107, containing a single-run open-tread stain with two turned balusters per tread, carrying a molded rail. The square newel, channeled on each face, holds a high, turned pedestal. A long narrow library-101 on the west side is separated by a stair hall-107 from a double parlor-front parlor-108, back parlor-109, on the east.

The library is decorated with symmetrically molded trim with corner blocks and a molded cornice. The parlors are treated with architrave trim, a molded plaster cornice, and plaster ceiling medallions.

The front parlor has a rectangular projecting bay on the front facade, with a single drapery cornice around three sides, integrating a gilded central pier glass. The parlors are separated by a screen of Roman Doric Antae and Columns, and both feature tall stained-oak cabinet mantels with mirrors in the over mantel and ceramic tile fireplace. A decorative inlaid border floor finishes the parlors and dining room.

Behind the front block is the narrower ell containing a dining room-110 and kitchen-111 on the east and sitting room-102 and rear hall-103 on the west. There is a marbelized mantel with an elaborate coal grate and pressed tin ceiling in the dining room. In the kitchen is Mrs. Walker's early iron stove which utilizes gas and wood. The National Park Service has expended an enormous amount of time in restoring this stove to its historic appearance.

The 1922 addition to the house is treated with plain trim at openings. Rooms on the first floor were utilized for a laundry-113, pantry-104, and bedroom-105.

The bedrooms on the second floor are finished similarly to the rooms directly below. Original late nineteenth century mantels remain in Mrs. Walker's bedroom-209 and her study-211. Located in the southeast corner of the second floor, her bedroom-209, is the most elaborate with a cabinet mantel and lattice work grille ornamenting the room.

Since 1979, continuous efforts has been focused on restoring the Maggie L. Walker house to its original appearance to convey the personal and family life of Maggie Lena Walker. To stabilize the structure itself and prevent further interior damage a new rubber membrane roof was installed to replace the old tin roof early into the restoration process. All new plumbing and electrical wiring replaced outdated hazardous pipes and wiring. The removal of the furnishings, household items and personal memorabilia from the house to a central storage area made it convenient to do restoration especially on the interior of the structure. By studying the evidence and information available in the house combined with information gathered from outside sources the National Park Service was able to proceed with restoration.

Wallpaper samples from each room were removed and examined to determine which papers dated to the period of restoration. The second layer of paper found on the wall in the parlors dates C.1928. This pattern can be seen in the background of a photograph of Mrs. Walker seated in her wheelchair and is therefore appropriate to the period of restoration. The pattern, a water color wash or peacock appearance was reproduced and hangs in the parlors today.

In the dining room-110, at the rear of the parlors remnants of an early twentieth century floral patterned wallpaper found above and visible behind the chase in the southeast corner of the room. This paper dates from the 1910s and 1920s. It is an oak leaf pattern on grass cloth. Although this paper depicted shades of beige, brown, and green, it is possibly the paper Mamie Evelyn Crawford (a granddaughter) remembered being in the dining room when she stated that the room had a dark green paper with small flowers. A solid paper was located on the lower section of the wall along with the same layer of the oak leaf on grass cloth pattern. This yellowish gray solid paper, striated with stripes, depicted a light ripple texture with decorative silver lines interwoven. The oak leaf pattern on grass cloth will be reproduced at a later date. The dining room as it appears now has been papered temporarily with a modern pattern assimilating an oak leaf effect with a matching solid paper as a wain coat. The dining room retains its original tin ceiling of which a small damaged part on the south side has been reproduced and restored.

In the library - 101, a solid color light brown wallpaper dating from the late 1920s was found on the wall. The original color could have well been a pale yellowish brown with inklings of a mixture of red, blue, and heavy brown. The light brown paper now hanging in the library assimilates this pattern. The present ceiling pattern is Cat's Paw.

The silver paper now hanging in hallways 107, 208, and 210 is an exact reproduction of one of the original Walker period patterns found in this location. It is a typical wall covering of the 1920s and further depicts an exact pattern Mrs. Walker used. The thin silver metallic finish paper has an off white flowered medallion design.

Evidence suggests the entire second floor did not retain any 1920s papers except for the hall and room 202. Removal of paper from rooms 201, 207-209 revealed a written script, "Joe Smith 1940" in room 207. An early deep red color pattern paper with a floral design dating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was found behind the wall mirror in Mrs. Walker's bedroom - 207. Subsequent layers of paper found in the room represented the same pattern and color scheme. Both rooms, 207 and 209, were always treated the same. Upholstered furniture in these rooms has a floral design complimented with a red leather chair. Wallpaper was selected for Mrs. Walker's bedroom-207 based on this evidence. The picture molding was dark red with decorative touches of gold.

Room 201 - Hattie and Russell's bedroom was treated in the same manner. Even though no 1920's pattern remained, the existing color treatment, green was maintained. Subsequent layers of paper showed a green background with small floral designs. The picture molding was green and was repainted green.

Mrs. Walker's study-209 retains a oak leaf pattern. The idea is to give no effect.

Although wallpaper hanging in rooms 202, 203, 204, 212, 213, 214, and 210 are not original patterns these were selected to effect the 1920's.

The interior physical appearance had greatly deteriorated by 1979, but still maintained the original decor which existed when Mrs. Walker's died in 1934. Only one major change was made since 1934. Hattie Walker redecorated the entire house for her daughter, Maggie Laura's 1942 wedding. The interior was repainted and repaired.

### Paint Colors

Guided by a paint analysis, specific colors were selected for each area in the house. Trim color in the front of the house, both first and second floor, is painted Navajo White. Room ceilings except for those with ceiling paper were painted Dover White. Trim color in the rear of the house is Chocolate Shake. The kitchen-111 is painted yellow with a Chocolate Shake trim. The remaining rooms 113, 114, 112, 105, 103, 205, were painted light brown. The second floor side porch, sun porch, and family room were painted green.



## Floors

All rooms maintain their original wood floors. These floors have been restored. The kitchen has a contemporary square tile floor. Period floor covering will be reproduced at a later date.

## Light Fixtures

The light fixtures were cleaned, rewired, and returned to their original place either in the ceiling or on the walls, both first and second floors.

## Summary

With the placement of household items, furnishings, and personal memorabilia the scene is set to recapture the busy household which existed during the time Mrs. Walker and her family lived at 110 E. Leigh Street.

As many as thirteen individuals lived in the house at different times: Mrs. Walker, her two sons and their wives-Russell and Hattie, Melvin and Ethel; her grandchildren-Maggie Laura, Armistead, Mamie Evelyn, and Elizabeth; her Mother, Elizabeth Mitchell; her housekeeper and companion, her husband-Polly and Maurice Payne. Although the chauffeur, Alphonse Robinson lived in the quarters on the second floor of the carriage house he added to the busy household. Edward (Ned) Christian was employed as part of Mrs. Walker's house staff, but never lived in.

The house for the most part represents the personal and family life of Mrs. Walker. It also reveals her accomplishments outside the home. Friends, visitors, and business acquaintances were always welcome. Quite often Mrs. Walker had several or a group of individuals in her home as guests.

In her diaries she writes of such frequented guests. Monday, April 1925, at home, "Luncheon for Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, Pres. N.A. Of C.W. Clubs... Mrs. Janie Barrett; Pres. V. State Federation. \_\_\_ Chr. of Executive Board of N.A. Of C.W.C. \_\_\_ and Mrs. Delilah Beaseley. \_\_\_ representative Club of Woman of California. \_\_\_ also Blackwell and Johnson. 12:N."

Saturday, July 31, 1926. "In office until 12n. At home after. Eugertha called, asked if I needed her to do her Saturday chores.-- I replied, no -- she left.

Mrs. A.K.H. visits at 7p.m.-- a general conference until 11:45- we parted a little closer than before--"

Thursday, August 12, 1926 at home. "About 2 p.m. (v) called to inquire concerning health, etc.-- Spent quite an hour on the front upper porch."

Sat. Aug. 21, 1926. "An unexpected visitor at 6:30 p.m. -- cold, disappointed, and sick." Wed. Sept. 15, 1926. "Last night, on my return from the Globe, I found Miss Nannie H. Burroughs on my porch, awaiting me.-- I met her and invited her upstairs. Made her feel comfortable.- And for hours I listened to her. We talked about the Woman's Federation.- the National Baptist Conf. the N.A.A.C.P.- Mrs Bethune, Hawkins-Brown, Rebecca S. Taylor and everything and everybody- Tired out we sought our beds for rest. \_\_\_"

Wed. Feb. 29, 1928 at home. Meeting of the Trustee's. A full meeting of the Council of Colored Women.

In an interview with Mrs. Hattie Bell of Norfolk, VA, daughter of Mrs. Walker's Attorney, J. Thomas Hewin, she related how Mrs. Walker held open house at least once a year. Anyone was welcome to come during this time, walk through the house, have refreshments, and fellowship.

The library-101, parlors 108-109, and Mrs. Walker's second floor quarters, are likely points for discussing her public service career. Photographs and books, can be used to convey her affiliation with different organizations such as her work with the Order and Consolidated Bank, as well as with any other thematic topic.

Her second floor living quarters sun porch, bedroom-207, study-211, dining and kitchenette-216, 217, along with the elevator exhibit addresses the fact that she was a paraplegia. In 1928 she became confined to a wheelchair. As she stated in her diary Sunday, Jan. 1, 1928, "this day finds me at home with my son, Melvin, wife and children. Polly, my faithful companion and Alphonso, the chaffeur. The Xmas holidays have been most pleasantly spent.- The home has been cheerful and all seemed happy.-My limbs have been unable to carry my body.- I've tried every conceivable advice, suggestion, etc.- to have my condition improved.- am still not walking. The year ending has been blessed.

Thur. Jan. 12. Am still unable to walk.-little or no improvement.- but so long as I can speak comfortably words to others my own heart is healed.

Fri. Jan. 13. Dr. Hughes and Harris talks about my condition. I gleam all has been done that could be. I must wait on nature. See Packard man- Mr. Woody as to the advisability of readjusting the back seat of car- put in a chair with rollers.- So as to enter and exit without trouble." a Packard with adjustments were secured at a cost of \$7,000.

Alphonso, the chaffeur, succeeded in getting her to many places such as Philadelphia, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Florida and many more. Polly accompanied her on most trips. Mrs. Walker continued her life's work as usual until she died in 1934.

Just as she inspired many during her lifetime, a good interpretive tour of her home can inform and inspire many who would want to know more about Mrs. Walker and the community in which she lived.

## Bibliography

### Books

- Alderson, William T. and Low, Shirley Payne.  
Interpretation of Historic Sites;  
American Association for State and Local History, Nashville,  
Tennessee, 1976
- Branch, Muriel and Rice, Dorothy  
Miss Maggie - A Biography of Maggie Lena Walker; Marlborough House  
Publishing Co., Richmond, Virginia 1984
- Chesson, Michael b.  
Richmond After the War 1865-1890;  
Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia 1981
- Dabney, Virginius  
Richmond, the Story of A City;  
Doubleday and Company, Inc.  
Garden City, New York, 1976
- Dabney, Wendell P.  
Maggie L. Walker and the Independent Order of St. Luke;  
Dabney Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1927
- Daniel, Sadie Iola  
Women Builders;  
The Associated Publishers, Inc. Washington, D.C. 1931
- Fiftieth Anniversary - Golden Jubilee, Historical Report of the  
R.W. G. Council I.O. Saint Luke, 1867-1917;  
Everett Waddy Company, Richmond, Virginia 1917
- Giddings, Paula  
WHEN AND WHERE I ENTER...The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex  
In America; William Morrow and Company, Inc. New York, N.Y. 1984
- James, Edward T.; James, Janet Wilson; and Bayer, Paul S.  
Notable American Women 1607-1950;  
The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge,  
Massachusetts, 1980
- Logan, Rayford, W. and Winston, Michael R.  
Dictionary of American Negro Biography;  
W.W. Norton and Company, Inc.  
New York, N.Y. 1982

- Meier, August  
Negro Thought in America, 1880 - 1915;  
The University of Michigan Press,  
Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1963
- McDaniel, George W.  
Hearth and Home - Preserving a People's Culture;  
Temple University Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1982.
- Mirken, Alan  
1927 edition of the Sears, Roebuck Catalogue,  
The Roaring Twenties;  
Bounty Books, A Division of Crown Publishers, Inc.  
New York, N.Y., 1970
- Ovington, Mary White  
Portraits in Color;  
The Viking Press, Inc.  
New York, N.Y., 1970
- Tilden, Freeman  
Interpreting Our Heritage;  
The University of North Carolina Press,  
Chapel Hill, N.C., 1977
- Wesley, Charles Harris  
The History of the National Association of Colored Women's Club, A  
Legacy of Service;  
Mercury Press,  
Wichita Kansas, 1984
- Winthrop, Robert P. and Zehmer, John  
The Jackson Ward Historic Distric;  
Richmond Department of Planning and Community Development,  
Richmond, VA

## Oral History

### Interview, transcribed:

Diann Jacox with Mr. Armstead Walker,  
Richmond, VA, February 20, 1981.

Diann Jacox with Mrs. mamie E. Crawford,  
Richmond, VA, March 5, 1981.

Diann Jacox with Dr. Maggie L. Lewis, Chicago,  
IL, April 18, 1981.

Diann Jacox with Mrs. Bernetta Plummer and Mr.  
Anthony Binga, Richmond, VA, March 13, 1981.

### Interview Taped:

Celia Jackson and William Sydner with Mr.  
Madison Jones, Richmond, VA, March 21, 1983.

Celia Jackson and William Sydner with Mrs.  
Harriet Bell, Norfolk, VA, July 21, 1983.

### Newspapers:

Richmond Planet/currently Richmond  
Afro-American  
Richmond News Leader  
Richmond Times Dispatch  
The St. Luke Herald/late St. Luke Fraternal  
Bulletin.

### Reports:

Chandler, Sallie  
Maggie Lena Walker 1867 - 1934:  
An Abstract of Her Life and Activity;  
Thesis; Virginia Commonwealth University,  
Richmond, VA, 1975.

Fleming, Jesse, E.  
A History of Consolidated Bank and Trust  
Company (The beginning of Black Banking In The  
United States); published by the Consolidated  
Bank and Trust Company, Richmond, VA, 1972.

Marlowe, Gertrude W. with the assistance of  
Kim Q. Boyd, Cheryl Christmas, and Denise  
Jones  
A Critical Review Of Selected Sources  
Available On The Public Career Of Maggie L.  
Walker;  
Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Howard  
University, under contract with the National  
Park Service, 1984.

General Managment Plan - Development Concept Plan, Maggie L. Walker NHS;  
Denver Service Center, 1982.

Historic Structures Report, Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site;  
Prepared by Margaret Pierson Michler and John M. Dickey, F.A.I.A; Media,  
Pennsylvania for the National Park Service.

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, National Register of Historic  
Places Inventory - Nomination Form: "Maggie L. Walker House", 1976.

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, National Register of Historic  
Places Inventory Nomination Form: "Jackson Ward."

Walker, Maggie L.                    "Diary"- Richmond, VA, 1917 - 1922  
    "Diary"- Richmond, VA 1925  
    "Diary"- Richmond, VA 1928  
    "Diary"- Richmond, VA 1930 - 1931  
    (Unpublished, Maggie L. Walker NHS Archives)