

II

Guides to Streets and Homes

Let me preface the six chapters of Part II with one admonition and four items of explanation.

- **READ PART I.** In one of Conan Doyle's tales, Sherlock Holmes asks Dr. Watson how many steps there are in the main stairs of their abode at 221B Baker Street, a stairs Watson had gone up and down countless times. When Watson cannot tell him, Holmes exclaims: "You see but you do not observe."

The three chapters of Part I are intended to help a person *observe* the Old North rather than only see it. Therefore, I urge anyone who has not already read those chapters at least to skim them before taking to the Old North streets guided only by Part II chapters. These Part II chapters assume some knowledge of the Part I chapters and one's walk will therefore be much richer when informed by them.

- **NUMBER STREETS CONSOLIDATED WITH LETTER STREETS.** The Old North consists of six north-south streets that are named for alphabet letters (B, C, D, E, F, G) and three numbered east-west streets (Fifth, Sixth, Seventh). The great majority of structures front the lettered streets and there are twice as many lettered as numbered streets. Taking account of these facts, in order to make walking easier I have organized the properties by lettered streets and inserted numbered street properties at their point of proximity to a lettered street. For example, in the chapter on G Street, 716 Sixth Street would be described between 537 and 603 G Street, this being its point of proximity to a lettered street.

- **REVERSE ALPHABETICAL STREET DESCRIPTIONS.** Logically, the six letter-named streets should be described in alphabetical order. I have, however, put “social-logic” before alphabetic logic and reversed the order. This is because Davis developed in (more-or-less) expanding circles from the train station at G and Second streets. As part of this, development moved up G Street and gradually west through F, E, D, C, and B streets. Reverse alphabetical description therefore reflects this history more accurately. Moreover, walking tours are most likely to start from G Street, making it the most natural first chapter in Part II.
- **MEANING OF THE SYMBOL “ † ”.** Thirty-two Old North homes and structures were included in the 1996 *City of Davis Cultural Resources Inventory* (ARG 1966). All 32 of these are pictured and described in Part II, where they are identified with a cross (†) after the heading for the text on each.
- **MEANINGS OF “HEC” AND “ARG.”** For brevity’s sake, I cite the Historic Environment Consultants 1980 *Cultural Resources Inventory* of Davis as “HEC” and the Architectural Resources Group 1996 *City of Davis Cultural Resources Inventory* as “ARG.”

4

G Street

Commerce on the Eastern Edge

Before World War II, a large number of trains ran through Davis every day and this had two effects on property adjacent to the tracks: noise annoyance if one lived there and attractiveness as sites for railroad sidings and loading. The first condition retarded residential construction next to the tracks and the second prompted commerce along the tracks.

With the decline of the railroads after World War II, G Street became more attractive for homes and less attractive as a site for commerce using railroad sidings, which were abandoned and even covered over. Other kinds of commerce then began on G Street.

G Street in the Late 1930s

The photograph reproduced in Fig. 4.1 conveys the relative bareness of G even into the late-1930s, when the picture was taken. The large, long structure to the right in Fig. 4.1 is a grain



4.1. Corner of Fifth and G looking north along G in the late 1930s. The house in the middle of the picture is 536 G, at the southeast corner of G and Sixth. The Plant grain storage shed is on the right. (Courtesy Clarence Barry)

G Street Residences, Residents, Rentals

Here is how G Street compares to the other five lettered streets in terms of the population and housing statistics reported for the Old North as a whole in Ch. 1.

1. RESIDENCES. Compared to the other streets, G Street has:

- 1) fewer residential units,
- 2) fewer signature homes (the period homes that give the Old North its special appearance, discussed in Ch. 1), and
- 3) fewer lot-dominant (visually prominent) structures.

The substantial portion of the land used commercially explains these lower numbers. Even so, G Street does have 21 signature homes, which are 14% of the Old North total and ranks G next to last among streets.

2. TINY/HIDDEN ABODES. However, G Street has a relatively high percentage of all the tiny and/or hidden abodes—22%, ranking it second to E Street which has 38% (13 for G versus 23 for E).

3. RESIDENTS. G Street has a relatively small percentage of the total Old North population (71 of 609 people or 12%), again ranking it next to last (just above B Street).

4. RESIDENTS IN SIGNATURE HOMES. A high percentage of this smaller population—89%—live in a signature home or in ancillary abodes (63 of 71). This ranks G second among streets and above the Old North average of 63%.

5. OWNER-OCCUPIED SIGNATURE HOMES. G Street ranks second among streets in the percent of all its residential units that are owner-occupied signature homes—34% as compared to 24% in the Old North as a whole and to 18% on F and C, 20% on E, 29% on D, and 78% on B.

6. OWNER-OCCUPIED VERSUS RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. Narrowing the focus to owner-occupancy of only signature homes rather than all residential units: 48% of G Street signature homes are owner-occupied, ranking it third among streets.

This generalization is important enough to state in the reverse as a way to signal its significance: *52% of G Street signature homes are rentals, ranking it fourth among streets.*

7. ABSENTEE LANDLORDS OF SIGNATURE HOMES. 10% of landlords of G Street rental signature homes do not live in Davis, which ranks it sixth or lowest among streets on this characteristic.

Overall, G Street is among the “smaller” of the six streets in several senses, including population size and number of residences.

processing and storage shed fronting the railroad track. There is a rail siding between the building and the track. That business closed

in 1945 and the building was removed shortly thereafter, making way for Hibbert Lumber.

Of historical interest, pre-World War II grain commerce was organized on the principle of “bagging,” that is, of packaging grain in bags that humans could move and stack by hand. Grain silos, bulk railroad containers, and trucks rapidly made bagging obsolete.

500 G Street: Hibbert Lumber Company

A venerable Davis institution at the northeast corner of Fifth and G (Fig. 4.2), the Hibbert Lumber Company celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1997. It began as and remains a family-owned and operated business.



4.2. The Hibbert Lumber Company building in the late 1950s. There is no stop light or even stop sign at Fifth and G. Fifth Street ends at the railroad, just beyond the right edge of this photograph. (Courtesy Becky Hibbert)

G Street 1930s Homes

The five homes at 506, 512, 516, 522, and 526 G were constructed in the late 1930s.

The rarity of snow in Davis prompted people to take pictures of it, which is what Clarence Barry did on the 500 block of G Street on March 20, 1942, a scene shown in Fig. 4.3. Notice the “new development” quality conveyed by the landscaping.

536 G Street

The southeast corner of Sixth and G is the third place the house at 536 G has been located (Fig. 4.4). It was built in 1916 at the confluence of Putah Creek and the Canal, three miles southeast of Davis, for newlyweds of the pioneer Plant-Dolcini family.



4.3. Snow on G Street, March 20, 1942, showing, from the left, 516, 512, and 506 G. The grain shed is visible in the left of this photo, behind 516 G. (Courtesy Clarence Barry)

The raging waters of Putah Creek, which flooded the road to Davis, made winter visits to town extremely hazardous and daily trips to school impossible. Therefore, in 1924, the house was moved to June Acres Stock Farm, four miles east of Davis.

Its third and last move, to its present location, came in 1938. Additions and improvements accompanied each move.

It has served continuously as the Dolcini family home since 1916.

4.4. 536 G Street, at the southeast corner of G and Sixth.



Bowers Corner: Northwest Sixth and G

In one sense, the current neighborhood began at the northwest corner of Sixth and G streets on January 22, 1913. That Wednesday morning, workmen began laying sidewalk along G and along Sixth. With that act, farm land turned into town land.

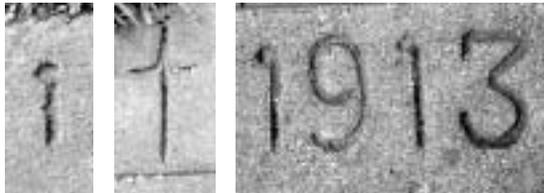
As described in Ch. 3, the same sidewalk is there today. Arrows marking the property lines and numbers identifying the lots were pressed into the wet cement and these are, in very high percentage, still there to see. For example, the first lot at the corner

in Fig. 4.5 is “lot 1, block 1” of Bowers Addition and the “1” is quite clear in the cement (Fig. 4.6).

4.5. 1997 view of Bowers Corner from G looking along Sixth toward B.



4.6. The lot number and property line arrow at 603 G and the year at 623-25 G.



Historic Events at Bowers Corner

By the mid-1940s, the corner of Sixth and G had become a starting point for parades into and through the Downtown. The end of World War II was a major occasion for such parading (Fig. 4.7).

Commerce North of Sixth Street

The block formed by Sixth, Sweet Briar (formerly Cemetery Road), G, and the railroad has been used for a variety of commercial purposes over the decades.

In the 1930s, a produce-packing shed stood by the tracks just north of Sixth Street, complete with its own railroad siding. (Its roof is visible just behind 536 G in Fig. 4.1). The Shell Oil Company had a small storage facility at the north end of the block.

By the middle 1940s, the businesses occupying both these locations had changed. In the north, along Sweet Briar, there was a honey extracting operation on the old oil storage site. Somewhat later, two small rental cottages occupied the northwest corner of the block (Whitcombe 1955, 121-122). In the south, along Sixth Street, the Davis Ice and Fuel Company operated by Richard Barlow, a well-known Davis figure, replaced the produce packing shed, which had been removed (Roberts 1996a; Fig. 4.8).

Davis Joins In Victory Celebration

**Excitement Prevails When
News of Surrender Comes.
Stores Close; Parade Wed.**

Wednesday saw every place in the community shut tight and only those who must, labored throughout the day.

In the evening at six o'clock a parade gathered at the corner of 6th and G streets. It was composed of any and everything to give vent to the joy of victory. Headed by Chief of Police Gattrell it followed a course down G Street to Second, west on Second to C Street then north to Fourth and back to G where it disbanded.

Prominent in the parade were riders of the Circle "D" Horsemen's club. Mayor C. A. Covell in a "ten gallon" hat sat astride a white horse named "Hirohito." The fire department—sirens sounding a deafening roar and as the cortege progressed, it gathered in length and strength. Enthusiastic residents joined in the line with the horns sounding.

4.7. The end of World War II parade forms-up at Sixth and G streets. (DE, 8-7-45)

In 1947, Barlow also established a nursery at the northeast corner of Sixth and G, in front of his ice and fuel business. It and the couple to whom he later sold it are shown in Fig. 4.9.

4.8. Pearl and Richard Barlow in front of their Union Ice Company building, middle 1940s. A fuel storage building is behind the ice house and next to the railroad.



(Courtesy Mickey Barlow)

4.9. Barlow's Adobe Garden Shop and Nursery and its proprietors, Betty and Dick Fawcett, at Sixth and G, 1952. 607 and 613 G are visible in the left-hand background. (Courtesy Mickey Barlow)



In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Pacific Coast Aggregates operated an aggregate processing plant on the north end of the block. Much of its output is reported to have gone into the new junior high school built on the Old North block bounded by Fifth, B, Sixth and C (the “Hanley Block,” described in Ch. 8).

Historically, this entire G Street block was held by a single owner, even though that owner has changed over time. For a period, Southern Pacific Railroad owned it.

In the later 1950s, the ownership changed and all the then existing businesses were removed. The Safeway grocery chain acquired the southern part of the block and constructed a grocery that opened in 1960.

Shortly after this, the northern portion of the block was developed separately as the strip of shops one sees there now. The resulting complex, with its shared parking lot, anchoring supermarket, and block of contiguous storefronts was, in some planning views, a textbook example of the “planned neighborhood shopping center.”

In the 1970s, a small Texaco gas station operated at the southeast corner of G and Sweet Briar. After it ceased business, the building briefly housed a fish store. Later in the decade, all the buildings north of the shopping center were cleared.

Pursuing a corporate policy of ever larger stores, Safeway closed its G Street store in 1980. Empty for a time, the company

leased the building as an internally subdivided “Public Market” containing several small shop spaces, including a limited-size (non-competing) grocery store.

This venture failed within a year and the building was closed until it was leased to Davis Food Cooperative, Inc. in 1984. The Co-op operated the building in the multi-tenant “Public Market” configuration for a time, but then consolidated it into only two spaces, an enlarged Co-op grocery and a section subleased to the Davis Community Clinic, a medical facility for low-income people.

In the 1990s the Co-op purchased the building from Safeway and the clinic acquired its own facility and moved out. These changes opened the way to restoring the entire structure to the grocery store it once had been (Fig. 4.10). This remodeling was celebrated in an October, 1997 “Grand Reopening.”



4.10. 1997 street view of The Davis Food Cooperative, Inc. building.

The remodeled design has been controversial in several ways. Co-op leaders have explained it as, among other things, an effort to establish a landmark structure in the Old North part of Davis.

Many residents think, though, that this landmark is not particularly in tune with the character of the area. Indeed, some regard the building as an assault on the aesthetic of the neighborhood, which is, of course, one of the purposes of post modern deconstructionist architecture, the label the architect applies to the remodel (McGinn, DE, 6-7-98).

Various elements of the design are said by the architect to carry cooperative movement as well as post modern meanings (an intriguing mix, certainly). Too detailed to go into here, a brochure explaining the intricate symbolism of the building’s design has been available at the information desk in the store (Ogrydziak Architects 1997).

The Davis Food Co-op is not simply a grocery store. It is also a social movement or a way of life. These movement/lifestyle aspects are not only imbedded in the building’s architecture, but also

in the accouterments of its parking lot. Most visibly, the outdoor clock near the corner of Sixth and G celebrates what Co-op officials believe to have been, in 1997, 100 years of cooperative movement activity in Davis.

Continuing the tradition of starting parades at Sixth and G, the Co-op parking lot hosts the start of the annual Holiday Children's Parade (Fig. 4.11).

4.11. Excerpts from a 1997 Davis Downtown Business Association flier promoting the annual Children's Parade. This is one of several events starting at or taking place in the Co-op parking lot at Sixth and G.

Holiday Celebrations in Downtown Davis

Children's Parade

Thursday, December 4

6:00 p.m. (Line-up starts at 5:50 p.m.)

Location: Starts at 620 G Street (Davis Food Co-op)

Children are invited to join in the annual Children's Parade. Davis Food Co-op will be providing candles to carry (non-burning alternatives will be provided for younger children, while supplies last). Children will be joined by the Cal Aggie Band, McGruff The Crime Dog, Santa Claus, The Madrigal Choir, and more! The Children's Parade will be followed by the official community tree lighting and the annual downtown Holiday Open House.

The East 600 Block of G: The Old North Center

Traditionally, the east 600 block of G did not have a place or shopping center name. Only in the late 1990s, when new shopping centers became an issue in Davis, did city planners dub this block the "Coop Center" (*sic*) as a way to identify it in planning charts showing all 10 of the existing or proposed "shopping center zoning districts" (Interview with City of Davis planner, March 27, 1998).

That name, though, is only a planning convenience and not an official name or the result of any public or democratic process of review. Should there be such a process, my preference would be to name this shopping area after its neighborhood and therefore to call it the Old North Center.

Bungalows on G Street

G street has 19% (6 of 32) of all the surviving Old North bungalows, with four on G Street—at 607, 617, 627, and 631—and two on Seventh—at 717 and 721.

613 G Street†

613 G is the first in a series of multi-apartment structures on the west side of the 600 block of G, but you have to look carefully to see that they *are* multi-apartment buildings.

This 1930s Colonial Revival cottage at 613 G has two 1960-70s constructed apartments appended to the back of it—although these are virtually invisible from G Street (and not visible in Fig. 4.12).

Indeed, the 1996 ARG surveyors appear to have missed the rear apartments because they did not include them in their description of this structure as a cultural resource.

These surveyors do mention, though, that the house has been “converted to commercial use” (an insurance office and the Davis bureau of the *Sacramento Bee*) (ARG, 323).

The cultural resource features of the house include its “projecting porch supported by two classically stylized columns.” It is the porch that “gives the house Colonial Revival characteristics” (ARG, 323).

4.12. 613 G Street.



631 G Street†

ARG historical surveyors remarked that the “small, one story bungalow” at 631 G (Fig. 4.13) “contributes to the overall character of the neighborhood” by virtue of its “prominent attic dormer” and “a recessed porch [that] is accessed via several steps” (ARG, 325-326).

4.13. 631 G Street.



Likely constructed in the 1920s, “the house has a gable roof running parallel to the street . . . [and] is sheathed in horizontal wood siding” (ARG, 325).

635 G Street†

Like 631 G, ARG surveyors were impressed that 635 G “contributes to the overall character of the neighborhood.” They describe it as a “small, one story house” which has a “projecting front porch,” a “gable roof [that] runs parallel to the street” and “six over one double hung windows” (ARG, 327) (Fig. 4.14).

4.14. 635 G Street.



635 G is testimony to the adroitness of the developer’s design in that the ARG surveyors apparently again did not notice that this building is actually part of a two-lot complex of apartments encompassing the adjoining lot, 641 G Street. In all, there are five living units plus the corporate office of the developer in the street-facing unit of 635 G Street.

This design at 635-641 G Street continues the muted high-density phenomenon along the west side of G Street (see 613 G Street).

721 Seventh Street

In the early 20th century, palm trees were popular among Davisites. In Fig. 4.15 we see that in the middle 1920s, several young specimens grew in the front yard of the home on the northwest corner of G and Seventh (721 Seventh Street).

But, as one can see from looking at that corner now, the palms are gone—and few remain in the Davis landscape.

4.15. Palm trees in the front yard of 721 Seventh Street, mid-1920s. G Street, with the railroad behind it, is in the background. (Courtesy Jane Zakarian)



Because G Street is proximate to the railroad tracks and is now a northern “spike” extension of the Davis Core Area commercial zone, it has a number of obvious contrasts with the other five north-south streets of the Old North. As we move west, the streetscape changes quite considerably.

5

F Street

The Traffic Artery

A curious person might ask about F Street: How did all those charming homes get built on such a heavily trafficked road? Why would one build so close to so much noise, danger, and other annoyances?

The answer is that people did not build under these conditions. When most F Street homes were constructed, there was little traffic on the street because it came to a dead-end at Seventh. (The dead-end is visible in the 1946 aerial photograph reproduced as Fig. 2.4.)

But the large UC Davis and city expansions of the 1950s and 1960s changed all this for F Street. Development to the north demanded access from and to the south. F Street was thus “cut through” to the north and transformed from a quiet residential byway to a major traffic artery.

Despite being so beset, much charm persists on F Street (and traffic calming and diverting measures that would improve life on this street are not beyond the realm of possibility).

F Street is the Old North’s “Bungalow Heaven”

F Street has more classic bungalows than any two other Old North streets combined. Here we find 13 of the 32 that survive in the area, which is 41% of the total.

There are three in the 500 block, at 507, 513, and 519. Of them, historical resource surveyors inventoried 513.

At the northwest corner of Sixth Street west of F, we have 619 and 621 Sixth. The surveyors inventoried 621 Sixth.

The 600 block boasts the largest number of any Old North block and likely any block in Davis: eight. These are at 613, 618,

619, 623, 633, 637, 643, and 647. The historical resource surveyors have inventoried three of them, those at 618, 619, and 643.

F Street Residences, Residents, Rentals

As with G Street, here are numerical indicators of F's residential, resident, and rental "size."

1. RESIDENCES. Compared to other streets, F:

- 1) has an average number of residential units (60),
- 2) contains the largest number of signature homes (34), and
- 3) ties with E Street for the largest number of lot-dominant structures.

These measures tell us that F Street is robust relative to the rest of the Old North as regards the number and characteristics of its residential units.

F Street's geographical position as (1) somewhat farther from the railroad tracks (reducing train annoyance) but (2) closer to the original downtown than other Old North streets shows up in these statistics in terms of the street having the highest percentage of signature homes, which means people built on F earlier than on other streets.

2. TINY/HIDDEN ABODES. F Street has a "middling" number of tiny and/or hidden abodes (10 of 60 or 18%), ranking third behind E with 38% and G with 22%

3. RESIDENTS. F also ranks third in number of residents (127 of 609, or 21%), behind E with 25% and C with 24%

4. RESIDENTS IN SIGNATURE HOMES. F is fourth among streets on the percentage of residents who live in a signature home or in an ancillary abode on the same property (e. g. a converted garage or an apartment unit behind the lot-dominant structure) (88 of 127, which is 69%).

5. OWNER-OCCUPIED SIGNATURE HOMES AND ALL RESIDENCES. F street ties with C for last place in the percent of all its residential units that are owner-occupied signature homes (11 of 60, which is 18%).

6. OWNER-OCCUPIED VERSUS RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. Narrowing the focus to owner-occupancy of only signature homes rather than all residential units: *F Street ranks a clear dead last with 11 of 34—32%— of signature homes owner-occupied.*

As with G Street, the above statistic is important enough to warrant stating in the reverse: *F Street ranks first in the percent of its signature homes that are rentals (68%).*

7. ABSENTEE LANDLORDS OF RENTED SIGNATURE HOMES. Putting the misleading case of B Street to the side, F ties with C for the highest percentage of rental signature homes with landlords who give out-of-Davis addresses on their county tax roll listing (10 of 23 or 43%).

All the bungalows included in the ARG or HEC surveys are pictured and described in the pages ahead.

619 Fifth Street: Example of “Abode Creep”

The building at 619 Fifth Street (Fig. 5.1) is an example of an odd but wonderfully developed structure that is simply the rear part of 503 F. It is not on the 1921 or 1933 Sanborn maps, but the original garage portion appears on the 1953 Sanborn. That map shows an overhang to the right that is now enclosed while yet another overhang has been added to the right. This is an example of creating a home by slow, over-the-years creep.

5.1. 619 Fifth Street, an example of “abode creep.”



513 F Street (The Bentley Home)[†]

The 1980 HEC surveyors declared that 513 F’s “architectural values provide its primary significance. The bungalow is a good representative of Craftsman styling with typical materials, form, and image of the era. Although not large, the structure’s composition and scale add to its visual importance and presence” (HEC, 227-228).

These surveyors elaborate this assessment of architectural significance in these terms:

This symmetrical one and a half story Craftsman bungalow has a gabled roof with a generous broadly arched porch under the street side eaves that extends the full width of the house. Battered pillars support the roof at the porch corners. Slender brackets support gable overhangs. Surface materials are clapboard, shingles, wood with a clinker brick porch base. A dormer window with vents projects from the gabled roof (HEC, 227).

They also report on the long-standing multiple-occupancy of this house, a feature that is not immediately apparent from the street. “The building has been altered to accommodate additional units of

dwelling space and an added stair extends to the top story on the north side to provide access” (HEC, 227; Fig. 5.2).

5.2. 513 F Street. (The Bentley Home).



621 Sixth Street †

Constructed in the 1920s, 621 Sixth Street (Fig. 5.3) “is an excellent example of a Craftsman style bungalow [and] . . . is a strong contributor to a neighborhood rich in bungalow style structures,” opined the 1996 ARG surveyors (ARG, 282).

The special features of this stuccoed Craftsman include its “intersecting gable roofs perpendicular to the street. The gable over the main portion of the house is punctuated by an attic vent. The porch has a gable roof with the ridge running parallel to the street [and] is supported by two canted piers on bases with an additional area to be used as planter holders. The porch has a low arch that comes to a point in the center. A large tripartite window with an awning occupies the east end of the front elevation” (ARG, 281).

5.3. 621 Sixth Street.



618 F Street†

Probably built in the late 1910s, 618 F was among the first houses constructed on this block.

Like a number of other Old North homes, 618 F has seen the hard times of not being loved and cared for by its owner(s). However, this house has been more fortunate than some others because it now has owners who have invested in renovation and remodeling (Fig. 5.4).

5.4. 618 F Street in the late 1990s, after renovation and remodeling.



In Fig. 5.5 we get a glimpse of a former and sad period of 618 F's life.

5.5. 618 F Street before renovation and remodeling. (Courtesy Roxie Eichelberger)



619 F Street†

The 1996 historical surveyors considered 619 F Street (Fig. 5.6) “a particularly well designed and proportioned Craftsman style house” (ARG, 318).

Constructed sometime between 1910 and 1920, “this two story . . . home has a gable roof running parallel to the street. A large tripartite dormer window with its own gable punctures the main roof. Both roofs have bracketed overhangs. A front porch

runs the entire length of the house. Four tapered, classically inspired square columns support the porch and rest on a parapet wall. The house is clad with horizontal wood siding except in the gables of the main roof which are shingled. The front door is slightly off center and is the only asymmetrical feature of the front elevation. Large tripartite windows flank either side of the front door” (ARG, 317).

5.6. 619 F Street.



620 F Street†

Constructed in the early 1930s or late 1920s, 620 F (Fig. 5.7) has a “projecting porch supported by thin posts, . . . a gable roof that is perpendicular to the street [and] . . . is sheathed in horizontal wood siding” (ARG, 319).

ARG surveyors note that “the roof of the main house mimics the form of the front porch and has an attic vent. The front door is accessed off the small porch and there is one double hung window on the south side of the front elevation” (ARG, 319).

5.7. 620 F Street.



643 F Street[†]

The 1980 historical surveyors report that 643 F Street (Fig. 5.8) was constructed in 1916 “solely as an investment, a common past and present enterprise in Davis, and has always been used as a rental” (HEC, 230). Even so, 643 F Street has architectural value because of the “quality and execution of detailing combined with [its] careful proportions” (HEC, 230).

Specifically, “the proportions of the house emphasize its horizontality The shallow hipped roof . . . intersects the low gabled roof of the porch over the entrance The porch roof is supported by double posts set on stucco piers. The brackets at the eaves add ornament to the roofline. A shallow slanted cantilevered bay extends from the front of the house” (HEC, 229; ARG, 321).

5.8. 643 F Street.



623 Seventh Street (The Anderson-Hamel House)[†]

623 Seventh Street is a 1903 Queen Anne cottage which was originally located five blocks south of this site, at the northwest corner of Second and F streets, and moved to its current location in the late 1940s (Fig. 5.10).

- **HISTORY.** As noted earlier, unlike Woodland, which had (and still has) extensive turn-of-the century neighborhoods of mansions and near-mansions, Davis “was never a rich town” and had only a few “stately” homes (Dolcini, 1996, 156; Walters 1995, 1997; Pinegar and Wilkinson 1997).

The Queen Anne here at 623 Seventh was among the small number of Davis’ slightly more stately turn-of-the century houses. While impressive and the home of a member of the Davis elite, it is quietly modest in scale compared even to other affluent Davis

homes of the same period. (Notice its neighbor, the Weber home, in Fig. 5.9.)



5.9. The Anderson-Hamel house in its original location at the northwest corner of Second and F streets. This photograph was taken around 1910 and looks west along Second Street, toward the University Farm. The large home in the center of the photograph is the Weber mansion, which was torn down to make way for the Brinley Building now at the northeast corner of Second and E. (Courtesy Hattie Weber Museum)

John B. Anderson, a Canadian who came to the Davis area in 1893, had the house built in 1903. He started the Davisville Cash Store, was involved in forming the Bank of Davis in 1913, and served as Davis' first mayor after city incorporation in 1917 (Tyler 1992).

5.10. 623
Seventh Street,
The Anderson-
Hamel House.



The house was purchased by another Davis elite family—the Hamels—in 1923. Members of this family lived in it into the 1940s and it was then bought by a member of the Quessenberry family who moved it in order to clear the way for the Quessenberry Drug Store at Second and F streets (Tyler 1992).

• **DESECRATION AND RESTORATION.** In the 1950s the house was “modernized” by removing all its external Queen Anne features and it became a decaying, nondescript rental.

Noni and David Storm purchased it in the early 1970s and went to great pains to restore it to its original appearance. This process included the good luck of discovering the original gingerbread woodwork in the four-foot crawl space under the house. Other details were reconstructed from an early photograph of the house (Tyler 1992).

• **RECENT USES.** The Storms originally used the restored house as the office of Storm Engineering, but later converted it to a bed and breakfast inn, a venture that was not commercially successful. Used again as a residence in the early 1990s, it has more recently become an office.

• **ARCHITECTURE.** A Queen Anne cottage, the HEC and ARG surveyors describe 623 Seventh as composed of two gabled sections integrated by a hipped porch roof. The narrow clapboard of the walls is contrasted with the fishscale shingles of the gable ends. There are louvered vents in the gables, with cornice moldings, and a dentil course at the line of the soffited eaves.

The porch has turned columns, jigsaw panels with pendant, and a railing made of geometrically arranged rectangles. [It] is accessed via four steps. Several window openings occur under the roof of the porch which turns the corner on the east elevation (HEC, 179; ARG, 125).

Following the observations in Ch. 1 on windows taller than they are wide, note the conspicuous presence of tall windows in 623 Seventh. Indeed, one of the owners, Noni Storm, has remarked on the key importance of these windows in providing “excellent natural lighting” and avoiding a “dark feeling” (Tyler 1992).

• **HISTORICAL STATUS.** In 1997, Davis had 33 “Designated Historical Resources,” which are houses, other structures, and physical formations considered culturally important enough to warrant degrees of legal protection from change without public consideration.

The 33 are themselves divided into two classes: simply Historical Resources (18 in number) versus Outstanding Historical Resources (13 in number). The latter enjoy more legal protection against change or demolition than the former.

Seven of the 13 Outstanding Historical Resources are houses and, pertinent here, the Anderson-Hamel home is one of those seven. In the words of one writer, this home has the social standing of a “precious architectural gem” (Tyler 1992).

The Seventh and F Area in the Middle 1920s

We are fortunate that the Mary and George Vansell family liked to take photographs outdoors in the 1920s and that their daughter, Jane Zakarian, saved these images, for their pictures create valuable windows on the early years of Old North life and its landscape. In addition to photos seen in other chapters, in Fig. 5.11 we have a 1920s view in the vicinity of F Street along Seventh.

5.11. Summer, 1924 photo of Mrs. Mary Jane Vansell and daughters Jane and Margaret Alice taken in front of 713 Seventh looking south with G Street to the left and F Street to the right. 631 G is seen on the left and 620 F is seen on the right. Both houses are still there. (Courtesy Jane Zakarian)



As mentioned in Ch. 3 and elaborated earlier in this chapter, F Street ended at Seventh Street for most of Davis' history. It was cut through to Eighth Street and further north only after World War II. As might be expected, turning F Street into a major north-south traffic artery has had many effects on the lives of people living there. In particular, the traffic tends to discourage families with small children and to encourage student rental housing, a trend evidenced in the statistics on F Street given at the beginning of this chapter.

6

E Street

The Geographical Center

E Street forms the east-west geographical midpoint of the Old North. Indeed, the intersection of Sixth and E is the central point of the neighborhood.

If traffic allows, stand in the middle of that intersection and look down each street emanating from you in four directions. This vantage point provides a clear-cut image of the neighborhood's compactness and its physically clear boundaries. You see that it is terminated by the railroad track to the east, Fifth Street to the south, Civic Center Park to the west, and the end of E Street to the north.

Parades On E Street

Perhaps because of its geographical centrality, local parades tend to use E Street. Among them is the fall Davis High School homecoming parade, which begins downtown and winds its way to the high school, often along E Street (Fig. 6.1).

6.1. Float in the 1997 Davis High School homecoming parade. 522 and 516 E are in the background.



In 1997, a "Cyclebration" of "human-power" in the sense of human-powered transportation formed at the Civic Center

Park on B, moved east along Sixth and turned toward the

E Street Residences, Residents, Rentals

This is E Street's profile of population and housing.

1. RESIDENCES. Compared to other streets, E Street:

- 1) has the largest percentage of all Old North residential units (80 of 128 or 28%, as compared to C in second place with 62 units, which is 22%),
- 2) ranks second in its percentage of signature homes (30 of 146 or 20%), and
- 3) ties with F Street for the largest number of lot-dominant structures (40, which is 22% of the total).

E Street's high residential units rank is due to the apartment buildings fronting Seventh Street (a situation that also elevates the number of units for C and F).

2. TINY/HIDDEN ABODES. E Street has an unusually large 38 (23 of 60) of Old North "tiny and/or hidden abodes" because of the peculiarity of Pomegranate Place, an 11-cottage complex behind the house at 521 Seventh Street (described below in this chapter). Otherwise, this street is not notably out of line in such structures, for which the overall Old North percentage is 22 (60 of 281).

3. RESIDENTS. In having the largest number of residential units, E Street also has the largest number of residents—152 of 609 people, or 25%.

4. RESIDENTS IN SIGNATURE HOMES. Because of the apartment houses just mentioned, a relatively low 59% of E Street residents live in a signature home or in an ancillary abode on the same property, typically a converted garage or an apartment unit behind the lot-dominant signature home (89 of 152). This percentage ranks it fifth among streets, above C at 41%, and considerably below most other streets.

5. OWNER-OCCUPIED SIGNATURE HOMES AND ALL RESIDENCES. Along with F and C streets, E ranks low on the percentage of all its residential units that are owner-occupied signature homes (20% for E and 18% each for C and F).

6. OWNER-OCCUPIED VERSUS RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. However, if we look at owner-occupancy as a percentage of all signature homes rather than of all residential units, E Street ranks much higher among streets. It is now second (16 of 30 or 53%), behind B with 88%. Stated in the reverse: *E Street ranks fifth in the percentage of its signature homes that are renter occupied (47%),* which is not far behind G at fourth with 52%, and C and D at 56% and 57%, respectively.

7. ABSENTEE LANDLORDS OF RENTED SIGNATURE HOMES. E Street ranks fourth in the percentage of its rented signature homes with owners who give out-of-Davis addresses on the county tax roll (4 of 14, which is 29%).

Downtown on E Street (Fig. 6.2). (This event also celebrated “the bicycle as art” [DE, 5-9-97].)

6.2. A unit in the 1997 “human power” parade promoting non-automobile transport and celebrating the bicycle. 522 E is in the background.



Bungalows on E Street

E street is “bungalow-challenged” with only three of the Old North’s 32 bungalows (9%). These are at 516, 517 and 616. 516 and 616 are included in the city’s inventory of historical resources (and are described below).

502 E Street (The Tingus Home)[†]

502 E (Fig. 6.3) was built in 1936 for George and Constance Tingus. Still owned by the Tingus family, the widowed Mrs. Tingus lived here into the 1990s. The house is now a rental.

6.3. 502 E Street (The Tingus Home).



The 1996 historical surveyors dub this home a “Spanish inspired stucco house” that has a “gable roof running parallel to the street” and “two cross gables [that] intersect the main gabled roof. A small gable covers the porch which has an arched entry. A second larger gable has a decorative, arched attic vent. Two large multipaned windows are present on either side of the entry” (ARG, 301).

508 E Street (The Granucci Home)[†]

508 E (Fig. 6.4) was built in 1936 and for the family of J. F. and Annie Granucci. Like Mrs. Tingus next door, the widowed Mrs. Granucci lived in this house into the 1990s. Indeed, through the 1970s and 1980s, the two women often sat in front of their respective homes or visited together in one or the other’s front porches or yards.

The 1996 historical surveyors felt that “this is a particularly charming Medieval or Tudor Revival brick home. The brick work consists of a well executed arch at the front window and intermittent darker glazed brick within the front facade. A gable roof with a long sweeping southern end dominates the front facade and intersects the gable of the main portion of the house . . . ” (ARG, 303).

6.4. 508 E Street (The Granucci Home).



The ARG surveyors also thought this home “is a strong contributor to the overall character of the neighborhood . . . It is one of only a few brick homes in this neighborhood” (ARG, 304).

Early 1950s E Street Streetscape

The background of the photograph of Wayne Wooden reproduced in Fig. 6.5 helps us form a sense of E Street in the early

1950s. He is standing in front of his home at 512 E, with 516 E in the right background.

His mother, Kay Wooden, reports the large palm tree behind Wayne in the front yard of 516 E was a spot where neighbors gathered to chat.

The palm is no longer there because a resident of 516 E who was learning to operate an automobile knocked it down in a driving mishap.

6.5. Wayne Wooden in his front yard at 512 E Street, with the early 1950s E Street streetscape behind him. (Courtesy Kay and Wes Wooden)



513 E Street (The Miller Home)

513 E was the home of Danne and Effie Miller from 1933 to the 1990s. During the 1920s and 1930s, Mr. Miller worked throughout Northern California on construction of the PG&E electric line system, including, in 1928, the overhead electric lines that run down the 500 and 600 blocks of E Street. He estimated that 513 E was constructed in 1928 for \$2,000. He bought it in 1933 for \$2,500, in the days, he says, when one was paid \$3.25 a day.

516 E Street (The Peña Home)[†]

516 E Street (Fig. 6.6) is one of the “eight little bungalows” described in Ch. 3 as having been built by A. R. Pedder in the 1910s. The family of Galvina Peña lived in this house in the 1920s.

The 1996 historical surveyors describe it as “a well crafted, stucco, one story bungalow. The overall composition of the house is symmetrical except for an off-center front door The porch roof gable is perpendicular to the street and is an echo of the main roofline of the house . . . The porch consists of two canted piers supporting the low arch of the porch span” (ARG, 305).

6 Guides to Streets and Homes

The Grecian Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*) spreading over the roof of this home is one of about 100 official *Davis Landmark Trees* (Core Area Specific Plan Task Force 1994, 66-70).

6.6. 516 E Street
(The Peña
Home).



517 E Street

517 E looks much older than records suggest it can be and it was likely built in the late 1920s. In local lore, though, it is the original farm house located in an almond orchard, now gone. (Fig. 7.2 shows that orchard.)

522 E Street (The Wright Home)

522 E was the home of Thomas and Hilda Wright from the 1940s. When housing was in short supply during World War II, the rooms of this house were brought in on trailers and bolted together on the foundation as a temporary measure that would last only a year or so. As is often said, there is nothing more permanent than a temporary structure.

523 E Street (The Bagley Home)

523 E was the home of the Floyd and Dorothy Bagley family from its construction in 1939 until 1974. In the 1930s and '40s, Floyd Bagley operated Davis' main grocery store, which was housed at the southwest corner of Third and G.

523 E was originally a one-story home. The two-bedroom and bath second story was added in the late 1950s in order to create more space for the three Bagley children.

The two-car garage building behind 523 E is original and was among the first and few two car garages in the Old North

before World War II. One resident of the 1930s reports that the Bagleys were seen by neighbors as ostentatious in constructing such a large garage.

In 1992, the present owners removed the casement window in the living room facing the street and replaced it with French doors opening onto the deck that was also added. (This house is an example of how some people will not leave well enough alone and fail to keep faith with the original architecture.)

524 E Street

524 E Street is a good example of faith-to-the-original remodeling. It has the appearance of late-1930s construction, as the main body is, but the porch and the extended front room are in fact 1980s extensions performed with great care, as a labor of love, by the father of the then owner.

The Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) at the rear is an official *Davis Landmark Tree* (Core Area Specific Plan Task Force 1994, 66-70).

6.7. 524 E Street, including a glimpse of the Coast Redwood Davis Landmark Tree towering behind it.



527 E Street

Unlike the many E Street homes that have been occupied by only one family for many years, 527 E Street has had a great many owners (seven since 1974 alone). Most made few improvements and skimped on maintenance, but, happily, the second most recent owners undertook wide-ranging upgrading and maintenance. The current owner-occupant has likewise treated this home affectionately.

533 E Street (The Arnold Home)

Built in the middle 1930s, the modest house at 533 E (Fig. 6.8) was, from the late 1940s to his death at age 82 in 1994, the home of Hubert Arnold, a multi-talented and wealthy eccentric and UC Davis professor of mathematics.

6. 8. 533 E Street (The Arnold Home).



Among other endeavors, over a period of 65 years he collected some 1,800 artistically-crafted ceramic pieces from almost 200 artists in many countries. Kept mostly in boxes and paper bags, these works of art (together with his large antique camera and other collections) were stuffed into this house and garage.

A few years before his death, he gave the ceramic collection, valued at several million dollars, to the Crocker Art Museum of Sacramento, where in 1989 it was featured as a major exhibit titled “One Man’s Collection” (Creative Arts League, 1989).

Arnold believed that Davis landscaping should be native and natural and his actions based on this belief explain why there is no Hackberry city street tree in front of 533 E. Once there was, but over the years he treated it in ways that resulted in its death. The trees now in the planting strip are those he thought were more appropriate and that he planted as replacement for the Hackberry.

Arnold was wealthy, but he spent little money on 533 E. The family who bought the house from his estate have engaged in major renovations and it is now an historic preservation gem.

600 Sixth Street (The Smalley Home)

In a 1996 interview with Marie LaCroix (who then resided at 600 Sixth), Mrs. Fay Smalley, then age 90, reported that she and her first husband, William Williams, built 600 Sixth themselves, assisted by relatives and friends, over a period of months in 1932 and 1933 (Fig. 6.9).

The couple paid \$750 for the lot and had to buy the construction materials, but they spent only \$8.50 for outside labor, Mrs. Smalley proudly reported. All the other labor was their own or that of relatives and friends. (Modern “sweat equity” looks anemic by comparison.)

6.9. 600 Sixth Street (The Smalley Home).



615 and 617 Sixth Street: “Storybook Primitivism”†

The twin cottages at 615 and 617 Sixth (Fig. 6.10) were built sometime in the late 1930s. Historical resource surveyors describe them as “topped by gabled roofs with their ridges parallel to the street The wood frame structures are sheathed with siding rounded to imitate logs. Stepping stones lead to the public sidewalk” (HEC, 171-172, ARG, 279-280).

6.10. 615 Sixth Street, the western of the twin “storybook primitive” cabins.



In addition, the HEC surveyors offer this marvelous interpretive text for understanding these houses:

They are wonderful examples of the urge to storybook primitivism, related to the desire to return to nature which recurs cyclically in American culture. It is a visual result of the same interests which caused the creation of the great public parks and forests in the 19th century, the Craftsman movement in the early 20th century, and the recent ecological enthusiasms. The mature trees complete the illusion of the forest primevae [sic] (HEC, 172).

607 E Street (The Lyda Williams Home)

607 E Street was the long-time home of Lyda Williams, whose front yard was for many years a magnificent flower garden. In 1991, at age 88, she was killed by a pick-up truck while crossing at the corner of Seventh and F. Because she was beloved by neighbors and at their initiative, the city well lot at 617 E was established as the Lyda Williams Memorial Garden.

607 E was likely built in the late 1940s and appears on the 1953 Sanborn map, but without the garage we now see in front, which was added sometime after 1953.

616 E Street[†]

The historical surveyors describe 616 E (Fig. 6.11) as a “stucco clad Craftsman style Bungalow [that] has a prominent dormer in its gable roof. Running parallel to the street the gable roof is intersected by a double window dormer with a shed-like roof. . . . The slope of the gable roof covers the porch and is supported on either side by squat piers set on masonry bases. A parapet wall is punctured by the centered stairway with masonry bases for planters on either side” (ARG, 307).

The kitchen walls of this home were opened in a 1995 remodel of that room and, the owners report, printing was seen on the studs and other wood. From this the owners infer that this may have been a mail-order “pre-cut” house such as was rather common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; that is, the house may have arrived as a kit and been assembled on the site.

Date of construction/assembly is uncertain, but it appears on the 1921 Sanborn map and is one of only four houses on E Street in that year.

The ARG surveyors comment that this home adds “to the overall character of the neighborhood . . . [and] is one of the finer examples of a pattern book bungalow in the area” (ARG, 308).

6.11. 616 E Street.



617 E Street: The Lyda Williams Memorial Garden[†]

The 617 E property is an example of the kind of inventive, multiple uses that can be devised for a site when people have a little will, imagination, and tolerance (Fig. 6.12).

Currently, three compatible functions take place on this lot. The **first** and historic function is pumping water for the city. This lot is the site of the first city water well and its official name is therefore “Well 1.” The current pump is behind the hedge. Water pumping is all that happened in this location until two other uses were added in recent years.

6.12. 617 E Street, benches in the Lyda Williams Memorial Garden.



The **second** use is as the Lyda Williams Memorial Garden, created in 1991. As mentioned, Lyda Williams lived at 607 E Street, two doors to the south of this property, and cultivated a magnificent flower garden in her front and rear yards. It was greatly appreciated by E Street residents and by many others who walked through the neighborhood or were lovers of flowers and regularly came from around the city to admire her work.

Following her death in 1991, a memorial gathering of several dozen people was held on this site and it led to the creation of the memorial garden (Fig. 6.13).

The 1996 historical surveyors list this memorial as a cultural resource site and describe it as a “pleasant sitting area” that is “well landscaped and is a strong contributor to the block” (ARG, 310).

The **third** use of this property is the gardening that a local resident now does on the open land behind the city water pump.

6.13. Plaque in the Lyda Williams Memorial Garden.



618 E Street

Like a number of other Old North homes, 618 E has a mobile and complex history. It began life as a vernacular cottage, built in the 1920s, in the block that is now Central Park. Development of that park in the mid-1930s necessitated its removal. It was purchased, moved (Fig. 6.14), and remodeled in 1936 by Helen and Gray Rowe (Fig. 6.15).

6.14. The original 618 E being moved, in the mid-1930s, from the block that will become Central Park. (Courtesy Helen Rowe)



6.15. The moved house established at 618 E Street, 1936. (Courtesy Helen Rowe)



It was remodeled again in 1997 and is a handsome neo-Craftsman cottage home (Fig. 6.16).

6.16. 618 E after its 1997 remodel.



630 E Street

630 E has also undergone considerable remodeling. It began as a small cottage much like the two next to it at 642 and 650 E and all three of them appear to have been built in the early 1930s.

In Fig. 6.17, we see 630 E in the 1950s, still in its original configuration. As is evident in looking at 630 E today, the architecture has been quite considerably modernized.

6.17. Kay and Frank Ogasawara in front of their home, 630 E Street, middle 1950s. (Courtesy Frank Ogasawara)



639 E Street†

Constructed in the late 1920s or very early 1930s, 639 E Street is in the Tudor Revival style and features a “prominent street facing chimney” (ARG, 311) (Fig. 6.18).

Sheathed in horizontal siding, this one story house has a raised slab foundation. The windows are double hung and are in pairs along the front facade.

The house is accessed via a recessed porch with a small gable roof. The main roof of the house is gabled with a cross gable on the southern end of the elevation (ARG, 311).

ARG surveyors comment that 639 E is a “significant contributor to the overall character of the neighborhood” (ARG, 312).

6.18 639 E Street.



521 Seventh Street: Pomegranate Place

Looked at from Seventh Street, 521 Seventh appears to be only a 1930s house. It is that, but there is also much more.

Behind that house, to the left and down the surfaced driveway, there are 11 tiny cottages arrayed along a curving cement footpath (Fig. 6.19).

This hidden little enclave arises from the conjunction of (1) a longish strip of land and (2) the availability of the cottages.

(1) The longish strip of land running between Seventh and Eighth streets on which they sit is a remnant of the failed 1913 development called Bowers Acres that was described in Ch. 3. Originally, there were 15 of these Seventh to Eighth Street strips, each one acre in size (thus “Bowers Acres”).

As discussed, the set of these lots along the north side of Seventh were envisioned as a “millionaires’ row.” But it was not to be. The land did not sell to such buyers and Bowers Acres remained vacant or was farmed until after World War II.

(2) Enter a developer who takes note that a number of tiny cottages called Asbill Court, on F Street near First, must be removed to make way for an office building (a structure fronting G Street that is now part of the Hallmark Inn). Relocation was an alternative to demolishing the cottages and 11 of them became Pomegranate Place on Bowers’ failed millionaires’ row.

6.19. Behind 521 Seventh Street, with a view of the pathway and three cottages in Pomegranate Place.



The features of traditional neighborhoods enumerated in Ch. 1 are seen on all Old North streets, of course. E Street, though, has an especially rich concentration of them and is a trove of

historic homes, sites, stories, and streetscapes. In this way, E expresses the essence of the district as a whole.

The street is made all the more appealing by being at the geographic center of the neighborhood and by dead-ending, a feature that provides framing and closure.

7

D Street***Post-War Scars Amid Pre-War Splendor***

D Street is notable for its contrasts between very attractive pre-World War II homes and early post-war cheap apartments. Such contrasts are seen on other Old North streets, so D Street hardly has a corner on post-war scars amid pre-war splendor. The point, instead, is that these contrasts are particularly eye-catching on this street because it has so many outstanding, classic homes. Thus, despite the scars, D Street has enormous charm.

Bungalows on D Street

D ties with G Street in each having six of the Old North's 32 bungalows (19% of the total for each). One of these is in the 500 block, at 512 D. Four are in the 600 block, at 602, 612, 630, and 648 D. The sixth is at the north end of D, at 501 Seventh.

Three of the six appear in the city's inventory of historical resources and are written up below: 602 and 648 D, and 501 Seventh.

503 Fifth Street (The Morse Home)[†]

The HEC and ARG historical surveys describe 503 Fifth as a "one story wooden vernacular cottage . . . topped by a hipped roof. The house is severely unornamented, but the proportions . . . of the slanted bay derive from Italianate sources" (HEC, 167-168; ARG, 117-118).

The HEC surveyors think that this house is "a fine example of the vernacular tendency to use one or two fragments of a high art style to enrich an essentially utilitarian structure" (HEC, 168).

D Street Residences, Residents, Rentals

Employing the same seven points of profile used for G, F, and E Streets, these are D's population and housing statistics.

1. RESIDENCES. D Street ranks:

- 1) fourth among streets in numbers of residential units (41 of 281 or 15%),
- 2) third in percentage of signature homes (28 of 146 or 19%), and
- 3) third in percentage of lot-dominant structures (35 of 182 or 19%).

D's lower ranking on residences is largely due to the relative absence of apartments directly at the intersection of D with Seventh Street.

2. TINY/HIDDEN ABODES. D ranks next to last in tiny and/or hidden abodes, having only 8% of them (5 of 60) and exceeding only B Street, which has 2%.

3. RESIDENTS. Paralleling its smaller number of residences, D Street has relatively fewer residents, ranking fourth among the streets, with 15% of the population (89 of 609 people).

4. RESIDENTS IN SIGNATURE HOMES. D ranks third in the percentage of residents who live in a signature home or in an ancillary abode on the same property (63 of 89, which is 71%).

5. OWNER-OCCUPIED SIGNATURE HOMES AND RESIDENCES. D is in the middle of the spectrum on the percentage of all its residences that are owner-occupied signature homes. At 29% (12 of 41), it ranks third below B at 78% and G at 34%.

6. OWNER-OCCUPIED VERSUS RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. Focusing only on signature homes, 43% of them (12 of 28) are owner-occupied, ranking it fifth, (but still close to C, G and E at 44, 48, and 53%, in that order). Stating this generalization in the reverse: *D Street ranks second in percentage of its signature homes that are rentals.*

7. ABSENTEE LANDLORDS OF RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. Focusing in further and only on rented signature homes, we find that D ranks next to last among streets in terms of landlords who give out-of-Davis addresses on their county tax roll listing (4 of 16, which is 25%).

Estimated to have been constructed in 1896, 503 Fifth may be the oldest structure in the Old North, as well as among the oldest in all of Davis.

The HEC survey reports that "this was the first Davis . . . home of John Haussler," an early settler and rancher whose "family lived in the house until the early 1920s In 1929 the house was bought by Joe V. Morse and his bride Ona. Joe Morse did construction work on the UC Davis campus and eventually became a foreman" (HEC, 169). Mrs. Ona Morse lived in the house into the 1990s.

The house was in a serious state of disrepair after Mrs. Morse's death in the early 1990s, but, the ARG surveyors report it "has been extensively remodeled and renovated" in recent years (ARG, 118).

7.1. 503 Fifth Street (The Morse Home).



516 D Street

516 D (Fig. 7.2) was, for some years, owned by Mary Jane and George Vansell. In the early 1980s an elderly Mrs. Vansell told me that this tiny house was built at the rear of this lot as a temporary structure and in order to leave room at the center of the lot for an ordinary house the family planned to build later. However, she laughed, the family never seemed to get around to building that large new home on this lot.

Mrs. Vansell herself, with daughter Jane, appears in Fig. 7.2. The year is 1922 and we know from the Sanborn maps of this area (Fig. 3.10) that the lots in this block to the north and northeast of 516 D are vacant, as the picture suggests about the northeast. In the distance, through the young almond orchard, one can glimpse 616 E (the vague white spot to the left), which is the only house on the west side of the 600 block of E Street at that time.



7.2. Mary Jane Vansell and daughter Jane photographed in front of 516 D Street in 1922. (Courtesy Jane Zakarian)

528 D Street (The Warner Home)[†]

The HEC historical surveyors label 528 D (Fig. 7.3) a “Colonial Revival” structure and a “superb example of 1930s interpretation of American Colonial imagery” (HEC, 213). However, other interpreters have thought it best described as “modified Tudor in style” and report that it “has not been changed structurally since it was built. Except for the updated kitchen, the house is completely original” (University Farm Circle, 1996, 5).

7.3 528 D Street
(The Warner
Home).



“Built in 1929 as a wedding gift for the newly-married” William and Fern Warner, 528 D “remained in the Warner family for over 60 years” (University Farm Circle, 1996, 5).

The house “presents to the street a collage of shallow gabled forms of various pitches. The composition is bisected by a brick chimney. The primary gable sweeps low on the left side to provide a wing wall pierced with an arch. There is a fan motif in wood relief over the entrance” (HEC, 213).

The ARG surveyors judged this house to be an “important part of the streetscape along this block of D Street” and as “one of the strongest Colonial Revival facades in this part of Davis” (ARG, 287).

537 D Street†

537 D (Fig. 7.4) is the Old North’s sole example of the “Moderne Style” of architecture, as well as one of the few examples of it in all of Davis (the Varsity Theater at 616 Second being another).

Built in 1940, 537 D has “nicely crafted, fixed, wrap around windows in the International Style,” which is a major variation on Moderne (ARG, 289). Indeed, it is the wrap around windows that create the illusion of the roof floating at the house corners that most strongly convey its Moderne character. In addition, the house is “L-shaped in plan, the entry is to the south of the projecting portion of the L. A flat cantilevered roof covers the entry” (ARG, 289).

7.4. 537 D Street.



510 Sixth Street: First Church of Christ, Scientist

The modern church now seen at the southeast corner of Sixth and D streets is a mid-1980s single-structure blending of two previous buildings, one a church and the other a combined Sunday School and reading room.

The original church, completed in 1925, was bungalow-inspired in style (Fig. 7.5).

7.5. 510 Sixth Street, the First Church of Christ, Scientist Davis before the mid-1980s remodel into the building now seen at the southeast corner of D and Sixth. (Courtesy First Church of Christ, Scientist Davis)



601 D Street†

601 D is an owner-occupied, brick -veneered home constructed in 1938 or 1939 (Fig. 7.6). Due to its architectural style and setting, many consider it to be one of the more attractive homes in the area.

ARG surveyors classify both 601 D and 528 D as Colonial Revival in style (ARG, 38). In the case of 601 D, this classification is prompted by the “well proportioned Palladian window on the front elevation,” which is “one of the few Colonial Revival houses in Davis with a Palladian window” (ARG, 291-2).

In addition, 601 D has “a gable roof that runs parallel to the street” combined with “two cross gables [that] intersect the main gable” (ARG, 291).

7.6 601 D Street.



Decorative fleur-de-lys type features appear above the windows in the two cross gable sections (and a third fleur-de-lys type feature appears on the back of the house). A concrete patio

with a low brick wall marks the main entry of the house and metal awnings overhang the front and side entries.

601 D is one of the few homes in Davis with a large basement. It also has a detached two-car, brick garage accessed from the alley.

602 D Street (The Grady Home)[†]

602 D “was built in 1913 by Robert and Emma Grady. Mr. Grady was employed . . . at the university. His wife, Emma, worked as a bookkeeper in the 1920s for the Nickerson Ice and Fuel Company. The house was sold in 1963 . . . but Mrs. Grady [rented it] until her death in 1967. It has since been used as a rental” (HEC, 215-216).

The HEC surveyors think this house (Fig. 7.7) is significant as a “strong architectural contribution as a middle class house” (HEC, 216). That is, it is a modest house built for people with modest means that nonetheless has some elegant design features.

These features include a “highly unusual decorative configuration in the front gable. This theme is reflected in the facade window and the consistency and quality of the design treatment suggest a careful designer Heavy shaped brackets support the porch gable, echoing the smaller forms used in the pediment ornament. A large front facade window, to the north of the porch, reflects the pediment pattern. The beam ends lift slightly at the outer ends, suggesting a slight Japanese influence” (HEC, 215).

7.7. 602 D Street
(The Grady
Home).



612 D Street[†]

Likely built between 1915 and 1920, 612 D (Fig. 7.8) is “Craftsman in detailing, [and] has a broad gable roof running perpendicular to the street. Heavy brackets ‘hold’ the roof overhang. The porch runs the entire width of the house and has a parapet railing. The porch support consists of two vertical members at either end, with one supporting the roof bracket. The overall character of the house is somewhat Swiss Chalet” (ARG,295-296).

The ARG surveyors remark that “this house contributes to the overall character of the neighborhood . . . and is a strong feature of this residential block” (ARG, 296).

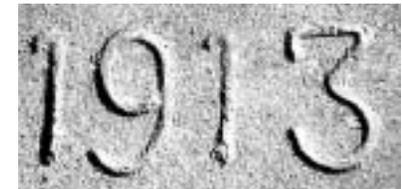
7.8. 612 D Street.



The Year “1913” in the sidewalk at 613 D Street

As described in Chs. 3 and 4, the sidewalks in the five blocks of Bowers Addition were laid in 1913. The “1913” pressed into the wet cement at 613 D (Fig. 7.9) is one of the two surviving indications of the year. (The other is at 623-25 G.)

7.9. The year of starting Bowers Addition and laying the sidewalk pressed into the cement in front of 613 D.



Water Systems: Pedder and The City of Davis

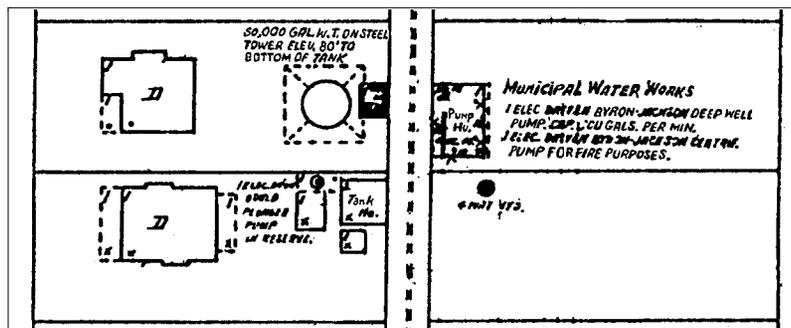
Before Davis’ incorporation in 1917, people got their water from their own wells or from one of two privately operated small water companies.

One of those companies was owned and operated by A. R. Pedder, the person who managed Bowers Addition at the level of selling properties and contracting to build a limited number of homes. In order to make lots more attractive to builders, in the mid-1910s, he developed a water delivery system to serve the five blocks of the Addition.

This system centered on a well sunk at the rear of 612 D Street and a 50,000 gallon capacity tank on an 80-foot tower next to it at the rear of 616 D (Fig. 7.10).

The other water system, which was larger and provided service to the main part of Davis to the south, was apparently unreliable. After the incorporation of Davis in 1917, public demand for a municipal water system grew and a bond issue to fund it passed by a 3 to 1 vote on November 4, 1919 (DE, 11-7-19).

The city began this new Municipal Water Works by buying both the existing private systems, including the 616 D lot with the water tank and tower *and* the bungalow on it (Fig. 7.11).



7.10. 1921 Sanborn map of 616 D (the top left lot), 612 D (bottom left), 617 E (top right), and 611 E (bottom left).

Pedder built this bungalow in 1918 (or so) for a single man who was paid to live there and maintain Pedder's water tower and pump. For this reason, the internal layout of this house was distinctive in not having a bedroom. Instead, just behind the living room, there was an alcove in which a folding "Murphy bed" was installed.

After buying the Pedder system, the city made 616 D and adjacent lots the center of the new Municipal Water Works. This house continued to be the required residence of whomever managed the water system (DE, 11-5-20).

7.11 616 D Street, bungalow built to house the manager of the Pedder water system.



After the purchase, Pedder's well at the rear of 612 D was found to be inadequate for the needs of the now much-enlarged water system. The two lots across the alley at 611 E and 617 E were purchased for a new well and pump house (Fig. 7.10). This original City Well 1 was housed in a red brick building to the rear of 617 E and connected to the water tower on the other side of the alley.

7.12 1946 aerial view of the Davis water tower. Fifth Street runs across the bottom of the picture. The future Eighth Street runs across the top. D Street, on the left, becomes a footpath at Seventh. (Excerpt, Eastman photo 4704, Courtesy UC Davis Special Collections)



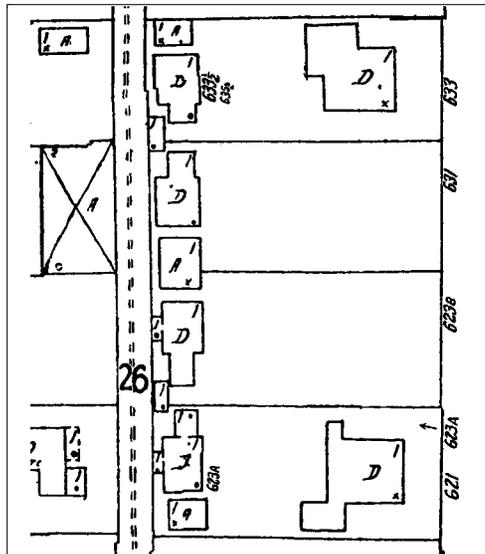
With the drilling of the new well seen today toward the E Street end of 617 E, the brick pump house and tower were removed in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The tower was a quite conspicuous landmark for several decades of the town period and is fondly remembered by many Davis old-timers (Fig. 7.12).

621 through 633 D Street: Irwin Court

In the 1920s, prominent local rancher and influential Davis citizen Lynn Irwin purchased the four lots at 621 through 633 D for the purpose of creating a cluster of small, rental cottages and homes. Built slowly, the cluster eventually achieved the configuration shown in the 1945 Sanborn map reproduced in Fig. 7.13. Planned with an open central lawn around which cottages were clustered, the complex came to be called “Irwin Court.”

7.13. 1945 Sanborn Map of Irwin Court, 621, 623-25, 627-29 and 631-33 D Street. The dotted double line indicates the alley between C and D Streets. The rectangle containing an “X” is Pedder’s construction shed at 632 C. The cottages behind 621 and 633 D are still standing.



In Fig. 7.14, we get a partial view of Irwin Court from the vantage point of standing beside 621 D and looking north across the lawn toward 631 D and the person standing in front of the door of that house. In the background to the right, we see the apartment house on the northeast corner of D and Seventh streets.

After Irwin’s death in 1957, the four lots comprising the Court were divided among members of his family. The family member who inherited the two middle lots sold them to a public-spirited, local real estate agent and developer who, despite

neighbor objections, demolished the cottages and erected 623-25 and 627-29 D.

7.14. Home at 633 D Street as viewed from the “front” of 621 D Street and across the open lawn of Irwin Court, late 1950s. (Courtesy Isabel Sparks)



I think the most positive thing one can say about these two apartment buildings is that preservationist consciousness has risen such that they could not be built today. Along with some others in the Old North, 623-25 and 627-29 give us compelling examples of what to avoid.

621 and 633 D Street

Knowing that there was once an Irwin Court allows us to make sense of 621 and 633 D, the two houses that historically flanked the open lawn of the complex.

Both now appear odd because neither fronts the street. From the sidewalk, we look at a side of each house because the front of each looks toward what used to be the lawn of the Court. Each home now faces the side of an unattractive apartment building. So, these two homes, in effect, lost their front yards when this community-minded developer inserted his boxes.

630 D Street†

630 D Street (Fig. 7.15) is one of the “eight little bungalows” described in Ch. 3 as having been built by A. R. Pedder in the Old North and the Davis Downtown over the 1910s (Sherwin 1986).

The ARG surveyors characterize 630 D as a “Craftsman style” bungalow with a “gable roof perpendicular to the street.

The porch gable echoes the line of the main gable . . . Thin posts support the slight arch of the porch” (ARG, 297-298).

These surveyors also appraise this house as a “significant contributor to the streetscape” (ARG, 298).

7.15. 630 D Street.



642 D Street

642 D Street was built on this double lot (one of the few such lots in the Old North) in 1938 by James Duthie, contractor, who lived just across the alley from this site, at 637 E Street (also a double lot).

Given the physical ease with which the soon-to-be occupants of 642 D—Mr. and Mrs. Hubbs—could complain to him about his materials or workmanship after they moved in, I think we can assume that he put 642 D together quite properly.

The current owners showed me the construction contract that had been passed on to them by the previous owners. With their permission I reproduce it in Fig. 7.16. I do so because I find the trust these parties had in one another to be quite poignant.

The Hubbs were likely undertaking the biggest purchase they would ever make, but they could begin it with a handwritten agreement covering one page. What makes us pause, of course, is the contrast between such an agreement today, replete with specialists and complex contract prose, and this one in 1938.

Along with the contract and original plans for the house, the current owners also received a photograph of it, which I reproduce in Fig. 7.17. The text on the back of the photograph is

quoted in the caption. It, also, is a poignant fragment of a bygone America.

TELEPHONE 253	637 E STREET
JAS. DUTHIE CONTRACTOR AND BUILDER DAVIS, CALIFORNIA	
April 19 th 1938	
I propose to build a home for Mr and Mrs O W Hubbs to meet all $\frac{1}{4}$ of minimum requirements, And to plans and specifications purchased from Guy L Rosebrook for the sum of \$5800.00 Five thousand eight hundred dollars	
House to be brick veneer (used brick)	
Garage to be brick	
No tile wainscote, floor and base only	
$\frac{5}{16} \times 2$ select plain white strip oak floor	
Electric fixtures	50.00
Finish hardware	60.00
no Window shades	
no Sidewalks	
Windows cleaned allowance \$10.00	
Metal corners in all plaster angles	
Putch creek gravel in all foundations	
Shingles $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches to weather	
Basement excavation 25 ft x 23 ft	
No electric wiring except as shown on plans	
120.000 BTU Furnace	
Jas Duthie	

7.16. Contract for the construction of 642 D Street. (Courtesy Steve Tracy)

7. 17. 642 D Street. The text on the back of this photograph reads: "January, 1940, Mrs. James Lewis Rock while visiting in Davis, Cal." (Courtesy Steve Tracy)



648 D Street†

ARG surveyors judged 648 D Street (Fig. 7.18) to be "one of the more interesting bungalows in the immediate area. The design of the piers at the porch is especially significant The front porch occupies two thirds of the elevation and is supported by squat piers on masonry pedestals A series of gable roofs are perpendicular to the street with the attic gable having a decorative vent" (ARG, 291-292).

Likely "constructed between 1910 and 1920," the house "contributes to the overall character of this end of D Street" (ARG, 292).

7.18. 648 D Street.



501 Seventh Street[†]

Among the many bungalows in the stock of early Davis homes, ARG surveyors labeled 501 Seventh (Fig. 7.19) one of “the best examples” of the genre (ARC, 40).

Although quintessentially a bungalow, the form is also unusual and the “bracketed extension” . . . over the “large scale tripartite window on the ground floor” may be “a remnant of the original roof” (HEC, 177). That is, this was likely, in the surveyor’s view, a one story house to which the second story has been added—albeit in a consistent style. However, Davis residents in their 80s and 90s to whom I have mentioned this possibility all vigorously protest that it was always a two-story house.

The historical surveyors additionally believed that other features of 501 Seventh were probably “alterations and additions” and mention “the sleeping porches over the ground floor entry porches” as such (ARG, 123).

In these ways, 501 Seventh is a “fine example of the visual changes that can occur to a structure over time” (HEC, 178).

Recall that the Bowers Acres strips of one acre lots were laid out along the north side of Seventh Street and put up for sale in late 1913. 501 Seventh’s estimated year of construction is 1915. It is therefore among the very few homes surviving from the earliest period (HEC, 178).

7.19. 501
Seventh Street.





Like F Street, D Street ended at Seventh for the bulk of Davis history and was only "cut through" after World War II.

And also like F but less intensively, D Street access to Eighth Street creates traffic. For a period in the early 1990s, some D Street residents worked for traffic-calming measures of several sorts— such as one or more speed bumps. For complex reasons, though, no such devices were ever put in place.

8

C Street

An Intact Enclave

Like D Street, C displays strong contrasts, but of a different sort. Here the visually most striking feature is the counterpoint between the block-long backside of the public school administration headquarters in the 500 block and the virtually intact 1920s-like enclave in the 600 block. In just a few steps we go from 1950s neo-modern presence to Old North essence.

The Harby/School District Block: C to B Between Fifth and Sixth

Two of the 12 main blocks that make up the Old North have never been subdivided into multiple “lot” ownership. One of them is on G Street, the block on which The Davis Food Cooperative, Inc. stands. The other is here on C, bounded by C and B streets on the east and west and Fifth and Sixth streets on the south and north.

Like the other five blocks to the east of this block in the southern tier, the “on paper” plan envisioned subdivision of this block into lots following the Downtown pattern.

As can be seen, the other blocks were, to varying degrees, subdivided into individual lots for ownership and development. But multiple-ownership of lots never happened in this block. The several reasons for this include a small Davis population combined with the availability of more attractively located lots that made subdivision economically unattractive in the era when it would have been easiest to do—the period before the 1920s.

This block comes with the standard “things used to be cheap” economic tidbits: the block changed hands for \$1,000 in 1876. It sold again, for \$3,000, in 1886 (Larkey 1969, 57).

James A. Harby, a banker, became the owner around the

C Street Residences, Residents, Rentals

Employing the same scheme of aspects used for the other five streets, these are the population and housing statistics of C Street.

1. RESIDENCES. We find that C Street ranks:

1) second among streets in number of residential units (62 of 281, or 22%),
2) fourth in percentage of signature homes (25 of 146 or 17%), and,
3) third in percentage of lot-dominant structures (32 of 182, or 18%).
C shares with E the features of (1) a dead-end at Seventh which created additional space for the construction of (2) apartment buildings erected in the 1960s. These features elevate both the residential units and the population of C and E.

2. TINY/HIDDEN ABODES. C Street has 12% (7 of 60) of all the Old North tiny and/or hidden abodes, which ranks it fourth among streets, but near F with 18% and G with 22%.

3. RESIDENTS. In line with its relatively larger percentage of residences, C ranks second in residents, with 148 of all 609 Old North inhabitants, which is 24%.

4. RESIDENTS IN SIGNATURE HOMES. C Street ranks last among streets in the percent of its residents who live in a signature home or in an ancillary abode on the same property (60 of 148, which is 41%).

This rank reflects two facts about C Street. One, the western side of the south faceblock has no residences, reducing the possible number of signature homes. Two, apartment complexes at the intersection of C and Seventh streets inflate the non-signature home population.

5. OWNER-OCCUPIED SIGNATURE HOMES AND ALL RESIDENCES.

Along with F and E, C is at the bottom of the rankings on the percentage of all its residential units that are owner-occupied signature homes (11 of 62, or 18%, with F also at 18% and E at 20%).

6. OWNER-OCCUPIED VERSUS RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. Focusing only on C Street signature homes, 44% of them are owner-occupied (11 of 25), which ranks C fourth among streets.

As I have done for the other streets, let us appreciate the meaning of this finding by stating it in the reverse: *C ranks third in the percentage of its signature homes that are rentals (56%).*

7. ABSENTEE LANDLORDS OF RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. Looking at only rental signature homes and putting B Street to the side, C ranks with F in having the highest percentage of landlords who give out-of-Davis addresses on their county tax roll listing (6 of 16 or 43%).

turn of the century and held it until 1922. Although it was worth much more, in the “interest of civic improvement,” he sold it for \$2,000 to “twenty local citizens who each contributed \$100 so that a high school could be built in Davis” (Larkey 1972b).

Ironically, the school district decided to build the high school on a larger piece of ground, in the next block to the west, and the Harby Block remained vacant until the Davis Intermediate School was constructed on it in 1949.



8.1. September, 1946 aerial view from the southeast of the Harby Block. The building on the left is the Davis High School Gymnasium, which fronts on B Street. Fifth Street terminates at B, across the street from the gym. The home plate of the city’s baseball diamond is in the lower left of the Harby Block. (Excerpt from Eastman Collection photo 4705, Courtesy UC Davis Special Collections)

During the 1930s and 1940s, it was used as the city baseball field (Fig. 8.1) and people continued to call it the “Harby Block.”

Three months before and all during World War II, Davis (along with communities across the country) had a Ground Observer Corps whose job was reporting on all planes passing over the town. A “specially constructed tower” for this task was erected on the Harby Block and a volunteer force of some 250 “men, women and teenagers manned the post twenty-four hours a day” (Larkey 1969, 133).

Events at the School Administration Parking Lot

The school administration parking lot that fronts Fifth between C and B streets is a locale for non-profit groups to conduct fundraising activities, especially flea market-type events. An example of an ad for one of these events is shown in Fig. 8.2.

8.2. Advertisement for an event in the school administration parking lot at Fifth and C streets.



Two circumstances prompt such uses of this parking lot. One, the lot is quite visible because it is situated on Fifth, which is one of only two streets that run the entire east-west span of the city. The traffic is particularly heavy on Saturdays, when many people come into the area to go to the Davis Farmers' Market, just to the south on C.

Two, the school district is non-commercial and non-profit, which constrains what it can allow on its land, but which fits with supporting other non-profit groups.

411-15 Fifth Street: Newman Chapel†

Dedicated in 1931, the chapel at the northeast corner of Fifth and C streets (Fig. 8.3) was the St. James Catholic Church of Davis until the congregation grew too large and relocated to B and Fourteenth streets in 1964. This building was subsequently turned over to student ministry and is so used today.

The historical surveyors characterize this structure as a “one story brick Romanesque Revival Church [which] has its entry in the street-facing gable end” (HEC, 201).

The main facade organization is symmetrical with a rounded stained glass window centered high in the gable over the recessed, compound arches of the entry. Flanking the entry are pairs of small arched windows. The symmetry of the composition is broken by a hip-roofed bell tower to one side (ARG, 283).

The surveyors were impressed that this church is quite small, but through “sophisticated manipulation of scale,” its architects have created an illusion of “visual massiveness beyond its actual size” and “an unusually forceful effect for a building of such modest scale” (HEC, 201).

One of the key devices contributing to this illusion is the “tiny scale of the wall openings.” That is, the front-facing windows are uncharacteristically small, prompting a false perception of mass (HEC, 202).

The 1996 surveyors noted that the “building is in good condition. However, a large crack in the front facade has been inappropriately patched” (ARG, 283).

This structure does not appear to have a C Street address. Instead, maps and directories show its location as a “dog leg” lot off the three-lot parcel fronting Fifth Street with the address 411-415 Fifth Street. Counting the church on the dog-leg lot, 411-15 Fifth consists of four lots all owned by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Sacramento.

8.3 411-15 Fifth Street, the Newman Chapel as it appeared in the mid-1930s when it was the St. James Catholic Church. (Courtesy Reverend Andrew Coffey)



514 C Street: Newman Catholic Student Community[†]

Constructed perhaps 10 years after the church—in about 1940—514 C was initially the rectory for the church next door, later a residence for nuns, and then its current use, the offices of the Newman Catholic Student Community (Fig. 8.4).

Architects attempted to relate “to the adjacent church [in] its brick construction and red tile roof. Stylistically, however, it is

closer to the Spanish Colonial Revival than to the Romanesque imagery of this next door neighbor” (HEC, 203).

“The wall surface is animated by a pattern of darker bricks [and] there is a recessed entry with a heavy metal lintel” (HEC, 203).

8.4. 514 C
Street:
Newman
Catholic
Student
Community.



The Unusually Intact 600 Block of C Street

In addition to describing dozens of individual houses and other structures as the main part of their 1980 *Cultural Resources Inventory*, HEC developed a list of what they felt were culturally important “districts, preservation areas and groupings . . . that contribute importantly to the character and visual quality of the city” (HEC, 36).

HEC’s list begins with the largest unit, that of the *district* and they identify the Downtown, and University Avenue as possible such areas. College Park is suggested as a possible district or a smaller *preservation area*.

On the smallest scale are *groupings*, which are “block faces of buildings throughout the city whose consistency of style and character are environmentally important” (HEC, 37).

Among those HEC identified in the survey year of 1979 were the 200 block of Third Street, the 500 block of Third Street, and the 600 block of C Street. Here is what they write about the 600 Block of C:

Another streetface whose character derives largely from landscaping qualities and the similar scale and character of its component structures is the 600 block of C Street. The buildings are somewhat later in date than clusters previously mentioned, but together with the mature trees,

consistent setbacks and residential scale, create a sense of time and place evocative of past eras and lifestyles (HEC, 37).

Remarkably, this characterization of the 600 block of C Street remains accurate and the block is virtually unchanged.

This “intactness” sense is all the more remarkable because the block contained a large and “out-of-character” construction shed—at 632 C—up to the 1960s. (It is shown in Fig. 8.5 and on the 1921 Sanborn map reproduced in Fig. 3.10).



8.5. Aerial view of the 600 block of C Street, 1960. A. R. Pedder’s construction shed is prominent in the middle of the block, at what is today 632 C, the site of a “double-diamond” duplex built in 1962. (Excerpt from Davis Joint Union High School 1960 yearbook inside cover aerial photograph)

Romantic Media Imagery of C Street

Davis’ main medium of print communication, *The Davis Enterprise*, seemed smitten with the “romantic character” of C Street in same period as the HEC cultural resource survey. In a feature article titled “Historic Tree-lined Davis Streets” published on August 1, 1980, the caption of a full-page (almost 13-inch wide) photograph of what was labeled C Street informed us that:

A walk down the shaded C Street sidewalks is an ideal way to soak in Davis history, or just a cool breeze from the many trees.

There is a slight problem in that the photograph is actually of homes in the 600 block of D Street, but that error is irrelevant to appreciating the photo as *romantic imagery* of C Street. For that purpose, D Street is just as good as C Street. (The photo in question appears in Fig. 8.6.)



8.6. Romantic Imagery of C Street. Photograph of the 600 block of D Street published in *The Davis Enterprise*, August 1, 1980 as a photograph of C Street. (Courtesy *The Davis Enterprise*)

Ironically, while the 600 block of C Street is in some sense quintessentially Old North, individual homes of the block did not attract the cultural resource affection of either the 1979 or 1996 surveyors.

In the “historic homes derby” (if there be such a thing), C Street has been a flat loser with zero such houses. In contrast, G and B streets have three each, E Street six, F Street seven, and D Street nine. (However, C Street does much better in terms of historical structures per se. It has three, all of which are described in this chapter.)

603 C Street

The home at the northwest corner of Sixth and C streets—603 C Street (Fig. 8.7)—may not have historic cultural significance, but it is certainly an exotic design.

The first view of this house is puzzling. Situated “kitty-cornered” on two lots, it raises the questions, which side is the front and where is the center of the house?

On closer inspection, though, it becomes less strange. The front entrance of the house is on C Street—and the address is therefore quite correctly 603 C Street. From the vantage point of C Street, we can see that the back of the house fronts Sixth Street.

Also looking from C Street, we can appreciate that the structure running back toward the alley on the right of the house is an attached apartment off the main house.

Neighborhood lore holds that 603 C was constructed by a carpenter on the University Farm campus. He had extra, rental income in mind, thus, the seemingly attached but actually separate rental unit “on the back.”

8.7. 603 C Street.



Early Bungalows in the 600 Block

The 1921 Sanborn map reproduced in Fig. 3.10 shows only three homes in the 600 block of C Street in that year: 612, 618 and 645. In addition, the bungalow at 619 was apparently moved there from Fourth and C streets in the early 1920s in order to make way for the Community Church. All four are therefore very early *and* are remarkably similar in style, which makes them exceptionally significant as contributors to the streetscape.



8.8. Four 1910s bungalows in the 600 block of C Street: 612 C (top left), 618 C (top right), 619 C (bottom left), and 645 C (bottom right).

These bungalows are four of the eight “little bungalows” that Bowers Addition developer A. R. Pedder constructed in Davis in the late 1910s and early 1920s (Sherwin 1986; Ch. 3, above).

Social Life on C Street

At any given time, Old North streets, and blocks on each street, vary in the degree to which residents socialize among themselves *qua* residents. As well, streets and blocks vary over *time* in this way—the degree of resident socializing waxing or waning from decade to decade.

C Street residents have likely been among the more active of block-level socializers, a possibility suggested by Fig. 8.9.



8.9. Gathering on C Street, Memorial Day, 1987 (and the first birthday party of Theodore Dingemans, front row, first from the left). (Courtesy Dennis Dingemans)

Tree Canopy Trauma

According to a city parks official with whom I spoke, in January, 1997, the driver of a large, long truck got lost and came up the Old North's C Street looking for a way out of the city. On C headed north, he turned right onto Seventh. In order to avoid cars parked on the north side of Seventh, he cut the corner short and snapped off the mature city street tree growing in the planting space directly at the corner.

The photograph in Fig. 8.10 was taken just after city crews had removed the fallen tree but not the stump. Sawdust still litters the site.

8.10. Stump of the tree snapped off by a large truck turning right onto Seventh from C Street, 1997.



An incident such as this reminds us of the fragility of the Old North canopy of trees. This fragility was underscored in the El Niño winter of 1997-98, in which two large Old North street trees were downed by storms (at 504 F and 620 B).

405 Seventh Street: The Barn[†]

HEC surveyors were apparently charmed by the idea that a real barn from the Davis agricultural past could have survived in the town right down to the HEC survey year of 1979.

They listed the barn at the rear of 405 Seventh Street as a “cultural resource” and the 1996 surveyors repeated the compliment and kept it in the inventory.

Because of the overgrown landscaping, the barn is virtually invisible except in the winter from the vacant lot just north of 425 Seventh Street (around the corner).

However, we do have a good picture of it because of the enterprise of Old North resident and photographer Norman Riley. Taken in the 1980s from the roof of the adjacent apartment house, his photograph, reproduced in Fig. 8.11, also shows the landmark tree described just below.

The HEC surveyors describe the barn as a “surviving agricultural building relating to early Davis” and a “surviving contact with the agricultural origins of the area” and they estimate it was constructed in 1900 (HEC, 175-176). Reports of laying out Bowers Addition and Acres in 1913 suggest that both tracts consisted of completely open land. Therefore, a 1900 construction date seems too early, although late 1910s construction is possible.

Once used as a residence but now an art studio, it is “an example of adaptive reuse” (ARG, 122).

8.11. The historical resource barn and landmark Valley Oak at 405 Seventh Street, 1980s. (Courtesy Norman Riley)



Landmark Valley Oak, 405 Seventh Street

While we are standing on D Street peering through the bushes at the historical barn, let us lift our gaze slightly in order to appreciate the magnificent Valley Oak that towers over the north end of the barn.

This is one of several *Davis Landmark Trees* in the Old North (Core Area Specific Plan Task Force 1994, 66-70).

The C and Seventh Vicinity in the 1920s

In previous chapters, Vansell family pictures have given us 1920s streetscape views of portions of G, F, and D. Another of their photographs shows us the vicinity of C and Seventh streets (Fig. 8.12).

In the background of Fig. 8.12 are the water tower (left) and construction shed (right) built by A. R. Pedder. In addition, the scarcity of homes in the Seventh and C vicinity is noteworthy.



8.12. A group of children poses, mid-1920s, on Seventh Street with the water tower and construction shed built by A. R. Pedder in the background. (Courtesy Jane Zakarian)



The 600 block of C Street, then, has a more-than-ordinary number of the physical features people have in mind when they speak of “classic small town Davis.”

Of no small import, this little enclave both persists and is protected by the fact that C Street *ends* at Seventh and is thus not beset by high volumes of automobile traffic.

9

B Street

Park Events on the Western Edge

Historically, the west side of B Street has been open land, much as one sees it now. This break in settlement makes B Street the western edge of the Old North.

In the earliest Davis years, the lands to the west of B were open fields. When the Davis High School—the large red brick structure fronting Russell Boulevard—was established in the late 1920s, the immediately adjoining land became athletic and other school-related fields.

The high school population grew and that building was vacated when a new and larger facility opened on Fourteenth Street in 1960. The “big red schoolhouse” at this location was subsequently sold to the City of Davis for use as the City Hall, which it continues to be. The open field along B Street and behind City Hall is now public and named Civic Center Park.

Why B Street Is “Crooked”

Unlike other Old North streets, B Street is crooked and bends at Sixth. Why?

As reported in Ch. 3, the six blocks in the southern of the two tiers are an 1871 extension of the original 1868 grid. That grid was (and is) laid out parallel to the railroad. But, the railroad is not exactly north and south. Instead, it “tilts” about 13 degrees to the northwest. Therefore, all blocks oriented to it are also tilted some 13 degrees.

This tilt is in conflict with the federal, state, and county practice of, where feasible, orienting roads exactly north-south. The plotters of Bowers Addition began its five blocks by orienting to the railroad. But, at B Street they were in conflict with the north-

south principle used by Yolo County road planners. How were the two principles to be accommodated at this intersection?

B Street Residences, Residents, Rentals

B has a population and housing profile that is considerably different from the other five streets.

1. RESIDENCES. B Street is last among the six streets in its percentage of:

- 1) residences (9 of 281 or 3%),
- 2) signature homes (8 of 146 or 5%), and
- 3) lot-dominant structures (9 of 182 or 5%).

2. TINY/HIDDEN ABODES. It is also last in its percentage of tiny and/or hidden abodes (1 of 60 or 2%).

3. RESIDENTS. As one can now expect, B Street has the fewest residents (22 of 609, or 4%).

4. RESIDENTS IN SIGNATURE HOMES. But, B ranks a heady first in the percentage of its residents who live in a signature home or in an ancillary abode on the same property (typically a converted garage or an apartment unit behind the lot-dominant signature home) (22 of 22, or 100%).

5. OWNER-OCCUPIED SIGNATURE HOMES AND ALL RESIDENCES. Likewise, B is first in the percentage of residential units that are owner-occupied signature homes (7 of 9 or 78%). All the other streets are much, much lower on this score.

6. OWNER-OCCUPIED VERSUS RENTAL SIGNATURE HOMES. Most B Street signature homes are owner-occupied (7 of 8 or 88%). It is far above any other street, most of which cluster in or near the 40% level. Stating this finding in the reverse: *B Street ranks lowest in the percentage of its signature homes that are rentals (12%).*

7. ABSENTEE LANDLORDS OF RENTED SIGNATURE HOMES. Focusing only on rented signature homes, we find that the only landlord on B Street has an out-of-Davis address on the county tax roll. This produces a dramatic “100%” statistic, which is of course misleading. The larger fact is that *B Street is dominated by owner-occupied signature homes.*

As is evident, B Street’s statistics are markedly different from those of every other street. It is much smaller in number of structures and people. Its houses are more frequently built in later decades and the rate of owner-occupancy is spectacularly higher—but based on a very small number of structures. So, B Street is special in these ways—and also in other ways we will see in the following pages.

Their decision was apparently to orient four of the five blocks to the railroad but to accommodate on the western edge of the western block. Therefore, B was bent at Sixth.

Interestingly, the accommodation was (and is) partial rather than total. B's bend is still about five degrees short of the some 13 required for true north-south. The reason for this may be that to go the full distance would have effectively eliminated home sites on B (rather than only make some of them awkwardly shallow). (By the way, full north-south is achieved one block west, at A Street.)

The Fifth and B Intersection

For most of Davis history, Fifth Street extended from B Street to the railroad track. In Fig. 9.1, we see that the street now called Russell Boulevard (to the left in the photograph) curved into B Street without intersecting with Fifth.

But, in the mid-1960s, Fifth was widened, connected to Russell Boulevard on the west and extended across the railroad to the east. As is clear in Fig. 9.1, a large section of the northwest corner of Central Park had to be cut off in order to make Fifth Street meet Russell Boulevard.

9.1. Fifth Street terminating at the Davis High School Gymnasium, 1946. (Excerpt from Eastman Collection Photo B-4705, Courtesy, UC Davis Special Collections)



The Davis High School/City Gymnasium

The brick building at the intersection of B and Fifth streets was built as and still is a gymnasium (Fig. 9.2). Originally a part of the Davis High School, it has been a public facility since the school district sold the 12-acre high school site to the City of Davis in 1979. With a \$1.5 million bond measure, the high school building, which is now the City Hall behind this gym, was internally

4 *Guides to Streets and Homes*

reconstructed into modern office space, while preserving the historic external appearance. The restoration work included this gym, which is historic on the outside but modernized on the inside.

A “modified Romanesque” structure, it was constructed in the mid-1920s, burned down, and was rebuilt in 1938 (Yusavage 1992).

9.2. Originally the Davis High School Gymnasium, this building at Fifth and B is now the Civic Center Gymnasium.



The swimming pool to the north of the gym on B Street was constructed for high school use in 1958. It is now a city facility named the Civic Center Pool.

526-30 B Street: The School District Administration Building

Continuing the history of the Harby Block begun in the last chapter, 526-30 B Street was completed in 1949 and served as an “intermediate” or “junior high” school for nearly 30 years. The same conditions of population explosion prompting the street changes described above also, in the late 1970s, led to relocating the junior high school.

9.3. 1960 aerial view of 526-30 B Street. (Excerpt from Davis Joint Union High School 1960 yearbook inside cover aerial photograph)



In 1979, this building became the administrative headquarters of the Davis Joint Unified School District of Yolo County (Fig. 9.3).

The High School Athletic Field

For more than 30 years—from the late 1920s to 1960—the field just west of B Street that is now Civic Center Park was the athletic field of the Davis High School.

Over most of that period, Dewey Halden, who came to Davis in 1928 and was the high school's first coach, trained football, track and other teams on it. In Fig. 9.4 we see him with one of his early teams and with B and Sixth streets in the background. Happily for him, his commute to work was short, for he lived at 619 Sixth, just four blocks east and behind him in Fig. 9.4. (Happily also, 619 Sixth is a carefully cared for though remodeled classic bungalow.)

Retiring from the school system after 34 years, in 1962, “his dedication to all athletics prompted the school to not only name the new high school's field after him in 1961 but to start the Halden Relays in 1962” (Orendor 1996, 35).



9.4. Fabled coach Dewey Halden (left) and one of his early teams, about 1930. B Street is behind them. 645 C Street is on the left. The roof and chimneys of 301 Sixth are visible behind the heads of the boys in the middle. On the right, 603 C Street is under construction. (Courtesy Isabel Sparks)

Social Events on B Street

The scarcity of B Street’s residents and residences is counterbalanced by the abundance of its social life and events. Its proximity to Civic Center Park creates physical and social space for gatherings. These include the following.

GAMES AND STROLLING ON THE CIVIC CENTER PARK FIELD. There is a softball diamond in the Civic Center Park, just across from Sixth and B streets. Davis has a robust set of softball leagues organized through the City’s Department of Parks and Community Services that has used this field in the evenings from early spring to late fall. On many evenings, there is a lively social scene at this field.

In addition, at various times in the day sundry types of sporting teams practice and dogs walk their owners.

“BREAKFAST WITH THE BUNNY” EASTER PARADE AND “EGGSTRAVAGANZA.” The Davis Senior Center at the southeast corner of Seventh and A streets is a public facility and part of Civic Center Park. Its availability for indoor events combined with its surrounding public, open space creates an inviting locale in which to stage events combined with parades.

Prominent among these is the annual Easter “Breakfast with the Bunny” for children at the Senior Center, which is followed by a parade along B Street to the Downtown (Fig. 9.5), where there is an “Eggstravaganza,” “featuring egg decorating, pictures with the bunny, cookie decorating and much more!” (Advertisement, DE, 3-4-98).

9.5. Parents and children strolling in the Easter Parade, B Street, 1998. 636 B is on the left and 626 B is in the middle-right.



THE DAVIS TURKEY TROT 5K/10K. Since the later 1990s, on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, an event called the “Davis Turkey Trot 5K/10K” takes place on the Civic Center Field, the greenbelts and streets of Davis, and—most especially—on B Street.

Long distance runners and their friends and families, numbering in the thousands, congregate on the field, start the race from the school administration parking lot on Fifth Street, and end on B Street at the 600 block, a scene shown in Fig. 9.6.

9.6. The 600 block B Street finish line of the 1997 Davis Turkey Trot.



301 Sixth Street[†]

301 Sixth (Fig. 9.7), the house next door (at 309 Sixth), and 636 B were the first three houses built on B Street. 636 B was constructed in 1926 and the other two built close to or not long after that date (all three appear on the 1933 Sanborn map).

The ARG surveyors characterize 301 Sixth as a “Cottage Revival house . . . sheathed in stucco” (ARG, 275).

9.7. 301 Sixth Street.



“The main roof is hipped with a cross gable projecting on the west end toward the street. The fenestration is inconsistent and the overall composition is asymmetrical. There is a brick chimney projecting from the hip roof. The entry is on the east side of the projecting gable portion of the house. A small uncovered porch is present” (ARG, 275).

309 Sixth Street[†]

One of the citizen volunteers helping with the 1996 cultural resources survey of this block described 309 Sixth Street as “Hansel and Gretel cute” (Fig. 9.8). While not a formal architectural concept, the phrase does help to capture what the professionals from ARG described as the “particular charm that emanates from its fanciful facade. The decorative relief stucco or exterior plaster work is quite nice The house is a unique example of the eclectic cottage home” (ARG, 278).

More formally, 309 Sixth is, like 301 Sixth next door, a “Cottage Revival stuccoed residence.”

“A prominent and centered cross gable marks the front elevation. The cross gable has an attic vent, decorative relief patterns and two small windows.

“One of the series of decorative patterns on the cross gable is arched quoining. The roof is covered in red clay tile that is laid in patterned rows with a double row along the ridge.

“The entry is on the east side of the cross gable and is discernible by the small patio surrounded by a low wall” (ARG, 277).

9.8. 309 Sixth Street.



The 600 Block of B Street: Preview of Post-War Styles

A number of the homes facing B Street in the 600 block provide a preview of post-World War II suburban ranch-style residences. Built about 1940, they reflect the new tastes of an about-to-emerge America.

One way to see how these houses move toward a new style is to stand back from them—on the sidewalk on the west side of B Street. Strolling north from Sixth to Seventh from that distance helps one see their *long, low, and horizontal* lines.

The contrast is, of course, with most houses on most other Old North streets, which are more compact, stylized, and vertical.

As one might predict from other things reported about B Street, it has no bungalows, a style whose time had passed by about 1930.

301 Seventh Street[†]

301 Seventh Street (Fig. 9.9) is what architectural specialists call a vernacular cottage, by which they mean a house

designed and constructed by ordinary people without the “assistance” of architects or other high culture workers.

A cabin, 301 Seventh is very definitely vernacular and of uncertain date and origin. It does not appear on the 1921 Sanborn map, but it clearly was built long before that year, which means it was moved to this location from someplace else, probably in the 1920s, for it does show up on the 1933 Sanborn map.

9.9. 301 Seventh Street.



The HEC and ARG surveyors both liked this house and describe it as “project[ing] a clean, simple, vernacular image” that “gains some dignity from its fortunate proportions” (HEC, 174).

Technically, “the roof is gabled and the porch is a simple shed supported by square posts. There are lean-to additions to the rear. The house has wide shiplap siding and six over six double hung windows” (ARG, 119).

Major Old Home Demolition Along Seventh Street

The 1933 Sanborn map shows 14 homes (and *no* apartment houses) fronting the north side of Seventh Street between B and G. All but a few of these were torn down after World War II (mostly in the late '50s and early '60s) to make way for the major apartment complexes now seen along Seventh: the Orange Tree at 311; the Markham at 335; the Kensington at 601, 609, 615 and 617; and, Longview Properties at 701, 703, and 713.



In one common-sense reckoning, the Old North starts at the corner of Fifth and G streets and one moves into the neighborhood by going north and west from that corner.

In that logic, in arriving at Seventh and B, we have reached the end or at least the outer edge of the neighborhood. Our trip and this guide are in this sense finished.

But not quite. “Start and finish” and “beginning and end” have a temporal as well as a physical meaning. Having looked at the Old North *past* in the chapters of Part I and at its *present* in Part II, what about the *future*? What do “start and finish” mean in terms of *time*?

This is the topic to which I come—and with which I end—in the Epilogue, “What Future for the Old North?”