

**Dallas Landmark Commission
Landmark Nomination Form**

1. Name

historic: Richard W. and Grace S. Allen House

and/or common: Allen/Willie House

date: September 9, 1998

2. Location

address: 2603 Fairmount St.

location/neighborhood: Vineyard/Uptown

block: 3/950 lot: 2,4, pt. 6 land survey: J. Grigsby tract size: 0.39 acre

3. Current Zoning

Planned Development District 9

4. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	<u> </u> museum
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u> </u> occupied	<u> </u> agricultural	<u> </u> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<u> </u> residence
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational	<u> </u> religious
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessibility	<u> </u> entertainment	<u> </u> scientific
<u> </u> object	<u> </u> in progress	<u> </u> yes:restricted	<u> </u> government	<u> </u> transportation
	<u> </u> being considered	<u> </u> yes:unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial	<u> </u> other, specify
		<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military	

5. Ownership

Current Owner: 2603 Fairmount Partners

Contact: Doug Nichols

Phone: 214.220.0693

Address: 2600 State St

City: Dallas

State: TX

Zip: 75204

6. Form Preparation

Date: September 9, 1998

Name & Title: Ron Emrich, Principal

Organization: Urban Prospects, Inc.

Contact: same

Phone: 214.942.2202

7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Alexander Survey (citywide) local state national National Register
H.P.L. Survey (CBD) A B C D Recorded TX Historic Ldmk
Oak Cliff TX Archaeological Ldmk
Victorian Survey superior
Dallas Historic Resources Survey, Phase I X high medium low

For Office Use Only

Date Rec'd: Survey Verified: Y N by: Field Check by: Petitions Needed: Y N

Nomination: Archaeological Site Structure(s) Structure & Site District

8. Historic Ownership

original owner: Richard W. & Grace S. Allen

significant later owner(s): Raymond & Laverne Willie (1945 - 198?)

9. Construction Dates

original: 1889 - 1890

alterations/additions: ca. 1945

10. Architect

original construction: unknown (possibly Stewart & Fuller)

alterations/additions: none

11. Site Features

natural:

urban design: prominent corner lot, terraced three feet above street grade

12. Physical Description

Condition, check one:

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

unaltered

altered

Check one:

original site

moved (date _____)

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc). elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

The Richard W. and Grace S. Allen House (ca. 1889) is a two-and-one-half-story wood frame dwelling of the Late Victorian period displaying high quality characteristics of the Queen Anne style. Altered after 1917 to its present appearance, the house features an asymmetrical plan, a complex composition shingle roof composed of multiple gables springing from a tall central hipped roof structure, and evidence that a three-story turret or tower may have originally anchored the primary (northeast) corner of the house facing the intersection of Fairmount and Mahon Streets.

The house faces north on Fairmount (originally Peak) Street, set back behind a modest front and side lawn terraced some three feet above the street grade. Originally part of an upper class residential neighborhood developed just north of the McKinney Road, a mile and a half northwest of the Dallas County Courthouse, the Allen House remains as the most intact and finely detailed late 19th century dwelling in the area. It is surrounded by a mixture of commercial and modern multi-family uses. The property also contains one contributing building, a two-story brick structure built as a dwelling sometime before 1921, and a non-contributing building, a three-story townhouse constructed in 1996.

General Characteristics

The immediate neighborhood surrounding the Allen House grew up during the late 1880s and 1890s and consisted of one and two-story frame, brick or stone residences. The remaining dwellings of the period, mostly one-story cottages and two-story residences dating from the mid- to late- 1890s, are scattered among a variety of commercial, multi-family and other building types that date from the 1920s through the 1990s. The area is zoned as a Planned Development that allows for multiple residential and non-residential uses. Existing building footprints and massing are protected, but the structures may be removed and replaced.

When built, the R.W. and Grace Allen House was located on a 150 by 150 foot parcel representing three lots in the North Dallas Improvement Company Addition. The Allens subdivided portions of the lot during their residency to allow for an additional dwelling to be erected next door to the west. The current property is some 110 by 154 feet.

The Allen House rests on a pier and beam foundation constructed of brick and wood, with a partial basement under the kitchen end of the house. A wood frame dwelling constructed possibly by the

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brother of owner Grace Allen, the house is embellished with a variety of decorative treatments including fishscale and rounded shingles, graceful turned porch pillars, carved and pierced friezes and brackets, and Eastlake-inspired carved entry doors with leaded glass. Fenestration patterns are varied on the asymmetrical elevations, with some windows reaching seven feet in height, each topped by a classic cornice. Upper sashes of the three east-facing windows in the slightly curved first floor diningroom bay are filled with stained glass panels depicting baskets of flowers flanking the letter "A." A flat-roofed porch with a shingled visor projecting from its parapet wraps around three sides of the house, and an arcaded, integral second story porch is nestled beneath the projecting gable that tops the diningroom bay facing east toward Mahon Street. The two-story, five-sided bay of an engaged octagon anchors the northeast corner of the house facing the intersection of Mahon and Fairmount.

Some evidence, including oral history discussions (interview documentation now lost) with the house's longtime owner Laverne Willie, indicates that a conical-roofed turret or tower originally surmounted the engaged octagon. The structure for the base of such a turret remains intact in the attic of the residence, with signs of roof alterations that would have been required had a tower been removed.

Neither building permits nor photographs from the historic period were located. The earliest Sanborn Insurance Map showing the area that includes the Allen House is dated 1899. The maps demonstrate that the house remains in its original plan configuration with no additions since its construction. The 1899 Sanborn clearly indicates a 2-1/2 story structure, with a three-story volume in the location of the possible turret. 1905 and 1921 Sanborns also display evidence of a conical roof at the location; later maps indicate no such element atop the engaged octagon, suggesting a tower may have been removed after 1921 and prior to the Willie's purchase in 1945.

No information on original landscaping has been located. Mature deciduous trees shade the interior side yard and rear of the property. Other landscaping includes clipped foundation hedges ringing the house on the north and east, and a brick sidewalk placed perpendicularly to the sidewalk reaching the front door, then circling the north and east elevations of the house.

A two story brick structure, with a composition shingle hipped roof, simple 1 x 1 wood sash windows and (replaced) paneled wood entry door is located at the rear of the property facing Mahon Street. The building first appears on the property in the 1921 Sanborn map and was indicated as a dwelling, with a full length wood porch across the east elevation. Prior maps indicate a grouping of wood frame outbuildings on the property near the rear property line, with a glass-roofed greenhouse located directly behind the main house for a time.

Exterior

The primary elevation of the clapboard-sided Allen House faces north on Fairmount Street, its asymmetrical façade separated into three horizontal and three vertical divisions. The pair of carved wood entry doors, each with single lights of leaded glass and surmounted by a stained glass transom, is located in the central division. Brick steps access the wood-floor porch, the roof of which shields the central and east divisions of the main façade. The large mass of the house's central hipped roof is broken by a gabled attic dormer and window located above the entry.

West of the entry is a projecting two-story bay topped by a gable roof, the shingled pediment supported by pierced brackets. The clipped corners of the bay frame a pair of 1 x 1 wood frame windows on the second floor, tall and narrow in configuration as is characteristic of 19th century forms. A matching pair of windows below on the first story was replaced, probably in the 1940s, by a fixed, multi-pane display window. East of the entry division is the projecting bay of an engaged octagon tower, its conical roof and third story projection evidently removed before 1945. Three of the five projecting faces of the bay are filled by 1 x 1 wood sash windows on both stories.

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The visor-shaded, flat roofed porch springs from the projecting west bay, sweeps around the corner bay octagon shape, and continues along the east elevation to end at the diningroom bay. The porch roof is supported in this area by a series of simple Doric wood columns, which may perhaps have replaced earlier turned pillars that would have matched those remaining on the rear elevations of the house.

The highly textured exterior materials are characteristic of high style Queen Anne design. The frieze is a jigsaw pattern of diamonds and triangles, cornerboards mark each turning in a wall angle, shingles in gables and on the porch visor roof are a combination of fishscale and round-end, and cornices and other mouldings are smooth, yet complex in profile. The house may have lost additional, typical Late Victorian turned work and it probably originally sported a metal roof cresting. An 1889 architect's rendering of the new residence of Richard Allen's friend and business associate William B. Gano at the corner of Oak Lawn and Cedar Springs Road appears remarkably similar in scale, plan, massing and detailing to the Allen House. The richly textured Gano House no doubt influenced the design of Richard and Grace Allen's the following year.

The east elevation, facing Mahon Street, is also divided into three vertical parts. The central division is a deeply projecting bay whose front elevation is a gentle curve which projects forward on the first story. The curved wall is set back under an arcaded integral porch supported by turned pillars and balustrade on the second story, and the whole supports a gable roof with a shingled pediment pierced by a small 1 x 1 attic window. The rounded shingles of the porch visor roof continue in a band dividing the first and second stories of the projecting diningroom bay, then continue in a new plane as the hipped roof of the porch that wraps the rear of the house. South of the visually prominent diningroom bay, the porch roof shades the entrance to Dr. Allen's home office, reached by brick steps.

The south elevation is the rear of the house. Its decorative detailing may represent the most intact remnants of turned woodwork on the dwelling, with curved brackets and intricate spindlework balusters and friezes decorating the ground story porch extending the full width of the elevation and a second story observation porch topped by a simple shed roof. A shallow gable projects from the center of the elevation, with a single, 1 x 1 attic window. A second small gable extends above the roof of the first story porch.

The west elevation is the simplest and least complex. Again, the center of three major vertical divisions is marked by a projecting, gable-roofed element, the pediment enveloping a 1 x 1 window supported by a three-sided, two-story bay with 1 x 1 windows in each of the chamfered facades of the bay.

Interior

The interior of the house has an irregular plan divided into a number of public, private and service rooms arranged around a central hall. The quality of interior finishes and woodwork is significant and nearly original. All formal rooms and family private quarters are enclosed in lath and plaster walls; some portions have had gypsum board overlaid above the plaster, while other rooms retain their original plaster finishes.

Coal burning fireplaces, with glazed ceramic hearths and surrounds, are located in each bedroom on the second floor, the east parlor flanking the entry hall, the diningroom and Dr. Allen's medical office behind the diningroom.

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Remarkably intact and unpainted woodwork decorates the formal entry hall, stair to the second floor, the diningroom (certainly the most exuberantly detailed room in the house) and Doctor Allen's surgery behind it. Turned and beaded spindlework screens fill the rectangular transom over the double width opening (missing its twin leaf doors) to the east parlor. A similarly detailed fanlight screen tops the matching opening to the west parlor, which is dominated by a corner-placed white marble fireplace.

Summary

All major design and construction occurred during the occupancy of Richard and Grace Allen from 1889 to 1912. Fabricated in a craftsmanlike way, possibly by Grace Allen's brother William, the details (particularly interior and exterior woodwork) of the Allen House are unmatched in any other dwelling from the same period remaining in Dallas. Changes since the residency of the Allens, save perhaps for removal of an apparent turret, were minor, and the house retains a high degree of architectural integrity and conveys a strong sense of time and place.

13. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

The Richard Wisdom and Grace Simpson Allen House at 2603 Fairmount Street is significant as probably the most distinguished, high-style example of large Queen Anne-style domestic architecture remaining in Dallas. The home retains much of its integrity and particularly its outstanding exterior turned and jigsawed decoration, and interior art glass, woodwork and detailing. The elegant two-and-one-half story frame house, located on a prominent corner lot in the area developed in the late 1880s and 1890s by the North Dallas Improvement Company, relates to late 19th century European and American architectural influences in Texas. Built in 1889 – 1890, the house is also important for its association with Dr. R.W. Allen and Grace Allen, representing Dr. Allen's role as a prominent early Dallas physician, Grace Allen's association with and leadership in social and literary circles in Dallas, and the couple's connection with the development of the near north side and Oak Lawn section of the city.

Dallas in the mid- to late-1880s was a prosperous rail hub, with the Houston & Texas Central and Texas & Pacific Railways, along with the Missouri, Kansas & Texas and several other railroads, converging on the booming town on the banks of the Trinity River. Land development and speculation, in Dallas always an economic pastime and often a leisure pursuit as well, was at an all-time record level. Between 1880 and 1890, Dallas' population had nearly tripled and assessed taxable valuation of real estate had grown by 800 per cent.¹ Suburban expansion to the south in the fashionable Cedars area, to the northeast along the newly opened Ross Avenue corridor, and across the river to the southwest in the adjoining town of Oak Cliff saw rapid construction of homes and businesses in entire new additions or plats. The growing population brought near gridlock to the alternately dusty and muddy streets of Dallas, and "rapid transit" lines – horse drawn, electric or steam locomotive driven – were created both to relieve congestion and to facilitate sales of homesites in the new areas on the outskirts of the city.

Suburban development to the north of the city's heart was slower to occur than to the south and east, however, thanks in part to the physical and psychological barrier of the Texas & Pacific railroad mainline tracks along Pacific Avenue. The railroad grade, raised several feet above the surrounding streets, had become a dangerous and annoying irritant to citizens and an impediment to the speculators wishing to attract homebuyers to the valuable lands across the tracks to the north. Nevertheless, in 1884 the Belt Street Railway was extended by a group of investors to convey prospective homebuyers north of the tracks, beyond the "Frogtown" red-light district on lowest McKinney, to the newly opened Thomas and Colby (Streets) area, North Dallas' first socially elite neighborhood.² A fragment of the neighborhood, with more modest houses than the elegant mansions that would spring up on nearby Ross and Maple Avenues within a few years, remains in the State Thomas Historic District (NR, City of Dallas) in 1998.

Another major factor contributing to a sudden boom in North Dallas development arose, meanwhile, as a result of the conflict between rival factions of Dallas State Fair organizers. The fight had culminated in 1886 with competing fairs operating across town from one another. When the faction supporting the one-year-old Texas State Fair (located on what is now the grounds of North Dallas High School and Cole Park) capitulated to Col. William H. Gaston and his preferred East Dallas site, developer Frank Cockrell acquired the North Dallas fairgrounds and laid out the Fairland Addition to promote for housing development. Cockrell, with investors Walter Caruth, O. P. Bowser, Jules Schneider and Royal Ferris, chartered the North Dallas Circuit Railway in 1887 and began steam-driven rail service in a loop that passed just north of the Thomas-Cole addition, beyond Trinity (now Greenwood), Emanu-El, and Calvary Cemeteries and the nearby Freedman's Town and Cemetery, to Fairland. Ultimately, Cockrell's speculative real estate venture didn't succeed and few homes would be built for another 20 years. However, his Circuit Railway did serve to encourage more rapid development closer to town, including in John M. Howell's Fairmount area, where Richard and Grace

¹ McDonald, *Dallas Rediscovered*, p. 182

² *Ibid* p. 171

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Allen were soon to build their gracious Queen Anne mansion one block south of the Circuit Railway line.

J.M. Howell had settled on a sizeable tract between the Cedar Springs and McKinney Roads in 1872, planting vineyards and orchards and opening a commercial greenhouse at McKinney and Pearl. After attending the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876, the "father of Dallas horticulture" returned home and began planning an addition to the city on his own land that would reflect the graciousness and beauty he had seen in Philadelphia. Streets were named for his father-in-law (Rev. Jacob Routh), his own family, and after Fairmount Park, the site of the Philadelphia Exposition.³ Remaining largely a "tangled growth of wisteria and honeysuckle" until 1888, in that year fellow real estate promoter Edwin P. Cowan built his spectacular Queen Anne-style mansion "The Shingles" on the western edge of Howell's addition, at the northwest corner of Cedar Springs Road and Maple Avenue.

Howell, Cowan, Cockrell and several other real estate venturers embarked on an ambitious effort to promote nearly all of North Dallas as a "healthful, cooler" and less muddy alternative to living closer to the city.⁴ The North Dallas Improvement Company was formed as a loose association of investors and developers, and included Oliver P. Bowser and W.H. Lemmon, who soon opened Bowser's & Lemmon's Addition north of Turtle Creek, and Oliver Thomas, Howell's former partner in the nursery and developer of the Thomas-Colby area. Cowan focused his speculative attention on the Maple Avenue corridor, selling a tract of more than 250 acres to the City of Dallas in 1889 that would serve first as a "pleasure and driving park," and in 1894 as the site for Parkland Hospital at Maple and Oak Lawn Avenues.⁵ Quickly, Maple Avenue and the North Dallas development would rival Ross Avenue at the architectural and social apex of Dallas domestic life. The North Dallas Improvement Company Addition - Maple to Routh Streets, north from McKinney past Cedar Springs Road -- was platted on March 18, 1889. That same year, William H. Thomas, President of the American National Bank, was living on McKinney between Harwood and Maple, while C.S. Woodworth, wealthy from lumber interests in East Texas, built a massive home at Maple and Cedar Springs. Exuberant villas such as a respectable brick mansion for M.D. Garlington, Thomas Marsalis' partner in the wholesale grocery business (1889); and George Dilley's extravagantly eclectic Moorish "Ivy Hall" (1890) also rose along Maple Avenue.

On August 27, 1889, Richard and Grace Allen purchased their 150 by 150-foot property at the southwest corner of Fairmount and Mahon Streets from John M. Wharton for \$4,681.25. Wharton had bought the three lots from the North Dallas Improvement Company in May.⁶ The Allens would immediately begin construction of a large and gracious home in an image befitting the emerging upper class neighborhood around them, and their evident station in Dallas society.

Richard Wisdom Allen was born near Lexington, Kentucky on November 23, 1846, received a medical degree from Transylvania University in Lexington in 1870 and completed graduate medical studies at Bellevue Hospital Medical College in New York in 1872.⁷ Allen joined Dr. Jacob A. Ewing in his practice in Dallas in 1873, and for the next forty years practiced surgery and general medicine with offices in prestigious office buildings in downtown Dallas. In 1880, Allen was appointed to serve on the Dallas Board of Health, and was listed as the "local physician" for the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT) Railroad from 1881 to 1912. Active in the Dallas County and Texas State Medical Societies, Dr. Allen served on various Society committees including Ethics and Membership during his lengthy career.

³ Ibid p. 188

⁴ various advertisements, *Dallas Evening Herald*, 1889 - 1890

⁵ *Dallas Evening Herald*, Sept., 1889

⁶ Dallas County Deed records, v. 103, p.412; Murphy & Bolanz Block Book B, pp. 63 - 65 (Dallas Public Library)

⁷ Giles, Marie Louise, MA Thesis, University of Texas, Austin, 1951, pp. 74 - 76

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Dr. Allen married Grace Simpson and the couple had several children: a daughter, Nellie, who was born in 1876, and two sons who died in infancy.⁸ Grace was born in 1849 New York, but little is known about her background or early life, and a date of marriage has not been found. The Allens lived for a number of years at 1125 Main Street between St. Paul and Harwood Streets, then a respectable neighborhood of neat single family residences near downtown and some three blocks from the Central Christian Church where they worshipped. Grace's mother, Jane Simpson, and younger brother, William, were living with the Allens and their servant in 1880.⁹

No record can be found of an architect or building permit for the spacious house on Fairmount Street, but neighborhood lore suggests that William Simpson, who was listed in City Directories as a contractor, had a hand in the house's construction.¹⁰ Their friend and business associate William B. Gano had just completed a large, frame Queen Anne house designed by Dallas architects George W. Stewart and Brock C. Fuller at the northeast corner of Cedar Springs and Oak Lawn, and its published image in the *Dallas Herald* in October 1889 bears a striking resemblance to Richard and Grace Allen's.¹¹ Perhaps, the Allens may have engaged Stewart and Fuller as well. The family was listed in the 1890 - 1891 City Directory at home at 445 Fairmount (the address to be changed to 2603 during the citywide renumbering process in 1910). William Simpson lived at the same address. There the Allens remained until 1912.

Construction of the house was probably not complete when Richard Allen embarked on his only known effort to ride the wave of real estate-driven prosperity in Dallas. He and his friend William Gano joined with several partners in another speculative North Dallas real estate venture that ultimately failed. In the fall of 1890, an article appeared in the Dallas newspapers touting the impending opening of the Southern Female University, "a school for young ladies under the auspices of the Christian Church."¹² Planned to serve the "higher and highest grades" to prepare young women "to adorn homes and professions," the University was also touted as another opportunity to promote the "pride and progress of the city.... Every dollar brought to the city by schools is that much outside capital placed in circulation here."¹³ Obviously, founding of educational institutions was regarded as a legitimate economic development tool!

The location was part of the "Philadelphia Place" lands that Col. Henry Exall had acquired from the historic Cole farm and represented to a group of Philadelphia investors. The ten-acre University campus was laid out just west of the then-under-construction Exall Lake, in what is now the Town of Highland Park, with an additional fifteen acres set apart for "a permanent fund." That fifteen acres¹⁴ was advertised the following week as the University Place Addition, another wonderful - and perhaps educational - place to buy or build a home near the school.¹⁵ Dr. Richard W. Allen was named as President of the University Place Improvement Company and William B. Gano as Vice-President. The two friends also served on the board of governors of the Southern Female University, along with Maj. K.M. Van Zandt, Capt. W. H. Lemmon and Judge James B. Goff of Austin. Gano's father, Civil War hero Gen. Richard M. Gano, served as President. As with so many high-flown dreams of the early 1890s, the real estate development never materialized, the red brick and tan Pecos stone Richardsonian Romanesque-style Administration building and dormitories were never built, and the school never opened.

⁸ Greenwood Cemetery markers, Dallas

⁹ 1880 Federal Census Records, Dallas, p. 86

¹⁰ Interview with Mrs. Raymond Willie, Dallas County Heritage Society Inventory, 1974

¹¹ *Dallas Evening Herald*, op cit. Oct. ____, 1889, p. ____.

¹² *Herald*, op cit, Oct. 13, 1890

¹³ *Ibid*

¹⁴ Murphy & Bolanz Map of Dallas, 1891

¹⁵ *Ibid*, Oct. 18, 1890, p. 7

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It would be another fifteen years before the speculative dreams of Col. Exall and the Philadelphia investors would be realized by John S. Armstrong and the developers of Highland Park. There is no evidence that Richard and Grace Allen were a part of that or any other real estate venture again.

Little is known about the domestic life of the Allens, apart from occasional mentions in the society publications of the time.¹⁶ Grace Allen was an active and long time member of the Pierian Club of Dallas, one of the city's oldest and most respected women's clubs. Founded in 1890 by Mrs. Alexander C. Ardrey as the Chautauqua Scientific and Literary Circle, the group was later renamed "Pierian" and has met monthly ever since in members' homes to read and study great works of literature and art. The Pierians' mission, in addition to "mutual help and encouragement of all those discoveries of mental culture," was the "establishment of a public library for Dallas," a goal reached through the combined efforts of the Pierians and other women's organizations in 1901. Grace Allen was listed as a member by 1893¹⁷ and in 1900 - 1901 served as Librarian on the list of officers.¹⁸ An 1893 meeting in the Allen's parlor on Fairmount Street was described as "an author's day," with discussion of works by Browning, Burns, Emerson and others. Tea and light refreshments were, of course, served. Fellow Pierian Club members in the 1890s included Mrs. James M. Coble, wife of a prominent surgeon who lived just down the street on McKinney Avenue; Mrs. R. L. Munger, whose husband would soon develop the Munger Place Addition in East Dallas (NR, City of Dallas HD); and Lottie Flateau, whose parents were early residents of Fairland. Grace Allen's name was moved to the Honorary Member category in the 1904 - 1905 Pierian yearbook, where she remained listed each year until her death in 1934.

Following Richard and Grace Allen, numerous other prominent Dallas families settled in the Maple/Fairmount area developed by Cowan and Howell after 1890. (Cowan himself, along with the North Dallas Improvement Company, suffered severe losses in the depression of 1893 and sold his home "The Shingles" that year to William H. Abrams, Land and Tax Commissioner of the T & P Railroad.) Jean B. Adoue, President of the National Bank of Commerce and later Mayor of Dallas, by 1895 had settled his family in a mansion on the northwest corner of McKinney at Maple, and a block away at McKinney and Fairmount, his bank Vice-President, brick manufacturer James M. Harry, built a large home.¹⁹ William C. Kimbrough, partner in the law firm of Wooten & Kimbrough, built at 465 Fairmount, two houses west of the Allens, also in 1895. A staid stone Victorian edifice at the northwest corner of Mahon and Fairmount, just behind the Allens, was erected in 1896 for J.S. Mayfield, founder of Mayfield Lumber.

In 1898 John C. Weaver's (Briggs & Weaver, later Briggs & Stratton implement company) beturreted Queen Anne house appeared on the west side of Maple, followed nearby in 1899 by a large house for Elm Street hardware merchant William B. Robinson and in 1901 by the Colonial Revival house built for George Bannerman Dealey, publisher of the *Dallas Morning News*.

Also in 1901, John P. Murphy, partner in the Murphy & Bolanz real estate management and promotion company, built an eclectic house across Mahon Street from J.S. Mayfield.²⁰ The Murphy House, altered almost beyond recognition and serving as a small hotel, remains in 1998 as one of the few large houses of the period in the old north Dallas area.

The Allen's neighbors included solidly respectable middle class families as well, including Henry Muller, head of the shoe department at Sanger Brothers department store and James O. Wynn,

¹⁶ see e.g. *Beau Monde*, March, 1897, p. 6, Dallas Historical Society Collections

¹⁷ *Dallas Times Herald*, Dec. 21, 1924, III, p. 8

¹⁸ Pierian Club yearbook, 1900-1901

¹⁹ Dallas City Directory, 1895

²⁰ McDonald, *op. cit.*, pp. 187 - 190

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manager of the Covenant Mutual Benefit Association. The congregation of so many of Dallas' prestigious families – the business and social leaders of the community – in the North Dallas/Maple Avenue neighborhood by the turn of the century brought development of significant religious institutions to the area as well.

Trinity Methodist Church built a spectacular new sanctuary, designed by James Flanders in the fashionable Prairie Style, on the corner of McKinney and Pearl in 1904. Two years later, Dallas architects C. W. Bulger & Son designed an imposing Classical Revival edifice for the McKinney Avenue Baptist Church at the corner of Routh. The much-altered building remains in 1998, used as a restaurant. Finally, by 1917 the Collegiate Gothic-style Westminster Presbyterian Church replaced a large home on the corner of Fairmount and Howell, across the street from the Allen House.

References to Richard and Grace Allen largely disappear from records after about 1905, although Dr. Allen's medical practice continued to be associated with the MKT Railroad until his retirement in 1912, and he moved his offices to the prestigious Wilson Building at Ervay and Main Streets for a time. The family last appears on Fairmount Street in the Dallas City Directory in 1912, and in 1913 Dr. Allen is listed at an address a block away on Routh Street, where a small 1920s apartment building stands today. The Allens joined their daughter, Mrs. Elmer Twyman, in Kansas City in 1913, where Dr. Allen died that same year. He was interred in Dallas' Greenwood Cemetery, next to the infant sons buried there in 1879 and 1887. Grace Allen first leased the great house on Fairmount Street to local lawyer M. H. Gossett, then sold it in 1917.²¹

Grace Allen died on January 7, 1934 in Kansas City. Many friends and family members attended her funeral at the Central Christian Church in downtown Dallas, where the family had worshipped for 40 years. The list of honorary pallbearers, the aging men with whom the Allens had ridden the heady wave of development in Dallas in the late 19th century, included Jean B. Adoue, George Bannerman Dealey, Robert E. Lee Knight, Sam Cochran, E. J. Kiest, and James J. Collins.²² Apparently their respect for Grace and Richard Allen, demonstrated as she was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, suggests a more important role for the Allens in Dallas' history than the surviving record might indicate.

After 1917, a succession of owners and tenants passed through the Victorian mansion on Fairmount Street. For a time during the 1920s the Fairmount Inn hosted guests there while most of the palatial houses on Maple and Ross Avenues fell to the wrecker's bar. Margaret A. Robinson, who purchased the house in 1942, sold it to Raymond and Laverne Willie in 1945. For many years, Mrs. Willie operated a "hardly worn" clothing shop in the house, known as the Hodge Podge, while leasing office and retail space to a variety of tenants. For some years starting in 1944, Ebby Halliday operated a millinery shop in the west parlor of the Allen House. There she began to offer interior design assistance to people in the real estate industry, which later led to her founding of a major residential real estate brokerage firm based in Dallas. The current owners, Douglas and Karrison Nichols, purchased the house in 1998.

Architectural background and characteristics

The Richard W. and Grace S. Allen House is one of a handful of remaining wood frame dwellings in Dallas displaying elements of Late Victorian Queen Anne design. Its scale (more than 4,000 square feet) and its degree of integrity, both inside and out, sets it entirely apart from any other remaining Queen Anne dwelling of the period. Houses in the neighborhood that date from the same period, such as 2615, 2723 and 2714 Routh, are smaller and less finely detailed. All have been significantly altered. Distinguished, high-style dwellings approaching the Allen House in size, such as the nearby residence at 2701 Fairmount or the Frederick Wilson House (Wilson Block HD) in East Dallas, are of

²¹ Dallas County Deed Records, 11/29/17

²² *Dallas Morning News*, Jan. 8, 1934, III, p. 1

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a slightly later architectural period, displaying an eclectic mix of Late Victorian and Neo- Classical stylistic influences. No domestic buildings of the period remain in either The Cedars or Ross Avenue districts; all have disappeared. The Allen House, then, is the only known example of its type retaining a significant degree of original integrity in Dallas, expressing architectural values associated with the 1880s and early 1890s. It is significant as a unique local interpretation of late 19th high style American architecture and as a tangible link to the society that fostered it.

Integrity

The Richard W. and Grace S. Allen House retains a very high degree of integrity of setting, location, feeling, association, design, materials and workmanship. The boundaries of the property conform to the legal lot associated with the property. Originally constructed on a larger parcel, the property was subdivided to create new building lots for residential development.

The house is one of the oldest remaining in the near North Dallas/Vineyard/Uptown area. It has outlived nearly all the other large, high style Late Victorian dwellings dating from the late 1880s to 1900; the few others that remain have lost their integrity due to significant alterations. As such, the Allen House is a rare and highly visible feature in the City of Dallas.

Except for the possible removal of an original turret/tower on the building's most prominent corner (northeast), few major alterations were made to either the exterior or interior of the home. The changes occurred following sale of the house in 1917 by Mrs. Allen and largely respected the original form, massing and materials. The contributing "carriage house" structure on the rear of the property facing Mahon Street was constructed sometime between 1905 and 1921 and, save for removal of a full-width porch, appears to have been subjected to minimal alteration. The three-story "townhouse" on the west rear portion of the site, constructed by a previous owner in 1996, is a non-contributing but compatible structure placed on the historic location of small-scale outbuildings. The non-contributing building does not obscure significant views of the Allen House or its contributing outbuilding from either Fairmount or Mahon Streets.

The Richard W. and Grace S. Allen House is worthy of preservation as the best surviving example of large, high style Queen Anne design in Dallas. It provides a tangible reference to the economic and social background of its builders and original owners, as well as to the history of suburban expansion and development in the historic North Dallas and Oak Lawn area. The property conveys a strong sense of time and place and retains a high degree of integrity.

14. Bibliography

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15. Attachments

District or Site Map

Site Plan

Photos (historic & current)

Additional descriptive material

Footnotes

Other: _____

Designation Merit

- | | | | |
|--|------------|--|------------|
| A. Character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas or the United States. | <u> X </u> | G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city. | _____ |
| B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. | _____ | H. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, material or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. | _____ |
| C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city. | <u> X </u> | I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural or architectural motif. | _____ |
| D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historical heritage of the city. | <u> X </u> | J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar feature of a neighborhood, community or the city. | <u> X </u> |
| E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. | <u> X </u> | K. Archaeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories or historic or prehistoric value. | _____ |
| F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or specimen. | <u> X </u> | L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment of public pride. | _____ |

Recommendation

The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date:

Chair, Designation Task Force

Jim Anderson, Urban Planner
Historic Preservation