

Robert Goins House

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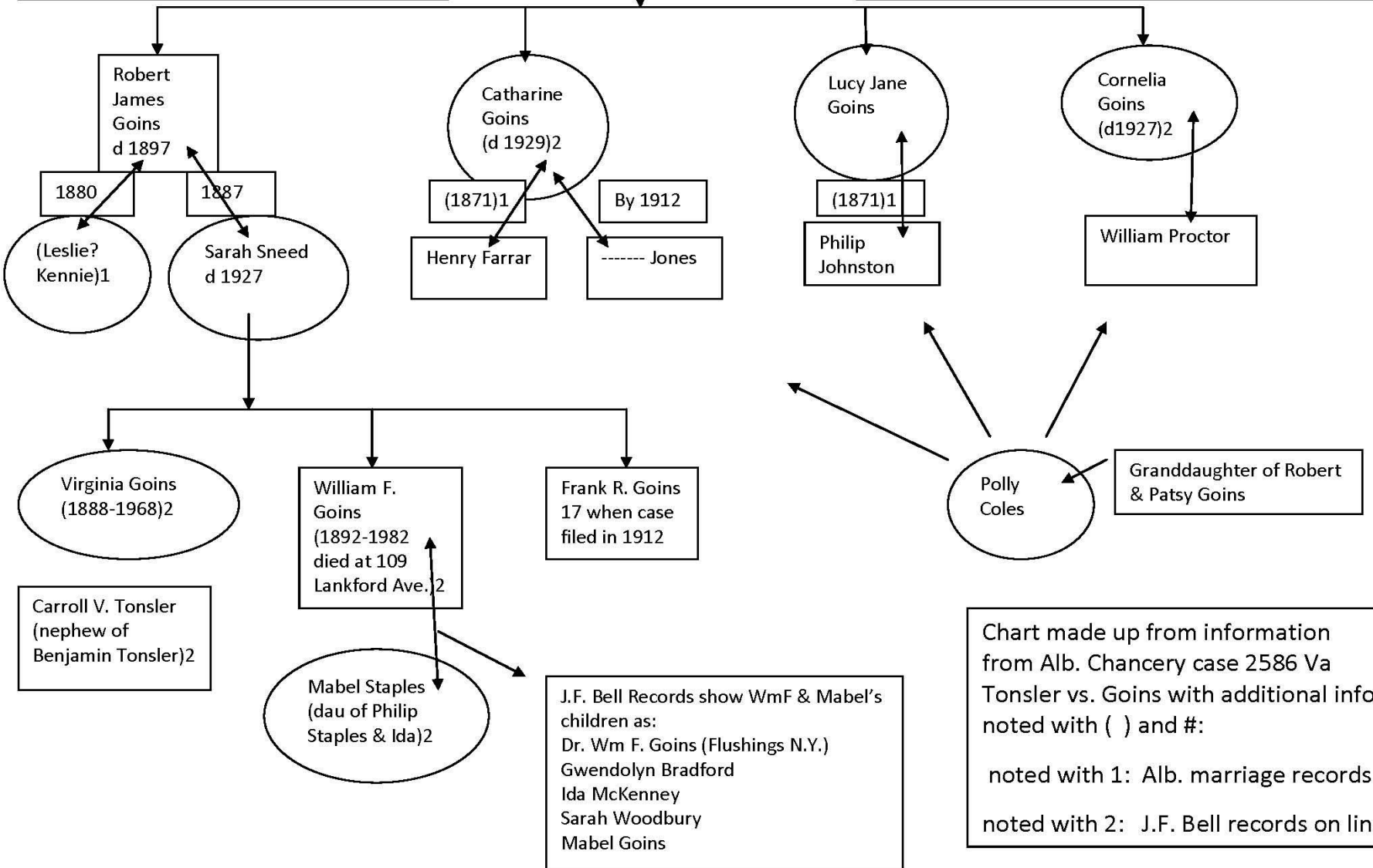
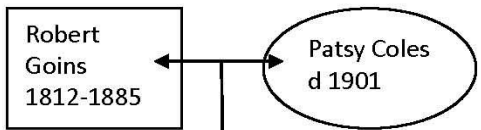
The **Robert Goins House** is one of Charlottesville's individually protected properties, meaning any exterior changes or potential demolition would have to be approved by the Board of Architectural Review. The house is located at 114 Lankford Avenue^[1].

2586: Virginia Tonsler vs. Goins

Virginia Tonsler states her grandfather, Robert Goins, was a free man previous to the Civil war, and bought land in 1845 and 1860. Robert died in 1885 without a will and her father, Robert James Goins died in 1897 without a will. Virginia files this bill in 1912 to settle the land of Robert Goins who died in 1885.

Alb. Chancery case 2586 Tonsler vs. Goins: Robert Goins d 1885 he was a free man who bought land in 1845 (from Ezra Wolfe) & 1860 (from Thomas Bailey. The family cemetery is shown on a survey.

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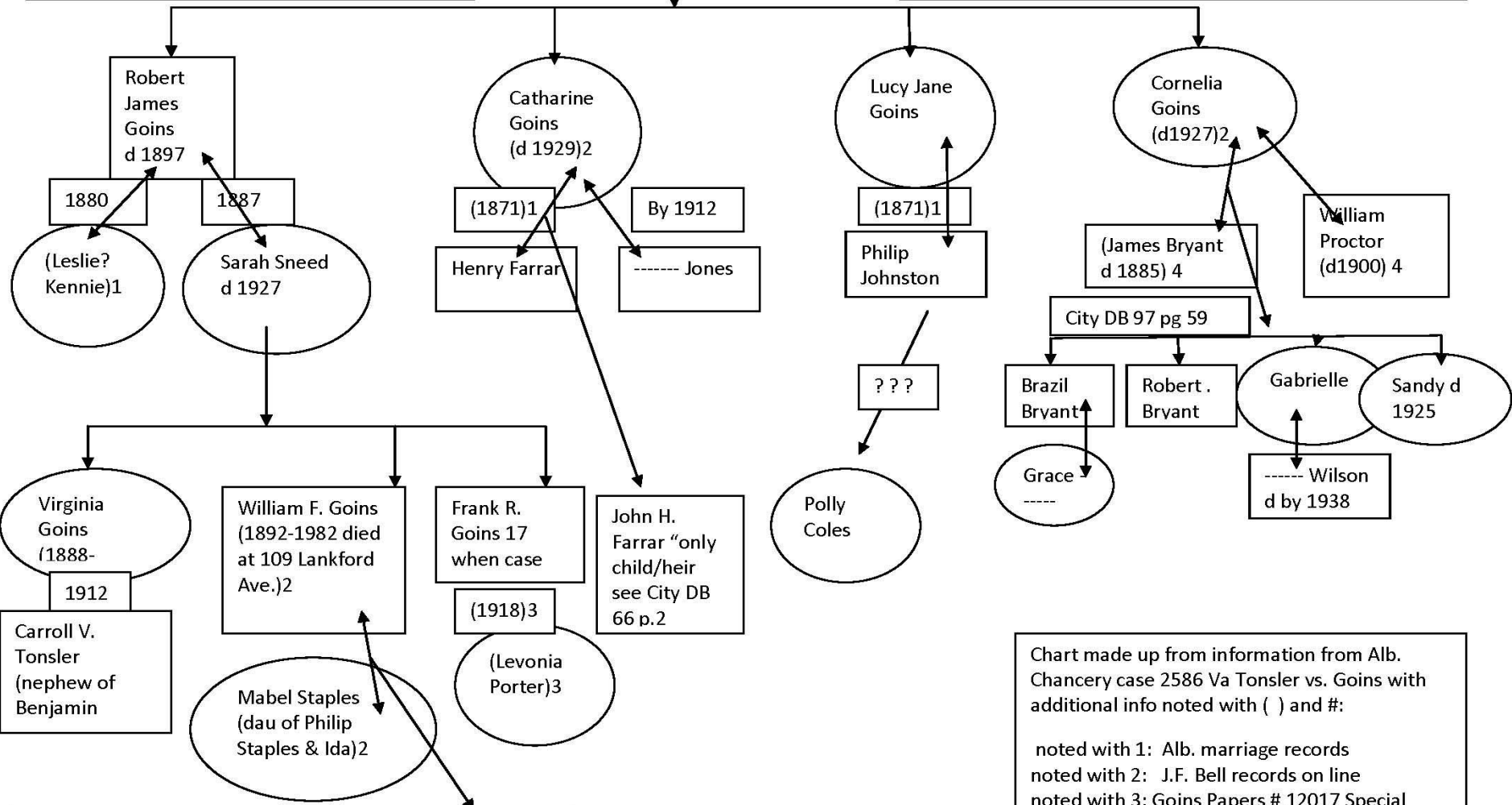


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Robert Goins 1812-1885

Patsy Coles d 1901



J.F. Bell Records show WmF & Mabel's children as: Dr. Wm F. Goins (Flushings N.Y.), Gwendolyn Bradford, Ida McKenney, & Sarah Woodbury

Chart made up from information from Alb. Chancery case 2586 Va Tonsler vs. Goins with additional info noted with () and #: noted with 1: Alb. marriage records noted with 2: J.F. Bell records on line noted with 3: Goins Papers # 12017 Special Collections UVa noted with 4: C-ville DB 97 pg 59

To the Hon. ~~Robert J. Goins~~,
County

Judge of the Circuit Court of Albemarle, Virginia.

Your Complainant, Virginia Tonsler (nee Goins) respectfully represents unto your honor that she is the daughter of Robert James Goins, who was the only son of Robert Goins, deceased; that the late Robert Goins, her grandfather, died in the year 1885, seized and possessed of two certain tracts or parcels of land situated in the County of Albemarle, South West of and near the City of Charlottesville. The first of said tracts of land is described as follows: A certain piece or parcel of land lying in the County of Albemarle containing 1-4/10 acres and is further and more fully set out in a deed dated the 26th. day of November, 1860, to Robert Goins from Thomas R. Bailey and Anne Eliza Bailey, his wife, which deed is duly recorded, a certified copy of which is herewith filed marked Exhibit "A", and is asked to be read as a part of this bill.

The second of said tracts or parcels of land is described as follows: A lot or parcel of land containing 3 acres, and is further and more fully set out in a deed dated March 1st., 1845, from Ezra M. Wolfe and wife to Robert Goins, which deed is of record in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Albemarle County, a copy of which is herewith filed marked Exhibit "B", and is asked to be read as a part of this bill.

That Robert Goins, while so seized and possessed of the aforesaid tracts or parcels of land died intestate in the year 1885, leaving your Complainant's father, Robert J. Goins, who also died intestate in the year 1897, leaving surviving him his widow, Complainant's mother, Sarah Goins who still survives with two other children of Robert J. Goins, in addition to Virginia Tonsler, your Complainant, William F. Goins, an adult, and Frank R. Goins who is an infant 17 or

Virginia Tonsler's Complaint:

Robert James Goins (her
father) died in 1897

Robert Goins (her
grandfather died in 1885)

Robert Goins d 1885
bought land in 1845 from
Ezra Wolfe & 1860 from
Thomas Bailey

Robert James Goins d
1897 left wife Sarah &
children: Va. Tonsler, Wm
F. Goins & Frank R. Goins
17 or 18

18 years of age, who are grandchildren of the late Robert Goins; that the late Robert Goins in addition to his son, who has since his father's death died, left surviving him three daughters who are still living, whose names are as follows: Lucy J. Johnston, Katharine Jones and Cornelia Proctor, who, together with the late Robert J. Goins' ~~heirs~~ are the sole heirs at law of the late Robert Goins.

That Patsy Goins, wife of Robert Goins, survived her said husband and died in the year 1901; that before her death, in fact from and before the death of her husband until her demise she resided upon the aforesaid estates of her husband, and some of her children and grandchildren did, in fact the three daughters do, and have been for sometime since their father's death, residing in distant States of the Union; that sometime before the death of their mother and Complainant's grandmother, she made a will; amongst other provisions of said will testatrix undertook to devise all her real and personal estate to her four children, and a part to her granddaughter, Polly Coles. Polly Coles has been permitted to live on said property since the death of Patsy Goins by the three daughters of the late Robert Goins, who were part owners of said property. Sufficient it is to say about this, that their mother, Patsy Goins had no property, real or personal, to dispose of as the property she spoke of devising in her will to her children and granddaughter was the property of her husband, Robert Goins, that he had bought and paid for the same and had received deeds thereto in his lifetime, and of which he died intestate, and in which their mother had no interest, control or ownership therein in any manner whatsoever save a dower interest therein which she had by reason of her marriage to their father and Complainant's grandfather and the death of Complainant's grandfather. Said will appears to have been fully proven and duly probated, admitted to record or probated as re-

Virginia Tonsler's 1912 Complaint Continued:

Robert Goins d 1885 left wife
Patsy & children: Robert
James Goins, Lucy J.
Johnston, Katharine Jones
and Cornelia Proctor.

Patsy Goins survived her
husband and left will dividing
her land among her 4
children and grandchild Polly
Coles. Patsy owned no land
but Polly Coles has been
permitted to live on the
property since the death of
Patsy Goins in 1901 (but she
should own no interest in
the land)

quired by law, and recorded in Will Book No. 30, P. 486. A copy of said Will is herewith filed marked Exhibit "C" and is asked to be read as a part of this bill.

Complainant alleges and charges that her grandmother never had any propetty, real or personal, to dispose of by her will and that all the property mentioned by her grandmother in her said will belonged wholly to her grandfather Robert Goins, and at his death, he having died intestate, all of his property, real and personal, descended to his four children who have been heretofore mentioned, who were his sole heirs at law, subject only to the dower of her grandmother therein.

Complainant further alleges that these two tracts of land lie contiguous to each other, or practically in one body, that located upon said property are two small houses, the residence of the late Robert Goins, that no partition of said land has been made amongst said heirs, and that all of the said land is regarded of much value.

Notwithstanding the fact that Complainant believes and charges that her grandfather, the late Robert Goins, had paid in full all of the purchase money for the aforesaid tracts of land, there appears of record in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Albemarle County a conveyance from said Goins to S. V. Southall, trustee, recorded in D. B. 59, pp 239 and 240, a trust deed securing to Thomas R. Bailey three bonds for \$77.14 each, with William H. Fenney as surety, dated 26th. of November, 1860, payable one, two and three years from their respective dates.

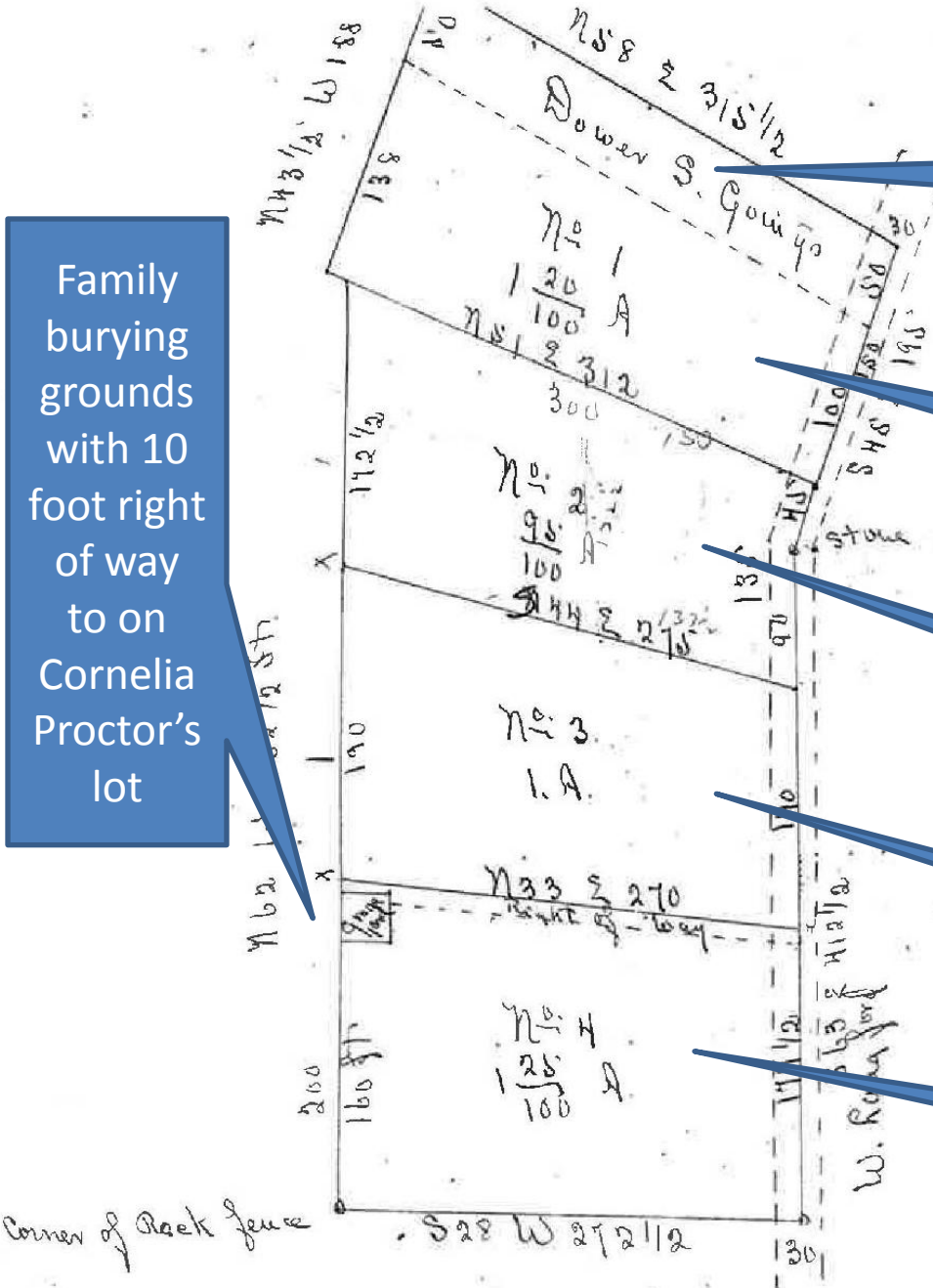
It further appears from the records that there is another trust deed given by Robert Goins to Robert S. Jones, recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Albemarle County in D. B. 47, p. 54, a deed of trust dated 24th. of September, 1849, securing one bond to one Wolfe for \$69.45, and another bond to one Muskgrove for the sum of \$71.54. This deed of trust appears to be on the three

Virginia Tonsler Continued:

...her grandmother never had any property, real or personal, to dispose of by her last will, as when Robert d 1885 died without a will his property passed to his 4 children with dower rights for the widow...her grandfather paid for the land in full...the (1845 & 1860) tracts are contiguous...there are two small houses, the residence of the late Robert Goins (it seems Robert d 1885 built two houses)

**Results of the case
(recorded at Alb.
DB 151 pg 283)**

Family
burying
grounds
with 10
foot right
of way
to on
Cornelia
Proctor's
lot



Dower lot of
Sarah Sneed
Goins

Lot 1: to Va. Tonsler,
Wm F. Goins & Frank
R. Goins

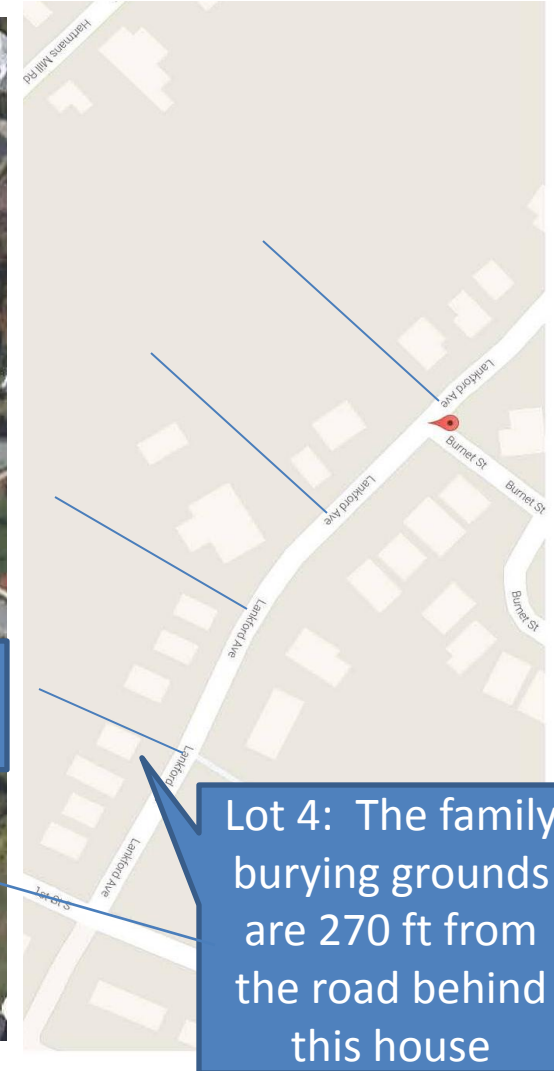
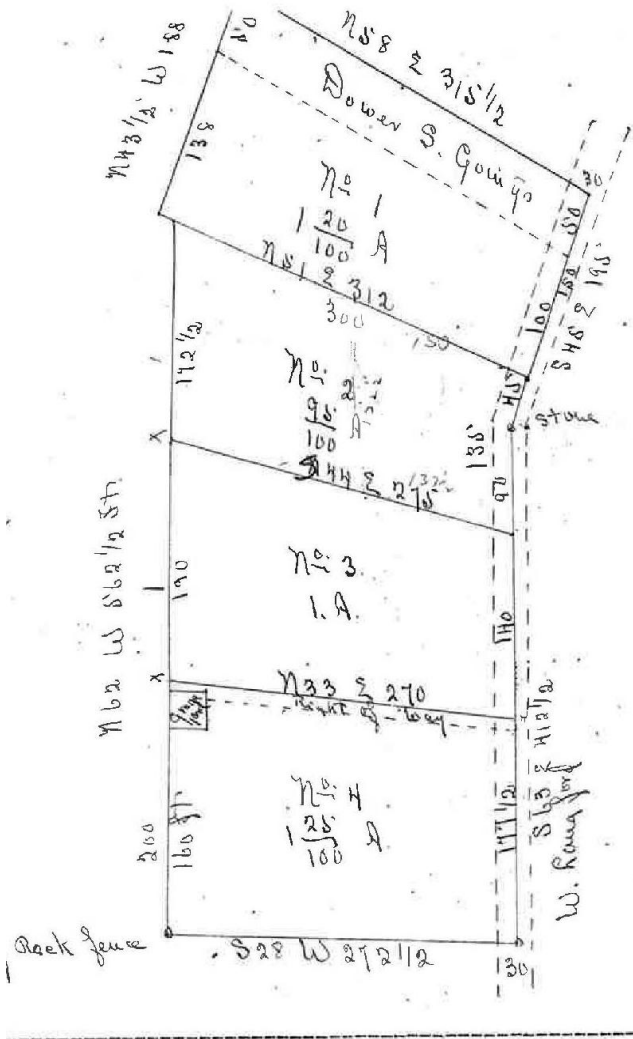
Lot 2: to Katharine
Jones

Lot 3: to Lucy J.
Johnston

Lot 4: to Cornelia
Proctor

1912 survey and two views of goggle maps

Notice how Lankford Ave still bends the same today as in 1912. Today's 114 & 116 Lankford (said to be Robert Goins homes) are then on Lot 2 of 1912 survey





The 4th house up Lankford is a white house with Green roof right at the entrance to Mr. Zion Baptist church



In 1914 Cornelia Goins Proctor had Charles E. Coles build her a home on her lot 4. (Alb. DB 156 pg 453). She lived there until she died in 1927. In 1938 her children by James Bryand sold 1/2 of Cornelia lot (the eastern part without her house) to James L. Fagans (C-ville DB 97 pg 59).

ust; 1914, severally acknowledged the same before me in my County aforesaid.

Given under my hand this 10th day of August, 1914.

N. Garland, J. P.

In the Clerk's office of Albemarle Circuit Court August 10th., 1914.

This deed was presented to me in said office and with certificates annexed, admitted to record.

Teste *W. P. Mansfield* Clerk.

Cornelia Proctor, (a widow woman) is justly indebted to C. E. Coles in the sum of \$320 as is evidenced by her bond of even date with these presents, payable at the Jefferson National Bank, at Charlottesville, Virginia, to C. E. Coles, on January 1st., 1919, or sooner, in whole or in installments at the option of the maker, with interest at six per cent, payable semi-annually on the first days of January and July of each year, and both principal and interest being the balance of amount due for erection of house.

Said Proctor is willing more fully to secure said debt, principal and interest, evidenced by said bonds.

Therefore this deed, dated this 1st day of January, 1914, by and between Cornelia Proctor, of the first part, E. O. McCue, Trustee of second part and C. E. Coles of third part.

W I T N E S S E T H :

That for and in consideration of the premises and the sum of \$5.00 cash, in hand paid party of the first part by party of second part, receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged the said party of the first part does hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey, with general warranty unto party of the second part, all that certain tract or parcel of land with dwelling recently erected thereon, lying in Albemarle County, near the Southern city limits and more fully described as follows:-

Beginning in the center of a 30 foot street at corner to Lot No 3, the nec with said Street S 65 E 177 1/2 feet to corner, thence S 28 W 272 1/2 feet to corner of an old rock fence, thence N 33 E 270 feet to the beginning, containing 1 and 25/100 acres, it being

Alb. Deed Bk 156 pg 453

THIS DEED, made this 15th day of December, 1938, by and between Brazil J. Bryant and Grace Bryant, his wife, Robert A. Bryant, unmarried, and Gabrielle Wilson, a widow, sole heirs at law of Cornelia G. Proctor, deceased, parties of the first part, and James L. Fagans, party of the second part,

W I T N E S S E T H :

That for and in consideration of the sum of THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS, (\$300.00), cash in hand paid by the party of the second part to the parties of the first part, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the said parties of the first part do hereby GRANT, BARGAIN, SELL and CONVEY unto the said party of the second part, with GENERAL WARRANTY of title, that certain lot or parcel of land, situated in the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, on the South side of Lankford Avenue, fronting 88-75/100 feet on said Avenue and being the Eastern one-half of lot No. 4 shown on a plat attached to a deed from E. O. McCue, Commissioner, to Cornelia Proctor, dated December 9th, 1912, and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Albemarle County, in D. B. 151 p. 283. Said lot has a depth of about 272-1/2 feet on the East and about 271 feet on the West, measured from the center of Lankford Avenue, with a rear width of 100 feet.

The property hereby conveyed is a portion of the lot conveyed to Cornelia Proctor by the above mentioned deed.

Cornelia Proctor, whose maiden name was Cornelia Goins, married James Bryant and of this marriage four children were born, namely: Brazil J. Bryant, Robert A. Bryant, Gabrielle Bryant and Sandy Bryant. Sandy Bryant died unmarried and intestate in 1925; James Bryant died in 1885 leaving his widow, Cornelia Bryant and the four above named children. Cornelia Bryant was remarried to William Proctor who died in 1900. There were no children of this marriage. Cornelia Goins Proctor died intestate in 1927; leaving the parties of the first part her sole heirs at law.

The said parties of the first part covenant that they are seized in fee simple of the property hereby conveyed; that they have a perfect right to convey the same; that said property is free from encumbrances of any kind; and that they will execute such further assurances as may be requisite to

C-ville DB 97 pg 59

Robert A. Bryant

Ed.

Brazil J. Bryant et als

To) E/S

James L. Fag

Fee \$2.25
Tax .36
Trans. 1.00
paid \$3.61

*Delivered to me 9/2
J. F. Fagans*

ALB DB 156
Pg 453

*Eid.
Cornelia Proctor
and
C. E. Coles
and
C. E. Coles
Trust
1.75
1.00
2.75
Paid*

*The debt of \$320
owed by the bond
and receipt was received
this deed of trust
has been paid in full
and the same thereby
discharged.*

*Char E. Coles
J. P.
W. P. Mansfield
Deputy for
W. L. Mansfield, Clerk
The bond of \$320.00
secured by this deed
and has been produced
for me reviewed and
recorded this 27th
day of March 1916
W. L. Mansfield
Deputy for
W. P. Mansfield, Clerk*



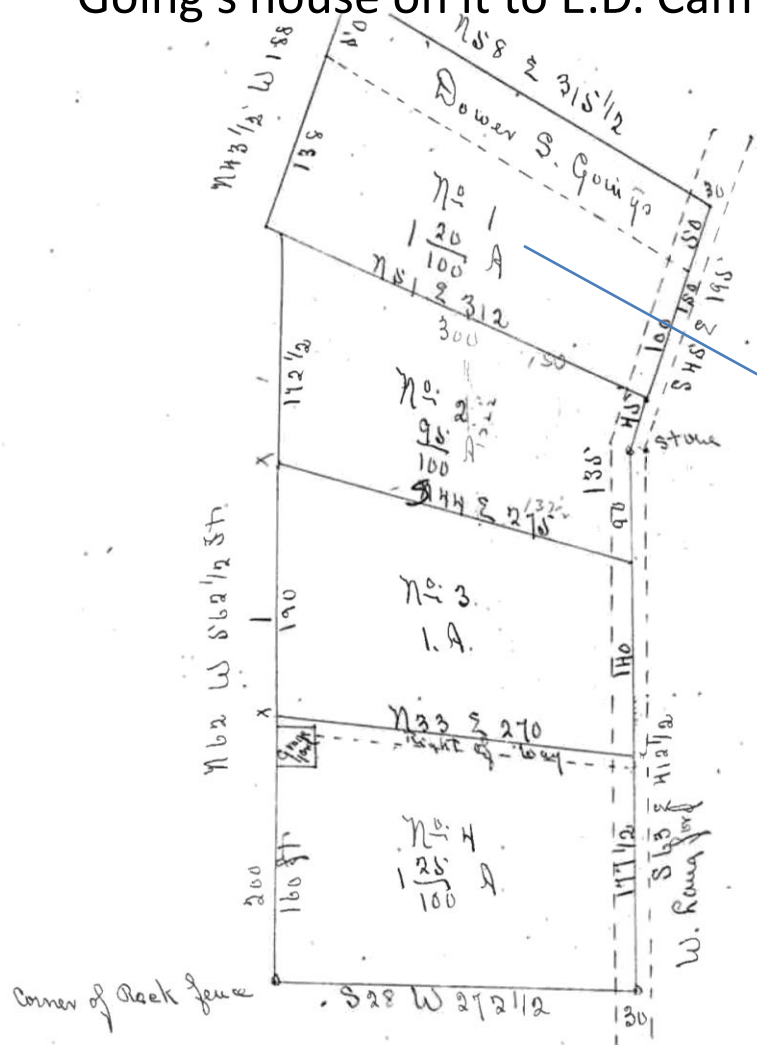
If you go to the right of Cornelia Goins Bryant Proctor's 1914 house (built by Charles E. Coles) along the western boundary line and go back 260-270 feet you should be the the old Goins burying grounds. Buried there should be Robert Goins d 1885, his wife, Patsy Coles Goins d 1901, and their son, Robert James Goins d 1897. In 1912 there was a 10 foot right of way running back to the cemetery. The J.F. Bell records show that in the 1920s when Virginia Tonsler and Cornelia Proctor died they were buried in Oakwood. Likely the family burying grounds was not used after 1912. The entrance/driveway to Mt. Zion church is almost directly across the street from the Right of Way going back to the Goins burying grounds.

The Robert Goins d 1885 “family burying grounds” should be 260-270 feet back from Lankford Ave. at the western edge of 106 Lankford Ave. (Cornelia Goins Bryant-Proctor’s house)



Robert Goins
family burying
grounds

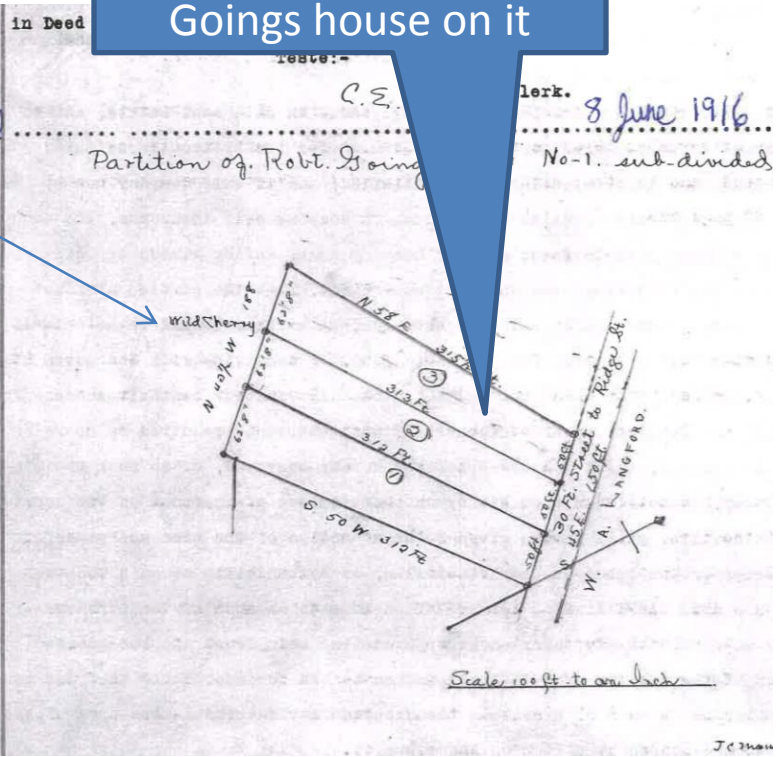
In 1916, Lot 1 was divided into 3 lots (C-ville Deed book 29 pg 287). Virginia Tonsler got Lot 3 with the dower lot of Sarah Snead Goings and a house. Land books show lots 1 (to Wm F. Goings) and Lot 2 (to Frank Goings) did not have a house. Virginia Tonsler and Sarah sold Lot 3 (which likely had Robert James Going's house on it to E.D. Campbell in 1920. An old house is not on the lot today.



27 OCT 1920
 VA Tonsler,
 Corral #1,300
 To E.D. Campbell
 Lot 3

Lot 3 to VA
 Tonsler
 Keep buildings
 insured.

Va Tonsler's lot 3 in the division of Lot 1 likely had Robert James Goings house on it



114 Lankford Avenue: Where It Stands and What's at Stake

Aaron Wunsch

By now, most readers are aware of the controversy surrounding 114 Lankford Avenue in Charlottesville. That address belongs to an unrepossessing house erected by Robert Goins, one of the city's first free black landowners. Regardless of the building's ultimate fate, the case raises theoretical and procedural issues of broad interest to the area's preservation community. The following essay highlights those issues after outlining the significance of the site.

During the mid nineteenth century, a new settlement took root behind Ridge Street, an artery running southwest from Charlottesville's core. The development of Ridge Street itself comprises an important chapter in the city's physical and social history. There, starting in the 1840s, wealthy white merchants erected impressive brick houses, while east of Ridge a different sort of enclave arose. It consisted of wooden buildings inhabited exclusively by free blacks and grew up around a three-acre parcel belonging to Robert Goins.*

Historians have identified Goins as one of the first African-Americans in Charlottesville to own a substantial amount of land. His original purchase east of Ridge occurred in 1845. Four years later, he and his wife Patsy had erected a "log-bodied dwelling house" on the property, along with "a stable planked upright and other similar buildings"; in 1860, Goins extended his land holdings and appears to have built a second house. Remarkably, both houses still stand. Although there has been some confusion regarding their chronology, a recent survey suggests that 114 Lankford Avenue is the earlier of the two (the other candidate is 116). All the more unfortunate, then, that the building has been at the eye of the storm.

Last spring, Dale Ludwig of Palmyra, VA, acquired 114 Lankford and applied for a demolition permit. Aware of the building's local landmark status (conferred in 1997), Ludwig nonetheless had reason to believe his application would be approved. A previous owner's neglect and unfinished renovations had left the house a vacant eyesore, and the city's building inspector had condemned it earlier in the year. These conflicting imperatives – preservation and demolition – have been at the root of this case ever since.

In the months since Ludwig's initial application, several shortcomings of local preservation law and practice became clear. First, it appears that no bureaucratic safety mechanism prevents the condemnation of historic buildings or requires special review in such cases. The Goins house was condemned simply because it was open to trespassers and the elements, not because of structural problems. Had the inspector known of the building's significance, he might never have issued the order. Second, as the Board of Architectural Review deliberated on Ludwig's request, they repeatedly came up against the limits of their

power in such cases. The BAR's jurisdiction over local landmarks governs only those features visible from a public right-of-way. Since the original log structure lies buried behind later additions, did the BAR have any say over its fate? Third, there was the (unstated) question of how much responsibility the city bears for bringing preservation cases into the public eye. The Goins House saga received widespread media coverage only after the City contacted Monticello in hopes of finding a party willing to reconstruct the log section of the building at a new location.

Finally, one might question the appropriateness of such reconstruction schemes and the city's role in advancing them. Most preservation literature of the last ten years has stressed the importance of place. Yet the city felt free to broker an entirely placeless solution – at once understandable (given the city's embarrassing predicament) and particularly ill-suited to a house whose builder helped spawn the surrounding community. Luckily, this effort failed.

At present, the Goins House remains intact. After having his application postponed and then denied by the BAR this summer, Dale Ludwig turned to City Council for relief. His appeal was rejected unanimously on October 7th. Yet preservationists should consider these promising decisions as the start of their work, not the end. By law, Mr. Ludwig may demolish 114 Lankford in six months if he makes a bona fide (and unsuccessful) attempt to sell the building in that period. Moreover, the house remains empty and far from water-tight. Further neglect could ultimately amount to slow demolition unless the city steps in (the powers afforded by nuisance laws might afford some protection but are obviously a double-edged sword). In the short run, those concerned about the building's fate should try to keep abreast of Ludwig's plans. Perhaps he could be convinced to apply caulk and tar paper where needed, or to allow volunteers this privilege. In the long run, preservationists must aim to close the more obvious loopholes raised by this case. Better communication between branches of city government might be the place to start.

* Sources: *Leslie A. Giles and J. Daniel Pezzoni, "Cultural Resources Survey of the Ridge Street Expansion Area" (1997); "Survey of the Ridge Street Historic District and Proposal for Local Designation" (1994). Both reports are on file in the city's planning office.*

Preservation Piedmont Annual Meeting

Thursday, December 12, 5:30 p.m.
422 Second Street NE

Mr. & Mrs. David Morris welcome us to "The Old Manse", their Federal Era house.

Research not in the case:

Preservation Piedmont Newsletter Fall 2002 goes over 114 Lankford Ave

ert Goins.*

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114 Lankford & 116 Lankford

(photos from Assessor's records on-line)

The **Robert Goins House** is one of Charlottesville's individually protected properties, meaning any exterior changes or potential demolition would have to be approved by the Board of Architectural Review. The house is located at 114 Lankford Avenue^[1].

Robert Goins House

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