United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property
   Historic name Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence
   Other names/site number N/A
   Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location
   Street & number 3201 Washington Avenue
   City or town St. Louis
   State Missouri  Code MO  County Independent City Code 510 Zip code 63103

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

[Signature]

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of certifying official/Title Toni M. Prawl, Ph.D., Deputy SHPO  Date 04/10/15
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register  ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register  ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper  Date of Action
### 5. Classification

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<th>Category of Property</th>
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<td>X building(s)</td>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

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<td>LANDSCAPE/Garden</td>
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<td></td>
<td>other: Slate</td>
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X NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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<th>Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.</th>
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<td>Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.</td>
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<td>Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.</td>
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Criteria Considerations

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<td>less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.</td>
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence
St. Louis (Independent City), MO.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  Under 1 acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:__________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 38.637630  -90.225036  3
   Latitude:  Longitude:  

2
   Latitude:  Longitude:  

3
   Latitude:  Longitude:  

4
   Latitude:  Longitude:  

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927  or  _____ NAD 1983

1
   Zone  Easting  Northing  3
   Zone  Easting  Northing

2
   Zone  Easting  Northing  4
   Zone  Easting  Northing

Verbal Boundary Description  (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification  (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title  Matt Bivens/ Historic Preservation Director
organization  Lafser & Associates, Inc.
date  1-24-14; rev 3-1-14; fin 2.25.15
street & number  1215 Fern Ridge Pkwy., Suite 110
telephone  314-560-9903
city or town  St. Louis  state  MO  zip code  63141

e-mail  msbivens@lafser.com

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps:
  - A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
  - A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- Continuation Sheets
- Photographs
- Owner Name and Contact Information
- Additional items:  (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)
# Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence

**Name of Property:** Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence  
**City or Vicinity:** St. Louis  
**County:** (Independent City)  
**State:** Missouri  

**Photographer:** Matt Bivens  
**Date Photographed:** 4.15.2014

**Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:**

1. **Primary elevation facing south; camera facing north.**
2. **Primary elevation (left) and east elevation (right); camera facing northwest.**
3. **Detail of porch; camera facing southwest.**
4. **East side elevation; camera facing west.**
5. **East Side elevation (left) and rear, north elevation; camera facing southwest.**
6. **Rear elevation and lot; camera facing south.**
7. **West elevation; camera facing east.**
8. **Detail of rear yard and rock walls; camera facing north.**
9. **Interior vestibule and primary door to residence; camera facing north.**
10. **Interior primary stair, 1st floor; camera facing southwest.**
11. **Interior formal room with fireplace; camera facing west.**

*Figure 28, page x includes the photo key.*
Figure Log

Figure 1 (page 4): First floor plan. Source: owner's collection.

Figure 2 (page 8): Residential character by 1892. Source: Whipple Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2-3, plate 88, 1892.

Figure 3 (page 9): Residential character replaced mostly by large commercial buildings. Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2, 1932, plate 27; subject lot dotted outline.


Figure 5 (page 13): Museum of Fine Arts, Peabody, Steams & Furber, photo circa 1888. Source: Missouri Historical Society Photograph Archives.

Figure 6 (page 14): George Ashe Bronson Residence, 1885, Peabody & Steams with Furber. Source: Sanitary Engineer 1886 p. 266-67 August 26, Vol. 14, N 11, pgs. 266-67.


Figure 8 (page 16): George Ashe Bronson Residence, 1885, Peabody & Steams with Furber. Source: St. Louis Post-Dispatch. “Artistic Homes…” September 4, 1886, p. 9.

Figure 9 (page 18): Howard House, 1887. Source: MOHIS, William Swekosky collection, 1946.

Figure 10 (page 19): Dyer House, date unknown. Source: The Inland Architect & News Record. March 1894, Vol. 23.


Figure 12 (page 20): Morton House, 1887. Source: MOHIS, William Swekosky collection, 1946.

Figure 13 (page 21): Simmons House, date unknown, top left. Maverick house, date unknown, top right. Wolfe House, date unknown, bottom. Source: MOHIS, photograph collection, various dates.

Figure 14 (page 22): Nelson Estate, date unknown. Along Natural Bridge Road, east of Glen Echo Park and Lucas & Hunt Road. Source: MOHIS, photograph collection.

Figure 15 (page 23): Davis Residence, 1893. Source: MOHIS, Boehl & Koenig photograph collection, 1893.

Figure 16 (page 24): Brookline, Massachusetts residence c. 1885. Source: Albert Levy (photographer), Rverson and Bumham Libraries Book Collection, archives.

Figure 17 (page 24): Hans T. Lambert residence c. 1883-1884 at 94 Cass Street (later 620 N. Wabash Avenue), Chicago, Illinois. Source: J. W. Taylor (photographer), Chicago Public Library, archives.

Figure 18 (page 25): Charles W. and Mary P Bingham residence built 1883 at 2445 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. Source: Albert Levy (photographer), Rverson and Bumham Libraries Book Collection, archives.

Figure 19 (page 25): C. F. Morse residence built 1887 Kansas City, Missouri. Source: Inland Architect, volume XIX, number 4, Rverson and Bumham Libraries Book Collection, archives.

Figure 20 (page 26): Catherine Lorillard Wolfe residence (top) & gatehouse (bottom) built 1882 on Ochre Point, Newport, Rhode Island. Source: Albert Levy (photographer), Rverson & Bumham Libraries Book Collection, archives.

Figure 21 (page 27): Dr. George A. Bronson residence, 3201 Washington Ave., St. Louis built 1885. Source: Matt Bivens photograph 2014.

Figure 22 (page 28): Bronson house as constructed 1885, left side; as modified, middle; as extant, right side. Source: Left side is Whipple Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2-3, plate 88, 1892; middle is Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2, plate 27, 1909; right side is Matt Bivens photograph, 10-2014.


Figure 25 (page 32): Image of Bronson prior to death. Source: St. Louis Globe-Democrat, October 18, 1932.

Figure 26 (page 36): “Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence Boundary Map.” Source: Property Survey.

Figure 27 (page 37): Additional details of Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence. Source: Google Earth with Lafser & Associates details.

Figure 28 (page 38): Photo Key. Source: Building drawing of 1st floor.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Summary
The Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence at 3201 Washington Avenue in St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri, is a two-and-one-half-story red brick, irregular shaped building accented with gauged and rubbed brick, sandstone, and limestone. Featuring a complex roofline now clad with asphalt shingles, this Late Victorian era building features design elements of the Queen Anne and Romanesque periods with Chateauesque influences and retains its multiple eyebrow windows and small dormers in addition to chimneys with flared tops. Essentially original in design, this building was completed in 1885 and retains a very high degree of both its interior and exterior design elements. At the exterior, original leaded glass and wood windows, doors, in addition to transoms, roof overhangs, and porch details are extant; a section of the original rear yard rock wall is also extant. The interior is virtually unaltered since original construction and extant elements include multiple fireplaces (including mantels, hearth, and tiles), extensive wainscoting, millwork (including door and window casing), a coffered ceiling, plaster walls, wood floors, stair parts (including newels, balusters, rails, and landings), original floor layout, and other details. The building has very high integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Site
The city block containing the subject building is bound by Washington Avenue to the south, Leonard Avenue to the west, Samuel Sheppard Drive to the north, and Compton Avenue to the east. Although originally a residential street, the block is occupied by the former Central States Life Insurance Company at 3207 (NRHP listed 7-25-2012) and the former Royal Tire Service Building at 3229 (NRHP listed 6-22-2007)—both to the west of the subject building. An alley separates the portion of city block from two commercial buildings and parking lots which face Samuel Sheppard Drive to the north. The subject building is on the southeast corner of the city block with a lot that extends to the alley. A section of a rock wall that is historic and relative to the property is at the rear west edge of the lot. The surrounding neighborhood is mixed-use including religious properties, residential buildings, commercial and light manufacturing concerns, and restaurants.

Exterior
The primary elevation faces south along Washington Avenue and is comprised of two main bays framed by a steep, hip roof (photo 1). A raised limestone foundation is penetrated by a pair of segmental arched windows with brick headers at the left bay. A sandstone sill course above supports a tripartite window assembly composed of
double-hung, single light sash with a segmental arch transom above; wood framing is original. The window is framed with bullnose brick. Above at the second story is a paired, double-hung window in similar frame with sandstone sill and six-over-one-light sash. The raised, first story, right bay contains the entrance which faces east along Compton Avenue. Reached by concrete then by sandstone steps framed by sandstone and red brick, a shed roof porch with hip roof corner set upon ornamental, carved sandstone columns shelters the primary entrance. Contained within a slightly projecting, brick enclosure (a condition dating before 1918) under the porch roof is a paired double-hung window with sandstone sill and flat header. Set back on the return walls is a pair of multi-light, vertical, windows framed with bullnose brick and sandstone sills. Recessed slightly behind the left side bay is the second floor which contains a paired, double-hung window in a segmental arch frame with sandstone sill and six-over-one-light sash. Above is a projecting roofline that contains a high-hipped, asphalt-shingled roof, capped in copper. An eyebrow window penetrates the roofline just behind the corner hip portion (photos 1-4).

The east elevation contains a projecting porch set on three massive sandstone columns with rounded and squared bases and Romanesque capitals (photo 3). An ornamental sandstone bracket adjacent the entrance supports the porch at the building wall. A wood entablature under the roof is painted white. Under the porch is a full-light wood door set within a bullnose brick frame with segmental arch head. The porch roof is capped with terra cotta cresting. Above a continuous sandstone sill course (and water table) is a six-over-two-light window and a four-part, wood frame window with transoms at the first story. A pair of six-over-two-light windows is at the second story. All of the window openings are framed with bullnose brick, set within segmental arch openings, have sandstone sills, and either plain or ornamental wood inset panels under the arches. Above at the roof is a large hip roof dormer with boarded window opening. A pair of corbelled chimneys rises at either side. On the return wall which projects slightly at the rear of the structure is a smaller, single-light window similarly framed. A wide tripartite window at the first floor and a six-over-two-light window at the second floor are also similarly framed. The roofline above is also projecting and has a cross hip with small conical-shaped dormer with metal roof over a semi-circular shaped, boarded window opening. The basement story contains four small, segmental arch window openings (photos 2-5).

The north-facing building rear contains a projecting bay about the center of the elevation; a chimney wall which penetrates the roof is flanked at either side by a multi-light, segmental arch window on stone sill. Windows closer to the east-facing, left side
wall have bullnose brick frames while the opposite side has regular cut brick with flat edges. The stone sill course from the east side elevation continues around the building and separates the basement from the first floor. A tripartite window with leaded glass transom at the first floor and a paired, four-over-one-light, double-hung window at the second floor have bullnose, segmental brick arch frames. A pair of basement windows is cut in the foundation; window wells allow a source of natural light into the basement. On the right side of the bay is a pair of four-over-one-light, double-hung windows at the first and a single matching window at the second—each with segmental brick head comprised of flat edge brick profile. A small eyebrow window is set behind the conical roof of the projecting bay. A basement entrance reached by steps is at the rear (photos 5-6).

The west side elevation has three basement windows similar to the east elevation, an entrance door situated towards the rear, and seven segmental arch windows with limestone sills. The sandstone sill course which is present on the south elevation terminates about midway on this facade but is flush with the brick walls. A tall, narrow, vertical, multi-light wood window corresponds to the servant’s staircase. An additional hip roof dormer window penetrates the roofline. The main roof of the entire structure projects from the brick walls around the structure (photo 7).

The rear yard portion of the property contains a mostly intact ornamental rock wall at the western edge of the lot; the wall terminates at the alley in a vertical shaft which contains the building address “3201” in ornamental rock. This pumice-like rock is decorative and contains multiple arches, undulating lines, pockets, grottoes, and other details reminiscent of the former Japanese garden that was on site. (photo 8).

**Interior**

The interior is reached via the main entrance facing Compton. The first floor is comprised of seven primary rooms with a number of smaller antechambers allowing separation of one space from another (Figure 1, next page). Through a clay tile entry foyer clad completely with wood wainscoting is a secondary, leaded glass door (photo 9) which allows access into a formal space ornamented by wood wainscoting, spindle-work, newel posts, and a grand staircase (photo 10)—all original. Carpet on the floor of this room has been removed to reveal a wood subfloor but no finish floor; it is currently unknown if another floor is below. A fireplace with mirror and mantel is in the corner of this formal room. Nearer the front of the building is a small room which corresponds to the enlargement of the front porch prior to 1918. Evidence of where the wall was cut to achieve this treatment can be seen. Adjacent this space is a grand room with
massive fireplace and mantel (photo 11) with ceramic tile imported from England. On the back side of the grand stair is an open hall which allows circulation to a large pantry room, a secondary stair, and a former kitchen. The dining room and a secondary room contain original fireplaces with intact mantels. The first floor contains its original features including doors, millwork, plaster walls, floor plan, and other details.

Figure 1: First floor plan.
Source: owner's collection.
The basement is reached via the secondary staircase situated along the western edge of the building. The basement is partially unfinished space with a portion under the south-facing primary elevation that has been finished; this space likely corresponds to Dr. Bronson’s old sculpture studio based on the layout of the room and location of gas heating elements along the walls. The floor is dirt with wood joists set on the ground for a finish floor. Additional rooms are partly finished spaces with deteriorated wall treatments and no integrity; the boiler room is raw space with exposed brick.

The second floor is reached via the grand and the secondary stair and is highly original. It retains the floor plan comprised of six primary rooms and a number of smaller antechambers. Three additional fireplaces are included on the second floor as well as a built-in window seat and bookcase area. The attic is reached by the secondary stair and is partially finished space with three primary rooms.
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence at 3201 Washington Avenue in St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri, is eligible for local listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C in ARCHITECTURE. An exceptional local example of the residential work of the prominent Boston architectural firm of Peabody & Stearns with Pierce Furber in St. Louis, the building stands today as one of three private mansions in the proximity extant from an earlier period when both sides of Washington Avenue east of Grand Boulevard was a prominent residential section of St. Louis; further, the building stands as the firm’s earliest extant, intact residence in St. Louis rendered in the eclectic style which was indicative of the firm’s nationally-known work. Designed and completed in 1885, this red brick and sandstone, Late Victorian style building contains design elements of the Queen Anne, Chateauesque, Eastlake, and the Romanesque. Built for prominent local dentist Dr. George Ashe Bronson as both an office and as a residence for him and his widowed mother, Bronson remained in the house until his death in 1932. Representative of the varied body of work of Peabody & Steams, both the interior and exterior are essentially unchanged since construction. The interior features such original details as window and door casings, doors, windows, wainscoting, millwork, fireplaces, coffered ceilings, wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and the original or early floor plans from the basement through the 3rd floor—an attic space that was finished—are also intact. The period of significance is the design and construction date of 1885. The building retains excellent integrity and is a good representative example of the architectural firm’s ability to successfully intermingle a variety of building styles in one structure.

Background - Washington Avenue as a Residential Enclave

Building permits on file at the City of St. Louis illustrate a variety of residential building specifications for Washington Avenue along at least an eight-block stretch between North Grand Boulevard (to the West) and North Beaumont Street (to the East) beginning in 1876.1 Historic maps2 and period photographs depict physical elements and appearances such as building footprints, construction materials, and stylistic

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1 The author has been conducting extensive research along Washington Avenue and surrounding area over the past decade and physical records number in the hundreds, thus this citation is a general note on the source of files/records/archives. This source: City of St. Louis. Building Permits, Deed Abstracts, and Data Engineering Building Cards on file at the St. Louis Comptroller’s Office. 1200 Market Street, Suite 1, St. Louis, Missouri, 63103.

2 The author, op. cit. This second major source includes: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of St. Louis (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company) and A. Whipple Insurance Maps, various dates.
details. Historic residences along Washington Avenue reflected period styles ranging from the Italianate and Queen Anne to the Romanesque and Second Empire and were constructed of brick and stone with terra cotta details. The bulk of these houses featured stone fronts. What has been gleaned from this study is that this section remained a strong residential area at least until 1900; it was after this time that residential structures were rapidly being replaced with offices and businesses. This trend would continue and the street would illustrate a near complete transformation from domestic to commercial uses after 1930. Only a handful of residences are extant today along this stretch of Washington which illustrates the earliest occupied history of the street.

The earliest recorded building permit on city block 1039 of Washington Avenue (between North Compton Avenue to the East and North Leonard Avenue to the West) dates to December of 1881 for a two-story brick dwelling to cost $8,000—this permit was followed by four brick dwellings for a single owner in 1883. The owner of the 1881 building, B. Weber and Company, was a major builder and contractor highly active in St. Louis and particularly along Washington Avenue. Research conducted indicates that Weber often worked with architect Francis D. Lee; Lee in turn worked extensively with the Gratz Moses family, designing their residences and offices in St. Louis. Moses owned other buildings along Washington Avenue (designed by Lee) and in fact would commission Lee to design a building for him on land he owned at the southeast comer of the aforementioned city block in May of 1881. This house never materialized and ultimately Moses sold the property—still a vacant lot—to a one George Ashe Bronson before 1885.

Another early permit for the construction of four, two-story brick dwellings was issued on June 1, 1883 for a Mrs. C. Marmaduke. These houses, corresponding to numbers 3205-3207-3209-3211 Washington Avenue, all had stone fronts with Mansard roofs and most likely were rendered in the formal Italianate style based on map review; the 1892

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4 City of St. Louis op. cit.
5 The author, op. cit. including extensive review of files as identified under City of St. Louis op. cit.
6 Landmarks Association of St. Louis, unpublished architect’s files of Francis D. Lee and Peabody & Stearns. Permanent Collection, various dates.
7 City of St. Louis, op. cit.
8 Ibid. No assessor records exist to indicate the exact transfer of land from Moses to Bronson.
9 Ibid.
Whipple Fire Insurance Map indicates that this city block face was completely built out and wholly residential in nature at this time (Figure 2).\textsuperscript{10}

\textbf{Figure 2}: Residential character by 1892. Source: Whipple Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2-3, plate 88, 1892.

The Whipple map above also shows a dance hall and additional residences on the other half of the city block facing then Lucas (now Samuel Sheppard) to the north (bottom) and thus indicating some commercial use at adjacent streets (Figure 2). A series of wood frame outbuildings line the alley in between (Figure 2, middle structures along alley). The residential character of the city block was basically preserved until the later 1910s.\textsuperscript{11} In October of 1919, a permit was issued by the city to the owner to demolish four residential addresses including 3205-3207-3209-3211 Washington Avenue in order to make room for the Central States Life Insurance Company—a National

\textsuperscript{10} Whipple Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2-3, plate 88, 1892.

\textsuperscript{11} St. Louis city directories, op. cit.
Register listed Mission Revival style commercial building designed by architect Tom P. Barnett and completed in 1921.\textsuperscript{12}

Before 1932, all of the residences except for one were demolished and replaced by an automotive company (the National Register-listed Royal Tire Service Building) at 3229 and Barnett’s work of art at 3207 Washington. The sole-survivor of the former era, a two-and-half-story, eclectic brick mansion remained at the corner of the city block (Figure 3). This residence was designed and constructed for well-known and respected local dentist, Dr. George Ashe Bronson in 1885.

\textbf{Figure 3}: Residential character replaced mostly by large commercial buildings. Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Vol. 2, 1932, plate 27; subject lot dotted outline.

\textbf{Background – George Ashe Bronson}

Very little is known about the early life of George Ashe Bronson, and what has been gleaned from his history for this nomination is comprised of documentation obtained from city directories, newspaper articles, industry announcements and publications, and finally Bronson’s obituary. George Bronson was born about 1853 and came from Omaha, Nebraska, where his parents were pioneer settlers.\textsuperscript{13} The family moved to St. Louis where his father George was listed as a book-keeper throughout his active life here.\textsuperscript{14} Young George Bronson was also listed as a book-keeper as early as 1873 and

\textsuperscript{12} City of St. Louis, op. cit.


then a clerk for the Chicago and Alton Illinois Railroad in 1876.\textsuperscript{15} Accounting was not his only interest as Bronson would become a graduate of the Missouri Dental College in 1879 where he received his D.D.S. along with seven other men.\textsuperscript{16} Residing with his widowed mother Marion in 1881, the Bronson’s occupied a building located at 2203 Olive—several blocks west of their former apartment at 1412 Olive (both since demolished).\textsuperscript{17} The city directory of 1881 listed sixty practicing dentists within the city limits and Bronson worked from an office located at 1401 Washington Avenue—several blocks east of the nominated property.\textsuperscript{18}

A likely combination of the death of his father in 1881 and personal success in business ultimately culminated in 1885 when Bronson settled on plans for his large corner lot on a “fashionable” street to build a grand home for himself and his widowed mother.\textsuperscript{19} The site was 3201 Washington, just four blocks east of Grand Boulevard and just southeast of the private residential enclave Vandeventer Place. This new residence, an eclectic red brick building, was no doubt distinct from the white stone-front Second-Empire houses adjacent it on the block although it was completed just two years after the majority of buildings there. The architectural designs came from a prominent national firm—none other than Boston’s Peabody & Stearns.

There are no known records of correspondence between Dr. Bronson and local architectural firms and the ultimate choice to engage Boston’s Peabody & Stearns may be as simple as local exposure to the firm’s buildings in proximity to the nominated property. Archives have yet to yield the religious preference of Bronson, but Peabody & Stearns’s Unitarian Church of the Messiah (completed in 1880 and since demolished) at Locust Street and North Garrison Avenue was less than a two-block walk just southeast from his lot. A man of his stature among the social elite of St. Louis would have guaranteed that he had at least visited Peabody & Stearns’s Museum of Fine Arts nearby in Lucas Place (designed 1879 and since demolished). The firm had also completed a number of private residences including those for H. L. Newman in

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. 1873 and 1876 editions.
\textsuperscript{16} J. D. White, Editor. “The Dental Cosmos.” (Philadelphia: Samuel S. White, 1879), volume 21. Bronson’s class was the 13th to graduate.
\textsuperscript{17} Gould’s St. Louis Directory, 1880-1881.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} City of St. Louis, op cit. In 1886, Dr. Bronson and his mother were included in the prominent St. Louis Blue Book, a formal directory for upper class St. Louisans.
Vandeventer Place in 1882, S. H. Leathe at 2700 Lucas in 1883 and I. W. Morton in Vandeventer Place in 1884 (all since demolished).\(^{20}\)

**Elaboration - Peabody & Steams come to St. Louis, enter Pierce Furber**

Peabody & Steams, a Boston, Massachusetts architectural firm of national prominence, was organized in 1870 and lasted over forty years until both partners died a month apart in 1917—the firm produced over 1,000 designs for buildings throughout the United States.\(^{21}\) Archives indicate that design partner Robert Swain Peabody was born in 1845 and had trained at Harvard and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in France; John Goddard Steams, Jr., born in 1843, had also trained at Harvard and acted as the construction and field superintendent.\(^{22}\) Peabody worked in the office of the Boston architect Gridley J. F. Bryant after graduating from Harvard in 1866.\(^{23}\) He then became a student of Henry Van Brunt. (A partial list of the firm’s work is included in Appendix A, page 39).

Until the death of Henry H. Richardson, Peabody & Steams, although widely patronized and admired, were clearly eclipsed by Richardson among Boston’s architects.\(^{24}\) But after 1886, Peabody & Steams rose to ascendency in Boston and ultimately was the chosen firm to represent Boston at the Columbian Exposition in 1893.\(^{25}\)

**The St. Louis Connection**

Peabody & Steams were eventually brought to St. Louis via a church connection and a request by the minister of the Unitarian Church of the Messiah (UCM), William Greenleaf Eliot. Eliot (1811-1887) had come to St. Louis from Boston, Massachusetts in 1834 and was acquainted with Ephriam Peabody—father of architect Robert Swain Peabody and pastor at Boston’s King’s Chapel.\(^{26}\) Further, Ephriam received major financial support from local Bostonian, Nathaniel Thayer in order to establish Washington University in St. Louis—Thayer’s residence on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston was designed by Peabody & Steams.\(^{27}\) The exact year that Peabody & Steams came to St. Louis is unknown but their very first known commission here was a private residence

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\(^{20}\) Ibid and Landmarks Association of St. Louis, op cit.
\(^{22}\) Ibid.
\(^{23}\) Wheaton A. Holden, op. cit., page 114.
\(^{24}\) Ibid. Page 115.
\(^{25}\) Ibid.
\(^{27}\) Ibid.
designed for C. P. Burdick in 1878 (sources indicate the structure was near 2028 Chestnut Street—since demolished).\(^{28}\) The first major commission on the other hand was for the Museum of Fine Arts in Lucas Place the following year in 1879.

The firm appeared on the St. Louis scene with prominent commissions at least two years prior to Henry H. Richardson, Fuller & Wheeler, and the partnership of Burnham & Root.\(^{29}\) Elliot engaged the firm to design a new church edifice for the UCM on the northwest corner of Locust and Garrison in 1879 (Figure 4) which would eventually be completed in 1881. The Museum of Fine Arts (AKA Crow Memorial Art Gallery, Figure 5, next page) in 1881 followed (both since demolished).\(^{30}\) Touted as “a worthy task” where no recognized style was followed, the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Louis was a masterpiece of its time.\(^{31}\) Credit to the success in St. Louis was due to the presence of Pierce T. Furber who represented the local office.

Figure 4: The Church as completed showing etching (far right). Source: Commercial & Architectural St. Louis. (St. Louis: Jones & Orear, 1888), page 158. Period photograph (right). Source: L’Architecture Americaine. (Paris: Andre, Daly fils Cle., 1886).

During the 1880s, Furber (born 1853) supervised local construction of the firm’s projects including the Turner Building on 8th Street between

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\(^{28}\) Landmarks Association of St. Louis, op cit.
\(^{29}\) Charles C. Savage, op. cit., page 132.
\(^{30}\) Wheaton A. Holden, op. cit.

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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Olive and Locust which began in 1881 and the St. Louis Club at Locust and Ewing Streets in 1884 (both demolished). Furber also supervised construction of the varied residential commissions in St. Louis city.

**Figure 5**: Museum of Fine Arts, Peabody, Stearns & Furber, photo circa 1888. Source: Missouri Historical Society Photograph Archives.

Known residential work of the firm in St. Louis includes private residences for banker H. L. Newman in 1882 at #21 Vandeventer Place (demolished), S. H. Leathe in 1883 at 2700 Lucas (demolished), I. W. Morton in 1884 at #49 Vandeventer Place (demolished), Dr. G. A. Bronson in 1885 at 3201 Washington (building being nominated), A. Mansur in 1885 at 3700 Lindell (stone building to be verified), J. E. Erhardt in 1886 at 928 North Grand (demolished), G. S. Meyers in 1886 at 914 North Grand (demolished), Robert Moore in 1886 at #61 Vandeventer Place (demolished), and T. Howard in 1887 likely at 303 Garrison (demolished). Furber died in 1893 but the firm still completed local residences for L. C. Nelson in 1893-95 in the city of Normandy (currently unknown), Col. E. S. Rowse in 1893-95 at #30 Benton Place (extant), T. S. McPheeters in 1894 at 3824 Delmar (demolished), J. T. Davis in 1895 at #17 Westmoreland Place (extant), and a residence for J. and C. Dyer in 1895 at #38 Westmoreland Place (extant).\(^\text{32}\)

\(^{32}\) Landmarks Association of St. Louis, op cit.
Of all the known residential work completed in St. Louis by the firm, the nominated building is the earliest identified structure as well as one of a few that are extant today; the building is also one which retains very high integrity both inside and outside.

**Design and Construction of the Bronson Residence**

Although no physical building permit record has been found, Peabody, Stearns & Furber designed a two-and-one-half-story, red brick and stone residence for dentist George Bronson in 1885. The August 1886 edition of the Sanitary Engineer featured an elaborate etching of the Bronson residence (Figure 6) in addition to one which they designed earlier in 1882 in Newport, Rhode Island for Arthur Brewster Emmons, Esq. (Figure 7, next page). The source indicated that Bronson’s residence was constructed of brick with trimmings of Springfield, Massachusetts brown stone with a red slate roof.\(^{33}\) In comparison, the Newport residence was part red brick and part wood frame with stained shingles. The St. Louis project drew no design similarities to the earlier Newport project except for the use of three massive brick chimneys.

**Figure 6**: George Ashe Bronson Residence, 1885, Peabody & Stearns with Furber. Source: Sanitary Engineer 1886 p 266-67 August 26, V 14, N 11, pages 266-67.

\(^{33}\) The Sanitary Engineer. August 26, 1886, volume 14, number 11, pages 266-67, “Special Illustration.”
In September of 1886, local newspaper, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch included an entire section written by an author simply known as “G. T.” on “Artistic Homes... Some Beautiful Residences which Adorn the Streets of the City” touting “Improvements in Architecture Introduced During Recent Years—The Picturesque Style as Compared with Square, Harsh Walls—The New and the Old—Illustrations of Taste and Art in Dwellings.” The section also featured an illustration, however crude, of Bronson’s residence (Figure 8, next page) with the following description:

The home of Dr. Bronson on Washington Avenue is another model, massive, simple and full of beauty. It is a building that elicits a remark of approval from all who see it, and yet it is utterly devoid of all the filigree that until recently the architects of St. Louis thought a requisite attachment to an expensive home. The designers of the Bronson house are Messrs. Peabody and Stearns. The house in its treatment is very like the Ives house (A Lucas Avenue residence designed by Eames and Young, since demolished). The windows are finished in the same manner and there is a similar impression of stability conveyed by the stone porch. There is also the same true feeling of simplicity about the dormers,
chimneys, etc. The house is built of red stock brick and red sandstone. The roof is shingled as is also that of the charming little balcony at the front door. This balcony and its steps are also of red stone. The windows are lower casements of large panes with transoms of stained glass and inside blinds.34

Figure 8: George Ashe Bronson Residence, 1885, Peabody & Stearns with Furber. Source: St. Louis Post-Dispatch. September 4, 1886, page 9. “Artistic Homes...”

In the article, the author lashed out at the earlier architectural character of St. Louis’s residences pre-dating Bronson’s, referring to them as “square-topped, bald-front blocks of stone and granite” comparing them to the character of barns and thus less picturesque.35 Bronson’s residence, on the other hand, was measured as very pleasing to the eye, especially adjacent the row of “flat,” stone-fronted houses to the west on

35 Ibid.
the same city block of Washington Avenue. In an effort to explain the “mistakes” of earlier house architecture in the city, the author pronounced that the local architect generally attempted to beautify his buildings by attaching ornamental details to otherwise “unattractive” outlines of houses and concluded that St. Louis had a “wilderness of examples of this folly.”

However, on a positive note, author G. T. noted a deviation in design during the early 1880s which could be classified as a “tendency in the right direction.” Blaming the “carpenter architect” for the “average” designs of old, the author referred to the new architects as artists and claimed that there were “perhaps three dozen first-class dwelling houses in the city”—one being Bronson’s. He also claimed that one of the earliest “departures from the stereotyped block houses” was one then occupied by James Richardson at 5632 Cabanne. This building featured a main two-story block with high pitch roof, multiple projecting gables, roof dormers, ornamental chimneys, a porte cochere, and arcaded porches. Another residence on Lucas Avenue then occupied by one Professor Ives, was designed by Eames & Young and had a corner tower, crowstep gable ends, and varied fenestration. A house designed by E. A. P. Newcomb on West Pine was touted by the author as the “first house in the city where the glaring white-stone trimmings were abandoned and a uniformity of color secured by the introduction of terra-cotta.” Perhaps the epitome of the picturesque in the article was Henry H. Richardson’s Potter House in Cabanne Place which was entirely clad in wood shingles that conformed to every curve and projection of the structure. Each of these highlighted “innovative” buildings has since been demolished with the exception of the Bronson house at 3201 Washington.

The Residence as a Work of Peabody & Stearns (with Furber)

Massachusetts native, Robert Swain Peabody was the firm’s design specialist and business head. His varied architectural education at Harvard, in England and France, and especially at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, as well as his study with prominent architect Henry Van Brunt, a job with Boston architect Gridley J. F. Bryant, and ultimately a partnership with John Goddard Stearns provided him with a varied repertoire and an ability to design successfully in any style and at any time. Although proficient in the execution of churches, schools, and commercial buildings it was in the field of

36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Landmarks Association of St. Louis, op. cit.
residential architecture that Peabody found himself most at home and his fascination with eclecticism realized its fullest expression.\textsuperscript{41} Between the 1870s and into the 1910s, Peabody executed a diversity of styles and designed residences of nearly every known type. In fact, as historian Wheaton Holden stated, “a peculiar aspect of Peabody and Stearns’s residential work is the apparent absence of clear-cut patterns in its chronological development.”\textsuperscript{42}

It was this multiplicity of styles that set the firm’s work apart not only in St. Louis but nationwide as well. A study of the known St. Louis dwellings (Figures 9-15) alone illustrates the seemingly boundless range of design. Photographs within the Missouri Historical Society collections (MOHIS), architectural journals, and miscellaneous archives demonstrate this collection in detail. Some of the designs which followed Bronson’s include an early residence dating to 1887 for Thomas Howard at #33 Vandeventer Place, since demolished. This residence was comprised of heavy cut stone, a front gable roof, Romanesque arches, a massive stone chimney, and multiple roof dormers. Here, the firm used stone similar to their 1880s houses in Cleveland and Chicago.

\textbf{Figure 9}: Howard House, 1887. Source: MOHIS, William Swekosky collection, 1946.

\textsuperscript{41} Wheaton A. Holden. “The Peabody Touch: Peabody and Stearns of Boston, 1870-1917.” Efforts made by historians such as Wheaton Holden on the works of the firm have provided valuable information including building lists and photographs which help to compare and contrast the Bronson residence to other built works in St. Louis and primarily in Boston and Newport, standing and since demolished. The few extant (and past locations of all demolished) buildings in St. Louis were field identified by the author of this nomination and then studied and compared to the Bronson house. In summary, it was found that each residential design that appeared here was unique in its own right. This is also the case of the firm’s work in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and other locations.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid, page 120.
An unaddressed and undated residence designed by the firm for J. N. Dyer illustrated in the 1894 Inland Architect (Figure 10) shows a more traditional red brick house with roof dormers, cross gables, and tall chimneys in the Tudor Revival style; brick quoins further define fenestration and wall planes.

**Figure 10:** Dyer House, date unknown. Source: The Inland Architect & News Record. March 1894, v. 23.

An earlier house built for Henry L. Newman at #21 Vandeventer Place in 1881 (razed) was designed by the firm as a generally symmetrical, two-and-one-half-story, red brick mass but with a side projection containing a one-story chamber and two-story bay (Figure 11, next page). The centrally-located entrance was deeply recessed behind a semi-circular arch opening framed with stone and bearing a heavy keystone. A white limestone foundation provided a stark contrast between the grey slate roof and red brick. An asymmetrical red brick and stone residence built for Isaac W. Morton at #49 Vandeventer Place in 1887 (razed) featured a high-pitch, hip roof intersected by a corner tower, a cross gable, and a number of roof and wall domers (Figure 12, next page). Again the entrance is deeply recessed but this time it was set under a wide, Romanesque arch. This building also contained a corbelled and dentilled comice which did not appear on other buildings of the era designed by the firm.
Figure 11: Newman House, 1881. Source: MOHiS, William Swekosky collection, 1946.

Figure 12: Morton House, 1887. Source: MOHiS, William Swekosky collection, 1946.
Houses designed for Edward H. Simmons (#21 Westmoreland Place—razed in the 1930s), George M. Maverick (unidentified location and date), and the D. R. Wolfe house on the 4400 block of Washington Avenue (extant today but modified) illustrate the wide range of styles and details indicative of the firm’s local work (Figure 13).

**Figure 13:** Simmons House, date unknown, top left. Maverick house, date unknown, top right. Wolfe House, date unknown, bottom. Source: MOHIS, photograph collection, various dates.
Perhaps more reminiscent of Peabody & Steams's prominent east coast works, the firm designed a country estate in Normandy, St. Louis County, for Lewis C. Nelson (since demolished). “Nelsonia” as it was known locally and statewide, was a shingled residence with expanses of porches intersected by gable roof porticoes (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Nelson Estate, date unknown. Along Natural Bridge Road, east of Glen Echo Park and Lucas & Hunt Road. Source: MOHIS, photograph collection.

By the 1890s, Peabody, Steams & Furber had designed over 15 buildings locally with more to follow. Their influence on St. Louis residential design had continued for almost two decades up to the death of Pierce Furber in 1893. One of the more traditional designs of this final period—likely a preference of its owner—was a traditional Italian Renaissance dwelling designed for John T. and Maria Davis in 1892 within one of St. Louis' most prominent private enclaves at #17 Westmoreland Place (Figure 15, next page). This edifice was a formal, symmetrically-planned, three-story villa comprised of

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County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Peabody & Steams Back in the East and About

The firm left the St. Louis commissions in the able hands of partner Pierce Furber until his untimely death in 1893; after this time the last of the firm’s residential projects were completed in 1895. The firm would finally return to St. Louis to design the American Telephone and Telegraph exhibition building for the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair but otherwise had focused on their eastern commissions. So the firm continued to design numerous types of buildings catering to the wealthy of Boston, Newport (Rhode Island), Manchester-by-the-Sea (Massachusetts), and New York, designing for them personal residences as well as vacation homes and summer cottages. Additional houses were designed in Chicago, Colorado Springs, Cleveland, and other major cities. Houses completed close to the time of the Bronson residence include one in Brookline, Massachusetts (Figure 16, next page), the Hans T. Lambert residence at 94 Cass Street in Chicago (Figure 17, next page), the Charles W. and Mary P Bingham residence at

ashlar-cut Missouri red granite. Traditional stone arches springing from free-standing columns and pilasters as well as stone balustrades accented the facades.

Figure 15: Davis Residence, 1893. Source: MOHIS, Boehl & Koenig photograph collection, 1893.
2445 Euclid Avenue in Cleveland (Figure 18, page 25), and the C. F. Morse residence built in Kansas City, Missouri (Figure 19, page 25).

**Figure 16**: Brookline, Massachusetts residence c. 1885. Source: Albert Levy (photographer), Ryerson and Burnham Libraries Book Collection, archives.

**Figure 17**: Hans T. Lambert residence c. 1883-1884 at 94 Cass Street (later 620 N. Wabash Avenue), Chicago, Illinois. Source: J. W. Taylor (photographer), Chicago Public Library, archives.
Figure 18: Charles W. and Mary P. Bingham residence built 1883 at 2445 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. Source: Albert Levy (photographer), Rveson and Bumham Libraries Book Collection, archives.

Figure 19: C. F. Morse residence built 1887 Kansas City, Missouri. Source: Inland Architect, volume XIX, number 4, Rveson and Bumham Libraries Book Collection, archives.
These four examples share some basic arrangements of form and massing but fenestration, dormer projections, cresting, gable ends, lintels, and material textures have varied treatments. One somewhat common characteristic (with the exception of the Brookline residence) is the use of a trio of soaring chimney stacks which are treated as prominent features. Most of the St. Louis houses, including Bronson’s, also have these three protuberances. On a grander scale, Peabody and Stearns’ Catherine Lorillard Wolfe residence on Ochre Point in Newport, Rhode Island (Figure 20) contained three primary chimney stacks which project from a massive stone block defined by multiple projecting bays, porches, gable ends, and roof overhangs. Even the gatehouse (Figure 20) was executed with a distinct design containing the trio (the third is not visible here).

Figure 20: Catherine Lorillard Wolfe residence (top) & gatehouse (bottom) built 1882 on Ochre Point, Newport, Rhode Island. Source: Albert Levy (photographer), Everson & Burnham Libraries Book Collection.
In comparison to these varied examples, the Dr. Bronson residence at 3201 Washington (Figure 21) was designed within the general Late Victorian era but, in the tradition of Peabody and Steams, it does not follow that particular architectural style. In fact, it is comprised of varied characteristics from the Queen Anne, Eastlake, Romanesque, and Chateauesque types. While the Queen Anne was the more dominant style for residential construction at its time of design, Peabody and Steams challenged the style by composing an inimitable structure.

**Figure 21:** Dr. George A. Bronson residence, 3201 Washington Ave., St. Louis built 1885. Source: Matt Bivens photograph 2014.

Queen Anne characteristics of the Bronson residence include the steep, irregular-shaped complex roof line but the small roof dormers and tall, elaborate chimneys are more indicative of the Chateauesque as was the original ceramic tile roof cresting (partially intact). The partial wrap-around porch at the corner, multi-light and leaded
glass wood windows, and an overhanging main roof are typical of the Queen Anne. Romanesque features include the asymmetrical footprint, curved arch window headers and sandstone columns with richly carved cushion capitals; the eyebrow window is also associated with the style.

Windows and doors are framed with bull nose brick and topped with segmental arched headers; fenestration patterns at each elevation correspond to specific rooms within. The interior is complete and intact with Queen Anne and Eastlake ornamentation in the form of extensive millwork, wainscoting, elaborate fireplaces (with English ceramic tile manufactured by Minton, Hollins & Company), intricate spindle work, and a grand stair comprised of carved balusters and newels. Instead of being built primarily of heavy limestone like the majority of the traditional Romanesque buildings in St. Louis, Peabody and Stearns used stone instead to accent the facades via belt courses and as ornamentation at the porch columns and brackets. The firm abandoned the heavy limestone used in several of their buildings of the same period for different clients in other cities, and although St. Louis had an abundant source of limestone for building, Peabody and Stearns specified red brick and sandstone. This effect resulted in a “lighter” building.

The only change to the building was a small porch closure which occurred likely around 1908 and may have been built by the same builder who completed the house (Figure 22). Identical molded brick frames period windows which match those in the house. This historic change has gained significance as it was completed by Bronson during his active career within the house.

Figure 22: Bronson house as constructed 1885, left side; as modified, middle; as extant, right side. Source: Left side is Whipple Fire Insurance Map, volume 2-3, plate 88, 1892; middle is Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, volume 2, plate 27, 1909; right side is Matt Bivens photograph, 10-2014.
Dr. Bronson Later in Life

Dr. Bronson continued to work from his home office at 3201 Washington Avenue maintaining his social status as well as his role in the field of local dentistry where he had procured two early patents for a dental napkin and a holder in the later 1890s.\(^{44}\) Investing over 40 years in dentistry, Dr. Bronson retired about 1896 to pursue his hobbies in landscaping and sculpture. Enjoying the arts, Dr. Bronson took up painting at age 72. Being quite successful as a painter, Bronson boasted that if he could have found a reliable channel for distribution that he could have made more money as an artist than as a dentist.\(^{45}\) Bronson also found himself in his basement studio creating sculptures for his home and garden. Retirement did not mean that Bronson actually stopped dentistry; several life-long patients continued to stop by for check-ups and to see what Bronson was keeping himself busy with.\(^{46}\) By 1905, the St. Louis City Directory lists the Bronson’s in addition to Miss Jessie Smith and Dr. Stephen Voyles; all four were also included in the St. Louis Blue Book.\(^{47}\)

Bronson’s work in landscaping took an interesting turn for in 1909 and in 1912 Bronson’s garden was touted in local newspapers (Figure 23, next page). The St. Louis Post-Dispatch featured a full page spread dedicated solely to Bronson entitled “A Japanese Garden in the Heart of St. Louis.”\(^{48}\) Complete with drawings and actual photographs showing the landscape; portions of the residence were also visible. The 1909 article explained how Bronson enlisted the help of a Japanese man named Dr. Shiro Miyake, a dentist who resided with Bronson since the 1904 World’s Fair. Miyake had attended dentistry school while living with Bronson and the two made an important bond which would be realized through their efforts in the garden behind the house. The writer explained how Bronson’s house was a beautiful one and when it was built it was one of the great mansions of St. Louis, Dr. Bronson being a “fashionable” dentist of the city.\(^{49}\)

By 1909, the wealthy residential and commercial neighborhood had eventually given way to boarding houses and people “of lesser means;” thus, the garden was an effort on behalf of the good doctor “to bring all the beauty that he could into this section.”\(^{50}\)

\(^{44}\) The 1895 Bulletin of Pharmacy (Detroit: George S. Davis, 1895), volume 9, page 44. Dental Register. (volume 49). Patent 531,093 and 531,094 “Dental napkin-holder”


\(^{46}\) Ibid.

\(^{47}\) St. Louis city directories, op. cit.


\(^{49}\) Ibid.

\(^{50}\) Ibid.
Again in 1912, this time in the St. Louis Republic, the garden was featured under the title “Fortunes Invested in Quaint and Curious Gardens of Shrubs and Blossoms.”\textsuperscript{51} Bronson credited Miyaki with the garden design\textsuperscript{52} saying: Miyaki transformed the rear yard of maimed landscape in less than a year into a “beautiful miniature park” of which was sculpted by the pair from rocks gathered from the country (mostly lead and zinc ore). Bronson claimed that the work was always pleasant and never allowed to become oppressive.\textsuperscript{53} The garden allowed Bronson’s patients a distraction from their sometimes painful appointments (Figure 24, next page). Unfortunately the garden has long since eroded and all of the rock sculptures destroyed with the exception of a portion of a wall at the west property line in the rear of the back yard.

\textbf{Figure 23:} St. Louis Post-Dispatch. “A Japanese Garden in the Heart of the City.” August 29, 1909, page B1

\textsuperscript{51} St. Louis Republic. June 30, 1912, special feature section.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
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**Figure 24:** Photographs of yard and dentist patient room. Source: “A Dentist’s Recreation.” *Dental Brief: An American Journal of Dental Science.* (Philadelphia: L. D. Caulk Co., January 1911, v 16, page 16)
Dr. Bronson’s Death

Dr. Bronson died suddenly of a heart attack at age 79 in October of 1932 (Figure 25). His obituary read “His Japanese Garden was one of the Beauty Spots of St. Louis.”54 Also touted as having “one of the most lucrative dental practices in the city,” he was acknowledged as “one of the oldest graduate dentists in St. Louis.”55 A noted philanthropist, artist, and hobbyist, Bronson had lived in increased seclusion since his retirement.

Figure 25: Image of Bronson prior to death. Source: St. Louis Globe-Democrat, October 18, 1932.

55 Ibid.
The Residence Later

Dr. Bronson died in 1932 but the property was transferred much later by Bronson’s estate to husband and wife Dr. Fred W. and Euphemia Teiber in December of 1939. Euphemia died in 1940 and Fred Teiber, later remarried, sold the property to Ester R. Frazier; Frazier retained the property until selling to Dorian Amon in 1974. Ending up in a trust, the building was recently sold to a new owner who is going to preserve the original architectural design and rehabilitate the structure for office use.

Conclusion

The Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence is a completely intact Peabody, Stearns & Furber residential design dating to 1885 in St. Louis city. It is also one of three and the most intact of the original residential structures left standing along a ten block stretch of Washington Avenue between Jefferson Avenue and North Grand Boulevard—a former residential corridor in St. Louis. This building helps to tell a special story about the history of Washington Avenue and the city as it transformed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Despite multiple attempts to classify the firm’s architectural style within national trends, scholars alike have concluded that the firm’s eclecticism coupled with its overall ability to design in any style at any time, set them apart from other practicing firms of their era. Although the firm had a large portfolio of local buildings, each one—with the exception of a known handful—have since been demolished. Extant projects including the 1892 Security Building (319 N 4th St), the Wolfe Residence (date unknown and since altered on the 4400 block of Washington Ave.), the 1885 Bronson Residence (3207 Washington Ave.), and the 1893 Davis Residence (#17 Westmoreland Place), as well as photographs of the lost buildings, represent the varied design eclecticism of the firm. Succeeding H. H. Richardson in Boston after his death in 1885 and achieving equal importance to that of McKim, Mead & White in New York City, designs for the Bronson residence were drafted at this pivotal time. Ultimately, Boston would select Peabody & Steams to represent them at the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago. The firm’s popularity in St. Louis only grew. The Bronson Residence is intact from its period of construction, retains high integrity, stands as an excellent example of its morph of architectural styles—the epitome of Peabody and Steams’ design philosophy, and is a representative local example of the work of this nationally-known, preeminent architectural firm.

56 St. Louis City Assessor. Deed documents; book 5876, page 194, December 9, 1939.
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City of St. Louis Assessor Office. Deed transcriptions. 1200 Market Street, Room 123, St. Louis, Missouri, 63103.


Landmarks Association of St. Louis. Building and architects files.


Missouri Historical Society Collections Including unpublished:
3. Vertical File on Dr. Bronson.
Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence
Name of Property
3201 Washington Avenue
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)


The Sanitary Engineer. August 26, 1886, volume 14, number 11, pages 266-67, “Special Illustration.”


St. Louis Republic. June 30, 1912, special feature section.


**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence at 3201 Washington Avenue in St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri, is located on city block 1039, including 40 feet by 124 feet and 8 inches in Section 16 of the School Addition on Block 10. The nominated property is legally known by the St. Louis City Assessor’s Office as parcel ID 103900080. A solid black line on the accompanying map entitled “Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence Boundary Map” indicates the boundary of the nominated property (Figure 26). Figure 27, next page, shows the property (within dotted line) with additional details.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated parcel includes the full parcel and building historically associated with the Bronson residence.

*Figure 26:* “Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence Boundary Map.” Source: Property Survey.
Figure 27: Additional details of Dr. George Ashe Bronson Residence. Source: Google Earth with Lafser & Associates details.
**Figure 28**: Photo Key. Source: Building drawing of 1st floor.
Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence
Name of Property: 3201 Washington Avenue
County and State: N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

H. L. Newman, St. Louis, 1882
Charles W. Brigham, Cleveland, 1883
S. H. Leahy, St. Louis, 1883
J. F. White, Brooklyn, New York, 1883
James S. Garland, New York, 1884
G. A. Bronson, St. Louis, 1885
A. Manus, St. Louis, 1885
J. E. Erhardt, St. Louis, 1886
G. S. Meyers, St. Louis, 1886
Robert Moore, St. Louis, 1886
Mrs. W. P. Ogden, New York, 1886
Thomas Howard, St. Louis, 1887
C. F. Morse, Kansas City, Mo., 1887
James J. Hill, St. Paul, Minn., 1887-1888
George F. Baker, New York, 1891
L. C. Nelson, St. Louis, 1891-1894
Col. E. S. Rowse, St. Louis, 1891-1895
C. L. Colby, New York, 1894
Dr. DaCosta, Villa Nova, Pa., 1894
Mrs. E. Gammel, Duluth, Minn., 1894
T. S. McPherson, St. Louis, 1894
John T. Davis, St. Louis, 1895
Mrs. Cortine Dyer, St. Louis, 1895
L. C. Karem, Elkins, Va., 1895
John G. Halpern, Pittsburgh, 1895-1897
G. W. C. Drexel, Philadelphia, 1896
E. M. Ferguson, Philadelphia, 1896
J. J. Enery, New York, 1896
Durbin Horne, Pittsburgh, 1897
George L. Carnegie, Dungennes, Fla., 1898
Harvey Childs, Pittsburgh, 1894
G. W. C. Drexel, Bryn Mawr, Pa., 1898
Mrs. J. B. Fell, Philadelphia, 1898
Walter L. Ross, Winchester Heights, Pa., 1899-1900
Dr. George Woodward, Philadelphia, 1900-1912
Craig Biddle, Radnor, Pa., 1901
Henry G. Brown, Pittsburgh, 1903
Rensselaer, Pittsburg, 1903
Fercival Roberts, Narberth, Pa., 1902-1904
Mrs. H. E. Miller, Tarrytown, N.Y., 1906
Livingston Biddle, Bryn Mawr, Pa., 1917

Exposition Buildings
Machinery Hall, Massachusetts State Building, Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1892-1893
Horticultural, Mining, and Graphic Arts Building, Walter Baker and Co., Limited Pavilion, Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, N.Y., 1901-1902
American Telephone and Telegraph Co., Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis, 1901-1904

Exposition Buildings
Machinery Hall, Massachusetts State Building, Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1892-1893
Horticultural, Mining, and Graphic Arts Building, Walter Baker and Co., Limited Pavilion, Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, N.Y., 1901-1902
American Telephone and Telegraph Co., Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis, 1901-1904

Gymnasia
Smith College, Northampton, Mass., 1879
Hemenway, Cambridge, Mass., 1878-1879
Groton, Groton, Mass., (Old) 1886; (New) 1902
Phillips Andover, Andover, Mass., 1903
Lawrenceville, Lawrenceville, N.J., 1903-1904

Houses outside New England
C. P. Burdick, St. Louis, 1878
Edgar Ewing, Colorado Springs, Col., 1879
W. G. Elliott, Portland, Ore., 1882
J. Leiser, Chicago, 1881
Jen Eye Lodge, Colorado Springs, Col., 1881-1882 [sic]
S. C. Bartlett, Peoria, Ill., 1882
Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence
Name of Property
3201 Washington Avenue
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Hotels
Brunswick, Boston, 1874-1875
Anders, Colorado Springs, Colo., 1882-1883
Bellevue, Boston, 1899-1900

Libraries
Yarmouth, Yarmouthport, Mass., 1871
Easthampton, Easthampton, Mass., 1880-1881
Divinity Hall, Cambridge, Mass., 1886
Mansfield, Mansfield, Mass., 1899-1900
Marlboro, Marlboro, Mass., 1903-1904
Bangor, Bangor, Me., 1911-1914

Monuments
Dorchester Heights, Dorchester, Mass., 1900

Museums
Museum of Fine Arts, St. Louis, 1879-1881
Hilliard Art Museum, Northampton, Mass., 1882

Office Buildings
Liberty Square Building, Boston, 1873
Federal St. Store, Boston, 1873
Devonshire St. Store, Boston, 1874
Boston Post Building, Boston, 1874
Mutual Life Insurance Co. of New York, Boston, 1874-1875
R. H. White Store, Boston, 1875
United Bank Building, New York, 1880-1881
Turner Building, St. Louis, 1882-1883
R. H. White Warehouse Store, Boston, 1882-1883
Grew Building, Boston, 1884
American Unitarian Association Building, Boston, 1884-1885
Exchange Building, Boston, 1887-1891
Fiske Building, Boston, 1888-1889
Central Railroad of New Jersey Building, New York, 1890-1891
Security Building, St. Louis, 1890-1891
Ludlow Manufacturing Co. Buildings, Boston, 1890-1894
Pepe Buildings, Boston, 1891-1897

Lambert Building, St. Louis, 1891-1894
Masonic Building, New Bedford, Mass., 1893
State Mutual Building, Worcester, Mass., 1894-1897
New Bedford Standard Building, New Bedford, Mass., 1894
Storage Warehouse, Cambridge, Mass., 1895, 1895, 1903, 1911-1912
Concord Building, Framingham, Mass., 1897-1898
Russia Building, Boston, 1897-1898
Chamber of Commerce Building, Cleveland, 1897-1899
Corwin Publishing Co. Building, Philadelphia, 1899-1900
Albany Building, Boston, 1901-1902
Rhode Island Hospital Trust Co. Building, Providence, 1901-1903
Merchant's Real Estate Trust Building, Boston, 1901-1903
Central Building, Boston, 1901
India Building, Boston, 1902-1904
Conard Building, Boston, 1902-1903
Liberty Market Building, Pittsburgh, 1898-1900
Massachusetts Building extension, Boston, 1901-1904
Monks Building, Boston, 1901-1904
Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, Dedham, Mass., 1906-1907

Providence Journal Building, Providence, 1904-1906
U. S. Custom House extension, Boston, 1906-1910
New England Telephone and Telegraph Co. Building, Boston, 1910-1911
Boston Insurance Co. Building, Boston, 1913-1914

Railroad Stations
Providence (Park Square), Boston, 1872-1874
Central Railroad of New Jersey, Jersey City, N.J., 1889-1890
Union, Duluth, Minn., 1890-1891
Lakewood, Lakewood, N.J., 1902
Springfield (St. Louis & San Francisco R. R.), Springfield, Mo., 1894

Schools and Colleges
Bussey Institute, Jamaica Plain, Mass., 1870-1871
Third Academy Building, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N.H., 1871-1872
Smith Academy, Hatfield, Mass., 1872
Great Falls Academy, Somersworth, N.H., 1873-1875
College Hall, Smith College, Northampton, Mass., 1875-1875
Newtonville School, Newton, Mass., 1874
Longwood School, Brookline, Mass., 1874
Colorado, Colorado Springs, Colo., 1875-1878
Harvard School, Brookline, Mass., 1877-1878
Dickinson School, Deerfield, Mass., 1877-1879
Washington University, St. Louis, Mo., 1870
Walker Hall, Amherst College, Amherst, Mass., 1882
William H. Lincoln School, Brookline, Mass., ca. 1884
Memorial Hall, Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, N.J., 1884-1885
Robert Winthrop School, Brookline, Mass., ca. 1888
Marion St. School, Brookline, Mass., 1888
Boynton School, Brookline, Mass., 1888
Paul Revere School, Boston, 1877-1878
The School, Groton School, Groton, Mass., 1900
Runkle School, Brookline, Mass., 1900-1903
Heath School, Brookline, Mass., 1903-1904
Industrial School for Crippled Children, Boston, 1903-1905
Simmons College, Boston, 1902-1903; 1908
Whitman High School, Whitman, Mass., 1903-1907
Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Mass., 1906-1907
Normal and Latin School Group, Boston, 1906-1908
Parental School, West Roxbury, Mass., 1909-1910
Westworth Institute, Boston, 1910-1916
Middlesex School, Concord, Mass., 1911-1912
Banger High School, Bangor, Me., 1913-1914
Southeast High School, Southbridge, Mass., 1916-1917

Town and City Halls
Taunton, Mass., 1882
Worcester, Mass., 1896-1899
Clinton, Mass., 1908-1909
Chelsea, Mass., 1909-1910
New Hampshire State Capitol (Major Addition), Concord, 1909-1910
Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence
Name of Property
3201 Washington Avenue
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Selected Competitions

Bronson, Dr. George Ashe, Residence
Name of Property
3201 Washington Avenue
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Prominent Members of the Office Staff (1870–1917)

William S. Aldrich, Charles C. Collins, Colbert A. MacClure
W. Cornell Appleton, George P. Fernald, George F. Newton
William E. Barry, Charles S. Frost, Hubert G. Ripley
Robert P. Bellows, George A. Fuller, Albert C. Schweinfurth
Clarence H. Blackall, Pierce P. Furbel, Henry Schweinfurth
Dwight Blaney, Edward T. Graham, Julius A. Schweinfurth
Warren R. Briggs, David A. Gregg, Albert H. Spahr
John Cady, Pierce P. Furbel, J. F. Spalding
Walter Campbell, Edward T. Graham, Frank E. Wallis
Pomona W. Chandler, Joseph D. Leland, Timothy F. Walsh
Theophilus P. Chandler, Edwin J. Lewis, Jr., Joseph M. Wells
Henry Ives Cobb – Ion Lewis, Edmund M. Wheelwright

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