

## Meet the Neighbors

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On August 23, 1903, William Lytle Foster aimed his camera out the library window of the old Lytle mansion and captured an image of the Haines house, which stood at the corner of Fourth and Lawrence Streets. Although this image alone is quite interesting, it is only part of a much larger group of photographs in which Foster visually documented the entire Lytle mansion from cellar to attic. It was through these photographs as well as another series taken by local photographers Rombach and Groene that I became interested in the buildings that once stood on the site of Lytle Park more than a century ago.

Of the nineteenth century structures remaining in the Lytle Park area, we are seated tonight in the second oldest, the Taft Museum having the distinction of seniority. Our clubhouse has faced Fourth Street since the 1830s, and those who once resided here witnessed much development across the street. In exiting the Club tonight, should our progress be arrested for a few moments, we would see Lytle Park and its various amenities spread out before us. But before we leave this evening, let us journey back into the past to a time before the park, to see what existed when the progress of those former residents was likewise arrested. Tonight, we will pause for a moment at the doorway and take the time to meet the neighbors.

Our first neighbor of record is Dr. Richard Allison, veteran of the Revolution and most recently post surgeon of Fort Washington. By deed dated February 10, 1795, Allison purchased from John Cleves Symmes a tract of land, which began at the corner of the first street east of Fort Washington and the third street north of the Ohio River. This tract, and an adjoining parcel added in 1798, became known as Peach Grove in consequence of the orchard planted by the doctor on the north section of this property. Peach Grove was located on the north side of Symmes Street between Lawrence and Pike and ran north to a point just beyond Fifth Street.

The year prior to his first purchase of land, Dr. Allison married Rebecca Strong, daughter of Lieutenant Colonel David Strong, also of the garrison at the Fort. Thirty-seven years old at the time of his marriage, Allison's bride was a mere sixteen. Yet despite the disparity in their age, the marriage proved to be a happy one. In 1799, Dr. Allison and his wife moved to present Clermont County, leaving Oliver M. Spencer of Indian captivity fame, to look after his affairs in Cincinnati.

In the spring of 1800, Dr. William Goforth, son of Judge William Goforth of Columbia, took up residence in Dr. Allison's recently vacated home. That same year, Dr. Goforth began instructing fourteen-year old Daniel Drake in the "various branches of medical practice." Though it is uncertain how long Goforth resided at Peach Grove, it is possible he continued to rent the property until 1807, the year he left Cincinnati for New Orleans.

Returning to Dr. Allison in Clermont County, among his patients was the Lytle family of Williamsburg, Ohio. The patriarch of the family, William Lytle, speculated in land and may have become acquainted with the Peach Grove property through his business dealings with Dr. Allison. William Lytle began negotiations for the purchase of Peach Grove in the autumn of 1805, and on January 1, 1806, he received a contract from Peyton Short and John Cleves Symmes detailing the required payments for the purchase of the property. Though Lytle's dealings appear to be with Symmes and his family, the deed as recorded in Hamilton County, and dated September 29, 1806, names Dr. Allison as the owner, not Symmes. Although there may be some doubt as to who owned the property in 1805, it is certain that after 1806, William Lytle was the owner of Peach Grove.

William Lytle, fifth child of Captain William and Mary Steele Lytle, was born on September 1, 1770 near Carlisle, Pennsylvania. At the age of nine, William and his family emigrated to Kentucky to settle on the bounty land his father received for service in the French and Indian War. In his memoirs, William describes his family's journey down the Ohio River, and their encounter with a group of Indians across from the Licking River.

"At 10 o'clock the next morning, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 1780, the pilot boats gave signals that the enemy were drawn up in hostile array on the northern or what was called the Indian shore of the Ohio. Three boats immediately landed in a concerted order half a mile above the foe. It was arranged that half the fighting men should be in readiness to spring to the shore the moment the boats should touch the land; they were then to form and march down upon the Indian encampment. The Indians were encamped opposite [the] Licking, where Front street now intersects Broadway in Cincinnati."

This incident that Lytle describes occurred eight years before Cincinnati was settled.

William Lytle's family continued down the Ohio to Beargrass, Kentucky, now part of Louisville, and subsequently moved to a site near Frankfort. In 1796, William Lytle moved to Ohio and laid out the town of Williamsburg, which bears his name.

By 1810 Lytle moved from Williamsburg to Cincinnati, bringing with him a family that consisted of his wife, Eliza Noell Stall, and five children: John, William, Robert, Eliza and Edward, the eldest being ten, and the youngest two. William's wife Eliza died on May 15, 1821, and fifteen

months later he married Margaret Smith Haines, widow of Captain Job Haines of New Jersey. Margaret, who had come to Cincinnati in 1819, brought four children to this union: Ezekiel, Joanna, Elias and Elizabeth.

In April of 1824, William Lytle transferred the deed to Peach Grove to his stepson Ezekiel Smith Haines. That November through contract with the Bank of the United States, Haines was to see to the extension of Fourth Street from Lawrence to Pike, along with the creation of Lytle Street, which ran from Fourth to Symmes, 182 feet east of Lawrence. That same month, Haines transferred the deed to Peach Grove to the Bank, possibly as a result of a mortgage to the property.

William Lytle died on March 17, 1831, and with his death Peach Grove effectively passed away. On July 15<sup>th</sup> of that year, Nicholas Longworth purchased from the Bank of the United States the parcel now bounded by Symmes, Lytle, Fourth, and Pike Streets. Less than a month later on August 8<sup>th</sup>, William Thoms purchased the parcel bounded by Fourth, Lawrence, Fifth and Pike. Both Longworth and Thoms subdivided their properties, while the parcel that contained the Lytle mansion remained intact for the present time under Haines ownership.

Shortly after his stepfather's death, Ezekiel Haines married Charlotte Townsend Higbee in Trenton, New Jersey. Returning to Cincinnati, Ezekiel continued to manage the legal affairs of the Lytle-Haines families, while his mother, Margaret oversaw the day-to-day affairs of the Lytle mansion.

Of William Lytle's children, Robert Todd continued to reside in the Lytle mansion after his father's death. Robert had married his stepsister Elizabeth on November 30, 1825. Their first child, William Haines Lytle, was born in Cincinnati on November 2, 1826, followed in 1828 by Margaretta (who died at age four) and Josephine Roberta who was born in 1830. Their fourth child, Elizabeth Haines Lytle, was born in 1835 in New Jersey while the family was visiting relatives.

Robert Lytle was a lawyer by profession. Pursuing a political career, he served in the Ohio State Legislature from 1828 to 1829, and in 1832, he was elected to the United States Congress. Defeated for re-election, Robert was appointed in 1836 to the post of Surveyor General, the same position his father had held from 1830 until his death the following year.

Robert, like his father, was a strong supporter of Andrew Jackson, and in 1837, the ex-President was a guest of the Lytles when he stopped over in Cincinnati on his return home to Tennessee from Washington. In the fall of 1839, hoping that his health might be restored by a warmer climate, Robert left Cincinnati to travel to Cuba. Arriving at New Orleans in December,

Robert died of consumption at the Veranda Hotel on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Two years later, his wife Elizabeth died leaving her three young children, William, Josephine, and Elizabeth, in the care of their maternal grandmother Margaret and their uncle Ezekiel.

Back in 1831 when Peach Grove was broken up and sold, the Lytle family was able to retain the section of property bounded by Symmes, Lawrence, Fourth, and Lytle streets. This city block became known as Lytle Square. The oldest structure on the Square was the brick office built by Dr. Allison that stood at the northeast corner of Symmes and Lawrence. Writing in 1852, Dr. Daniel Drake described this building as the site where he learned the preparation of medicine.

“But few of you have seen the genuine, Old Doctor’s shop of the last century; or regaled your olfactory nerves in the mingled odors which, like incense to the god of Physic, rose from brown paper bundles, bottles topped with worm-eaten corks, and open jars of ointment, not a whit behind those of the Apothecary in the days of Solomon; yet such a place is very well for a student.”

After these aromas vanished, William Lytle used this building as an office for his extensive land ventures, and later on, both he and his son used it as the office of the Surveyor General.

Located in the center of the Square was the mansion that William Lytle built beginning in the summer of 1809. Fronting on Symmes, later to become Third Street, the mansion measured fifty by fifty-five feet and was two and a half stories in height. Robert Bailey, the mason, used over 215,000 bricks for the structure, which Lytle purchased at the price of \$3.37 ½ per thousand. Carpentry work was done by Messrs. Wood and Crouse, and the plaster was applied by Ezekiel and John Thorp at the rate of twenty cents a square yard.

Robert Bailey was later hired again to line a cistern on the property, and in 1815, he was in charge of the construction of a combined kitchen and servants’ quarters. Though the exact year of construction is not known, by 1848 Ezekiel Haines also built a home on the Square. This large two-story house stood at the southeast corner of Fourth and Lawrence Streets.

1850 brought development of a different nature to the Square. Prior to this, any construction or land deeds dealt solely with the Lytle or Haines families. On February 26, Ezekiel Haines deeded a lot at the northwest corner of Symmes and Lytle to Erasmus Gest, chief engineer of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad Company. This lot had a forty-foot frontage on Symmes and extended back ninety-five feet on Lytle. Later in March Eliza Este, wife of merchant David Este, Jr., purchased a lot with a twenty-eight foot frontage on Symmes, forty-eight feet east of Lawrence. These forty-eight feet were divided into two twenty-four foot lots, one of which was purchased by

merchant Robert Chalfant and the other leased by Joseph R. Buchanan. Buchanan, dean of the Eclectic Medical Institute, was known for his work in cerebral physiology, which later developed into an interest in the field of phrenology. These three lots extended back ninety-five feet, the same as Gest's. Since Chalfant's lot was located at the corner of Symmes and Lawrence, Dr. Allison's office must have been razed prior to this time.

Although these four lots took up much of the Symmes street frontage, the Lytle mansion still had unobstructed access to Symmes. From a description on a later sale, a garden was located between the mansion and the street, at which point there was a gate flanked by stone pillars that were topped with large stone spheres.

Margaret Lytle, who survived her husband for twenty years, died of consumption on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 1851. Margaret had lived to see her grandson William reach adulthood, and her granddaughters Josephine and Elizabeth at the brink. That fall, William was elected to serve in the Ohio State Legislature. Josephine Lytle married Dr. Nathaniel Foster in 1853, and in 1856 Elizabeth married attorney Samuel Broadwell. After serving two terms in the Ohio Legislature, William became a law partner with his uncle Ezekiel, the firm taking the name "Haines, Todd and Lytle." William continued living in the family mansion, sharing the space with his two elderly aunts, and from time to time some boarders.

During the 1850s the buildings along Symmes Street received street numbers, the building at the corner of Symmes and Lawrence being 118, followed by 120 and 122. In 1851, Sanderson Robert, who held the deed to 120 Symmes, sold the property to Frances Ross, wife of John Ross, a paper merchant. The Rosses resided at this address until 1862 when the lot was sold to Charlotte Wright. In 1855, James J. Faran, mayor of Cincinnati from 1855 to 1857, purchased 122 Symmes, which had been owned by the Estes. Faran, co-proprietor of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* with Washington McLean, resided here until his death in 1892. In 1857, Robert Chalfant deeded 118 Symmes to his daughter Theresa, wife of attorney George E. Pugh. George Pugh served in various public offices, including the United States Senate. In 1863, when Clement Vallandigham ran on the Democratic ticket for Ohio governor, Pugh reluctantly agreed to be his running mate. Fortunately for Pugh, Vallandigham lost the election.

Moving to the opposite corner at Symmes and Lytle, 1854 finds Erasmus Gest selling his lot to Mrs. Sarah Worthington King Peter, daughter of Ohio governor Thomas Worthington. A convert to Catholicism, Sarah Peter embraced her faith with intense fervor. Instrumental in bringing the

Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis to the United States, Sarah, through a complicated chain of events, offered the use of her home and property for the construction of a convent, with the stipulation that she would retain a living space among the Sisters. Her offer was accepted, and in early 1861, Antony Bley, who previously designed and built St. Mary's Hospital, was commissioned to prepare the plans for an additional story to Sarah's house, along with a chapel and living quarters for the Sisters.

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, the cornerstone of the new convent was laid with proper ceremony. Bley's plans for the convent did not meet the approval of some residents of the Square, most notably Dr. Foster, who continually brought his concerns over building code violations to Bley. Apparently Bley ignored these issues resulting in Foster threatening to sue for damages. First was a code violation concerning the proximity of the convent's windows to those of the mansion. Second, and possibly the most serious, was an issue over the chapel encroaching on Lytle property. The first problem was remedied with a privacy fence; the other was solved by selling Sarah Peter a five-foot strip of land on the west side of the convent.

Although much of William Haines Lytle's military career is beyond the realm of this paper, some events do justify mentioning. Having served in the Mexican War, William Haines Lytle quickly offered his services when Lincoln called for troops to suppress the rebellion that started down in South Carolina. The first call was for men to serve for three months, the time it was thought necessary to restore peace. Lytle received his commission as colonel of the Tenth Ohio Volunteer Infantry on May 6, 1861. The government soon realized that more than three months would be needed, so on June 4, 1861, Lytle's commission was extended for three years. The Tenth Ohio left Camp Harrison on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June and moved to the western regions of Virginia.

On September 10, 1861, Lytle was seriously wounded in the leg at the battle of Carnifex Ferry. Returning to Cincinnati to recuperate, Lytle stayed at the home of his sister Josephine Foster, which was located on Broadway near Third. On November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Tenth Ohio Infantry arrived at Cincinnati. As the regiment marched from the river up Broadway, Colonel Lytle watched his troops from the doorway of his sister's house. Though unable to ride a horse, he joined his regiment by riding with the Chaplain in an open barouche. As Lytle's leg wound healed, he eventually returned to the Lytle mansion to put business affairs there in order.

Returning to service early in 1862, Lytle once again was wounded, this time to the head during the October 8<sup>th</sup> battle at Perryville, Kentucky. Captured and paroled, Lytle again returned to

Cincinnati to recuperate, only this time he had to wait until he was exchanged due to his status as a prisoner of war.

Officially exchanged on February 4, 1863, Lytle returned to active duty, now with the rank of Brigadier General. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, at the battle of Chickamauga, Lytle was mortally wounded as he led a charge to protect the rear of his command. Buried on the field, Lytle's remains were later exhumed and brought to the Union lines under a flag of truce to be sent back to Cincinnati for burial. The funeral service at Christ Church on October 22<sup>nd</sup> was one of the largest the city had ever seen.

With the death of General Lytle as well as his two elderly aunts the previous spring, the family temporarily sought another use for the old Lytle home. In April of 1864, Ezekiel Haines offered to rent the mansion to the Sisters of the Poor of St Francis. Sarah Peter quickly accepted the offer as space in the convent was limited, and additional space was needed for the accommodation and care of the many orphans and homeless children she so willingly took in off the streets. Around this same time, Sarah purchased from Haines the parcel of land on Third Street that lay in front of the Lytle mansion. The deed to this lot dated May 17<sup>th</sup>, contained a clause that allowed the family to remove the gate and pillars, along with the fence that bordered on Third Street.

In planning an extended trip east to seek medical attention, Ezekiel Haines rented out his house at the corner of Fourth and Lawrence to Thomas Phillips, proprietor of the American Bolt and Nut Company. On his return trip to Cincinnati, Haines died in Yellow Springs, Ohio on April 8, 1865, the day before Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House.

With Haines' death, ownership of the Lytle mansion passed to General Lytle's sisters, Josephine Foster and Elizabeth Broadwell, as did further adventures and problems with the convent next door. In the summer of 1865, excavation was begun to enlarge the convent's chapel and to add additional living quarters. Antony Bley, who was again commissioned to do the construction, neglected to stabilize the sides of the ditch being dug for the foundation. The resulting erosion began to encroach on the Foster/Broadwell property, threatening the stability of the Lytle mansion's walls. Dr. Foster, through Alexander Todd, informed Bley that unless the situation was immediately rectified, he would sue for any further damages to his property. The excavation was quickly shored up, and construction continued through the next year. On August 11, 1866, this latest addition to the convent was dedicated.

While the Lytle mansion was serving as an orphanage, one of the Sisters from the convent wrote the following description of its interior:

“It was [a] roomy two-story building divided on the first floor by two broad passages which had three large hall doors. To the left of the door... on the side opposite our chapel were two large rooms which formerly served as work and sitting room[s] for the children, but while the new building was being constructed they were used by the Sisters as recreation and work rooms. These rooms were separated from each other by the second passage. The main entrance of the dwelling led into the hall. At the other side lay two corresponding large rooms, one of which was used as a dining room for the children, the other served as cells for six sisters. A narrow passage led between these rooms into an apartment paved with red bricks, which might have served for a kitchen, but now had to be used during the day as a sitting room for the children; on Mondays, however, it was turned into a laundry. Most of the children slept in a large room on the second floor, and some of them slept in a part of the attic.”

In April of 1866, the orphanage officially closed, and the remaining children were transferred to other institutions.

The additions made to the convent in 1866 eliminated access to the Lytle mansion from Third Street, and so the following year, after the Sisters had vacated the mansion, Dr. Foster moved the entrance of the home to face Lawrence Street. The Third Street doorway was converted into a window, and a large porch and veranda were added to the new entrance. The attic was remodeled for use as servants' quarters and dormer windows were added for light and ventilation. The room at the southeast corner of the first floor was converted into a kitchen and the 1815 kitchen was torn down.

In 1868 Nathaniel and Josephine Foster moved into the renovated mansion, followed shortly after by Samuel and Elizabeth Broadwell. The Fosters brought three children into the home, the oldest being Anna age 11, followed by John age 10, and William Lytle Foster who was born on March 16, 1867. Named after his uncle, William's birth and the need for additional space may have been what prompted the Fosters' decision to renovate the Lytle mansion for family use. On February 17, 1872, the Fosters' fourth child, Lily, was born in the mansion. Later that year in August, their son John died at Put-in-Bay, Ohio.

Turning our attention now to the corner of Fourth and Lawrence Streets, Charlotte Haines, after an absence of almost seven years, is again listed in the city directories as residing at her old home. In 1875 Charlotte's nephew George Coursen, is living with her, possibly as a caregiver during her last illness. Charlotte died on October 28<sup>th</sup>, and fifteen days later, Coursen negotiated a

contract to sell his aunt's home to Washington McLean. As mentioned earlier, McLean was co-proprietor of the *Cincinnati Enquirer* with James Faran, who lived on the Third Street side of the block.

The lot that McLean purchased had a 195-foot frontage on Fourth Street and extended back 110 feet on both Lawrence and Lytle. In 1877, McLean divided this property, selling a lot at the corner of Fourth and Lytle to his daughter Mary, wife of Aaron Bugher, president of the Beaver Creek and Cumberland River Coal Company. Aaron and Mary built a large two and a half-story house on this property in 1878. Prior to this, the Bughers had lived at 108 East Fourth, the building now occupied by the Literary Club.

In 1881, Washington McLean purchased 118 East Third Street from Robert C. Pugh and sold it the following year to his son John. John McLean, who had taken over his father's position as co-proprietor of the *Enquirer*, converted the residence into a boarding house. One of his earliest tenants was Leonard Lewis, editor of the *Cincinnati Times-Star*. Next door at 120 East Third, Thomas Wright sold this property in 1882 to Elizabeth Bates, wife of attorney and later Judge Clement Bates.

On April 1, 1882, Elizabeth Broadwell deeded her portion of the Lytle mansion property to her sister Josephine Foster. The Broadwells moved to the southeast corner of Fifth and Pike Streets, while the Fosters remained at the mansion. In June of that year, Dr. Foster was stricken with paralysis while calling on a patient. Lingered for several days, Dr. Foster died on July 8<sup>th</sup>, leaving Josephine and their children to look after the mansion.

On April 26, 1886, Aaron Bugher deeded his house at Fourth and Lytle to George Wilshire of the Western Insurance Company. Later that year on November 13<sup>th</sup>, John McLean sold 118 East Third to Mary Hanna, wife of businessman Henry Hanna, then president of the Little Miami Railroad Company. Mary used the property for rental income, her most famous tenant being William Howard Taft, who moved here in 1892 while serving as a United States Circuit Court Judge. Taft resided at this address until 1898, when he moved to Madison Road near Annwood in East Walnut Hills.

On May 9, 1887, Washington McLean sold his residence at the corner of Fourth and Lawrence by public auction. Having subdivided the property into five smaller lots, the auction ended with George Wilshire purchasing one lot to the west of his home, while Frederick

Burckhardt, president of Burckhardt and Co. oil merchants, purchased the old Haines residence along with three additional lots.

Burckhardt purchased this property to provide a new home for the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, which moved to this site in 1888. According to a description found in George Roe's *Cincinnati, the Queen City of the West*:

“The imposing building now occupied was the residence of the late Washington McLean ... That this spacious and splendid residence has been amplified and admirably fitted for a conservatory is due to the enterprise of that public-spirited citizen and patron of music, Mr. Frederic[k] Burckhardt. It was he who, at Miss Baur's earnest request had a magnificent structure of four stories added to the historic mansion, making up altogether a most handsome consolidation dedicated to the goddess of music. It is complete as to a hall for recitals, rooms for practicing, and all necessary adjuncts, and is both well lighted and ventilated.”

Home to Miss Clara Baur, Directress and founder of the Conservatory, and also her niece Bertha Baur, secretary and preceptress, the Conservatory remained at this location until 1902 when it moved to the old Shillito mansion in Mt. Auburn.

For the first few years, Burckhardt's son Rufus resided in the Conservatory addition, possibly serving as a building manager. In 1891, Burckhardt purchased the property owned by George Wilshire at the corner of Fourth and Lytle, and eventually Rufus moved into the Wilshire home. Down on Third Street, the convent was again in need of space, and so the Sisters decided to build a new facility in Hartwell. The older Sisters remained at Third and Lytle, while the novitiates moved to the new convent. In 1900 the Santa Maria Italian Educational and Industrial Institute moved their offices into the old convent sharing space with the remaining Sisters.

Returning to the Lytle mansion, on December 30, 1896, the social event of the Yuletide season was the marriage of Lily Foster and Charles Livingood. According to one of the local newspapers, following the wedding ceremony at Christ Church,

“a reception was held at the home of the bride's mother, Mrs. Nathaniel Foster ... where every room was aglow with ... bright happiness and fragrant with ... flowers and laurel and red-berried holly. The beautiful effect of the mistletoe and lilies was carried out in the decoration of the bridal table, brightened by the gleaming candelabra.”

Two years later on December 21, 1898, Josephine Foster, the last surviving member of her generation, passed away at the age of 68 years.

The last occupants of the Lytle mansion were Anna and William Foster. The Livingood children, who frequently visited their aunt and uncle, were the fifth generation to be part of this home. In 1903, councilman Mike Mullen began his crusade to erect a park on the site of the mansion. Rufus Burckhardt and the Sisters were willing to sell their property since it had outlived its usefulness. The elder Sisters moved to the facility in Hartwell, and with the Conservatory gone, Burckhardt was left with a structure that served a fairly specific need. Hanna, Bates, and the Farans were likewise willing to sell, and so opposition to the park centered on the old Lytle home.

In 1905, the structures on Third and Fourth Streets were razed, and the Lytle mansion was vacated as construction of the park was begun. Controversy over the fate of the mansion would continue until 1908. Foster and Livingood, the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, and various patriotic groups – all spoke up in hopes of preserving the mansion. In the end, however, it was Mike Mullen and the political machine of the day that prevailed. During the summer of 1908, the Lytle mansion was razed, and a bandstand was soon erected on its site.

Also in 1908, John McLean presented a fountain to the city in memory of his father, Washington McLean. This fountain was placed where his father's house once stood. Later in 1917 the fountain was moved to the west side of Lawrence Street. Taking the fountain's place was the statue of Abraham Lincoln by George Grey Barnard, which was presented to the city by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Phelps Taft on March 31, 1917 before a crowd of some twenty thousand. In 1921, the Rickett's U.S. Marine Memorial was dedicated under simpler, yet equally impressive ceremonies. These monuments along with playground equipment, walkways and benches, constituted the Lytle Park seen by those exiting this door on the evening of June 30, 1930, when 500 East Fourth Street officially became the home of the Literary Club. Five years later, a new bandstand was erected in memory of Councilman Mike Mullen.

Except for two years during the Second World War, Lytle Park served as the site of Western and Southern Life Insurance Company's Nativity scene. First viewed at Lytle Park in 1939, the nativity was moved in the late 1960's to Eden Park's Krohn Conservatory.

In 1951, Lytle Park's boundary grew with the addition of the block immediately to its east. This addition gave the Taft Museum an open vista to Lawrence Street.

During the late 1950s, a situation arose which threatened the very existence of Lytle Park when plans were announced to route an expressway through the center of the park. The ensuing conflict over saving the park and many of the surrounding buildings dragged on for years. Finally it

was decided to construct a tunnel, or rather a group of tunnels, that would carry the traffic under what would be an enlarged, and possibly improved park.

After the completion of the tunnels in 1969, much of Lytle Park was rebuilt on a concrete slab, which sits on the roof of the interstate's tubes. To accommodate the height of the tunnels, the southern end of the park was raised to the Fourth Street elevation. Lawrence Street was eliminated, as was the northern half of Lytle Street, and part of Third. With Lawrence Street gone, the western boundary of the park now became Ludlow Street.

With the return of the Lincoln statue and the Marine memorial, Lytle Park took on much the same appearance that we see tonight. A few other amenities were added, such as the semi-circular wall at the southwest corner of the park. This wall showcases some informational plaques relating to the history of the area, while it also creates a protective barrier to the southern portal of the tunnel.

Tonight as we pause at the doorway, a full century has elapsed since the Lytle mansion was razed. In the intervening years, the park has become an icon of the area, with the surrounding buildings making up an historic district. For 78 of these one hundred years the Literary Club has met at 500 East Fourth, becoming for some as much of a landmark as Mr. Lincoln across the street.

Our ties run deep with these neighbors we have met, four of whom were members of the Club. Samuel Broadwell became a member in 1855, followed by Clement Bates in 1870 and William Howard Taft in 1878. Charles Livingood became a member in 1894 and was present in 1930 when 500 East Fourth became the home of the Literary Club. Even our property has ties with these neighbors, being at one time a part of Dr. Allison's Peach Grove.

We are now left with the question of how acceptable would our presence be to our nineteenth century neighbors? How would they feel about our invasion of the neighborhood on Monday night? Given the relative abundance of doctors, lawyers, educators, and businessmen with both the residents of the past and the club members of today; a certain compatibility exists in both directions. Whether we are speaking of a local resident or a transient father and son walking through the park, we may find that in viewing the past, the next neighbor that we meet may in fact be one of us.