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# First Fire - 1871

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Riverside News.

January 16, 1913..

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## *Mr Jennisons House at 154 Bartram Rd. the First one to be Burned in Riverside*

We well remember the first fire in Riverside. Henry F. Jennison, a successful insurance man had built and recently occupied a very pretty frame house on the present site of the Grant's home. One day fire was discovered by a neighbor but having no effective means of extinguishing it at hand the house burned to the ground in the middle of the day. Immediately Mr. Jennison rebuilt, using red brick and when the house was finished it was often spoken of as "the brick house" for years, being the only one in town. The one daughter Miss Nellie was a very bright girl and a good pianiste. There were several sons, and they returned to Chicago in a few years. The house was then occupied by the family of Mr. Wm. A. Havemeyer until he bought the fine place which was there home for many years. B. F. Chase then moved in and several differant families lived there until the house was bought by George Ellis, something over twenty years ago, from E. A. Driver. After the death of Mr. Ellis, Mr. Driver again bought the place, renting to several parties in turn among them, Wm. H. Kerfoot. Finally John P. Driver moved there with his family, remaining in possession until they moved to California, when Mr. and Mrs. Grant bought the property which they have greatly beautified.

The only other house built in pioneer days in that entire block was the one the ruins of which still occupy the lot northeast of Mrs. W.D.L. Simpson's house. When the fine old house was new it belonged to

a family named Hinckley. They were good eastern people with very decided opinions as to mine and thine. There were two sons, fine young fellows and with them lived Dr. and Mrs. Hall, Dr. Hall standing high in the homeopathic profession in Chicago. It was a large, square house with a door in the center. The inside of it was commodious and elegant, outside was severe in its

very clean coat of white with a barn and a white picket fence entirely around the premises. Fortunately in a very few years, the place was sold to Edward Hollister a well to do carpet merchant of Chicago. Never did lovlier people come into our midst and they removed much of the fence, added porches and painted the house in soft warm brown.

The property was later

bought by Judge Wm. Barnum whose family enjoyed the place until that luckless day upon which they were burned out.

Years later other houses were built. The houses built by Mr. Wm. A. Havemeyer and others of the same family being the first additions. Then the Murray house now occupied by Ralph Crew's family the the present home of the Regan family which was first known as the Markham House, and the house built for the family named Mellor from Wisconsin which Gen. Simpson subsequently bought and last the Warren and Beardsley homes. One house has been torn down within the last few months. There is not a more desirable location in Riverside than this splendid block and today most of the houses are owned by their occupants which is always an advantage to a neighborhood.



H. F. Jennison's Residence, situated on Bartram Road, Riverside.  
J. C. Cochrane, Architect.