

HISTORIC OTTERBEIN

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Hanover Street from Lee to Barre, 1869

by David Safier



This segment of the 1869 pictorial map of Baltimore shows the intersection of Hanover and Lee Streets. Today Hanover Street from Lee to Barre is purely residential, with some 19th homes still standing on the west side and newer buildings on the rest of the block. In 1869, however, the block housed a public school and a Presbyterian church, which would later become a Jewish synagogue, then an extension of the public school. And just across Barre Street was Murr's ice cream saloon which, one can imagine, was a regular hangout for children from the church and the school down the block.

Public School Number 4

The school at the corner of Hanover and Lee is mislabeled "Public School 3" on the 1869 map. It was actually Public School Number 4, the fourth public school in Baltimore. It first opened as an elementary school in 1829. It was replaced by a larger school building in 1895 which later served as a junior high school, expanding onto the land where the church once stood in the 1950s.



You can find more information about P.S. 4 and other schools in the neighborhood on the history pages of the Otterbein Community Association website.

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St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church opened on the east side of Hanover Street just north of Welcome Alley in the 1850s. The photo shows the church as it looked then, with a 150 foot bell tower and the original homes surrounding it. In 1893, the church was sold to the Jewish congregation of Anshe Emunah, which had been meeting above a Chinese laundry in the area since it was organized in 1884. The Anshe Emunah congregation removed the bell tower and used the rest of the building for its synagogue until a fire in 1893, when they built a new structure. In 1923, the home at 518 S Hanover Street, across the street from the synagogue, was purchased to be used as the South Baltimore Talmud Torah Hebrew School. Jewish children from the neighborhood schools would attend, most likely between the hours of 4 and 8pm.

In 1955 the Anshe Emunah congregation sold the synagogue building to the Baltimore school system which used it as a cafeteria, gymnasium and extra classrooms for the junior high school at Hanover and Lee.

You can find more information about the church and synagogue as well as other religious buildings in the neighborhood on the history pages of the Otterbein Community Association website.



Wm. F. Murr's Ice Cream Saloon

Murr's Ice Cream Saloon on the northeast corner of Hanover and Barre must have had a thriving business, situated as it was in a dense urban neighborhood and up the block from a church and a school. I couldn't find a photo of the storefront, but I did locate this business card. The address on the card, 139 Hanover St, is from the original Baltimore address numbering system which was revised in 1887. Today it would be 429 S. Hanover.



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The Murr brothers began their ice cream business at Hanover Market a few blocks north of the Barre St. location, which they opened in 1863, advertising “Ice-cream and water-ices: thirty-five cents per quart.” According to articles and advertisements in the Sun, the brothers William and Henry dissolved their partnership in 1881. Henry opened a rival ice cream shop a few blocks away on Charles Street and put an ad in the paper declaring that his new shop “is no way connected with any other business,” indicating possible bad blood between the brothers.