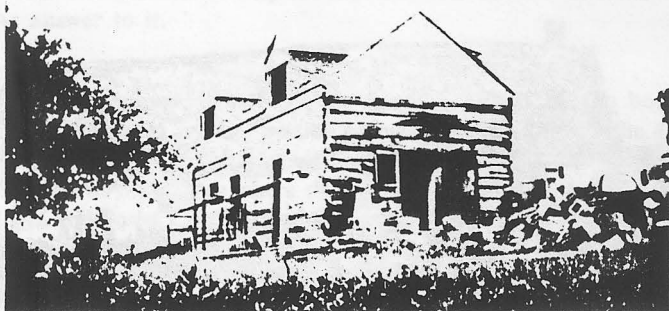


THEN AND NOW V JAMES TURMAN BARRON



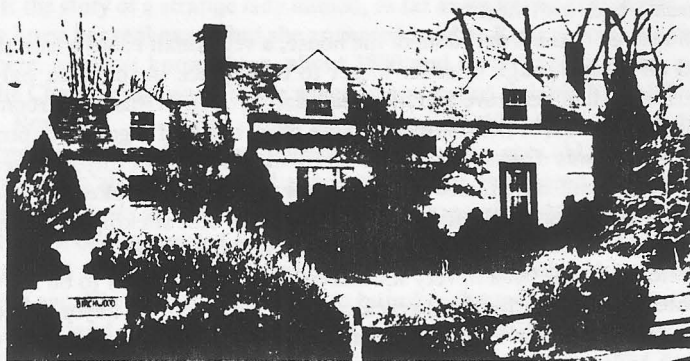
Then — Birchwood, 4572 - 26th Street, North, before renovation in 1940. (Photo courtesy Rev. and Mrs. Walter Horn)

Birchwood

When President Theodore Roosevelt visited friends in Arlington, he ate ice cream hand-frozen at Birchwood, one of the three oldest houses in the County.

Birchwood originally was a 14 x 16 foot log cabin built around 1836 by Caleb Birch. Blackened foundations of an earlier structure which evidently burned have been found on the site, suggesting that Birch may have built a honeymoon house there as early as 1800 when he married Mary Bowling.

Birchwood's connections with Roosevelt came through the President's friend, Admiral Presley M. Rixey, who bought the land containing the cabin. Rixey's valet, Richard Wallace, lived at Birchwood and made ice cream for Roosevelt and Rixey after horseback rides through the Arlington woods. Wallace sold the house in 1939 and it was renovated the following year.



Now — Birchwood today, nominated as an historic site by the Arlington Historical Commission. (Photo by James Barron)



Then — Ball's Crossroads "Photographic Saloon" (From *Harper's Weekly Magazine*)

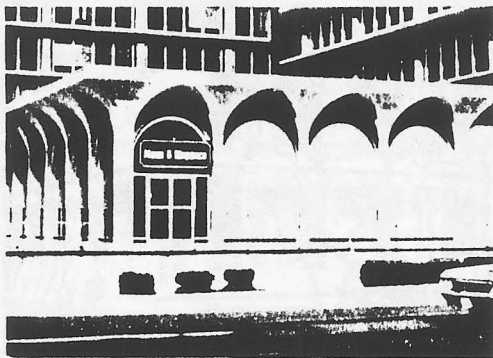
Ball's Crossroads Photographic Saloon

Civil War soldiers encamped at Ball's Crossroads in 1861 could have had their pictures taken in the "photographic saloon" pictured above in an etching from *Harper's Weekly Magazine*.

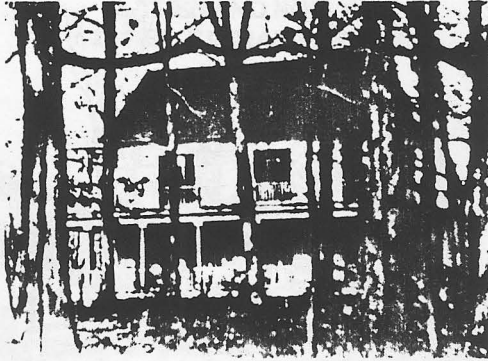
The photographic gallery provided a welcome diversion for troops discouraged by life in a backwoods camp. Front-line action skirted Arlington in the Civil War, with a small skirmish at Hall's Hill turning out to be the only serious fighting here during the war.

Photographs taken at Ball's Crossroads were probably made on glass plates which were slow and cumbersome. Portrait subjects sat in front of the camera for several minutes in bright sunlight so the plates would be properly exposed.

The photographers at Ball's Crossroads were itinerants who set up shop at camps to make money when battle scenes were scarce.



Now — Possible site in Ballston (Photo by James Barron)



Then — Oak Grove, as shown in a 1935 photograph.
(Arlington Historical Society Archives.)

Oak Grove

In 1935, property adjacent to the house shown above was offered to Arlington County for a public library. But the offer was not accepted, and the surrounding land subsequently was sold to home builders.

The house is Oak Grove, and stands on the remainder of a 79-acre estate which was purchased by the Schutt family in 1865. The present home, still owned by the Schutts, was built in 1900 after the original house burned.

When the house was new it faced Cherry Valley Road, and the population was centered to the north in Cherrydale. Today, with the street renamed, Oak Grove is in the middle of a residential area within sight of the proposed I-66 corridor.

Oak Grove is an example of the architecture of rural Arlington. Its Monterey-type veranda and wisteria-covered walls are reminiscent of a time when houses were set apart on large tracts of land.



Now — Wisteria climbs to the veranda of Oak Grove, 1721 North Quincy St.
(Photo by James Barron)