

Scenes from the Past



photo—published in "A Brief History of Harvey's Famous Restaurant" (1942).

The restaurant's second location was at Pennsylvania Avenue & 11th Street.

Harvey's Restaurant was perhaps the best known eating establishment in Washington, DC, and also the center of power and networking for much of its more than 150 years in business. Originally named Harvey's Ladies and Gentlemen's Oyster Saloon, it was established by brothers George W. and Thomas M. Harvey in 1858 at the corner of 11th and C Streets, NW. With the huge influx of residents and business owners in Washington during the Civil War, the brothers began to experiment with various methods of cooking oysters, eventually perfecting a steam cooking method.

The first location was a converted blacksmith shop, with additions built as the business thrived. The newly found delicacy was extremely popular, and by 1863 the restaurant was steaming an impressive 500 wagonloads of oysters each and every week. Piles of oyster shells as high as 50 feet were described surrounding the restaurant.

Harvey's changed locations



postcard—courtesy Kelsey & Assoc. private collection.

Depiction showing the restaurant's third, post-1932 location on Connecticut Avenue.

in 1866, when it moved into a newly renovated cast iron building at Pennsylvania Avenue and 11th Street where it entertained political and literary leaders for more than 65 years. Every President from Ulysses S. Grant to Franklin D. Roosevelt dined in the building. Then, in 1932, it moved to a build-

ing adjacent to the Mayflower Hotel on Connecticut Avenue and DeSales Street, NW when the old building was razed for the construction of the Federal Triangle project.

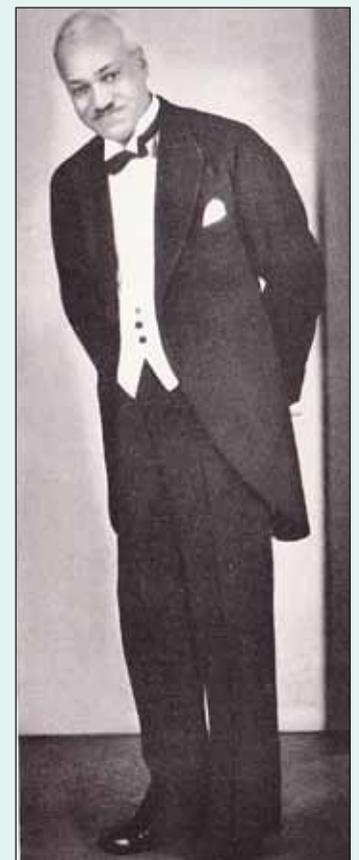
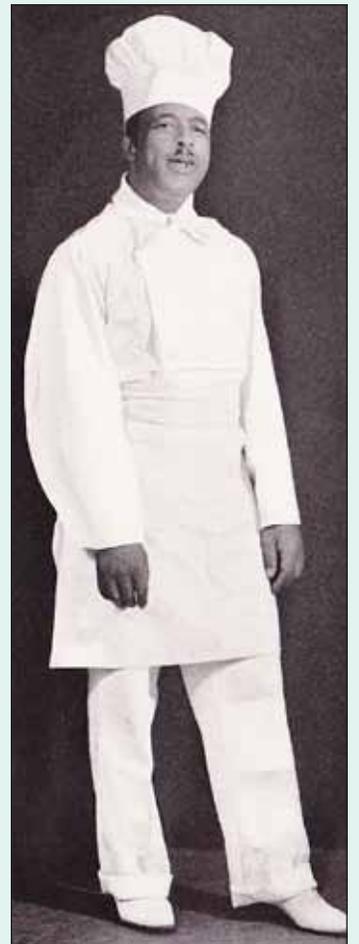
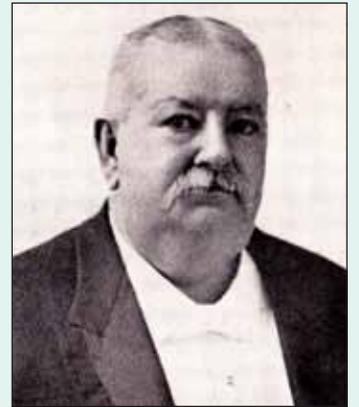
As written in the pamphlet titled "A Brief History of Harvey's Famous Restaurant," printed in 1942, menu items included

steamed oysters, canvas-back duck, roast pig, fried chicken, and even possum. Chef William Lewis and head waiter William Rose are pictured here; Rose worked at the restaurant for more than 50 years.

In 1970, the establishment moved to 18th and K Streets, NW when a developer acquired the Harvey's building and adjoining parcels for the construction of a new office building which incorporated the Farragut North Metro station's L Street entrance. A few years later, the restaurant relocated to the suburbs where it remains today.

—Paul Kelsey Williams
Historic Preservation
Specialist
Kelsey & Associates,
Washington, DC

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The Connecticut Avenue's third floor dining room.



postcard—courtesy Kelsey & Assoc. private collection.

Depiction showing the interior of the second, post-Civil War premises.