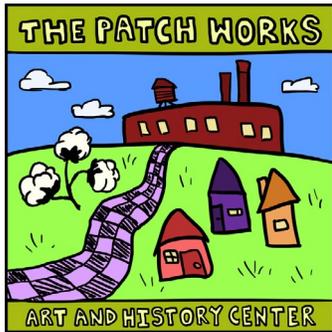


# HOW DID CABBAGETOWN GET IT'S NAME?

By Nina & Jake Elsas, The Patch Works Art And History Center

**On Saturday November 6<sup>th</sup>, we'll be welcoming 15,000+ of our closest friends into the neighborhood.** If you've never experienced it, well, here's your chance! Chomp & Stomp is one helluva chili-chompin', bluegrass-strummin' wingding! And in honor of this annual tradition (disregard The Great Lost Year of 2020), The Patch Works' Chapter 9



will discuss our community's name (and NOT bankruptcy, no matter how apropos).

After all, Chomp – like many local events and fundraisers – revels in and relies heavily on the folksy, whimsical name of “Cabbagetown,” which – even without being prompted by the moniker of a monstrously large

festival squeezing itself into an area the size of Cinderella's bloody shoe – conjures up vivid images of banjo-pickin', foot-tappin', wide-smilin' country bumpkins (eating... chili???)

Plus, the timing couldn't be more perfect, since last month's chapter ended with Young Jacob planting his cotton-picking flag in this here soil. Plusitty plus, it's an oft-asked question that we at The Patch Works are endlessly having to answer (good lord, ENDLESSLY): **“How did Cabbagetown get its name?” So, y'all, let's finally put it down in writing. That way, we can just copy and paste later.**

But that being said, we cannot address this topic in one chapter. As always, we must first blather for 1000 words before getting to the point. In addition... putting it bluntly... the truthful answer is not a happy one. We deliberately used the slur “bumpkin” to set the stage for a sad tale about “Have's and Have-Nots.”

**Frankly, the Truth is a major downer, which could tohhhtally harsh this month's Chomp & Stomp mellow.** The Patch Works strongly believes in picking at History's nasty warts, but there's the right time to pick, and a time to tactfully leave a wart alone. But only for the moment. Thus, let's just save Part 2 for December, when we'll drop the Truth Bomb in time for the winter holidays. Nothing says “Merry Christmas” like a depressing story about ill will and derision. Ho ho ho!

**First... backstory.** When Young Jacob et alia arrived in 1881, they'd've found a postage-stamp-sized community of homes (and a few stores) smattered around Tennels (Tennelle) Street, Borne (Carroll) Street, Savannah (Savannah!) Street and... a street-with-no-name-but-one-day-would-become Berean Avenue... all of which predate The Mill.

Yeppers, although none of the pre-Mill structures remain (allegedly), those streets are the oldest in the 'Hood. [SIDE NOTE: “Allegedly” because – as anyone living here can attest – city documentation on our old homes is utter poop, courtesy of a fire in the 19-Teens that destroyed lotsa housing records. Thus, many of today's structures

bear 1920 as an “official” construction date, which is, needless to say, WRONG-O... by two or three or more decades.]

This outlying enclave (pertinent word in Part 2) occupied the “Goldsmith Plat” in the eastern section of Atlanta's 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward, hiding juuuuust inside the city line. In the mid-1800s, residents probably supported the *Atlanta Rolling Mill* and the adjacent *Georgia Railroad*, but it's hard to say with utmost certainty. That history went up in smoke. Yet despite a dearth of evidence, the 1878 G.M. Hopkins Atlas of Atlanta has proven itself fantabulously helpful: its bird's-eye vantage meticulously illustrates the pre-cotton-mill landscape and includes all sorts of familiar names, such as Gaskill, Pearl, and Waterhouse (which were parcels of land, not streets). Not much else existed. Hell, even today's Boulevard was just a creek. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward = serious boondocks, y'all.

So, Young Jacob (et alia) began constructing the *Fulton Cotton Spinning Company*, adhering to the tried-and-true M.O. of erecting new housing for factory workers, who were inexhaustibly Sherman-izing into Atlanta. The first batch of mill homes was built in three rows, tightly nestled between Goldsmith Plat dwellers and Oakland Cemetery residents. This industrial colony was creatively called... Factory Lot!

**Factory Lot's 1<sup>st</sup>-Gen homes all went bye-bye [sad kazoo]. Some were deliberately demo'd, while others were lost to... FIRE. Good ol' Atlanta-loving fire!** In 1905, most done got burned up, along with a chunk of The Mill. Nonetheless, peeps living on Reinhardt will be tickled pink when they hear they've snagged 2<sup>nd</sup>-Gen mill homes, most of which dodged the 1905 fire. [SIDE NOTE: Ironically, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps are invaluable mapping resources.]

The '80s and '90s witnessed The Mill going full kudzu, and the town rode its unstoppable wave. The Mill acquired more and more land to the east and, during this zippy expansion, even had the prophetic foresight to build Airbnbs along Factory Street (née Borne; now Carroll). Soon, the community was much more than a “Lot” [insert Brady Bunch joke].

In 1889, after pupating for several years, Fulton Cotton Spinning Company hatched into *Fulton Bag & Cotton Mills* (an obscure and misplaced silk reference, yet with a zesty dash of historic relevance). When the company rebranded, it made sense to rebrand the mill town too.

Thus, Young Jacob (no longer “et alia”) transmogrified Factory Lot into a mighty city-state, gloriously christening it... Fulton Mill Village (aka Factory Town or “The Mill Village”). Well, frankly, as far as we know, Fulton Mill Village is still our neighborhood's official name. Which leads us to...

**...our Cliffhanger Ending! Y'all may already know the not-so-secret secret that “Cabbagetown” is only the 'Hood's nickname... and NOT a nice one at that.** We'd love to elaborate, but we gotta stop for today. Nonetheless, stay tuned, intrepid readers, for next month's Chapter 9 - Part 2, when we reveal... \*skkkrtch\*