

T.E.

**Kensey Johns Van Dyke House**  
300 Delaware Street

Present Owner: Calvin R Marshall

Dirk Albertson, is the only person of record, discovered as owning part of the plot extending south from Delaware Street between Third and Fourth Streets. A court case in 1682 and 1683 to establish the title of John Cann\* to a lot granted him by William Penn, facing Minquas Street (3rd) south of Wood Street (Delaware), John Cann exhibited in court a copy of an old Dutch map, to prove that Minquas Street was laid out in the town plan, and a number of the oldest inhabitants testified that there had been a double row of houses there facing east on Minquas Street, and west on Beaver Street (4th). These ancient houses had disappeared and the street was no longer a thoroughfare, until the time of this court case when lots had been surveyed according to the map, and grants made by William Penn. It is in this case that Dirk Albertsen was cited as an owner in the time of Nicholas de Rlngh, the earliest Dutch owner of the site south of Third Street opposite the Green.

The grants made by William Penn were to James Walliam or Williams for the Delaware Street end of the block between 3rd to 4th Streets, south of Williams, Getes Barrett, then John Cann and Eldert Egberts Forshen. John Cann's lot was 60' wide an 3rd Street which must have been the width of each of the other three lots. All were about 164' from 3rd to 4th Streets.

Forshen was naturalized by William Penn in 1683, and the next

\* In 1684, John Cann, by order of the Provincial Court, was appointed "Register of the town and county of New Castle,"

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year his property is ordered sold by the court. In 1691 John Cann has Forshen's lot and that of Giles Barrett in addition to his own, a property 180' wide on 3rd and 4th Streets by 164' deep. In Penn's book of Surveys, the surveyor's drawing shows that each of John Cann's three lots has a house on it, a very small one on the lot that was Barrett's, a larger one on the lot that was Forshen's, and a still larger one with two chimneys on Cann's original lot.

In 1691 the Delaware Street plot, adjoining Cann's three lots, originally of James Williams was conveyed to Richard Reynolds, 62' on 3rd Street by 162' on Delaware. From Reynolds it went to Richard Halliwell and Robert French and in 1709 they conveyed it to Peter Van Burgh and Andrew Gravenract. The east part of the Indenture to Van Burgh and Gravenract mentions John Donaldson, but in what capacity is obliterated by a torn part of the page, but in the recital of a subsequent indenture the sale to Peter Van Burg of Albany, N. Y., merchant and Andrew Gravenract of the city of New York, mariner, is in trust on behalf of the daughters and heirs of Major John Donaldson late of New Castle, merchant.

Mary Donaldson married George Yeates and became possessed of one half the original Williams plot. They sold their half share to George Graham, sail-maker in 1725. Catherine Donaldson and her husband, Michael Laughton sold their half share to Jacobus Williams Neering, saddler. Neering sold to Wessel Alrichs, gentleman, so George

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**Graham** and **Wessel Alrichs** owned the original 62' x 162' plot. They divided it into **three** parts, two parts to **Alrichs** and the third part with the house on it to **Graham**. In 1727, **Graham** and his wife sold to **Thomas Smith**, their house and narrow lot for 70 pounds.

**John Cann** divided his large lot in 1692, selling a 60' lot next to that formerly of **Williams**, to **Peter Godwin**. Among later owners of parts of **Cann's** three 60' lots, were **William Wright**, **Daniel Mercier**, **Francis Land**, **James Armitage** and **numerous** others, for **John Cann** and other owners divided some of their plots to make lots about **80'** deep back to back between 3rd Street and 4th Street.

In **May** 1798, **John Betson** was keeping a small brick hotel in the Third and Delaware Street corner of the original **Williams** plot. **Thomas Smith** who bought this plot in 1727 with a house on it, was interested in tavern properties. He bought the property that became the **Gilpin** house about this time and enlarged it. The ownership of what was later called "**the brick tavern house**" and lot of ground between the purchase by **Thomas Smith** and the occupancy by **John Betson** has not been successfully traced in this search.

The size of the building and plot on **the** 1804 survey indicates that both the house and narrow lot bought for 70 pounds in 1727 have **been** enlarged and the block-long lot of ground **has been** divided into three **parts**, the Van Dyke site having about half **the block** on Delaware **Street**.

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In 1805, Nicholas Van Dyke advertised the **Tavern house with stables** at 3rd and Delaware Streets, "now occupied by Robert Baldwin" for rent for a term of **years**. Van Dyke probably **owned** the property at this time, but none of the deeds indexed in his **name** are for this property.

In 1820 he built on the **site #300 Delaware Street** and by his will proved in 1825, **left it** to his son Kensey Johns Van Dyke, who **died** the following year. The plot then extended about 67' on Delaware Street by **about 240'** deep on Third Street,

After the death of Kensey Johns Van Dyke, this house **was** lived in for **some** years by James Rogers, who had married Martha Booth, oldest daughter of **James Booth Sr.**

In 1856, **Ann** Van Dyke, sold **the** house and ground to Dr. James Couper, and **was** later owned by **Dr. Couper's heirs.**

**The** property **was** later owned by David **Boulden**, the merchant, who owned the **store** house **adjoining** Packet Alley, and **was** his residence.

Adjoining to the west wall of the house for **many** years **was** a **brick** office building and there **was** also a second-story veranda on that side of the house for a time. Both were removed **some** years ago.