

THE STRAND

Site of the Garden to the McIntire House (#8)
and the House and Site of #14 The Strand,
the Morrison House, now owned by the heirs
of James Morrison
(Lee Photo #16)

Original Plot - 3

During the Dutch period this plot of 66'-4", now the McIntire garden and the Morrison house sites, had on it two dwellings and some timbers for further building. The first recorded Dutch owner of the plot was Foppe Jansen Outhout, commissary to the expedition of Director Peter Stuyvesant of New Netherland, when Stuyvesant came down from New Amsterdam in 1655, with a fleet of ships to take Fort Casimir and the whole Delaware River from the Swedes. When the ships departed, Foppe Jansen set up a tavern on the Strand, whether on this site or on his upper site - where the Philip Laird house and part of the garden now is - is uncertain, for Foppe Jansen soon sold the house and garden on this lower site to Jacob Vandever. Between 1655 and 1677, the plot had a number of owners. Jacob Vandever sold to Thomas Snelling, Snelling to John Henry. John Henry's widow Catherine, sold her house and garden on the north part of the lot, the site of the Morrison house, to Justa Andries (Anderson), innkeeper, before 1677. He already owned the south part, called "two lots of ground with a dwelling house thereupon as also some pieces of timber for building thereupon" (the original deed is in the possession of the Delaware Historical Society), and as John Henry had owned the whole 66'-4", it is likely that Justa Andries bought the south part of the lot containing the site of the present McIntire garden from John Henry, and following Henry's death, the

north part from his widow. Jacob Vandever was farmer and merchant and dealer in property. The occupations of Snelling and Henry have not been found in this search to date.

In 1677, the Court confirmed the whole to Justa Andries, and that same year "the Court having viewed the account of Justa Andries, ordinary keeper, for public expenses at the last high court to the sum of ss 551:10*, do allow the same." This would indicate that the court met at Justa Andries' tavern and dwelling. Indications are that this tavern was on the Morrison house site, the smaller house being on the south side, the site of the McIntire garden.

The following year Justa Andries sold the whole plot with all houses and buildings to Ralph Hutchinson, innkeeper, for 3,000 gilders. Hutchinson in 1679 sold to John Darby, innkeeper. a few years later, Justa Andries had the whole property again, whether by re-purchase or foreclosure of a mortgage has not been determined.

About 1685, Andries sold the south 33' of the plot for 20 pounds to Derrick Vandenburg, mason, lately come to New Castle from New York and the north 33'-4" to John White of New Castle, both sales with all buildings and improvements.

* No other sum of money in the court records is written with an "ss". The sign used for gilders may have looked to the editor like an old-fashioned double s. It was not for "stuyvers" because that coin would be used only up to 20, because 20 stuyvers made a gilder.

McIntire Garden Site

A few years later (1689) Derrick Vandenburg sold the house and lot he bought for 20 pounds to George Hogg, cordwainer, for 32 pounds. Vandenburg, the mason, may have improved the house, and George Hogg, who was, or who became, prosperous, undoubtedly did, for he lived in the house until he died in 1721. A small house set much farther back from the Strand than the neighboring dwellings is shown on the 1804 survey map, the same shape and exposure as the two large houses to the south, a house which very likely survived from the Dutch period and was the house Justa Andries sold to Vandenburg and the latter to George Hogg. There is no indication in any of the subsequent indentures and wills examined, that any other house than the original one was on this site.

John Hogg Sr., in his will of 1721, left the house and the lot which ran through to the Market Place, to his wife Ann and son John. John Hogg sold house and lot to John VanLeuvenigh Sr., shopkeeper, who in his will of 1753 left the property to his son John VanLeuvenigh Jr. Subsequent owners were William Semple, Casper, John and Abraham Singer and in 1791 and 92, James Riddle. The latter was a prominent citizen of the merchant family, best known commercially through the firm of Riddle and Bird, who conducted business at the building at the north-east corner of the Strand and Delaware Street, later known as the Jefferson house. No direct indentures have been found for these transfers of ownership between the will of John VanLeuvenigh

(Plot 3, continued)

Sr., and the purchase in 1914 by the late George McIntire and his wife from an heir of Dr. James Cooper - of this garden site together with the house, #8 the Strand. The intervening owners are mentioned in deeds for the Morrison site. Mrs. Elizabeth D. M. Edwards, who sold to the McIntire's, had bought the interest of the other heirs of Dr. James Cooper in #6 and its garden and two adjoining properties to the north - the Morrison house and the garden.

The Morrison House and Site - #14 The Strand

John White, who bought Justa Andries' tavern and dwelling on the site of #14, was an important citizen in the early years of William Penn's period. His patent for this house was approved in the court in 1685, although he probably bought it and lived in it several years earlier. He was appointed one of the judges of the court in 1683. The next year when the assembly of Penn's province met at New Castle, its sessions may have been in this, White's house. In any case, John White entertained some of the members, for among the records of this session there is mention of laws being read over by several assemblymen "at John White's." John White was the speaker at the next three sessions of the assembly in Philadelphia, and was still a member in 1689 when, although elected to the assembly, he was detained by the sheriff in New Castle. The offense could not have been very serious, because the assembly sent for him and he was seated. In the property records of the court at New Castle, he is

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frequently mentioned as buying and selling property and acting as attorney and witness for others up to and through the year 1689.

In 1695, John White's heirs sold house and lot to George Hogg Sr., cordwainer, who owned the house and ground next door at the site of the present McIntire garden. During George Hogg's life time, he divided this upper lot which ran through to the market square, by a line part way between the two streets, and left the Second Street plot with a house on it in which his son George Jr. lived, to George; and the front half with the house on it to his son James and daughter Sarah. James and Sarah sold to John Lewden, a farmer, in 1724, and three years later, Joseph Parker, a brickmaker, bought it. The brickmaker owned it for 17 years when he sold it to John Scott, innkeeper. Ten years later, one of the most distinguished men of his day, Judge Richard McWilliam the elder, bought the property. It is not certain that he lived in it. It is more likely that he rented it to a tavern keeper, for five years later he sold it to his brother-in-law, William Spencer, an innholder. In 1791 James Riddle had bought it, who at the same time owned the adjoining McIntire garden site.

From 1791 until the house was ruined or destroyed in the fire of 1824, the property was owned outright or by mortgage by Richard Grafton, John Mundall, Harding Williams, John Wattson and his heirs and finally by Dr. James Cooper the elder. In May, 1824, Dr. Cooper bought the lot for \$2,000 and immediately built the present brick house which was afterward remodeled by his son Samuel. Dr. Cooper's

brick house was of the same size, and judging from present inspections must have been of the same exterior type as the dwelling and tavern that was on the site as shown in the elevations of the 1804 survey.

Dr. James Cooper Sr., by his will in 1839 left his surgical instruments and medical books to his son James Jr., who became one of the outstanding physicians of his day in this country. To his son Samuel he left his portable desk, mathematical instruments and writing apparatus, indicating the business bent of the young man. The will left the property to Dr. Cooper's wife and all his children, together with other real estate. This property through Samuel Cooper, the outstanding merchant, importer and exporter, by whose name the house was known for many years, and other heirs of Dr. James Cooper, the elder, came finally to the last heir to own it - Mrs. Elizabeth D. M. Edwards, of Brookline, Massachusetts, and then to James T. Morrison, whose heirs still own it.

Detailed and documental history on file.

The house as studied in 1937 by HABS is described in HABS-Del.-112. By errors probably from the assurance by consultants, its erection is attributed to Samuel Cooper the merchant. Indentures clearly state that it was erected by Dr. James Cooper, the elder as stated above.

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(Plot 3, continued)

The house which is at present on this site is known as the Morrison House and is in good condition and fits in well with the character of its neighbors. One major blemish of its street facade is the recessed porch on the south corner, which is of comparatively late origin. This report contains a photograph of the building before the porch existed; a central door, under the middle window above, gave access to a small shop with a window on each side of the door. Another door on the south corner balanced the alley entrance on the north corner and gave access to the rear of the house and the second story.

This report would recommend the restoration of this facade to its condition as shown on the photograph as an important step in any restoration or preservation undertaking.