

River Side of the Strand Between
Delaware and Harmacy Streets

B-11, opposite the Tile House Site, now #53,
owned by Hugh C. Galloway, and #55, owned by
Philip D. Laird

So far as can be determined from surviving records, the Tile House lot, 60' wide on the Strand, belonged in the Dutch period to William Maurits, the Dutch citizen of English birth, who owned also, in 1656, the adjoining house and lot to the south. In 1678, under the English, Moses D'Gonne, a boatman owned the lot with a "small house" on it. D'Gonne sold it that year to Jan Boyer, who the following year was also a boatman, or as part of his occupation used his sloop or other vessel to transport people and goods to and from New Castle. He probably had a wharf or landing opposite his dwelling. Boyer died about 1703, or 1704, leaving the Tile house and the bank lot opposite to his two married daughters. In 1705 they sold both properties to Joseph Wood, who owned the house and bank lot next adjoining to the south.

Joseph Wood sold the Tile house, and the bank lot, now #53 and #55, to Dr. Patrick Reilly in 1716. After Dr. Reilly's death and the marriage of his widow to Gideon Griffith, "gentleman", and sheriff for a term, the bank lot (along with the Tile house) was seized by the sheriff, Henry Newton, and sold to the highest bidder, Dr. John Finney in 1735. Gideon Griffith recovered these properties by later payments stipulated by Dr. Finney. Both were again seized by the sheriff, and sold to Anthony Whitely in 1754.

Dr. Finney paid 65 pounds for this bank lot (B-11) opposite the Tile house, 600' deep, and in the deed the breadth is described as "the width of the wharf", As the bank lot is known to have been at least 60' wide in deeds both before and after this sale, this must mean that a wharf extended across the whole waterfront.

The bank lot continued to be sold with the successive sales of the Tile house: Anthony Whitely's widow acquired possession of it in 1758. She later married John Passmore, survived him, and the bank lot along with the Tile house was sold by her executors in 1782 to Israel Israel. William Armstrong, the innkeeper bought from Israel in 1796 and in 1802, the sale is recorded of the bank lot from Armstrong to William Aull for \$900, described as 63' wide on the Strand and 600' deep into the river.

Following the death of William Aull in September 1803, his several heirs inherited the property: John Aull his brother; John Bull Jr., his nephew, son of his deceased brother James; Martha Aull McDonnel, and Mary Aull, William's sisters; Eliza Blair Steele, his neice, daughter of his deceased sister, Jane Aull Blair. In the division of the estate, there were numerous exchanges and "sales" between the heirs. John Aull Sr. was given power of attorney for the other heirs in 1803-1804. The date of the building of the two adjoining brick houses, #53 and #65 has not been determined from available records, but the evidence

suggests that they were there at the time of William Aull's death, and that he may have had the 63' lot from William Armstrong, several years before the deed was recorded in 1802. All exchanges and transfers between the heirs are of #53 and #55 as separate properties.

#53

Rachel Aull, widow of William is the first recorded owner of #53. John Aull later, 1826, owned this house and lot, having acquired from the other heirs, their $4/5$'s part in addition to his $1/5$. Descendants in the Aull families continued to own #53 until late in the century, 27'-3" wide on the Strand by 600' deep into the river.

At sheriff sale of the house and lot as the property of Charles and Clara Spencer in 1887, it was bought for \$2,100, by George Gray, and sold the same year by him to Henry A. Dennison for \$2,250. In 1904 it was conveyed by Henry A. Dennison to Elizabeth M. Dennison; and by her, in 1933, sold to Irene duPont. Philip D. Laird bought the property from Irene duPont in 1934.

#55

From heirs of William Aull in 1747, in a sale by Robert Gardner, heir of James Gardner, Ferdinand Lechler acquired #55, 33'-3" wide on the Strand and 600' deep into the river. In 1892, Mary A.

In all of the exchanges, both #53 and #55, are "dwelling houses" with no indication of any other use. In 1826, #55 was "lately occupied by B. H. Latrobe" and at that time, 1826, occupied by George Read III. Heirs of William Aull included a **capenter** and several Philadelphia merchants. It is likely that all the business of these men was conducted at the shops and warehouses near the wharves. Gardens behind the houses are mentioned in some of the conveyances. There was an alley north of #55, between this property and the ferry house on the property of James McCallmont, next door to the north, which led past gardens to storehouses and wharves,