

J. E.
River Side of the Strand Between
Delaware and Harmony Street

B-12, now #57 and #59, owned by Mrs. Philip Laird

In the Dutch period, the first known owner of the property on the opposite side of the Strand, #58-60, was Derrick Albertsen, named early in the English period as a responsible householder. He was a judge in the court when he died, 1675, and his heirs owned the property in 1678. The next owner or occupant mentioned is Adam Baldrige, who had it some time before 1704, when in the sale of the Tile house next door to the south, it is described as "lately belongingⁿ to him. All the deeds indexed for Adam Baldrige, are cited as in Book R, which no longer exists.

Derrick Albertsen's business or trade has not been found, but items in the court records of the administration of his estate, together with that of Martin Rosemont, who died the same year, indicate jointly owned properties by Albertsen and Rosemont. Rosemont at the time of his death lived in what is now the back part of the Colby house on Delaware Street. That Albertsen and Rosemont may have had a business in which they used a wharf on the water lot bordering on Harmony Street, now #57 and #59, is conjecture, but may have been true. Harmony Street is called "the street to the free wharf" in the warrant for this bank lot to Roeloff deHaes in 1701. The free wharf, mentioned casually in 1701, may have been there for many years, adjoining the private wharf on this property.

The lot, 600' deep into the river along Harmony Street, was 60' wide on the Strand. Roeloff deHaes, son of Johannes and grandson of the first Roeloff deHaes who came with Stuyvesant at the time of building Fort Casimir in 1651, was prominent and prosperous like his father, and was probably a merchant. Roeloff, whose occupation has not been found in the records, died in 1716. For a debt against his estate the bank lot was sold in 1717 to Samuel Lowman, attorney for Dr. Patrick Reilly, to whom a conveyance was made by Lowman the following year, for 180 pounds, 50 shillings. Dr. Reilly, prominent as a physician, evidently bought as an investment, and leased the water lot and wharf. The conveyance states: "with houses, buildings, wharves" etc. "as in the within written indenture", but the latter indenture is not included here, nor in any of the deed volumes searched.

The ferry across the river, mentioned later as "irregularly kept", may have operated from the wharf of this water lot from the time of Albertsen and Rosemont (see condensed summary of wharves, piers and ferries). The lease to ferry operators and site for a shop, may have interested George Monro, glazier, who bought the water lot along with the property on the opposite side of the Strand in 1726. Through Monro's daughter, Mary, who married Dr. James McCallmont, the property came into possession of Dr. James McCallmont, after the death of George Monro Sr., in 1796.

At this time, the bank lot had on it, on the site of \$57, the old established ferry house, also 2 store house, stable, sheds, etc. at the back, on Harmony Street, and the wharf at the river.

In the Delaware and Eastern Shore Advertiser, May 8, 1797, Mary Ann Thompson advertises that she has "moved to the old established ferry-house, lately occupied by Mr. Samuel Rown, where she intends to keep a good supply of liquors, and everything necessary to accommodate travelers."

Dr. James McCallmont secured sole right to operate the ferry for twenty years from 1801, provided he built a new wharf to extend 115 feet further into the river with a slip beside it. In the act conferring this license the site is described as "at the brick house and wharf.....commonly called the old ferry.. ... formerly of George Monro." In 1811, McCallmont received an extension of ten years to his right to operate the ferry, upon his proposal to extend the wharf still further to overcome the interference of the growing mud flat with landing at low tide.

The property remained in the McCallmont family, except for a two-year interval, 1827-29, during the settling of Dr. James McCallmont's estate for the benefit of his heirs - until 1853, when George Finley McCallmont sold the property to James and Samuel Truss for \$1,200. In 1859, these owners divided the property, each taking one half. The two adjoining brick houses on the

south two-thirds of the 60' lot were built after this year, #57 and #59, the remainder of the plot along Harmony Street for a distance back of the house being left vacant and probably for use as garden as it is now.

In many conveyances by deed or will between the members of several generations of the Truss family, the property, 60' x 600' is divided into residence plots - house and garden - with the wharf and commercial plots behind them, or attached to one of them. These back lots contain besides the wharf or wharves, a "granuary" (?), sheds, stables, and office.

#57

Rosanna, widow of Samuel Truss, together with other heirs of Samuel Truss, inherited #57. Rosanna had a window and a gate opening from the back of her house into a strip 25' wide that ran behind #59 out to Harmony Street, in 1892, when she sold all of her half part in #59 to Thomas L. Truss for \$2,000, including the buildings and wharves, just mentioned, running across the back of the whole 60' breadth.

The whole property #57 and #59 came into the possession of John Taylor in the early 1900's, and both properties were known after Taylor's death as the John Taylor Estate, ~~until they came p~~

~~into possession of Philip D. Laird.~~ and are still in the possession of a member of the Taylor family. #59 sold to William Taylor in 1916.