

· THIRD STREET

Old butch House
#32 East Third Street

(See Photo #72)

The data published to date by the Society for the Preservation of Antiquities in connection with the "old Dutch house" is based upon the search of a property on what is now Fourth Street, behind the site of the old Dutch house. The Fourth Street plot, in the "Second Row" of Dutch grants was patented to Jan Gerritsen (John Garretson) by Peter Stuyvesant in 1657, and later grants were made to John Garretson adjoining his first lot. Any early house on that site has long disappeared.

The first identification of the Dutch house site comes from the indentures, deeds and wills, for the adjoining property to the north (see Summary of #34 and #44), giving the site of the present Dutch house as south boundary to the upper site. In 1671, Jan Head had the Dutch house site. His name has not been found to date in any other record. When the adjoining lot to the north was sold in 1678 by the widow of Harmen Beynersen to John Ogle, this site adjoining south was owned by Jean Jacquet. When in 1687, John Ogle's widow sold the 138' double lot between the Dutch house site and Harmony Street, that lot was bounded "to the south-nest by the log house of George More.n

For the other side of the Dutch house site, Ambrose Backer produced in court in May 1682 a re-survey of his several lots lying together extending 343' from Wood Street along the Market Place

(Old Dutch House, continued)

(Third street) to the house and lot of George More. The court approved the survey of Backer's land. The 138' lot of ground bounding George More to the north and the 343' plot bounding George More to the south, on the block between Wood and Harmony Streets, left roughly 100 feet for George More's lot - allowing for inaccuracies of the early measurements and changes in the street lines.

The re-survey for Backer was made by Ephraim Herman in 1681, and together with the deed from Widow Ogle to Hendrick Vandenburg in 1687 shows that John More had a log house on a lot which included the present Dutch house site, in 1681, which he still had in 1687. Whether the house was built by Jan Head, by Jean Jacquet or by George More, himself, who as a carpenter, cannot be known. "Jean Jacquet" was Jean Paul Jacquet, the former Dutch director at Fort Casimir who lost that job at the time Jacob Alrichs arrived, April 1657, as director representing the city of Amsterdam. Jacquet was living near the ferry over the Christina in the 1680's.

George More inherited from his mother, Ann Wale (widow of George More Sr. of Kent County after whose death she married George Wale, who also died leaving her again a widow), the house and lot on the Strand which he sold to Ephraim Herman in 1680. This was the original Strand plot containing the site of the Presbyterian Manse. The sale to Ephraim Herman of his mother's house and lot on the Strand may have preceded or followed his removal to

(Old Dutch House, continued)

the log house on Third Street, How George More acquired the Dutch house property has not been discovered, nor how it was conveyed to John Walker who owned it in 1695, or earlier, as is shown by deeds for the adjoining properties.

By will of 1697 John Walker's widow, whose given name was "Wyburg", the house came into possession of her son "Powell Barnes". Powell Barnes, "turner", bought the lot adjoining to the north in 1700. In 1701 he sold the north lot and had a survey made of his Dutch house plot. This survey made by George Deakyne shows the Dutch house plot to be 72' front and back and 169' between Third and Fourth Streets. Various spellings of the name Powell Barnes or Barends, and the appearance of the name Joseph Barends among those requesting to be naturalized by William Fenn in 1683, are indications that Paul Barnes' father was of non-English birth. He could have been Dutch, Swede, or Finn. Women of the Barnes family in New Castle in the 1680's had such given names as "Engelty" and "Branchee", but also Prudence, Sara, and Catherine,

The next discovered owner of this plot is Samuel Silsbee, who left it by will in 1751. His trade or profession is not recorded. Whether descent from the heirs of Paul Barnes would bridge the gap between Barnes and Silsbee may be discovered if the orphans court records ^{and} the archives at Dover can be searched. His father may have been Francis Barnes who "came by his death by casualty" while in Maryland, and whose estate was administered by Edward Cantwell.

(Old Dutch House, continued)

Paul Barnes married Willianje, daughter of Reynier Vanderculen. Reynier Vanderculen at the time of his death in 1695, owned *the* 30' lot to the south of the Dutch house lot with a brick house on it (later incorporated in the Alexander houses), but no heirs of Willianje Vanderculen Barnes have been found in the Vanderculen records.

Of Samuel Silsbee's minor sons, Joseph and John who inherited the Dutch house property in 1651, Joseph, a carpenter, died in 1790 and John a year later. Their sister, Mary Silsbee Thompson, widow, inherited the property, and also the adjoining property to the north along with other property formerly belonging to Samuel Silsbee. By her will of 1795, Mary Silsbee Thompson divided her property among her five children, Catherine, Mary, John, Joseph and Samuel. To her daughter Catherine, the lot to the north of the Dutch house lot, then in the tenure of Henry Rowan; to her son John and daughter Mary the Dutch house property - "the brick messuage wherein I now dwell and the lot of ground thereto belonging with all improvements thereon (being late the dwelling house of my deceased brother John Silsbee)". A property above Harmony Street was left to sons Joseph and Samuel.

Mary Silsbee Thompson appointed Joseph Tatlow, executor^{of} the estate and guardian of the children, requiring him to apprentice the sons to such trades as he should think most suitable "as soon as they arrive to proper ages respectively for that purpose hereby

-5-
(Old Dutch House, continued)

requesting and directing the said guardian to give them as good an English education before they are bound out as their small position will afford" etc.

Mary Silsbee Thompson's will of 1795 contains the first mention found in any record, of the "brick" house. So far as all the historical records avail, a plausible conclusion is that the brick house was built by Pauell Barends (Paul Barnes), son* of Wyburg or Wyburje Barends, who after her husband's death married John Walker Sr. Paul Barnes' father-in-law, Reynier Vanderculen, a large property owner, was building and buying brick houses in the 1680's and 1690's, including the brick house on the lot adjoining the Dutch house garden to the south.

The log house of George More that was on the Dutch house plot in 1687, may have been on the south side of the plot and may have been left standing for lease or other use after the substantial and distinguished small brick house was built on the present site. The frame house on the present garden site, moved to the back of the lot when the Dutch house was restored in 1938, is of 19th century construction.

Mary Silsbee Thompson's son John, in 1810, sold his half-interest in the Dutch house property to John Zimmerman, tailor; John Springer acquired a half-interest the same year and from the heirs of Springer the property went to William H. Dobb in 1855, then to Samuel Carpenter 1859, to James L. Maloy, to James P. Poote,

*See longhand copy

(Old Dutch House, continued)

and to Peter C. Schenk in 1874, in successinn. Sold for debt of Peter Schenk's heirs in 1900, the property was bought by Martha a. Janvier, executrix of Sarah E. Janvier. From the heirs of Martha Janvier the Dutch house was bought by Harry ?#. Hushebeck in 1917 and in 1938, sold by him to the Delaware Society for the Preservation of Antiquities.

When bought by the Society the house was restored with limited funds, but is nos in good condition and needs little done to it to bring it into a good state of preservation, which it so richly deserves.

- 1949 architect's statement on condition of the house.