

# Transportation in New Castle

Ferries, Wharves, Packet Boats, Roads,  
Stage Coaches, Steamboats,  
C&D Canal, NC & FT Turnpike and RR,  
Trolley, Paper Streets – What is a Street?,  
N.C. and Travel in an 1802 Expense Report of E. I. du Pont  
Is New Castle Historic, Why Study It?

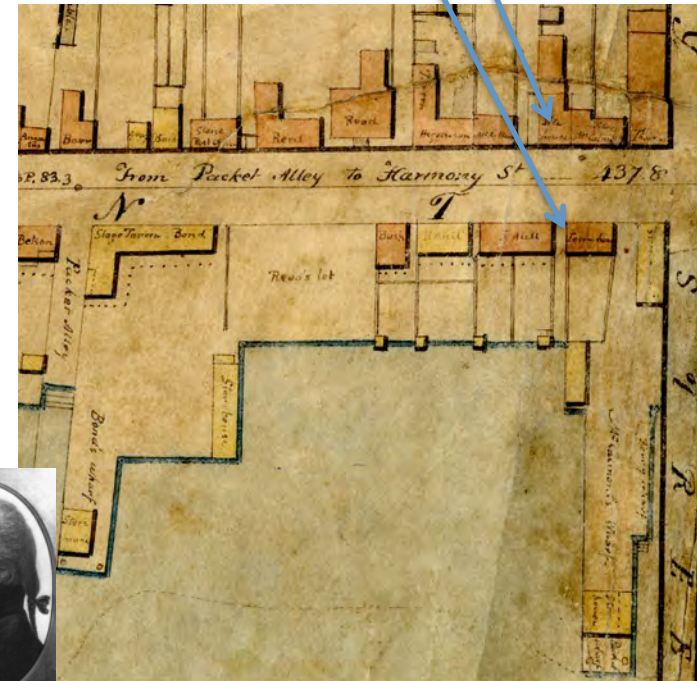
pdfs of all talks:

<http://nc-chap.org/lectures>

# Early Ferries

- Licensed in 1724 between New Castle & Salem by Pa. Governor
- Then to Michael King, ancestor of the family who ran the icehouse up Harmony
- Then a monopoly to James McCallmont by act of the legislature in 1801 for 21 years to carry travelers, horses, cattle, carriages and goods across the river. He was a busy guy—naval surgeon, prisoner of war, physician, cofounder of the Med. Soc. Of De., ferry owner ...

Ferry House, McCallmont House



Ferry House

McCallmont House

# Wharves

- Small ones existed from colonial days
- Harmony St. always had public wharves. In 1817 the Trustees made the "Free Wharf" 54 ft wide, 310 ft long
- There was no Delaware St. Wharf until 1832 for the NC&FT RR. In 1837 Elihu Jefferson extended it 600 ft. into the river. It was locally known as "Old Major Wharf" or "Cape May Wharf" for the steamboats that docked there.
- A wharf was off Packet Alley since before 1790 to service the packet boats from PHL and stage coach companies. Later the "Major Reybold" docked there instead of at Delaware Street
- Archibald Alexander and Alexander Harvey had a wharf and business at the end of Alexander Alley
- The 600 ft long "Coal Wharf" or "Long Wharf" was near the flagpole in Battery Park from 1863 (to 1875?)

A view of The Town of New Castle from the River Delaware, --  
Taken the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1797 --by Ives Le Blanc



# Packet Boats

Small boats for regularly scheduled mail, passenger and freight service on rivers, canals and transatlantic. Varied in size from narrow (canal) to clipper ships for transatlantic travel.



Edward Moran 1857, "New Castle on the Delaware", Butler Inst. Of American Art

# Roads

“Early roads replaced Indian trails. Trees were cut down and some stumps were removed, but there was no grading, no drainage, or use of anything but natural earth. They were maintained or not by the local communities. Travel was difficult or impossible after heavy rains or snows.”

Holmes, 1960

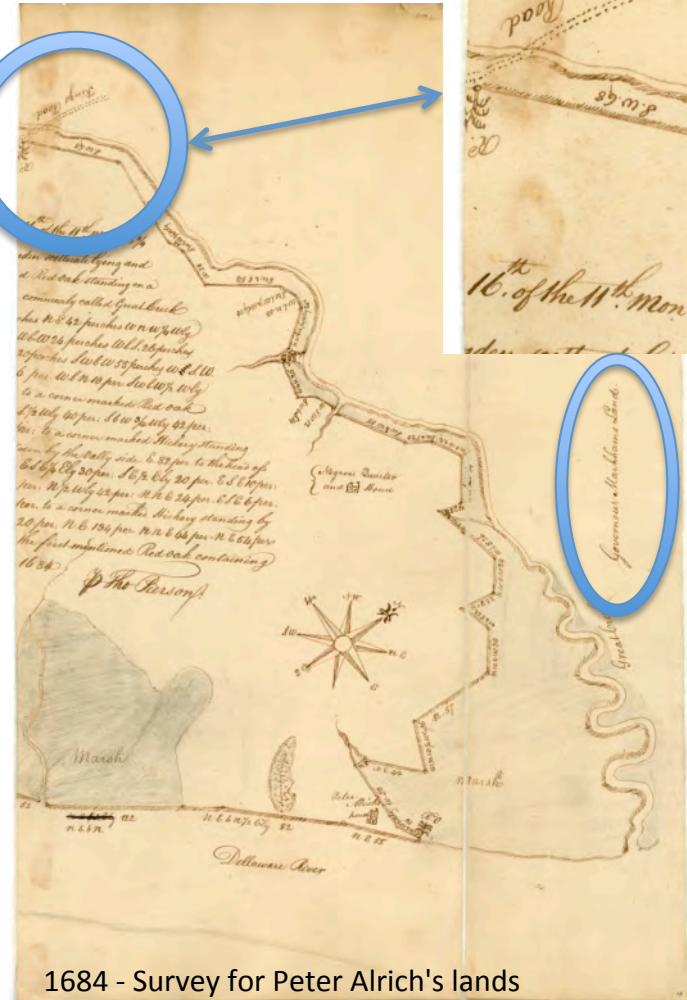
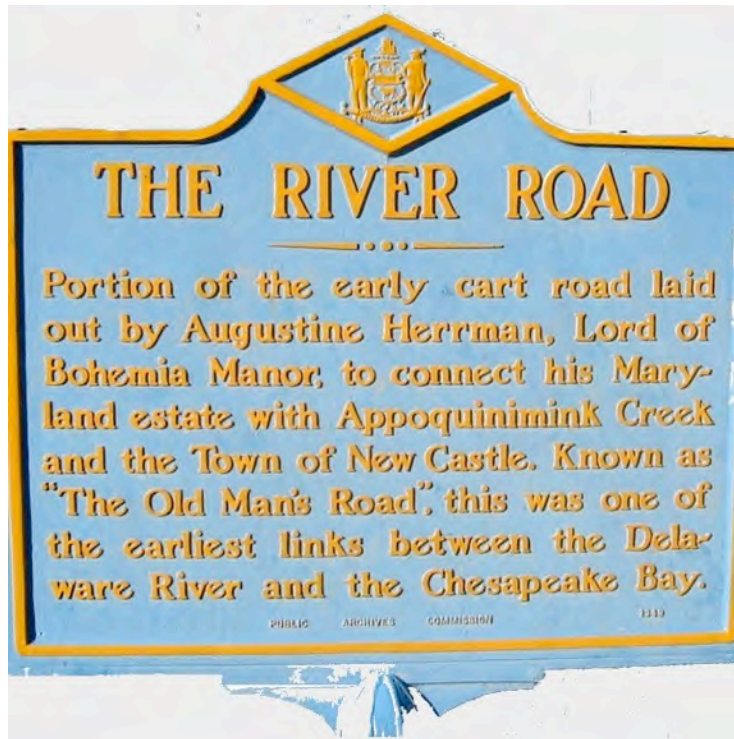
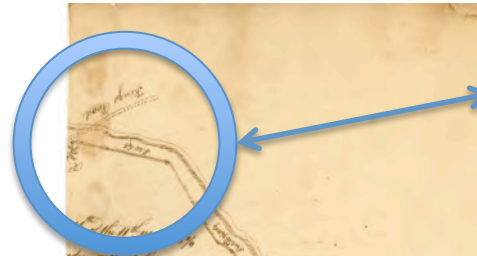
“Road-Making is a branch of engineering which has been very little cultivated in America, and it was not until the introduction of railways that Americans entertained the ideas of transporting heavy goods by canals and slackwater navigation.”

Sketch of the Civil Engineering of North America, David Stevenson, London, 1838

# Roads before 1700

- < 1664 Dutch Period: dikes, trails along water and into woods
- 1675 Broad dyke was built to facilitate building wagon or cart roads (Dike Uprising)
- 1679 Danckaerts' journal reports many "broad cart roads" and many blazed trails (all confusing)

King's Road south of New Castle, modern Rte 9 near Grantham Lane

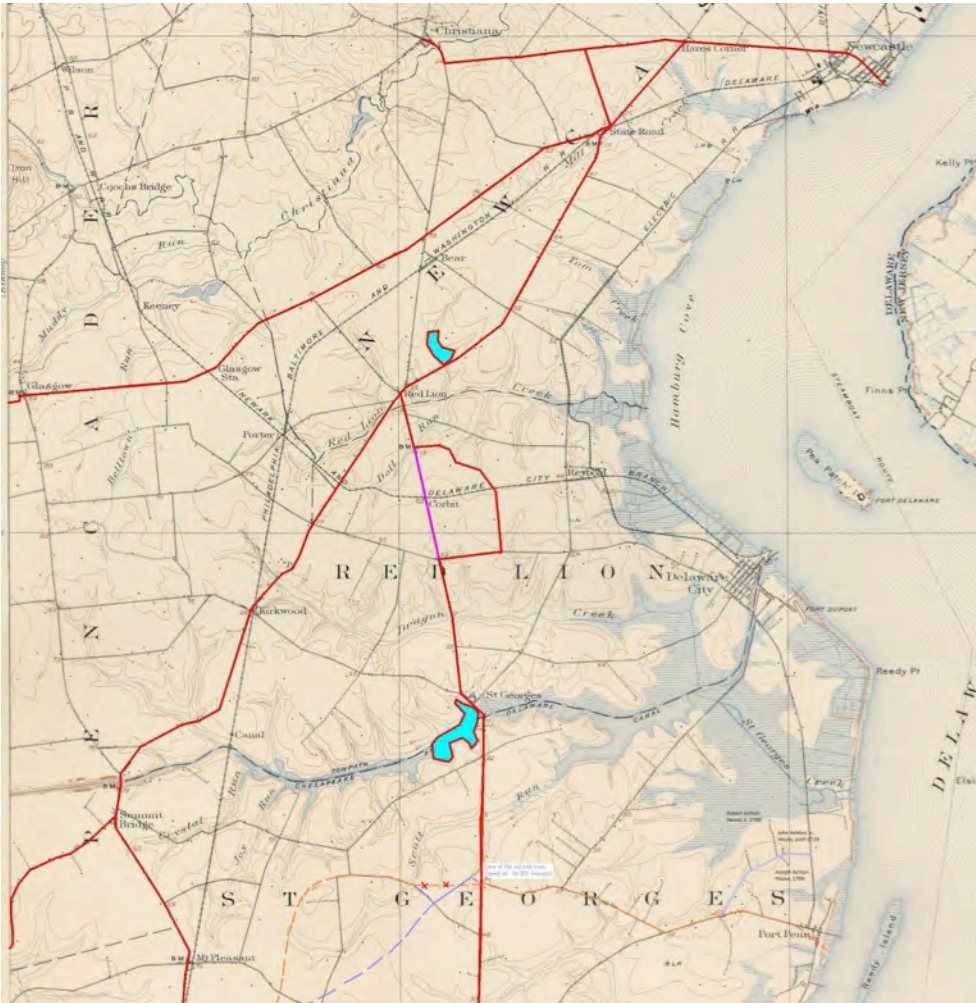


1684 - Survey for Peter Alrich's lands  
DPA 22555-00

# 18<sup>th</sup> Century Roads in Delaware

Based on the 1737 Eastburn Map, overlaid on 1904 topographic map.

Overlay by Alice Guerrant, DE DHCA

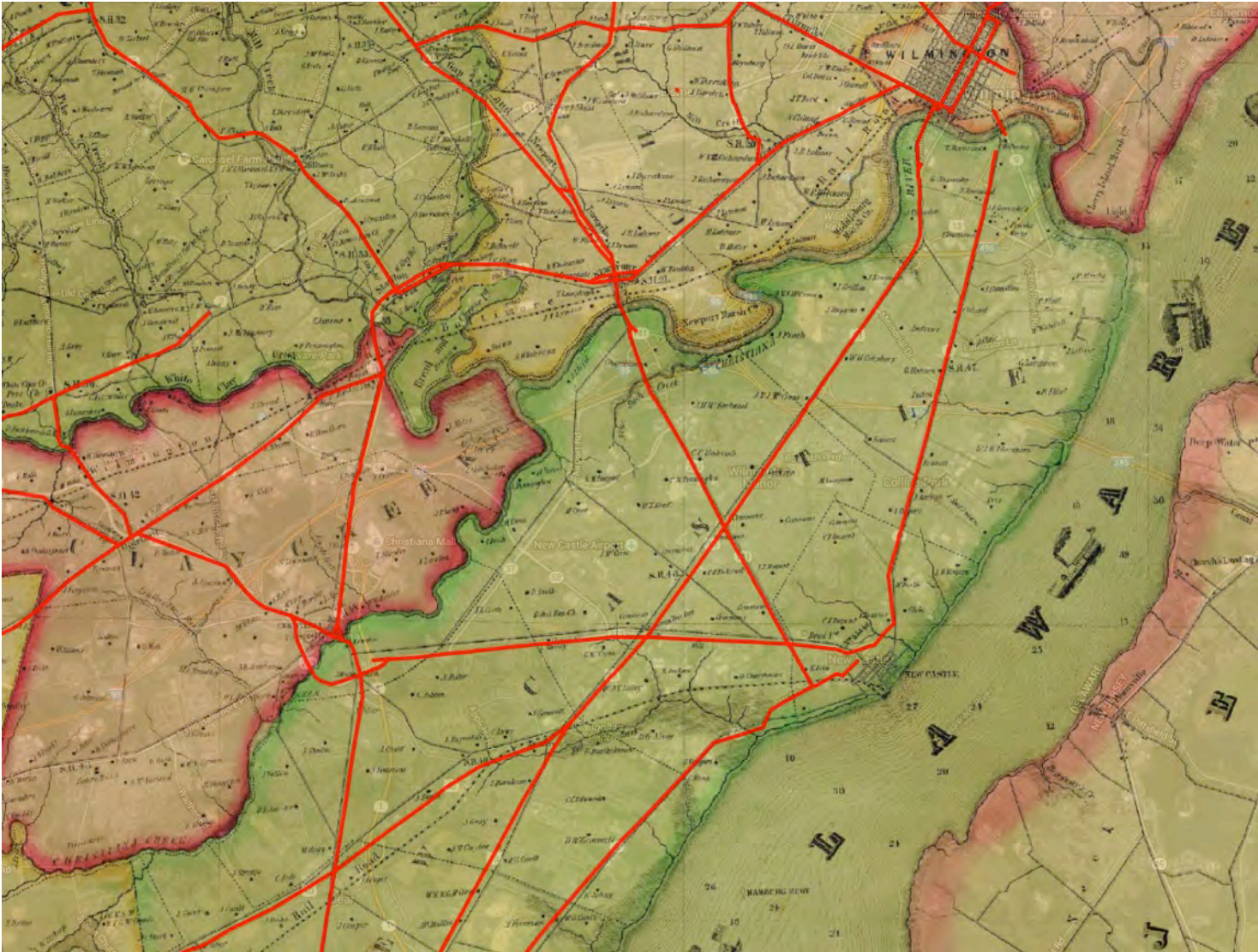


Roads existed from New Castle via Hare's Corner to Christiana, Elkton/Frenchtown, southern Delaware.

No road is shown along the river in 1737, but the Kings Road (one of the Kings Roads?) is known to have existed.



Roads built by 1849 pretty much define the location of modern major roads (in red). Local changes in alignment are relatively minor.





# Stagecoaches

1775 Joseph Tatlow started stages between New Castle and Fenchtown.



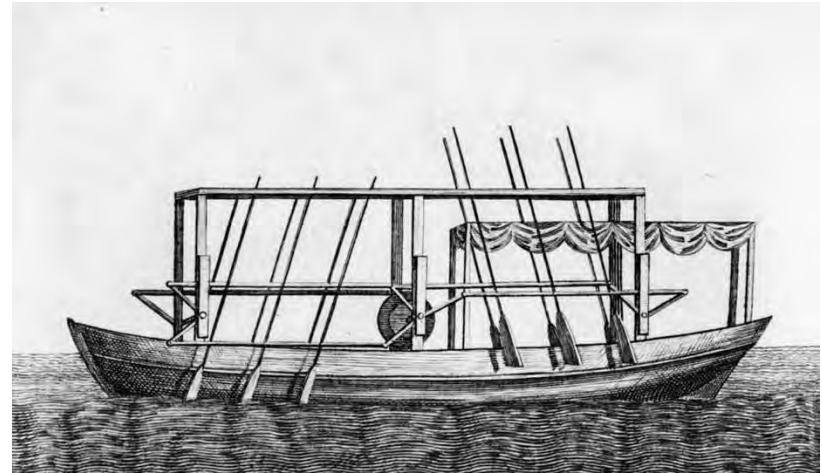
This 1895 Robert Shaw painting of a c1825 scene may be derived from a similar panel picture in the steamboat “New Castle” [now lost]. Both show a steamboat, anchored packet boat and stagecoach drivers watering their horses and soaking the wheels to swell them.

Stages ran up through the toll both at Delaware & 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup>, through Hares Corner, Bear, Aikentown (Glasgow) to Fenchtown MD.

The stages were owned by the owners of the companies that ran steam ships or packet boats from PHL to Packet Alley and Fenchtown to Baltimore

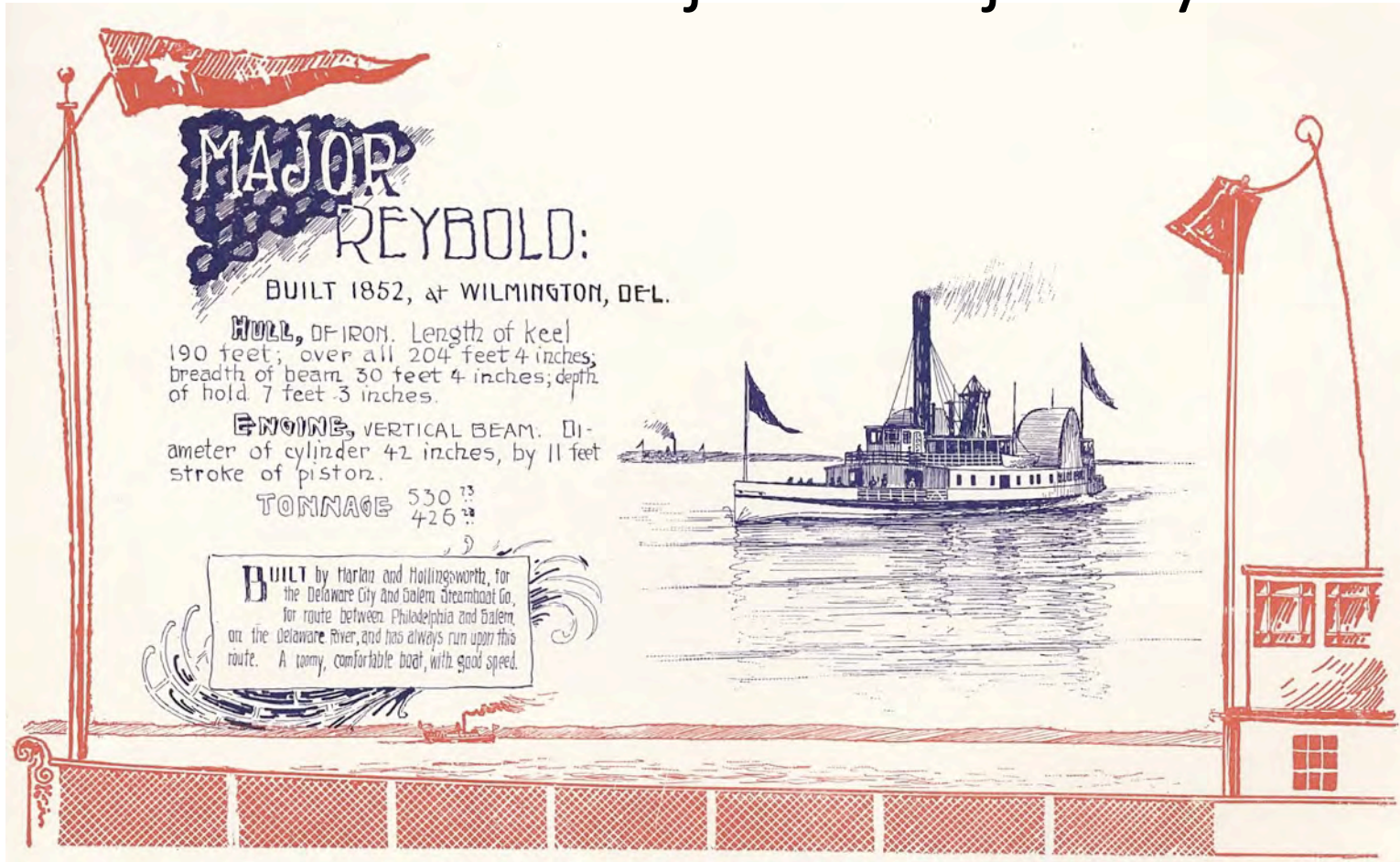
The toll road (NC & FT Turnpike Co.) was slow, difficult to maintain and subject to evasion.

# Steamboats



- 1787 John Fitch made first successful steamboat in PHL, witnessed by Constitutional Convention. Ran trips PHL – Burlington; Patented
- 1807 Robert Fulton built Clermont, ran NYC to Albany
- 1816 E. I. du Pont meets, mentions meeting, taking or sending stuff via steamboat 10 times in his correspondence
- 1830 “Robert Morris” started 40 years of travel PHL->New Castle
- 1844 Ericsson Line steamboats went via canal PHL -> Baltimore

# “The Major” – Major Reybold



Ran from PHL to Salem and New Castle. Originally owned by the Delaware City & Salem Steamboat Co. Wm, Reybold head. Ran until 1906 Shipped peaches from his farm in Delaware City, people welcome then and the rest of the year



The sister ship Thomas Clyde, sailed 1878-1929 also went from PHL to NC and Bombay Hook where the owner had farms a picnic grounds or to Augustine Beach or Riverview Beach (NJ) for pleasure cruises for clubs and Sunday School groups.



Wilmon Whildin  
artist John Neagle, c1823

**Captain Whildin** was one of the most successful steamboat captains on the Delaware.

His ship *Delaware* went between PHL and Cape May, between 1821 and 1827, stopping at New Castle . The all day trip cost \$5.

He opened Cape May Point in 1829 and opened a hotel there, with connection by the steamboat “Emerald”

His ship *W. Whildin* was the first iron steamboat on the river in 1841. It ran between Baltimore and PHL on the canal.



New Castle Historical Society

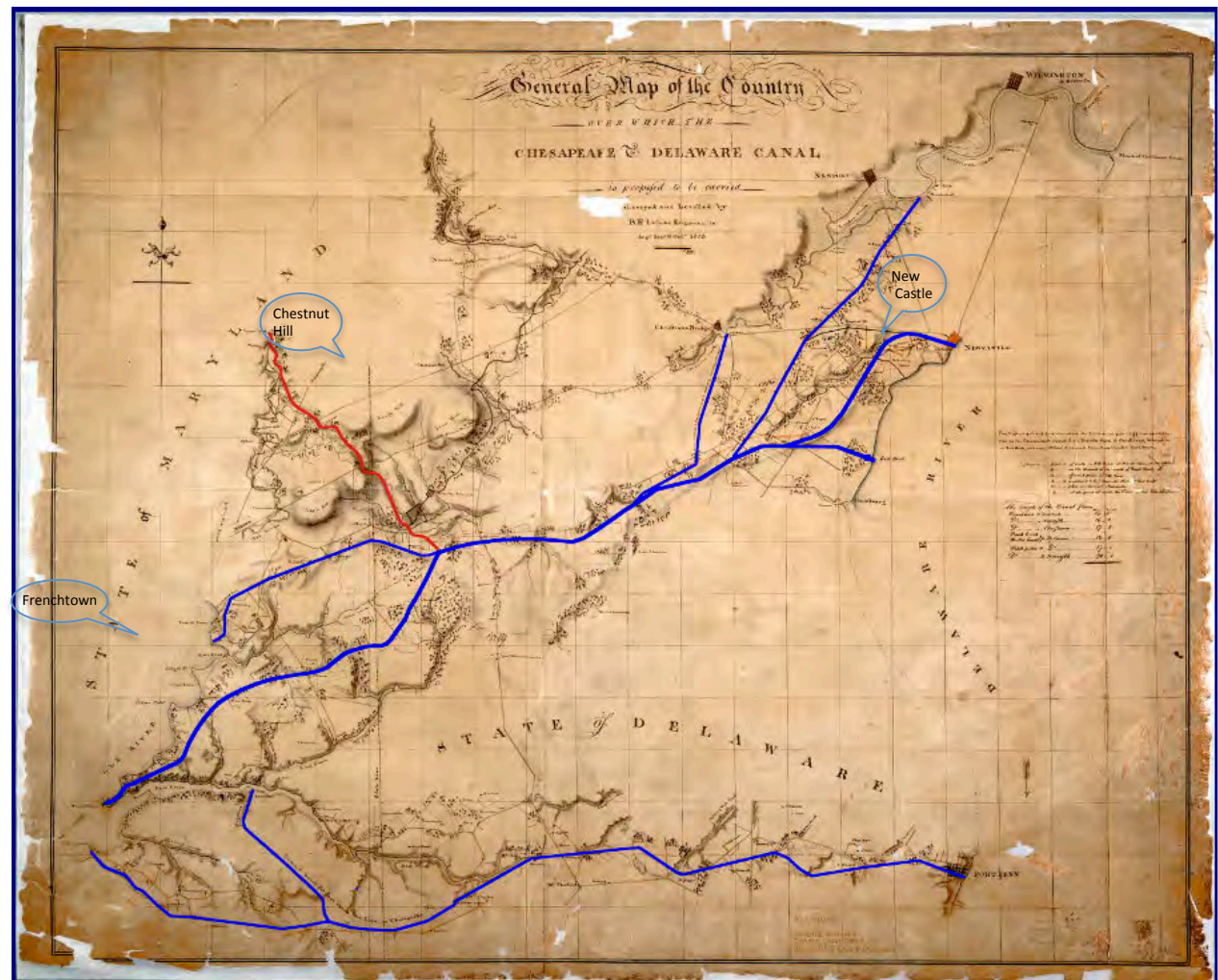
The Queen Anne, c. 1930

## C & D Canal (1803-5)

Canal Company mainly from PHL, also MD and Delaware. Route with 14 locks but minimal digging proposed by Latrobe. Started 1803, ran out of money 1805.

No federal support.

Possible termini included Frenchtown and Battery Park 😊



General Map of the Country  
-- over which the --  
**CHESAPEAKE & DELAWARE CANAL**  
---is proposed to be carried---  
Surveyed and Levelled by  
B. H Latrobe Engineer, in  
in Aug<sup>t</sup>. Sep<sup>r</sup> & Oct<sup>r</sup>. 1803

Proposed routes including from Welch Neck/Back Creek or Frenchtown, MD to Port Penn, Christiana, New Castle or Christiana, and the feeder (shown in red) from Elk Forge to near Aikentown (Glasgow). The feeder was nearly completed in 1805 when the company closed due to lack of funds. The proposed feeder from White Clay Creek starting at Newark was never started.



# C & D Canal – a slow but efficient competitor for the New Castle & Frenchtown Turnpike & RR Traffic

Canal begun in 1824, finished 1829.

Back Creek MD to Delaware City DE

Investors: PA \$100k, MD \$50k, DE \$25k, US \$450k

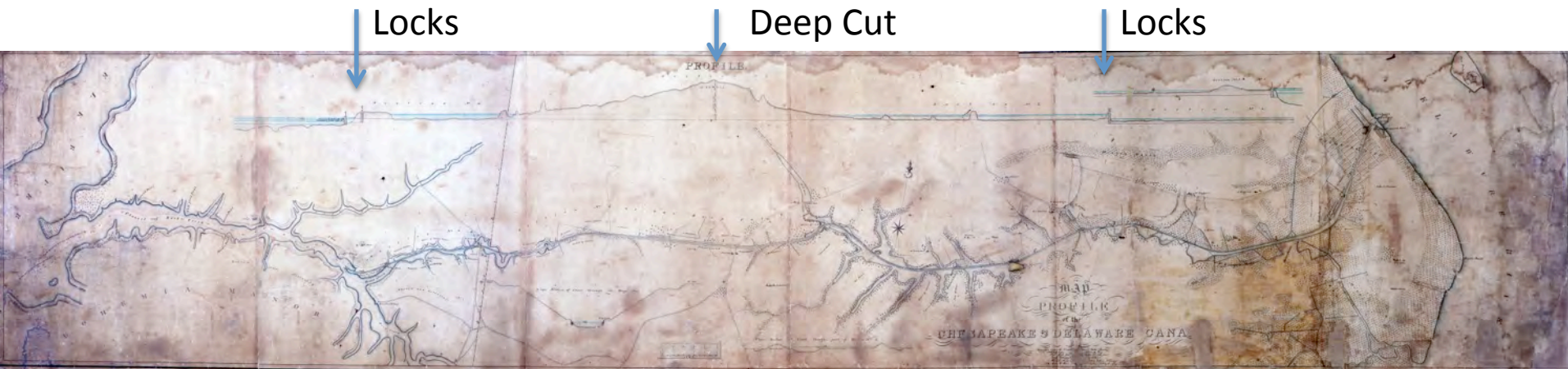
Barges pulled by mules and horses (slow but efficient)

Width: 36 ft originally (450 ft currently)

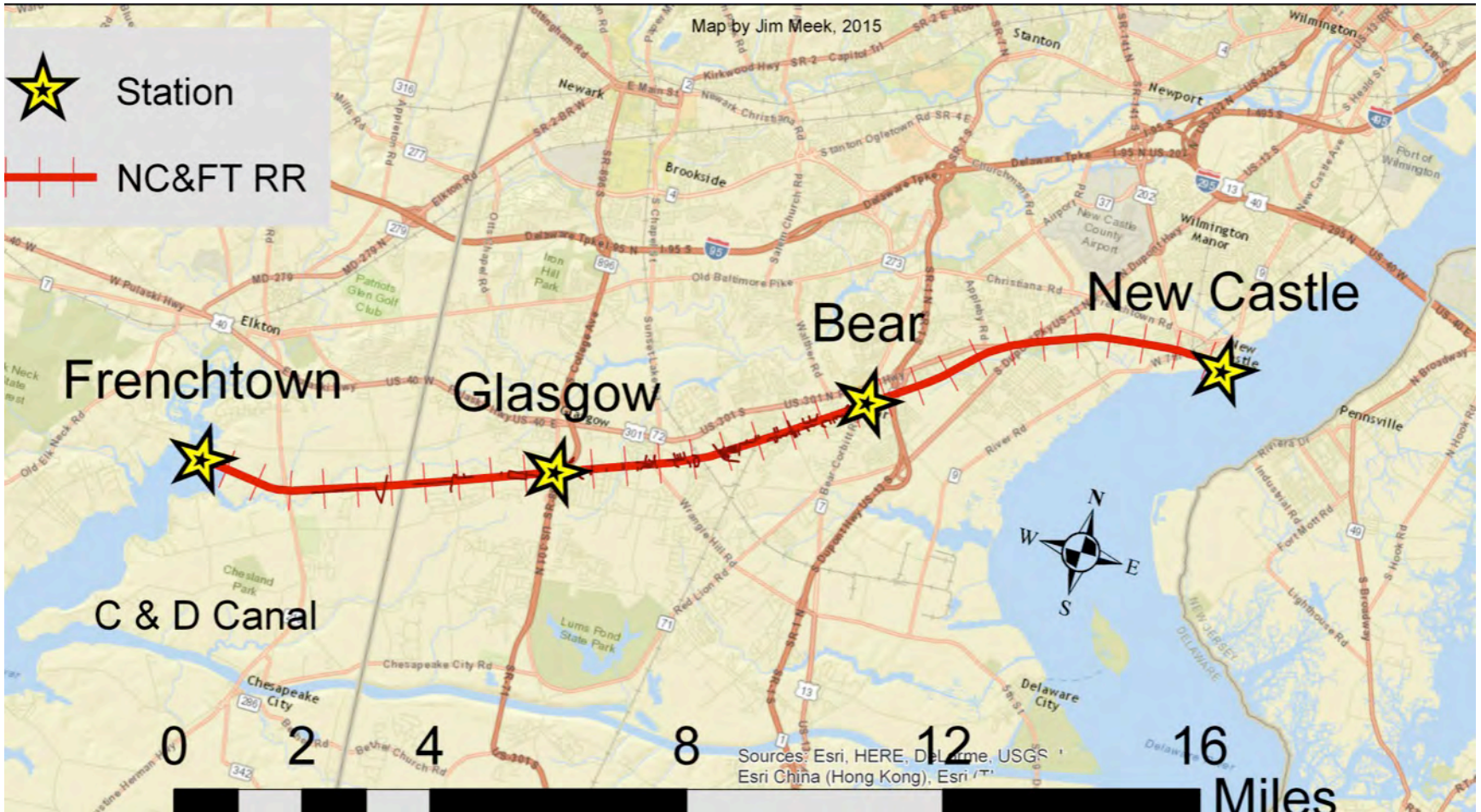
Water supplied from Lums Pond

Required a “Deep Cut” at Summit Bridge (90 ft above bottom).

Four locks vs 14 in Latrobe’s 1803 plan (slow compared to the NC & FT RR)



# New Castle & Frenchtown RR



# The NC& FT RR was NOT the first RR by 5 years!

Railroad	State	Year	Miles
Quincy quarries to Neponset River	MA	1827	4
Mauch Chunk to coal mines	PA	1828	5
Mount Carbon	PA	1830	7.5
Schuylkill Valley (Port Carbon to Tuscarora)	PA	1830	30
Little Schuylkill (Port Clinton to Tamaqua)	PA	1831	23
Pontchartrain	LA	1831	5
<b>New Castle &amp; Frenchtown</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>1832</b>	<b>16</b>
Camden and Amboy	NJ	1832	61
Mohawk & Hudson	NY	1832	16
Saratoga & Schenectady	NY	1832	22
Westchester to Columbia	PA	1832	9
Rochester to Carthage	NY	1833	2
Philadelphia & Trenton	PA	1833	9

[in 1838] Within a very few years, a wonderful change has been effected in land communication throughout Great Britain and America where railways have been more extensively and successfully introduced than in any other parts of the world...The first, the Quincy RR, was intended to convey stone from the quarries to a shipping port.

Sketch of the Civil Engineering of North America, David Stevenson, London, 1838

# The number of railroads exploded

By the end of 1832, the year the NC & FT RR was completed, there were about 10 railways.

“...in 1837 there were no fewer than 57 railways in operation.. And 33 railways were then in progress and 150 more railway companies had been incorporated....”

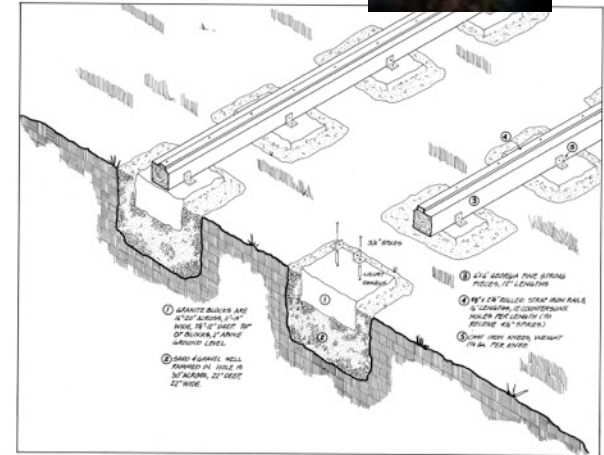
(Stevenson, 1838)

# The Stone “Sleepers” of New Castle



“The early American railroads consisted of iron rails and chairs resting on stone blocks and were constructed on the same principles as those in [England]. But American engineers soon discovered that this construction of road was not at all capable of withstanding the rigours of an American winter. The intense frost...was found to ..materially alter their positions... and the rails had to be relaid at the close of ever winter.”

(Stevenson, 1838)



HAER – Historic American Engineering Record, 1976

In New Castle, the sleepers were understood to be undesirable already in 1833, and a new track of “T” rails on wooden cross ties installed in 1835.

# Industrial Espionage/Skulduggery

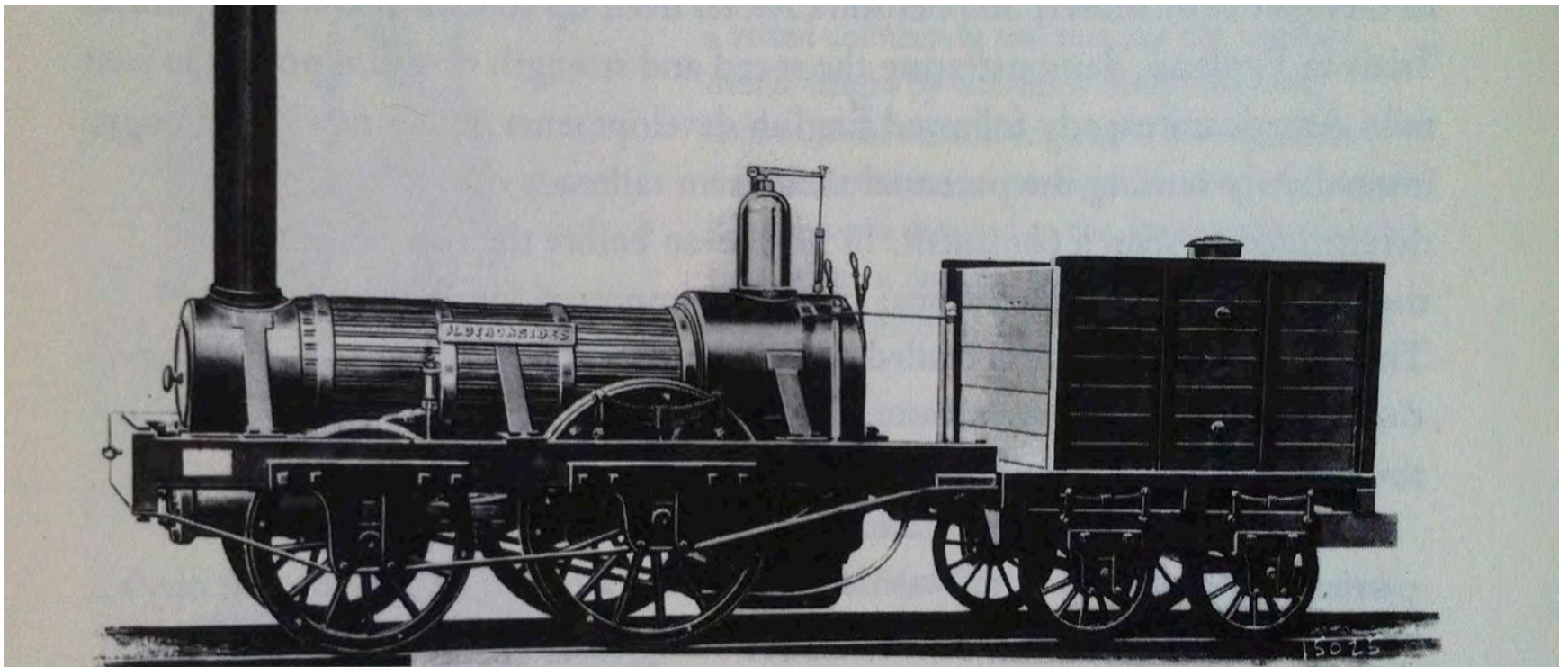


Baldwin's Lodge Alley shop was not much to look at, but it provided the space he needed to finish his first locomotive. In the heart of the old city, the shop was one of many small metalworking establishments in the neighborhood. Baldwin shared ideas, techniques, and workers with this network of fellow mechanics—all working as industrial revolutionaries.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

NC&FT RR hired Matthias Baldwin to assemble the English Stevenson engine. He sent a worker who, after erecting a tent on the Battery to hide his activities, took 2 months to assemble the engine. A second engine with another assembler took 1 week.

# Baldwin's copy of the "Delaware"



Matthias Baldwin's first locomotive, *Old Ironsides*, closely followed an English "Planet"-class design by Robert Stephenson and Company, which was imported to America by the Newcastle and Frenchtown Railroad in 1831. Baldwin helped assemble that import, the *Delaware*,

# Opening of New Castle & Frenchtown Railroad (September 10, 1832 )



Hugh Ryan, 1985



# A Short Lived Success

- The railroad was successful. In 1833 the builders (from NC & PHL) imagined extending it to Boston, or even South America!
- Travel was rapid (about an hour) and comfortable.
- ??Passengers a day
- The owners had not conceived how rapidly railways would expand and eliminate the need for steamboat connections provided by New Castle.
- By 1839 the Philadelphia Wilmington & Baltimore RR completely bypassed the NC&FT route, and eventually absorbed it.

# Great (and Brief) New Castle Ferry War

- Sept. 1925 The White Line/Pioneer Line had a grand opening of a terminal at the end of Delaware St.
- June 1926 Wilson Line started operating from Chestnut St. hourly 6 a.m. to midnight
- 1927 The two lines merged and became VERY popular until 1954 when the bridge opened.



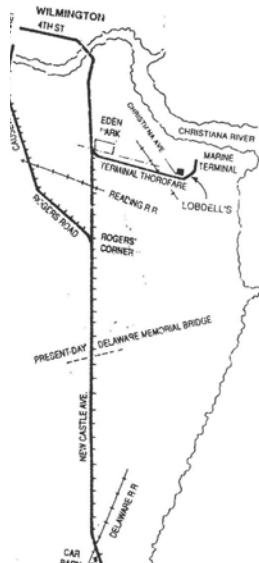
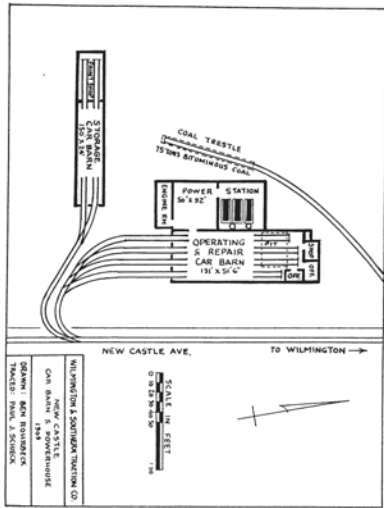
# Trolleys

Started c. 1896

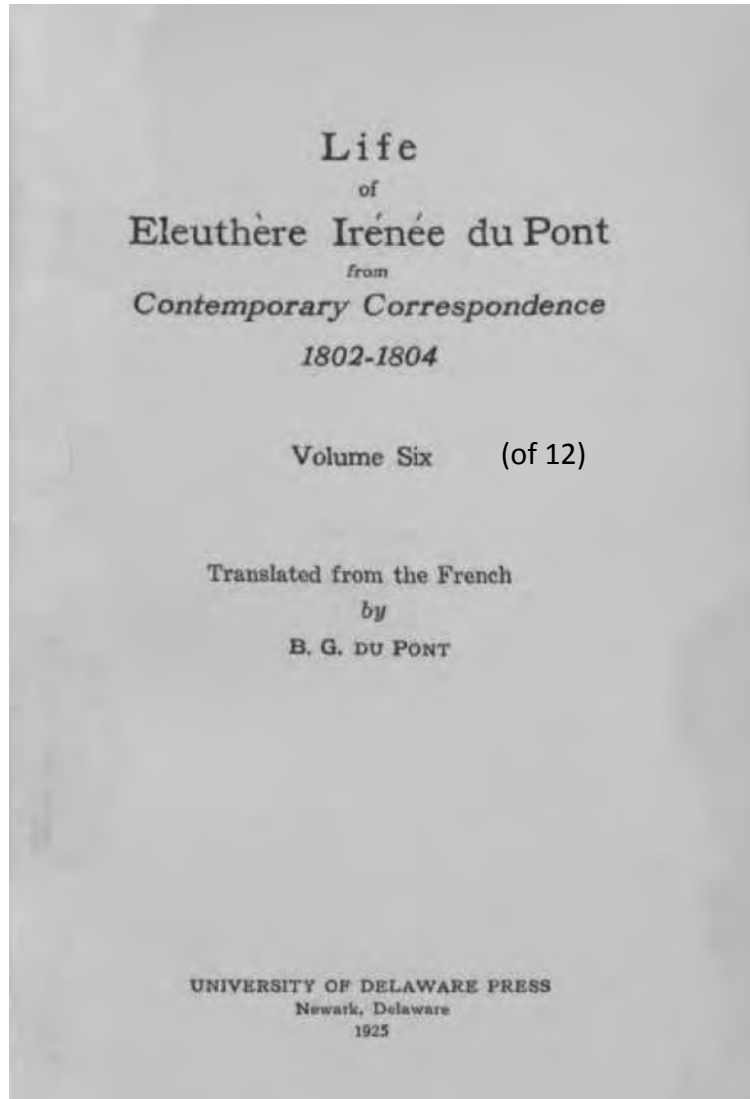
From Wilmington to New Castle

to 2<sup>nd</sup> St. up Delaware St.

left town on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> to Dobbinsville & Delaware city



# Transportation and Everyday Life for E. I. du Pont (1802-1818)



## *Boats leave directly from New Castle to France*

E. I. du Pont to Du Pont de Nemours.  
Mill near Wilmington, August 15, 1802

The departure of M. de Marbois, who sails from New Castle, gives me an opportunity at last of writing to you, dear Papa; until now I have always had the bad luck not to know of ships for France until too late, but I hope for the future to have better arrangements in Philadelphia and to be informed of the sailings.

## *Another letter home*

E. I. du Pont to Du Pont de Nemours.  
July 16, 1803.

### *New Castle is still the seat of government*

Peter Bauduy to E. I. du Pont.  
Wilmington, August 20, 1802.

No news from Victor—for either you or Me. Do not forget to come and breakfast with me tomorrow so that we can go to New Castle. I have made an engagement with Rodney to **arrange about your naturalization;** and I shall expect you.

I have just received your letter of May 13, my very dear Papa, and hearing at the same time that a ship for Bordeaux is today at New Castle I am seizing the opportunity to answer you. The news of the cession of Louisiana was published here about ten days ago. It had a great effect on public opinion and gave Jefferson the position that his talents and his patriotism deserve. No one expected this result of the negotiation and much admiration is felt for the President's sagacity in making so important an acquisition. The Federals are ashamed of their blustering of last year and are obliged to admit that Jefferson's methods are better, safer and cheaper than would have been a war with France and Spain, and a forcible invasion of the country by Kentucky Riflemen.

*Du Pont to ship 60 kegs of  
gunpowder to New Castle!*

Duplanty to E. I. duPont.  
Philadelphia, September 2, 1808.

My dear Mr. Irenee,  
I wrote you two letters yesterday ... As I told  
you, I have seen Price and another man, **[he]**  
**agrees to go to New Castle to receive about**  
**60 kegs**....tomorrow night I shall be more sure  
of the day and will write to you again in order  
that **you may have the shipment at New**  
**Castle** at the right time. I hope that tomorrow  
I may have your answer to my letter of  
yesterday telling me exactly what quantity  
and qualities you can let me have. You know  
as well as I what is best—TP Cannon Fr; Fz; P.  
A. & W. in a smaller quantity.

*New Castle the last stop  
before France*

E. I. du Pont to Du Pont de Nemours.  
Brandywine, Eleutherian Mills,  
October 1, 1808.

My dear Papa, I sent Mr. Michaux a  
letter and a drawing for you while he  
was in Philadelphia, but **he has come**  
**to dine with us on his way to New**  
**Castle where he is to join the ship**...

*Travel by red-eye is not new  
Customs in New Castle a problem*

E.I du Pont to P. Bauduy, 1808

However, all that I have written is the result of stupidity caused by the longing for sleep after my ride on the mail stage; for you have, of course, answered the letter Already. McCall will have written to you that it is too late for the 200 kegs of cannon and musket powder; so please tell Dalmas not to grain any more for cannon. As for what is already done, we can send it to Boston with the P. A. In Philadelphia I spoke to Capt. McCoy of the brig Harmony which sails early in next week; he would be glad to have the powder, but it would have to be delivered to him in the river, for he cannot and will not sail from New Castle because of the Custom House.

*Goodstay  
Packet from  
New Castle to Bordentown*

New York, August 17, 1802.

my duties as furnisher of supplies will end—and I go to Goodstay to hide myself from the clamoring of the fifteen hundred angry blacks and whites who will probably die of hunger if that happens; and then I should not need him. However, if it suits him and you 1 should like to have him; but as he will need his trunk and the stage is expensive, could he not come almost as quickly and more comfortably by the packet boat from New Castle to Boordentown and from there to Amboy? Do as seems best to you about sending him—the necessity is growing doubtful—and about the route, ...V. d.P.

Isaac McKim to E. I. du Pont. In English.  
Baltimore, 31st July, 1802.

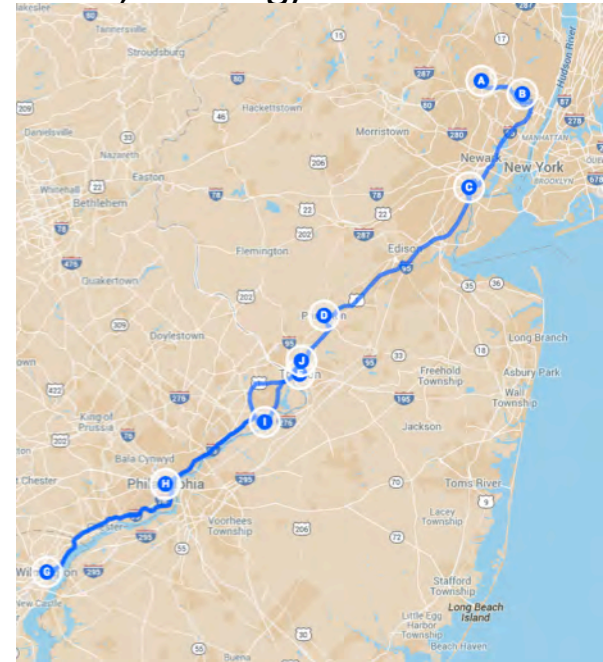
My dear Sir—

I read this morning your esteemed favor of the 28th Inst and I called immediately at the Collector's office, respecting your three Barrels Machinery which arrived in the Maryland Sloop of War from Havre. the Collector being Convinced that every thing was Strictly True respecting their use &c. has been pleased to give orders that they be delivered up to me, whenever I may call for them, free of duty, there has been some small charge attending the Landing of them, as also the Storage, which I shall pay, and render you an account thereof—it now remains with you to give the necessary instructions respecting their being forwarded to you, and I believe the best way will be to send them by the way of the french town and Newcastle Stage Boats, so that you will have to Send from Wilmington to New Castle for them, if they are forwarded by this route.—I can give directions for them to be left at the Storehouse in Newcastle until you send for them. Be Pleased to inform me if I shall forward them to you by the french Town & Newcastle Stage Boats—or any other way that you may think best, believe me to be with great Regard  
Sir, your most obt. Servt. Isaac McKim.



# Travel Expense Report of E. I. du Pont.

Date	Description	D	sh,p	(Pounds, shilling)
1802	To Little Fall	D	sh,p	(Pounds, shilling)
March 25	At Aquakimunk		5	
	<b>Lodging</b> —Little Fail	1	7	
26	<b>Breakfast</b> at Patterson	l	2	a
	<b>Bridge</b> at Hackensack		4	b
	<b>Tolls</b>		3	
April 11	<b>Boat</b> to Elisabethtown	1		c
	<b>Carriage</b>		4	
	Supper—Elisabethtown		6	
	Carriage to Princetown	4		d
12	<b>Stage</b> – Princetown	2	4	e
	Breakfast—Trenton		4	
	At Philadelphia, porter for trunk		2	f
16	Inn at Philadelphia	6	6	
	To Wilmington – tolls		2,4	g
19	<b>Gig</b> , 4 days	10		
22	Inn at Wilmington	13	6	
	Stage to Philadelphia	1	6	
...				
29	Francis Hotel at Philadelphia	1	6	
	Mail Stage	8		
	Dinner at Bristol		6	
	Supper at Brunswick		4	
	Gig to Bergen			
....				

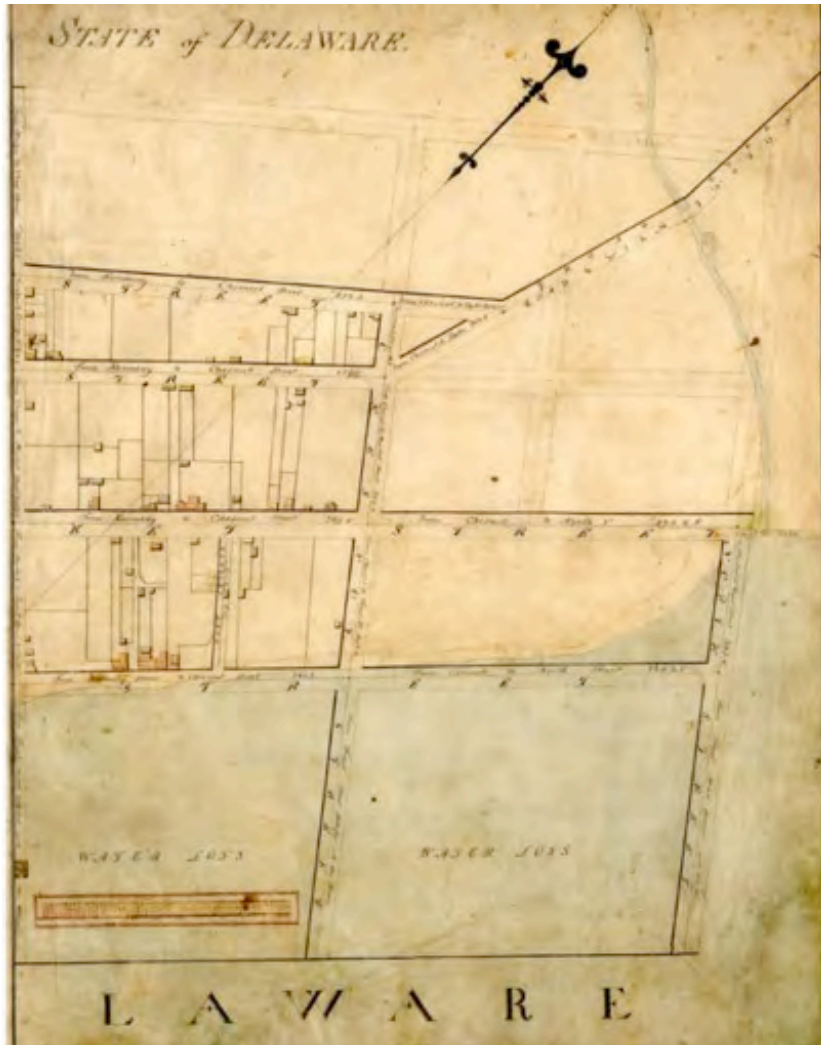


how? Toll road  
two wheel carriage  
not yet home?  
not packet boat?

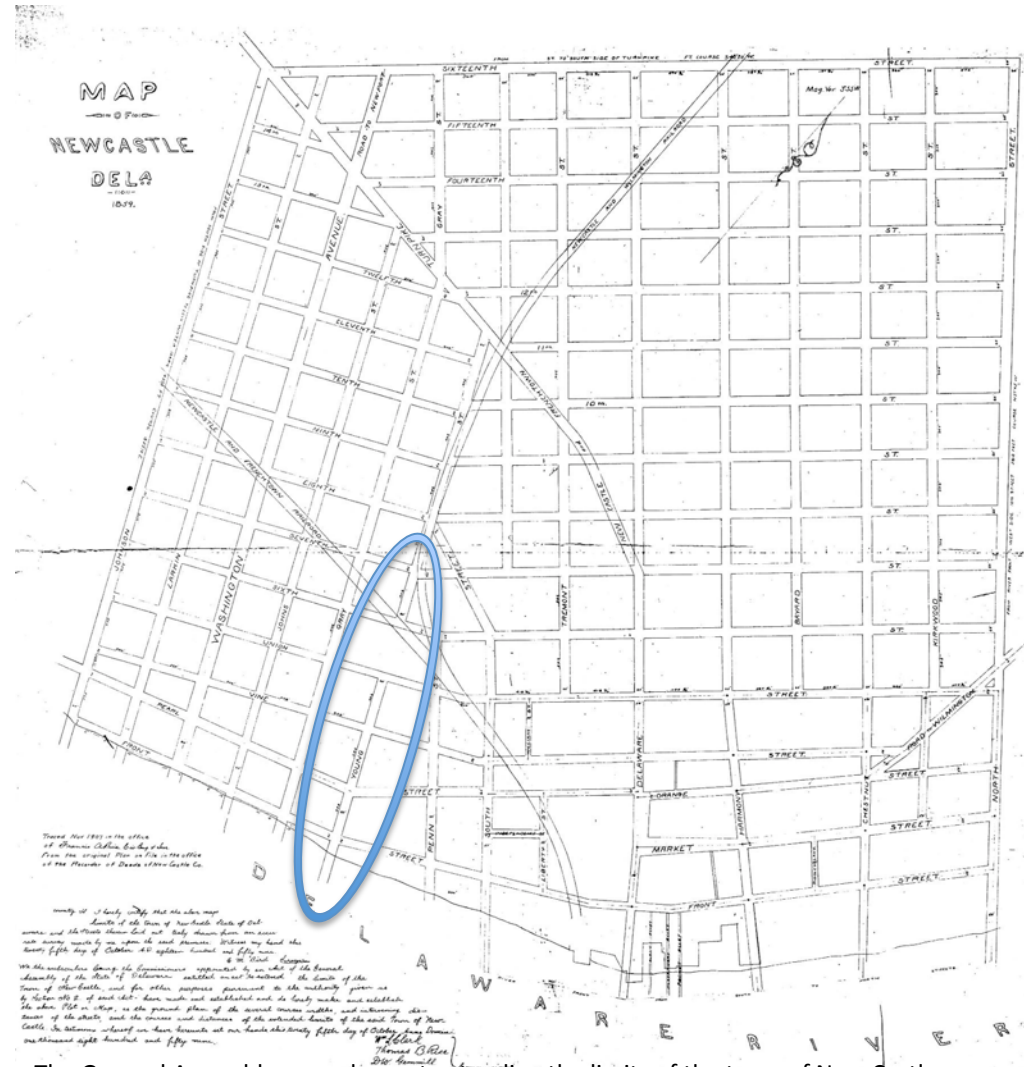
expensive!!

# Streets and Paper Streets

When is a street a street?



Latrobe 1804



The General Assembly passed an act extending the limits of the town of New Castle. 11 Del. L. Ch. DCXXIII (1859).

# Dotted Line Streets



November 15, 1991

BROSIUS-ELIASON CO., A DELAWARE CORPORATION, PLAINTIFF,

v.

JOHN A. DIMONDI AND THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF NEW CASTLE, DEFENDANTS

COURT OF CHANCERY OF DELAWARE, NEW CASTLE, Berger, Vice Chancellor.

“In 1875, New Castle was incorporated as a city pursuant to 15 Del. L. Ch. 152 (1875) (the "City Charter"). Pursuant to Section 25 of the City Charter, **new streets could only be opened upon written application by twenty resident freeholders and the Concurring vote of the City Council.**

“The City ... has no knowledge of any ordinance or resolution by which the disputed portion of Young Street was opened, of any condemnation proceeding relating to the disputed property; it has no records of any payment being made to a landowner with respect to the disputed property; and it has found no evidence that the City ever maintained the disputed property as a public street.

“There is some evidence that Young Street once existed over the disputed property. Jefferson M. Moak ("Moak"), an archivist for the City Archives of Philadelphia and former librarian who has studied the history of Philadelphia map making, testified as an expert on DiMondi's behalf. Moak examined three maps ... and the George William Baist Atlas of New Castle County dated 1893. According to Moak, each of those maps shows Young Street as an open street between Sixth and Seventh Streets. **Moak reached that Conclusion because the relevant portion of Young Street is drawn with solid lines rather than dotted lines.**”

[http://de.findacase.com/research/wfrmDocViewer.aspx/xq/fac.19911115\\_0005.DE.htm/qx](http://de.findacase.com/research/wfrmDocViewer.aspx/xq/fac.19911115_0005.DE.htm/qx)

A public street may be created by statutory dedication and acceptance, common law dedication through adverse use, or the recordation of a subdivision showing streets, the conveyance of lots by reference to the subdivision plan and public use.

Here there is only some circumstantial evidence that the disputed property may have been used as a public street at some time between 1859 and approximately 1935. This evidence is insufficient to establish public use of the disputed property as a street.

Moreover, even if there once was a street, the evidence clearly establishes that it has been abandoned.

A public road acquired by use, as opposed to dedication, may be abandoned where there is non-use for at least 20 years.

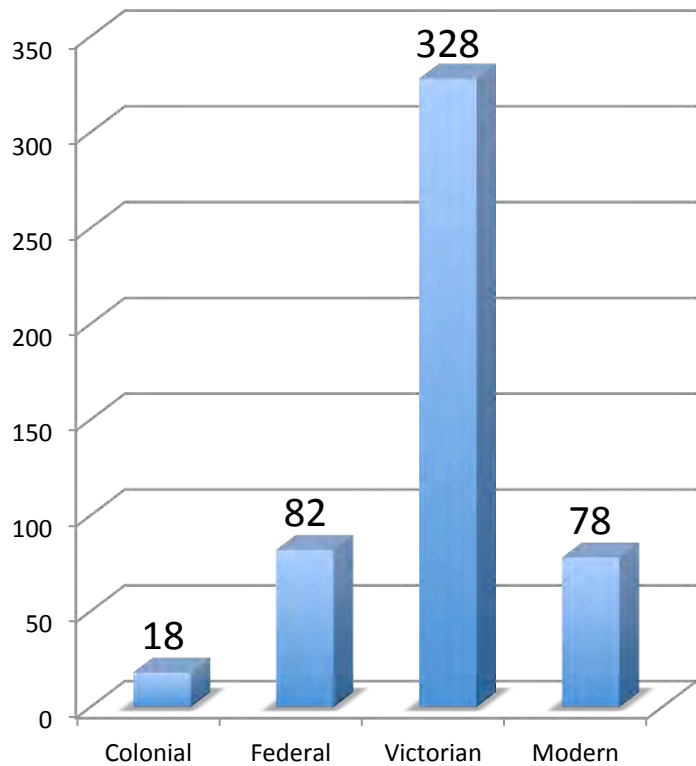
There has been no showing of public use of the disputed property.  
DiMondi, likewise, failed to establish a public easement by implication.

Berger, Vice Chancellor.



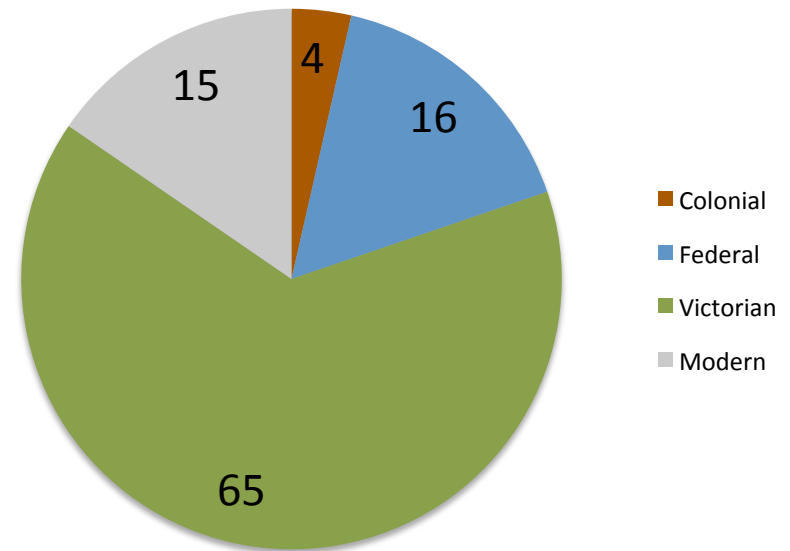
# Is New Castle a Colonial or Historic Town?

Distribution of the 506 buildings in the 1984 Historic District Nomination



Count

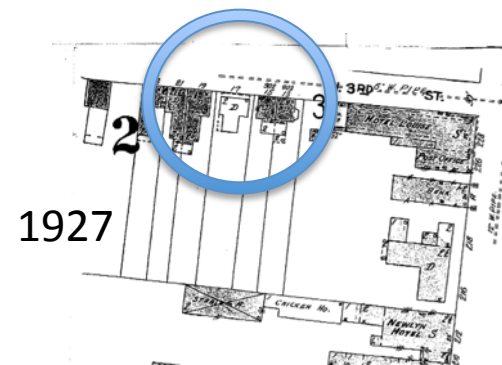
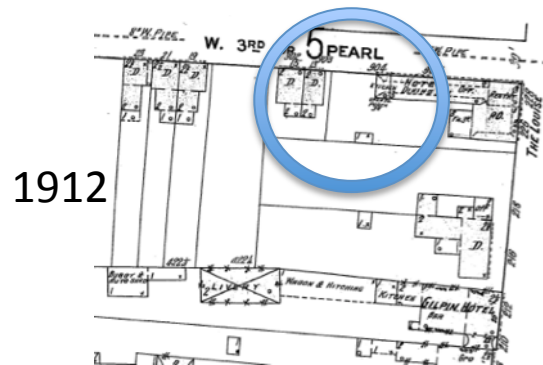
Colonial	1600-1780
Federal	1780-1830
Victorian	1830-1900
Modern	1900-1984



Percentage

# How old is MY (or THAT) house?

- 1) Easy: Look at it for 5 seconds
- 2) Easy: Check maps (available 1803-1925)



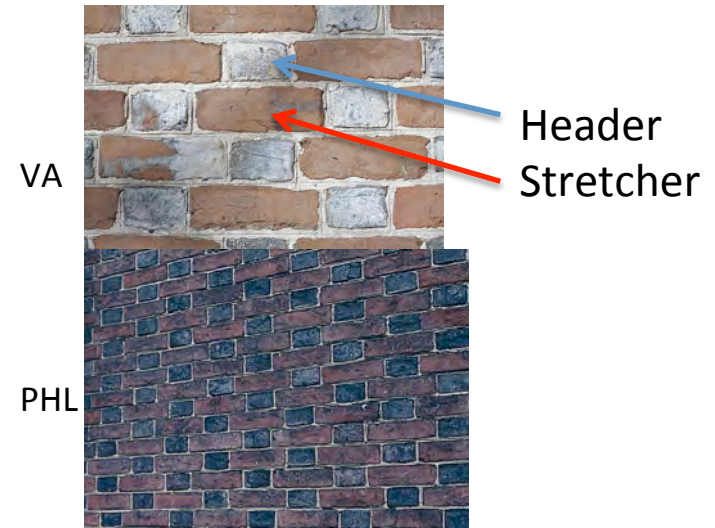
- 3) Easy: Using owner's name from maps, check if they are mentioned in <http://nc-chap.org> (e.g. Eckman's deed and title searches).
- 4) Harder: do a chain of titles.



## Flemish bond:

alternating header and stretcher in each row.  
Used in Georgian and Federal periods in façade.  
In early Georgian, the headers were often glazed.

The glaze color is from the smoke used to fire them, and varies with wood used: in Va, oak gives blue gray; in Phil., other wood gives black color.



## English bond:

Rows of all headers alternate with rows of all stretchers. Common in water tables, and sides and back of early Georgian (and one colonial revival) buildings.



## Running bond :

All stretchers. Used from Greek Revival on.

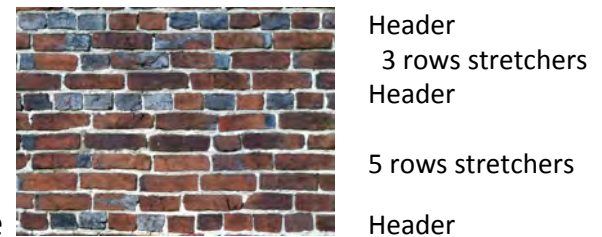
9 The Strand



## Common bond:

Rows of all headers are separated by 3-12 rows of all stretchers. Used on sides and backs; rarely on front façade.

Amstel House



# New Castle, A Walk Through Time

Benson & Hoffecker, 2011

New Castle is an extraordinary town, an early outpost of European explorers and settlers and a colonial capital beautifully situated on one of America's great rivers.

In a compact space it provides an unusual richness of architecture that spans more than three centuries. Sometimes people say that New Castle is so beautiful because it is a town that time forgot, but that isn't exactly true ... the town itself is not a museum, nor is it a place that remains frozen in an earlier era.

New Castle has changed over time, so you cannot literally step back into its past. There is much you can no longer see, or smell, or hear. ...

But with the conjuring trick of your mind's eye, you can perhaps imagine those earlier times as you read about New Castle's history and architecture, and walk through its streets ...

Today its residents live twenty-first century lives while continuing a now 350-year-old tradition of building, preserving, adapting, even removing and altering their world.

....[it was] the most multicultural town in all of 17th century America.