



background research

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Early History

The projected path of Wilmington Boulevard, Jefferson to King Streets, transects a multifaceted section of Wilmington, Delaware, showing the progression of the city from the residential commercial, through the industrial to the present stage of post industrial economy. This area has the prospect of being the subject of a true urban study, with the seminal works of Benjamin Ferris (1846), Elizabeth Montgomery (1873), and Thomas Scharf (1888) and his "staff of able assistants", providing a canvas upon which the color of the town can be painted .

The original settlement of Wilmington dates from 1638, when two small ships from Sweden landed, heralding the entry of Delaware into the lottery of European Colonial expansion. Christianaham, the settlement/fortress, erected by these settlers, took as its center the building which was most important to the loyal proponents of a state-sanctioned religion, the Lutheran Church. This church, Holy Trinity (now called Old Swedes), the focal point of religious and social life, proved to be an autrificial force which kept the residents from expanding far beyond the sight of the Church's tipped roof. The fact that the residents chose to reside within sight of the settlement did not preclude their wanting rights to land in the outlying regions. Many large grants were applied for, surveyed and approved. These early Swedish grants held none of the entailments which the subsequent English grants carried. Improvements were not required and residence was not a stipulation of ownership. Therefore, many Swedes owned tracts consisting of thousands of acres which were never fully viewed by the owner.

New Sweden was founded upon a few small, isolated settlements by populations dependent on the fur trade with aboriginies and subsistance farming. Government, spiritual, and logistical matters often depended upon the infrequent arrival of ships, bearing three month old news from the mother country. Judicial affairs were settled by proxy, and decisions were made by men having little knowledge of the special problems encountered by a New World colony. The influx of Dutch settlers into the Delaware Valley hastened the end of Swedish colonialism.

The Dutch found the Swedes to be a loose confederation rarely looking toward the tenuous central government of the colony for more than confirmation of land grants and an occasional admonition to a neighbor encroaching upon property. The Dutch, on the other hand, were well versed in the politics of colonial expansion. The Dutch West India Company, which had long tried to gain a foothold in Delaware, had little trouble in forcing the ill prepared Swedes to surrender Fort Christiana. Upon surrender, the Swedes found that they had lost little except face. Swedish land grants were respected and the Swedes were allowed to continue in the practice of their religion.

It was not until the coming of the English that the life-style of the colonists was to change. Dutch settlers proved to be of the same mold as their Swedish bretheren. Settlement in the area of Christianaham continued. The Dutch were more interested in the abundant virgin land around New Castle and points south, areas neglected by the Swedes (Gov. Printz, who knew of Swedish ownership of the entire area of present Delaware, had foregone a pedestrian survey of the area until the time immediately preceeding the Dutch conquest).

The Dutch, while honoring grants given by the Swedish government, distributed land grants with equal ease to their own colonists. And under the same conditions as the Swedes, requiring only survey and recordation.

The English, already entrenched upon the continent by virtue of some of the earliest explorations and settlements, wanted the rich fur trade and lands of the Dutch Delaware Valley settlers. Claims and counter claims, followed by a continental war, aided the encroachment of English settlers. The Dutch were ill-equipped to contest the land claims which the English military imposed upon them. Although the English won militarily, they lost diplomatically through the Treaty of Utrecht, the Delaware Valley. The Dutch had lost control of the situation to the point where they were forced to relinquish control to the English upon demand. English claims on land, harsher than the Dutch had imposed upon the Swedes, were accepted through force rather than mutual agreement. The Dutch were forced to realize that their power was gone.

Although the Dutch-English treaty stated that grants of both sides would be accepted, discrepancies were difficult to resolve. Aboriginal property rights became the focus of many disputes due to the Indian view of land ownership (Aboriginals had no concept of land ownership). Encroachments of the Dutch, Swedes, and English upon each other caused frictions which often led to murder.

The English claim to supremacy was strengthened by the appointment of Governor Keith. The establishment of this strong local government gave the English an advantage over the Dutch and Swedes, in that decisions could be made promptly without "guidance" from the mother country. At this point, the Penin and Calvert families fought with each other over uncertain land boundaries once again to the detriment of the Dutch and Swedish settlers.

The English of the "South-River" quickly learned that Governor Keith was more than self-serving. Using the power of his office, he distributed three quarters of the colonial land to his own retainers. Keith's governorship was cut short when the former land owners sent letters to the court of Charles II, exposing his corruption. The Governor was promptly relieved of this position, and Charles II appointed his brother, James, Duke of York, to the governorship and the claims of the dissatisfied land owners were settled.

A Model for Development

"Spatial changes in urban growth were paralleled by alterations in the arrangements of people and activities within cities as well. For example, in pre-industrial cities the most affluent and prestigious residents occupied central locations. The poorest people lived on the edges of the city; the artisans and the tradesmen between the rich and the poor. ... With the expansion of commerce and industry in the city center, the value of maximum accessibility to urban facilities was increasingly offset by a deterioration of the residential environment. Thus, peripheral locations isolated from undesirable adjacent land uses ... became attractive to high-income residents. The dwellings they vacated, once subdivided and extended with cheap new

structures, provided a new and centrally located supply of low-rent housing. with the introduction of new and cheap forms of local transportation, middle-income people joined the suburban movement and most low-income and immigrant families concentrated in old housing near the expanding centrally located employment opportunities."

David Ward (1971:5)

"An increase in the rate of urbanization or population concentration tends to encourage the selective growth and internal differentiation of urban centers.

David Ward (1971:4)

David Ward, in his Cities and Immigrants (1971), has provided an extremely adaptable model regarding urban development, industrial growth, and population expansion. Wilmington, in comparison to many east coast urban centers, contained a relatively homogeneous population and, consequently, can provide a test case upon which the "Ward Model" can be tested. Immigration became a factor in Wilmington in stride with economic development; both of which were "grafted on" a stable economy, which remained relatively unchanged for the better part of a century.

Clan structure, the grouping of ethnic groups in terms of social behavior, was based on economic lines. Residence requirements, therefore, were also based primarily upon this factor. Through the use of Ward's model, it is possible, after a thorough historical background research, to predict, 1) the time period of utilization for a specific area within the city, 2) the type of utilization that is likely at the time period (i.e. residential, commercial, industrial) and 3) the economic position of those utilizing the properties of the specific area.

The city of Wilmington provides an interesting case regarding the utilization of Ward's Model. Unlike Philadelphia, New York, and other urban centers, Wilmington did not continue to develop from its 'natural' urban core. It must also be noted that the city did not have the effects common to other centers from the early influx of immigrants from their respective mother countries.

Wilmington developed through economic advantage. The original Swedish settlement of Wilmington - Christinaham, was utilized as little more than a trading hamlet. Its primary purpose was to substantiate Swedish claim to a colony in the New World land grab. The Dutch did little to develop the area during their tenure. It was left to the period of English Colonial Consolidation to utilize the economic advantages which the physiogeography of the Wilmington Area promised.

It was through the utilization of these various advantages that during the period of industrialization the city was first geographically bound together. The original site of settlement was left over to the remaining Dutch and Swedish residents. Few of these people had ever utilized the out-lying regions, preferring instead the company and safety of settlement and solace of a church at its core. The English on the other hand, brought an expansionistic economic outlook Quaker businessmen, quick to view profit potential, looked from Philadelphia

toward the virgin opportunities afforded by an area bounded by the Brandywine, Christiana, and Delaware Rivers. Socially, these Quakers saw a chance to forge for themselves a society in which, unlike the already rigid social mesas of Philadelphia, they could take to the fore. Chester County farmers saw the chance to gain a foot-hold in mercantilism, a path closed to them in an already crowded Philadelphia.

This move was abetted by the eighteenth century influx of the Scotch-Irish. These disenfranchised Presbyterians provided the knowledge of trades and crafts necessary for the development of enterprise in a new commercial center. This group became the lower part of the new town's two class system (Blacks were not considered to be a part of "polite Wilmington society" until well into the nineteenth century). Thus, the stage was set for the development of a city - Wilmington.

Early Development of Wilmington

The geographical dispersion of Wilmington was directly related to the various qualities of its water-ways. The Brandywine was settled by Quaker millers dependent upon its swift flow for power. The area bordering Christiana, upon which this study centers, provided a natural port for the craft plying the Delaware River, in the early days for purposes of interurban trade, and in later days to convey the commercial products of the burgeoning town to points world-wide.

Wilmington's internal development was somewhat clouded by its originator, Thomas Willing, and the men who followed him. Willing, attempting to further his economic dreams, married Catherine Justison in 1728. Catherine was the daughter of Andrew Justison, owner of the land upon which Willing envisioned the metropolis of Wilmington to stand. On September 26, 1731, Andrew Justison transferred to Thomas and Catherine Willing all that land lying on the Christiana between West and French Streets. Willing lost little time in pushing his advantage. In October of the same year, he laid out the plan of his town based upon the model of Philadelphia. Willing constructed his house the following year, as testified by a stone implanted in the gable of his home, which stood on the northwest corner of Front and Market Streets until 1825. In that year it was demolished by Eli Sharpe, a tavern keeper who purchased the property in order to expand his business and allow his new building to meet the code requirements regarding the width and grade of Market Street (Willing's house, the first built in the borough, extended eight feet beyond the building line which came to exist along Market Street). Sharpe's Hotel, which continued in operation into the twentieth century, extended for half of the first block of West Front Street, with a stable in the rear.

The purchase of Willing's lots was painfully slow. Benjamin Ferris (1846), in his Original Settlements on the Delaware, provides a map of Wilmington in 1736, which shows only three other houses constructed by this date in the project area. Two of these sites, contained on a single lot site, are found on the northeast corner of Front and Market Streets. Only 19 other structures are shown to exist at this point in time. These structures were interspersed throughout the area in an irregular pattern.

As time progressed, builder-residents began filling in the gaps left by the early tenants. By 1815, the Porter Directory of the City of Wilmington shows that the area bordering the Christiana River and extending up Market Street had been filled in. Although it is impossible to determine the precise number of residents it is shown that Water and Front Streets had become a burgeoning area of activity and population growth, primarily related to the conduct of port business. Residents of the town ranged in occupation from port collector to ship's captain, as well as ancillary occupations such as sailmakers, ship chandler, etc.

At this point in time, small commercial establishments were flourishing. These enterprises utilized the two and three story edifices erected during the eighteenth century. Small taverns, grocers and dry-goods purveyors housed their businesses in the first floor of their residences. Market Street had become the town's commercial nucleus, moving towards Eighth Street, the town's northern limit.

The 1730's had seen a battle between two of the town's major forces, Thomas Willing and William Shipley. In 1735, Shipley had purchased from Willing and his wife and Justison and his wife eight acres of land between Market and Tatnall and down to Christina, thus completing his move towards the river. Shipley continued purchasing land northward the Brandywine and soon became the owner of half of the town. Shipley began petitioning the colonial government in Philadelphia to allow him to build a Market House. Willing, feeling his grasp upon Wilmington slipping, petitioned that he be allowed to build the true Market House on Second Street. Petitions flew back and forth between the two factions and the government in Philadelphia. The final settlement was to allow both Market Houses to be built, thus placating both sides.

This caused Willing to realize that he was losing control of his borough. Deciding that he had nothing to gain in the way of town ownership, Willing sold his home to Eli Sharpe and left the area. Little is heard of him after this.

The need for expanded control of streets and water systems was soon felt. As early as 1740, the widening of the streets was found necessary. This process was continued until 1862 when the streets were finally regulated. The water system was a constant source of problems for the populace. Water supplies were frequently fouled by their proximity to privies. Diphtheria and Typhus were the out-come. Cholera was also a common problem. In response to these problems, a number of prominent citizens formed the Wilmington Spring Water Company in 1804.

Four foundries were placed on West and Tatnall Streets to serve the area below Fourth Street. In 1810, the borough purchased the company for \$ 10,000.00. In order to improve the distribution of the system, the existing foundries were connected by means of wooden pipes to cisterns strategically placed around the city. In 1825 permission was granted for all citizens to tap into the pipes, thus putting to an end the need for wells within the city.

In the mid-nineteenth century the urban core of Wilmington was still centered on the Christiana waterfront, with Market Street the commercial focus and residences centered around this focus. The urban core remained limited by West Street on the west and Walnut Street on the east.

By the nineteenth century, the waterfront area had become unfashionable for wealthy residents. In a letter from Ann Patten Wales, this fact is made quite clear. She writes "I wish you to remove my children from this (Second Street) most unfavorable of residences".

The 1840's saw a rise of industrialization in the borough of Wilmington. Transportation had become the prime mover of Wilmington. Previous to this time, the town had depended upon being a trans-shipment center for imported goods. Agricultural products were sent to markets in Philadelphia by way of the port. Canals had greatly reduced the importance of the borough in this respect. With the advent of railroads, the town was rejuvenated. Wilmington again became a trans-shipping depot and with it the attendant services and manufactures. Railway cars became a new key to the town's prosperity. Car builders, such as Harland and Hollingsworth, became purveyors to the entire world. Foundries, such as Lobdell, became suppliers to the wheels and carriages necessary to the car manufacturers.

Carriage manufacture also became an important industry. Pusey and McClear and Kendall provided new jobs necessary to the revitalization of the town. These industries provided jobs for the rising population, caused by the great immigration from Europe.

These immigrants - Germans, Poles, Irish, and Jews from Eastern Europe also provided a need for housing. Wilmington's building had remained relatively stable. Although housing had made a continual move up Market Street, relegating the port area to the manual laborer, shop-keeper and saloons, the city saw little east-west expansion. With the rise in lower-income workers came the need for cheap housing.

Joshua T. Heald, Thomas Ford and Phillip Plunkett soon realized that this low-income housing vacuum heralded a means to profit. These men began by purchasing properties in the waterfront area and leasing them to small commercial entrepreneurs. They found that the rising population could utilize even more homes. The logical solution to this problem was to purchase the farmland bordering the eastern and western reaches of the town as it then existed. They then hired contractors to build cheap housing for the workers.

This building continued into the beginning of the twentieth century as Wilmington gained a new industry in Morocco Tanning. The style of building began to change to accommodate a new socially mobile population. This new housing caused a rapidly deteriorating Front and Market Street area to deteriorate even more.

The small commercial establishments came to be taken over by the Irish and the eastern European Jews who opened such businesses as saloons and liquor stores, feed, coal and hay depots, and ready-made clothes and credit furniture respectively. The new housing developments on the east side had been built by Joshua Heald.

This development was also facilitated by a new trend in urban transport. The Front and Union Street Traction Company had been in operation since 1850. New directions, such as electricity, provided the means for those with money to remove themselves from the urban center. Previous to this point peoples were

forced to live within walking distance of their jobs. Now the wealthy at least could move to the northwesterly part of the city in order to build homes fashionably suited to their rank in society. The area above Seventh Street in Wilmington's West Side became the home of the city's Middle Management. This was a new class for a city which had long retained its two class eighteenth century style of life of those who owned (Quakers) and those who worked (Scotch-Irish). The area below Seventh Street, between West Street and Jackson Street, was relegated to the Irish and German working class and fast became a no-mans land for the "respectable" people of the town. As one chronicler of the City's nineteenth century remarked: "...drunken brawls on Saturday night and yards filled with garbage were the rule rather than the exception".

Artificially, this seems to have been an over-statement. Although these people were assumedly working class, they seem to have supported their families in a better style than was implied in the previous quotation. Imported decorative wares predominate. It seems that the drab redwares of the previous decades were replaced by a decorative touch that, although inexpensive in its time, shows a concern with upward social mobility. The lack of sobriety in this area cannot be substantiated by the artifactual remains, since the contents of the bottles cannot be determined.

As the nineteenth century progressed, business began to take on a more megalithic character. The period of early industrialization had allowed the small investor to rise from craft to manufacture. As time progressed, large manufacturers became powerful enough to purchase their competition as well as quell any attempt to move into the field. The capitalization expenses alone provided a barrier to most who had hopes of entrepreneurship.

The gap caused by this factor was filled by the ability of a man to rise in a corporation to a position of middle management. This factor, coupled with a rise in immigration from Poland and Italy, caused the Front Street area to further decline. As the nineteenth century faded and the twentieth century dawned, the working class housing of the neighborhood became a social anathema to the "polite" members of Wilmington society. The area soon began to take on a distinctly unsavory character.

In 1882 the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad decided to elevate the tracks which had long existed between Front and Water Streets. This move virtually obliterated any vestiges remaining of Water Street.

This aided an already unsavory area into further decline. The end product was to be found in the decrepit commercial establishments which have come to be a trademark of the area.

The development of the city can be seen in the maps. The Ferris 1736 map shows a small scattering of buildings in a nuclear city. By 1802, the borough charter map shows this nucleus emerging in a recognizable pattern. It may also be seen that it was not until the 1840's that the area west of West Street was developed. As the area expanded westward, one can see that the nuclear city area had become a commercial hub.

Project Area Historical Documentation

The first historical reference to the project area is made in the Minutes of the Board of Property of the Province of Pennsylvania, dated 10th day, 3rd month, 1712. Here Matthias Peterson makes his first request to give "300 acres on the North Side of Christiana Creek" to "Andrew Justassen" for "arrears of Quitt rent". (Minute Book H). Peterson renews his request twice more in 1719, but the land is not conveyed to Justice until the 8th of May 1727 (Minute Book I). Several years later, in 1731, Justice deeded part of the land lying between West and French Streets to his son-in-law, Thomas Willing. In October of the same year, Willing laid out his track into lots and began the village of Willingtown.

Willing sold his first lots in July of 1732 to Joseph Way, who purchased one lot at a cost of 10 pounds, and Dr. James Milner, who purchased two lots at the intersection of Market and Front Streets. By 1735, the village had grown to contain about 20 houses. This number increased to 33 by 1736.

Willing's holdings were increased in 1740 when Andrew Justice devised to his grand-daughter and son-in-law the whole lot bounded to the north by Second Street, to the west by Tatnall Street, to the south by Front Street, and to the east partly by the land of Joseph Way and James Milner.

Jefferson to Justison Streets

The block between Jefferson and Justison does not appear on Willing's Map of 1736 nor on subsequent maps until 1850, when a building appears on the north-east corner of the block. A second building, possibly touching the first, was set back from both Second and Justison Streets. Buildings were also facing on Justison at mid-block and located on the southwest corner of Jefferson and Front Streets.

These structures were in use during the 1840's by a variety of different type individuals, both in terms of occupation and descent.

The 1845 Wilmington City Directory lists a number of inhabitants for Justison Street between Front and Second Streets. These include: William Bates, a pilot; Nathaniel Benson, waterman; Nathaniel Henderson, a laborer; James Higgins, a laborer; Lydia Jackson, a widow; Amy Wilson, a widow and "coloured inhabitant", and William Johnson, who is listed as a cordwainer and "coloured inhabitant".

An examination of Pomeroy and Beers' Map of 1868 shows several new buildings. A new building had been added on Justison Street at midblock, set back and touching the 1850 building. Another structure had been added in the vacancy at Justison and Front, creating a solid facade which continued on Front and half-way up Jefferson. A machine shop was built at mid-block on Jefferson, and finally another structure was added between the machine shop and the corner of Jefferson and Second Streets.

The map of 1878 shows every property facing Justison Street to be built upon. W. T. Shaw, an agricultural machinist, occupies the corner of Front and Justison. Behind his property and at 102 Jefferson Street structures, probably barns, livery or stables, make their appearance.

The buildings at 111 and 113 Justison Street were expanded forward to the building line by 1884. Other alterations to the block, evident by this time, include the demolition or alteration of both structures at 102 Jefferson Street. One structure extending onto the 109 Justison property is brought flush with the Justison building line. The possible barn/livery/stable of the 1878 map was altered to house other activities. The long building at the southwest corner of the block, at Jefferson and Front Streets, has been identified as a carpenter shop.

Justison to Washington Streets

The Justison to Washington Block does not appear on the 1736 Willing Map but was occupied by the 1840's. The 1845 City Directory lists four inhabitants on Pasture (Washington) Street : William Hunt, a machinist; Moses Werrell, an ostler; Norris Hood and Adam Bayard, both laborers. The latter three are listed as "coloured inhabitants".

The 1850 map shows J. Smith owning a L-shaped building in the corner of Washington and Second Streets. Two other buildings faced on Washington Street between Second and Lafayette Streets. And one structure stood at the northeast corner of the Lafayette/Front Streets Block. Two buildings faced on Justison Street north of Lafayette Street and two structures occupied the corners to the south. Finally, there were either several narrow buildings or one long one on Front Street at this time.

New Buildings appeared on Washington Street, both to the north and south of Lafayette Street in 1868. A new structure also appeared mid-block on the north side of Lafayette Street. About this time, the corner of Front and Justison Streets was occupied by Mitchel & Wilson who advertised themselves as Carpenters and Builders.

A narrow street, or alley way, connecting Justison and Washington Streets appeared between Second and Lafayette Streets in 1878. A new structure stood on the north side of this unnamed thoroughfare, and two new buildings had been constructed on Lafayette Street. Interestingly, a street light is noted at the corner of Justison and Second Streets for the first time. It does not appear that such street lights had yet been installed this far west on Front Street.

In 1884, new constructions appeared at 105 Washington Street and at the back of 519 W. Front Street. The only other structural alteration evident was the extension of one of the Lafayette Street buildings to the building line. Street lights were installed at both the Washington Street and Justison Street corners along West Front Street.

Washington to West Streets

The block from Washington Street to West Street, as with the blocks previous, does not appear on Willing's 1736 map. Probably occupied during the early part of the nineteenth century, numerous occupants are listed by the 1845 city directory on West Street. A list of these include: Brown, a milkman; Hugh Lafferty,

a laborer; Abe Link, a machinist; Thomas Rodgers, an iron founder; Joseph Montgomery, a boiler maker; John Otto, a cordwainer; Sara Ann Walker, a widow; James Yates, a tobacconist; Abraham Vesey, a coloured carpenter; and Priscilla Mosely, simply listed "coloured". Joseph Scott & Co., a paper maker, is also listed.

T. Hall occupied the northeast corner of this block in 1850. A broad building next to a small structure, owned by F. Supplee, and a L-shaped building at the southeast corner formed a broken facade with T. Hall facing West Street. Front Street was occupied by another structure of F. Supplee's and the J. Griffith Empire Foundry, which covered the west half of the Front Street facade. Four structures were located along Washington Street. J. B. Stephen owned two buildings to the south, S. Walter one to the north, Anderson owned the corner building. Three small adjacent buildings were set back from Second Street. The western most was owned by Moore, and the eastern most by J. B. Stephen.

Each lot on the southern half of West Street had been built upon by 1868. On Washington Street, a new building had been built south of Stephen's building and a new structure on Second Street made a solid facade on the eastern portion of that street. Two areas reflect a possible change in function. The house marked Moore in 1850 was now marked "S.H." (school house?) and the interior of this block was now designated as a "Hay Depot". The city directory for 1868 has 6 listings for West Street: Charles Mullen, a carter at 107 W.; Henry English, Brass and Bell Founders, 109 W.; Dunn & Stimmel, Carpenters and Builders, 111 W; and William Priest, blacksmith, 111 W.

In 1878, the property at 111 West Street was identified as Thomas C. Carpenter's Livery and Carpenter Shop, with a barn or livery stable attached to the rear. Other marked buildings include "Wilmington Emporium, Sash, Doors, Blinds etc.", located at 417-421 West Front Street; the "City Mission" at 422 Second Street; J. B. Stephen's property at 422 Second Street and the interior of the block which was now marked as a barn or livery stable with W. Bright's name on it.

The Hexamer Map of 1887 shows radical change in the nature of the block. Thomas C. Carpenter's livery and carpenter shop of 1878 and 1884 was now depicted as "Junk", 401 West Front Street was listed as "Drugs", and the City Mission at 422 Second Street was now listed as a private school.

West to Tatnall Streets

A portion of the block from West Street to Tatnall Street appears on the Willing map of 1736. A small house is shown at approximately 309 West Front Street. The nature of the block cannot be ascertained until about 1845 when a check of the Wilmington City Directory shows six individuals and a business on Tatnall Street. These include Charles Read, a blacksmith; Charles Lenor and Francis Lenoir, cordwainers; Benj. Lobb, a farmer; William Bennett, a laborer; William Bleyer, a basket maker; and Richard K. James with the White Horse Temperance House.

The White Horse Tavern is located on the 1850 map on the northeast corner of this map. Mary Sam Ward identifies this structure as the "headquarters of the

temperance advocates about 1843 (they) bought the stock of liquor kept at the hotel and burned it on a vacant lot at 8th and Market Streets, the occasion being made a jollification, with speeches, a brass band, and a display of flags". A small building faced 2nd Street and another building faced Tatnall Street about mid-block. The southwest corner of the block was identified as the "Worrell's Est." (Blair). O. McQuade and D. Bush are names associated with a building at mid-block facing West Street, and a series of buildings appear in the interior of the block which are labeled: O. McQuade, O. McQuade, O. McQuade and Mrs. Riley.

A hotel still occupied the northeast corner of the block in 1868. In addition, a larger building about mid-block on Tatnall Street is identified as Jon Cuseck, carpet weavers. A coal yard was located on the southeast corner of the block. The western half of West Front Street formed a continuous facade wherein Lawrence Blatts advertised boots and shoes, and Henry Bleyer made baskets. One unidentified building faced West Street.

In 1878 the hotel building is identified as E. Miller's Hotel. Four two-story buildings were located along Tatnall Street from 111-119. 109 Tatnall Street was a barn/livery stable structure. Several other such structures make their appearance at this time, two behind 313 W. Front Street, one behind 122 West Street, and a third about mid-block on Second Street.

By 1884 a street light had been installed on the corner of West and Front Streets. And 1887 sees a wood shop added in the vicinity of 107 Tatnall Street. The two barn/livery stable structures at the rear of 313 W. Front Street were demolished and the 309-313 Front Street property is now identified as a machine shop.

Tatnall to Orange Streets

The Tatnall Street to Orange Street block appears on the 1736 Willing Map. Although no houses were depicted, a small stream entered on Second Street near Orange Street and ran nearly parallel with Orange Street and exited at the southeast corner of the block.

The John Milner House (Grubb Lumber) was built on this block around 1790 at approximately 213 W. Front Street. From this point in time the block was occupied by a variety of individuals and businesses. The 1845 directory lists Jacob Haman, a blacksmith; Luke Higgins, a laborer; Moore & Hamon, Plough Manufactory; John Smith, a machinist; Elizabeth Twee, a wheelwright; Cynthia Bishop, a widow (coloured inhabitant); J. C. Tweed, wheelwrighting and corn-cultivators, and the Delaware Agricultural Warehouse of George Churchside.

The northeast corner of the block was occupied by a L-shaped building marked P. Johnson in 1850. About mid-block on Orange Street C. Miller owned several buildings. A. Alderdice, N. Cleland, and a marble and granite yard were in the vicinity of the southeast corner of the block. And J. Wales (later Grubb Lumber) owned the adjacent building which faced Front Street. A second, larger building or buildings faced Front Street west of Wale's building, and an unidentified building stood on the southwest corner of the block. In this vicinity was

Barr's Plaster, Wood and Coal Yard. Two buildings faced Tatnall Street about mid-block and a large I-shaped building stood on the northwest corner. W. McCaul's building faced Second Street. Two more smaller structures stood between him and Johnson's building on the corner.

The facade along Orange Street was completed by 1868. Front Street appears to have remained unchanged. The small building on Tatnall Street was demolished, and the properties on the eastern part of Second Street were built on.

Only the property at approximately 119 Orange Street was vacant in 1878. The Front Street facade was completed with Walton Whann & Co. at 203 Front Street, with the Harris Lumber Yard extended the distance of Tatnall Street. The Second Street facade was completed by this time. The interior of the block contained several barn/livery structures and a large blacksmith and wheelright shop.

A series of eleven stores called "Arcade Row" faced Tatnall Street in 1884, but otherwise the block appears unchanged.

In 1887 the block was filled with numerous businesses, including a blacksmith shop (115 Orange Street), a wheelwright shop (111 Orange Street), the Delaware Machine Co. (on the southeast corner), a fertilizer depot (205-7 Front Street), a liquor business (211 Front Street), a saloon (213 Front Street), shops (215-7) and another blacksmith at 221 Front Street. A junk yard had replaced the lumber yard and the building at 210-14 Second Street was a large repository with fire buckets and hose on each of its three and one half floors.

Curiously, although other blocks in the area were lighted, no street lights appear on this block.

The John Milner House (Grubb Lumber) was extensively investigated by the MAAR field crew and served as the center of operations for most of the project. Because of its early date and the centrality of the structure to the archaeological team, this structure was documented in depth.

Document Search: The Property Known as 205-07-09 West Front Street
(Grubb Lumber Company)

The land upon which the present structure stands was one of the original Swedish land grants. This grant was delivered to John Anderson Stallcoop in 1671 (Scharf 1888:631). Stallcoop, who evidently could not control a grant of the size delivered, divided his grant on April 16, 1675. Samuel Petersen and Jaus Cornelison were the recipients. Cornelison sold his tract to Justa Anderson. Petersen, upon whose land the property in question stands, maintained his portion, which was surveyed by Thomas Pierson, government surveyor, in April of 1686. The land remained in the Petersen family until its sale to Andrew Justison on May 8, 1727 (Ferris 1846:202).

Andrew Justison's daughter, Catharine, married Thomas Willing in 1728. On September 26, 1731, Willing received from his father-in-law, by agreement, all that part of the plantation lying between present West and French Streets. By October Willing began to lay out the present town plan, but concentrated his efforts on the area east of present Market Street. Willing, the first to erect a house, chose the Northwest corner of Front and Market Streets (Scharf: 1888:630 and Ferris 1846:203-04). Activity as far as land sale in the western part of the city must have been slow due to the fact that Willing and his father-in-law Justison conveyed to William Shipley eight acres of land lying between Market and West Streets, Second and Fifth Streets on August 9, 1735 (Ferris 1846:204-05).

This information, though long accepted as fact, must be weighed in the light of title search. The chain of title diverges here due to a will of Andrew Justice (Justison anglicized his name as was the custom with many of Delaware's Swedes and Dutch) dated July 15, 1740 leaving the property in question to his daughter, Mary Scott. The will was proved in Burlington County, New Jersey.

On July 15, 1769, Mary Scott's heirs sold the property to Phillip Jones. All references consulted could shed no light on Jones. Jones' tenure as owner of the property is unimportant, though as the record of sale from Jones to John Milner dated May 4, 1783 shows no record of any structures existing on the property.

The tenure of Milner marks the construction of the present structure under study as the recorded transaction between Milner and his wife, Phebe, and Major John Patten states that Milner had built a "brick message" and transferred this and all outbuildings pertaining thereto.

Miner appears in scant references in the records of Wilmington Friends Meeting. The record notes that Milner, the son of Samuel and Mary, had been born on September 4, 1744 though from the appearance of the entry, not in Wilmington. At some point before the birth of their first child in 1768, Milner married Phebe Larken, daughter of one John Larken. There is no record of the Larken family as being from Wilmington.

Between 1768 and 1794 the Milners begat nine children, five male and four female. Two mentions of the children were found. The Delaware and Eastern Shore advertiser for October 1, 1798 carries the notice "Married on September 24...Married on Monday evening, September 24, Mr. James Bovis of Philadelphia to the amiable Miss Harriot Milner, daughter of John Milner, Esquire of this place." A notice in the Delaware Gazette (n.d.) states that William Milner, Captain of the steamboat Superior died in Philadelphia on Thursday, September 30, 1823.

These references seemingly point to a strong Philadelphia connection, this not being uncommon among Wilmington's Quaker population. A good deal of Wilmington's Quakers had originally been residents of Philadelphia and the surrounding parts of Chester County.

After the October 31, 1797 sale by Milner to Patten, Milner becomes scarce in all references. Milner appears neither in the 1800 census nor the 1800 Wilmington City Directory (Porter 1800).

Major John Patten owned and resided in the Milner property during 1798. That year proved unfortunate for both Major Patten and the youthful borough as the summer was wracked by the Great Yellow Fever epidemic. Both Major Patten and a Mr. Miller, "a young lawyer of promise, residents of the house, were stricken." (Montgomery 1872:255-56).

The fact that Patten was a prominent statesman of the time has a great deal to weight upon the significance of the structure. Patten was a native of Kent County. Upon the commencement of hostilities with England, Patten enlisted in the Delaware Militia and, gaining stature through some of the hardest engagements of the war and the death of Major John Haslett, became Major of the Company. Captured at Camden, South Carolina, Patten was released at Charlestown and returned to Delaware, where he eventually became President of the Cincinatti of Delaware. He was also a member of a great many societies devoted to science and his pet subject, agriculture (Munroe 1954:155, Wilson n.d.:54-55 and Montgomery 1872:255-56).

Patten had an active career in politics. He was elected to the Continental Congress, Delaware General Assembly and, in November of 1785, seated in the U.S. House of Representatives. His position in the Cincinatti held great stead with the Federalist Party. Patten died on December 26, 1800 at his estate in Dover (Mirror of the Times and General Advertiser: January 17, 1801). Throughout his life, Patten maintained citizenship in Kent County (Wilson:54)/

In all probability, Patten purchased this house, as was the custom of country gentlemen and statesmen, as a townhouse to be used upon occasion of visitation to Wilmington. The historical relationship, therefore, is not as significant as is his Kent County relationships.

Patten died intestate. The court awarded the estate to Joseph and Ann, his son and daughter, who were under the care of a guardian. Joseph died leaving Ann his share of the property and Ann, in time, married John Wales. Ann died in 1863, leaving the property to her children, who, harboring little of the sibling rivalry so common in such cases, sold the property two years later. During this period neither Ann Patten Wales nor any of her children resided at this property (Wales Family Papers, ms. Historical Society of Delaware).

The property was sold by the Wales children to one Phillip G. Plunkett and wife on December 25, 1865. Plunkett purchased a good deal of Wilmington real estate but, though his other properties were rental properties, Plunkett resided in the Grubb Lumber Company structure and maintained a liquor business. During this period the large rear yard of the site also supported a blacksmith shop.

Plunkett, who owned both the property in question and the adjoining westerly property, lost both in a Sheriff's Sale on March 26, 1906 to John J. Magahern who, upon his death, left the property to his children. During this period the structure was modified to its present industrial state due to its usage as a meat packing plant and a lumber yard. The site continued in this capacity until its purchase by the State of Delaware.

In conclusion, the significance of this standing structure is nominal. That the Patten and Wales families once owned the structure is precluded by their minimal personal use of the residence. The industrialization of the area has altered the fabric of the property and its residential heritage can only be recognized by experienced researchers.

Chain of Title: Grubb Lumber Company

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1671 | John (Anderson) Stallcoop |
| April 16, 1675 | Samuel Petersen |
| November 20, 1689 | Peter Peterson (by will) |
| January 24, 1714 | Peter Peterson (by will) |
| May 8, 1727 | Andrew (Justison) Justice |
| July 15, 1740 | Mary Scott (by will) |
| July 15, 1769 | Phillip Jones |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| May 4, 1783 | John Milner |
| October 31, 1797 | John Patten |
| February 12. 1823 | Ann Patten Wales (from brother Joseph as John Patten died intestate and court decided to son) |
| December 25, 1865 | Phillip Plunkett (from heirs of Ann's husband) |
| March 26, 1906 | John J. Magahern (by Sheriff's sale) James P. Magahern and others (Will 0533) |
| October 30, 1938 | Frank Grubb and Sons Company |
| August 18, 1966 | Wesley Realty Company |
| April 3, 1979 | State of Delaware |

Orange to Shipley Streets

This block appears on the Willing map without any houses. It is known, however, that prior to 1800 William Jones owned a residence at the northwest corner of Shipley and Front Streets (the southeast corner of this block), with a beautiful flower garden surrounding it. His Son, William G. Jones, the leading undertaker and cabinet maker of half a century ago (1838) succeeded in ownership. (Unidentified source).

The entire facade of Shipley Street had been built up by 1850. The owners are:

- 125 - P. Countiss
- 123 - H. Covington
- 121 - Mary Moore
- 119 - Mrs. McCarkle
- 117 - F. Leonard
- 115 - W. Chandler
- 113 - A. Alderice
- 111 - J. A. Griffin
- 109-101 - W. G. Jones

The 1868 map shows a hotel (possibly the Sorrel House Hotel), located about 117 Shipley Street. The city directory for 1868 indicated that R. K. Jones maintained a boarding house at that address, and William Jones, cabinet maker, was at 101 Shipley Street. A carriage factory was in operation on Front Street.

Several large barn/livery structures appeared on Front Street and back into the southern half of the block by 1878. Commercial ventures appeared along Orange Street, and an Engine House occupied 114 Second Street. Street lights appeared on both Orange and Shipley Streets near Front Street.

1884 found the center of the block to have been built up, but with no details given. The Engine House was now identified as Fame Hose House.

A saloon occupied 119 Shipley Street and a hotel, 113, in 1887. Agricultural Implements, Hay, Grain etc. occupied the southwest corner of the block. A repository, wood work shop and blacksmith were located in the center of the block, a carriage house on Orange Street, and stoves and furniture (made or sold?) on the northwest corner next to the three-story Engine House.

Shipley to Market Streets

This block appeared on the Willing map with two houses facing Market Street, one house on the southwest corner of the block (the northwest corner of Market and Front Streets) and one house facing Shipley Street.

In 1845, the city directory lists several of the occupants on Market Street. These include:

- Phebe Sharpe, Buck Hotel
- David Shaw, Innkeeper & carter, Bird-in-hand
- George Kates, Ready made furniture, undertaking, attended to with the utmost despatch
- Indian King Hotel
- Edward Bodle, Boot & Shoe Store

Every property facing Market Street was built upon by 1850. One building was on the southwest corner of the block, and three more were evenly spaced along Shipley Street. Second Street was completely built up.

The 1868 map showed only the Rianhard Hotel (formerly Buck Tavern?) at the southeast corner of the block. The city directory listed Robert Pyle, blacksmith, at 106 Shipley Street, and John Jones, Boots and Shoes, at 118 Shipley Street.

A 1878 map was too small to reveal much more than interior building and a barn/livery structure on the southwest corner of the block.

An oil manufactory was located at 110 Shipley Street, and a street light was located on Front Street near the corner of Market Street in 1884.

1887 sees the Jefferson Hotel occupying 119 Market Street and an unidentified hotel stood on the southeast corner of the block. A pipe fitting operation occupied 112 Shipley Street.

Market to King Streets

The Willing map shows this block with one house facing Front Street, and three facing Market Street in 1736.

By 1850, two buildings faced King Street, another stood on the southeast corner of the block, and the Bird-in-Hand was mid-block facing Front Street. The west portion of the block facing Front Street, all of Market Street, and all of Second Street, were built upon.

The 1868 map only depicted a hotel on the southeast corner of the block and the Wilmington City Railway tracts laid along Front Street and north on Market Street. The city directory for that year listed:

Peter McCullough & Co., Boots and Shoes, NE corner of Front and Market
P. A. Riley, Boarding House, 1 E. Front Street
S. S. Wikeisham, barber and hair dresser, 3 East Front Street
David Campbell, carter, 113 King Street

The 1878 map is too small to indicate much more than a completely built-up block, with a half of a row of houses behind and parallel with the King Street buildings. A street light was located on King Street near Front Street.

By 1887 a bake house was located at 123 King Street and a fish market at 117 King Street. Two saloons stood at 1 and 3 East Front Street, a cigar manufactory at 100-4 North Market Street, a liquors (store or manufactory?) at 108-110 Market Street. Drugs (store or manufactory?) were located at 124 North Market Street and 2 East Second Street, and saloons at 8, 10, and 14 East Second Street.