Historic Building Report

on

Kidd House

325 Walnut Street

Independence National Historical Park

Prepared by

Staff

Independence National Historical Park

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

May, 1958
Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park
From: Regional Director

Subject: Amended Administrative Data Section for Historic Structures Report, Part I, Kidd House, 325 Walnut Street

We recommend the subject report to your approval.

(Sgd.) Ronald F. Lee
Ronald F. Lee
Regional Director

In duplicate

Copy to: Director
Chief, RODC
Operations Division

MHNelligan/cp

General Daily Area
Historic Structures Report, Part I
Independence NHP Kidd House, 325 Walnut St.

INTERPRETATION

Amended Admin Data

OPERATIONS

ASSISTANT REGIONAL DIRECTOR

REGIMENTAL DIRECTOR

COMMENTS DUE (SUPT) JAN. 25
Region Five  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pa.  

January 15, 1960

Memorandum

To: Director  
From: Regional Director  
Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part I, Kidd House, 325 Walnut Street, Independence NHP, Amended Administrative Data Section

Attached for your review are two copies of an Administrative Data Section, Part I, for the subject building revised as of December 11, 1959. To facilitate review comparison with the Administrative Data Section originally submitted, it is suggested that the revised section be inserted in your bound copy of the report.

In accordance with established procedure, comments should be submitted to the Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park, no later than January 25.

(Sgd.) Ronald F. Lee  
Ronald F. Lee  
Regional Director

In duplicate

Attachments

Copy to: Chief, EODC, w/attachment  
Supt., Independence

MHNelligan/cp  
General  
Daily  
Area  
Operations Division
December 11, 1999

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Region V

From: Superintendent, Independence NHP

Subject: Amended Administrative Data Sections for Historic Structures Reports, Parts I, on Second Bank of the United States, McIlvaine House, and Kid House.

In line with our memorandum of October 13, 1999, subject: "Development - Park Building," we submit herewith amended Administrative Data Sections for the Historic Structures Reports indicated above. With respect to the Second Bank of the U. S., we are also submitting Furnishings and Exhibition Data Section together with new Table of Contents. Please have one set of these inserted in place of the present sheets in your copies of the reports and forward the remainder to WASO and EDCC for similar handling and review.

In your comments on my memorandum dated October 23, you have indicated concurrence in these proposals.

M. O. Anderson
Superintendent
Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Independence National Historical Park
From: Regional Director
Subject: Historic Building Survey Report, Kidd House, 325 Walnut Street

In reviewing the subject prospectus, we note that (1) the proposed action will require a revision in the Master Plan and the MISSION 66 Prospectus, and (2) that the Secretary of the Interior has to some extent previously committed the Service to adapting this and the other Kidd House for occupancy by the Carl Schurz Foundation, although that organization presumably might be even more satisfied to occupy the Yoh Building, the retention and adaptation of which have been approved by all offices concerned.

For these reasons, we recommend that final decision on this structure be deferred until it has been considered at the Master Plan field conference scheduled early in June.

(Sgd.) Daniel J. Tobin

Daniel J. Tobin
Regional Director

In duplicate

Copy to: Director
Chief, EODC
Operations (att. Mr. Nelson)

MHNelligan/cp

General
Daily
Area
HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY REPORT - KIDD HOUSE, 325 W 25 WALNUT ST.

Interpretation

Barros - Agree with conclusions. A Good Agent

Cotter - 5/7/58 agree with conclusions.

Operations

Coyle

Asst. Regional Director

Regional Director

RETURN TO INTERPRETATION WITH COMMENTS BY MAY 14, 1958
Memorandum

To:       Director
From:     Acting Regional Director
Subject:  Historic Building Survey Report, Kidd House, 325 Walnut Street, Independence National Historical Park

In accordance with the procedure outlined in FO-11-56 dated February 16, 1956, attached for your consideration is the Historic Building Survey Report for the Kidd House, 325 Walnut Street, Independence National Historical Park, prepared by Superintendent M. O. Anderson and his staff. By copy of this memorandum, we are forwarding a copy of the report to EODC for review and comment.

The report should be reviewed by no later than May 15. Our comments will follow.

(Sgd.) J. Carlisle Crouch
J. Carlisle Crouch
Acting Regional Director

In duplicate

Attachment

Copy to:  Supt., Independence
          Chief, EODC (w/c report)

MHNelligan/cp

General Daily
Area Operations (att. Mr. Nelson)
Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Region 5

From: Superintendent, Independence NHP

Subject: Historic Building Report for 325 Walnut Street

In accordance with memorandum dated February 16, 1956, we are herewith transmitting in triplicate for your review the Historic Building Report for 325 Walnut Street (Kidd House).

M. O. Anderson
Superintendent
SIGNATURE SHEET

RECOMMENDED

__________________________  Date ________
Director

__________________________  Date ________
Regional Director

__________________________  Date ________
Chief, Eastern Office, Div. of Design & Construction

APPROVED

__________________________  Date ________
Superintendent
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CHAPTER I

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Prepared by Superintendent M. O. Anderson
NAME AND NUMBER OF BUILDING:

Kidd House, 325 Walnut Street, Building No. 17.
PROPOSED USE OF STRUCTURE
AND JUSTIFICATION

Contrary to our recommendations contained in the Administrative Data Section, Part I, of the Historic Structures Report submitted May 2, 1958, and pending Region V and WASO approval, that these buildings be demolished, we now recommend that they be retained, rehabilitated, and exteriorly restored, and the interior altered and adapted for use by the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, in accordance with approval for same granted by letter dated March 26, 1958, from Assistant Secretary Roger Ernst to the Foundation. Our original recommendation in the Report, accordingly, is hereby rescinded.
PROPOSED USE OF STRUCTURE
AND JUSTIFICATION

Since neither this structure nor the adjoining No. 323 Walnut Street are historic in terms of the events associated with them, nor are they of the period preceding 1800, and both are in such poor condition as to make them virtually useless for landscape and other purposes, it is recommended that they be demolished.

For purposes of restoring the original scene of row houses along this section of Walnut Street (between Third and Fourth Street) and providing support for the McIlvaine House, it is recommended that the adjoining Yoh Building be utilized instead. (See Historic Building Reports on the Bishop White House, McIlvaine House, and the Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House.).
PROVISION FOR OPERATING HOUSE

To be occupied and operated by the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation as a museum and library under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service.
PROVISION FOR OPERATING HOUSE

Not applicable.
PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST FOR
REHABILITATING THE STRUCTURE:

325 Walnut Street ............ $34,800
PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST FOR REHABILITATING THE STRUCTURE AND GROUNDS:

$34,800.
CHAPTER II
HISTORICAL DATA

Prepared by Martin I. Yoelson
The building designated 325 Walnut Street (Illustration No. 1), is located on the north side of Walnut Street between South Third and Fourth Streets. This building is one of two structures known as the "Kidd Houses", the other being No. 323 Walnut Street. The former, three stories high, is situated on a lot fronting 18 1/2 feet on Walnut Street and extending 127 1/2 feet to Harmony Court. Erected between 1811 and 1812, this three-story brick building is a typical Philadelphia row house of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

Neither plans, prints, nor written accounts have yet come to light covering the early years of this building. The earliest description is a fire insurance survey for 1824, made by the Mutual Assurance Company, which describes the structure as a

"...three Story Brick house... - Front 18 feet 6 inches, Depth 42 feet. First Story. 2 Rooms, occupied as Counting Rooms, 1 Marble Mantle, neat washbds, windows cased & Inside Shutters, neat Square head folding front door - Entry: 1 neat door, washbds & Stucco cornices, Neat Square head Venetian front door, with side lights, Second Story, 2 Rooms, Marble Mantles, neat washbds windows cased & Inside Shutters, 2 Mahogany doors, Stucco cornices, - Third Story. 2 Rooms, marble mantles, neat washbds, windows cased & Inside Shutters, 1 flight common Strait Stairs, - Garret 2 Rooms plaister'd, Trap Door, Battlements, Brick Cornice back, 1 arch head dormar window front 12 lights, glass 11-1/2 inches, & 1 Common Square head
do back 12 lights, glass 9-11 inches - Piazza
7 feet 6 inches by 12 feet three stories high,
2 flights open newell Mohogany Ramp handrail
Stairs, neat brackets, turned ballusters, Brick Cornice...party walls 9 inches, Brick and Stud partition, An Ash hole, access in the yard from Harmony Court, water plenty...."

In addition to the main building, other buildings situated
on the property at the time are described by the survey as

"...Kitchen 12 feet by 20 feet, Two Storied high, First Story finished as Customary, Second Story, 1 Room, marble mantle neat washbds, closet & windows cased, Loft as a Store Room. form'd in front by frame & boarded raised on part of the Roof back & ends. Brick wall, - washbds & window cased, Brick Cornice, At the End of the Kitchen, adjoining & communicating with the Same in both Stories, Is a Two Story Building 11 feet by 12 feet, 3 Sides Frame & boarded & 1 Side Brick First Story as a Scullery, floord with Brick, & Plaister'd, Second Story, A Bathing Room, No Boiler, washbds & windows cased, & Plaister'd 3 floors narrow heart pine, other floor narrow white pine bds,- Glass 1*8 lights 13-17. 60 do 12-18. 1*8 do 10-11, 24 do 11-15 & 36 do 10-12 inches,...."

In 1848 a resurvey of the property revealed one major change
to the main building. In the cellar a furnace was installed and en­
closed in a brick chamber. Concerning the back buildings, the survey
indicates that a number of changes had been made.

The "kitchen" building was altered in that a "dining room" replaced the "customary" on the first floor, the "loft" on the second floor was removed and a third story added. The two-story back build­
ing, 11 by 22 feet, was removed. In its place was erected a new
three story brick building, 12 by 22 feet. The first floor of this structure was in use as a kitchen, the second story contained 2 rooms, and the third story was divided into 3 rooms. (See "Appendix" for the 1848 survey.)

The appearance of the main building remained unchanged until the 1860's when major alterations were made. These changes, made over a period of fifty years, radically altered both the exterior and interior appearances of the original building.

By 1865 we find 325 Walnut Street connected with the building to the east (No. 323) by communicating doorways on the first and third floors and in the garret. The insurance survey made in that year describes the first major alterations as

"...that part of the front & part of the partition Walls have been taken down, forming a Vestibule in front of the Entries, the Walls above are supported by Iron & Wood Girders, with 3 Iron Columns under the opening front surmounted by 3 Elliptic Arches, and the opening enclosed by a pair of panel doors, projecting Moulded heads with brackets under to all the front windows painted & Sanded, communicating doors in 3d Story & Garret to building on the East,..."

In addition to the above alterations, the main building underwent other changes, including 1) the installation of an iron washsink for the first story; 2) the front room, second story, was partitioned into 2 rooms, the entry removed, a pair of folding doors and one closet added; and 3) the entry on the third floor and the
stairs to the garret were removed and a pair of folding doors, a closet, and a step ladder to the garret added.

Also, several changes were made to the back buildings. (See "Appendix" for the 1865 survey.)

In 1869 two communicating doorways had been cut from the "2nd Story front building to the 2nd Story front building on the east." Five years later a communicating door had been cut in the second floor rear rooms. A "low down grate" was installed in the front room of the second story. (See "Appendix" for the 1874 survey.)

During the next several years other alterations were made to the main building and to the back buildings. In 1881 the walls in the first floor entry and the stairs leading to the second floor were "lined with planed and groved yellow pine boards", and "a communicating opening with architraves at sides leading into No. 323" was made in the third story front room.

In 1882 "a one story brick office building", 13 feet in breadth and 15 feet in depth, was erected on the property. Although the location of this smaller structure is not designated, it was probably near Harmony Court. This structure had a communicating doorway on the first story leading into a similar building erected on the property of No. 323 Walnut Street. (See "Appendix" for the 1882 survey.)

Three years later a second story was added. (See "Appendix" for the 1885 survey) At this time the walls in the second story of the
three-story back building were lined with walnut and ash boards. Also, two closets and a marble top, china bowl wash stand were added.

Major alterations to the main building by 1905 radically changed both its interior and exterior appearance. A resurvey that year revealed that the floor between the first and second stories, front, had been removed. A flat show window (one light plate glass), 3 feet by 4 feet 8 inches, on the front first story replaced the bricked exterior (see Illustration No. 1). The front and rear walls of the building were lined with planed and grooved boards 4 feet high. The second story front and rear windows were replaced by two one-light glass panes. As for the back buildings, a number of the windows were replaced with new panes of glass and two wash stands were added to the first story back building. (See "Appendix" for the 1905 survey.)

On February 3, 1909, the Mutual Assurance Company again resurveyed the building. This resurvey indicates no additional alterations to the main structure. The first story, it shows, contained one-large room. No second story front room existed since 1905, although there was a second story back room. Stairs led to this room from the first story. A communicating doorway connected the second story back room with the second story rear room of No. 323 Walnut Street. The third story and the garret retained its two rooms respectively and the communicating doorways to the building on the east.
Judging from the information in the 1909 survey, it seems that over a period of many years changes had been made to the original back buildings even though the earlier surveys do not reveal such changes. For the 1909 survey does not describe the three-story piazza (existing in 1824), the three-story kitchen (two stories in 1824), and the three-story back building, 12 feet by 22 feet (existing in 1848). In place of these structures, the survey describes a three-story back building, 12 feet in breadth and 56 feet in depth. On the basis of this limited and indefinite information, it is assumed that either the original back buildings no longer existed, having been replaced by the building existing in 1909, or that the original structures had been converted into one large building, the one described in this survey.

As for the two-story back building erected in 1881-1882, no changes are indicated. (See "Appendix" for the 1909 survey.)

No evidence has been uncovered to indicate additional alterations to the main building since 1909.

It is recommended that an architectural investigation be conducted to substantiate the historical or documentary evidence covered in this section of the report. The investigation should determine what portion of the original building is still standing.

Except for the photograph and insurance surveys in the Appendix and the surveys included in this report, no plans, prints, sketches, or maps have been found to date concerning No. 325 Walnut Street.
On the basis of our studies as here outlined, we seriously doubt that a building existed on the piece of ground today known as 325 Walnut Street prior to 1811, and that the building now standing there is in part the one erected by Robert Kidd between 1811 and 1812. That building, however, has been substantially altered through the years.
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Ownership of Property to 1812

The lot on which 325 Walnut Street is located was originally part of a larger lot bounded on the south by Walnut Street and on the west by Fourth Street. It was 198 feet fronting on Walnut Street and in depth running northward on Fourth Street 255 feet. This larger lot was granted to Charles Lee in the 1680's by William Penn as an original patent.

Until 1721 this larger lot remained undivided despite the number of legal transfers by the ensuing owners. But shortly thereafter it was subdivided into a number of smaller lots. In 1734 Andrew Hamilton purchased one of the subdivided lots located 60 feet north of Walnut Street and approximately 100 feet east of Fourth Street. The lot was 35 feet in breadth (east and west) and 65 1/2 feet in depth running northwardly. The northern part of the present-day lot on which 325 Walnut Street is located was included in the Hamilton purchase.

Andrew Hamilton, the "most distinguished advocate in the colonies" whose eloquence in defense of Peter Zenger was a milestone in the fight for freedom of the Press in America, was closely associated with the selection of the site and the construction of the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall). In 1741 he bequeathed the above lot, 35 by 65 1/2 feet, to his son, James.
James Hamilton, colonial governor of Pennsylvania, from 1748 to 1754 and from 1759 to 1763, purchased in 1746 two additional pieces of ground of the aforementioned subdivided lots. One lot was located on the north side of Walnut Street being 35 feet in breadth and running north 60 feet to the piece of ground which he received from his father. The second lot, west of the former lot, was 53 feet in breadth fronting on Walnut Street and 87 feet in depth running northwardly at which point it widened westwardly (toward Fourth Street) 48 feet continuing northwardly 40 1/2 feet, then eastwardly 101 feet, and south 127 1/2 feet to Walnut Street. The James Hamilton lots included the southern and part of the northern sections of the lot on which today is located No. 325 Walnut Street.

In 1783 James Hamilton bequeathed the two above described lots and the lot acquired from his father to several nieces and nephews.

On May 12, 1810, the heirs of James Hamilton sold to John Rea (Rhea), an upholsterer, the lot on which present-day 325 Walnut Street is situated, being 18 feet on Walnut Street and 127 1/2 feet in depth running north to Harmony Court. The following March, Rea sold the lot to Robert Kidd, a copper merchant. Shortly thereafter, Robert Kidd proceeded to erect on this lot of ground a three-story brick house. The structure was completed before 1812 for in that year Kidd occupied the premises. Kidd was apparently the first occupant since neither the city directories nor the Philadelphia County tax records for 1811 list an occupant for earlier years.
Prior to the erection of this house, early tax records, city directories, and the chain of title, fail to show the existence of any building here. If any structure had been erected on or near this site, it could have been only a temporary frame stable or shop.

Tenants of 325 Walnut

Robert Kidd sold the property to Doctor Philip S. Physick on December 8, 1826. Ten years later it was bequeathed in trust to Dr. Physick's four children. In 1838, Salley E. Randolph, widow, acquired the house and lot; her dependents continued ownership until 1942 when the Federal Government purchased it as part of the Independence National Historical Park Project in 1951.

Robert Kidd who was responsible for the construction of 325 Walnut Street occupied the premises from 1812 to 1817, and again in 1819, following which he removed to No. 311 Walnut Street. Prior to 1812 Kidd had resided at No. 192 High (Market) Street. Little is known concerning the life of Robert Kidd other than his occupation as a copper merchant for the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

We do not know who built this house.
EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

The historical importance of the building at 325 Walnut Street, other than its possible value as a part of the landscape setting, is slight.

Not one of the owners or known occupants of the building was involved in the story of Independence. Because the house was built after the historic period which the Park commemorates (1774-1800), its preservation is not considered vital. On the other hand, since a house built in 1810 is not necessarily different from one built in, say 1800, it might be worthwhile to preserve and restore the exterior of this house - if architecturally feasible - as part of the landscape development of the Park.
On viewing the within describ'd premises, I find the first story of the
Kitchen now a dining room, with a niche, neat washbds, closet & windows
cased, second story, washbds closets & windows cased. The loft or store
room is removed, and another story is added, and finished with washbds
closets & windows cased, loft not floor'd or plaister'd roof covered with
tin, brick cornice. The former building as a scullery & bath room is
removed and in its place, is erected, a new three story brick building
of 12 feet by 22 feet, - first story, a kitchen plain mantle, dresser,
washbds & windows cased, - second story in 2 rooms, one with plain
mantle, washbds closets & windows cased, other a store room, shelv'd,
washbds & windows cased, third story in 3 rooms with washbds, closets
& windows cased. One of them a bathroom, boiler below - loft not
floor'd or plaister'd. Roof cover'd with tin brick cornice, close
strait & winding stairs, floors narrow heart pine boards, glass, 60 lights
10 & 11 & bow 10 & 12 party walls finished stud & board partitions, —
In the front cellar is a furnace enclso'd in a brick chamber, arched over,
the gas pipe leads into a chimney, the treated air conveyed in a brick
flue, and let out through apertures, in the walls covered by iron valves,
the whole appears secure,
On Viewing the premises described to which this is attached I find that part of the front & part of the partition Walls have been taken down, forming a Vestibule in front of the Entries, the Walls above supported by Iron & Wood Girders, With 3 Iron Columns under, the opening front surmounted by 3 Elliptic Arches, and the opening enclosed by a pair panel doors, projecting Moulded heads with brackets under to all the front windows painted & sanded, communicating doors in 3d Story & Garrett, to building on the East, An Iron Washsink in 1st Story Main Building - Second Story, front building in 2 Rooms. Entry removed a pair folding doors, one closet

Third Story in 2 Rooms. Entry & Stairs removed, a pair folding doors One closet, a step ladder to Garrett, hung at side, Room & Entry papered.

Back Building, First Story. The Entry & Stairs removed the West Wall of one Room lined with boarding - a pair of folding doors between Rooms, 2 Closets, Two 12 light Windows to floor 13 x 22 & one light 12.16 panel shutters, papered. All the premises occupied as Offices all other parts remain as before described.

Augt 21/65
Geo. C. Justus. Surveyor
Mutual Assurance Co.
Policy No. 617
Survey No. 3060

June 17, 1874

On viewing the within described premise I find the following alterations: Second Story Back room partition removed. An opening in division wall communicating with 2d Story Back room on the West, wide jambs 5" pilaster. Sash door containing 2 glass 21 & 27" [Illegible] below. Low down grate in Front Office.

George W. Wharton
June 17th 1874
Mutual Assurance Co.
Policy No. 44617
Survey No. 3060

July 26, 1882

A one story brick office 13 f by 12 f with office [Allegible] 4 f at south west corner. Tin roof, facia board. Walls lined with planed and grooved cherry boards, 4 f 6" high, one 1 light window glass 15 by 32' double hung and inside shutters. Sash door 4 lights & ribbed glass 11 by 20'. Wash stand, marble top, china bowl & water. One light window glass 11 by 19' not hung iron bars. Doors & windows finished with architraves. Communicating door to No. 323.

Alfred Ogden
Surveyor
July 26, 1882
The following Alterations have been made No. 325.

Second story back building. 1/4 light sash in all windows. walls lined with walnut & ash boards 1 1/2 high moulded cap. two extra closets, wash stand, marble top, china bowl of water.


Alfred Ogden
Surveyor
Dec. 5, 1885.
The floor has been removed between 1st & 2nd story front building. now one story high. girders & pilasters cased under third story joice. Stucco cornice & mouldings Shop front cornice mouldings &c. One flat show window one light plate glass 3 ft by 6 ft 8. Yale lock. Two one light glass in 2d Story front & rear windows. One & light sash pressed glass 26 by 36 in rear window in one story building at rear & front building. Walls of front & rear building lined with planed & groved boards 6 ft high. moulded Cap. lining boards & finish of this part hard wood. Two wash stands & water in first story back building.

Alfred Ogden
Surveyor
10/24 1905
Mutual Assurance Co.  
Policy No. 4417  
Survey No. 3060  

February 3, 1909

Survey of the Three Story Brick Building with Attic. Situated on the North side of Walnut St. east of Fourth No. 325 Main Building 18' 6" Front by 42' 0" Deep. Back Building 12' 0" by 52' 6" three Stories high. 12' 0" by 12' 6" two Stories high Yellow pine floors. Tin roofs. Galvanized iron conductors. plastered throughout. Underdrained. Moulded & bracketed Leads over front windows Main Building. First Story in one room. Extending in height from the ground floor to underneath the third Story Joist.

Plain Shop front. Cornice Mouldings etc. One flush bulk window with one light 5' 6" by 10' 6" plate glass. One 8/4" sash door with one light 36" by 56" plate glass. Yale lock etc. Straight open stairs to second story back building with sash door on landing to opening in brick party wall between Nos. 323 & 325 with one light 2h" by 42" am glass. plain Jambs h" architrave. Two one light sash in front & rear window. Walls wainscoated 4 feet high with worked boards with Moulded cap etc Main Building Third story in two rooms Two windows D. H. Sash two Lts 18" by 36" am glass. plain mantle in each room. windows & Doors cased. Plain base and architrave

Attic in two rooms.

One segment head dormer window 12 Lts 11" by 14" glass. One square head window 12 Lts 9" by 11" am glass. plain straight stairs

Back Building First story in three rooms, offices

Three windows D H Sash 1 Lts 15" by 30". Two Ditto 13" by 28". One Ditto 15" by 27" two Ditto 15" by 32" are ar glass. One sash door one Light 2h" by 42" plate glass. Two small toilet rooms each with sash door. Open porcelain water closet & tank. Open porcelain washstand cold water only plumbing of good quality. walls wainscoated with worked boards. 56" high, one small fire proof safe with Iron door built in brick wall. Second Story in three rooms Divided by a paneled & glass partition four glass 24" by 25" four windows D H Sash one Lt each sash 15" by 28" bottom sash plain am glass. upper sash plain leaded glass. Two twin windows D. H. Sash two Lts 15" by 28" two single windows 2 Lts 12" by 28". One casement sash one Lt. 25" by 44" all am glass. Third story in two rooms finished in a plain ordinary Manner used for storage

The Entrance to this building is from No. 323.

Walter Toyday Surveyor
Feb. 3 1909
View of present-day 325 Walnut Street (center building) looking north, 1957. National Park Service Photo.
THE KIDD HOUSE AT 325 WALNUT STREET (see Plate No. 1) was built between 1810-1811. The theme of development as stated in the MISSION 66 Prospectus for the Park is "to recall those events of the period from 1774 to 1800 by the restoration, reconstruction and preservation of those structures and features. Any other factors shall be incidental to and should not conflict with or intrude upon the theme." Having been constructed after the historic period established for the Park, the Kidd House, 325 Walnut Street, is not associated with any historic personage or event of the historic period.

Architecturally the house is of the Federal Period which is reflected in plan by the circular corners in the rear building and the details of the wood trim (see Plate Nos. 2 and 3). While it is possible some few houses built in the very last years of the 1800 reflected the Federal Style, its influence was not widely felt until the early years of the 19th Century.

A fire insurance survey made by the Mutual Assurance Company in 1824 gives an unusually full and complete description of the house in that year. This survey is quoted in full on pages 1 and 2 of section 1, Chapter II of this report. Measured drawings, Plate Nos. 5 thru 10, record the building as it exists and indicate those portions of the original building which remain.
EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION OF THE FABRIC

A reference to Plate Nos. 5 thru 10 will indicate the following major changes:

First Floor

The original Walnut Street (south) facade has been replaced (see Plate No. 5); unlike the Bishop White and McIlvaine Houses, this house had no interior masonry cross walls. The original kitchen has been removed and a new addition constructed in its place.

Second Floor

The second floor has been removed in the front house and piazza (see Plate Nos. 3, 4 and 8).

Third Floor and Garret

Except for openings in the east party wall these floors are in their original structural condition.

General Structural Condition

All walls are 9 inches thick excepting the front and rear wall of the front house which are 14 inches.
ADDITIONAL WORK NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH

The existing building has been recorded with measured drawings.

To complete the architectural research would require a physical investigation of the building to record the evidence of missing parts, a study of all available documents relating to the house, recording the evidence, a study of similar contemporary houses, and evaluating all evidence and prepare preliminary restoration drawings.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Historically the house is not of the period 1774 to 1800, it is not associated with any historic events or personages of the period, and architecturally it possesses no special merit.

The original purpose in programming the Kidd House at 323 Walnut Street together with the Kidd House at 325 was to reduce the gap between the Bishop White and the Dilworth-Todd-Hoylan Houses.

The revised methods for stabilizing the neighboring Bishop White, the Dilworth-Todd-Hoylan and the McIlvaine Houses, as described in the Historic Building Reports on these structures involves the grouping structures along Walnut Street which will present these three houses in their true settings as units in row houses. This proposed grouping of the Bishop White, McIlvaine and Dilworth-Todd-Hoylan structures suggests the removal of the Kidd Houses. Their removal will open a grand vista on Carpenters' Hall from the south.

It is observed that the Kidd Houses, 323 and 325 Walnut Street, Buildings No. 16 and No. 17, respectively, have relatively no historic or unique architectural significance. Since in view of the above proposed grouping and treatment of the three more historic neighboring structures in this area, their retention and rehabilitation for landscaping reasons is reduced in importance, we recommend that the Kidd Houses be removed from the Master Plan, that they be demolished, and that the area they occupy be landscaped.
CHAPTER III
ARCHITECTURAL DATA

Prepared by Resident Architect C. S. Grossman
ILLUSTRATIONS
South elevation (Center Building).
Third floor, north room, looking north.
First floor looking into back building; note the second floor windows to the left.
First and second floor space looking north from north room. Note that the second floor has been removed. The window to the rear is the original second floor window.
HOUSES at 323-325 WALNUT Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania