391/132004

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT
on
HIBBARD-GRIFFITTS HOUSE
341 WALNUT STREET

INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

NOVEMBER 1959

INDE 202
CRBIB# 002158

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H30

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Independence National Historical Park
420 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

REGION FIVE NOV 21 1959	INITIAL AND DATE
REG. DIRECTOR	
ASST. REG. DIR.	
OPERATIONS	
INTERPRETATION	MHN 11/25
ADM.	
REG. RES. PLAN.	
RANGER ACT'S.	

November 20, 1959

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Region V

From: Superintendent, Independence NHP

Subject: Historic Structures Report on Hibbard-Griffitts House, 341 Walnut Street

In our transmittal memorandum of November 17, covering subject report, we did not indicate that EODC was being requested to begin preparation of the Architectural Data section of this report. By copy of this memorandum we are now so requesting.

M. O. Anderson
Superintendent

Copy to: Chief, EODC

12/23/60 Copy of rpt given to Mr. Judd, EODC.

1/5/62 Rpt. sent to General File. EODC did not act on it, and in meantime, plans for it have been approved--4/5/61.

MHN

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H30

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Independence National Historical Park
Old Custom House
420 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia 6, Pa.

November 17, 1959

REGION FIVE
NOV 19 1959
INITIAL AND DATE

REG. DIRECTOR	
ASST. REG. DIR.	
OPERATIONS	
INTERPRETATION	✓ 11/24
ADM	
REC. RES. PLAN	
RANGER ACT'S	

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Region V

From: Superintendent, Independence NHP

Subject: Historic Structures Report on Hibbard-Griffitts House, 341 Walnut Street

Enclosed in quadruplicate for your review and distribution is the Historic Structures Report on Hibbard-Griffitts House, 341 Walnut Street.

M. O. Anderson
Superintendent

Enclosures (4)

SIGNATURE SHEET

RECOMMENDED

W. Henderson Date 11/17/59
Superintendent

Date
Regional Director

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

APPROVED

Date
Director

Historic Structures Report

on

Hibbard-Griffitts House

341 Walnut Street

Independence National Historical Park

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Prepared by

Staff

Independence National Historical Park

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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November 1959

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CHAPTER I

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Prepared by Superintendent M. O. Anderson

NAME AND NUMBER OF BUILDING

Hibbard-Griffitts House, 341 Walnut Street, Building No. 56.

PROPOSED USE OF STRUCTURE
AND JUSTIFICATION

It is proposed that the Hibbard-Griffitts House at 341 Walnut Street, together with the house at 339 Walnut Street that adjoined it, be reconstructed for occupancy and use by the affiliated Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture. The two reconstructed buildings would serve the purposes of stabilizing and supporting the adjoining Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House, of accommodating two eligible and worthy organizations at the locale of their origins, of providing a home for historic library collections on horticulture and agriculture in the colonial period, and of contributing materially to visitor comprehension of the historic period's rich social history.

The exterior of the building should be as literal a recreation of the original as possible. The interior should be of fireproof and structurally reinforced design to give the structure permanency and strength to allow the affiliated societies to house their library collection and related activities. The house at 339 Walnut Street was built at about the same time as the Hibbard-Griffitts House at 341 Walnut Street and the Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House and was nearly identical in appearance and dimensions to the former. Such a reconstruction would not only have the merit of providing minimum space of approximately 4000 square feet needed by the proposed occupants but would further the aim of presenting to the visiting public a locale authentic in detail and true

to the 1775-1800 period. Also, the row of three smaller dwellings would be in effective contrast to their more auspicious neighbors, the Bishop White, McIlvaine and Kidd Houses.

Provision should be made in the arrangements with the affiliated societies for reservation of space in the reconstructed houses, readily accessible to the general public, in which to maintain some type of exhibit relating to the most noted occupant, the eminent physician, Dr. Samuel Powel Griffitts, and to the dramatic and historically interesting decade of his residency at 341 Walnut Street, as well as horticultural data relating to the focal period of the Park, 1774-1800.

PROVISION FOR OPERATING THE HOUSE

House is proposed to be operated by the affiliated Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Philadelphia Society For Promoting Agriculture. No cooperative agreements have yet been executed or proposed for this or other purposes.

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF COST FOR RECONSTRUCTING THE STRUCTURE AND GROUNDS

$107,000

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL DATA

Prepared by Historian Mary Ann Hagan

STRUCTURAL EVIDENCE
FROM DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

On February 13, 1769, Jonathan Dilworth and Hezekiah Hibbard bought the lot on the northeast corner of Walnut and Fourth Streets. It extended 48 feet east and was 67 feet in depth. This lot remained in common ownership until August 9, 1769, when Dilworth and Hibbard divided the property. Dilworth retained the corner lot, 16 feet by 67 feet, on which in 1775 he built the dwelling now known as the Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House, while Hibbard received the remainder consisting of two contiguous lots 32 feet on Walnut Street and 67 feet deep.

The deed by which the lot was partitioned makes no reference to buildings on the Hibbard portion at that time. In 1774 the Hibbard property was divided, the eastern half of the lot being deeded to John Marshall, a bricklayer. Thus, Marshall held a lot 16 feet on Walnut and 67 feet in depth, the boundaries of which began at a point 32 feet from Fourth Street.

The western section of the Hibbard lot remained in the family until 1807 when Joseph and Elizabeth Hibbard, children of Hezekiah Hibbard, transferred title to David Evans. The record of this transaction indicates that by then there was a brick building on this lot immediately adjacent to the Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House. Tax records show that this brick building had been constructed some thirty years earlier. The first reference in the tax records to the Hibbard-Griffitts House dates to 1779. Owing to a gap in the records between

1774 and 1779, the age of the building cannot be established more definitely. John Marshall sold his lot to John Morris, Gentleman, on January 4, 1777, and the deed of that date establishes the existence of a brick messuage at 339 Walnut Street (old style, 113 Walnut Street). It seems probable that Hibbard, a carpenter, transferred title on May 20, 1774, to the eastern half of his lot to John Marshall preparatory to building. Thus, construction of the Hibbard-Griffitts House at 341 Walnut Street and the adjacent houses, the Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House and the Marshall House, may have been started as early as the spring of 1774. The 1783 insurance survey of the Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House states that it was then about eight years old. An insurance survey for the Marshall House at 339 Walnut Street made in 1784 states that the house was then "about twelve years old." However, the chain of title for 339 Walnut Street makes no mention of any building on the lot in May of 1774 and this casts doubt on the accuracy of the estimate as to age.

The earliest insurance survey for the Hibbard-Griffitts House is for the year 1848. Even at this late date the house possessed many design features of the type described in earlier surveys of the adjoining houses, and they give us a picture of the Hibbard-Griffitts House as it appeared in the eighteenth century. All three were row houses 16 feet in width. Each was a three story brick house with a two story kitchen wing (Illustration No. 1). Each of the three houses had a

molding above the baseboard. The 1784 survey for 339 Walnut mentions surbase and skirting; the 1807 survey for the Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House mentions surbase and washboards, and the 1848 survey for 341 Walnut mentions plain base and single moldings.

While the first floor of the Hibbard-Griffitts House had one large room, a passage and a small room in 1848, it is probable that there were originally two rooms of similar size on that floor. In the correspondence of a later occupant, Dr. Samuel Powel Griffitts, are references to a "parlor" and a "nursery." In 1848 the Hibbard-Griffitts House was being used as an apothecary shop. The 1831 resurvey of the adjoining house at 339 Walnut Street specifically mentions that the two first floor rooms had been converted into one large room. Another obvious change is the "bulk" window on the first floor which replaced the original colonial window.

The plain entablature "across the whole" mentioned for the first floor and single architraves and moldings for the second and third floors suggest the familiar period treatment. The reference to 8 by 10 inch glass lights for the windows on the second and third stories, the kitchen and the two dormer windows indicates the presence in 1848 of the original windows. Details such as plain wooden eaves and roof-deck with railing round out the picture of a Philadelphia row house.

The Hibbard-Griffitts House was so extensively remodelled during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that little of the original structure remained when it was acquired by the Park (Illustrations No. 2, 3). The building was demolished in 1957.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Among the occupants of the house during the historic period were William Zane, 1779-1785; Nathaniel Ingraham, 1786-1787, and in the last decade of the eighteenth century, Samuel Powel Griffitts. During the nineteenth century, Robert Scot lived in the house at least from 1800 to 1803, and Samuel Dobson lived in the house during the second decade of the nineteenth century. There is nothing in the records to show whether or not Hibbard ever occupied the premises.

William Zane, tanner, is the first person known to have rented the house from Hibbard. This Zane may be the same person who supplied "Brass Nails," "Ironmongery," and "Sundries" for construction work at Congress Hall in 1790, 1793 and 1795.[1]

In 1788 the Hibbard-Griffitts House was vacant and in the following year, Samuel Powel Griffitts began his occupancy (Illustration No. 4). Griffitts (1759-1826) is chiefly remembered today as the founder of the Philadelphia Dispensary, which was organized in 1786 to care for the poor in their own homes. He was a strong exponent of inoculation against smallpox and the Dispensary pioneered in providing this service for the poor. Griffitts was graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1781 and then continued his studies at Paris and Montpellier, and then at Edinburgh and London. While yet a student at the University, he administered to the wounded at the battle of Germantown. After his return to Philadelphia in 1784 he took an active part in charitable

works. A devout practice of the beliefs of the Friends led him to seek his patients, in his own words, "chiefly amongst the poor." He served the community as a manager and attending physician at the Dispensary. He was also a Secretary for the Abolition Society, a member of the Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, the Humane Society, the American Philosophical Society, and a charter member and vice-president of the College of Physicians. He was an overseer for the schools conducted by the Friends in and around Philadelphia from 1791 until 1815. He was professor of materia medica at the University of Pennsylvania. Griffitts also edited a medical journal, Eclectic Repertory, and the American edition of William Buchanan's Domestic Medicine (1797), and took an active part in the establishment of a sanitarium, the Friends Asylum, at Frankford.

A close friend of Dr. Benjamin Rush, Griffitts (who survived a serious attack of yellow fever in 1793 under Rush's care) supported Rush in the controversy over the treatment for this disease. Griffitts remained in the city and took an active part in the provisions made for the care of the poor during the epidemics of 1793, 1797-99, 1802, and 1805.

In 1793 he did not leave the city until October, when he was convalescing from a near fatal attack of the disease. During the other epidemics he remained in the city against the protests of his family and friends, long after all who could possibly afford to had left the city.

He noted on October 7, 1797: "About twenty three physicians have left the city." And on October 4, 1798: "But five of the regular Physicians remaining in the City and liberties--the rest gone, dead, sick...or occasional visitors." In his writings, there is no word of condemnation for the doctors who sought their own safety. In sharp contrast were the opinions of his friend, Dr. Rush, who wrote with scorn of advice given by"Dr. Kuhn in his lurking hole at Bethlehem."

A volume of correspondence of Griffitts, preserved at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, reflects various phases of his life: his letters from Paris and London to his mother and the daily letters from the city to his wife while he cared for yellow fever victims of 1798. This correspondence discloses the fact that four o'clock flowers were growing in the Griffitts' garden. It also discloses that Griffitts took part in whitewashing the house's interior, apparently as a preventative measure, during the epidemics of the 1790's. A journal on the yellow fever epidemic kept by Griffitts in 1798 is preserved at the College of Physicians. In this manuscript there is further evidence of Griffitts' concern for the poor; for example, he was instrumental in providing litters to carry the poor to the hospitals. His careful notes also reveal that he believed the validity of the radical methods advocated by Rush, bloodletting and purging, was demonstrated in Griffitts' own practice.

Dr. Griffitts, in founding the Philadelphia Dispensary, established his name permanently in the annals of early medicine in this country, but he should also be remembered as one who exemplified the ideals of his profession, as a contemporary wrote shortly after his death: "by his active benevolence and uncommon usefulness."

In 1800 Robert Scot (or Scott) moved into the house at 341 Walnut Street. Scot was an English engraver and watchmaker who had settled in Philadelphia about twenty years earlier. He worked as an engraver on the illustrations for Dobson's Encyclopedia (1794-1803), the first undertaking of the kind in this country. Scot also made a full-length line engraving of Washington. In 1793, he was appointed engraver to the United States Mint in Philadelphia. Scot held this position until 1820.[2]

On February 2, 1807, Joseph and Elizabeth Hibbard, children of Hezekiah Hibbard, sold the house at 341 Walnut Street to David Evans.[3] This Evans may be the cabinet and venetian blind maker who made and repaired venetian blinds for such historic buildings as Independence Hall and Congress Hall. However, Evans did not live in the house. In 1807, the Philadelphia directories listed his residences as 115 and 215 Mulberry [Arch] Street.

NOTES

Chapter II
Section 2
Notes

1. Historic Structures Report on Congress Hall, Part I, Independence National Historical Park, May 1959, Chapter II, Appendix B, p. 1; Appendix H, p. 1; Appendix E, p. 6.

2. Mantle Fielding, American Engravers upon Copper and Steel (Philadelphia, 1917), pp. 238-40, list of engravings made by Robert Scot.

3. Historic Structures Report on Congress Hall, Part I, Independence National Historical Park, May 1959, Chapter II, Appendix E, pp. 4 & 6.

EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

The house which formerly stood on Walnut Street, one door from Fourth Street, was not the scene of important historic events, nor did any of its owners or occupants play a conspicuous part in the Revolution or the establishment of the federal government. None of the occupants are among the better known figures of our early history, although two of them are assured a place of recognition within their own fields.

Robert Scot was an early figure of some note in the history of arts in our country.

Dr. Samuel Powel Griffitts was an eminent early American philanthropist. He was also acquainted with the leading men of his day. His home was located near the center of America's greatest medical community. The Dispensary, then located at the south side of Chestnut Street across from Strawberry Alley, was only a block and a half away. He was one of three prominent doctors who lived in this same block on Walnut Street. The others were Dr. William McIlvaine, whose house still stands at 315-17 Walnut Street, and the famous Dr. Benjamin Rush, one door from the corner of Third Street. The elder Dr. William Shippen resided a block away at the corner of Locust (then Prune) Street, the younger Dr. William Shippen a few doors away at 410 Locust Street.

Much of the social history of Philadelphia during the Federalist period is associated with the buildings on Walnut Street. Reconstruction of the Hibbard-Griffitts House would add a structure of value in interpreting this important facet of the Park story.

APPENDIX A

Contributionship Survey of 339 Walnut Street

Survey^{d} 2^{d} Aug^{t} 1784

A house belonging to Deborah Morriss Situate on the North Side of Walnut Street two doors below 4th Street where She dwells--

16 feet front 31 feet deep 3 Storys high 9 inch party walls. Two Rooms on a floor plaster partitions. Chimney Brests Surbass & Scerting in first & 2^{d} Storys. 3^{d} Story very plain. Garot plaster^{d} painted inside & out. Stair Case 10 by 8 ft. 3 Storys high and kitchen 18 by 12 feet. 2 Storys high 9 inch wall the whole about 12 years old

House	- 400
Stair Case & kitchen	100
	£ 500

Gung Bedford

D39

APPENDIX B

Contributionship Survey of 341 Walnut Street

I have Surveyed a brick House, Piassa & Kitchen for Mary E. Lawrence / in her trust for the devisees of Charles Evans. -- Situate on the North Side of Walnut Street, East of & next to the Corner of Fourth Street. The House being 16 feet front 33 feet deep, Piassa 10 feet by 8 feet, both three stories high, Kitchen 11-1/2 feet by 17 feet -- two stories high, 14 & 9 in. walls.-- The lower Story of the house is in one room & passage, with a small room, partly off of the Passage. the floor of com^{n} yellow pine, plain base & single mouldings, a bulk window front with circular corners, containing 24 lights, Glass 13 by 20^{in}, Shutters folding into a box on either Side, & plain Pilaster Shutters outside, a folding sash door, Glass 7 by 14 ^{ch} with Sliders, a door into the passage, a plain Entabliture across the whole.-- A folding sash door back, Glass 11 by 18^{in} with Sliders.-- The 2nd Story in two rooms, & short passage, the floor of com^{n} yellow pine, base & subbase round, single architraves & mouldings, one pannel'd chimney breast, one mantle shelf, recess, & two breast closets.-- Glass 8 by 10^{in} outside. Shutters front & back.-- The 3rd Story in two rooms & short passage, the floor of com^{n} yellow pine, plain base single architraves & mouldings two mantle shelves, & three closets.-- Glass 8 by 10^{in} outside shutters back-- The Garret in two rooms & box entry. floor of com^{n} yellow pine, plain base & single mouldings. two plain dormer windows. Glass 8 by 10^{in} & a trap door in the roof plain winding Stairs in the Piassa, with short rail at bottom, leading from the lower to the 3rd Story, & Straight Stairs between the rooms, thence to the garret. The Kitchen floor of com^{n} yellow pine, plain base round, single mouldings mantle shelf two closets & a plain dresser.-- Glass 8 by 10^{in} outside shutters.-- The 2nd Story in one Room, floor the same, plain base, single mouldings, mantle shelf & two breast closets, Glass 8 by 10^{in}. All the rooms except the Kitchen & Garret are papered.-- Cellar rough floored.--

5th M^{o} 9 1848. John C. Evans
Surveyor

Liberty of an Apothecary Store.
Policy N^{o} 7912 Dr 1800. - Dr 33.50
Agreed to be correct.
Thos. Evans

An Apothecary Shop therein.

[The following was written on the left border of the page:]

plain wooden Eaves front & back, tin gutters & pipes, Piassa roof of tin. rails on Kitchen roof.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Chapter II
Illustration No. 1

ORIENTATION REVIEWED

OPERATIONS REGION
WASHINGTON

INTERP. REGION
WASHINGTON

COOP. ACTV. REGION
WASHINGTON

DES. & CONST.
STERN
A.
E.
L.A.
WASHINGTON
A.
E.
L.A.

OTHER

PREPARED
DESIGNED
CONTRACT DRAWING
CHECKED

REVISED
DATE | INITIAL

RECOMMENDED
DATE
APPROVED

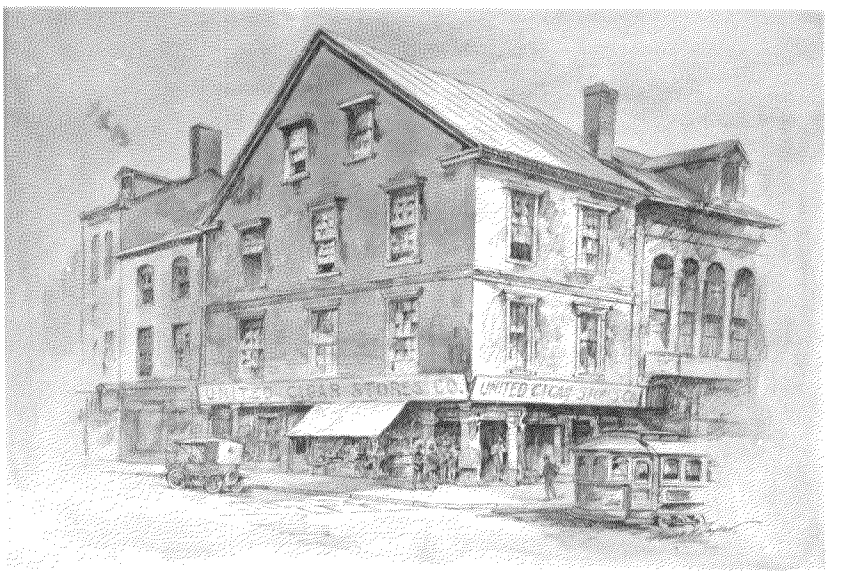
SCALE

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION
PREPARED BY
OFFICE

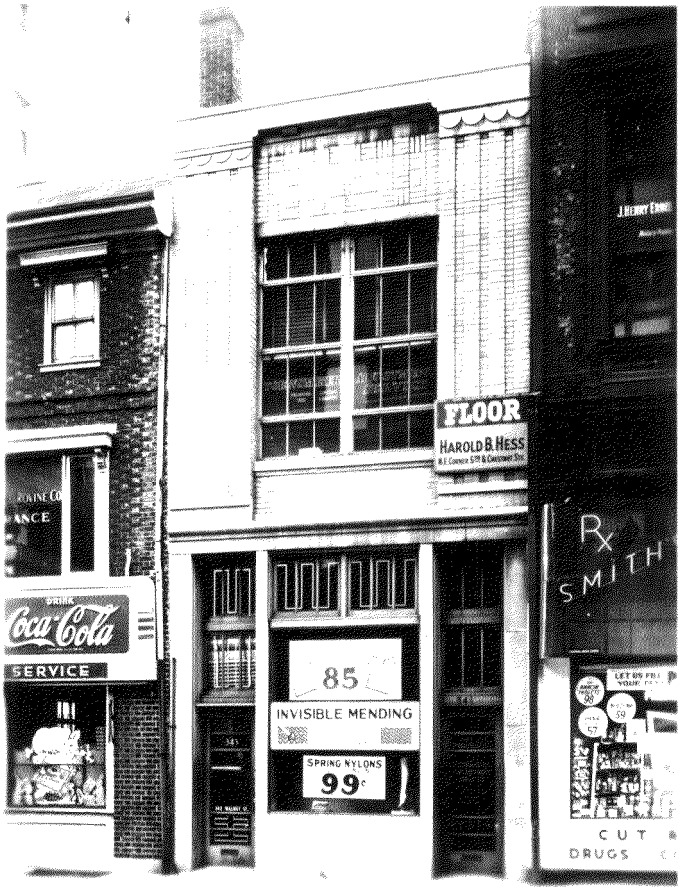
PROPOSED TREATMENT of HISTORIC HOUSES
TITLE OF DRAWING
NORTH SIDE of WALNUT STREET between 3rd and 4th
LOCATION (REVISION AREA)
INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
NAME OF AREA

REGION FIVE
PCF
SHEET 1 OF
DRAWING NO. 2500
DATE

BASIC DATA



Hibbard-Griffitts House as it appeared, much changed, in 1909 is to right of corner store (Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House). Note roof line, dormer and chimney represented in the Frank H. Taylor sketch which is in the Independence National Historical Park Collection.



341 Walnut Street previous to demolition, 1957.

Chapter II
Illustration No. 4



Drawing of Samuel Powel Griffitts
by Albert Newsam (1809-1864).
Courtesy of College of Physicians
of Philadelphia.

CHAPTER III

ARCHITECTURAL DATA

(To be submitted)

CHAPTER IV

ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA

Prepared by Archeologist B. Bruce Powell

ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

During demolition of the structure at 341 Walnut Street, routine observation was made on the progress of the work to discover, if possible, archeological evidence. Nothing thought to be of archeological value was observed; and no sub-surface features, inside or outside of the house, were found.

PREVIOUS ARCHEOLOGICAL REPORTS RELATING TO THE PROJECT

There are no previous archeological reports relating to the Hibbard-Griffitts House.

FURTHER RESEARCH NEEDED

No further research is needed. Portions of the party walls of the Hibbard-Griffitts House still remain beneath the present surface, but the excavation and study of these walls is not considered a necessary part of the research on the house. Aside from the expense involved, it is felt little if any information of an indispensable nature could be recovered. No secondary structures, such as a privy or a wall, were observed during demolition, and it is believed the historical importance of the tenants is not of sufficient stature to warrant a special search for such features in an attempt to recover artifact material.

CHAPTER V

FURNISHINGS AND EXHIBITION DATA

Prepared by Museum Curator David H. Wallace

EXISTING HISTORIC FURNISHINGS

No attempt has been made to trace the household possessions of any of the various eighteenth and early nineteenth century occupants of the Hibbard-Griffitts House. None are in the existing Park collection.

PROPOSED FURNISHING PLANS

Since it is not proposed to refurnish the Hibbard-Griffitts House as a Historic House Museum, no furnishing plans are needed. An exhibit plan for a relatively small on-site exhibit on the house and its early occupants will be prepared as soon as the necessary research is completed.

RECOMMENDATION FOR INTERPRETIVE DEVELOPMENT

Assuming that the Hibbard-Griffitts House will be occupied by the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture and the affiliated Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, it is recommended that interpretive development by the Park be limited to a small exhibit (two or three panels at most), accessible to the general public, illustrating the history of the house and its occupants, with particular emphasis on the distinguished contributions of Dr. Samuel Powel Griffitts to the life of Philadelphia when it was the nation's capital.