

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT, PART I
ON
CITY TAVERN
INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

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Prepared by

Staff

Independence National Historical Park

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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SIGNATURE SHEET

RECOMMENDED

Moanesson
Superintendent

Date 9/25/62

Regional Director

Date _____

Robert G. Hall (by memo)
Chief, Eastern Office, Division of Design & Construction

Date 10/24/62

APPROVED

Director

Date _____

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

H2215

September 25, 1962

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Northeast Region

From: Superintendent, Independence

Subject: Historic Structures Report, Part I, on City Tavern

Enclosed in triplicate is the Historic Structures Report, Part I,
on City Tavern for your review and distribution.

M. O. Anderson
Superintendent

Enclosures

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CHAPTER I
ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Prepared by Superintendent M. O. Anderson

Chapter I
Section 1
Page 1

NAME AND NUMBER OF BUILDING

City Tavern, Building No. 5.

PROPOSED USE OF STRUCTURE
AND JUSTIFICATION

It is recommended that City Tavern be reconstructed and refurnished, as recommended in chapter II, section 3, and chapter V, section 4, of this report. While we are not prepared to recommend an immediate first floor operating facility until further study of the means has been made and the permanent pattern of visitor use and the surrounding environment has stabilized, we indorse in principle the ultimate introduction of food and beverage services. This would follow an initial period of functioning as a fully furnished museum. During this interval, the way would be prepared for an operating facility by occasional use of the public rooms for gatherings and catered affairs for organized groups. Management problems would thus be encountered, studied, and resolved in advance of such use.

Provision should now be made for this future use by providing basic and required physical facilities while reconstruction is in progress. Deep cellars, such as have been found indispensable for the kitchens of the King's Arms at Williamsburg, should be constructed the full length of the combined building and piazza. Dumbwaiters connecting the kitchens and public rooms on the first and second floors should be installed in the walls while they can be located to advantage and in a manner which is unobtrusive.

Since the proposed future operating facility would ultimately be designed to further the interpretive program of Independence National Historical Park, it would probably not be practical to operate it on a

concession basis. Instead, it should be on the same footing as the Glass-house operation at Jamestown. Perhaps such an organization as the Philadelphia Restaurant Association or one of the national associations in the hotel or restaurant field could be interested in and considered for sponsoring the facility. Management could possibly be entrusted to the Eastern National Park and Monument Association or a similar cooperating association; if necessary, one might be formed for this special purpose.

When and as an operating facility might be introduced, it is estimated that each of the four first floor rooms could seat about twenty-five people. Alcoholic beverages would be served only in the rooms on one side of the hall, and prices would be set high enough to provide adequate controls. Access by both casual visitors and tour groups to the second floor would not be expected to be materially affected by such an operating facility. The central hall and staircase provide direct access to the second floor, and the stairs in the piazza allow for a one-way traffic circulation pattern. It is estimated that the key second floor interpretive stop, the Long Room, will accommodate up to 125 people at a time.

In periods of heavy visitation, it would be necessary to keep the first floor hall clear to facilitate traffic flow. Any overflow from an operating facility would have to await service under the awning out front, or perhaps on the open porch under the piazza. At less busy seasons, a small overflow could await service in the center hall.

Arrangements for such demonstrations as concerts will present no problems in a city such as Philadelphia with its many orchestras, chamber music groups, and music schools.

PROVISION FOR OPERATING
THE BUILDING

The house is proposed to be operated by the Service as a historic house museum, with food and beverage services to be introduced eventually by a cooperating agency yet to be named.

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE
OF COST

\$461,300.

CHAPTER II
HISTORICAL DATA

Prepared by Historian Miriam Quinn

STRUCTURAL HISTORY

City Tavern, "the most genteel one in America" according to John Adams, resulted from the desire of the Philadelphia gentry for a "large and commodious tavern" worthy of the largest and wealthiest colonial city. Funds for its erection were raised by subscription in 1772 and 1773. The subscription list was a veritable "who's who" of Philadelphia. Included among the subscribers were Governor John Penn, Chief Justice Benjamin Chew and Justice Thomas Willing of the provincial Supreme Court, John Dickinson, several members of the powerful Shippen, Tilghman, and Cadwalader families, and many of the city's most successful merchants. They subscribed some £1500 and borrowed £1000 more from Governor Penn.¹

In August 1772 the trustees appointed by the subscribers purchased a lot on the west side of south Second Street above Walnut from Thomas Proctor (see Appendix A for chain of title). On this site was constructed a spacious building, fronting 50 feet on Second Street and extending 46 feet along an alley. By April 1773 the trustees were seeking a tavernkeeper for the completed building.

Research to date has uncovered none of the records of construction of City Tavern. No contracts have survived. No plans or specifications are known to have been prepared although it is not too much to expect that they were drawn up for a building as large and important as this. It is perhaps more than mere coincidence that the design of the building anticipated in some respects the facades of Congress Hall and Old City Hall with their

raised pavilion fronts topped by a pediment. Henry Hill, designer of Congress Hall and Old City Hall, was among the subscribers and may have contributed his talents to this project. Situated on the northern fringe of an area of fine town houses, City Tavern attracted attention as an "elegant," "spacious," "commodious," and "handsome" building.

These qualities are apparent in the two contemporary views of City Tavern. The first, an engraving by William Birch dated 1800 (Illustration No. 1), and the other, a drawing by Benjamin Latrobe (Illustration No. 2), designer of the neighboring Bank of Pennsylvania, show a three story brick building with a projecting pedimented bay, a lunette in the tympanum. The gable end visible in both views has two chimneys. Those on the other end also can be seen, outlined above the roof. A cornice with modillions is also in evidence. Both also show shutterless sash windows in front with five openings per floor. Latrobe, with the interest and trained eye of an architect, includes several details omitted by Birch or hidden by the awning he shows. In the Latrobe view, the arched pedimented frontispiece at the front door, the vaulted flight of steps leading to it, and the suggestion of an areaway and doorway under the stairs, as well as the band courses, are clearly defined. He shows the cellar raised a half story above grade, sufficiently high that the window needed no areaway.

To the data gained from these views may be added the conductor head shown in Sachse's 1840 view (Illustration No. 3).

The insurance surveys of 1773 (Appendix B) and 1785 (Appendix C), supplemented by the later and more detailed ones of 1834 (Appendix D) and

1848 (Appendix E), provide important information on the interior appearance of City Tavern during the historic period. On the first floor a central hallway led through a "large arch" with "reeded pilasters and paneled soffit"² to a handsome open staircase with stair brackets, ramped mahogany rail, and a halfrail and open pilasters "up the wall of 2 stories." On each side of the hallway were two public rooms. In these rooms was centered the business of the city's better merchants. Here every afternoon they gathered from nearby docks, warehouses, and counting houses to "find out about market prices, to learn about ship movements, the records of which...[were] kept in a register, and to hear the news" over "refreshments and punch," and "treat one another."³

City Tavern, advertised as being equipped in the style of a London tavern, had one of these rooms appropriated as a coffee room where patrons could peruse American and English newspapers and magazines.⁴ By 1789 the two front rooms were set aside for use by the newly established Merchants' Coffee House and Place of Exchange. This did not, however, interfere with the use of the rest of the building as a tavern and hotel.⁵ To accommodate large groups at public entertainments, two of the "several large clubrooms" could be thrown into one room which extended the full depth of the building.⁶ City Tavern's dining room drew from a "...Larder ...supplied with the prime and earliest productions of the season." Customers were informed: "Large and small parties or single gentlemen, may be accommodated with breakfast, dinner, or supper at hours most convenient

to themselves. A cold collation is regularly kept." The bar provided such refreshments for hungry and thirsty Philadelphians and visitors as "Soups, Jellies, Ice Creams," offered "Gentlemen...the choicest of Wines, Spirituous Liquors and the most approved Malt Liquors, from London and other Breweries," and even stocked "a variety of French Liquors."⁷

These public rooms were "finish^d plain," their "Scerting Surbass fronts to Closets" and their double architaved windows and inside shutters (first described in the 1834 survey) the only features of note. The words "finish^d plain" may be taken to mean that other items of trim not detailed in the survey were present in the room. These would have included an unembellished cornice, a chair rail (the "Surbass" of the 1773 survey), a baseboard (the "Scerting" of the 1773 survey), fireplaces adequate in size for rooms of substantial proportions, doubtless faced in marble with wooden mantles and associated panelling. The "Scerting Surbass fronts to Closets" indicates that each room had one or more closets opening above and below the surbase (chair rail), perhaps without doors above. The function of the "clubrooms" required closets with adequate shelf space at hand for china, crystal, and linen. Rows of pegs placed in convenient locations in each of these public rooms served as the place for the patrons to hang their hats and coats.

One of the rooms contained the bar. Here the business of the house was transacted. This was not so prominent or unusual a fixture that it claimed special attention in contemporary descriptions.

On the second floor at the head of the stairs was the most elaborate room in the house, the Long Room, which extended the full width of the building. This room, where meetings, dinners, and balls were held, was entered through double folding doors and, according to Scharf and Westcott (II, 982), was "divided into boxes fitted with tables and elegantly lighted."⁸ Views of City Tavern indicate that there was a fireplace at each end of this room. Two windows flanked the northernmost one,⁹ while a windowless wall presented a setting for the other.¹⁰

In the Long Room was the outstanding ornamental feature of the entire building, referred to in the 1773 survey as consisting of "2 pedestals fluted pilasters & fram^d--Intablature with Cornish," and in the 1785 survey as "2 fluted Pilasters with pedestals and Intablature across the room with fretted cornice." These pilasters and pedestals may have been the terminal features of the chimney breasts of the southern fireplace, the entablature running across the breast and the cornice continuing around the room. In such an arrangement the "fram^d" element would have been a tabernacle or similar frame between the pilasters. Alternatively, these same words may be interpreted as meaning an entablature spanning the room ("across the room") supported at its ends by pilasters and pedestals. This structure removed a distance from a fireplace wall may have framed an orchestra* or platform. Some form of a raised surface had been present in the room some years before 1786, presumably installed when City Tavern was built.¹¹

* Orchestra, according to the Oxford English Dictionary: "That part of a theatre or other public building assigned to the band of performers or musical instruments (and, in a concert-room, to the chorus of singers). A building or structure for a band of instrumental performers; a band stand." (See Appendix G for further discussion of the orchestra.)

William Ellery refers to this orchestra in his description of a Fourth of July banquet held there in 1778:

The glorious fourth of July, I celebrated in the City Tavern with Brother Delegates of Congress and a number of other Gentlemen, amounting in the whole to about 80,--the anniversary of Independency. The entertainment was elegant and well conducted. There were four Tables spread, two of them extended the whole length of the Room, the other two crossed them at right angles. At the end of the Room opposite the upper Table, was erected an Orchestra. At the head of the upper table and at the President's right hand stood a large baked Pudding, in the centre of which was planted a Staff on which was displayed a crimson Flag, in the midst of which was this emblematic device: An eye, denoting Providence, a Label in which was inscribed an appeal to heaven; a man with a drawn sword in one hand, and in the other the Declaration of Independency, and at his feet a scroll inscribed "The declaratory acts." As soon as the Dinner began, the Musick consisting of Clarinets, Haut-boys, French horns, Violins and Bass Viols, opened and continued making proper pauses until it was finished. Then the Toasts followed each by a discharge of Fieldpieces, were drank, and so the afternoon ended. In the evening there was a cold collation and a brilliant exhibition of Fireworks.¹²

Included among the room's other details were a baseboard and chair rail and windows having double architraves and inside shutters.

Elsewhere on the second floor were two rooms, one on each side of the stairs. They were finished in the same manner as those on the first floor; that is, with baseboard, chair rail, closets, and double architraves to the windows. According to the 1834 survey, these windows had outside rather than inside shutters. These rooms, which served as withdrawing rooms during social affairs and as private rooms for dinners and meetings, communicated through doorways with the Long Room. It was into one of these rooms "adjoining" the Long Room that the stricken Charles Thomson was carried during the meeting protesting the closing of the port of Boston.

The third story was in five rooms of unexceptional character, "finish^d plain" as were the first and second floor rooms. Here were accommodations for guests. "Finish^d plain" in the third floor bedrooms may be assumed to have had different meaning than in the rooms of the first two floors. The Birch and Latrobe prints show a lower story and windows in proportion. Presumably the scale and elaborateness of the interiors bore the same relationship. Bedroom closets with a single shelf and pegs for guests' apparel would be expected in the rooms on this floor.

The garret added an undetermined number of bedrooms to City Tavern for less affluent guests or servants. The two windows in the gable shown in the Birch print (doubtless matched by two at the other gable) suggest as many as four rooms. The early surveys state only that the garret was plastered. These simple rooms would have had a beaded baseboard, pegs and shelving, and little else. Fireplaces almost without exception were omitted from garret floors of Philadelphia houses, City Tavern doubtless as well.

The 1773 survey states that most of the rooms throughout the house had "Straight Joint floors." The important rooms, it is so implied, had floors of tongue and groove boarding, secret-nailed.

The cellars are little known to us. It is certain they contained a center passage and two large kitchens,¹³ a wine cellar, wood storage space, wash facilities, and an ice house. But the number and disposition of divisions has not been determined.

Along the rear of City Tavern was a piazza, 28 by 11 feet, with "a poarch under it with Ramp^d Rails & Balisters and Stairs down to the

kitchen."¹⁴ This structure, commonplace to urban taverns, provided a covered entrance for guests and a service passage connecting the kitchens and public rooms (see Appendix H).

Because of the scarcity of records, any repairs or changes made to City Tavern during the historic period are unknown at this time. The building remained in use as a tavern through several changes in ownership and management. Late in 1784 the subscribers authorized the sale of City Tavern by the trustees. Samuel Powel purchased the lot and building at public sale for £3000 and received title in April 1785. Upon his death in 1793 the property passed to his widow, Elizabeth, who leased the building to a succession of tavernkeepers and a Committee of Merchants.

Later prints and drawings show a building which varied somewhat in form as remodelling overtook it in a less fortunate age. Dormers cropped out of the roof as the pediment disappeared (Illustration No. 3). Enlargements added two rear structures (Illustrations No. 4 and 5). In 1834, a disastrous fire gutted the upper stories. It was rebuilt and reopened as a tavern, but soon came to serve as an auction house. Finally, in 1854, it was taken down.

NOTES

Chapter II
Section 1
Notes

1. Declaration of Trust of the Subscribers of City Tavern, February 9, 1776, Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, American Philosophical Society.
2. Philadelphia Contributionship Resurvey of No. 1767, November 20, 1834. This feature first received mention in this 1834 survey, but it was undoubtedly an original feature of City Tavern, fully in keeping with its architecture.
3. Kenneth Roberts and Anna M. Roberts, eds. and trans., Moreau de St. Méry's American Journey [1793-1798] (Garden City, N. Y., 1947), p. 354.
4. Pennsylvania Packet, February 14, 1774.
5. Ibid., January 20, 1789.
6. Pennsylvania Gazette, April 21, 1773.
7. American Daily Advertiser, May 26, 1796.
8. Philadelphia Contributionship Resurvey of No. 1767, November 20, 1834.
9. The Birch and Latrobe views of City Tavern show the two second floor windows on the northern wall in slightly different positions. It is believed, however, that in this matter Latrobe is to be relied upon when he shows two windows east of the gable ridge, thus indicating that two windows were in the Long Room.
10. Philadelphia Contributionship Loose Survey, No. 461, December 7, 1759; ibid., (Resurvey), August 3, 1785; Philadelphia Contributionship Survey Book, 1795-1824, p. 21, December 23, 1799.

The Birch and Latrobe views show that the building immediately to the south of City Tavern abutted it. This structure, erected by 1759, was situated in such a way to have precluded windows on the southern wall of the Long Room.
11. Pennsylvania Journal, October 18, 1786.
12. Henrietta C. Ellery, ed., "Diary of William Ellery of Rhode Island, June 28-July 23, 1778," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XI, 477-478.
13. Pennsylvania Gazette, April 21, 1773.
14. Philadelphia Contributionship Survey Book, I, 54, November 2, 1773.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

On the evening of August 29, 1774, the Massachusetts delegates to the First Continental Congress approached Philadelphia and the end of their long and tiring trek. Several other delegates and some gentlemen of the city rode to the outskirts of Philadelphia to welcome the two Adamses and their colleagues--men certain to be influential in the forthcoming meetings. As John Adams wrote in his diary:

We then rode into Town, and dirty, dusty, and fatigued as we were, we could not resist the Importunity to go to the Tavern, the most genteel one in America. There we were introduced to a Number of other Gentlemen of the City--Dr. Shippen, Dr. Knox, Mr. Smith, and a Multitude of others, and to Mr. Lynch and Mr. Gadsden of S. Carolina. Here we had a fresh Welcome to the City of Philadelphia, and after some Time spent in Conversation a curtain was drawn, and in the other Half of the Chamber a Supper appeared as elegant as ever laid upon a Table. About Eleven oClock we retired.¹

The tavern to which the delegates and politically-minded citizens gravitated was new to the Philadelphia of 1774. Built by a "voluntary subscription of the principal gentlemen of the city for the convenience of the public,"² City Tavern had become in less than a year since its completion a political and social center of the largest city in British America. One observer writing in October 1773 had noted:

From the Coffee-House and the New Tavern I expect abundant matter for speculation. The political, commercial, literary and religious interests of the province will there, no doubt, be learnedly discussed by many a Knot of grave and sensible freeholders....³

City Tavern, the "largest and most elegant" tavern in America, was furnished and equipped "in the style of a London Tavern." Daniel

Smith, its first keeper, "fitted up several elegant bedrooms detached from noise, and as private as in a lodging house," and "a genteel Coffee Room well attended and properly supplied with English and American papers and magazines."⁴

Just three months before the arrival of the delegates to the Continental Congress, City Tavern had been the scene of the first of many meetings which helped to mold the political future of the Colonies. On May 19, 1774, Paul Revere rode into Philadelphia, bringing with him the news of the closing of the Boston port. Immediately, the principal inhabitants of the city were called to a meeting to be apprised of the contents of the letters received from Boston and to determine upon a course of action. A heterogeneous group of two or three hundred citizens, including representatives of the proprietary party and men such as John Dickinson, Thomas Mifflin, and Charles Thomson, crowded into the Long Room of City Tavern on May 20. By a pre-arranged plan, Joseph Reed first addressed the meeting, "with temper, moderation, but in pathetic terms"; Mifflin followed him, but spoke with "more warmth and fire." Then Thomson pleaded for an immediate declaration in favor of Boston and for making common cause with her. The clamor caused by Thomson's radical exhortations, although allayed momentarily while the respected John Dickinson held the floor, continued throughout the meeting. The tumult and disorder were, according to Charles Thomson, "past description."⁵ A committee was appointed to extend the sympathy of Philadelphians to the people of Boston for "their unhappy situation,"

to acknowledge that Boston was "suffering in the general cause," to recommend to them "firmness, prudence and moderation," and to pledge that Philadelphia would continue to evince a "firm adherence to the cause of American liberty."⁶ Then "the company broke up in tolerable good humor, both [factions] thinking they had in part carried their part."⁷

The next day the Committee of Correspondence met and prepared the letter Paul Revere was to carry back to Boston. More important and significant in the long-run, however, was the letter drawn up to accompany the news from Boston to the southern colonies "intimating the necessity of a Congress of delegates from all the Colonies to devise measures necessary to be taken for the common safety."⁸

The actual call for a congress of all the American colonies went forth from a group of Virginia patriots assembled at Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg just seven days after the meeting in Philadelphia's City Tavern. This idea was received with favor among other patriots, and in the course of the next few months the Continental Congress began to materialize.

Late in the summer of 1774, delegates began to arrive in Philadelphia for the meetings called for September. The new City Tavern, also known as Smith's, became the unofficial meeting place of the delegates before the actual convening of the sessions. John Adams and the other delegates, who had met informally there on the night of the arrival of the Massachusetts delegation, returned to Smith's two nights later. At

that time the twenty-five delegates already in Philadelphia met.⁹ As delegates drifted into Philadelphia, either alone or in groups, they made their way to City Tavern, there to meet their colleagues, sound them out informally in the relaxed atmosphere of the tavern on the issues which pressed so on their minds, and to map out their strategems. Here John Adams met for the first time Richard Henry Lee, Peyton Randolph, and Colonel George Washington of Virginia. Here men found others sympathetic to their point of view and "sized up" their opponents. Caucusing began at once.

On the morning of September 5, 1774, occurred the first significant encounter between the opposing factions. At ten o'clock, the delegates assembled at City Tavern. Bypassing conservative leader Joseph Galloway's offer of the Assembly Room at the State House (Independence Hall), they proceeded to Carpenters' Hall to view its rooms. There they decided to hold the official sessions of the Congress.¹⁰

Throughout the time that the Congress deliberated and debated in Carpenters' Hall, City Tavern served as a rallying point for the delegates. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, an unofficial member of the Maryland delegation, lodged there, and Colonel Washington, among others, dined and spent evenings there "in a Club."¹¹

On the afternoon of September 16, the delegates assembled at City Tavern. They then proceeded to the State House, but a few blocks away, to be "elegantly entertained by the gentlemen of this city" with a dinner accompanied by music and a discharge of cannon.¹²

Nearly two months of debates and deliberations by the Congress resulted in the adoption of the "Association" and in the passage of a Declaration of Rights and Grievances addressed to the people of Great Britain and a petition to the King. As the meetings drew to a close, the Pennsylvania Assembly entertained Congress at City Tavern on October 20, 1774. The entire House of Representatives joined the delegates, so that nearly one hundred guests gathered for "a most elegant entertainment." Here the prayerful toast was made: "May the sword of the parent never be stained with the blood of her children."¹³

On October 26, 1774, the First Continental Congress adjourned and the delegates began preparations for their departure. However, that evening all the members of Congress and some of the leading gentlemen of Philadelphia gathered for one final meeting at City Tavern.¹⁴ It may be surmised that here the delegates reflected upon the official debates and resolutions of the meetings in Carpenters' Hall and also upon the informal unofficial caucuses and discussions, so important to the eventual outcome and success of the Congress, which had taken place over dinner, coffee, a glass of punch or more ardent spirits in the rooms of City Tavern.

With the departure of the delegates from Philadelphia, quieter days descended upon Smith's Tavern on south Second Street. It served as the meeting place for various local groups, including the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick and St. George's Society, and as a focal point in local political and social life.

On the afternoon of April 24, 1775, an express rider from Trenton galloped into Philadelphia and rode directly to City Tavern. There he delivered his message: American and British forces had clashed at Lexington and Concord.¹⁵

Shortly after this, the delegates to the Second Continental Congress began their entrance into Philadelphia. Once again an enthusiastic group of citizens greeted the delegates from Boston at the outskirts of the city and, accompanied by "military Companys, one of Rifle men," escorted them, with music, to City Tavern.¹⁶

With the convening of the Second Continental Congress, City Tavern again came to the fore as the scene of informal meetings, caucuses, and friendly dinners. Here the delegates, released from the rule of secrecy which covered the debates and deliberations of Congress, could and did speak freely and openly.¹⁷

Eight of the most influential delegates, Randolph, Lee, Washington, and Harrison of Virginia, Alsop of New York, Chase of Maryland, and Rodney and Read of Delaware, made City Tavern their unofficial headquarters by establishing a "table" there every night. On Saturday evening, all the delegates gathered for a general dinner at Smith's tavern.¹⁸

The Pennsylvania Committee of Safety, which included such illustrious men as Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris, and Thomas Wharton, held a meeting at Smith's in August 1775.¹⁹ From a window of City Tavern where he was kept prisoner, Major Skene, a British officer, tested the moderation of

the crowd of American patriots gathered to witness his departure by roaring out "God save great George our King."²⁰ Nor was he the last British officer to be imprisoned there, for a number of them were housed in Smith's tavern through the spring and summer of 1776.²¹

The first anniversary of independence, July 4, 1777, was a day of festivity in Philadelphia, marked with illuminations, bonfires, and parades. Congress celebrated by dining with some of the military at City Tavern.²² In March Congress had attended a dinner given in honor of President Thomas Wharton of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania at City Tavern by the state government.²³

Activities at the City Tavern did not cease with the departure of the Congress from Philadelphia and the occupation of the city by the British from September 1777 to June 1778. Here, at balls given each Thursday evening, elegantly dressed Tories mingled with British officers. General courts-martial held by the British while in Philadelphia convened in the rooms of City Tavern.²⁴

Shortly after returning to Philadelphia, the delegates celebrated the second anniversary of American independence with a number of other gentlemen at an elegant and well-conducted entertainment at the City Tavern.

There were four Tables spread, two of them extended the whole length of the Room, the other two crossed them at right angles. At the end of the Room opposite the upper Table, was erected an Orchestra.²⁵

Following his reception by Congress at the State House, Monsieur Gérard, minister plenipotentiary from the court of France, was entertained

by Congress at City Tavern, now kept by Gifford Dalling. Gérard reciprocated on August 23 by giving a grand entertainment for the President and members of Congress and the chief civil and military men of the city to celebrate the birthday of King Louis XVI.²⁶

Dances and gala balls, dinners given by the Commonwealth or Congress to celebrate occasions such as the anniversaries of independence and the French alliance or to honor men such as General Washington, and small informal gatherings of members of Congress where politics was undoubtedly the top of conversation continued to make City Tavern a place of social and political importance in the Philadelphia of the late 1770's and throughout the next two decades. Activities at City Tavern, however, were not limited to the political and social realms. Here Philadelphia life in all its aspects was reflected. Here citizens gathered to discuss methods to stabilize the currency and to organize and establish the Bank of Pennsylvania. Merchants and traders frequented City Tavern and used its rooms for their discussions on the state of trade and there established a Chamber of Commerce.

The birth of the French dauphin provided occasion for a grand dinner to be held, attended by the French minister, the principal civil officers, the members of Congress and the Pennsylvania Assembly, the clergy, and other distinguished citizens. Upon his arrival in Philadelphia in 1783, the Dutch ambassador, Van Berkel, lived at City Tavern, managed since late in 1779 by George Evans. The Dancing Assembly and City Concerts

made City Tavern a focal point in the cultural and social life of Philadelphia (see Appendix F).

In 1787 the Constitutional Convention convened in the State House. Washington, president of the Convention, attended concerts at City Tavern and dined there as before "with a club."²⁷ Once again City Tavern, now kept by Edward Moyston, served as a gathering place and discussion center. As the Convention neared its conclusion, the Philadelphia troops selected City Tavern as the site for their "splendid entertainment" honoring General Washington on September 15, 1787. And on September 17 "the business[of the Convention] being closed, the members adjourned to the City Tavern, dined together and took a cordial leave of each other."²⁸

President-elect Washington's triumphal entry into Philadelphia on April 20, 1789, culminated with an "elegant entertainment of 250 Covers, at the City Tavern, prepared for him by the citizens of Philadelphia. A band of music played during the entertainment, and a discharge of artillery took place at every toast,..." Washington spent the night there before he continued his trip to New York.²⁹

In January 1789 there opened in the two front rooms of City Tavern the Merchants' Coffee House and Place of Exchange, established by the subscription of merchants, ship captains, and other gentlemen of Philadelphia. This effected in no way the operation of the rest of the building as a tavern and hotel by Moyston. Here gentlemen and their families were "accomodated, as usual, with the most superior Liquors, at reasonable rates,

and every Article for the Table [was] served up with elegance, in either the French or English stile."³⁰ At the Coffee House, records of ship arrivals and departures were kept, and here the principal merchants of the city reported each day. Moyston and his successor, Samuel Richardet, supplied their customers not only with the daily papers of Philadelphia and of other American cities, but also with the most important and interesting journals from Europe.³¹

As before, Washington's entry into Philadelphia in September 1790 caused great celebration. The Corporation of Philadelphia provided "a most superb entertainment" for him and his party at City Tavern, attended by innumerable city, state, and federal officials.³²

During the 1790's, while Philadelphia served as the nation's capital, members of the federal government lived, ate, and drank at City Tavern, as had their predecessors in the 1770's. Here in 1793 was celebrated the French victory over the Austrians and Prussians and the anniversary of the Franco-American alliance, and here the citizens of Philadelphia presented their greeting to Genet. Here the merchants of the city honored Alexander Hamilton in 1795 when he retired from public life.³³

Although late in the 1790's City Tavern was not frequented as before by members of Congress³⁴ and one congressman "found it very noisy and disagreeable,"³⁵ it continued to be a great center of activity. Now, however, it was chiefly the scene of sales and auctions and of meetings relating to every aspect of Philadelphia life--social, cultural, political, and economic. Public dinners continued to be held here in great numbers.

About the turn of the century, City Tavern began to lose its prominence. Dinners continued to be held there, but it served chiefly as an exchange. As Moreau de St. Méry noted about 1798:

...Each day an officer goes from there [City Tavern] to the lower part of the river at least as far as Newcastle, depending on the weather and the season, to find what vessels are expected or which are preparing to sail from Newcastle. All this is paid for by assessment levied on the merchants.³⁶

James Kitchen, who had taken over the tavern from Samuel Richardet in 1799, continued as the proprietor until 1823, and it was during this period that it gained its fame as a commercial institution.

Interest in the erection of a new exchange by the Chamber of Commerce was manifested in 1821, and Elizabeth Powel indicated a willingness to sell her City Tavern property for this purpose.³⁷ However, the new Exchange, designed by William Strickland, was erected on Third Street, and it was here that the merchants moved in March 1834 following a fire at City Tavern, or as it was known then, the Merchants' Coffee House.³⁸

Now City Tavern moved into a period of decline and obscurity.

In 1854 the long and illustrious history of City Tavern concluded with the razing of the building to make way for new brownstone buildings.

NOTES

Chapter II
Section 2
Notes

1. Lyman H. Butterfield, ed., Diary and Autobiography of John Adams (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), II, 114.
2. Pennsylvania Packet, February 14, 1774.
3. Ibid., October 25, 1773.
4. Ibid., February 14, 1774.
5. Charles Thomson to William Henry Drayton, Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, II, 412-417. This quarterly hereafter cited as PMHB.
6. Pennsylvania Packet, June 6, 1774.
7. Charles Thomson to W. H. Drayton, PMHB, II, 412-417.
8. Ibid.
9. Butterfield, ed., Diary and Autobiography of John Adams, II, 118-119; Edmund C. Burnett, ed., Letters of Members of the Continental Congress (Washington, 1921), I, 5.
10. Butterfield, ed., Diary and Autobiography of John Adams, II, 122; Burnett, ed., Letters...Continental Congress, I, 6, 8, 10.
11. Charles Carroll of Carrollton to Charles Carroll of Annapolis, September 7, 1774, Charles Carroll Papers, III, 69, Massachusetts Historical Society; John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., The Diaries of George Washington, 1748-1799 (Boston, 1925), II, 162-165.
12. Pennsylvania Packet, September 19, 1774.
13. Butterfield, ed., Diary and Autobiography of John Adams, II, 155.
14. Ibid., II, 157.
15. J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884 (Philadelphia, 1884), I, 295.
16. Butterfield, ed., Diary and Autobiography of John Adams, II, 161. This is an entry for May 10, 1775, from Robert Treat Paine's Diary.
17. John Adams to James Warren, October 7, 1775, Warren-Adams Papers, I, Massachusetts Historical Society.

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18. George Read to Mrs. Read, May 18, 1775, Burnett, ed., Letters...Continental Congress, I, 92.
19. "Minutes of the Council of Safety," Colonial Records, Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania (Harrisburg, 1852), X, 302-304.
20. John S. Littell, ed., Alexander Graydon's Memoirs of his own Time (Philadelphia, 1846), 127-128.
21. Pennsylvania Evening Post, February 1, 1776; Journals of the Continental Congress (Washington, 1906), IV, 389; Ibid., V, 639, 642; T. Hesketh to John Hancock, July 15, 1776, Elias Boudinot Papers, Library of Congress; Thomas Gamble to Richard Peters, July 30, 1776, ibid.
22. George Bryan to Mrs. Bryan, July 4, 1777, Amer. 1777, II, 76, Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library; Journal: Treasury Office and Auditor of Accounts, April 16, 1776-September 20, 1781, p. 150, R. G. 39, National Archives; David Grier to Anthony Wayne, July 5, 1777, PMHB, XL, 369.

The Congress, by August 7, 1777, owed Daniel Smith of the City Tavern \$832.47/90. Of this \$102.69/90 was for "Materials, workmanship, etc. furnished for the Fireworks on the 4th July," while \$729.68/90 was "for his Bill of expences of Congress on the 4th July last; including a balance of an old account."--Board of Treasury Reports, August 7, 1777, Force Transcripts, Box 88, p. 183, Library of Congress.
23. Pennsylvania Packet, March 11, 1777; Journal of House of Representatives, November 28, 1776-October 2, 1781, p. 130.
24. Rebecca Frank to Mrs. William Pace, February 26, 1778, PMHB, XVI, 216; British Orderly Book, February 23-May 30, 1778, Rutgers University.
25. Henrietta C. Ellery, ed., "Diary of the Hon. William Ellery of Rhode Island, June 28-July 23, 1778," PMHB, XI, 477-478.
26. Journals of the Continental Congress, XI, 814; Journal: Treasury Office and Auditor of Accounts, April 16, 1776-September 20, 1781, p. 221, R. G. 39, National Archives; Pennsylvania Packet, August 25, 1778.
27. Fitzpatrick, ed., The Diaries of George Washington, III, 219.
28. Ibid., III, 237.

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29. Pennsylvania Gazette, April 22, 1789; Pennsylvania Packet, April 21, 1789.
30. Pennsylvania Packet, January 20, 1789.
31. Henry Wansye, The Journal of an Excursion to the United States of North America in the Summer of 1794 (London, 1796), 97; Philadelphia Gazette and Universal Daily Advertiser, January 4, 1794; American Daily Advertiser, May 26, 1796.
32. Gazette of the United States, September 8, 1790; American Museum, VIII, Appendix IV, 6; Jacob C. Parsons, ed., Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer (Philadelphia, 1893), 163.

For this entertainment the City of Philadelphia paid Edward Moyston £153.--Minutes of City Council, 1789-1793, Municipal Archives, Philadelphia.
33. American Daily Advertiser, February 7, 1793; Gazette of the United States, May 22, 1793; [Worcester] Massachusetts Spy, March 4, 1795.
34. Aurora: General Advertiser, March 9, 1798.
35. Joseph Nicholson to Mrs. Nicholson, October 3, 1799, Shippen Family of Pennsylvania Papers, Library of Congress.
36. Kenneth Roberts and Anna M. Roberts, trans. and eds., Moreau de St. Méry's American Journey (Garden City, 1947), 354.
37. E. S. Burd to Elizabeth Powel, May 29, 1821, Elizabeth Powel Papers, Box: Business Papers 1811-1857, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; [Elizabeth Powel] to James Fisher, June 1, 1821, Ibid.
38. H. Belin Dupont, ed., "Excerpts from Notebook of Francis Gurney Smith, April 12, 1819-November 21, 1852," p. 5-6, INHP.

EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

City Tavern has been regarded from the inception of the Independence National Historical Park Project as one of the focal points for interpreting the story of Independence. In its rooms the founding fathers charted the course to be followed in 1774 and later. To its public rooms they repaired for informal conversation around the dining table. Here opinions were exchanged and differences composed. The movement to nationhood can scarcely be comprehended without reference to this meeting place. It has been said that City Tavern ranks with Franklin's House as the place "out of chambers" where successively delegates and representatives shaped the destinies of America.

Reconstruction of City Tavern is provided in the approved chapter I, Master Plan for Independence National Historical Park.

It is a foregone conclusion that the reconstructed City Tavern will be refurnished.

In interpreting City Tavern it will be essential to recapture as much as possible of the atmosphere encountered by Washington, Adams, and their colleagues. Refurnishing as an historic house museum will be but the first step to realization of this goal. The second step would be operating City Tavern as a dining facility. Thus, to the comfortable but mute furnishings of the public rooms would be added the sounds, sights, and odors of meals in good company which will enable visitors more fully to experience life as it was in City Tavern.

This operating facility would serve two most important interpretive purposes.

First, it would permit those visitors who wished to do so to experience one aspect of Philadelphia life: to eat the food and quaff the drink of the eighteenth century amidst the atmosphere of that era. For many visitors, it would be a unique and long-remembered experience. For all, it would help bridge the gap between the twentieth century and the eighteenth and enable them to see the makers of the great events commemorated within the Park as men who really lived and who were present, eating and drinking and working and planning, within these buildings.

Secondly, the odors and noise and feel of people would help create for the visitor using the other facilities the sense of the busy, bustling tavern this once was, a sense vital to a true understanding of the building and the events which took place there.

These public rooms would be open during the hours regularly observed by the proprietors. Dishes of eighteenth century Philadelphia from a limited but varying menu would be offered at meal times, and such refreshments then available at the bar as alcoholic beverages, soups, jellies, ice cream, tea and coffee by the pot, and "cold collations" during business hours. Private parties would be accommodated in first and second floor rooms upon reservation as in the old days.

The third step would be arrangements for interpretive demonstrations of those social activities for which eighteenth century City Tavern

was noted. The Philadelphia Dancing Assembly, still a robust institution long since removed to the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, might be encouraged to return annually to the Long Room for a representative program of archaic dancing forms. Concerts and chamber music were popular then at City Tavern and should be instituted again on the "orchestra" (stage) of the Long Room. Banquets on civic occasions and by fraternal and social organizations were features of City Tavern's busy calendar. These might be re-introduced.

The fourth step would be recognition through dignified, appropriate means of those political, economic, and other activities which once frequently took place in City Tavern's public rooms.

Concurrently, tour groups and casual visitors will be admitted to City Tavern to view the house from the hallway and, proceeding to the second floor, view the Long Room. Here, at the first stop along the Park tour route, they will learn how at City Tavern a chain of events leading to Independence was set into motion.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

CHAIN OF TITLE TO THE CITY TAVERN PROPERTY

Ex-Record Book I, 184

25th day 4th mo. 1684

William Penn
to
John Goodson

A certain Lot of land lying and being in Philadelphia Containing in breadth fifty one foot & in length on the North side of the sd Lott from the second street to the swamp Two hundred forty three foot & from the swamp to the second street on the south side of the sd Lott Two hundred and fifteen foot bounded Northward with John Moons Lott Eastward with the second street from Delaware Southward with John Persons Lott westward with the swamp...

Rec. 14th 3rd mo. 1690

Deed Bk. I-4, 302-304

5th mo. [July] 3rd, 1703

John Goodson-Chyrurgeon
to
Edward Shippen-Merchant
£550

That Lott of Land Situate Lying and being in the said City of Philadelphia Containing in breadth 51 foot and in length on the Northside of the Lott from the Second Street to the Swamp 243 foot and from the Swamp to the Second Street on the South side of said Lott 215 foot. Bounded N--by John Moon E--Second St. S--John Persons W--Swamp

Rec. June 8, 1768

Deed Bk. I-4, 425-427

January 10, 1760

Samuel Emlen, Merchant--executor of will of
Samuel Powell (grandfather) deceased
to
Samuel Powell--(grandson, devisee in will)
£1000 (for services)

[By Powell's will, after fee paid, the grantee was to receive as follows:]

A certain lot of ground situate in the said City
Containing in Front on Second Street 102'. Bounded East
with same Street, South with Walnut Street, West with
Dock Street, and North with an alley leading out of
Second Street into Dock street &ca.

Rec. July 25, 1768

Deed Bk. D-6, 107-110

Apr. 29, 1771

Samuel Powell--Esquire
& Elizabeth, h/w
to
Thomas Proctor--Carpenter
Cons: rent (\$166-1/2 Sp. milled & 9 pence)

All that lot & piece of ground situate on the west
side of Second Street from the River Delaware...contain-
ing in breadth on said street 51' and in length 123'.
Bounded N.ward by lot now or late of John Moon, west-
wardly other ground of Samuel Powell at the distance of
123' from Second street, Southward by other ground of
Samuel Powell and eastward with Second street.

Within 3 yrs. to build & finish on said lot a good
brick messuage, at least 17' front, 3 stories high.

Rec. Jan. 29, 1783.

Deed Bk. I-13, 141-142

Aug. 22, 1772

Thomas Proctor--Carpenter
& Mary, h/w
to
Edward Shippen, Jr.)
George Clymer }
Henry Hill }
Joseph Shippen, Jr.)--Esquires
John Cadwalader }
John Wilcocks }
Samuel Meredith }
Cons: 10 ph.

lot or piece of ground situate on
West side of Second St. containing
in front on said street 51' & in
depth 100'. Bounded N--John Moon
W--grd. of Thomas Proctor S--grd
of Samuel Powell E--2nd St.
Subj. to yrly rental of \$166-1/2 &
9 pence.

Rec. July 14, 1774

Deed Bk. D-13, 159

Apr. 12, 1785

Shff. Thomas Proctor
to
Samuel Powell
£3000

Deed Poll
vs.
Edw. Shippen, Jr., et al

All That lot or piece of ground, with the Capital
Messuage or Tenement thereon erected, Situate on the West
side of Second Street, Containing in breadth on said
Street 51' & in length or depth 100'. Bounded Northward
with lot of ground now or late of John Morris, Westward
by ground of Thos. Proctor, whereof this is a part, South-
ward by ground of Samuel Powell, Eastward by Second St.

Ack. Apr. 15, 1785
Rec. May 2, 1785.

Will Book W, 569-570

Mar. 11, 1793

Will of Samuel Powell

To my wife, Elizabeth Powell, all my real & personal property
except if she has a child.

Proven Nov. 11, 1793.

Will Book 9, 422-423

May 22, 1819
[Jan. 29, 1830]

Will of Elizabeth Powell

To my niece, Dorothy W. Francis, all that house and
lot of ground situate on the West side of Second Street
called the City Tavern & the house and lot thereto adjoin-
ing being the estate rented by me to the Committee of
Merchants Also a house and lot on Walnut Street between
Second and Third Streets in the occupancy of Gabriel Coit
for her natural life. On her death the property is to be
sold by executors: William White, Edward Burd, Thomas
Mayne Willing, Edward Shippen Burd Proceeds to go to Ann
Francis, 2/6; William Francis, 1/6; John Francis, 1/6;
Mary Page, 1/6; Thomas Francis, 1/6; all children of
Dorothy W. Francis.

Proven Jan. 29, 1830.

Deed Bk. A.W.M.-76, 128-134

July 31, 1848

Edward Shippen Burd--surviving executor of Elizabeth Powell Estate
to
Charles Lenning--Chemist & Druggist
\$21,500

[Two lots] Beginning at the southwest corner of Delaware Second Street and of a certain 18' alley or street extending from said Second Street to Dock Street called Bank Alley thence extg. westardly along the Southerly side of Said Bank alley 99'5" more or less thence southwardly parallel with Second street 50'7" more or less to the aforesaid other ground formerly of Samuel Powell and now of Wm. Marshall eastwardly by the said Marshall's ground, by the other ground formerly of the Said Samuel Powell and by the aforesaid ground late of Matthew Whitehead 34'7" thence still by the said ground late of Matthew Whitehead Southwardly 7' thence eastwardly 3' then Southwardly 16'9" thence eastwardly 6' thence Southwardly 3'10" & thence eastwardly 24'10" thence Southwardly 24' to the Northside of Walnut Street thence eastwardly along the North-erly side of Said Walnut Street 11'4" thence by aforesaid messuage & lot late of William Kirkpatrick Northwardly 29' & thence eastwardly 20' to the west side of said Second Street and thence Northwardly along the westerly side of Said Second Street 73'8" more or less to Said Bank Alley & place of be-ginning. With the tenements or messuage thereon erected.

Rec. July 31, 1848

Deed Book JMH-917, 235-238

June 30, 1920

Penna. Co. for Ins. on Lives, etc.--adm. w/will of Charles Lennig
to
The Seamen's Church Institute of Phila.
\$107,000

All those two Certain lots or pieces of Ground w/the Buildings...thereon Situate...on the Northwest Corner of Walnut and Second Streets Containing in front on the said Walnut Street 88 feet 7 inches...extg. in length or depth Northward along the West side of Second St. 102 feet to Moravian St. & containing in breadth on the rear end of the lot along the said Moravian St. 91 feet 5 inches...and the other thereof Situate on the north side of the said Walnut

St. at the 88 feet 7 inches West from the West side of Second St. Containing in front on Walnut St. 18 feet & extg. in length or depth Northward of that width the East line of the said Lot along the premises above described 51 feet 8 inches.

Rec. July 2, 1920

Deed Book

Sept. 10, 1956

The Seamen's Church Institute of Philadelphia
to
United States of America
Cons. \$625,000

All that certain...piece of land w/the bldgs. & improvements thereon erected, situate in the Fifth Ward of the City of Phila....described as follows: to wit: Beginning at the point formed by the intersection of the westerly side of Second St. w/the Northerly side of Walnut St.; thence extg. westward along the said side of Walnut Street 180.54' to the Northeasterly side of Dock Street; thence extg. Northwestwardly along the said side of Dock Street 115.57' to a point on the Southerly side of Moravian St.; thence extg. Eastwardly along the said side of Moravian St. 240.78' to a point on the Westerly side of Second St. aforesaid; thence extg. Southward along the said side of Second St. 102' to the first mentioned point and place of beginning.

Being known and numbered as 201 to 221 Walnut St. and 217 to 227 Dock St.

APPENDIX B

PHILADELPHIA CONTRIBUTIONSHIP INSURANCE SURVEY OF 1773

[Book No. 1, p. 54]

Survey^d Novem^r 2^d 1773--at the Request of James Alen Esq^r a Large New house Situate on the west Side of 2^d Street a little above walnut Street.

50 feet front 46 feet deep 3 Storys high 14 & 9 inch walls-- 4 Rooms in first 3 Rooms in 2^d & 5 Rooms in 3^d Story all finish^d plain with Scerting Surbass fronts to Closets and Archatrives to windows--the Large Room in 2^d Story has 2 pedistals fluted pilasters & framed--Intabliture with Cornish--3 Storys of open Newel Stairs Ramp^d & Bracketed Scerting half Rail & open pilasters up the wall of 2 Storys--plaster^d pertitions Chiefly Brick walls--Carret plaster^d--a pediment in front modillion Cornish at Eaves--Straight Joint floors in most of the Rooms--Glass 12 by 9--a plaza Back 28 by 11 feet--a poarch under it with Ramp^d Rails & Balisters and Stairs down to the kitchen--the whole painted--
A Tavern

Gun^s Bedford

£ 1500 on the whole

The North part to the Brick wall	£ 500)	
The South part to the Brick wall	500)	
The part between the two Brick walls)	500)	@ 30/ pr ct
with the whole of the plaza &c	)	

three policies

APPENDIX C

PHILADELPHIA CONTRIBUTIONSHIP ~~INSURANCE~~ SURVEY OF 1785

[Book No. 1, p. 119]

Survey'd May 2^d, 1785--

The City Tavern Situate on the West Side
of Second Street a few doors from Walnut Street and belonging to
Samuel Powell Esq^r--

50 f^t. front 46 f^t. Deep 3 Storys high 14 & 9 inch
walls, 4 rooms in first, 3 Rooms in Second and 5 Rooms in Third
Storys, all finished plain with Surbas Scerting fronts to Clos-
setts and Archatrives to Windows, the large room in 2^d Story has
2 fluted Pilasters with pedestals and Intabliture across the
room with fre^t cornice, Three Storys of open Newell Stairs Ramp^d
& Braketted Scert & half-Raile and open pilasters up the Wall of
two Storys, plastered Pertisions Chiefely Walls, Garret plastered--
A pedimont in front, Modilion Eaves, Strait Joint Floors in most
of the Rooms, Glass 12 by 9--A piazza 28 by 11 f^t. and poarch
under it Inclosed with rails & Balisters--The whole painted in-
side and out--About 12 Years Old--

Gun^s Bedford

£1500 in the Whole--

N ^o 1767	the North part to the Brick Wall	£500
1768	the South part to the Brick Wall	500
1769	the part between the two Brick walls, with the Piazza and Stairs Case	500
		£1500 @ 47/6

APPENDIX D

PHILADELPHIA CONTRIBUTIONSHIP INSURANCE RESURVEYS
OF NO. 1767

1834 and 1838

I have Resurveyed a House called the old coffee-house [City Tavern], belonging to Dorothy W. Francis [relative, may be wife, of Thomas W. Francis (died c. 1821) to whom Elizabeth Powel leased City Tavern on 9 March 1808] Situate on the South west corner of Second Street & Bank Street, North of & near Walnut Street.--Being Fifty feet front 46 feet deep--three Stories high. North wing 38 feet on Bank Street by 17 feet deep. South wing 12-1/2 feet by 33 feet--One Story above the basement.--18 a 9 in walls.--The lower Story of the main building is divided in two rooms & passage--floor of 5/4ⁱⁿ yellow pine--base & subbase [both words either underlined or stricken out in pencil] around the rooms, & base only in the passage a large arch in each room & one in the passage with reeded [?] pilasters & pannel'd soffit [?]-db^{le} architraves to the windows & mouldings to the doors[.] glass in front--12 by 17 in 3 [changed in pencil to 5] pair folding sash doors ["front" inserted in pencil]--all with inside shutters--glass back & side 9 by 12ⁱⁿ--outside shutters.--The 2^d Story in 8 rooms & passage--floor 5/4" yellow pine--plain base round & surbase in two rooms, db^{le} architraves to doors & single to windows front & back--& single moulding to 5 small rooms.--Glass 9 by 12ⁱⁿ inside shutters front & outside do back--two plain Mantles & 1 pair folding doors, painted.--The 3^d Story in 7 rooms & passage, floor of comⁿ yellow pine,--plain base round & surbase in two rooms, db^{le} architraves to doors of back rooms--Single do to the windows--& single Mouldings to the doors of front rooms.--4 breast closets--Glass 9 by 12ⁱⁿ--inside shutters front & back, 2 plain Mantles.--The Garret in 5 rooms & passage floor of inch yellow pine--plain base round, & plastered. five plain dormer windows & trap door in the roof--Brick eave front & back, tin gutters & pipes,--The basement is divided in two rooms & Cellar, floors of comⁿ white pine, plain base round--single Mouldings & inside shutters to the windows.--The Stairs lead from the passage to the Garret,--open newel & string-turn'd banisters, the first story has mahogany rail, the remainder large painted rail--& plain brackets, & half rail up the wall. The North wing is in one room, floor of clean yellow pine, plain base, single mouldg^s plain Mantle & breast closets--Glass 9 by 12ⁱⁿ outside shutters.--basement in two rooms--finish'd plain.--The South wing is in two rooms--floor partly yellow & partly white pine, plain base round, single mouldg^s--Glass in folding doors, in lieu of windows--15 by 18ⁱⁿ Kitchen in the basement--finish'd very plain,--plain Eaves to both wings--tin gutters & pipes.--

11th Mo 20th 1834
Insured by Policy No. 1767

John C. Evans
[in different hand:]
for D W Francis
T W Francis

[on reverse side:]

I have Resurveyed the within premises--An Addition having been made to the North wing--viz--now raised to three stories high & extended to the west over an alley--Being now 45 feet on bank St--the 2^d Story in one room--floor of comⁿ white pine, rough single mouldings--Glass 8 by 10ⁱⁿ--outside shutters.--The 3^d Story in one room--floor of comⁿ rough w^t pine, Glass 8 by 10ⁱⁿ both rooms, plastered,--a platform projecting on the South Side about five feet--floor, rough & plain post & rails--outside.--plain facia[?] under the eave & plain cornice on bank St--shed roof covered with Zinc.--tin pipe.--11 mo 24 1838

John C. Evans
[in different hand:]
for D W Francis
T W Francis

APPENDIX E

PHILADELPHIA CONTRIBUTIONSHIP INSURANCE SURVEY NO. 7456

23 August 1848

I have Surveyed a brick Building known as the old Coffee house, belonging to Charles Lennig situate on the west side of Second Street, & south corner of Bank Street, North of & near Walnut Street. The main house being 50 feet front 46 feet deep, North wing 17 feet by 45 feet, both three stories high South wing 12-1/2 feet by 33 feet, one story high. 14 & 9ⁱⁿ. walls.-- The lower Story of the main house is in one room the floor of 5/4ⁱⁿ yellow pine, moulded base round, double architraves to the windows--three Arch'd doorways, finish'd with Single Architraves, & panneled soffits, five pair of folding sash doors on 2nd Street, glass 12 by 17; inside shutters, glass back & on alley., 9 by 12ⁱⁿ outside shutters.--The 2nd story in three rooms & short passage the floor of 5/4ⁱⁿ yellow pine, base round--& subbase in one room folding door with reeded pilaster Architraves--double Architraves to the other doors, & windows, one plain mantle, glass 9 by 12ⁱⁿ pannel'd inside shutters in front & on alley--& outside do back.--The 3rd story in three rooms, the floor of comⁿ wide yellow pine, plain base round, & subbase in two rooms, double architraves to the doors & single do to the windows, four breast closets, large mouldings round the fire places.-- Glass 9 by 12ⁱⁿ, pannel'd inside shutters front & plain d^o back & side.-- The garret in five rooms, the floor of comⁿ yellow pine, plain base, single architraves,--five plain ridged dormer windows & trap door in the roof--& windows in the gables--Glass 9 by 11ⁱⁿ.--A large open newel stairs with open string, bracketted, turn'd ballusters, & ramp'd rail, one story of Mahogany--the balance large painted, from the lower Story to the garret (part of the rail broken in 2nd flight) Brick Eave front & back tin gutters & pipes--The basement is divided into four rooms & passage, the floor in three is of comⁿ yellow pine narrow boards & in one brick--plain base, single architraves & mouldings, two large breast closets--three pair of folding sash doors front. Glass 12 by 18" glass in windows 12 by 14ⁱⁿ sliders & inside shutters.--Glass back & north side 9 by 12 & 12 by 14ⁱⁿ ----The North wing, basement story on Bank St., has two rooms divided by rough board partition, floor of comⁿ yellow pine, plain base & single mouldings, glass 8 by 10ⁱⁿ--four pair of sash doors, glass same--outside shutters, & sliders to the doors.--The main story in two rooms, planed board partition floor of Comⁿ yellow pine, plain base, single Architraves one closet.--Glass 9 by 12ⁱⁿ outside shutters.--The 2nd story in one room floor of Comⁿ yellow pine plain base, single mouldings--a large door way into the main house, glass 9 by 12ⁱⁿ--The 3rd Story in two rooms--board partition, floor comⁿ yellow pine, part of west room not plastered, glass 8 by 10ⁱⁿ. A rough platform on the south side five feet wide with over plain posts & rails along the front. The roof double pitch covered with Zinc tin pipes down.--

The South wing is in one room the floor partly comⁿ yellow & partly white pine, plain base single mouldings folding doors on North side in lieu of windows. Glass 15 by 18ⁱⁿ much broken plain Eave, roof old, plastering in bad repair,--The lower Story front & [Street?] and north wing papered
----8th M^o 23rd 1848

John C Evans
Surveyor

Liberty of a refectory in the basement and also of a painter and varnisher.
Policy N^o 7456 Drs 4000 at 3 per Cent Drs 120
agreed to be correct
Charles Lennig

APPENDIX F

ACCOUNT OF CONCERTS HELD AT CITY TAVERN

[from Harold D. Eberlein and Cortlandt V. D. Hubbard, "Music in the Early Federal Era," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LXIX (1945), 108-110]

During the season of 1785-86 there were no "City Concerts." Their discontinuance seems to have been because of a three-cornered quarrel between the leading musicians, Bentley, William Brown and Henry Capron, the latter an exceptionally able violinist who had played at important concerts in Paris. The public, however, were not cheated of their musical recreation. At this point arrived Alexander Reinagle. By "virtue of his superior talent and individuality" he took control of the musical affairs of the city. He succeeded in reconciling Capron and Brown; Bentley went to New York. On October 18 the Pennsylvania Journal printed proposals signed by Reinagle, Capron, Brown, and A. Juhan. There were to be twelve fortnightly concerts, the first of a series on October 19, at the City Tavern. Reinagle and his associates promised the public their "greatest endeavours ...to render every performance agreeable and satisfactory to the lovers of music"; they further said that "a new orchestra is erected and the greatest care will be taken to make the room agreeable."

Fortunately for us, Reinagle published the programmes of his concerts in the daily papers. From one of the "plans," that of November 1, 1786, we may gather some idea of the music presented:

Act I.

Overture Toeschi
Song, Mr. Reinagle from the Duenna
Concerto Flute Stamitz

Act II.

Concerto Violin Fiorillo
Symphony Lachnith
Sonata Piano Forte Reinagle

Act III.

Concerto 2d Corelli
Duett, Violin and Violoncello Breval
By particular desire, the Miscellaneous Concerto

We have no means of knowing whether the pianoforte sonata Mr. Reinagle played was one of his own compositions or the work of some other composer; the programme-writers of the early Federal Era had a curiously nonchalant habit of sometimes putting down the name of the composer, sometimes the

name of the performer without any reference to the source of the number given. Nor, when the orchestra performs a symphony, can we tell whether they are playing the complete work or only one or two movements.

The City Tavern concerts achieved a deserved popularity and continued their annual appeal to the music-loving public. For the "City Concerts," holden at the City Tavern January 3, 1788, the Pennsylvania Packet of January 1 announces the "plan":

Act I.

Overture Stamitz
Song
Concerto Flute Brown

Act II.

Trio, Piano Forte, Flute and Violoncello Schroeter
Song Gretre [sic]
Concerto Corelli

Act III.

Overture Abel
Solo Violoncello Schetky
Symphony Bache [sic]

The concert was to begin at 7 o'clock precisely and tickets, at 7/6 each, were to be had at the City Tavern.

The proofreading for this newspaper announcement might have been improved. Ferusal of the list of composers represented prompts the query, "Did the proofreader really imagine that Mr. Bache had combined publishing, belligerent politics and musical composition in his repertoire of darling activities (Heaven save the mark!), or was the uncorrected lapsus a bit of subtle flattery?" However, ignoring printer's errors, the programme shows us that Reinagle was maintaining the standard he had set at the beginning of his Philadelphia career. It is worth noting that the numbers played included not only the acknowledgedly classic works of Bach, Handel, Corelli, Vivaldi and others, but also the compositions of writers who were almost contemporary, and likewise productions that were distinctly "modern."

APPENDIX G

THE ORCHESTRA

City Tavern was the scene of concerts, meetings, and dinners. With the building being put to such uses, the erection of a raised platform or "orchestra" in the Long Room was appropriate and to be expected. The orchestra was a familiar structure in buildings used as was City Tavern. Oeller's Hotel, which replaced City Tavern as the principal and best hotel of Philadelphia in the 1790's, had in its "elegant" and spacious assembly room "a handsome music gallery at one end." This structure was in keeping with the grand scale of the building and, therefore, was more elaborate than the orchestra one would expect to find in City Tavern.

Two references to City Tavern's orchestra have been found: the first an entry in William Ellery's diary for July 4, 1778, and the second in the advertisement for a series of City Concerts in 1786. In both instances the term "orchestra" was used in an identical way with the verb "erected," indicating that it refers to an architectural feature of the room and not simply to a group of musicians.

Ellery's description of the orchestra, as quoted on page 6, section 2, chapter 2, locates it across the end of the room. This arrangement allowed sufficient space in the rest of the room for accommodation of eighty persons at a dinner.

The Pennsylvania Journal of October 18, 1786, carried an advertisement for a new series of City Concerts to be held at the City Tavern. The subscribers, four of America's leading musicians, indicated that improvements had been made to City Tavern. This they hoped would encourage patronage of the concerts. They stated: "A new orchestra is erected and the greatest care will be taken to make the room agreeable."

APPENDIX H

THE PIAZZA

Behind the main structure of City Tavern was the piazza, described in the 1773 insurance survey as "a piazza Back 28 by 11 feet--a poarch under it with Ramp^d Rails & Balisters and Stairs down to the Kitchen" and in the 1785 survey as "A piazza 28 by 11 ft and poarch under it Inclosed with rails & Balisters."

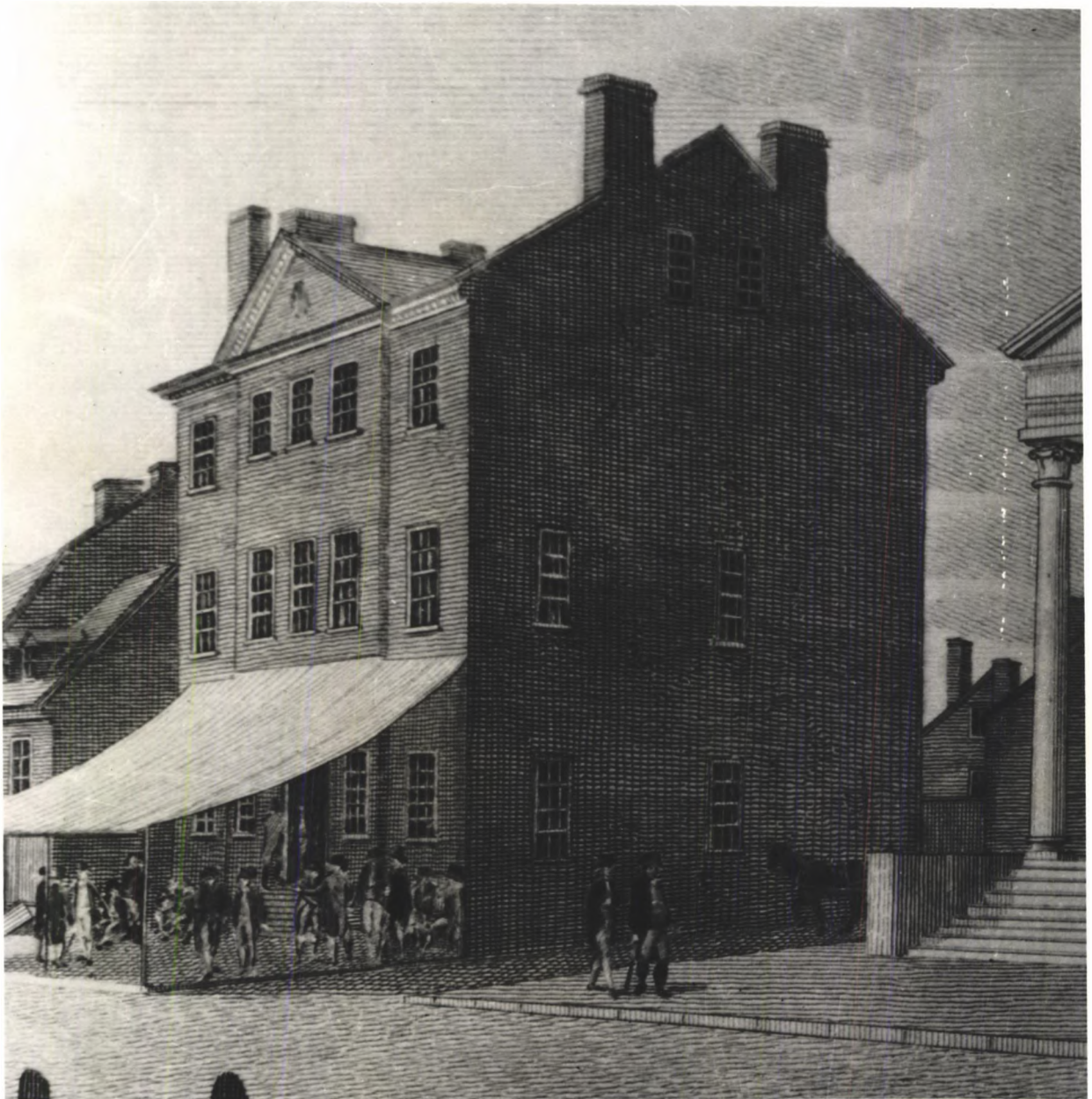
Centuries ago a piazza was a public square or market place. However, in the English-speaking world the term came to be erroneously applied to a "colonnade or covered gallery or walk surrounding an open square or piazza proper, and hence to a single colonnade in front of a building" (Oxford English Dictionary, VII, 815). In Philadelphia "piazza" commonly denoted a backbuilding containing a staircase, but also referred to the veranda of a house.

City Tavern's piazza was a two-storied structure extending 28 feet ~~along~~ the back wall. For a busy tavern a covered structure to the rear was a necessity. The 1773 insurance survey locates the stairs down to the kitchen in the piazza. This, too, would have provided a covered service area, perhaps containing additional stairs to the second floor public rooms. Here to the rear, accessible by means of the alley to the north of the building, deliveries could be made without interfering with the activities of the first floor public rooms. Here too, removed from the congestion of Second Street, guests could dismount from their horses and load and unload their coaches easily, conveniently, and leisurely. This also could provide a method of access to the building for ladies and others who preferred not to go through the public dining rooms and bar.

Ramped rails and balusters enclosed this porch area and its flooring was either wood or brick.

The survey books of the Philadelphia Contributionship contain many references to piazzas on eighteenth century Philadelphia buildings. Piazzas were often not merely walkways, but two-storied structures like City Tavern's, such as the "piazza to each Story on the South Side" noted on the 1783 survey of James Brighthurst's property and the "piazza & Room over it of wood 11 by 8 ft." described in the 1768 survey of a house on Chestnut Street between Front and Second Streets. The wings of the Alms-house on Spruce Street had "a piazza below of 12 feet wide." Many old prints, American and English, show piazzas in the rear courtyards of inns (Illustrations No. 6 and 7).

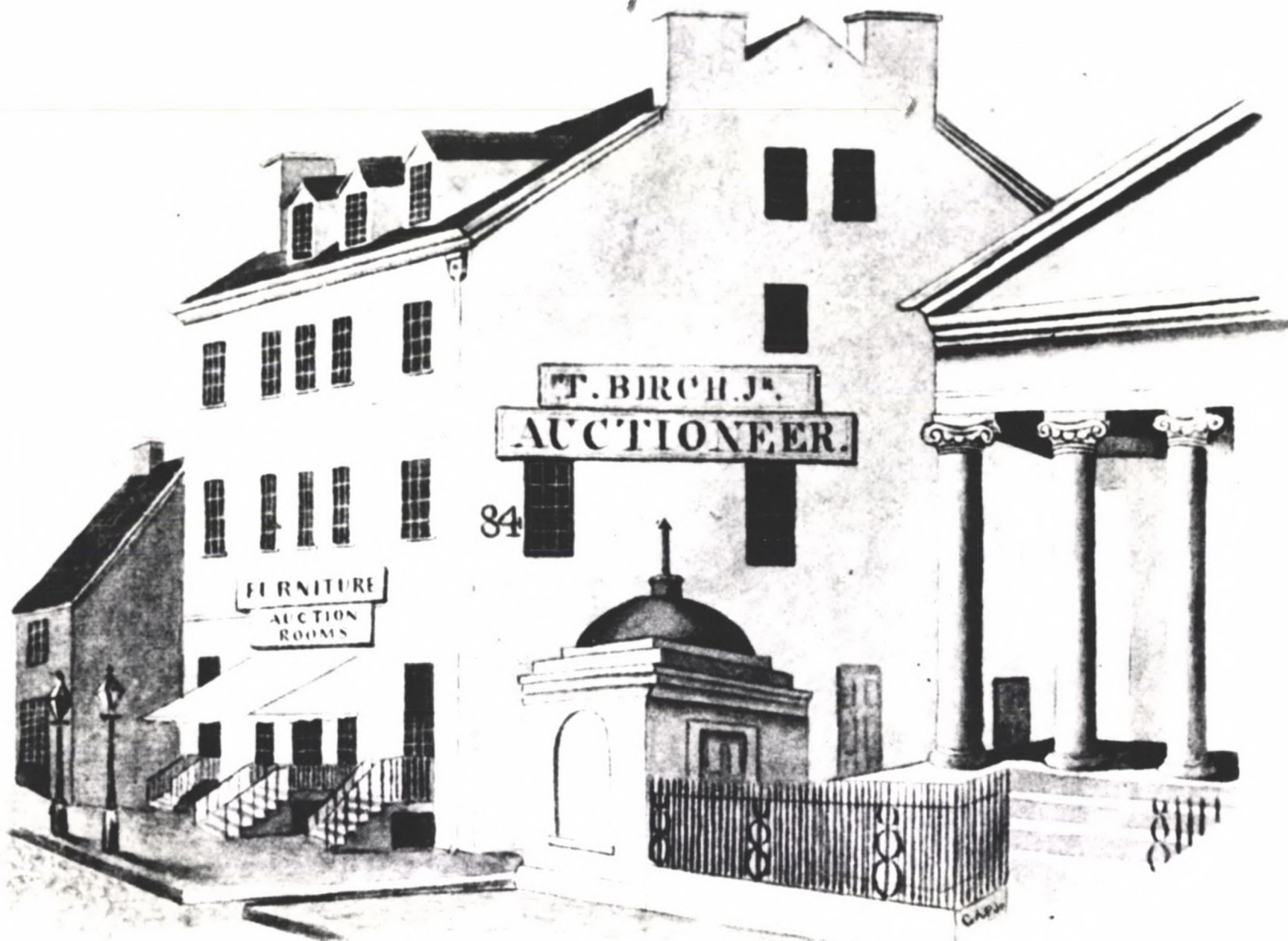
ILLUSTRATIONS



Detail of William Birch's view of Bank of Pennsylvania, 1800. This is one of two known views of City Tavern during the historic period. Among the important exterior features indicated are the projecting pedimented bay with a lunette in the tympanum, the modillion cornice, the sash windows, and the shutterless facade. At the gabled north end, Birch shows two chimneys; the two chimneys at the south end are in part visible. All of these features are in evidence from the front of the building to the street. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



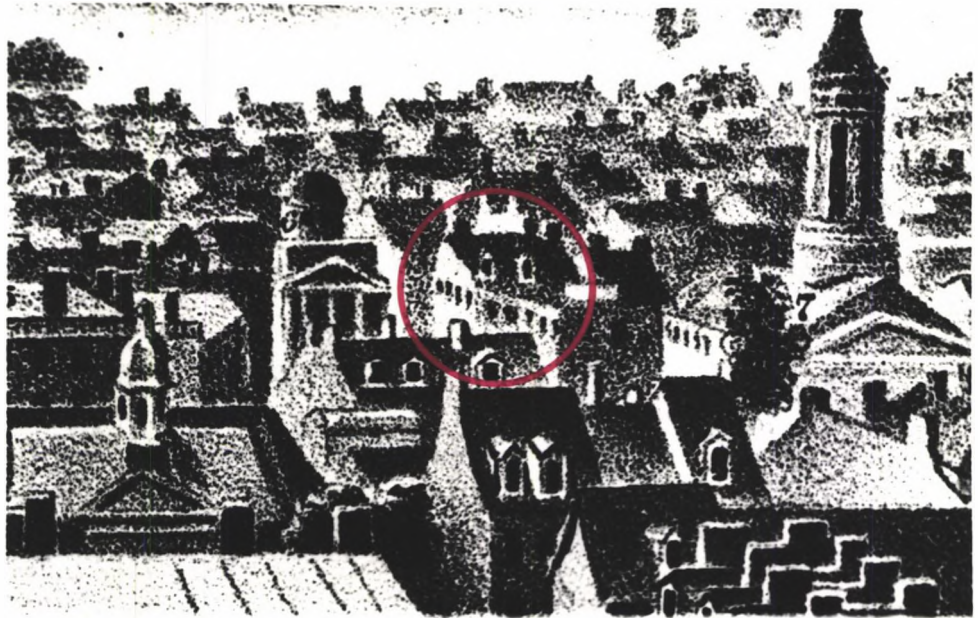
Detail of Benjamin Latrobe's view of Bank of Pennsylvania, c. 1800. Although the Birch and Latrobe views of City Tavern are basically in agreement, Latrobe recorded several details of the tavern's exterior which Birch omitted. Latrobe shows a vaulted flight of stairs leading to the front door which had an arched pedimented frontispiece. The cellar is shown raised one-half story above grade, so that the windows needed no areaway. Also shown are two band courses on the facade. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Md.



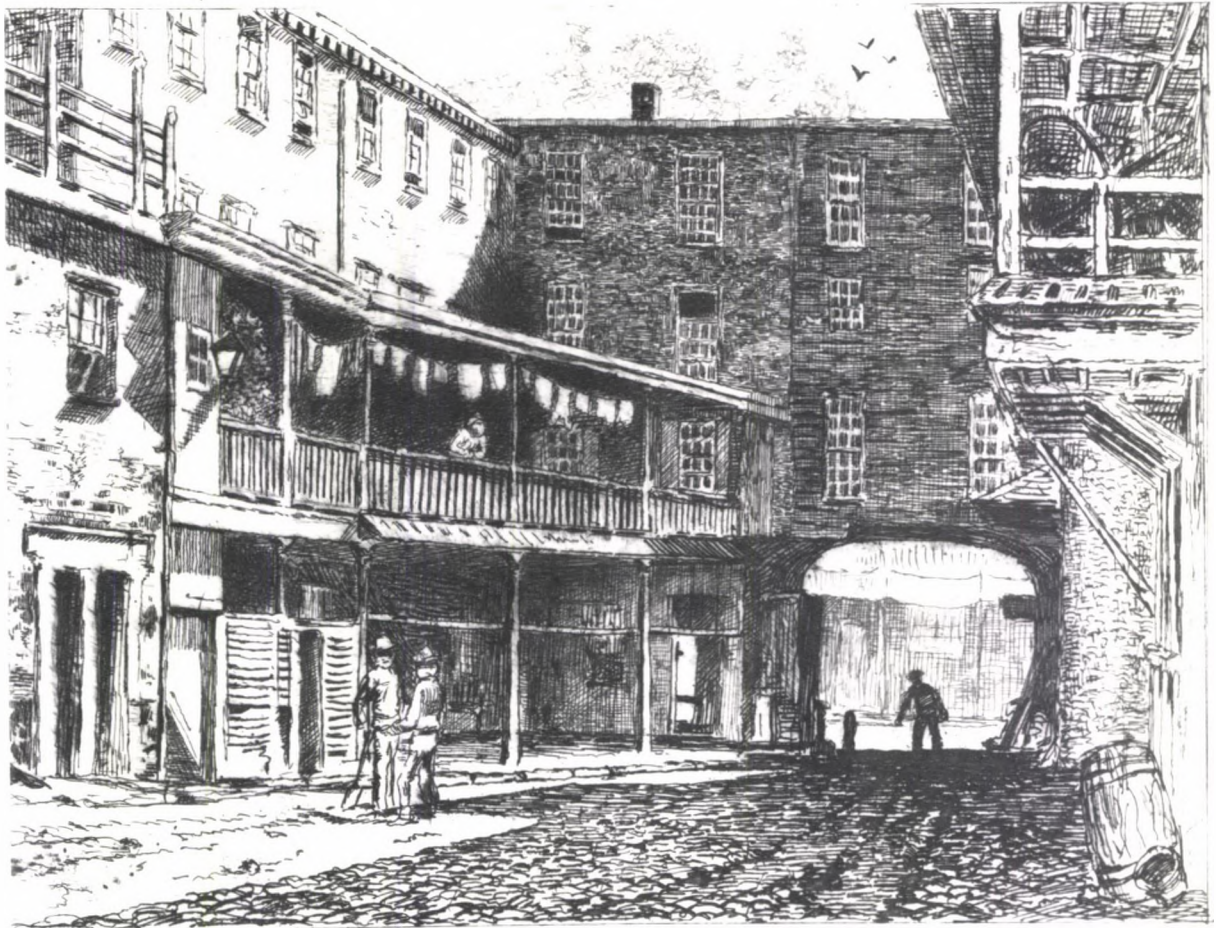
City Tavern, c. 1840, as shown in J. F. Sachse's Pictures of Old Philadelphia. This view clearly shows the many changes made to the building during the 19th century. Note the replacement of the pediment by dormer windows (1801) and the change in the window and door arrangement on the first floor.



Rear view of City Tavern from George Strickland's drawing of Bank of Pennsylvania. One of the dormer windows installed in 1801 is visible here.



Detail from Panorama of Philadelphia in 1838 by J. C. Wild, showing rear of City Tavern (marked in red) after additions to the north wing in 1838. See Appendix D for 1834 and 1838 insurance resurveys indicating changes and additions.



This view of the Black Horse Inn Yard, 352-354 North Second Street, shows a structure corresponding in several respects with the "piazza" described in the insurance surveys of City Tavern. This addition at the rear of the building is two-storied and has a porch at the first floor level.



This view of the Tabard Inn, Southwark, London, in 1810 shows a porch area on the first floor level of the tavern as at City Tavern. Similar structures are found on many eighteenth century taverns. From Henry C. Shelley, Inns and Taverns of Old London (Boston, 1909), p. 12.

CHAPTER III
ARCHITECTURAL DATA

[To be submitted]

CHAPTER IV
ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA

Prepared by Archeologist B. Bruce Powell

ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS

Upon the demolition of City Tavern in 1854, the site was occupied by two four-story brownstone buildings¹ which stood, with alterations, until 1933. In that year the structures were razed and a parking lot was established on the property. Illustration No. 1 shows the relationship of City Tavern to the nineteenth century buildings.

During July and August, 1958, I observed the demolition of the Seamen's Church Institute building, Walnut and Dock Streets, and the grading of the City Tavern site at Second and Ionic Streets.

The grading and landscaping contract on the City Tavern site called for removal of paving and large stones, breaking up basement floors, and refilling the excavations in such a way as to assure proper drainage. Foundations on building lines were to be left intact.

The excavations, by bulldozer, necessary to fulfill the contract proved that the basement floors of the 1855 buildings were very deep. Of heavy flagstones (described as "tile" in the nineteenth century), the floor rested on arched brick supports which in turn rested on stone piers imbedded in sterile clay. The top of the stone piers was 13 feet below modern sidewalk level.

About 40 to 50 feet from the Second Street building line and partially under the north foundation, the bulldozer operator scraped open a small brick-lined pit, some 3 feet in diameter and 1-1/2 feet deep. It was almost immediately covered by a cave-in, and the operator was unable to find it again. Unfortunately, I was not at the site when the pit was uncovered.

It is possible that it might have been associated with City Tavern as the bottom of a cold storage well in a subcellar, such as was found in the basement of the Bishop White House. The pit was the only structural evidence uncovered which might have been a remnant of City Tavern. No artifacts were found which date from the eighteenth century.

The extreme depth of the 1855 basements and the massive size of the brownstone buildings effectively destroyed any and all remnants of the historic fabric of City Tavern, with the one noted possible exception. Further archeological research would be useless.

PREVIOUS ARCHEOLOGICAL REPORTS
RELATING TO THE PROJECT

The only previous archeological report on this site is "A Brief Report on the Archeological Status of City Tavern Site," August 20, 1958.

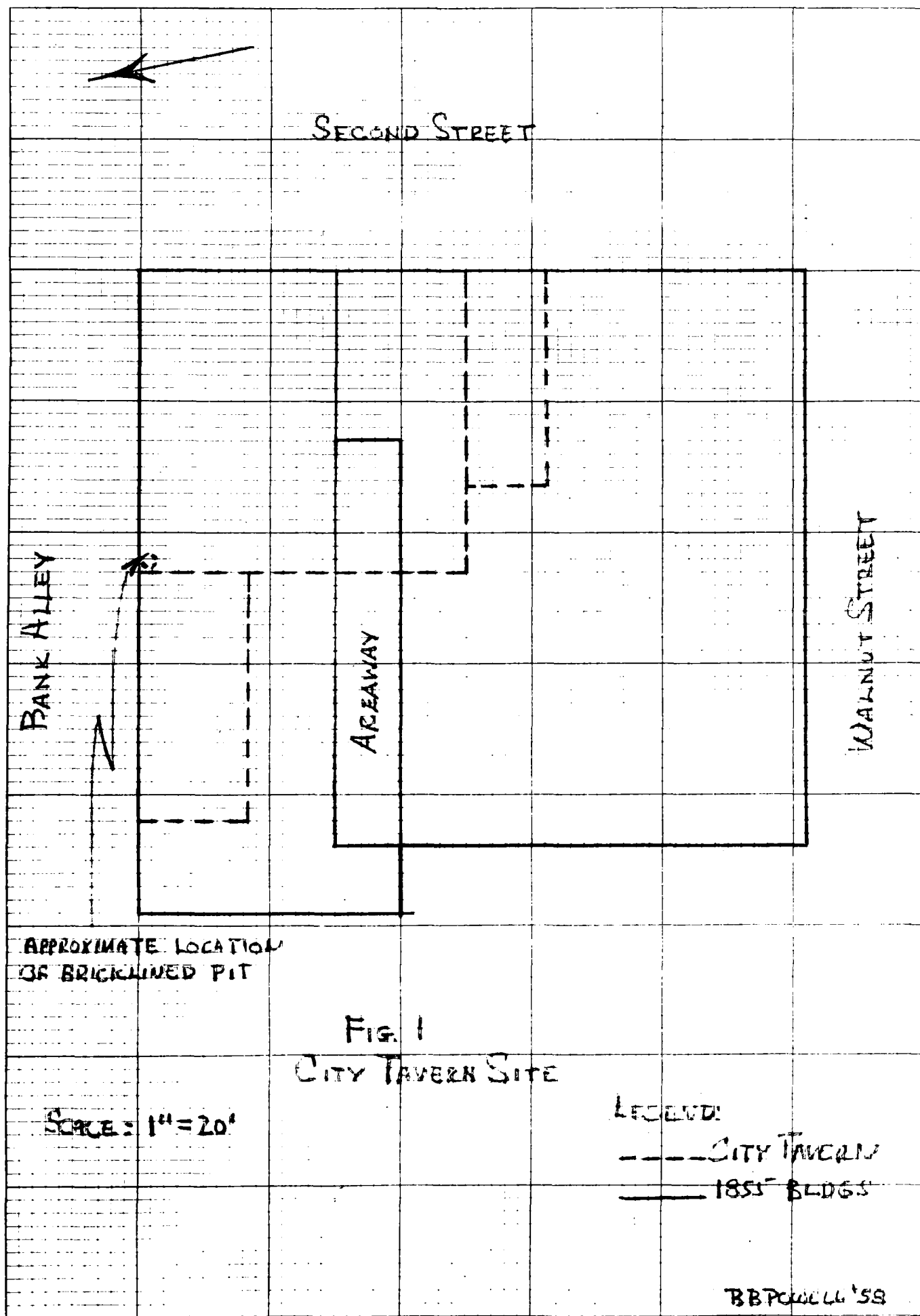
FURTHER RESEARCH NEEDED

No further archeological research is needed at the site.

Chapter IV
Notes

1. John F. Watson, Annals of Philadelphia... (Philadelphia, 1927), III, 349; Contributionship Loose Survey No. 9433 (February 20, 1855); Contributionship Loose Survey No. 9486 (June 29, 1855).

ILLUSTRATIONS



CHAPTER V

FURNISHINGS AND EXHIBITION DATA

Prepared by Museum Curator David H. Wallace

EXISTING HISTORIC FURNISHINGS

The original furnishings of City Tavern probably were thrown out or sold long before the building was demolished in 1854. Today, no pieces having even a traditional association with the once-famous hostelry are known to exist.

PROPOSED FURNISHING PLAN

The Furnishing Plan for City Tavern is scheduled to follow approval of the Historic Structures Report, Part II. Preparation of sections D-F by Museum Branch, INHP, will take approximately six months.

PROPOSED FINANCING
OF REFURNISHING

Preparation of the Furnishing Plan and acquisition of furnishings will be accomplished with federal funds, under PCP B-108-2 Reconstruction of City Tavern. It is estimated that the cost of refurnishing three floors will be in the neighborhood of \$120,000.

RECOMMENDED INTERPRETIVE DEVELOPMENT

The writer concurs with the recommendation that City Tavern be made a "live" exhibit featuring public use as an operating tavern, furnished with authentic period tavern furniture as much as possible. There is no doubt that such use would contribute greatly to the visitors' understanding of what City Tavern was like in the eighteenth century. It would also help to relieve the austerity which necessarily envelops restored but unused historic buildings. The awesome effect of the Assembly Room in Independence Hall, which is desirable in view of the room's deep historical significance, can only benefit from the contrasting effect of visitor participation such as is now encouraged in Congress Hall and as is proposed for City Tavern.

As part of its effort to recreate the atmosphere of the city where the United States of America was brought into being and nurtured through the better part of its first quarter century, the National Park Service has in City Tavern a uniquely appropriate setting for live demonstrations of the urban cultural life of the late eighteenth century. Exhibition dancing assemblies, concerts, recitals, and perhaps readings could be presented here, as they were in Washington's time, with the help of talented performers from all over the country.

With such uses, the furnishings of City Tavern would take on, as they should, a relatively secondary importance as part of the background. Too often in restored buildings they occupy the foreground and excite more comment than the historical events they are intended to call to mind. Here is an opportunity to avoid that common fault.