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REPORT ON THE -

PEROT-MORRIS HOUSE

Germantown, -Penna.
(August 6, 1948)

By: Roy E. Appleman - Regional Historian

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OK W. S. Bahlman

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
REGION ONE
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

September 29, 1948.

MEMORANDUM for the Superintendent,
Morristown National Historical Park.

There is attached a copy of Regional Historian Appleman's report on the Perot-Morris House, dated August 6, 1948. I believe that a copy of this report was not initially distributed to you.

In view of the fact that you are likely to have direct connections with this project if and when the area has been accepted and established by the Service, it is believed you will find a copy of the report useful for your files. Mr. Appleman informed us of your desire to have a copy of this report.

W. S. Bahlman

William S. Bahlman,
Acting Regional Director.

Enclosure 535

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CONTENTS

Persons Interviewed	page 1
Description of Morris House	2
First Floor of House	3
Second Floor	4
Third Floor or Attic	5
Roof, cellar, heating	5
Warts or Blisters	7
Lighting	7
Degree of original form and material in house	8
Condition of House	9
Furnishings	10
Present care and maintenance	11
The Grounds	13
Insurance Covering Morris House	15
Legal Status of Property - Real Estate Situation	17
Background of Movement to Place Morris House in Government Ownership	21
Historical Importance of Morris House	27
Builder and Owners	27
Chain of Title	28
Washington in Germantown - Morris House, 1793	29
Washington in Morris House, 1794	37
Morris House in the Battle of Germantown	38
Early Comments on Morris House	39
Old Photographs of Morris House	40
Architectural Notes	42
Market Square, Germantown	43
Recommendations	44
Attachments	
21 present day photographs	
Plan of property, Estate of Elizabeth C. Morris	
First Floor Sketch Plan, Morris House	
2-fold leaflet on Germantown	
Information sheet on Germantown	

Note: The Morris House is situated about 6½ miles from Penn Square, or the City Hall, in the heart of Philadelphia. It is most easily reached by going north from City Hall on Broad Street 4.2 miles, hence northwest on Germantown Avenue 2.4 miles.

Report on the
Perot-Morris House,
Germantown, Pennsylvania.
(August 6, 1948)

Pursuant to Acting Director Tolson's memorandum of July 8, and Regional Director Allen's request, I visited the Perot-Morris House in Germantown, Pennsylvania, for the purpose of preparing this report. Museum Curator Hudson accompanied me for the purpose of evaluating the furnishings in the house. On July 28 Mr. Hudson submitted a report covering the furnishings.

During my stay in Philadelphia (from the afternoon of July 19 through noon, July 22) I discussed various problems relating to the Morris House with the following individuals who had particular interest in its preservation or in carrying out the settlement of the Morris estate:

Henry Ramick, (law firm of Saul, Ewing, Ramick & Saul)
2301 Packard Bldg.,
15th & Chestnut Sts. (telephone - Rittenhouse 6-777)

Elliston P. Morris,
1403 Packard Bldg.,
15th & Chestnut Sts. (telephone - Rittenhouse 6-6184)

J. Solis-Cohen, Jr.,
Real Estate Appraisals,
123 South Broad St., (telephone - Pennypacker 5-1516)

Leighton P. Stradley,
School House Lane & Oak Road,
Germantown, Pa. (telephone - Victor 4-4273)
(President, Germantown Historical Society; also
senior member important law firm of Stradley,
Roman, Stevens & Young, 1222 Real Estate Trust
Bldg., Broad & Chestnut Sts.) — telephone Pennypacker 5-7380

L. W. Van Meter,
Vice-president Provident Trust Company,
17th & Chestnut Sts. - (telephone - Rittenhouse 6-2100)

George Clarence Johnson,
Vice-president, Germantown Historical Society,
158 West Fern St., Germantown
(a prominent private architect) - (telephone - Germantown 8-2493)

John T. Campbell,
Surveyor, Ninth Survey District,
303 Town Hall, Germantown

DESCRIPTION OF MORRIS HOUSE
(5442 Germantown Avenue)

The Morris House, (situated at 5442 Germantown Avenue,) is on a lot 99' 1/4" street front and 407' 7-7/8" deep. The last 130 feet of this lot at the back has been cut off and sold, and can no longer be considered as part of the house grounds. For purposes of this report, therefore, the grounds may be considered as 99' 1/4" street front and 277' 7-7/8" deep. More will be said on this point later.)

The front part of the house is the original residence built by David Doshier in 1772 - 1773. The house is 2-1/2 stories of Germantown stone, covered with plaster. It has a fine old Colonial doorway, over which still remains the old cast-iron emblem of the Philadelphia Contributionship Insurance Company. (This is the hand-in-hand fire mark of 4 clasped hands in the unbreakable grasp of "My Lady Goes to London" of childhood days. The Philadelphia Contributionship, organized in 1752, was the first fire insurance company in America. Benjamin Franklin was one of its founders.

There have been two or three later additions to the original house.

The house, as it now stands, has 17 rooms, 4 baths, 1 lavatory, and a full basement extending under both the original and the later periods of construction. The house is in an excellent state of preservation.

First Floor of House:

The original house on the first floor has a hallway 5' 9-1/2" wide, extending from the doorway to a rear enclosed porch. To the north of the hallway is a library 20' 10" x 11' 8-1/2", back of which is a stair hallway and stairs leading to the second floor. To the south of the hallway are two rooms; a parlor 21' x 13' 3", and a back parlor (originally used as a dining room) measuring 13' 3" x 10' 10". Both rooms on the south side of the hallway have fine old Dutch delft tile facings around the fireplaces.

In the rear of the back parlor, reached by a doorway from the central hallway, is an enclosed porch — open in the summer and enclosed in the winter by glass and used as a conservatory. A long wing extends back from the original house on the north side for a length of approximately 60 feet. This includes a dining room 21' x 12' 9", a kitchen 17' 9" x 13' 5", and a shed-like room 16' 4" x 13' 5". On the north side of this series of rooms are a laundry room, pantries, and an elevator shaft. The elevator shaft extends from the first floor to the attic, is operated manually, and is used for the raising and lowering of trunks, baggage, and linen. The first floor has a lavatory located to the north of the

library in a later addition to the original house, and reached from the stair-hall.

A plan of the first floor (copy attached), drawn by Mr. George Clarence Johnson in April of this year, will show the first floor arrangement. This plan has not been printed previously. Mr. Johnson consented to have prints made for the purposes of this report. He asked, however, that it be made clear that all measurements are approximate and not precisely accurate. This plan was drawn as a result of hasty measurements he made this last spring with the help of Mr. Elliston P. Morris.

Second Floor:

The second floor of the original house is reached by a wide Colonial stairway and the layout is similar to that of the first floor. There is a central hall with one large room to the north and two bedrooms to the south. These rooms have usable open fireplaces with old Dutch delft tile facings. Some of the delft tile fireplaces are of a blue-white tile; others are of a magenta or mulberry color. There is a bathroom on the second floor, tiled, with tub but no shower. This is immediately over the lavatory on the first floor and is in a "blister" or an addition to the original part of the house. All the plumbing and bathrooms are in additions to the original house. It should be pointed out, therefore, that the original house has not been cut off or the original room arrangement destroyed by later plumbing.

Back of the original house is the long wing on a different floor level from the original house. This wing contains two large rooms used

as nurseries or bedrooms for domestics and two bathrooms and a lavatory.

There is a hallway in the rear which contains a maid's room and a sink with running water. Linen and storage closets are located here. On the back of the original part of the house a balcony porch overlooks the grounds.

Third Floor or Attic:

The third floor or attic of the original part of the house has one bedroom on the north and a tiled bathroom with tub, but no shower. This bath is immediately above those on the first and second floors. On the south side there is a sitting room overlooking the garden. This sitting room has interesting hand-carved oak paneling and mantle around fireplace. The attic to the modern wing now serves as a packed and cluttered store-room for books, magazines, and miscellaneous items of house furnishing.

Roof:

The roof over the original house and the later wing is tin. In the attic of the wing one can see shingle roofing underlying the tin. It could not be determined whether this shingled roof extends over the original house, but it is logical to assume that it does. There appear to be no leaks.)

Cellar:

The cellar extends the full length and width of the original and later

wing of the house. The cellar has a cement floor, its walls are of German-lawn stone, whitewashed, and it is subdivided by partitions into four sections. (Copper piping is used for all heating and water connections. There are three heating systems in the house. In the front part of the cellar, under the original part of the house, there is an old hot-air heating system. Back of this and under the later wing is a hot-water heating system. Still a third heating system carried hot water to the conservatory room located on the first floor in the rear of the original house. These heating systems all burn coal. There is also an automatic hot-water gas heater for bathroom use. The back part of the cellar, under the wing, is used for coal storage. There are two openings from the cellar to the surface grounds outside.

The cellar seems to be in excellent condition and is dry, except for one place along the south wall immediately in front of the hot-water heating system in the wing. Here considerable water had collected on the floor. I could not determine the cause of this accumulation of water. Lighting was poor at this particular point, but so far as I could see the wall seemed solid. No doubt there is a leakage in the wall, however, which could be closed without much trouble.

It is my understanding (based on a statement I have seen attributed to the caretaker) that the hot-air heating system has not been adequate to heat the house in cold weather. It also appears that the secondary hot-water heating system serves only the rear and north side of the old wing of the house. The present house, therefore, has the following heating

systems: (1) the original fireplaces; (2) a hot-air system for the original house; and (3) a hot-water system for part of the latter built wing. None of these heating systems seems to be adequate. It will be necessary for a heating engineer to study the heating system and recommend on consolidation or replacement.

"Warts" or "Blisters":

It has been mentioned earlier that all the plumbing serving the original section of the house was installed in a "wart" or "blister" built on to the north side of the house. This "wart" extends about 8 feet over into the adjoining lot. This is a point which requires special notice since the property line coincides exactly with the north wall of the original house. This later addition, therefore, constitutes an easement on the property to the north. If this part of the building is ever removed, the easement ceases to exist. It should be noted that this same type of easement exists for the long wing in the rear of the original house, with the difference that the easement here extends 2 or 3 feet farther into the adjoining property, for a distance of about 10 or 12 feet. More will be said on this point later. I have not been able to determine when the "blisters" were built on to the original house. Mr. Morris told me he thought they dated from about 1909.

Lighting:

The house is fitted with gas lighting fixtures. These are the lights

that replaced the original oil and candle burners. The house is also electrified and has outlets for lamps. These seem to be chiefly in the baseboards. The house does not have a modern electric system.

Degree of Authenticity in Original Building:

The original house has been altered very little indeed in the 176 years since it was built, so far as I could tell. It is likely that most of the flooring (at least on the first and second floors) has been relaid. The present floors are of narrow board soft-wood, pine I believe. A few of the rooms might have original floors, as the boards are of a greater width and appear to be much worn.

The doors appear to be all original, together with hardware. The entrance door has magnificent original hardware, constituting a double system of locks and latches. There have also been added modern locks, so that at the present time the door is fitted with 4 different locks and latch systems.

The library to the north of the hallway on the first floor has had bookcases built on to the north wall of the house. These can be easily removed. They date probably from the last half of the nineteenth century. Wall paper is now found in all the rooms. I think it unlikely that there was wall paper in the original house. The ceilings and walls at the present time contain considerable gold gilding. I feel quite sure that this dates from the first half of the nineteenth century, probably from about 1830 - 1835. The tile in the front parlor to the south of the

hallway is probably not original. It is not Dutch delft like the other fireplaces, but is of a design that suggests a Spanish or Moorish pattern and may be fairly recent. The stairway and rail seem to be original. The house has original wainscoting which is window-sill or chair-rail high. Doorways, room dimensions, windows, and ceiling height are unchanged from the original.

Condition of the House:

The Morris House has been lived in continually, except possibly for very short periods of time, from the date it was built, 1772 - 1773, to about 1943. In that year the then owner, Miss Elisabeth Candy Morris, was taken seriously ill and was moved to a hospital where she remained, I believe, until her death in December of 1947. In this 5-year period there were intervals in which a niece or a nephew lived in the house. During the 5-year period, however, when the house did not have continual occupancy, it was cleaned periodically by an old family servant. The grounds, likewise, were maintained in good condition. In effect, therefore, this house and its grounds have been in constant occupancy from the time it was built. It is apparent that all of the owners cherished the place and kept it in an excellent state of maintenance. As mentioned above, the original part of the house has been very little altered, and probably none at all since about 1850 or 1860.

The house was painted on the exterior in the fall of 1947. The old paint was scraped off and two coats of new paint were then put on. Mr.

George Clarence Johnson, an architect of Germantown, and Vice-president of the Germantown Historical Society, told me that at the time the house was being painted he noticed that the plaster was removed from the entire south wall of the original house and new plaster added prior to painting.

It is not clear whether the original house, built in 1772-1773 by David Doshler, was plastered. Most of the early houses of this period in Germantown were not plastered, but were constructed of Germantown stone, which is of a dark "grayish-black" color. On the front the stone was usually dressed, on the other sides not. It is my belief that the Morris House originally was of unplastered Germantown stone. Mr. Johnson told me that "Upcola", built in 1795 in Germantown, had stucco or plaster from the beginning. It is possible, therefore, that the Morris House may have been plastered as early as 1793-1794 when Washington resided there. All of the old photographs of the house (the earliest one that I have seen dates from about 1859) show plaster covering the stone, except for the cellar walls below the floor level of the first story.

Furnishings:

Mr. Ellisten P. Morris informed us that his mother, Mrs. Jane Rhoads Morris, owns all the furnishings. Apparently Mr. Harriet C. Morris in his will, or by some other arrangement, provided for this. Mrs. Morris' address is 131 West Walnut Lane, Germantown, Philadelphia 44, Pennsylvania, telephone No. Germantown 8-1345. Her son said that she is now out of the

Mrs. Richards works during the day time. This means, therefore, that the house is occupied at night, but there is no one there from about 8 o'clock in the morning to 5:30 or 6:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

The trustees of the Elizabeth Casby Morris estate will continue the usual maintenance of the grounds and house. Mr. Richard McAdoo, who has been the family gardener for about 22 years, comes twice a week to mow the grass, trim the shrubs, work the flower gardens, and otherwise take care of the grounds. At the present time he comes on Thursday and Friday each week. He is paid at the rate of \$1.25 per hour. The expenses for his work amount to about \$40 every two weeks, according to Mr. Morris. Mr. McAdoo has a regular job as elevator operator, which he took following the death of Harriot C. Morris this spring. When Mr. McAdoo worked full time for the family he was paid at the rate of \$250 per month. Mr. Morris said that he felt sure Mr. McAdoo would not wish to continue as gardener for the place, but that he was doing this work now merely to keep the place in proper condition for the present.

Mrs. Mary McCook comes to the house two or three times a week for cleaning work. Mrs. McCook, like Mr. McAdoo, is an old family servant. She receives \$15.50 a week for her work now. Mr. Morris is of the opinion that Mrs. McCook would like to continue her work as cleaning woman for the house. Mr. Morris said that both Mr. McAdoo and Mrs. McCook are very reliable and are people of good reputation, and that they have both been employed by his family for years.

city but would be back about mid-August. He emphasized the fact that he could not speak for her, but he said he thought she would be willing to donate or lend many of the pieces now in the house that would be appropriate for furnishing the house in period style. Mr. Hudson has estimated that about 10 per cent of the present furnishing of the house would be suitable for the Colonial-Revolutionary - early Republic periods. As I recall it, most of this period furniture consists of chairs and a few tables. Mr. Hudson's report on this subject, dated July 28, should be consulted for details.

Present Care and Maintenance:

Dr. Frederick H. Richards, an intern at the Germantown hospital, and his wife are living in the annex or wing of the house. Mr. Morris has an informal arrangement with them by which they will live there temporarily until the disposition of the house is finally determined. I believe Dr. Richards pays no rent and that Mr. Morris is content to have him occupy the wing in return for the protection that this gives the house. Mr. Morris said that Dr. and Mrs. Richards could be moved out at any time it was desired. In response to a question from Mr. Morris on the subject, I said that I thought it unlikely that the National Park Service would want to have Dr. and Mrs. Richards moved before some time in 1949 in the event the title to the house and grounds passed to the Service, since I believed it would be to the advantage of the government to have the Richards remain in the house until a custodian could assume responsibility.

THE GROUNDS

The Morris House is situated on a lot 99' 1/4" street front by 407' 7-7/8" deep. I have already mentioned that the rear 130 feet of this lot has been cut off by the trustees of the estate and is being sold. The street front seems to be the original dimension of the David Deshler lot, so far as I have been able to determine. Originally, however, the lot was much deeper than the present 407 feet, extending all the way west to the old Germantown Academy. Eventually Greene Street was cut through past the academy, and later the Second Church of Christ Scientists of Philadelphia was built on the back part of the Deshler-Morris lot facing Greene Street.

The house has no grounds on the north side, it being built right on the line, in fact over the line into the adjoining lot if one includes the later built "blisters" or "warts" which have already been discussed. The original house was approximately 36-feet square, according to Johnson's sketch drawing of the first floor plan (copy attached). Most printed references to the house speak of it being "40' by 45'" or about "40' feet square". That leaves about 60 feet of grounds on the south side of the house. This yard extends back from the street to the distance mentioned above and consists of lawn and an informal arrangement of handsome old trees, gravelled walkway, and flower beds. There is a handsome ancient English box, or what I thought to be English boxwood, in the back part of the grounds. I believe this boxwood falls in the part of the lot that has been cut off and is being sold. An effort should be made to move this boxwood to the part of the ground that will

remain with the house. I suspect that this boxwood dates from the Colonial period. I discussed this subject with Mr. Morris and he said he would be willing to talk with the Society of Friends about it if the Service desired to retain the boxwood.

There are two out-buildings on the grounds. They are:

- (1) A small out-house used presumably in connection with the original house. It has its original toilet equipment. At the present time it is used for storage of garden tools.
- (2) A two-story stone building, covered with plaster, standing in the back part of the yard along the north boundary wall. A casual inspection of this building indicated that it might be an original structure dating from the Colonial period, and possibly served as a barn. This building is within the back 130 feet which is being sold. If the Service desires to move and preserve this structure as an original building, it will be necessary to negotiate regarding it in the near future. It is very likely it will be destroyed by the new owners of this part of the property.

The present grounds extend to the north about 46 feet beyond the original Deshler property line for a distance of about 150 feet in the middle part of the grounds, and at the present time is planted mostly in flower gardens. The grounds of the Morris House, in general, have a simplicity and old-fashioned charm. Judging from a few other similar gardens in the rear of old houses which I had the opportunity of seeing while at Germantown, the garden behind the Morris House seems to be typical of the old deep gardens and yards that extended back from the early homes of Germantown.

INSURANCE COVERING MORRIS HOUSE

I called on Mr. L. W. Van Meter, Vice-president of the Provident Trust Company, who gave me the following information on the insurance being carried at the present time on the Morris House:

Fire Insurance:

At the time the late Marriet C. Morris died there was only \$10,000 fire insurance on the property. This was covered by two old perpetual insurance policies held with the following companies: The Philadelphia Contributionship for \$7,500; The Mutual Assurance Company for \$2,500.

The Provident Trust Company placed a fire insurance binder of \$50,000 on the house immediately after Mr. Morris' death; making a total of \$60,000 fire insurance on the property.

Fire Insurance - Furnishings:

At the time of Mr. Morris' death the contents of the house were insured for \$4,000. Following his death the Provident Trust Company placed a binder of \$45,000 on the furniture; thus making a total of \$49,000 covering the furnishings at the present time.

Burglary:

There is a binder burglary policy carried by the Provident Trust Company for \$20,000 covering the entire contents of the house.

Liability Damage:

There is another policy binder carried by the Provident Trust Company covering liability limited to \$5,000 for the claims of a single person; and \$10,000 limit for a single accident, regardless of the number of people involved in the accident.

Workmen's Compensation:

There is also a policy carried by the Provident Trust Company covering workmen's compensation. This insures the one part-time gardener and the one part-time charwoman. Mr. Van Meter could not give me the exact figure in dollars and cents involved in this insurance, but it is controlled by laws of Pennsylvania.

It will be seen, therefore, that a number of binder policies cover very thoroughly the present house and contents against fire, burglary, liability, and that there is also the workmen's compensation policy. All of these policies are carried on short-term rates, with the exception of the two original policies held with the Philadelphia Contributionship and the Mutual Assurance Company. All of these policies will be voided at the time title passes to the National Park Service. The Provident Trust Company is merely protecting the estate at the present time. Mr. Van Meter told me that in his opinion it would be to the interest of the National Park Service, or any owner, to continue the original perpetual policies held with the Philadelphia Contributionship and the Mutual Assurance Company.

I was very much impressed with Mr. Van Meter. He is a pleasant, agreeable, and capable business executive. He went out of his way to be helpful and remained one-half hour after his usual office hours in order to cover this subject thoroughly with me. The conference with Mr. Van Meter was arranged by Mr. Elliston P. Morris.

LEGAL STATUS OF PROPERTY -- REAL ESTATE SITUATION

The estate of Elizabeth Canby Morris, which includes the Morris House and property together with several adjoining lots in Germantown, 22nd Ward, Philadelphia, is being administered by three executors. They are as follows:

Elliston P. Morris (one of heirs)
1403 Packard Building
15th & Chestnut Streets (telephone - Rittenhouse 6-6184)

Provident Trust Company
17th & Chestnut Streets (telephone - Rittenhouse 6-9100)

Maurice Bauer Saul
2301 Packard Building
15th & Chestnut Streets (telephone - Rittenhouse 6-7777)
(Mr. Saul is an executor in a personal capacity and not as a member of the law firm of Saul, Ewing, Rumick & Saul.)

The sale of the real estate apparently has been entrusted to the firm of J. Solis-Cohen, Jr., 123 South Broad Street (telephone - Pennypacker 5-1516). In Mr. Elliston P. Morris' discussion of the status of the property adjoining the Morris House, he suggested that I see Mr. Solis-Cohen to get details and the latest information. Accordingly, Mr. Morris arranged an interview for me with Mr. Solis-Cohen, from whom I obtained the following information: (Reference to map, "Plan of Property, Estate of Elizabeth

C. Morris, 22nd Ward, Philadelphia," drawn by John T. Campbell, Supervisor and Registrar, 9th District, April 14, 1948, copy of which is attached, will indicate property lines discussed below) -

1. All the property in the estate of Elizabeth C. Morris facing Germantown Avenue on the east and School House Lane on the north of the Morris House (5442 Germantown Avenue) has been sold to the Savings Fund Society of Germantown. The bank plans to build a parking area on the back part of this property, and adjoining the Morris House grounds. Immediately adjacent and north of the Morris House on Germantown Avenue, and within the property bought by the bank, is an old early Federal period house dating from 1798. It has had a mansard roof put on it, but otherwise there appears to have been little change in the house. This old period building is scheduled to be torn down in the near future. It is shown in several of the photographs attached to this report. It is now No. 5448 Germantown Avenue. Information obtained from Mr. Selis-Cohen and Mr. Leighton P. Stradley indicates the bank does not propose to build immediately up to the Morris House property line.
2. The back 130 feet of the Morris House grounds, together with the back part of the two lots to the south of the Morris House, have been sold to the Society of Friends

School (a Quaker institution), whose property adjoins the Elizabeth Canby Morris estate on the south (but does not reach to Germantown Avenue). The Society of Friends plans to build a parking area and recreational playground on the area which has been bought from the Morris estate. Actual title has not yet changed hands, but the final papers in this transaction have been drawn up and are ready for signature.

3. The front parts of the two lots south of the Morris House lot facing Germantown Avenue (the rear parts of which have been purchased by the Society of Friends discussed in 2 above) are now in an advanced state of negotiations for sale. I did not learn from Mr. Solis-Cohen who the prospective purchaser is. I was told by Mr. Johnson, however, that he has heard the rumor that the most interested prospective buyer is a chain grocery store.

When I first learned from Mr. Elliston P. Morris that the back 130 feet of the Morris House grounds were to be cut off and sold, I questioned him about the advisability of this. He then related that the initial plan of the executors had been to cut the grounds off right at the back end of the house and sell all of it. Mr. Morris, as one of the trustees, said he objected to this and said he knew his father would never have approved such a plan, that the house needed the grounds to give it a proper setting,

and that they were part of the original picture. After a considerable debate on this point, it seems a compromise was reached to cut off the back 130 feet. Mr. Morris told me that he felt he could not do anything more in this respect, although he, himself, would like to see all the grounds remain with the house. Mr. Morris told me there was nothing that could be done now to alter the arrangement to cut off the back part of the grounds.

It appears, therefore, that the situation which will exist relative to the Morris House and grounds in the future is not a very happy one. There will be a parking area to the north and a parking area to the west, together with a school playground on the west or southwest, a bank building and perhaps some unoccupied ground to the north, and possibly a chain grocery store immediately to the south.

The most serious question, in my opinion, arises in connection with the northern boundary. As stated earlier, there is an easement written into the deed of the Savings Fund Society of Germantown for the property immediately north of the Morris House, covering the "warts" or "blisters" which extend variously at distances of 8 to 10 or 12 feet over the original property line at this point. As long as these additions to the house remain, the owner of the lot, of course, cannot build up to the property line at these points. He could, however, build up to the north wall of the house, as now constituted by these "warts". Or, if the "warts" are ever torn down, building then could come right up to the original Morris House and constitute an adjoining wall. There is no buffer strip whatever in the form of grounds on the north side of the Morris House. It has been

mentioned earlier in this report that on the south side of the Morris House there is a buffer strip in the form of a yard or grounds for about 60 feet. The future of the Morris House as a national historic site requires that a strip of ground be acquired on the north side of the house if it is to be given adequate protection. This will require negotiations with the Savings Fund Society of Germantown which now owns this property. Acceptance of the Morris House by the government might even be made conditional upon the executors obtaining a buffer strip to the north to be added to the site.

BACKGROUND OF MOVEMENT TO PLACE MORRIS HOUSE IN GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP

Most of what I am about to relate in this section was obtained in conversation with Mr. George Clarence Johnson, Vice-president of the Germantown Historical Society, and Mr. Leighton P. Stradley, President of the Society, in discussing with them their interest and that of the Germantown Historical Society in the preservation of the Morris House.

When Miss Elisabeth C. Morris died in December, 1947, the property passed to her brother, Mr. Marriot C. Morris. Mr. Morris was an old man and in declining health. In the spring of this year he suddenly became ill and was taken to a hospital. It soon became apparent that he probably was on his death-bed. Many members of the Germantown Historical Society had long been interested in preserving the Morris House because of its architectural and historical associations. At this juncture, Mr. Johnson, Vice-president of the Society, and a prominent

restoration architect, told me he visited Mr. Morris in the hospital and discussed with him various suggestions for preserving the Morris House. The suggestion which seemed to please him most was that the house be given to the United States Government. Mr. Morris agreed to do this, saying that he was interested in having the old house preserved. A codicil to his will was then drawn up which specified that the house should be given to the National Park Service. The laws of Pennsylvania require that any such codicil shall be null and void if the maker dies within 30 days after making the codicil. Mr. Morris did die a few days after the codicil was drawn up, and, therefore, it was null and void. The heirs of Mr. Harriot C. Morris, however, when informed of the situation, said they wanted to carry out Mr. Morris' desire in this respect and, therefore, they desired to have the codicil made effective. It was at this point that the property was offered to the National Park Service this spring. Since that time, following the appropriation by the 80th Congress of \$15,000 for the maintenance and operation of the house, legal negotiations have been in progress concerning the transfer of title to carry out the wishes of Mr. Morris and his heirs.

When at the end of April the Advisory Board recommended against accepting the Morris House because of the financial burden such properties impose, members of the Germantown Historical Society consulted with Congressman Hugh Scott and enlisted his help. Congressman Scott promised to do what he could and then consulted with Congressman Hartle Scott, also of Philadelphia, who has been prominent in the movement to establish

Independence National Historical Park. They discussed the possibility of having the property accepted as part of Independence National Historical Park, and I believe a clause was added to the bill by Congressman Hardie Scott which would permit this, although it does not mention the Morris House by name. There was also the prospect that the area could be established by the Secretary of the Interior under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. So far as I can determine, the appropriation of \$15,000 for the maintenance and operation of the property does not answer the question of how title shall pass to the government, although it would seem to indicate that it is the will of Congress that the property be accepted.

In discussing the interest of the Germantown Historical Society in the Morris House, I should mention that this Society has many prominent and influential members. Mr. Stradley, the President, is a senior member of one of the largest and most important law firms in Philadelphia. This law firm is that of Stradley, Ronson, Stevens & Young, 1222 Real Estate Trust Building, Broad & Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania. Mr. George Clarence Johnson, a Vice-president of the Society who has long been a very active member, is a prominent architect of Germantown and devotes most of his time now to restoration of old historic structures. Mr. Johnson is a man of middle age, robust, unusually energetic, and mentally alert. I suspect that he knows more about the historic houses of Germantown than any one in the locality. If the National Park Service does acquire the Morris House property, I think that Mr. Johnson's

ideas concerning its development should be obtained and carefully considered.

Both Mr. Johnson and Mr. Stradley told me that the Germantown Historical Society has plans to restore the old Market Square of Germantown which is immediately across the street from and facing the Morris House. Mr. Stradley said that the Germantown bank owns property on two sides of the square and that the officials of that bank have told him they are willing to cooperate in the restoration of the square to the extent of tearing down present buildings on their property and of building new ones in period style. The old square originally had a jail house, a market place, and stocks. The Germantown Historical Society is active in the restoration of several old historic houses in Germantown and occupies one built in 1772. Mr. Johnson is the architect who is supervising the restoration work now in progress. Just recently the Society sponsored a social which raised \$1,400 for some of this work.

There is attached to this report a map locating the old historic houses that still exist in Germantown. At one time, according to Mr. Stradley, he and others in the Society had hopes that Germantown could be restored in the manner of Colonial Williamsburg. There is an unusually large number of fine old Colonial and early period houses still standing along Germantown Avenue in Germantown. As will be noticed from the map, the Morris House (No. 7 on the map) is in the midst of this historic area.

Germantown, together with adjoining Chestnut Hills, constitutes one of the best suburban residential areas of Philadelphia, and, accordingly, a large number of influential people reside in the community.

Mr. Elliston P. Morris and Mr. L. W. Van Meter of the Provident Trust Company both told me that it is their understanding that Mr. French, a lawyer in Washington who is representing the executors, has been negotiating with attorneys in the Department of the Interior to draw up a new form of offer of the house by the present heirs; that this letter of offer is expected momentarily in Philadelphia, and that after it has been examined, Mr. Morris will sign it, return it to Washington, and that the property will then be accepted.

It might be said here as a matter of some interest that Miss Elizabeth Carby Morris was considered a very queer person not only by most of her neighbors in Germantown, but also by many members of her family. Apparently she refused to let anyone in the house, except a few very close relatives. The house has never been open to the public and very few people in recent years have ever seen inside it. As a result of casual conversation with a few people in Germantown, I found there was a great amount of interest in the house. It is considered locally as one of the best in Philadelphia. I suspect that interest is whetted by the fact that very few people have ever been admitted to the house. One result of this attitude on the part of Miss Morris was that she denied the Historic American Building Survey the privilege of making measured drawings and photographs of the house in 1939. This accounts for the failure of the HABS to include this house among the several other old historic houses in Germantown which it did measure and draw up.

This seems a good place to add a few words about Mr. Elliston P. Morris, one of the heirs and one of the executors of the estate. Mr. Morris showed Mr. Hudson and me through the house and around the grounds. He is a man I should judge in his 40s, large, and energetic. He answered all questions, I feel confident, to the best of his ability. I formed a good opinion of Mr. Morris. I think that he is motivated by high principles, and that he is not particularly concerned about getting the most money possible out of the estate. This was evidenced, I think, by his having objected to cutting off all the grounds in back of the house.

Mr. Morris has a good opinion of the National Park Service, and knows something about it. He was assistant forester for the Tennessee Valley Authority for 6 years back in the 1930s and early 1940s. He was first assistant to Mr. Ned Richards, who was then chief forester of the TVA. Dr. Fred Richards, who is now living in the house under an agreement discussed earlier in this report, is a son of this Ned Richards. Mr. Morris made many visits to Great Smoky Mountains National Park during the time he was in Knoxville, and was personally acquainted at that time with the late Superintendent Ross Aikin. He was also acquainted with Park Naturalist Arthur Stapka. I believe that Mr. Morris will do everything in his power to help the National Park Service gain desirable objectives if the Morris House is accepted by the government.

THE HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE MORRIS HOUSE

Builder and Owners:

The house known today as the ^{Deshler-}Perot-Morris House (3442 Germantown Avenue) was originally built by David Deshler in 1772-1773 and occupied by him immediately. David Deshler came to this country from Baden, Germany, where his father was an aide de camp of the reigning prince. Deshler's mother was a sister of Casper and John Wister, the founders of the family of that name which became so famous in the history of Philadelphia. Deshler established himself in business in Philadelphia where he was very successful. (He was known for his strict integrity, and it became a common saying in his day, "As honest as David Deshler." Deshler's name has come down to posterity in connection with a salve which I believe is still sold today in some parts of the country as "Deshler's salve." Mrs. Deshler purchased the recipe for it from a butcher, and it was first sold under the name of "Butcher's Salve.")

David Deshler died in 1792 and the property was then sold to Colonel Isaac Franks, who had served in the Continental army. (I have seen references to Franks as "Major", "Lieutenant-Colonel", and "Colonel".) Colonel Franks, who belonged to the Jewish faith, owned the house during the period of Washington's occupancy in 1793-1794. In 1804 Elliston and John Perot, who had earlier rented the house as a summer residence, purchased the place from Colonel Franks. The Perot family were of French-Huguenot descent. Elliston Perot died in 1834 and the old Deshler house,

which was part of his estate, was sold to Samuel B. Morris of the shipping firm of Wain & Morris of Philadelphia. Mr. Morris had married Mr. Elliston Perot's daughter, Hannah. Mr. Samuel B. Morris died in 1899 and willed his property to his son, Mr. Elliston P. Morris.

From Mr. Elliston P. Morris, the estate descended to his daughter, Elizabeth Canby Morris; then for a brief period to Marriot C. Morris, who died in the spring of this year, following which the estate was placed in the hands of executors for settlement.

Chain of Title:

There follows a synopsis of chain of title to the Morris House and lot. I obtained this information from Mr. Solis-Cohen, who told me he had consulted the original deeds in City Hall from which he obtained the data. This chain of title is not complete to the present time, but does carry down to Mr. Elliston P. Morris, the grandfather of the present heirs. The present Mr. Elliston P. Morris was named after his grandfather, who acquired the property in 1866. From this Mr. Elliston P. Morris the property descended to Miss Elizabeth Canby Morris, his daughter, who died in December, 1947. It was then held briefly by her brother, Mr. Marriot C. Morris, who died this past spring. The present heirs of Mr. Marriot C. Morris are offering the house to the Federal government.

September 7, 1752,
Book H, Vol. I,
p. 646

George Bringhurst to David Deshler
N. W. most 60'

Book H-2
p. 157

Ann Bringhurst, John Bringhurst, & George
Palmer, Executors of George Bringhurst
to David Deshler, S. E. most 40'

May 21, 1792
Book D-34
p. 41

Executor of David Deshler to Isaac Franks,
1500 pounds

April 28, 1802
Book E. P. 9
p. 161

Isaac Franks to Elliston & John Perot,
\$5,000.

March 4, 1836
Book A. M. 74
p. 240

Francis Perot to Samuel B. Morris,
\$7,000.

March 16, 1866
Book L. R. B. 156
p. 533
p. 527

Est. of Samuel B. Morris to
Elliston P. Morris

Books H - 1
H - 2

WASHINGTON IN GERMANTOWN — MORRIS HOUSE, 1793

In the summer of 1793 a devastating plague of yellow fever struck Philadelphia. Almost everyone who had the means and was otherwise able to do so fled Philadelphia. Many people of prominence went to Germantown, about 6 miles away. Germantown was located on an elevation and was considered very healthful. In the fall of the year, as the time approached for Congress to assemble, Washington, who was then at Mount Vernon, wrote to Edmund Randolph, a member of his cabinet who was at Germantown, to make arrangements for quarters for him at Germantown or vicinity. In a letter

dated September 30, 1793 at Mount Vernon, Washington wrote to Randolph at Germantown as follows: that because of "the continuation of the spreading of the malignant fever, with which the city of Philadelphia is infested" and because of the absence of the heads of departments, he would not plan to leave Mount Vernon until about October 25 when he would set out for Germantown. Washington then instructed Randolph to inquire about lodging for himself, one gentleman, three servants, and as many horses. He said he would go to a "hired lodging" only. If these could not be obtained, he would go to an inn. (Most of the material concerning Washington in Germantown is based on Charles Francis Jenkins' Washington in Germantown, published by William J. Campbell, Philadelphia, 1905. Mr. Jenkins reproduces practically all the letters of Washington and entries in his journals that relate to the Germantown period. This material was obtained from the Washington Papers in the Library of Congress. Mr. Jenkins was for many years president of the Germantown Historical Society and is currently president of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.)

In accordance with these instructions Randolph made an effort to locate quarters for Washington in Germantown. (On October 22, 1793, Randolph wrote Washington that Major Franks had agreed to let him have his house, but that he thought the terms were excessive, 150 pounds per annum, or for a shorter period not under six months at the same rate, and that except for a looking glass or two and a few pictures, Franks would not permit any of his furniture to remain. Randolph said, however,

that he had prevailed upon Franks' agent to allow a couple of beds, a few chairs, and a table to remain in the house until others could be obtained. He added, however, that no conclusive bargain had been made.

(Jenkins; pp. 92-93.) In a letter of October 23, 1793, to Randolph, written at Mount Vernon, Washington stated that he expected to set out on November 1 with Mr. Dandridge, two servants, and five horses for Germantown. (Jenkins; p. 95.)

On October 28, 1793, Randolph wrote to Washington, letter to be delivered to him at Wilmington, Delaware, that Colonel Franks had left town and that his agent was not willing to rent the house for less than six months, and that therefore he had not been able to arrange for him to occupy the house on his arrival in Germantown. (Franks had been badly scared by the yellow fever which was raging in Philadelphia and had considered even Germantown unsafe. He had therefore moved his family to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and that accounted for his absence at the time. Randolph informed Washington, however, that he had obtained three rooms for his use in the home of a Germantown clergyman, the Reverend Frederick Nerman, whose house immediately adjoined the Germantown Academy. There were to be two beds (for Dandridge and Washington), breakfast, and tea in the afternoon. The rate was \$10 for each per week. Arrangements for the servants and the horses were made in the immediate vicinity.)

Washington left Mount Vernon October 28, 1793, and was joined at Baltimore by Thomas Jefferson, who was also on his way to Germantown. The Washington - Jefferson group arrived at Germantown November 1, and

Washington went to the Reverend Frederick Herman's house where he took quarters, as arranged by Randolph. This site is now 130 West School House Lane, Germantown, and is just around the corner about one block distant from the Morris House.

At this time members of Washington's cabinet were living in or near Germantown (at the following addresses:)

Thomas Jefferson,
(King of Prussia Tavern, Germantown.)

Edmund Randolph,
(Spencers - (one mile east of Germantown))

Henry Knox,
(Near the falls of the Schuylkill.)

Alexander Hamilton,
(Fair Hill (between Germantown and Philadelphia))

Washington took his dinners at the King of Prussia Tavern, 5516-5520 Germantown Road (about one block from the Morris House). On November 11 Washington set out for Lancaster and Reading seeking a suitable place where Congress might assemble away from the yellow fever of Philadelphia.

In the meantime Washington had written to Colonel Franks at Bethlehem about the use of his house. Franks received this letter at Bethlehem on November 6, and set out soon thereafter (accompanied by Mrs. Franks) for Germantown to put his house in order for Washington's occupancy. On this occasion Franks made a complete inventory of the furnishings of his house so that he would have a record on which to base a bill for damages or replacement after Washington gave up the house. The original inventory of the furnishings of the Morris House in 1793 is now preserved in the

Germantown Historical Society. (Mr. Hudson and I examined this document and Mr. Hudson has reproduced it in his report on the furnishings of the house, dated July 26, 1948. It should be mentioned at this point that printed copies of this inventory which appear in several books, notably in Jenkins' Washington in Germantown, contain many errors and omissions. It seems that Jenkins used a copy of the inventory which he obtained from Mr. Elliston P. Morris, and at the time of the writing of his book he was not able to locate the original.) Because of the existence of this inventory, it is possible to know accurately the furnishings in the house at the time of Washington's occupancy in 1793. (Jenkins; pp. 102-116.)

A contemporary description of the house at this time has this to say: "A house and lot situate on the west side of the main street in Germantown, an airy, high situation, commanding an agreeable prospect of the adjacent country: the house is 45 feet front, and forty feet deep, two stories high, four rooms on the floor, all furnished in the most elegant manner: there are also suitable back buildings, all in good order, and a pump of excellent water in the yard. The lot contains about two acres, on which is an orchard of the best grafted fruit of various kinds, and a large garden pailed in." (Jenkins; p. 113.)

Mr. Appleman (I have been unable to determine precisely when Washington occupied the Morris House. It seems that he returned to Germantown on November 16, 1793. The earliest reference ^{he has} (I have been able to find of his being in the house is November 18 when he held a cabinet meeting there. ^{Mr. Appleman} I assume; ^{Washington} therefore, that he moved into the Morris House either on November 16 or

November 17, 1793. Washington lived in the house at least from November 18 until November 29, 1793. On November 29 (or possibly November 30) he returned to Philadelphia where Congress was to meet on December 2. (Jenkins: p. 219.) The cold weather of late fall had caused the yellow fever to abate so much that Washington and his cabinet felt it was safe to return to Philadelphia. It appears, therefore, that Washington lived in the Morris House 12 or 13 days in November, 1793.

During this period at least 4 cabinet meetings were held by Washington in the Morris House. These cabinet meetings were of great importance and dealt mainly with the question of war or peace with England and France over the Citizen Genet issue. The first cabinet meeting in the Morris House was on November 18; the second on November 21; the third on November 23; and the fourth on November 28.

(In April, 1793 France declared war on Great Britain. On April 22 of that year Washington issued his Neutrality Proclamation. Because of the great assistance given the United States by France in the Revolutionary War, there was wide-spread sympathy in the country for France, and there was active agitation for American intervention in the war on the side of France. On April 8, 1793, Edmond C. Genet arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, as agent and minister from France. In the subsequent weeks and months he carried on active agitation calculated to bring the United States into the war on the side of France. It was this tense situation that was the principal subject of consideration in the series of cabinet meetings in late November held in the Morris House, mentioned above. It was also

necessary at these cabinet meetings to determine what explanation Washington would make to Congress on the Genet question, and other matters, when Congress convened on December 2.

Washington had held a cabinet meeting on November 8 at the Herman house when he first arrived in Germantown. At that time the cabinet split on the Genet issue: Hamilton and Knox favoring the administration asking the French Government to recall Genet; Jefferson and Randolph opposing this as constituting a break with France.

On November 18 the cabinet met for the entire day, it appears, in the Morris House. It is possible that dinner was served in the house to Washington and his cabinet, although this is not certain. After dinner the discussion continued. The cabinet was still split on the Genet issue. Jefferson has left a complete synopsis of the arguments presented at this cabinet meeting. Jefferson strongly opposed the recall of Genet. He took the viewpoint that it was harsh treatment for the only nation in the world the United States could call a friend. Hamilton and Knox were for the recall. Washington expressed regret that the cabinet had split, but he adjourned it without a decision. (Charles F. Jenkins' Jefferson's Germantown Letters, pp. 135-140, William J. Campbell, Philadelphia, 1906.)

In the November 21 cabinet meeting at the Morris House, Washington's Neutrality Proclamation of April was considered and ideas were advanced as to the explanation of that action Washington should make to Congress. This proclamation was the first of its kind issued by the American government.

Hamilton was not present at the November 23 cabinet meeting, being ill. At this meeting it was suggested that a military academy be established. It appears probable that the first formal proposal for the establishment of a military academy was made in the Morris House during the November 23 cabinet meeting.

Prior to the November 23 cabinet meeting, Randolph had prepared a draft of Washington's speech to Congress. Jefferson had prepared a draft of his message. In the debate that took place in this cabinet meeting as to what should be included in these papers, Washington decided to include a recommendation for the establishment of a military academy. Hamilton and Knox were in favor of this; Jefferson opposed. At this meeting the President decided with Jefferson against the other three cabinet members that the account of the administration's negotiations with France and England would go to Congress as public documents rather than as secret documents. (Jenkins - pp. 149-152.)

Colonel Franks submitted to Washington a bill of \$131.56 covering the occupancy of his house in November, 1793, including certain items for breakage of dishes and cleanup of the house. Washington considered this bill excessive and did not pay it for nearly 4 months; then making a settlement of \$75.56. It would appear from this that Washington was just as close a bargainer as Franks. (Jenkins, p. 117.)

Washington in Morris House, 1794:

Washington apparently enjoyed living conditions at Germantown in November, 1793, for he arranged to take Colonel Franks' house in Germantown the next year for an estimated period of 6 weeks. He moved into the house on July 30, and moved back to Philadelphia on September 20. It would seem, therefore, that he actually remained at the house for a 7-week period in 1794. (Jenkins; pp. 234 and 275.) On this occasion Mrs. Washington and two grandchildren, Eleanor Park Custis and George Washington Park Custis, moved to the house with the President. Washington also had two loads of furniture brought out from Philadelphia. It is not known just what was included. It is assumed that this furniture was added to what Franks already had in the house, although it is quite possible that some of Franks' furniture was temporarily removed.

The Germantown Academy, which is located on the southwest corner of Greene Street and School House Lane, one block west of the Morris House, was established in 1760-1761. It opened on July 1, 1794 for the summer session. Washington apparently thought well of the school for George Washington Park Custis was enrolled as a student that summer. During his stay in Germantown in 1794, Washington attended the German Reformed Church, diagonally across Market Square from the Morris House. For the 7-weeks' rent in 1794, Washington paid Franks the sum of \$201.64. (Jenkins; p. 275.)

Morris House in the Battle of Germantown:

I will not make any attempt here to give an account of the battle of Germantown, except to note briefly the relationship of the Morris House to that engagement. The battle was fought on October 4, 1777, and was an effort on the part of General Washington to defeat and, if possible, compel the withdrawal of the British army which was occupying Philadelphia. Germantown is located about 6 or 7 miles from the Philadelphia of that day.

Washington's army approached from the north down the Germantown Road and a parallel road, striking a strong British outpost in the vicinity of the Chew House in Germantown. Lieutenant-Colonel Masgrave of the 40th British Regiment concentrated 6 companies in and around the Chew House, where he stalled the American attack while reinforcements came up. American artillery, brought up to within close range, battered the Chew House, inflicting heavy damage on it. It took 4 or 5 carpenters working all winter, it is said, to repair it.

Sir William Howe, Commander of the British forces, had his headquarters at Stenton, South Germantown, when the battle began. During the engagement he moved his headquarters up to the Market Square, directly opposite the Morris House, and gave orders from there. The main British line extended across Germantown Road at this point, along School House Lane and Church Lane. As it so happened, the actual fighting never reached this point. The Americans were defeated due to a number of misconceptions, and failures in their tactical operations, and withdrew. After the battle, General Howe moved his headquarters from Stenton to the Morris House and lived in it for a period of time. I have not been able to determine how long Lord Howe occupied the Morris House.

Early Comments on Morris House:

The description of the Morris House at the time Washington occupied it in 1793-1794 has already been included in the section "Washington in Germantown - Morris House, 1793." Various historians of Philadelphia have described the property since then. John F. Watson, in his Annals of Philadelphia in the Olden Time, 3 volumes, Edwin S. Stuart, Philadelphia, 1898 (entered 1857), says that the house retains its original appearance as nearly as possible and that it contained many fine pieces of antique walnut and mahogany furniture. (I believe that Watson did most of his writing between 1830 and 1857.) He added: "It is a rare treat for the lover of antiquity to pass some hours in this house with its surroundings. The grounds possess some noble trees, many of considerable age, and are laid out with such skill as to give the idea of much greater scope than they possess. The grass is kept in admirable order." (Vol. II, p. 464.)

J. Thomas Scharf & Thompson Westcott in their History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884, 3 volumes, L. H. Everts Company, Philadelphia, 1884, commented as follows on the successive family ownership of the house: "the property has been kept in perfect repair, and, with scarcely any change, remains today the same as when occupied by Gen. Howe and President Washington. It is paneled throughout, and most of its old fashioned, open fireplaces are surrounded by quaint tiling, and the windows retain their old eight-by-ten glasses, imported from Germany for the building." Vol. II, p. 898.

It should be noted that, according to this reference, the window

panes for the original house were imported from Germany. I do not know how many, if any, of the original glasses remain at this date.

In an address before the fourteenth annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Germantown Society in 1906, Maaman Henry Keyser had this to say of the Morris House: "The grand interior of this stately mansion always commands much attention; antique furniture, paintings, and bric-a-brac, old family sofas and tables, none less than one-hundred years old. In the hall stands a two-hundred year old clock which ticks away the hours in solemn metre. All these furnishings are kept up with a great deal of pride.

"There is no colonial house that is so well taken care of. The extensive grounds on the south and west are shaded with old trees and all is kept in perfect order." (Keyser, Old Historic Germantown, p. 20, Lancaster, Pa., 1906.)

Old Photographs of Morris House:

The earliest illustration of Market Square and the Morris House vicinity in Germantown that I have seen is an original watercolor painted by James Harvey, dated 1826, which hangs in the lecture room on the back wall of the Germantown Historical Society. This is an extremely interesting painting.

The earliest photograph I have seen of the Morris House is of 1859. The house looks just as it does today, covered with stucco. The fence extending south from the house appears to have been built of boards running horizontal to the ground instead of verticle as they do now, and was painted white instead of chocolate brown as it is today. This photograph

is in the collection of the Germantown Historical Society and was made available to me by courtesy of Edward W. Hecker, historian of the Society. Mr. Hecker says it is the earliest photograph of the house that he knows of. There are numerous photographs of the house in publications of the twentieth century. The house is illustrated in Maanan & Henry Keyser's address before the fourteenth annual meeting of the Pennsylvania-Germantown Society already mentioned. This illustration, which, of necessity, dated 1906 or earlier, shows the fence as it is today, with vertical paling, but painted white. Ivy covered part of the wall of the Morris House between the windows of the first and second floors on the front in this picture.

An illustration of the Morris House appeared in Harold Donaldson Eberlein and Horace Mather Lippincott, The Colonial Homes of Philadelphia and Its Neighborhood, 72 illustrations, Philadelphia and London, 1912, J. B. Lippincott Company, opposite, p. 226. (There is also a chapter on ^{account} the Perot-Morris House, pp. 225-235.) This is very popular/and has some inaccuracies.

The famous artis, Joseph Pennell, made a drawing of the Morris House in 1912 which was reproduced as a lithograph in Joseph Pennell's Pictures of Philadelphia, J. B. Lippenscott Company, Philadelphia and London, 1914. This drawing appears on page 59 and is a view looking west from across Market Square, directly in front of the house. It shows the southeast corner of Church Lane, and Germantown Road. Ivy is on the house front between the windows of the first and second stories. This is one of 64 splendid lithographs by Pennell illustrating old Philadelphia. This

same drawing appears in E. Robins Pennell & Joseph Pennell Old Philadelphia, Philadelphia and London, J. B. Lippencott Company, MCMXIV, p. 412.

Several other illustrations of the house that I saw show it just as it is today. Illustrations of the garden show it very much as it is today. It is apparent that there has been substantially no change in the appearance of the old part of the house and the grounds during the past century.

Architectural Notes:

The following notes relating to the Morris House have been taken from Frank Cousins and Phillip M. Riley, pp. 104-105, Colonial Architecture of Philadelphia, Boston, Little Brown and Company, 1920.

6 panel single doors, distinctive eighteenth century Philadelphia type, arranged mostly as in Perot-Morris, Rowel, and Wharton Houses

1 pair of small and large panels in alteration

Latch rail and lock rail separate - latch rail above as in Perot-Morris House. (p. 104-105).

The Perot-Morris doorway is deeply recessed because of thick stone walls. It presents at its best a variation of the Philadelphia type "virtually a pure Tuscan adaptation." The columns taper toward top and entablature recessed above door to form pilaster projections above columns (p. 118).

12 panel upper and lower window sashes, both first and second stories, in Perot-Morris House and many other houses of that period.

Most 2-1/2 story houses of Colonial Philadelphia have shutters on first story, blinds on second story, as in Perot-Morris House (p. 144).

Market Square - Germantown:

Germantown was founded in 1683 under the leadership of Francis Daniel Pastorius, who received a grant from William Penn. Originally the settlement was made up of self-exiled Germans, but soon many Englishmen joined the Germantown settlement. The center of early Germantown was Market Square, about one-half acre, situated immediately in front of the Morris House. The Burrough Council erected on this square in 1741 a market house and a prison. Stocks were used on the square before the prison was built. The prison, or jail, was a small log house at the east corner of the square. At an early date the Philadelphia Contributionship Fire Insurance Company erected a building on this square and occupied it until 1850. It has been mentioned that Sir William Howe directed the battle of Germantown from this square and that the main British line extended directly across it. The inn property at the corner of Church Lane (then Loken's Mill Road) was used for a period in the 1790s by the United States Treasury for the storing of specie in cellar vaults. I have already mentioned the watercolor drawn by James Harvey in 1826, which hangs in the Germantown Historical Society. This watercolor is of the Market Square. Another sketch of Market Square appears as Plate XXIV in John Richards Quaint Old Germantown in Pennsylvania, 60 Landmarks drawn on since 1863-1888, correlated, arranged, and annotated by Julius Friedrich Sachse, Philadelphia, 1913. The Morris House is shown in Plate XXXIII.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the present, at least, there would seem to be advantages in establishing the area as a national historic site, having its own administration, and not as part of Independence National Historical Park.
2. That the name of the area be: Deshler-Morris House National Historical Site.
3. Obtain buffer strip on north of house.
4. Move boxwood in grounds to part that will accompany house.
5. Restore original part of house to Colonial-Revolutionary period: remove bookcases along north wall in parlor, first floor; remove wallpaper throughout house; remove gilding on walls and ceilings; plaster and paint walls; remove gaslight fixtures; perhaps replace tiles around fireplace in front room, south side of hall, first floor. Estimates and architectural studies will be needed on restoration. Part or all might be done with current appropriation of \$15,000, as it is unlikely that personnel will be appointed until spring of 1949. Restoration work should be done, if possible, before house is opened to public.
6. Renovate rear wing for custodian's use as residence, or for quarters of some employee.
7. The subject of removal of "warts" on house will have to be given further study, related as it is to easements on adjoining lot. Restoration of house would dictate that the "wart" on original part be removed eventually. It will be impossible to do that now.
8. Study advisability of removing last brick addition to rear wing.
9. Engineers should study the several heating systems and make recommendations for renovating or installation of adequate new system.
10. Lighting system will have to be studied in relation to restoration and period display when policy in these respects has been established.
11. Schedule preparation and printing of small edition 2-fold folder for visitor use when house opened to public, possibly in spring, 1949. This means that the folder will have to be added to this year's printing program.

Recommendations - cont'd.]

12. Furnish in period style: Colonial and Early Federal Periods. This should be done with accuracy and taste. Germantown Historical Society and local community will almost certainly assist. Various museums might help.

13. Personnel:

Custodian	CAF-7	\$3,397
Laborer-handyman	CFC-6	2,469
W. A. E. Labor		500
Charwoman (W. A. E.)		1,500
Historical Aide	SP-5	2,394

\$10,260.

Mowing, gardening, and miscellaneous equipment will be needed, as well as supplies, office furniture, and other things necessary in establishing a new area.

Ray E. Appleman,
Regional Historian.
(August 6, 1948)

Attachments:

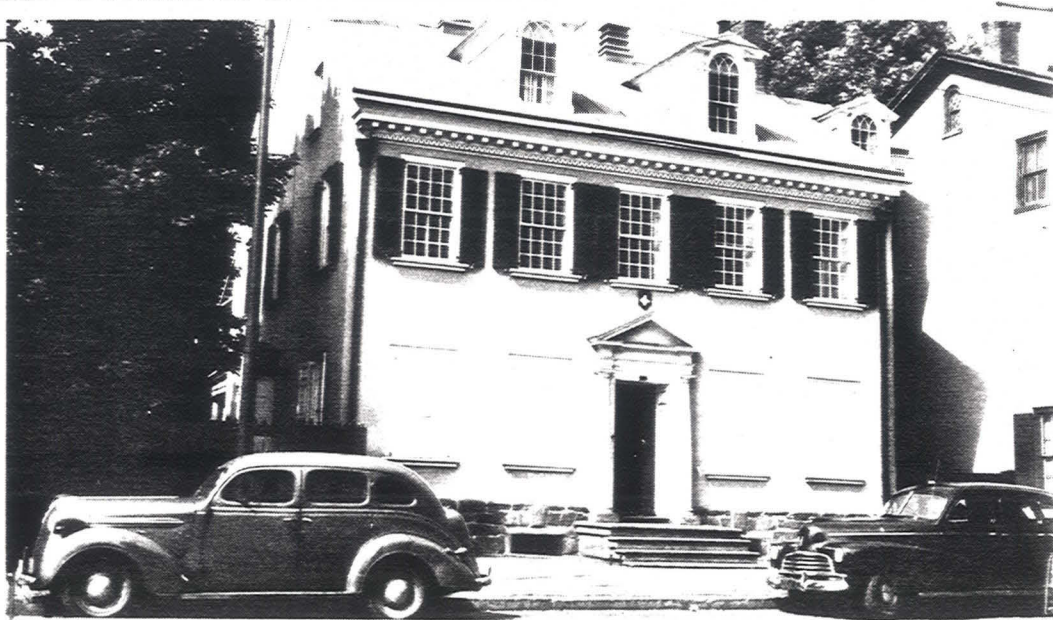
21 photographs

Plan of Property Made for Estate of Elizabeth C. Morris, 22nd Ward, Philadelphia, John T. Campbell, Sur. & Reg. 9th Dist., April 14, 1948.

First Floor Sketch Plan, Morris House, 5442 Germantown Ave., Phila., Pa., April 20, 1948. (Made by George Clarence Johnson, A. I. A., 158 W. Penn St., Phila. 44, Pa.)

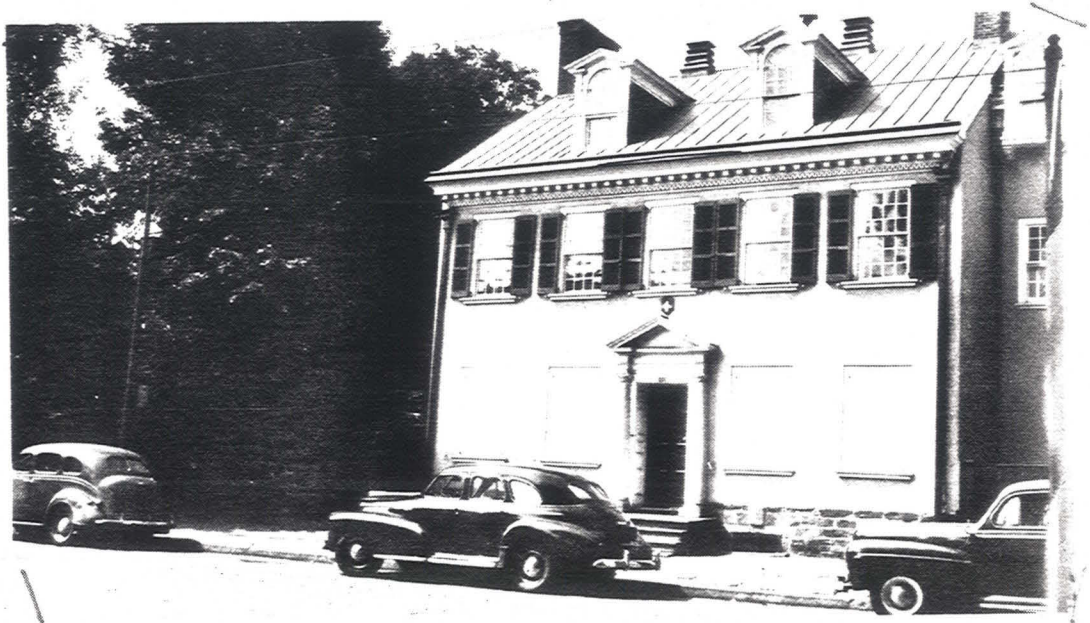
2-fold leaflet, "The Germantown Historical Society" issued by the Society, containing a location map of remaining historic structures in Germantown, together with numbered, identified list of sites indicated on map.

Information sheet on Germantown Historical Society.



No. 1.

From view of Perot-Harris House, 5142 Germantown Avenue, Germantown, Philadelphia. Building is constructed of Germantown stone covered with plaster. Property line on right (north) coincides with wall of house. Wood fence at left of house encloses informal grounds and garden. Note old cast iron marker, 1 clasped hands of Philadelphia Contributionship, above doorway. This was the first fire insurance in America and included Benjamin Franklin among its founders. (Pictures were taken by the writer, except No. 20, and negatives are in the Regional office file.)



No. 2

Another view of house shows more of fence and grounds on left (south) of house and double street car tracks in front of house on Germantown Avenue.



No. 3

View looking south past Morris House (right foreground) along fenced in grounds and sidewalk, Germantown Avenue. Note: Germantown stone of foundation walls. This type of material underlays plaster which covers remainder of house.



No. 4. Doorway of Morris House. Note address and old Philadelphia Contributionship cast iron marker.



No. 5. View looking west to Morris House from Church Lane. The house to the right (north) of the Morris House dates from about 1796, excepting the Mansard roof which is a change from the original. This house is scheduled to be torn down in the near future.

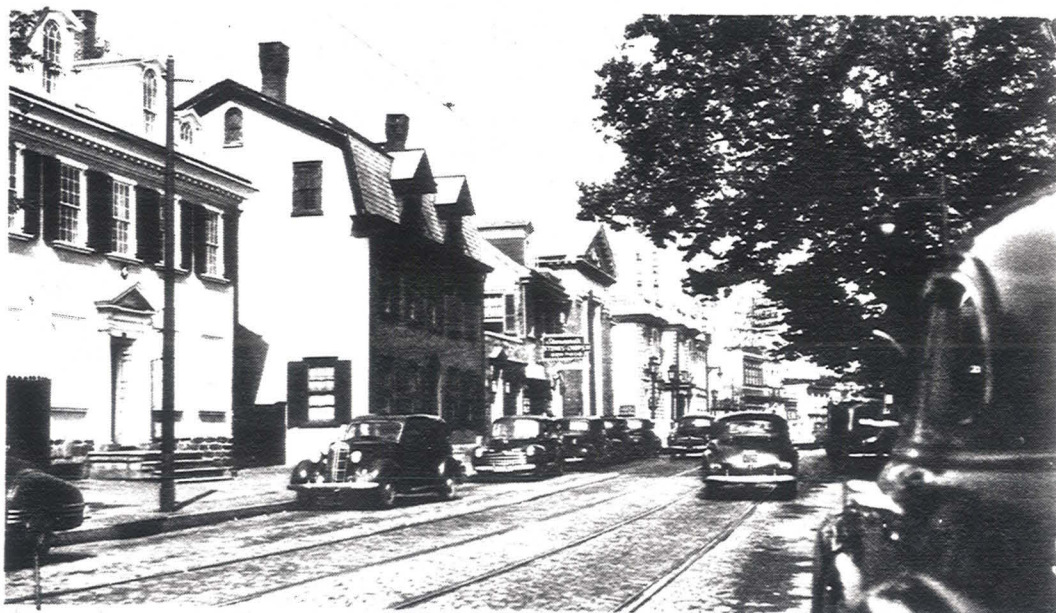
The southwest corner of the Old Market Square, Germantown, can be seen lower right foreground.



No. 6 View looking East from doorstep Morris House down Church Lane. South side of Market Square shows at left of photo.



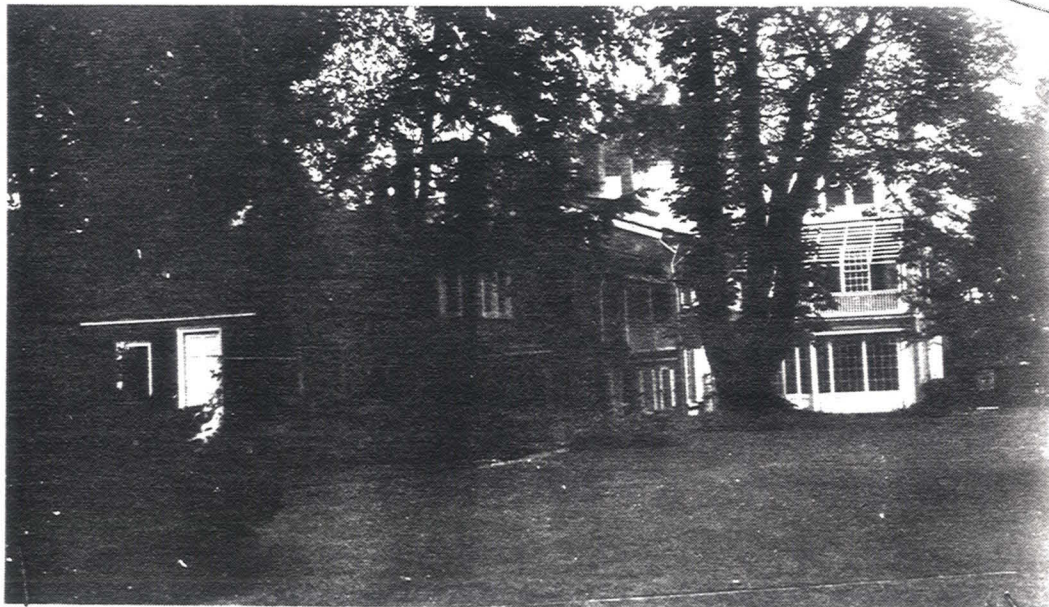
No. 7 View looking South along West side of Germantown Ave. Corner of Morris House shows at extreme right. Wood fence enclose grounds of Morris House.



No. 8. View looking north along Germantown Avenue. Morris House is last one on left of picture. Street car traffic is heavy and fast along this street.



No. 9. View looking east from grounds to rear wing additions to Morris House. The enclosed porch, or conservatory, and the second story portico attached to original Beshler House shown at right. Note cellar door on right to front part of cellar under original house.



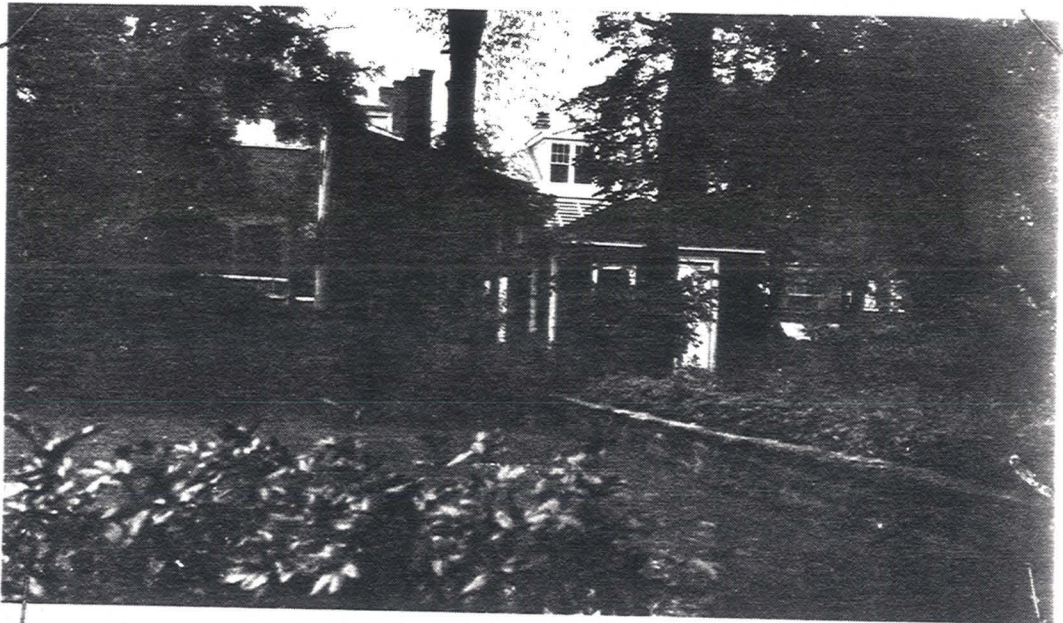
No. 10

Another view of rear of house. Note brick addition at end of wing.



No. 11

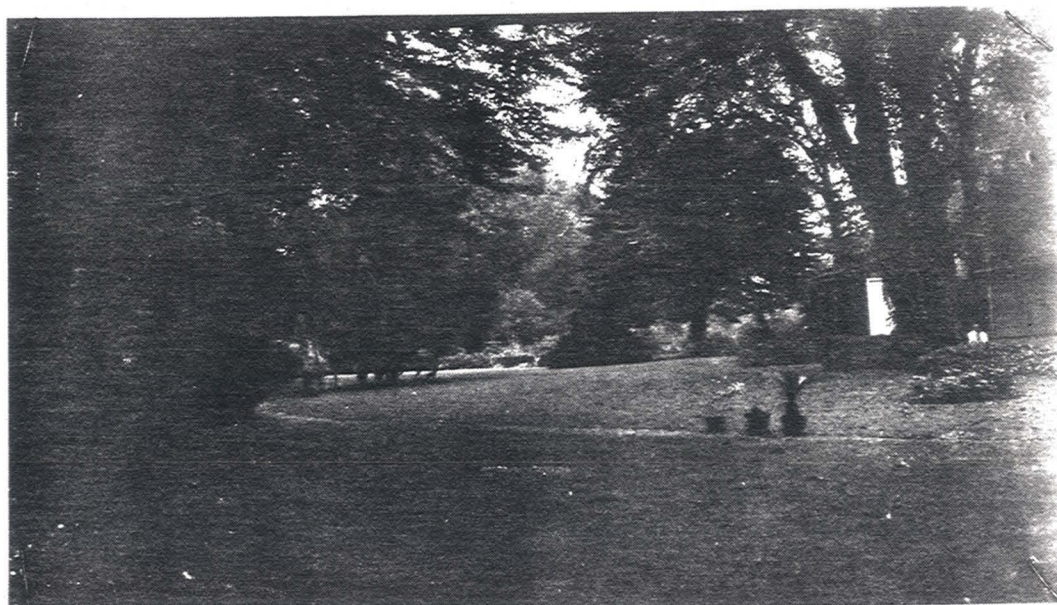
View looking North from yard to West wing showing where it joins original house. The conservatory and 2nd story porch attached to original house show at right. This wing could be adapted to serve as Custodian's quarters. There is a coal burning range in the kitchen.



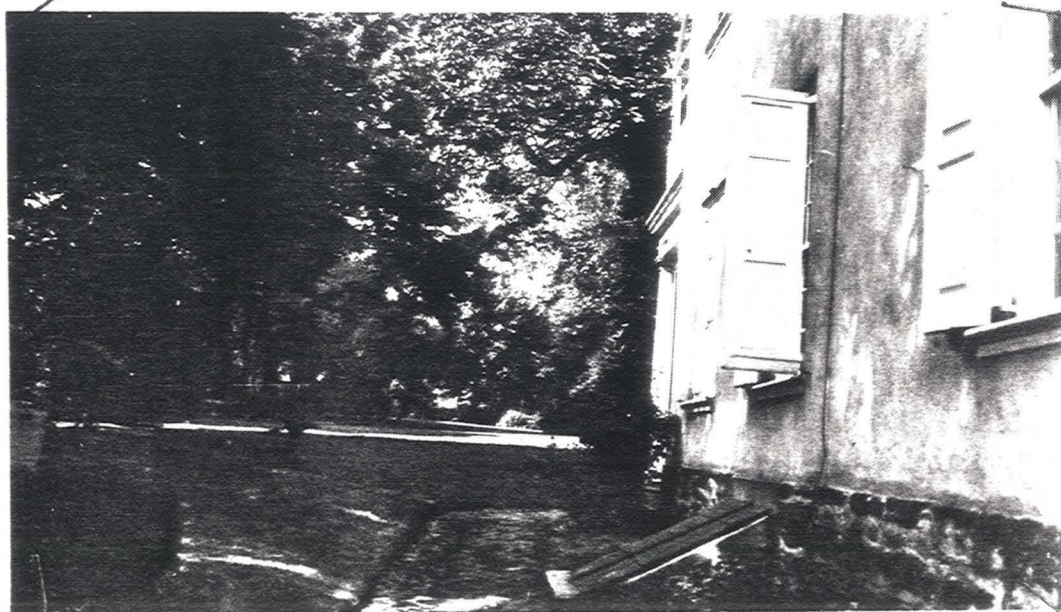
No. 12. View looking east along boundary of Morris House grounds. The stone wall seen running diagonally across the right side of picture is on the property line. The Morris House lot is to the right (south) of this wall. Note that the "warts" or "blisters" of the Morris House, seen in center, extend to the north of this stone wall line. This is the part of the house that constitutes an easement on the adjoining lot.



No. 13 View looking into grounds of Morris House through grill on gate from sidewalk, Germantown Avenue. This view is on South side of house.



No. 14 View looking West from point just inside street fence Morris House grounds.



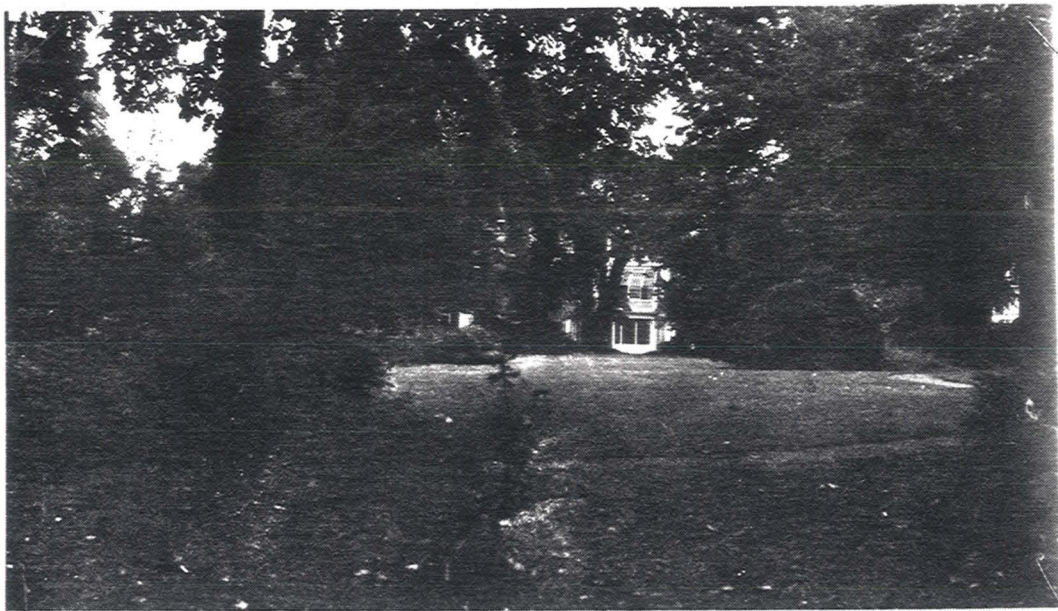
No. 15

View of grounds and south side of house. This side of the house was replastered prior to painting in the fall of 1947.



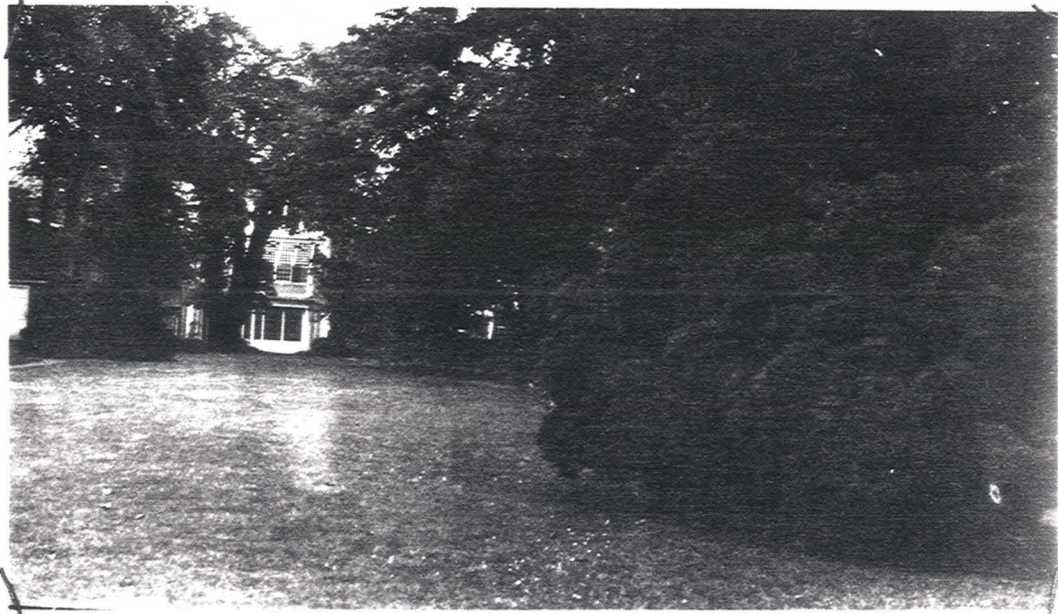
No. 16

View of west end of Morris House grounds. This part of grounds is being cut off and sold by Executors of the estate to the Society of Friends, who it is reported plan to build a parking area and school playground here.



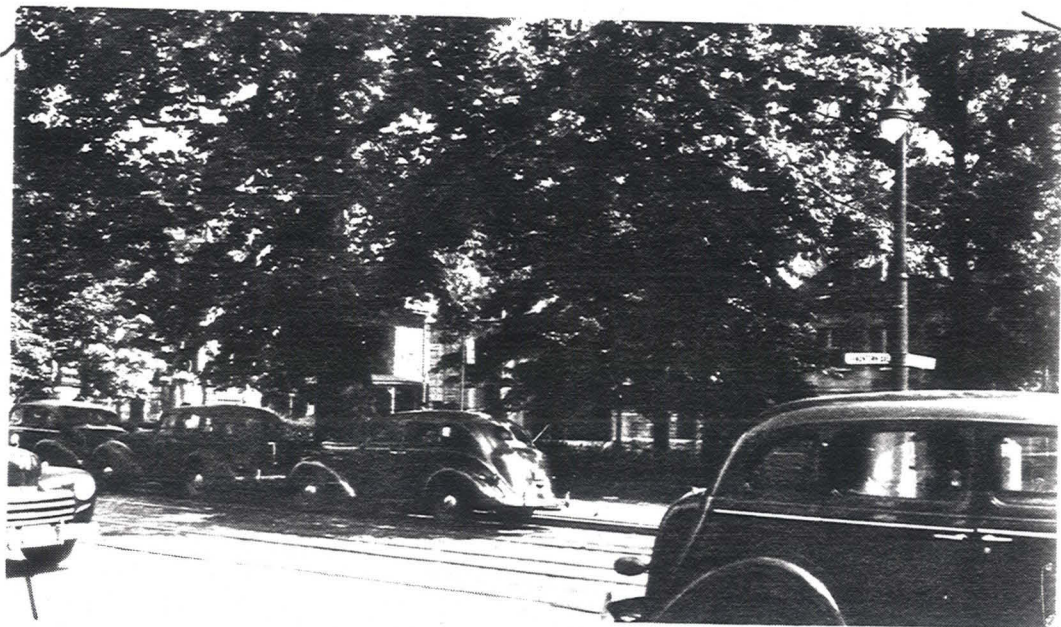
No. 17.

View looking east from near the back end of the present Morris House grounds. The back part to a point beyond the big boxwood at the right of the picture and the flower garden opposite has been cut off the grounds and sold.



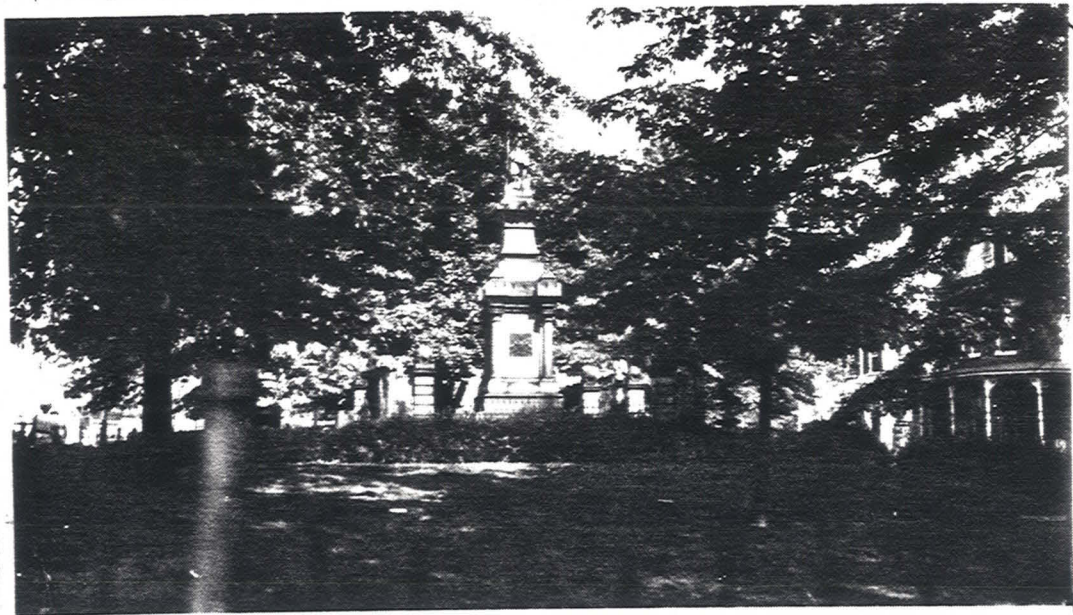
No. 12.

The new grounds boundary which the National Park Service will acquire if the Morris House is accepted by the Government runs just beyond, or east of the boxwood, as nearly as could be estimated on the ground. This boxwood is a very old one and should be saved for the grounds of the house. This would probably mean that it would have to be moved at Government expense if the SOCIETY OF FRIENDS agreed to its removal.



No. 19

View east from steps of Morris House across Germantown Avenue
to Market Square.



No. 20

View looking north from south end of Market Square, Germantown. The "square" is in the form of a narrow rectangle. Pedestrians can be seen on the sidewalk of Germantown Avenue at left. The Morris House is across the Avenue immediately opposite this end of the square. The Civil War Memorial in the center of the square was erected in 1863. One block of granite came from Devils Den, Gettysburg Battlefield. The Germantown Historical Society hopes to have this monument moved elsewhere.

THE GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

5214 Germantown Av., Philadelphia

When In the last year of the last century a group of Germantown citizens became interested in the forming of an organization to spread knowledge of and increase interest in the very unusual background of history still existing in this community. Germantown was then much less part of a great city and had a distinctly quaint old-time atmosphere, which has, alas, each year grown less!

The organization, named the Germantown Site and Relic Society, was officially launched on November 30, 1900, with Mr. Charles J. Wister as president, and Mr. Charles F. Jenkins secretary.

Where The first museum of the Society was opened in the old Concord School House in February, 1903, moving in 1907 to Vernon, the old Wister property in Vernon Park, where the collection of Germantown relics increased in size and interest. In 1927 the Society moved to the Hacker House, at 5214 Germantown Avenue, its present home.

This fine old residence, built in 1772 by Wm. Forbes, was presented to the Society by Edward I. H. Howell and his cousin, Mrs. Susan Hacker Bodine. At this time the name was changed to the Germantown Historical Society.

What The Museum building now houses a really rare collection bearing entirely on Germantown's history and growth.

The original land grant from William Penn to Pastorius dated 1689 is there, also—

Two portraits by Charles Willson Peale; a wooden figure, painted by Major André for use as decoration at the Meschianza.

An interesting gate-legged table which, tradition says, was used in Market Square to spread feasts for visiting Indians.

An original Sauer Bible and other books from the press of this earliest of Colonial printers—to mention but a few of the Society's unique treasures.

The library of the Historical Society is the largest and most comprehensive collection of books and pamphlets about Germantown history and is rich in genealogical records. Every Tuesday afternoon the scholarly librarian of the Society is at the Museum.

The lovely garden is regaining each year more of its old-time charm. Each spring is given a Garden Tea.

There are issued from time to time publications of historic value and interest which are mailed to the members.

The Guide Book to Historic Germantown, by Charles F. Jenkins, published by the Society, is at all times on sale for a nominal sum at the Museum.

Each year is sponsored a series of lectures and entertainments of historical significance for its members, and in the Fall a conducted tour through some interesting and historic section not too distant.

The Museum is open every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 1:00 to 5:00 P. M. through the duration, when the curator will gladly give further information.

Why The when, where, what of the Germantown Historical Society—its history, location and possessions—lead to the *why* of membership.

In a community such as Germantown education for the future is a perpetual duty. Each generation must be helped to be historically conscious, proud of the heritage of its past.

To assure this a vital organization with a large and representative membership is increasingly necessary. The cost of membership is small, the effect of membership is great both for today and for the future. Application may be sent to Chairman of Membership Committee.

Join the Germantown Historical Society **NOW!**

(30' wide)
met by July 40' wide

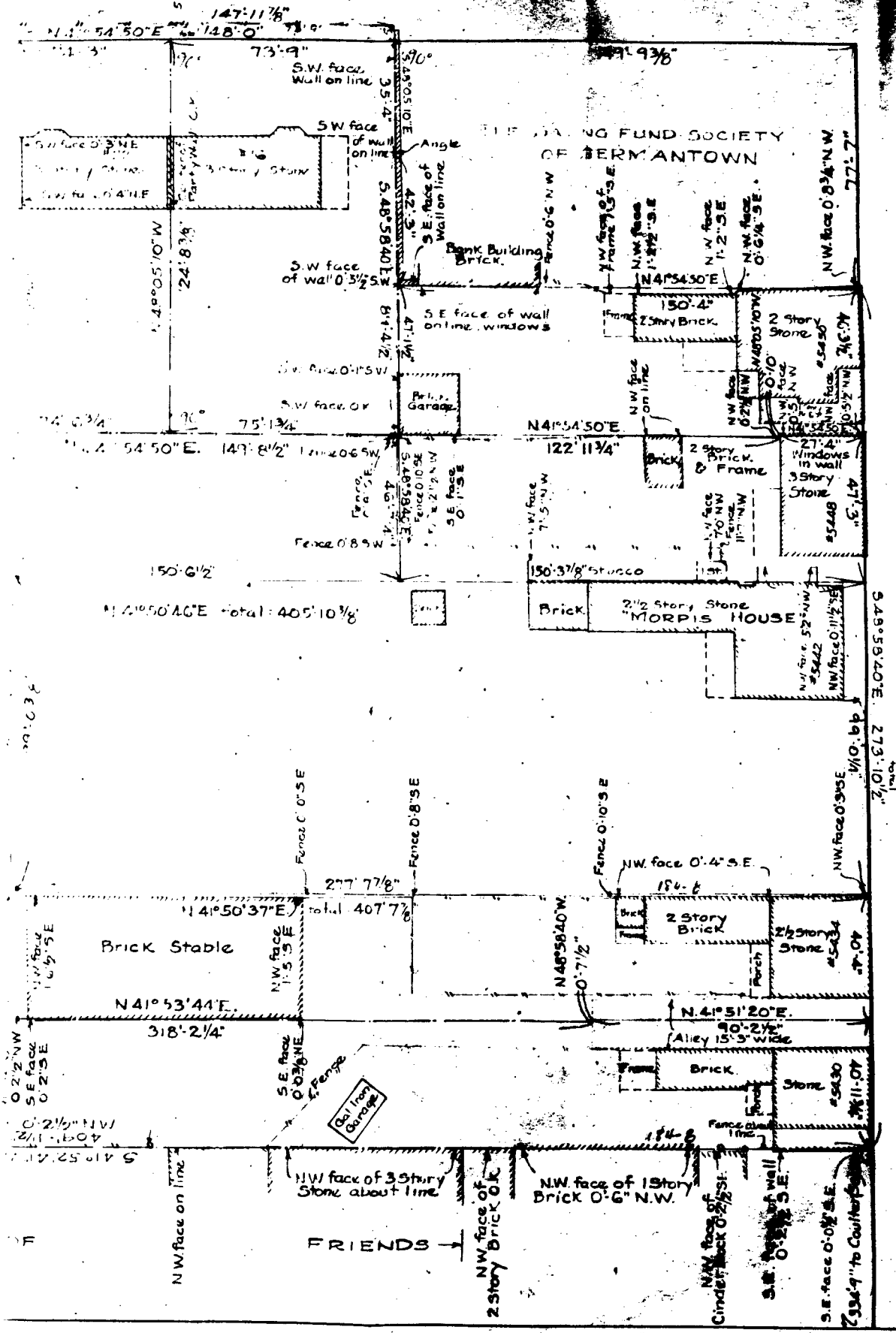
LANE

AVE.

(60' wide)

CHURCH
LANE

GERMANTOWN

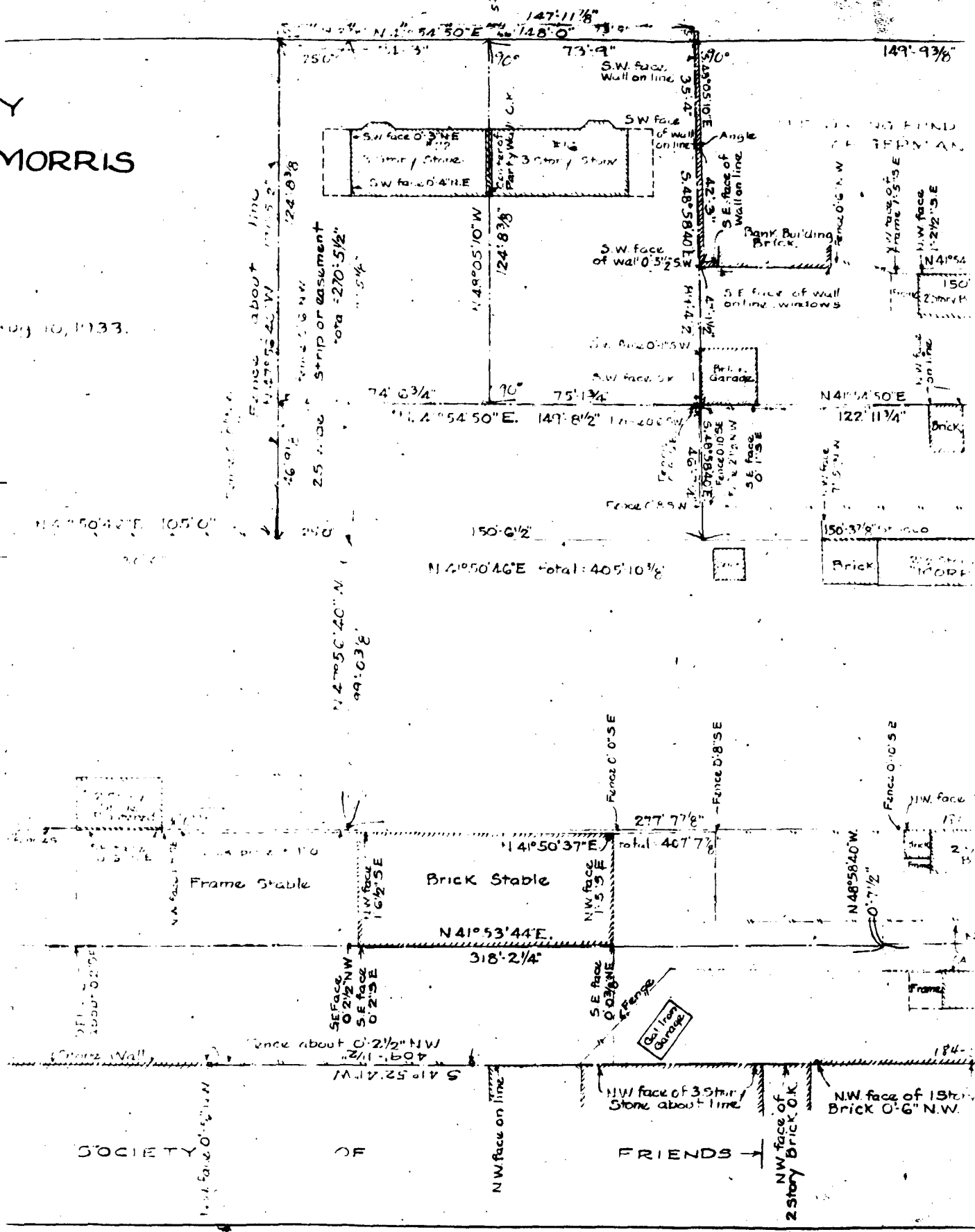


Y
MORRIS

Aug 10, 1933.

(30' wide)
Opened by Jury 40' wide

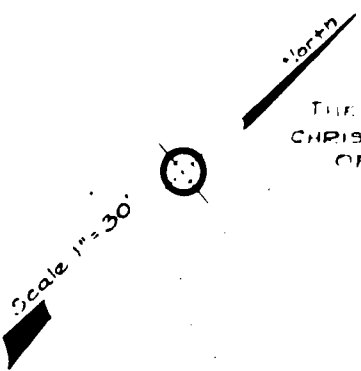
LANE



Op. 1

256

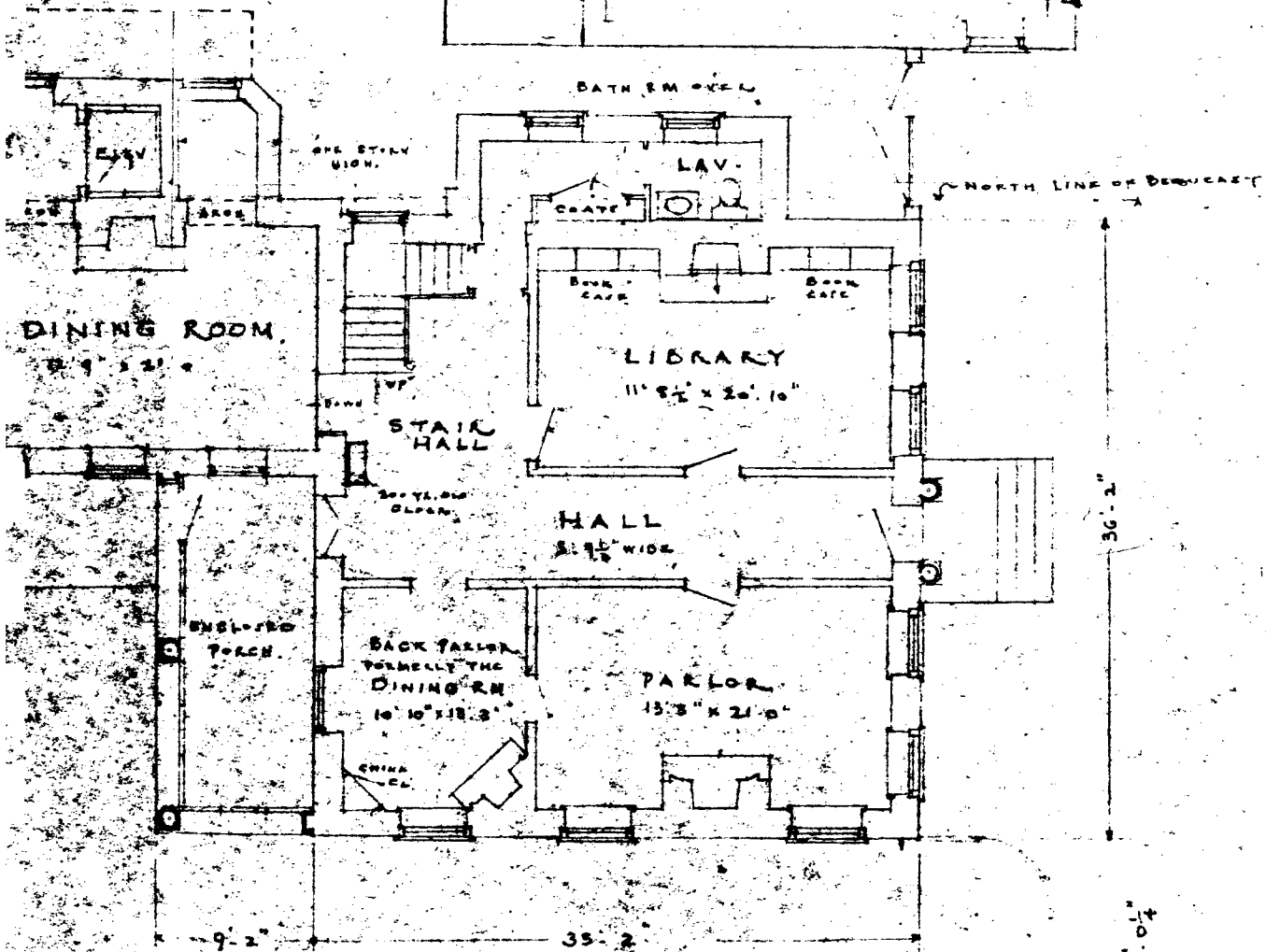
25.00 strip easement
26.00 270.5 1/2" 270.5 1/2"



John T. Campbell
Sen. & Reg. 9th Dist.
April 14, 1948.

5448

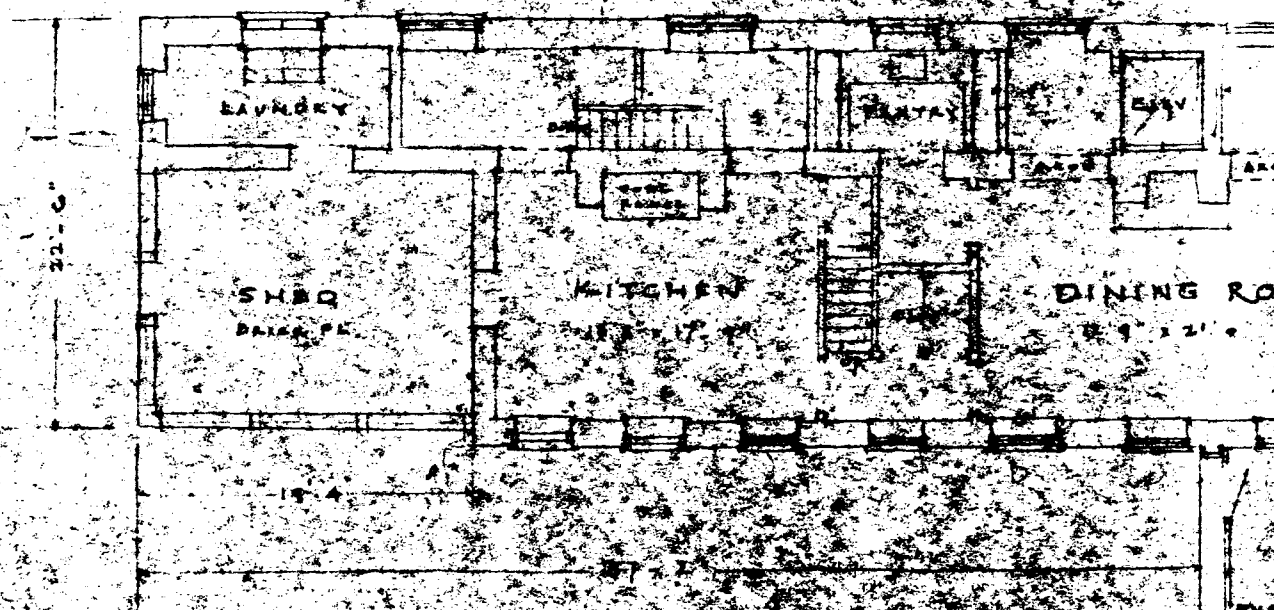
BUILT ABOUT 1798



PLAN.

RMANTOWN AVE. PHILA. PA.

SCALE $\frac{1}{8}$ " = ONE FOOT.



BUILT IN 1772 BY DAVID DEACHER, WHO DIED IN 1785. THEN
PURCHASED BY ISAAC FARRER, GEN. WASHINGTON LOVED
FARM HIM, DIED 1792, AND DURING THE JOURNAL, 1772 & 1785, HE
CABINET MEETING HERE. THE HOUSE BURNED BY THE MILLS, 1784.

THE MAIN PORTION OF THE HOUSE HAS FINE GRAYISH MARBLE, WHITE
TILE FACING, NEW WAINSCOT, CHAIR RAIL, BELL, BEAUFORT, GEORGE, BERRY
WITH FINE HARDWARE. THE REAL & LATESTLY ENTERTAINMENT, BUILT IN
LATER YEARS.
SECOND FL. MAIN PART IS SAME FROM AN. FIRST FL.
THE HOUSE HAS 3 PORCHES.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

PRELIMINARY SURVEY MADE BY
GEORGE CLEAFINGER JOHNSON, AIA
REGISTERED ARCHITECT
150 W. PENN ST. PHILA. 22 PA.
APRIL 24, 1945

MORRIS HOUSE - 5442 GERMANTOWN

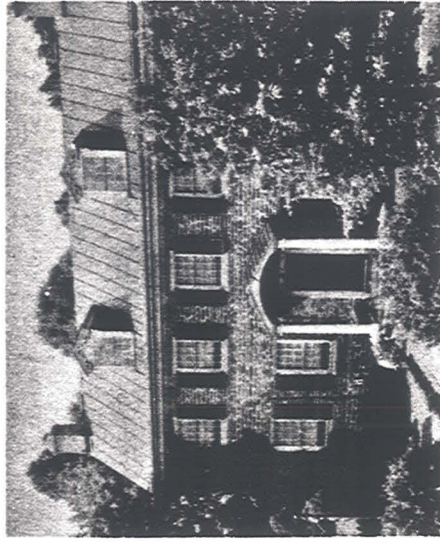
Places of Historic Interest in Germantown

1. STENTON: Windrim Avenue and 18th Street. Built 1772-74 by James Logan. Visited by Washington during and after the Revolution.
- *2. LOUDOUN: 4610 Germantown Avenue. Built 1801 by Thomas Armat.
- *3. GILBERT STUART HOUSE: 5140 Germantown Avenue. Occupied by Stuart 1796-1800. Studio was located in barn at rear.
4. HACKER HOUSE: (Germantown Historical Society) 5214 Germantown Avenue. Built 1772 by William Forbes.
- *5. GRUMBLETHORPE: 5261 Germantown Avenue. Built 1744 by John Wister. British General Agnew died here during Battle of Germantown.
- *6. JOHN FANNING WATSON HOUSE: 1271 Germantown Avenue. Reputedly occupied by Thomas Jefferson and Edmund Randolph in 1793.
- *7. MORRIS HOUSE: 9442 Germantown Avenue. Built 1772-73 by David Dasher. Occupied by President Washington in 1793 and 1794.
8. MARKET SQUARE: (Opposite Morris House). Center of early Germantown. Prison, stocks, and public scales were located here.
- *9. GERMANTOWN ACADEMY: Schoolhouse Lane and Greene Street. Founded 1760. Used as hospital during Battle of Germantown.
10. VERNON MANSION: Germantown Avenue north of Cheltenham Avenue. Built 1803 by James Matthews.
- *11. PASTORIUS HOUSE: 25 High Street. Built 1796 by Daniel Pastorius, great grandson of Francis Daniel Pastorius.
- *12. GREEN TREE TAVERN: Built 1748.
- *13. WYCK: 6026 Germantown Avenue. Portion of house built before 1700. Used as hospital during Battle. Visited by Lafayette 1821.
- *14. MENNONITE MEETING HOUSE: Germantown Avenue north of Herman Street. Built 1770. Founded 1708.
- *15. KEYSER HOUSE: 6201 Germantown Avenue. Built 1738 by Dirck Keyser.
- *16. JOHNSON HOUSE: 6306 Germantown Avenue. Center of Battle of Germantown.
17. CONCORD SCHOOL HOUSE: East side of Germantown Avenue north of Washington Lane. Built 1771.
18. UPPER BURYING GROUND: Germantown Avenue, adjacent to Concord School House. Burial place of many early settlers of Germantown and of Revolutionary War soldiers. Oldest known grave 1716.
- *19. CLIVEDEN: Germantown Avenue and Johnson Street. Built about 1760 by Benjamin Chew. Scene of Colonel Musgrave's repulse of Continental forces.
20. UPSALA: 6430 Germantown Avenue. Built 1798 by John Johnson. An excellent example of American "Colonial" architecture.
- *21. BILLMEYER HOUSE: Northeast corner Germantown Avenue and Upsal Street. Built about 1727. Occupied by Washington during Battle.
- *22. CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN: 6613 Germantown Avenue. Mother Church of sect in America. Built 1770.
- *23. ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH: Germantown Avenue and Phil-Elena Street. Founded about 1737. Present building is third to occupy the site. Scene of British activity during Battle.

(*Not open to public)

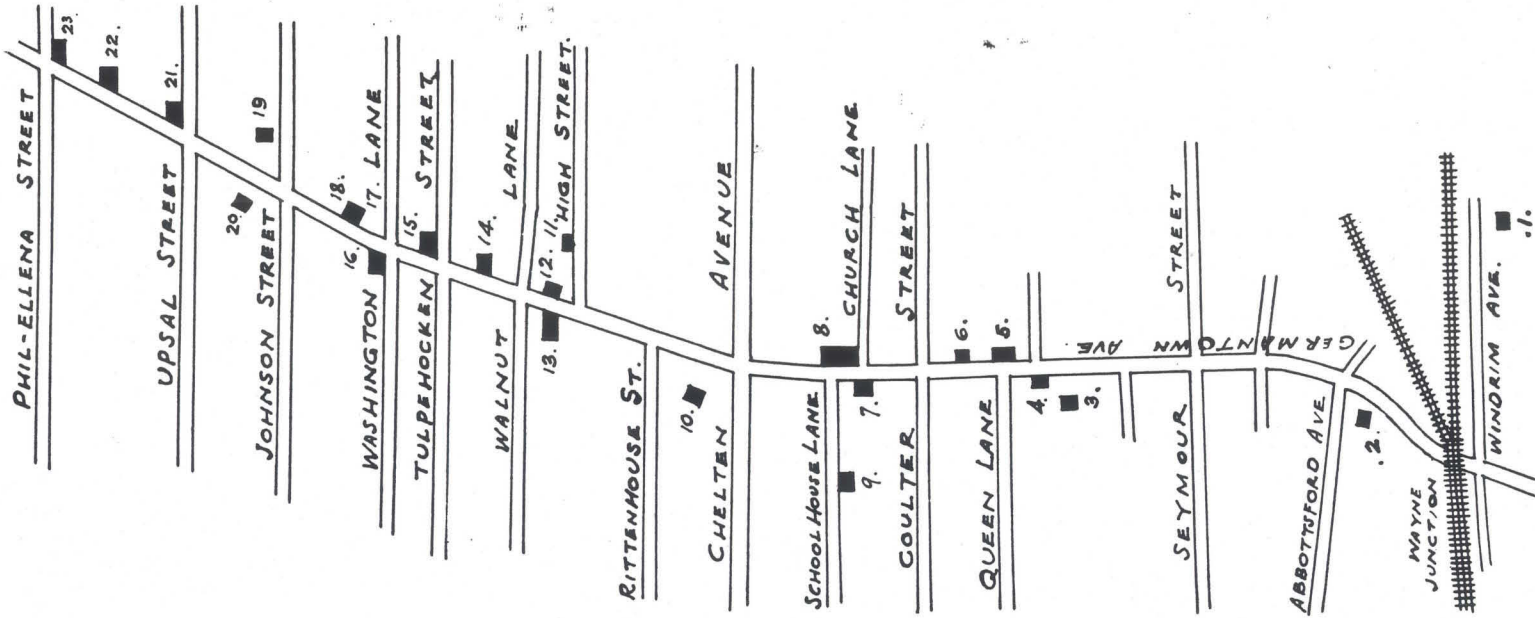
The Germantown Historical Society

5214 GERMANTOWN AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA



Early Germantown

GERMANTOWN was founded in 1683 by a group of self-exiled Germans under the leadership of Francis Daniel Pastorius; this emigration and settlement being the result of William Penn's tour of the continent prior to the establishment of Pennsylvania. Originally strictly German in character, the town had many English families within a generation when leaders from Philadelphia and the provincial community found the need for larger estates and farms than the original settlement could provide. Among the early English inhabitants of the Germantown area was James Logan, Penn's secretary. His residence, *Stenton*, built in 1728, is one of the outstanding landmarks of today. In 1764 Benjamin Franklin



came to Germantown to meet the "Paxton Boys" and persuaded them to return to the frontier without presenting their grievances to the Provincial Assembly. In 1777 Generals Washington and Sullivan made an unsuccessful attempt to dislodge the main force of the British Army from Philadelphia by attacking them in Germantown. In 1793 and 1794 President Washington lived in Germantown while the yellow fever epidemic was raging in the capital city. At that time all but one of his cabinet officers were also in Germantown as well as the United States Bank. The town maintained its separate political existence until 1854 when it became part of the city of Philadelphia.

Germantown Historical Society

Realizing that much of historical Germantown had disappeared, and that no means were available to safeguard what little that remained, a group of citizens formed the Germantown Site and Relic Society on November 30, 1900. In 1927 the organization changed its name to the Germantown Historical Society. During its existence of nearly half a century, the Society has placed many commemorative tablets throughout Germantown and has also acquired numerous articles of historical value for its museum.

The present home of the Society is the Hacker House, which is principally a museum, but contains a valuable library as well. Built in 1772 by William Forbes, it was occupied principally by the family of David H. Conyngham and after 1832 was successively owned by several others until purchased by Isaiah Hacker in 1844. During the Battle of Germantown the house itself played no distinguished role, but was a point on the British reserve line. Descendants of Isaiah Hacker remained in possession of the house until 1927 when Edward I. H. Howell and Mrs. Susan Hacker Bodine presented it to the Germantown Historical Society.

The Museum and Library

Specific contributions of the Society are many. Perhaps of greatest interest is the museum which

contains numerous items of interest from colonial times through the Civil War. By means of these we may have a clearer picture of just how inhabitants of early Germantown lived. Among the outstanding exhibits are:

THE ORIGINAL LAND GRANT from William Penn to Francis Daniel Pastorius, dated 1689.

THREE PORTRAITS attributed to Charles Willson Peale, one of the few notable artists of the American Revolutionary period.

A WOODEN FIGURE, painted by Major André of the British Army as a decoration to be used at the Meschianza in 1778, a social event which for a century remained unequalled in brilliancy and elaborateness.

A GATE-LEGGED TABLE, which, according to tradition, was used in Market Square to spread feasts for visiting Indians.

ALL THREE EDITIONS OF THE SAUER BIBLE and other books published by this first colonial printer.

Of equal importance and interest is the library, which is the largest collection of material on Germantown. This collection includes many family Bibles and records, an excellent file of local newspapers, and numerous volumes dealing with Germantown and Pennsylvania history. The Librarian of the Society is at the museum every Tuesday afternoon to assist those who seek information concerning historical Germantown.

Activities

From time to time the Society issues publications which are mailed to all members. Such bulletins concern subjects of historical value and interest. One of the latest of these is a biographical account of Charles Willson Peale during his residence in Germantown.

For those who wish more detailed information, a guide book prepared by Charles Francis Jenkins, one of the founders of the Society, is for sale at the museum.

Throughout the year, the Society sponsors a series of lectures dealing either with historical subjects or those of general interest. Trips through German-

town and historical sections of Eastern Pennsylvania are also conducted. Each spring the Society gives a Tea in the garden of the museum. Here, for a few hours, one can recapture that quiet charm which at one time was typical of Germantown.

Membership

The Germantown Historical Society has at present primarily an educational program. It is the desire of its members to make every citizen of our now very large community aware of the historical and cultural heritage which earlier inhabitants have given us. It is not with a false pride or self-satisfaction that we look back on the part Germantown has served in national and local affairs. By becoming acquainted with our rich past, we may take a healthy pride in our community of today and do much toward making it a leader in the future.

As has been mentioned, the Society also has its social life. There is still much work to be done which requires activity on the part of its members. Largely because of prohibitive taxes, many of the fine buildings in Germantown are endangered by extinction and it is the desire of the Society, in conjunction with other civic groups, to preserve as many as possible. For this purpose a large active membership in the Society is necessary. The community is not yet fully conscious of the value of our past and of those buildings which remain a tangible evidence of it.

*The members of the
Germantown Historical Society invite you
to join them in their work*

M E M B E R S H I P

Adult: \$5.00 a year

Life: \$50.00

MUSEUM HOURS: Every Tuesday, Thursday
and Saturday 1 to 5 PM

LIBRARY HOURS: Tuesday 1 to 5 PM