

DELAWARE STREET

#202-204 - The "Delaware House"
(See Photo No. 44)

Summary: The site of **this** house is a part of the large tract that was owned by **Mathias and Emilius deRingh** before 1670. It was bought that year by Peter Alrichs and sold by him in 1683 to Reynier Vanderculen. The original plot of ground extended along Delaware Street from the west line of **#124 (Platt's store)** to Third Street. Vanderculen sold it off in three parts: that next Third Street to Anthony Green; the middle part to **William Markham**; and the third part extending from "one foot west of the house" (which was the early part of **#206**) to the **line** of the land of Sarah Telsh, which is the west line of **Platt's** store. This latter part containing the site of the Delaware house was sold as a half-interest in house and ground to Dr. Qerardus Wessells in 1685. The whole plot **was** mortgaged by Dr. **Wessells** to John Darby in 1686, and was in the nominal possession of Dr. **Wessells** in 1687. Between that time and 1696, Vanderculen recovered the undivided property, and **in** that year sold it to Cornelius Empson. Between the purchase by Empson, "**gentlemen**", in 1696 and possession by Thomas Allett, "**innkeeper**", in 1721, when Allett died and left the property by **will** to his wife Ann, no records have been found so far.

In 1722, Ann Allett sold the house, ground and all buildings and improvements to Isaac Janvier **and** Joeeph Hill. Two years later theae **men** made a division, by which Isaac Janvier kept the house, **#206**, in which he lived, and the site of the **Delaware house**. **Whether** there **was** a house of any kind on that site at the time **is** not indicated by the deed of division.

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In 1769 this property, owned by Isaac and Jacob Janvier, was sold at auction as a "messuage and lot of land with appurtenances" to Robert Furnace, innkeeper, the lot 41' x 315'. Furnace, at the time of the sale, was the proprietor, but not the owner, of the **Gilpin** house. He was an ardent Methodist at a time when clergymen of that faith were unwelcome among the chiefly Episcopalian and Presbyterian inhabitants. Furnace had been forced to restrict his hospitality to the clergy at the Gilpin house, which may have been a factor in his purchase of a house of his own.

In 1830 the heirs of Robert Furnace sold to Joseph **Caldwell**, who in 1847 added a story, and generally repaired and improved the inn. **Caldwell** sold to **Joseph Gilbert**, and the house continued to be operated as a hotel. (History for last half of the nineteenth century still to be checked.)

In his history of ~~New~~ Castle, Alexander Cooper writes that about 1900, John Thompson, who had a successful business in part of 122-124, rented the Delaware house, remodeled it after tearing out the entire front, and conducted his store there until 1908, when he surrendered his lease to the owner, Henry **Witsel**, and retired.

The foregoing history indicates that until Thompson's time, the building was continuously an inn. Thomas **Allett** might have had a tavern there, although it seems more likely that the next owner of the site, Isaac Janvier, built the house or tavern between

(The Delaware house, continued)

1724 and 1729. In the latter year* he sold #206, in which he had been living in 1724. In any case, he must have built or enlarged the house before 1769, when messuage and lot were sold at auction.

John Crow was one of the outstanding proprietors of the Delaware house. He made his inn a center that radiated public spirit, and entertained many distinguished guests.

On the gable end of the house from the alley to the west there is plain indication of the addition of a story in 1847. The lower portion of the gable is laid in common bond with a stretcher course every fourth course.

* When Isaac Janvier sold #206 to Francis Janvier in 1729, he provided for the alley between #206 and #204, stipulating in the deed that Francis should not build out into it.

-----Detailed history on file-----