

INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

**THE HOME AND OFFICE
OF
WILLIAM DUANE**

HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

FEBRUARY 1971

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**THE HOME AND OFFICE
OF
WILLIAM DUANE**

(PUBLISHER OF THE AURORA)

316 MARKET STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

**HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT
HISTORICAL DATA SECTION**

by

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OFFICE OF HISTORY AND HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

EASTERN SERVICE CENTER

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**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**



PREFACE

This report like others of the Franklin Court-associated reports has benefitted from many years of study and the efforts of many Park Service historians. Martin I. Yoelson, first of all, Edward M. Riley, Dennis C. Kurjack, William M. Campbell, and a score of others have with special zeal dug out the many bits and pieces of which it is composed. The writer too has had that unmatched pleasure from time to time. He has chosen the mode of treatment and will have to answer for it.

Sources have come from many locations, some very far away. Most have been near at hand; in the American Philosophical Society's vault lies the mother lode. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Franklin Institute, the Library of Congress, the Franklin publication projects offices at the Yale University library, the Princeton University library, the record departments of state and city governments and those of Philadelphia's old fire insurance companies have contributed other documentary and record materials. The cooperation of their staffs and officials have been essential to this effort.

ABSTRACT

Included in this report are such materials as intensive research in manuscript collections and public records here and abroad has disclosed about the tenant house built by Benjamin Franklin during his declining years. The narrative explains his purposes in undertaking it, describes the process of construction and later alteration, and details use and occupancy since 1788. Equal emphasis is given the house's historical significance. Much obscure source material is explored in illustrating the Aurora's importance to our tradition of a free press. The contributions of editors Benjamin Franklin Bache and William Duane are discussed at length. Margaret Markoe Bache's courageous stand as publisher, following her husband's death from yellow fever, is related. The residency of William Barton, designer of the seal of the United States, is also presented.

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CHAPTER I

The Colonial Properties on High Street

Philadelphia's main thoroughfare of the colonial period bore the official designation "High Street." Founder William Penn intended the 100-foot-wide, east-west avenue to be the grand axis of his "great town," in appearance rather like Williamsburg's Duke of Gloucester Street today. Not only did Penn's surveyor, Thomas Holme, lay out a broad street, he provided that it have lots of greater depth - 306 feet from front to rear - than any other street in town. They were also generously wide, following the proprietor's wish that "every house be placed...in the middle of its plat, as to the breadth-way of it, that so there may be a greene countrie towne, which will never be burnt and always wholesome." But Penn's beau ideal for a colonial capital never came close to realization. On High Street commercial considerations dictated the mode of development. Typical village marketing found its way onto the street, and rapid growth transformed this into a large-scale produce operation. The city fathers built a shambles down the center of High Street's broad expanse. At this point the street became an artery of trade, its breadth a convenience to commerce more than a concourse of beauty. As values increased speculative landholders divided and subdivided the more spacious properties into narrow lots. Although some larger residences and public buildings were erected along High Street, the small, combination shop-homes of tradespeople came to predominate. Their builders economized by grouping them in unbroken array, sharing party-walls. Borrowing a term from the general appearance of things, Philadelphians before long referred "commonly" to their main street as "Market" instead of High Street.¹

This process became well-defined just about the time when John Read, a carpenter lately of London and Birmingham, and his wife, Sarah White

1. Agnes Addison Gilchrist, "Market Houses in High Street," in Luther P. Eisenhart, ed., Historic Philadelphia from the Founding Until the Early Nineteenth Century... (Phila., 1953), p. 304.

Read, future mother-in-law of Benjamin Franklin, arrived in Philadelphia.² Though their date of arrival is not known, it may be assumed to have preceded only briefly his purchase on May 24, 1711, of a 16-foot 6-inch by 306-foot lot in the middle of the block south of High Street between Third and Fourth Streets.³ As his purpose in acquiring the long, narrow lot at this time would have been for building a home, we may also assume that the two-story frame house later found there was built very soon thereafter.⁴

John Read's lot was half of a larger property made over to one Henry Hayes by original patent on April 7, 1707.⁵ Hayes divided it, selling the half nearest Third Street to a William Davis on April 12, 1711.⁶ Davis sold that half to Read little more than a month later.

2. The Read family background is discussed in detail in Historic Structure Report on 318 Market Street, Historical Data Section. Francis James Dallett, "Doctor Franklin's In-Laws," The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine, XXI (1958), pp. 297-302.

3. Endorsement on reverse of manuscript deed Henry Hayes to William Davis (MC 14a), April 12, 1711, reads: "Draw a Deed from Henry Hays to John Read of Philada. Carpenter for this Lott Cons [ideration] 15 lb." MS in American Philosophical Society Library is dated on reverse May 24, 1711.

4. For further description of John Read's frame house see Historic Structure Report on 318 Market Street, Historical Data Section. Discussion of occupants and their lives and times can be found in the same report.

5. The deed in William Penn's name was signed by his commissioners, Edward Shippen, Griffith Avere, Thomas Story, and James Logan. Exemplification Records Book 1, 687-8, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia. Patent Book A, vol. 4, 10; original in American Philosophical Society Library.

6. Described in the manuscript deed (MC 14a), American Philosophical Society Library: "A certaine piece of Land in the High Street in Philada, between the third and fourth a street from Delaware Being Part of a Lott which He the said Henry [Hayes] purchased of the Commissioners of property as expressed in patent bearing Date the seventh Day of Aprill Anno Dom 1707 Recorded in the Rolls Office at Philada. in Patent Book AV4, page 10 The 22d 2d mo. Anno Domi 1707 bounded and limited as follows, containing in Breadth sixteen foot an Half & in Length Three-Hundred & Six foot Bounded Northward with the Said High Street Eastward with William Bouldings Lott Southward with the ends of the Chestnut Street Lotts & westward with the other part of the said Lott now in the possession of Henry Hayes." The deed is dated April 12, 1711.

Read died in 1724. His widow transferred a half interest to Deborah and Benjamin Franklin in 1734 and they obtained the other half interest from her deceased sister's family in 1745.⁷ At no time did the Franklins live in the small frame house; a succession of tradesmen rented the dwelling during the 40 years preceding its demolition in 1786.⁸

Meanwhile, next door in the direction of the Delaware River a tailor, William Boulding, had developed in like manner a property of the same dimensions. He purchased the 33- by 306-foot lot from William Penn on December 3, 1705.⁹ In March 1708 he mortgaged it to colonial magnate Richard Hill, apparently laying out the £75 proceeds towards building two small brick houses along the Market Street frontage.¹⁰ Thus, John Read had a party-wall handy when he acquired his lot to joist into as he built.¹¹ Boulding died sometime before November 30, 1726, on which date son William Boulding, and daughter Mary Elgar and her

7. The transaction's lack of proper legal form (as described in fn. 3) was rectified by an instrument rendered by Hayes on December 12, 1716, now in the American Philosophical Society Library. Not long before his death Read mortgaged the property in the General Loan Office of Pennsylvania, and it was thus encumbered at the time when the family could least afford it. Sarah Read regained it at the sheriff's sale that followed and, anticipating the provisions of her deceased husband's will, made over the property to her daughters and their husbands during her lifetime. These developments are unravelled in Historic Structure Report on 318 Market Street, Historical Data Section. Deed Book H-7, 433-35, April 10, 1734, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia. Ibid., 435-36. Ibid., 437-39. Indenture, Benjamin Franklin, et ux., John Croker, et ux. to Sarah Read, April 11, 1734, provided for lease back to Sarah Read, during her lifetime. This ended with her death in 1761.

8. For Franklin's earlier associations with the site and tenants throughout the house's 75-year existence, see Historic Structure Report on 318 Market Street, Historical Data Section.

9. Exemplification Records Book 1, 690-91, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

10. Deed Book E-5, vol. 7, 180-3, Mar. 11, 1708/9. Ibid., p. 183-5, Mar. 12, 1708/9, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

11. Assuming, of course, that Boulding built promptly and that the brick messuage later established as having been on the property thus made its appearance between 1708 and 1711.

husband Joseph Elgar, his heirs, partitioned the property. The Elgars received the house next to Read's frame house and all the lot except a plot 17 feet 6 inches by 89 feet on which stood the other Boulding house. They also received the right of access to the rear by way of an alley through the younger Boulding's plot from Market Street.¹²

Elgar, a tanner by trade, and probably in residence elsewhere at a location more propitious to tannery operations, sold the house and lot on November 4, 1729, to widow Laura Syddons.¹³ She bequeathed it by the terms of her will of June 22, 1763, to son Anthony, a Bucks County farmer.¹⁴ This was only two-and-a-half months after Franklin started to build a fine house for himself to the rear of the property next door.¹⁵

12. Described in the deed book: "William Boulding having erected two Brick Messuages or Tenements on the...Lott, afterwards died,.. Now ...unto...Joseph Elgar...One of the said Messuages... [and] a piece of Ground...Contains in Breadth on High Street the width of the same Messuage Vizt 15 foot & a half and continues that Breadth to the Extent of 89 foot Southward from the sd. Street and from that extent it contains the Breadth of the Whole Lott Vizt 33 foot to the full extent of the whole Lot from High Street 306 foot And is bounded Northward with the said High Street Eastward partly with the other Messuage & Residue of the said whole Lot now of William Boulding, party hereto and partly with the Back Part of [lot at present-day 312 Market Street] ...Southward with the Back Ends of Chesnut Street Lotts and Westward with the Messuage and Ground late of John Read deced...Use of the 8 foot wide alley to be left open... Eastward over & across the Back End of the sd William Boulding's at the distance of 81 foot from High Street...also...Boulding's 2 foot of Ground to be left open from the said 5 foot wide alley into High Street [combining with the two foot wide strip of the next lot to form a four foot wide alley]." Deed Book G-4, pp. 449-52, *ibid*.

13. Deed Book G-6, 48-53, *ibid*. The consideration here involved was \$212 10s and half the \$6 yearly ground rent of the whole piece.

14. Deed Book H-21, pp. 481-87, *ibid*.

15. Franklin's House Historic Structures Report, Historical Data Section pp. 26-27.

A 34-foot-square structure on a 66-foot-wide lot, its siting left something to be desired in elbow room. Now, with the neighboring property in the possession of someone not likely to want it for personal use, a chance to widen the grounds presented itself. Nearly two years more passed before Deborah Franklin, acting in her husband's absence abroad, struck the bargain with Syddons that, in her words to Franklin, made the site "a fine Squair... with an equal spaise on each sid[e] your house."¹⁶ At that point the Franklin Court, later of such note and historical moment, came into being. Syddons made the most of his opportunity; he demanded and received £900 for the property.¹⁷ Deborah Franklin paid him a £500 deposit at the signing of the deed on September 26, and recorded it on October 31, 1765.¹⁸ With the property, representing a substantial portion of its value, came the small brick house built by Boulding nearly sixty years before.

16. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

17. While Deborah Franklin took the initiative in making the purchase, there can be little doubt that she did so aware of Franklin's desires in the matter. The possibilities opened up by Mrs. Syddon's passing could hardly have escaped discussion in advance of Franklin's departure for England. Nevertheless, she was influenced, as James Parker, postal official under Franklin, newspaper publisher, and earlier business associate, reported, "by Advise of your Friends, [and] purchased a Lot of Land adjoining your House, for which a large Sum was to be paid down." James Parker to Franklin, Jan. 4, 1766 in Leonard W. Labaree, ed., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven, 1969), XIII, 13. Their advice appears to have been regarded by Parker, then auditing Franklin's partnership with Hall and thus an authority of sorts, as good in the sense of resulting in the right measure and not so good in the sense of the price agreed to by her. Franklin's letters show him to have been gratified but feeling perhaps a bit skimmed.

18. As described in the deed the property consisted of: "The aforesaid piece or parcel of ground containing 15-1/2 ft. on High St. and 89 ft. Southward from High St. and from thence continuing the Breadth of the whole lot 306 ft. from High St. aforesaid Bounded Northward by the said High St. Eastward partly by the Residence of the same whole lot Southward by the back ends of Chestnut St. Lots and Westward with ground late of John Read dec'd." The ground rent continued in effect. Dead Book H-21, 481-7, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

Deborah Franklin described the proceeding in the following terms: "I have got the Dead don and recorded but not but on the 30 actually 31 of ocktober for it lay in Reyleis hands all the time all moste he was ill and he now layes dead but it is dun. Mr. Brogdon treeted me with the graitnes Politenes imaginabel on the ocashon the day that mrs Sidon

Although neither house assumed much importance in the scheme of things at Franklin Court, their backyards having come to exceed them in usefulness, both remained rental properties from whence a modest return could be extracted on the investment. For twenty years they thus served, aging and demanding upkeep increasingly as they grew older. Boulding's old brick house, apparently withstanding the ravages of time better than Read's frame neighboring structure, never went untenanted. Frederick Stonemetz, a cooper, had been living there at

acknowledge the Dead. Mr. Hughes gave Bond with me to the 4 hundred pounds." As translated from her familiarly vague and colloquial usage and phonetic spelling expertly by the Franklin Papers editors, this means that the Philadelphia conveyancer and scrivener, John Reilly, had been delayed in engrossing the deed over a long period of illness; that she finally had received the instrument on time to get it recorded before the end of October; that Charles Brockden, who as recorder of deeds (1722-1767) was a proprietary appointee and presumably disapproving of Franklin's politics, and treated her well when she and Anthony Siddons' wife (also Deborah by name) showed up in his office to receipt the sale; and that in passing title she had secured Siddons by bond for £400 of the £900 price of the house and lot. Reilly completed the deed virtually with his dying breath; he died sometime before November 21, 1765, when his apprentice advertised for employment, referring to him as "lately deceased." Leonard W. Labaree, ed., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven, 1969), XII, 351-52.

Deborah Franklin paid the £900 by increments. From scattered evidences it is possible to reconstruct the process in its main outlines. The earliest documented step in the dealing is a bond for £800 executed by her and John Hughes in Anthony Syddons' favor on March 10, 1765. Untitled sale catalogue, Item No. 163, Franklin, Deborah, Misc. Benjamin Franklin MSS, New York Public Library. As the agreed price was £900, this bond added to the payment of £100 in cash presumably consummated the sale on the above date. Then she drew on Franklin's partner in the printing business, David Hall, for a total of £407.3.5 in the months ending January 28, 1766. "Final Report on the Franklin and Hall Account" in Leonard W. Labaree, ed., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven, 1969-), XIII, 90. By June 4, 1765, £900 had been paid, leaving a balance of £400. Franklin to Deborah Franklin, Jun. 4, 1765, Franklin Papers, American Philosophical Society, 46, pt. 2, fol. 35. In March 1766 Hall reported to Franklin: "The 18th of last month she had One Hundred Pounds; towards Payment of the Lot she purchased of Mr. Siddons; and on the Tenth of this Month, I am to give her One Hundred Pounds more for the the same Purpose. When she wants more, she shall have it." David Hall to Franklin, March 3, 1766, quoted in Labaree, XIII, 193. She receipted this £200 on March 8, 1766 and drew further cash payments of £91 on July 12, £50 on November 25, and £160 on December 27 of that year. David Hall to Franklin, Jan. 27, 1767, *ibid.*, XIV, 19. Syddons

least since 1754.¹⁹ He continued on after transfer of title, the last year of record being 1775, but probably longer until his death sometime before 1779.²⁰ He plied his business at that address, presumably in a wooden structure opening on the alleyway to the rear.²¹ Little is known about his family. He kept one servant.²² After 1773 Daniel Stonemetz, in all probability his oldest son, is listed as working there, and after 1774 Philip Stonemetz as well.²³ For his modest establishment Stonemetz paid Franklin \$30 a year.²⁴ In 1779 Daniel Stonemetz succeeded to his father's listing as occupant, and the wartime tax listing for that year shows him to have been possessed of "4 Oz Plate" and "1 Cow."²⁵ He continued the cooperage in operation that year and the following two years before moving away.²⁶ His growing family of three children may have had something to do with his

receipted \$216 of this on November 26, using the bond's reverse side. The \$407.3.5 drawn in 1765 and January 1766 added to the \$501 drawn later in 1766 brings the sum total to \$908.3.5, enough to cover all costs of the property: down payment, bond, and interest. Letters she sent to him early in 1767 that have since been lost explained all this; he remained in doubt on financing arrangements late in 1766, but made no reference thereafter to the subject. Ibid., XIII, 519.

19. William Savery, "List of the Taxables of Chestnut, Middle, and South Wards, Philadelphia, 1754," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XIV, 418. (Hereafter cited as PMHB.)

20. Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XIV, 158. MSS Philadelphia City and County 18 Penny Tax, 1774, Middle Ward, 69, Public Records, Harrisburg, Pa.

21. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1773-4, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

22. He was listed in 1769 as having one servant, probably an indentured worker, considering house size and other factors. Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XIV, Middle Ward, 1769, 158.

23. Ibid. All paid occupational taxes in the pre-war period.

24. Tax List for Middle Ward, 1775, No. 251, MS in Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In the early lists he was listed often as not phonetically as Frederick "Stonemates."

25. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1779, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

26. Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XIV, XV, Effective Supply Tax, 1779, 498; 1780, 189; 1781, 696. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1781, 1783, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

withdrawal from the modest old house at this time.²⁷

By 1782 Thomas Poultney, an ironmonger and merchant, had replaced Stonemetz.²⁸ This was the same Poultney who, on order of the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety, delivered to military authorities 14 spades and 192 shovels early in 1776.²⁹ It may be assumed that he used the same backyard structures in the operation of his manufactory as did Stonemetz before him. A year after occupying the Market Street house he furnished andirons for the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office at Independence Hall.³⁰ The following year he advertised with Richard Wistar, an ironmonger living two doors away, as handling a very complete line of hardware in his store on Market Street.³¹ By 1785 the firm at that location was listed as "Thomas Poultney & Sons. His ironwork went into Congress Hall in 1790-1791 and Independence Hall in 1791.³³ He

27. Constable Returns, 1780, Middle Ward, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia. He was listed in this return as having "3 children under age."

28. Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, XVI, Effective Supply Tax, 1782, 341. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1782, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

29. Minutes of the Committee of Safety, Mar. 28, 1776, Colonial Records, X, 528.

30. Account Book 1783-1803, Fees Received, Record Books, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Nov. 28, 1783, Division of Public Records, Harrisburg.

31. Pennsylvania Gazette, Sept. 8, 1784, 1. Richard Wistar's store was in the small house at what is now 329 Market Street, on the other side from Poultney's house. Wistar lived on Chestnut Street. He is listed in the various directories through the century's end as an ironmonger, except for 1785, 1791, and 1797 when he was designated a merchant. Apparently, Poultney and Wistar conducted their manufacturing if any in the one location and their retailing in another. By 1794 Wistar's store was located at today's 306 High Street.

32. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1785-7, 1785, 20, Philadelphia City Archives.

33. "Apr. 11 [1790] To Cash paid the Committees order to Poultney & Wistar 4.14.3," Statement of Expenditures by the Corporation of Philadelphia for the Accommodation of Congress, 1790. Account "No. 109 to Tho§ Poultney & Sons, for Iron Mongery 40.4.5," Disbursements Paid for Fitting up Congress Hall in 1790. Public Records Office, Harrisburg.

was the last tenant before the house's demolition in 1786.

By the time work ended on Franklin's mansion in the courtyard, the old 1711 frame house had become derelict. It stood empty in 1766 when he offered the premises to his widowed sister-in-law.³⁴ Before then it had been home for Barnebus Neave, one of the carpenters employed in building the mansion.³⁵ This transient use was its last as a residence although it served several tenants as a place of business and their clerks now and again as a sort of rooming house.³⁶

34. Franklin to Mary Franklin, Aug. 26, 1766 in Leonard W. Labaree, ed., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven, 1969-), XIII, 392.

35. Robert Smith to Deborah Franklin, Apr. 25, 1766, Franklin Papers, v. 48, pt. 2, fol. 93, American Philosophical Society.

36. The historical associations of Read's frame house are treated in full detail in Historic Structure Report on 318 Market Street, Historical Data Section.

CHAPTER II

Franklin's New House at 316 Market Street

In 1786 Franklin tore down these two houses as well as the old brick one built by Read around 1716. And in the year that followed he built two larger and more modern structures on their sites, incorporating fire-proofing features, but designed primarily as their predecessors to be used both for commercial and residential purposes.³⁷ The one at present-day 316 Market Street differed from its counterpart next door at 318 only in reversing the floor plan and in other ways being adapted to its site. Its most striking feature was the 10-foot-wide arched passageway through the first floor center of the twin structure. Its inclusion necessitated a jig-sawing of both houses in the upper stories to accommodate the space over the arched passageway. In creating this structural "moiety," room space in the front was given to the house at 318. The passageway itself, traversed by Franklin's sedan chair and carriages, survived all later renovations and assumes interest and importance as an historic feature.

The circumstances that prompted Franklin to undertake the extensive redevelopment of his Franklin Court properties so late in life he explained whimsically as "an old Man's Amusement," that would accrue to the advantage of "his Posterity."³⁸ Far more than is suggested thus summarily, he marshalled much of his liquid capital and gave freely of his ingeniousness to improve his dilapidated Market Street frontage, increase the value of his real estate, open new sources of income, and provide more extensive quarters for himself and daughter Sally's growing family. Never one to accept a deteriorating situation without attempting to correct it, Franklin sacrificed much of his dwindling store of time between his eightieth and eighty-second years to supervising the work, and by April 22, 1787, was able to report the house at 316 Market Street

37. Design of the 1786-1787 structures is discussed in Historic Structure Report on 318 Market Street, Historical Data Section.

38. Franklin to Ferdinand Grand, Apr. 22, 1787, in Albert Henry Smyth, ed., The Writings of Benjamin Franklin (New York, 1905, 1907), IX, 575-6.

(and the companion structure at 318 Market Street) "nearly finished."³⁹

These virtually identical houses were described as one in a single insurance survey made for the Mutual Assurance Company little more than two months later:

Survey of two New Three Story Houses
situate the south side of High street between
third and fourth Streets belonging to his
Excellency Benjamin Franklin Esqr.

Dimensions of each 18 feet 9 inches front
exclusive of a 10 feet passage & 44 feet deep the
Eastermost House occupies the North Moyety over
the Passage & the Westermost the South Moyety.

Lower story back room Breast & Mantle
Cornice wash boards surbase and Windows Cased
with an Architrave Front Room washboards only.
Second story front Room has a Dentle in front
of the Chimney and a fret to the Mantle other-
wise finished as the back Room below Third Story
Breasts Mantle surbase washboards windows ceased
and single Cornice.

Garrets Plaistered Trap doors & Sky lights
the small rooms over the passage are plain with
only wash boards & windows cased. Open Newel
rampt stairs with a plain light handrail up to
the skylights and enclosed with a Brick wall.
Kitchen in the Cellar finished plain and an
Ash hole on the out side of Brick. NB The
Floors are plaistered between Joists as well
as under so are the stairs to both steps &
Risers the walls & Cieling has a Coat of plaister
under the Cornice all the Landscape pannels are
also plaister there are four Battlements to the
Houses and a Belcony in front.

40

This tells a great deal about the house that has since been corroborated
by evidence discovered on the party walls and end corners by Park Service

39. Ibid.

40. To which is added as preface to the premium line "Both Houses
are alike." Mutual Assurance Company Surveys No. 230 and 231, July 1787.
The Policy was not actually signed and the insurance did not thus take
effect until December 6, 1790, after Franklin's death, owing to
disagreement over the rate assigned, no allowance having been made for
fireproofing.

architects and under the cellar floor by its archeologists.⁴¹ Essentially a brick in-row house, it compensated for the absent frontispiece (none having been mentioned in the survey) by a second floor balcony long enough to cover access from both houses and combining with the archway below to decorate the facade. Mindful of the lot's limitations (when building Franklin had already decided to place a printing shop back of 316-318 Market Street), he designed the house to group working and housekeeping chambers right in the main structure with no ells or additions. He located the kitchen in the cellar, the "outhouse inside [the] house," and extended storage vaults from the cellar under the passageway.⁴² To discourage fire, he partitioned in brick top to bottom and separated wooden structural elements one from the another by plastering between them. Although roomy and endowed with such decorative touches as staircase newels and ramped handrails, cornicing of principal, chambers, and embellished fireplaces and overmantels, this "good" house, as Franklin called it, was substantial rather than showy.⁴³ Elsewhere it was plain and even utilitarian in its appointments, as in the upper stories and the first floor's front room, intended as an office or shop, and left devoid of ornamentation.

41. James F. O'Gorman (Charles E. Peterson and Penelope Hartshorne), Historic Structure Report, Part I, on 318 Market Street, Chap. III, Sec. III, 3-11; Sec. IV, 1-5. B. Bruce Powell, The Archeology of Franklin Court, 46-8.

42. United States Direct Tax of 1798, Philadelphia Middle Ward, Book "D", National Archives.

43. Franklin to Jane Mecom, Sept. 21, 1786, in Carl Van Doren, The Letters of Benjamin Franklin & Jane Mecom, Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society (Princeton, 1950), XXVII, 282-83.

CHAPTER III

Dr. McIlvaine, Dr. Bache, and Other Tenants

As things turned out, Franklin did not live to see the house at 316 Market Street tenanted. Although finished to the last item of trim by the summer of 1787, the house was listed in the tax records two years later as an "Empty Dwelling" valued at \$840.⁴⁴ Why this should be is not clear. Its advantageous location, near the heart of the city's business section, the prestige attached to the name of Franklin, its spaciousness and quality all suggest a ready market. But a combination of economic and tangible circumstance may have contributed to the result. Insurance had not yet been made on it, and renting an uninsured house would have gone against Franklin's grain. Demand may have been slow to build. The markets had not reached Fourth Street, but the work was in progress and perhaps impeded other activity along the street at that interval of time. As the house went unadvertised, contrary to the custom with the better properties, Franklin may simply have been choosy in appraising prospective renters. At any rate, Franklin's will passed the house and grounds at 316 Market Street to Sarah and Richard Bache:

I do give and devise my...three new houses,...
to my daughter, Sarah Bache, and to her husband,
Richard Bache, to hold to them for and during their
natural lives, and the live of the longest liver of
them. And from and after the decease of the survivor
of them, I do give, devise, and bequeath the same to
all children already born, or to be born of my said
daughter, and to their heirs and assigns forever, as
tenants in common, and not as joint tenants. 45

By these provisions of the will he sought to gain the "Advantage... for his Posterity." The various properties of the estate after being in the administration of Richard Bache while he lived could be divided

44. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1789, 19, Philadelphia City Archives.

45. Quoted from Franklin's last will and testament in Carl Van Doren, Franklin's Autobiographical Writings (New York, 1945), 688-89.

up and disposed of by the next generation. To the grandchildren with whom Franklin had played in his last years would go the houses on the courtyard, the one at 316 Market Street among them, as disposable properties, for whatever use or value they might bring. Bache completed placing of the fire insurance in 1790 and by 1791, as a matter of record, the first tenant, a merchant of the name Bohl Bohlen, had taken up residence.⁴⁶ He may, in fact, have resided there even earlier, but the fragmentary nature of tax and directory sources and Bohlen's obscurity prevent establishing an occupancy date.⁴⁷ Merchant Bohlen's sole claim to fame, for that matter, comes from the selling of servants' indentures to President Washington in 1793 and 1794.⁴⁸

Whatever Bohlen's line of merchandise, it did little or no violence to the house and its front room, for after him came a long series of tenants who maintained offices there.⁴⁹ The first of them, moved in around the middle of 1791, was Dr. William McIlvaine:

Dr. McIlvaine has embraced the Opportunity
afforded by Dr. Jones' Death of coming to
Town. He is now in one of Mr. Bache's new
Houses in Market Street; he is a good Surgeon
and an excellent Physician. 50

If not quite of the stature of a celebrity, McIlvaine is of special interest as the builder and briefly resident of the house still standing

46. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1793-6, 1791, 23, Philadelphia City Archives. Clement Biddle, Philadelphia Directory for 1791, 12.

47. In the case of the twin at 318 Market Street, Franklin's scruples over uninsured premises did not prevent renting to Charles Gilchrist in 1788 where he built the fire for a refinery of precious metals. Certainly the fireproofed construction itself would have eased Franklin's mind. Bohlen could have been in occupancy as early as 1789.

48. On July 20, 1793, a "German boy & two women - the former to serve 5 years & the two latter 3 years for their passage," for which Bohlen received \$185.16. On September 6, 1794, "2 Dutch servants" for £50.3.6. Washington's Household Account Book, 1793-1797, PMHB, XXX, 34, 318.

49. As Bohlen did not advertise his wares, his line of business is obscure. As he is listed at only one address in the 1791 directory, he is presumed to have had his home and business at the same place.

50. Edward Burd to Jasper Yeates, Aug. 4, 1791, Lewis Burd Walker, ed., The Burd Papers. Selections from Letters Written by Edward Burd. 1763-1828 (Philadelphia, 1899), 172.

at 315 Walnut Street in Independence National Historical Park.⁵¹ In fact, he had a knack for occupying houses that have weathered the winds of time, for in addition to the house at 316 Market Street and the one named after him at 315 Walnut Street, he also lived for years in one of the landmarks of Burlington, New Jersey, referred to, of course, as the McIlvaine House. Adding luster to his name was the heroic if not entirely effectual part he played in Philadelphia's great yellow fever epidemic of 1793.⁵² As was the case with professionally trained physicians of his day, McIlvaine became well enough known to the community generally, but, in the words of a memorialist, "sought his happiness in the bosom of his family."⁵³ Combined with his distinction in the medical field was his strong religious feeling.⁵⁴ He was said to be "admired for noble and upright purpose."⁵⁵

At the time he moved into the house at 316 Market Street, McIlvaine was forty-one years of age. Born in Philadelphia on July 18, 1750, he went to Scotland to complete his education while a youth of 16.⁵⁶ Taking his medical degree from the University of Edinburgh, he then returned to Pennsylvania and set up practice at Bristol. There in 1773 he married

51. Historic Building Survey on McIlvaine House in Independence National Historical Park, April 1958.

52. For the context in which McIlvaine appeared see J. H. Powell, Bring Out Your Dead, The Great Plague of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1793 (Philadelphia, 1949), 30-32, 36-44.

53. Stephen Wickes, History of Medicine in New Jersey and of Its Medical Men;... (Newark, N. J., 1879), p. 326

54. Ibid. His memorialist notes "his ambition was to train his son to become a Christian scholar and gentlemen....His religious impulses are illustrated by two bound volumes, now in the possession of his grand-daughter,...containing Dr. Blair's sermons written by her grandfather, as he heard them preached, while he was a student at the University of Edinburgh." Ibid., pp. 327-28.

55. Ibid., p. 327.

56. He was the son of William McIlvaine, a merchant from Ayr, Scotland, who relocated in Philadelphia in the early eighteenth century. The father was one of the founders of the St. Andrews Society and served as an Assistant of that organization the Dancing Assembly the same year. As he prospered he built a summer home, "Fairview," near Bristol, which may account for the younger McIlvaine's practicing in that town when he returned to America after his father's death in 1771. Robert B. Beath, comp., An Historical Catalogue of the St. Andrew's Society of Philadelphia with Biographical Sketches of Deceased Members. 1749-1913 (Phila., 1907-

Margaret Rodman, who died in 1781 after bearing four children. Two years later he married Tench Coxe's sister, Rebecca, who died after childbirth the same year.⁵⁷ In 1785 he married Judge Edward Shippen's daughter, Mary, who later resided with him at 316 Market Street.⁵⁸

McIlvaine is reputed to have been a patriot during the Revolution and to have served as a surgeon in Colonel Read's regiment. He was paid £56.5.0 for attending troops between December 21, 1777, and February 8, 1778, and he used a very sizable quantity of medicines at that time for which he charged Pennsylvania.⁵⁹ Scraps of information put him in

13), II, 244. The younger McIlvaine had an older brother, Joseph, whose son Charles P. became Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio. His younger sister, Mary, married Gen. Joseph Bloomfield, governor of New Jersey from 1801 to 1812. Wickes, op. cit., p. 326.

57. Wickes, op. cit., p. 326. Beath, op. cit., p. 117.

58. As noted by Mayor Samuel Powel's wife, Elizabeth, in a letter of Bushrod Washington: "Miss Molly Shippen was married on Thursday last to Doctor M'Ilvaine of Bristol; a Gentleman that neither you or I know; but he bears a good Character." June 22, 1785, Papers of Elizabeth Powel 1742-1830, Powel Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Also noted in Pennsylvania Evening Herald, Jun. 18, 1785. Edward Burd wrote to Jasper Yeates "Dr. McIlvaine was married to Miss Molly Shippen on ye 17 June, one of ye hottest Nights this year. They had ye condolence of all ye Ladies and Gent. in Town on ye unlucky state of ye weather." Walker, op. cit., pp. 133-4.

59. Folder (1) 1788, Comptroller General Accounts, 1787, Division of Public Records, Harrisburg. According to the records of the St. Andrews Society, he was commissioned captain of a company of Associators (militia) of Bucks County on October 9, 1775, and later commanded a company of the Third Battalion of Philadelphia. Then, his commission having expired, he fought as a private in the Battle of Red Bank on October 22, 1777. Finally, according to this source, he served with Read's regiment, and while regimental surgeon came under fire at the Battle of Monmouth, June 28, 1778. The only foundation for these **claims** appears to be family tradition, which includes, as well, that "he was taken prisoner in one of the battles in which he participated, and was confined in the dreaded prison ships." Beath, op. cit., p. 116.

Bristol rather than the field. With that town invested by troops much of the time, life was anything but placid. At one point he and a Captain Sims of the 13th Virginia Regiment had differences over troop quartering in his buildings that "ended with McIlvaine on the ground."⁶⁰

Except for his loss of two wives and his remarriages, McIlvaine's years before moving from Bristol to Philadelphia were unmarked by incident. The opportunity Jones' death opened to him he apparently welcomed with avidity after the quiet existence in a smaller community. He reentered the city of his birth in style, joining the 26-member College of Physicians the same year and buying the lot on Walnut Street where he was to build a home during the fall.⁶¹ So apparently, when he rented the house at 316 Market Street, he had already laid plans for establishing himself in an even larger and more elaborate town house. While still living on Market Street he listed such personalty as "50

60. The following excerpt from a deposition on the subject provides the salient points: "re: foreable entry into the stables & outhouses of Dr. McIlvaine by some troops commanded by Major alias Capt. Sims of 13th Va. Regiment - Sims refused to move all his men to the bathhouse which could house upwards of 100 men & only ca. 60 there at time - Sims refused to move his men although McIlvaine considered having them in the stables & outhouses an imposition - fight was instigated by Sims & ended with McIlvaine on the ground.

"McIlvaine had prepared part of his house for the troops & asked an officer to bring about 20 men there." McIlvaine enclosed the deposition in a letter to Thomas Wharton, President of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania in August 1777, in which he petitioned that "a person [Sims] who has both forfeited the carracter of a Citizen & a Soldier setting at defiance both the civil and Military powers" be brought to punishment. Executive Correspondence: 1777, Records of the Supreme Executive Council, Division of Public Records, Harrisburg.

61. He was admitted to the College of Physicians in November 1791. William Samuel Waithman Ruschenberger, An Account of the Institution and Progress of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia During a Hundred Years from January, 1787 (Phila., 1887), p. 246. The fellows of the College met in the Hall of the American Philosophical Society on what is now Independence Square. Among them were "the great leaders, the scientists and practitioners who had made Philadelphia America's medical center." J. H. Powell, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

oz Plate," a cow, and two slaves.⁶² Also in his household, requiring bedroom space, were two surviving daughters of his first marriage and those of the three boys and two girls of his third marriage born by that time.⁶³ Whatever his pretenses and expectations while on Market Street, he failed to impress his landlord. Writing to son Benjamin Franklin Bache, who managed this and others of his properties while in England during 1729, Richard Bache commented about the doctor:

I flatter myself that you disregarded McIlvaine's threat of leaving the house he occupies, if his rent was raised, tho' he pays his rent punctually, he is but a slovenly Tenant. - besides the rent he & Gilchrist [in 318] pay are lower considering the situation of the houses, than any in Town. ⁶⁴

With the completion of the house at 315 Walnut Street in 1793, McIlvaine made good on his threat and moved out.

Subsequently, Dr. McIlvaine found himself acting his small part in the 1793 yellow fever epidemic. Many of those able to leave the city did so, but true to his calling, McIlvaine stayed on, administering to his patients and collaborating with the other member of the College of Physicians in their desperate efforts to find remedies that would reduce the fearful death toll.⁶⁵ At length he followed so many others of the medical community to the sick bed, with little hope of recovery. He

62. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1791, 1793-1796; 1792, 24, Philadelphia City Archives. That he liked the best to be had is demonstrated by his purchase of molded, ornamented, and engraved silverware at a later date from the celebrated Philadelphia silversmith, Joseph Richardson. Joseph Richardson, Jr., Day Book, 1796-1801, 97 Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

63. Wickes, op. cit. pp. 326-27. McIlvaine's three marriages allied him with three of the most prominent families of the time. Son Joseph, the third of his children with Molly McIlvaine, became a United States senator from New Jersey. Beath, op. cit., p. 114.

64. Richard Bache to Benjamin Franklin Bache, Jul. 23, 1792, typescript copy of original in Franklin Bache Collection, George S. Eddy Papers on Franklin, Princeton University Library.

65. Though a member of the prestigious College of Physicians and highly qualified by his training abroad, McIlvaine appears not to have taken a conspicuous role in the deliberations. With such luminaries as Rush, Redman, Leib, Glentworth, Griffiths, Hutchinson, Kuhn, Currie, and the younger William Shippen, "citizen-doctors, moral, political, and

had sent his family to Burlington as a precautionary measure.⁶⁶ Nor did he now inform them of his peril, but persevered, nursed by a black servant. He followed Dr. Benjamin Rush's controversial prescription, the so-called "new remedy," a purgative of 10 grains calomel, 15 jalap given several times daily. Though described by other members of the Philadelphia medical community as "a murderous dose," "a devil of a dose," and "a dose for a horse," it failed somehow to finish off McIlvaine, who lived to become one of Rush's "trophies of the new cure."⁶⁷ By now McIlvaine had had quite enough of Philadelphia's dangers. He retreated to Burlington with his family, never returning to reside in Philadelphia.⁶⁸

social leaders, entirely competent to direct the whole community in civic action programs," on hand, McIlvaine apparently followed rather than led. The deep split that developed over the efficacy of Rush's methods, would have signalled caution to junior members. J. H. Powell op. cit., pp. 30-31.

66. To McIlvaine's sister, Mary Bloomfield, late in August or early September: "this City,... is almost deserted by ye wealthy Inhabitants Mrs. Lea and Mrs. McIlvaine and their Children are gone to Burlington" Edward Burd to Jasper Yeates, Sept. 4, 1793, Walker, op. cit., p. 180.

67. J. H. Powell, op. cit., p. 79. Although Rush made much of those who responded, McIlvaine may have been misrepresented: "Dr. McIlvaine was thought by Dr. Rush to have a slight touch of ye yellow fever, but he is better and I have some doubt whether it was that Disorder." Edward Burd to Jasper Yeates, Sept. 4, 1793, Walker, op. cit., p. 180. Rush cited McIlvaine's recovery in his "Accout of the Bilious Yellow Fever of 1793," published in his Medical Inquiries and Observations (Phila., 1805), II, 130.

68. The former Mary McIlvaine's husband wrote on September 12 "Dr. McIlvaine is perfectly recovered of ye malignant fever now raging in Philad. & ...is at my House with all his Family." Joseph Bloomfield to Joseph D. Camp, Ely Autograph Collection, New Jersey Historical Society. In his headlong retreat from Philadelphia McIlvaine virtually abandoned his new house on Walnut Street. In spite of the crisis gripping the city and the strain it imposed on Rush, whose leading role and controversial remedy involved him beyond his resources, McIlvaine tried to sell him the house: "I received a letter from Dr. McIlvaine yesterday containing an offer of his house for 10,000 dollars or a lease of it for seven years at \$250 a year.... Strange men! to propose contracts or undertakings to a man who is a 'poor pensioner upon the bounties of an hour.'" Rush to Mrs. Rush, Oct. 11, 1793, published in L. H. Butterfield, Letters of Benjamin Rush, II, 1793-1813 (Princeton, 1951), 712. A slovenly tenant, insensitive to the dire circumstances of his benefactor, these too are aspects of McIlvaine's life and conduct to be considered along with the rest.

As interesting a second-rate figure as is Dr. McIlvaine, he must share top billing with another member of his household - Mrs. Mary McIlvaine herself. She, as it turns out, was the very same "Molly" Shippen, "beloved sister" of the Peggy Shippen who married Benedict Arnold and abetted his treachery.⁶⁹ They and their sister, Sally, were among the Philadelphia beauties so admired by Sir William Howe's gallant young officers, Maj. John Andre among them, during the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777-1778.⁷⁰ Mary it was, in the costume of a Turkish dancer, whom a Lt. Sloper, "6th Knight of the Blended Rose," drew as his partner to the notorious "Meschianza."⁷¹ The young lady's father put his foot down on that occasion, but could do little to blunt his daughters' high spirits.⁷² People regarded her match with McIlvaine as a good one, the doctor himself being a ruggedly handsome man.⁷³ Her

69. Mary Shippen McIlvaine (born August 15, 1757; died March 14, 1831) outlived the doctor (died September 16, 1806) by a quarter century.

70. Sister Sarah Shippen, known familiarly as "Sally," retained her coquettish ways long afterwards: "Sally has her admirers; but she has too much Vivacity to determine to relinquish the Freedom and Independence of a single Life, you know she is a flirt." Elizabeth Powel to Bushrod Washington, June 22, 1785, Papers of Elizabeth Powel 1742-1830, Powel Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In time she married Philadelphia merchant, Thomas Lea.

71. Andre sent the program of this fete in honor of Sir William Howe to London for publication in the Gentlemen's Magazine (August 1778). In it was this listing: "6th Knight Lieut. Sloper in honor of Miss M. Shippen."

72. Their father, a neutralist in the war, later rehabilitated sufficiently to become chief justice of Pennsylvania, forbade their attending, thus sending them into a "dancing fury." "Notes and Queries: 'Did Peggy Shippen (Mrs. Arnold) and Her Sisters Attend the Meschianza?'" PMHB, XXIII, 119-20; 412-14.

73. Granting Mary McIlvaine's fondness for a good time and her connections in town, it may be supposed that she influenced the doctor's decision to move to bustling federal Philadelphia. The St. Memin physiognotrace of McIlvaine shows strong and well-proportioned facial features though the doctor was over fifty years of age when it was made.

frivolities behind her, Mary or "Molly" McIlvaine may be assumed to have settled into the role of housewife and mother while residing at 316 Market Street.

It is not certain just when Dr. McIlvaine moved out of the house at 316 Market Street. Richard Bache's reference to his threats to leave earlier in 1792 suggests that he may not have lasted the year out. By 1793 he was listed at the Walnut Street address while the directory shows the Market Street house to be occupied by one Ezekiel King, "merchant."⁷⁴ A frequent advertiser in Dunlap's newspaper during the months before the Yellow Fever epidemic, King offered for sale a large and impressive array of silverware:

EZEKIEL KING,

No. 106, Market street, Corner of Franklin's
Court, has Received by the Adriana from
Liverpool - An Elegant Assortment of

Tea Urns
Tea Trays and Waiter
Bottle Stands
Engraved Candlesticks
Table and Tea Spoons
Locketts
Seals, Watch Keys and Trinkets
Children's Clasps
Pins, &c

Also - A neat Assortment of fashionable
BUTTONS and BUCKLES, which he will sell
on the most reasonable terms for Cash ⁷⁵
or short Credit

Business must have been brisk, for subsequently he added coffee urns, tea and coffee pots, caddies, sugar "basons," ewers, snuffers, tankers, rummers, bread baskets, salts, "anteguglers," punch strainers, bottle

74. James Hardie, comp., The Philadelphia Directory and Register... for 1793, p. 79. Ibid., 1794, p. 83.

75. Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, April 13, 1793, p. 2. The buckles alone he stocked eventually in some 300 patterns. Ibid., June 12,

stands, and "elegant half-plated tea urns."⁷⁶ Among the non-silver items advertised by King were clock faces, watches, watch glasses, razors, razor straps, shaving boxes, necklaces, smelling bottles, needles, fish hooks, spurs, sadler's nails, and ivory and iron combs.⁷⁷ Other classes of stock included japanned goods and many of the same implements in "Tutania-ware."⁷⁸ Display of this large and varied stock almost certainly led to shelving of the house's first floor front room - for the first time.

King's intriguing advertisements end abruptly with the yellow fever visitation of 1793's summer and fall. He may have perished, as did so many that year, or fled with the rest and not returned. Although he made it onto the tax rolls for 1794 (from an enumeration made in all probability during 1793), no sign of business activity followed, and later directories contain no listing at all.⁷⁹

By 1794 the front room was back in use as an office; during that year a lawyer named William Ewing lived at 316 Market Street.⁸⁰ A widow and "gentlewoman," Anne Tharpe, succeeded Ewing.⁸¹ She remained

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (XI, 512) Tutania in 1790 was a metal composed of "8 oz brass; 2 lbs regulus of antimony, and 7 oz tin." It later became known as "Britannia-metal."

79. The 1794 personal tax credited him with 20 ounces of plate and a servant. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1791, 1793-6; 1794, 23, Philadelphia City Archives.

80. The tax records credited Ewing with 13 ounces of plate and a servant. He also appears to have rented quarters to a John Cooke who is also listed on the personal tax rolls from the same address at £40 valuation. Ibid., 1795, 25.

81. Edmund Hogan, *The Prospect of Philadelphia and Check on the Next Directory*, 1795, 1796, 10. Cornelius William Stafford, *The Philadelphia Directory for 1797*, 66. Stephens' *Directory of Philadelphia for 1796*, 183. Listed as at the 116 Market St. address in 1795, presumably occupying the first floor's front room, was one Thomas English, a "merchant." The next year John Cooke, a "huckseter," lodged with the widow Tharpe. The same year she sublet the first floor shop to a John Shute, another "merchant." Ibid., 37, 167.

through 1797.⁸² Neither resident left more than a scattering of minutiae on the record before going his way.

In the meantime the Bache children were reaching maturity. The eldest, Benjamin Franklin Bache, had married and gone into business as editor of the Aurora, and lived in another of the Franklin-built tenant houses at 322 Market Street. His younger brother, William Bache, born on May 31, 1773, at Franklin's mansion in the courtyard, had completed his education, prepared himself professionally to practice medicine, and on Nov. 28, 1797, entered into marriage.⁸³ Needing a house, he fell back on the family properties and occupied the one at 316 Market Street. By the time the 1798 Philadelphia Directory was made up (late in 1797) he was listed as residing there.⁸⁴

William Bache up to this time had led a dashing life when not at his studies. While debating the education he would receive, Benjamin Franklin had written to William's father in 1781:

Give William at my Expence the best our Country
can afford. I wish him however to learn French.
You have at present Schools and Masters that
teach it. Besides other usual things let him
acquire a little Mathematics, and a perfect
knowledge of Accounts. With these he will be
able to bustle and make his Way. 85

The "best" took young William a long way. As Franklin himself reported

82. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1791, 1793-6; 1796, 26, Philadelphia City Archives. Ibid., 1797, 25.

83. Leonard W. Labaree, ed., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven, 1959-), I, lxiii.

84. Stafford, op. cit., 1798, 18. The 1798 and 1799 Federal Direct Tax and Philadelphia County tax records also list Bache as residing at 106 High St. U. S. Direct Tax of 1798, "A" and "D" Books, Middle Ward, Phila., P. C. 58, Dept. of the Treasury, National Archives. County Tax Records, Middle Ward, 1798-1801; 1798, 23. Ibid., 1799, 27.

85. Father Richard Bache in a letter of June 20, 1781, evidently had suggested that eight-year-old William be given the same opportunity for an education abroad as eldest son, Benjamin Franklin Bache, then at school in Switzerland. To which Franklin replied: "I should be happy to see William. But I think a foreign education for one of your sons sufficient." Franklin to Richard Bache, Sept. 13, 1781, Albert Henry Smyth, ed., The Writings of Benjamin Franklin (New York, 1905, 1907),

five years later: "Will is at the Episcopal Academy, & learns well."⁸⁶ From there he went on to the undergraduate college of the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1790 after delivering an oration on the "natural history, culture, and qualities of potatoes."⁸⁷

At this point he put his knowledge of French into practice. The French Revolution having erupted, he journeyed to France to take it all in at first hand. His papers being out of order on his arrival, he found himself behind bars. Released to sign aboard a privateer, he proceeded to Paris after a successful voyage for a fling in the French capital.⁸⁸

Back in Philadelphia, he enrolled in the University's medical school. Before graduating in 1794, he distinguished himself by writing the University's first medical dissertation, entitled "Inaugural Experimental Dissertation, Being an Endeavor to Ascertain the Morbid Effects of Carbonic Acid Gas, or Fixed Air on Healthy Animals...."⁸⁹ The title suggests the influence of his great preceptor in the study of medicine, Dr. Caspar Wistar, professor of chemistry and adjunct professor of anatomy, surgery, and midwifery in the University's medical school. Together they had shared the hazards of 1793's disastrous yellow fever epidemic, and young Bache had nursed Wistar when he came down with

VIII, 305. On first seeing his two-year-old grandson Franklin wrote, "The youngest boy is the strongest and stoutest Child of his Age that I have seen. He seems an Infant Hercules." Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, June 17, 1775, quoted in Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin's Autobiographical Writings* (New York, 1945), p. 405. Four days before he had written to William Temple Franklin "Will has got a little Gun, marches with it, and whistles at the same time by way of Fife." Smyth, op. cit., VI, 406. Little William Bache thoroughly captivated his grandfather. From Paris he wrote "I long to see little bold Will. Kiss him for me." Franklin to Jane Mecom, Oct. 5, 1777, quoted in Van Doren, op. cit., p. 431.

86. Ibid., IX, 515.

87. L. H. Butterfield, *Letters of Benjamin Rush* (Princeton, 1951), II, 625n. Bernard Fay, *The Two Franklins: Fathers of American Democracy* (Boston, 1933), p. 153. He received the A. M. degree. Univ. of Pennsylvania, *Biographical Catalogue of the Members of the College* (Phila., 1894), p. 30.

88. Fay, op. cit., pp. 223-24.

89. Title from Charles Evans, *American Bibliography; A Chronological*

the disease.⁹⁰

Now, in furtherance of his career, he went abroad again to study at St. Bartholemew's Hospital, London.⁹¹ Back again in Philadelphia by 1796, he remained close to the family, spending time with them at Settle, the Bache family country place near Bristol, Pennsylvania, while practicing medicine in Philadelphia. The Polish author-in exile, Niemcewicz, visited Settle with him during April 1797, and reported Doctor Bache to be "an interesting young man."⁹² His marriage in November of that year ended this phase of his life, and brought him to the house at the entrance to Franklin Court.

While in residence at 316 Market Street Bache may be assumed to have fitted up the first floor front room as a physician's office and received patients there. He and his wife, Dr. Wistar's sister, Catharine, enjoyed social recognition and a degree of comfortable

Dictionary of All Books, Pamphlets, and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in 1639 Down to and Including the Year 1820 (New York, 1911-59), IX, 26598.

90. "Poor Will Bache was almost heartbroken during his master's indisposition." Benjamin Rush to Mrs. Julia Rush, Sept. 5, 1793, Butterfield, op. cit., II, 651.

91. He was there when Samuel Cooper wrote to him from the Pennsylvania Hospital on January 9, 1795. Ibid., I, 584n.

92. Metchie J. E. Budka, ed. and transl., Under their Vine and Fig Tree. Travels through America in 1797-1799, ...by Julian Niemcewicz (Elizabeth, N. J., 1965), p. 61. Mysterious references in British diplomat Liston's correspondence to Bache suggests that his sojourn in England may have made a covert Anglophile and active sympathizer of him despite his family's strong Jeffersonian leanings and his own intimacy with Republican leaders: "I have just seen M^r Wm Bache, who has, very obingly, so made his Arrangements, as to go in the Mail Stage to tomorrow from Philadelphia, and will with great Pleasure take Charge of your Dispatches....I shall write...to the Agent to... expect your Dispatches." Phineas Bond to Robert Liston, Oct. 14, 1796, Liston Papers, Univ. of Virginia. "I have this moment received very satisfactory Intelligence from my Friend M^r Bache,...relative to Halifax,...in which nothing is said of the French sailed for the West Indies - and, in his usual Stile of Loyalty, expresses his Hope that it may meet with its' Deserts there." Phineas Bond to Robert Liston, Oct. 22, 1796, ibid. Or could Bache have been a double-agent?

affluence as well.⁹³ Their first of four children, Sarah, was born there in 1798.⁹⁴ He left in 1800, later becoming Surveyor of Customs of the port of Philadelphia.⁹⁵

Stafford's Philadelphia directory for 1800 grandly lists the next occupant of 316 Market Street, one James Humphreys, as the proprietor of three lines of business, "printer bookseller and stationer."⁹⁶ In point of fact, he had had a fourth, now in disuse, for Humphreys had been the influential and notorious editor of the Loyalist Pennsylvania Ledger, and had only recently returned to his native city after years

93. Bache too was on the books of the great Philadelphia silver-smith, Joseph Richardson - for a tea urn, candlesticks, and extinguishers. Joseph Richardson Day Book 1796-1801, p. 122, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The entry was for Feb. 9, 1799. It may be assumed that the Baches had a choice of family furniture, and Franklin had seen to it that he received books from his library that would aid his career: "With regard to my books, those I had in France and those I left in Philadelphia, being now assembled together here, and a catalogue made of them, it is my intention to dispose of the same as follows:...such and so many of my books as I shall mark on the said catalogue with the name of my grandson, William Bache, I do hereby give to him." Franklin's Last Will and Testament, Smyth, op. cit., X, 499. Butterfield, op. cit., II, 652n. It was to William Bache, the oldest surviving son of the family, that Richard Bache left the Franklin portraits when he died in 1811: "I give and bequeath to my son William Bache, the portraits and other paintings, now in the mansion house in Franklin Court. All my Musical instruments, some of which he will prize the more highly as they were given me by his revered Grandfather & if what little music I have is worth his acceptance it is at his service. I also give and bequeath to my said son William Bache all the silver & copper Medals, and antique coins contained in two small drawers in my Bureau at Settle, likewise a french snuffbox on the top of which, is represented American Prosperity, and what it contains (which I know he will highly appreciate) the Contents are a lock of hair from the head of his late dear and beloved Mother, and a tooth & lock of hair from the head of his revered Grandfather. I likewise give and bequeath to my said son William all the silver table spoons, desert spoons and tea spoons which have my crest engraved upon them." Richard Bache's Last Will and Testament, Jan. 2, 1810, Will No. 76, Will Book No. 3, Register of Wills, Philadelphia.

94. Leonard W. Labaree, ed., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven, 1959-). I, lxiv. Sarah Bache (Hodge) died in 1849. Ibid.

95. Butterfield, op. cit., II, 652n. Cornelius William Stafford, The Philadelphia Directory for 1799, p. 16.

96. Stafford, op. cit., 1800, p. 65.

of exile in Nova Scotia.⁹⁷ Before becoming a controversial wartime figure, Humphreys had been apprenticed to Willam Bradford, the younger, prominent and good printer, and during the early 1770s had risen to the head of the trade through publication of the first Greek text printed in America and a five volume set of the works of Laurence Sterne, also a first. He started his newspaper at a critical time and was repeatedly attacked as a Tory in the opposition press. During 1776 he showed a remarkable ability to survive following publication of the pamphlet, Strictures on Paine's Common Sense, two editions of which sold several thousand copies. Eventually, he suspended publication of the Ledger with the Nov. 30, 1776, issue. After a quiet period of retirement into the country, he returned with Sir William Howe and resumed publication late in 1777. The British Army's evacuation of Philadelphia in 1778 ended his journalistic career in America, although he published the Nova Scotia Packet without success and tried his hand as a merchant in Shelburne before making his way back to Pennsylvania.⁹⁸ He encountered no trouble reestablishing himself as a conveyancer, later expanding into the other fields.⁹⁹

Now shorn of his earlier prominence, Humphreys merely kept shop and published an occasional book. Though a small-timer while at the new address, his work was good enough to earn back some of the standing lost through adherence to the Crown. Tempers had cooled, and, with the start of a new century, one-time ardent Whig Bache could rent to one-time arch-Tory Humphreys a house built by the great champion of American independence, Franklin.

Humphreys stayed through 1801, and may be assumed to have fitted up the first floor's front room for display and sale of his stock with

97. Humphreys' father, of the same name, had been a conveyancer by profession, who served before the Revolution as clerk of the Orphans court and justice of the peace in Philadelphia. On August 4, 1777, the Council of Safety issued a warrant for his arrest: "James Humphreys the elder,...to be held on his parole at his dwelling in this city, or at any other place on the west side of Delaware and within six miles of the same." Executive Correspondence: 1777, Records of the Supreme Executive Council, Div. of Public Records, Harrisburg. Dumas Malone, ed., Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1932), IX, 375-76.

98. Ibid., p. 376.

99. While at 63 and 65 Walnut Street, before establishing the business at the entrance to Franklin Court, Humphreys was listed as a notary public as well. Stafford, op. cit., 1799, 1800.

counter and shelves of the right sort.¹⁰⁰ It was thus ready for the next occupant, the acknowledged publisher first in rank and prestige in the United States, proprietor of the famous Aurora, William Duane.

100. Apparently, Humphreys made a sad showing in his business attempts of these years: "I send you a copy of my edition of the *Baeviad* and *Maeviad*.... One Humphrey advertised the work as being in press; but, after he had done this he came to get a copy of me. By this I found he had none; But I knew he would get one from gentlemen who had purchased of me; and I resolved to get the start of him. He would have murdered the work in a shabby shilling pamphlet, and I was determined it should not be so disgraced." William Cobbett to John Wright, June 10, 1799, MSS Bodleian Library, quoted in William Reitzel, "William Cobbett and Philadelphia Journalism: 1794-1800," PMHB, LIX, 239n. Stafford, op. cit., 1801, p. 14.

CHAPTER IV

William Duane and the Aurora, 1802-09

Duane's appearance at this time, somewhat battered by the adverse winds of business, followed more than a year his vacating the house at 322 Market Street. While taking a leading part in swinging Pennsylvania to Jefferson for president, he began the withdrawal to the Capital City in 1800, when the federal offices took leave of Philadelphia. Not yet eight months at the Aurora's helm, on November 7, 1800, he changed the tri-weekly edition's title from "The Philadelphia Aurora" to "Aurora, for the Country." The electioneering over and Jefferson in office, Duane bought land on the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Sixth Street in Washington, D. C., and set up a printing office, bookstore and stationery outlet.¹⁰¹ Enthusiastic over the prospects in the Capital City, he wrote back to the Aurora in December 1801:

This city, one day destined to be the greatest on this continent at least, in every respect, extent, beauty, convenience, and grandeur, has doubled its population, and number of habitations in little more than a year.¹⁰²

Married to the widow of the Aurora's founder, Benjamin Franklin Bache, himself a victim of the 1798 yellow fever epidemic, Duane had taken on formidable responsibilities: "the descendants of Franklin and the beloved wife of the amiable and good Bache, became my inheritance and my delightful care."¹⁰³ Having suffered at Federalist hands during the "reign of terror" of the Alien and Sedition Acts, he now prepared to receive his rewards. The way cleared, he arrived in December 1801 to

101. Duane assumed title to the property on August 28, 1801. He added an adjoining piece on April 19, 1804. In the two-story frame building at that location he advertised a complete line of goods, much of it printed at "106 Market Street." He also acquired title to a lot now in Capitol Park and a brick store on E Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets. Allen C. Clark, William Duane (Washington, 1905), 24-26.

102. Ibid., p. 27.

103. William Duane to Thomas Jefferson, June 10, 1801, quoted in Worthington C. Ford, "The Letters of William Duane," Proceedings Massachusetts Historical Society, 2nd Series, (Boston, 1907), XX, 267.

report the debates of Congress, and interspersed such clerical chores with assaults on Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Gallatin for aid to his infant enterprise. Somehow in the patronage welter that accompanied the change of administration, not everything came his way; but a good deal of it did. He published the acts of Congress and printed materials for the executive departments. Gallatin petitioned the President on his behalf to bring notice of his application for supplying of stationery to the heads of agencies. The Aurora took on the appearance of an early-day Congressional Record.¹⁰⁴ By 1802 such printed works as The Gambler or Memoirs of a British Officer were appearing with this imprint:

Washington City
Printed At The Apollo Press,
By W. Duane & Son

Duane's son by his first marriage, William J. Duane, now twenty-two years of age and about to embark on a notable career in public life, apparently had taken charge of the Washington operation, leaving his father free to spend his time chiefly with the Philadelphia business.¹⁰⁵

When not in Washington during 1801-1802, Duane lived with his augmented family at 119 Filbert Street.¹⁰⁶ By the latter year, his

104. Ford writes further about the Duane of this period, "His friendship, almost intimacy, and his loyalty to Jefferson constitute his claims for recognition....His ambition was great, and his thirst for public employment insatiable. But his constant need for money curbed his endeavors and limited his activity.... The actual advent of the Jefferson administration raised competitors, and Duane had a hard struggle to maintain himself by the newspaper. He sought aid again and again from Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, of whose cause he regarded himself the champion." Ibid., pp. 257-58.

105. For a profile of William J. Duane, see page 35 below.

106. Cornelius William Stafford, ed., The Philadelphia Directory for 1801, p. 119. At this address he is listed as the "editor and proprietor of the Aurora." Under Franklin Court he is listed as "printer and proprietor of the Aurora" (p. 115). As H. Capron's boarding school is also listed for the courtyard, occupying the mansion, the conclusion is inescapable that Duane printed the newspaper and did presswork in the printing shop at Franklin Court, but had the newspaper's editorial offices at his home on Filbert Street.

prospects in the Capital not up to expectations and Humphrey's lease expired, he had moved into the house at 316 Market Street. There he established the Aurora Book Store, a large and diversified business. His ambitions still high, some disappointments notwithstanding, he had come a long way in the last five years and banked on continuing in the ascendancy for some time to come. A flourishing branch store in the Nation's Capital managed by a capable and promising son, the principal offices of his enterprise in the Nation's largest and most active city, he was sanguine beyond limit. Yet such optimism had attended his lot only of late.

Today William Duane's importance in his time attracts little notice. References in the public papers of that day present but a gross caricature of the man. His principled and unequivocal nature left little room around him for alien souls. He broke in time with all his early supporters and they colored the scene he inhabited with many unkind observations. If he left behind any considerable body of papers, they have since his death been dismembered. The William Duane who did so many daring things, who dramatized worthy causes, whose persistence never wavered must be recovered from snatches of dialogue, verse, and prose, from pamphlet and discourse, from occasional letters, and from fragments of documentary proof and record source. Behind one so active as Duane a strewn wake of such oddments, though not fully coherent, forms an image many degrees removed from the conventional one.

From Duane himself comes what little is known about his origins and early life.¹⁰⁷ His father, a farmer and surveyor in northern New York State at the time of his birth on May 17, 1760, died five years later and contributed little that is known to Duane's character. From his mother, a descendant of the Irish patriot, Sarsfield, came the inflexible will and indomitable resolve for which he became famous later. After a few years in Philadelphia and Baltimore with his widowed mother, Duane at the age of fourteen found himself residing at Clonmel, Ireland.¹⁰⁸ Educated there in liberal subjects, he met and married

107. The Federalist press charged repeatedly that Duane had no standing as a citizen, that in fact, he was born in Ireland, not America. To this he replied in 1808: "It is well known by every person of common information here [Philadelphia], that it was proved in the Fed^l Court that I was born in America - and did not leave it till my 14 year - that my father died here. It is very true that I arrived here in 1796, but had I not left here in 1774, it would have been impossible." Col. Duane to Hon. Stephen R. Bradley, Nov. 10, 1808 quoted in Clark, op. cit., p. 63.

108. County of Tipperary.

Catherine Corcoran, a member of the established church, and his mother, a Catholic, disinherited him. Thrown on his own resources, he chose printing as a trade, and trained in Clonmel for three or four years before venturing to London with his little family. There his uncle, Matthew Duane, a noted conveyancer, antiquary, curator of the British Museum, and a familiar of Sir Horace Walpole, aided and advised him in his career. By 1787 he was on his way to India as editor of Calcutta's Indian World.¹⁰⁹

While in Calcutta Duane suffered a setback that shaped many of his future attitudes. Received favorably from the start, he prospered, enjoyed the friendship of Thomas Law, built up his personal library, the greatest asset of a molder of opinion, and prepared to bring out his family, still waiting for the call at Clonmel. Then, in a moment, all that his entrepreneurial talents had put together was lost. An article critical of the East India Company's governance gave offense to the ruling powers. Invited to breakfast by Governor Sir John Shaw, he was seized by sepoys enroute and cast into the "Black Hole" at Calcutta's Fort William; and detained until deported to England.¹¹⁰

Back in London, he again ran into trouble. Accepting the congenial pursuit of Parliamentary reporter for the General Advertiser, he listened to Pitt, Fox, Burke, and Sheridan. He espoused the cause of Parliamentary reform. Affected by the events of the French Revolution, at odds with the old system of Britain, he sailed with his family for New York on May 16, 1796.¹¹¹ Arriving in that city on July 4, 1796, he reembarked immediately for Philadelphia. Whether or not, as one account has it, he edited the Philadelphia Gazette for a time, before the year was up he had entered the employ of Benjamin Franklin Bache as his assistant

109. Clark, op. cit., pp. 8-12

110. The company also confiscated his possessions. His appeal for relief and complaints over the absence of due process in the proceeding proved unsuccessful in the courts of England and before Parliament itself. Such treatment would be enough to destroy most men's balance. In Duane's case, there already existed a taste for the principles of the the new American state, demonstrated in 1780 by publication of partisan verse: "it is very extraordinary that my doctrines should be dangerous, since I inculcated them from the Declaration of Independence, and supported them by a publication of three poems in 1780, one entitled Liberty and the other Independence, and third a descriptive poem in which the Spirit of 1776 breathed throughout;..." Ibid., p. 63.

111. On the ship Chatham, Captain Sammis commanding. Ibid., p. 14.

in the business and in running the Aurora.¹¹² Doubtless, his experience of two continents and his staunch Republican principles recommended him to Bache. Though the Aurora bore overhead enough, despite its popularity, it was a big operation that had always overburdened Bache when added to other printing work. And Duane's animosity toward Great Britain may well have lured Bache. Finally, Bache could foresee the termination of his privileges on the floor of the House of Representatives with the organizing of the new Federalist-dominated Congress in 1797.¹¹³ The new arrival's experience in reporting parliamentary proceedings marked him as the man to succeed Bache in recording the House's debates, an Aurora staple. And so it developed, Duane taking over Bache's stenographic chores and spelling him in the printing office and pressroom. Duane also lost no time in identifying himself with the causes of all and sundry Republicans, the United Irishmen, and varied and assorted Anglophobes. In time he joined Bache's stable of pamphleteers, in the company of such able stirrer-uppers as Monroe, Freneau, Spanish Minister Yrujo, and French ministers Adet and Fauchet, debuting with a disquisition on treaties entitled A Caution in 1798.¹¹⁴

Concealed by this seemingly satisfactory and mutually profitable arrangement was Duane's poverty and the precarious state of his family. As described by William Wood Thackara in a diary notation: "In the year 1796 - Wm Duane Came to this Country Wretchedly poor and friendless - occupied a room, with his family in a small frame house, in an alley leading West from 5th St. Between Race St & C---- alley abreast of

112. In the March 14, 1812, issue of the Aurora appears a reference to Duane and John Henry having been employed by the Gazette's proprietor, Andrew Brown, as editors "about 1795." Clarence S. Brigham, History and Bibliography of American Newspaper, 1690-1820 (Worcester, 1947), II, 911. A reference in Hartford's Connecticut Courant, the issue of November 25, 1795, to the Aurora as a "sink of venality" from which recently had poured scurrility against Washington, issuing "from an Hibernian sewer lately imported," raises the possibility that Duane had come to this country earlier than he recalled.

113. Bache's friend, Clerk of the House Beckley, was removed in March 1797 with the organizing of the Fifth Congress.

114. Charles Evans, American Bibliography (New York, 1941-59), p. 33647. Since 1796 Duane had been engaged in editing an edition of John Richard Greene's The History of France in four volumes, "The Revolutionary part collected from the best English and French authorities, by William Duane." *Ibid.*, p. 33796.

the 14 gun battery or 14 Chimnies."¹¹⁵ Not only did Bache pay a pittance, but at times he had difficulties meeting the payroll. By the summer of 1789 the family's situation had become appalling. His wife ill with cholera, a disease that soon took her life, the rent unpaid, he came to the end of his rope. Early in June his credit ran out. He begged a friend to come to his relief: "The landlady of my lodging has seized my goods will you be so good as to replevy them that I may go to business."¹¹⁶ Two days before he had explained his difficulties to the same friend in some detail:

I mentioned to you before my expectation of obtaining Something that might release me from petty embarrassments....I am disappointed my rent fell due yesterday (4 June) and my Situation is rendered in all these respects painful, my Wife in an afflicting illness, and my landlady an unconscionable foul-mouthed Dutch-woman; plaguing me and abusing my wife, and children, because we do not pay and leave her lodgings, because she fears my Wife will die in her house! - I meant to say some other unpleasantnesses that touch me - that is surely enough, I suppress the rest....as I am not getting money for my labor and there is upwards of 130 dollars due to me, it appears to me to be a folly to Sit and labor without much more than I could obtain by absolute idleness. - Perpetual inconveniency, and even for a long time I could cheerfully Suffer, but I cannot brook the Contumely that this Situation exposes me to. I have the name of working, and the imputation of dishonesty, beside the reproaches of a Stupid women, with the pain that my Sick wife must endure from such treatment - I am sure you will See that I ought to endeavour to release myself from this Situation...It will be indispensably necessary for me to Seek some Situation Should not some means be taken by Mr.

115. Diary of William Wood Thackara, 1791-1815, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The notation is on the inner pages of this manuscript diary, in explanation of the copies of two Duane letters referred to below.

116. William Duane to James Thackara, June 7, 1798, MSS letter in Diary of William Wood Thackara, *ibid*.

Stewart to release me from my more immediate
harrassments at least. 117

Duane's pressing needs were met "by a contribution of number of Republicans living in Philadelphia."¹¹⁸ But Catharine Duane died on July 13. Duane thus remained on the Aurora staff when Bache died of yellow fever on the following September 10.

Following Bache's death Duane took over management of his business and in time, as discussed in the historical data section of Historic Structures Report on 322 Market Street, pages 117- 136, married the widow Bache and became editor of the Aurora. In that capacity his considerable talents showed to great advantage and won him overnight success. He chose his grounds carefully while entering the political conflicts of the time, and within two years of his most trying hour he had completely changed about his circumstances. Comparing him with his predecessor, one authority has written that as "an editor he was much abler than Bache, better trained in writing, more experienced in management of men, and of more liberal political views....Bache criticized men rather than measures, while to Duane the policy rather than the man was the object of attack."¹¹⁹ As a journalist he introduced new slants and methods that brought interest and then popularity to the Aurora. In adopting the idiom of the people, in pioneering the editorial page, in sniffing out news and making sensational exposes, he showed himself a forerunner of modern newsmen. In his adroit attacks on the administration of John Adams and his challenge to the Sedition Law, he influenced strongly the Pennsylvanian electorate and even that of more distant points. By the start of the new century, the Aurora was known popularly as the "Bible of Democracy."

In assessing Duane's influence after 1800, his biographer in the Dictionary of American Biography states: "With Jefferson's election, the career of Duane moved toward an anti-climax."¹²⁰ It might be more closely in accord with the course of events if it were stated

117. Thackara, a member of the Democratic Society, was an engraver and illustrator of note. The Stewart referred to was either James or William Stewart, both of whom were ardent Republicans and members of the Democratic Society of Pennsylvania. The contacts demonstrated in this letter lend credence to Duane's having been patronized by leaders of that party, even to the extent of being imported.

118. Aurora, Aug. 11, 1802.

119. Ford, op. cit., p. 257.

120. The article by Claude C. Bowers. Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1930), V, 467.

that his job was over and done in the field where its consequences were greatest. For Duane there remained good battles to be fought, and he had benefitted enormously in the reputation needed to undertake them. And he now stood to derive the material gain his struggles of the past two years had opened to him. As Bache before him he received every encouragement that printing for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's departments of government could offer. The State's books for the period are liberally sprinkled with entries for payments made to Duane by various officials for printing the laws, advertisements of the land office, claims notices, militia inspector's stationery, and the like. Subscriptions of the Aurora went to many State offices. His assault on the patronage bastions in Washington met with less success, but earned him enough orders to quiet him for a time. It was Secretary of the Treasury Gallatin, then the Federal Government's biggest employer, to whom Duane turned most of his attention. Henry Adams accuses Jefferson and Madison of sacrificing him to Duane "whom they conciliated, flattered, persuaded, argued with, and supported by public and private aid."¹²¹ Jefferson's administration had scarcely taken office before he appeared to suggest Franklin's library, then being sold from the mansion's shelves, be bought for the public offices.¹²² He applied for the commission of stocking the newly authorized library of Congress.¹²³

121. Quoted in Clark, op. cit., p. 40. Duane and the Aurora's hold on the Administration is nowhere better illustrated than in Jefferson's resort to that newspaper's columns on Feb. 13, 1804, to publish an anonymous reply to the Federalist article "Etiquette of the Court of the U.S." Dumas Malone, Jefferson the President, First Term 1801-1805 (Boston, 1970), pp. 387-8; 499-500.

122. "I am not sufficiently opulent either to purchase them myself, or to risk the purchase upon the chance of their being taken by the public library Library of Congress or offices....I have no personal interest whatever, but what springs from my veneration for the reliques of the old Patriarch." William Duane to Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin, Sept. 12, 1801, Gallatin Papers, New York Historical Society.

123. "I shall be glad to undertake the provision of such books as may be required, and as I have had some experience, having resided in England for five years, and am acquainted not only with the first booksellers but numbers of the first library characters in that country, I could undertake the importation of the books for the public library under advantages that few others possess." William Duane to Secretary of the State James Madison, May 10, 1801, quoted in Clark, op. cit., p. 24. The matter was already in the hands of a Congressional commission under Massachusetts Senator Samuel Dexter, as it turned out, and Duane failed to get the desired commission.

These worthies soon tired of Duane's constant attentions, and fell out with him. But with President Jefferson he mained on the best of terms, supporting his policies warmly and making a well-received defense of the Louisiana Purchase in his publication Mississippi Question of 1803.

It was into the Pennsylvania political field that his time and energies were drawn increasingly as the century went on. In the view of many scholars his contests with Governor McKean and Secretary of the Commonwealth Alexander James Dallas for control of the Democratic-Republican party are of local interest. At stake, in fact, was a principle of great moment in the emerging Nation, that of making justice work for the people by making it "cheap, speedy, and safe."¹²⁴ Constitutional reform would be needed to carry Duane's program into effect. If the cause succeeded in Pennsylvania, it could be expected to find imitators throughout the country. Duane, ever the enemy of arbitrary power, saw in the system of justice then in effect a societal regulator contrary to the rights guaranteed to Americans.

That this cause should become embroiled in intra-party politics is a measure of the figures involved. As early as 1799 a radical faction led by Duane and Michael Leib had emerged in the Republican gubernatorial convention at Lancaster to press for the nomination of Peter Muhlenberg over Thomas McKean, whose democracy they distrusted. Dallas, as nominator of McKean, received governor.¹²⁵ Dallas' subsequent appointment to offices at the state and national level, while Duane's patronage recommendations went unheeded, brought matters to a head in 1802 when the Radicals combined with Pennsylvania's Federalists to pass a bill forbidding the practice.¹²⁶ The same year Dallas opposed the

124. Glenn L. Bushey, "William Duane, Crusader for Judicial Reform," Pennsylvania History, 1938, p. 142.

125. Raymond Walters, Jr., Alexander James Dallas, Lawyer-Politician-Financier, 1795-1817 (Phila., 1943), p. 89. Muhlenberg is another of history's neglected figures, described by Walters as one having "a versatile record as Episcopalian priest, Revolutionary War general, Congressman and United States Senator-elect." Leib, with Duane "those twin firebrands of radical democracy," was a physician of Philadelphia German descent, trained by Dr. Benjamin Rush. According to Walters, his "Apollo-like figure, powdered hair, ultrafashionable dress, and habit of using perfume belied his staunch belief in democratic principles." He had moved into the ranks of the anti-administration forces in 1793 when his German Republican Society joined the welcoming party for Citizen Genet. After this "his considerable talents as an orator and manipulator were exercised in state assembly, Congress, and in party meeting.... In debate Lieb displayed steadfast Jeffersonianism, selfish ambition, avarice, and viciousness when crossed. Keen in retort, he was not a close reasoner; ...his spitfire eloquence 'produced effect rather by the velocity of his missiles than the weight of his metal.'" Ibid., p. 120.

congressional move to reform the federal judiciary by abolishing the circuit courts and unseating their justices.¹²⁷ Again in 1805 he opposed what he regarded as an attempt to subvert the State constitution and judiciary, when in the wake of the unsuccessful impeachments attempts against Yeates and Smith, the Radicals proposed calling of an amending convention. To Dallas these strategies reflected an insatiable desire for control of the patronage and the power it represented.¹²⁸ His views on judicial reform prevailed with the defeat of Radical candidate for governor Simon Snyder.

But a very different view of the cause can be taken. Convinced that what was involved were the principles of the American Revolution over the "dark, arbitrary, unwritten, incoherent, cruel, inconsistent, and contradictory maxims of the common law of England," Duane made judicial reform a popular crusade.¹²⁹ The reform he so ardently supported was that of putting the judges under popular control by election rather than appointment. Not only did he promote the cause within the party and in the columns of the *Aurora*, he also published such tracts as the one entitled "Sampson Against the Philistines, or the Reformation of Lawsuits; and Justice Made Cheap, Speedy, and Brought Home to Every Man's Door." His "Society of Friends of the People" found itself opposed by Dallas' "Society of Constitutional Republicans." McKean's resentment over Duane's calling lawyers liars, rascals, and villains, led to his veto of the reform bill.¹³⁰ Failure to elect a Radical

126. Ibid., p. 123.

127. Ibid., pp. 124-25.

128. Ibid., pp. 133-37.

129. Dushey, op. cit., p. 144. Duane sought to have the power of the justices of the peace extended while McKean wanted to increase the number of judges. Dumas Malone, Jefferson the President, p. 459.

130. McKean, himself a member of the legal profession, had spent years on the Pennsylvania bench. Though bridleing at Duane's attack on lawyers, he also had been on the receiving end of many jibes and cleverly contrived exposes, as the publication under the title "The Royal Family" of the following list: "Thomas McKean, Governor; Joseph B. McKean, son, attorney-general; Thomas McKean, Jr., son, private secretary; Thomas McKean Thompson, nephew, secretary of the commonwealth; Andrew Pettit, son-in-law, flour inspector; Andrew Bayard, brother-in-law, to Pettit, auctioneer; Dr. George Buchanan, son-in-law, lazaretto physician." By the time the dust had settled, McKean had filed three lawsuits against Duane. In addition, Duane was indicted for publishing the toast "General Arnold and Governor McKean Both Beans of One Kidney." Frank W. Leach, "Old Philadelphia Families," North American, Oct. 13, 1907, p. 6.

successor to McKean ended the attempt at reform—but not until Duane had written another page in his history of support for popular sovereignty, one that has earned him this tribute from a modern scholar:

Possessed of an indomitable fighting-spirit and absolute fearlessness which frustrated the numerous attempts at intimidation by his enemies, boasting of a virile style and a brilliant journalistic tongue which caused its victims to wince under scathing denunciations, this political gladiator used the pages of what was perhaps the most powerful and influential Republican journal of the period to wage war for judicial reforms. 131

In the meantime Duane's business at 316 Market Street could not help but benefit from these escapades. Advertised as the Aurora's Book Store or Duane's Book Store, it offered an extensive stock, perhaps overflowing the confines of the first floor front room.¹³² Among the stationer's items would have been slates and slate pencils, sponges, several sizes of blank books, vellum pocket books, letter cases, fine writing paper, ink, ink powder, sealing wax, wafers, glass ink founts, and such legal stationery as penal bills, penal bonds, bail bonds, counter bonds, bonds of abitation, letters of attorney, indentures bills of lading, bills of sale, general releases, and many types of blanks. When finally he closed out from business further down the street years later, his book catalogue showed 1170-

131. Bushey, op. cit., 142. Other articles of the Radicals' legislative and constitution programs were reduction of executive patronage. Ibid., p. 152. Leib and Duane were by no means lonely champions. Such better-known Democratic-Republicans as Findley, Boileau, and Trimble, all of them nurtured by the Bryant brand of political principle and inspired by the French Revolution, but not as flamboyant as the "twin firebrands," gave disciplined support. More orthodox Republicans found them useful in days of Federalist sway and most uncomfortable afterwards. The difference between the factions was that which separates the reformer and the reconstructionist. In a later day, the Radicals assumed the air of old hat Republicanism, too highly principled and doctrinaire for that age and free of any tincture of threat to society.

132. H. Glenn Brown and Maude O. Brown, A Directory of the Book-Arts and Book Trade in Philadelphia to 1820. Including Painters and Engravers (New York, 1950), p. 43.

odd titles.¹³³

Of all his publishing enterprises, the one that probably gave him the most satisfaction was begun while he resided at 316 Market Street. Writing to a fabled patriot in 1807, he gave notice: "I am occupied in editing Franklin's works."¹³⁴ For years the world had waited for William Temple Franklin to finish the work he had begun after his grandfather willed his papers to him. Not until 1817 did the first of six volumes published between then and 1819 appear. In the meantime, Marshall and Vaughan in 1806 had published three volumes of Franklin papers. Perhaps inspired by the severe denunciation of Temple in that edition's preface, accusing him of receiving "a remuneration for suppressing them," and no doubt sensing a good market under the circumstances, Duane entered the field. The first of his six-volume work appeared in 1808, the last in 1818.¹³⁵ The Aurora voiced his other views.¹³⁶

133. Duane's personal library at his death numbered 1909 books and 74 maps and plates. Catalog of the Library of the Late Col. William Duane (Phila., 1863). A Catalog of the Valuable Books Comprising the Stock in Trade of William Duane, Relinquishing this Branch of Business (Phila., n. d.)

134. William Duane to Casesar Rodney, Nov. 23, 1807, William Duane Letters, Columbia University Library.

135. A veiled reference to the British government. John Clyde Oswald, Benjamin Franklin Printer (Garden City, N. Y., 1926), pp. 207-09.

136. In 1807 he espoused enthusiastically Mr. Joseph Neef's system of education with its startling innovative concept of the kindergarten. Also he was the first to detect in print the danger of the port of New York to the trade of Philadelphia, printing in 1801 a plan to retrieve "the loss of trade our city has experienced by the preduce of our country having been diverted to the markets of our sister States in Consequence of the improvements made by them. N.York is draining off the trade of our northwestern quarter by her wise measures and public spirit in expending large sums in opening the inland navigation of her exterior bordering on us." Clark, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

Nothing relating to life in the Duane family circle has emerged from the sources covered for this report.

These then were the affairs with which Duane busied himself while residing at 316 Market Street. The directories and tax records through 1809 list this as his home and place of business. After moving away, for reasons not known, his career went on in characteristic style. The epilogue to this story would have to include his increasing involvement with the militia after his appointment as a lieutenant-colonel of rifles in 1808, and his publication of several military texts that became standards if not classics during the period of the War of 1812. His championing of South American independence in the years before his retirement from the Aurora and other business in 1822 led to his visiting Colombia in that year and the next and writing a travel classic of what he saw.¹³⁷ He is recognized today in that country as one of the patron saints of its independence, and his portrait hangs in the capitol building. Upon his return he accepted appointment as prothonotary of the supreme court of Pennsylvania's eastern district, in which capacity he served until his death on November 24, 1835.

Duane's withdrawal from the lagging enterprise in Washington took place just before his leaving 316 Market Street, and this perhaps was an indication of decline - in business and his expectations in general. In 1807 he released his share of the shop on Pennsylvania Avenue to his assistant there, Roger C. Weightman. In 1814 he sold his realty.¹³⁸ Certainly, these transactions signalize a contraction that is further borne out by his move away from Market Street.

From the highest authority comes the summary tribute to Duane's career with the Aurora, Thomas Jefferson himself, who wrote:

That paper has unquestionably rendered incalculable services to republicanism through all its struggles with the federalists, and has been the rallying point for the orthodoxy of the whole Union. It was our comfort in the gloomiest days and is still performing the office of a watchful sentinel. We should be ungrateful to desert him and unfaithful to our own interests to lose him. 139

137. A Visit to Colombia in the Years 1822 & 1823 (Phila., 1826).

138. Clark, op. cit., p. 32.

139. Ibid., p. 53. The New York Star obituary offers another judgment of Duane worthy of consideration: "He was an able, indefatigable, and persevering writer of the old democratic school, and lived in the most stormy political times. The changes in the political world

Another famous contemporary - James Madison - had the last best say about Duane himself: "I have always regarded Duane, and still [1811] regard him, as a sincere friend of liberty, and as ready to make every sacrifice to its cause but that of his passions."

frequently brought him in conflict with his former friends, and led to controversies always bitter and unrelenting. No man had in his time more influence, and with faults and strong points of character inseparable from our nature, he possessed much sterling merit, and his history, by an able and impartial hand would be highly interesting."

CHAPTER V

Later History of the Title

Coincidence or not, the first tenant to occupy 316 Market Street after Duane's withdrawal was another editor of Irish extraction, whose career in certain aspects strangely paralleled that of his predecessor. This was one John Binns, publisher of the Democratic Press, the first so daring as to incorporate that then-inflammatory word into a newspaper title. Binns' stock-in-trade was the glory of America, by this time acceptable in a Republican party organ. Before coming to Philadelphia in 1807, Binns had gravitated from the land of his birth to London in 1794, where he had joined William Godwin to agitate for reform of Parliament on the basis of universal suffrage. After several jailings, he immigrated to Northumberland, Pennsylvania, to the side of Cooper and Priestly, where for some years he published the Northumberland Gazette. Later he became active in politics, serving as alderman of Philadelphia for years, opposing Andrew Jackson at the cost of his newspaper's life, and becoming renowned as an orator gifted with supreme "Irish eloquence."

Binns' stay at 316 Market Street was distinguished by no event of great moment. However, he was the last to use the printing shop built by Franklin in 1787-88, and its demolition early in 1812 along with the mansion and its dependencies in the courtyard was the occasion for his moving to other quarters.¹⁴⁰

In 1811 Richard Bache died. In the division of properties in Franklin Court that followed, the former Deborah Bache, daughter of Richard and Sarah Franklin Bache, now married to William John Duane, William Duane's eldest son, received title to the house and lot at 316 Market Street.¹⁴¹ They moved in the same year, and Duane, last seen returning from a trial spin with his father's office in Washington, D.C.,

¹⁴⁰. Born in 1772, Binns lived until 1860. Recollections of the Life of John Binns Written by Himself (Phila., 1854), p. 290.

¹⁴¹. Effective Jan. 14, 1812. Deed Book IC-19, 1-22, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

did business from the address as a printer, bookseller, and operator of a paper warehouse.¹⁴² There he remained through that year and the next, and was gone by 1814. The younger Duane, now 32 years of age, had not yet displayed the abilities that would later elevate him to Secretary of the Treasury under Andrew Jackson. While still at 316 Market Street he gave up the business and entered into the study of law. He had already served in the legislature, and he continued this service, holding the chairmanship of the important House committee on roads and canals. He wrote extensively on internal improvements. During the 1820s he served in municipal offices, and in 1831 as one of the commissioners under the treaty with Denmark. Unable to stomach Jackson's removal of deposits from the Second Bank of the United States, he stalled and was removed after only four months in office. After this he appeared infrequently in public life, spending his remaining career in testamentary pursuits after demonstrating a marked talent for drafting wills in his handling of that of Stephen Girard.¹⁴³

The Duanes sold the house and lot in 1825 to a merchant tailor named William Davis.¹⁴⁴

From this point on the house's fortunes changed. The historically important personages of previous years gave way to people of means but no celebrity and eventually in the twentieth century to owners whose only interest was in shelter for commercial enterprise. By this time the structure, repeatedly altered to suit changing commercial need, bore little resemblance to the house Franklin had built so many years before. As traced in the earlier historic structures reports, historical and architectural data sections (see footnote 41 and page 8 of this report), by 1860 a five-story, non-residential building had resulted from a transformation that gutted the interiors of the earlier structure and retained only the old party walls.¹⁴⁵ It was essentially this same building that the National Park Service acquired in 1954. Only a last-minute feat of architectural sleuthing saved it from the wrecker's ball in 1959.

142. Brown, op. cit., p. 43.

143. Johnson and Malone, op. cit., V, 468-69.

144. Deed Book GU R-8, 195-6, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia.

145. Historic Structure Report, Part I on 316 Market Street, Independence National Historical Park (March 1961), Chap. II, Sec. 1, pp. 4-5.

Bibliographical Note

As is the case throughout with this class of report, an expansion in biographical materials has been presented to aid in the comprehension of what is no major architectural feature of the National Park Service. A great many published primary sources and as many documentary sources are thus represented, reflecting very exhaustive research. Unfortunately, Service historians have had little luck finding documentation for physical attributes of the house. Nothing more has appeared from the various Franklin papers than reported previously, while descriptive materials from contemporary viewers have remained quite as elusive. The time has come to close the book on this phase of project research, leaving hope that scholars and antiquarians will be able to contribute a further nugget now and again while time remains to put such bits to use.

Again the writer has omitted what could only be a long and redundant bibliography. For those desiring a further look at the sources, some inconvenience will be experienced going from page to page to consult the footnotes. But this should be minimal as the chronological organization of the report should make all but random search productive in short order.

Illustrations

Note: No attempt has been made to reproduce illustrations of the house introduced in Chapter II (Historical Data), Historic Structure Report, Part I (March 1961) on 316 Market Street, Independence National Historical Park. The reader's attention is invited to Illustrations No. 2 (1860 view of 316 Market Street from Baxter's Panoramic Business Directory of Philadelphia); 25 (1951 photograph of building and arched passageway); and 7 (1951 photograph of rear of Structure). In addition, the 1869 floor plan, presented as Illustration No. 8, should be viewed along with the fire insurance survey presented as Appendix D in this report.

Illustration No. 1

William Duane from photographic reproduction of the Gilbert Stuart portrait destroyed by fire at Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Duane had this look and appearance while residing at 316 Market Street.



WILLIAM DUANE

PLATE I

Illustration No. 2

Franklin Place with rear view of 316 Market Street and arched passageway in background as drawn by D. J. Kennedy before drastic remodelling of the house. Courtesy of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Franklin House, Franklin Place.

sketched by J. Kennedy

