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DELAWARE STREET

#210 - "Gilpin House"
(See Photo No. 47)

Summary: The site is part of the deRinck-Alrichs-Vanderculen property that **was** sold by **Renyier** Vanderculen in 1688 to **William Markham**, William Penn's cousin and deputy governor, as 60 feet **wide** on Delaware Street and 300 feet deep. **Markham** sold to James **Claypool** the following year. There is no clear indication that a house was on the site at the time. **Claypool** probably built the house, for after his death in 1706, his **widow** who married Christian **Steelman** was in possession of house and ground as administratrix. To satisfy a claim against the **Claypool** estate, the court authorized sale of the house and ground then in possession of the **Steelman's**. In 1715, the **sheriff** who had **seized** the house **with** part of the land, sold house and lot to John **Earl**, the lot being **35-1/2** feet on Delaware Street and 300 feet deep - and was the **west** part of the original lot. It adjoined the Booth house property. In the deed, John **Earl** is a "**carpenter** of Kent County, Maryland."

In 1722 **when** Earl sold house and lot to George **Boss**, rector of **Immanuel** Church and Richard **Grafton**, merchant, he chose **William Read** "**innholder**" to record the sale. It may be **that** Read conducted his inn in this building, and that **leasing** it for an **inn** **as** the **purpose** of the purchase by **Ross** and **Grafton**. These men sold the "**message** and lot of land", 45-1/2 x 300 feet, to Thomas **Gozell** (**VanGozell**) in 1727. In Thomas **Gozell's** will (1732) he is called "**yeoman.**" **When** he **sells** the **property** to Samuel **Griffith** for 220 pounds in 1727, the **same** year he **bought** it, he is **Thomas Gozell**,

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"mariner". The house was leased when he sold it, and probably when he bought it, by Samuel Griffith, "merchant". The number of merchants who had taverns or houses they leased as taverns, is an indication that an inn where goods could be received, stored, or redistributed and where traders, other merchants, and ship's officers could be accommodated while business was transacted, was a necessary adjunct to their business; but whether or not Samuel Griffith conducted a tavern at #210 does not appear on the records.

In 1730, "the late dwelling of Samuel Griffith" was sold by the sheriff to Thomas Smith, "merchant". Thomas Smith built an addition to the house on its west side and had secured for that purpose from Margaret Williamson, who owned the Booth house, a strip of her land. It is at this time called a dwelling and tavern.

The deed of Margaret Williamson to Thomas Smith makes clear that his "new brick tenement" adjoined the other tenement on the lot Thomas Smith bought from the sheriff. At some later time, date not determined, the tavern was enlarged on its east side, the top stories extended over an alley or driveway which was incorporated in the building with an arched entrance-way from the street front.

The administrators of Thomas Smith's estate in 1737 sold the property to Thomas Thompson, "blacksmith" at public sale, his being

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the **highest** bid, 200 pounds. In 1741, the property was again sold at public sale - to the highest bidder, Isaac Janvier.

Isaac Janvier sold, the **same** year, to John **McGhee**, innholder.

The next sale was 1758 to Daniel **McLonen**, innkeeper, than in 1788 to Isaaο **Grantham** at sheriff's sale for 700 pounds. **Grantham** sold to John **Darrah**, "gentleman", also an innkeeper. Succeeding owners were **Robert Barr**, James Darling, David **Gemmell Jr.**, and George **Whitfield** in 1865.

According to Alexander **Cooper's** history, **Whitfield** made extensive additions, repairs, and improvements and **renamed** the hotel, "The Gilpin House" for Chief Justice Edward W. Gilpin, who was then in office (1857-1876). In 1907, **Whitfield** sold to Joseph S. **Godwin**. At that time the hotel was conducted by James **Kerrigan**. After Prohibition, the first floor of the hotel was made into shops and stores and an arch over the driveway to the stables destroyed.

Conclusion: The Gilpin house, **built** by James **Claypool** of Philadelphia, appointed term of 1689-1694 **as** Clerk of the Peace of New Castle County - continued to be a dwelling and tavern until the **1920's**, when its first floor was then converted into stores, the archway **was** destroyed and the space incorporated in the store. At a later date to accommodate a modern market store, the whole front **was** torn out from pavement to roof and rebuilt. The spacing and size of the second story windows was, however, retained, as was the roof pitch and position of cornice. At this time, dormers **were** added to the roof for the first time.

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