

THIRD STREET - #10 and #12'

Part of the **original** Ambrose Backer Property  
(See **Introduction** to Summary of  
Kensy Johns House - #2 Third Street)  
Present Owner of #10 Clara Bacon  
Present Owner of #12 Judge Richard S. Rodney

The properties, #10 and #12 Third Street, originally part of the **Ambrose** Backer land on Third Street that **Backer's** heirs sold to Adam Hay, include an original lot of **30'** more or less, bounded south by an alley **9'** wide between this plot and the "**Dorsey** house" site, #8, to the south. The front width of the lot began at a point **38'** south of the south line of Nathaniel **Silsbee's** alley and extended according to the first deed of sale, **30'** south along the street and **169'** deep **between** the Green and Beaver Street (Third and Fourth streets). In 1709 when Adam Hay sold this "**30** foot<sup>a</sup> lot to Samuel **Silsbee**, carpenter, there **was** no alley between the sites of #16 and #18 to measure from; the south line of the latter alley had been established however, as the south line of a 60' plot sold by Ambrose Backer to **Marten Martenson** (see summary of #18) and later bought by Adam Hay; and as the north line of a 25' lot sold by Adam Hay to Jonathan Savage in 1708 (see summary of #16).

Samuel Silsbee, carpenter, lived on the west side of Fourth Street, north of the **Amstel** House, behind the lot he bought in 1709 on Third Street. He was the father of Nathaniel Silsbee, bricklayer, who later bought the site of #18 and #20 Third Street and created "**Silsbee's** Alley" as a right-of-way for the public forever between Third and Fourth Streets. Samuel **Silsbee**, the

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#10 and #12 Third Street

carpenter (who is often confused with a later Samuel Silsbee who died in 1751) died in 1714 and by his will left the Third Street property to his wife Elizabeth and his two children Nathaniel, a bricklayer, who married Judith Jacquet (sister of Peter), and Mary who married Philip Janvier. In 1754, their mother being dead, Nathaniel and Mary made a division of their jointly inherited property by which Mary Silsbee Janvier became sole owner of the property on Third Street.

Mary Silsbee Janvier, in 1769, for 11 pounds, sold the 30' lot on the site of #10 and #12 to Daniel McLonen (yeoman, innkeeper, gentleman), who, since 1751 had owned the adjoining property to the north (the Judge Richard S. Rodney property). How early a house was on the site of #12 cannot be determined with certainty but in 1784 Daniel McLonen sold house and lot to Richard Sorce (Sauce) shopkeeper of White Clay Creek Hundred for 80 pounds. The house was undoubtedly the house now adjoining Judge Rodney's house. This house, #12, in spite of its modifications, especially of the front along the street, retains in the interior some of its early features. The date it was built by Daniel McLonen was probably soon after 1769. This small house is not shown on the 1804 survey map and the proportions or scale of the lots and alley on that map are far off those of the deeds. The offset for the alley in the adjoining property to the south given in all the deeds as 9', is on this map equal to half of the contemporary 26' house to the south.

The property site of #10 and #12 was bought in 1788 by Joseph Boggs, who the next year bought the adjoining house and lot to the south, #8. Both these properties as parts of Joseph Boggs' estate, were sold by the sheriff in 1792 to Kensey Johns Sr. who then owned the adjoining corner property at Third and Delaware Streets. Two years later Kensey Johns sold the site of #10 and #12 (along with the site of #8 to the south) to Nicholas Van Dyke, the younger, (who was U. S. Senator 1817-26). Nicholas Van Dyke in 1799 sold the property to two New Castle carpenters and builders, Jacob Colesberry and Jeremiah Bowman for \$480. These men in 1800 sold house and lot to Christopher Zimmerman. Zimmerman's occupation previous to 1811 has not been bound. In that year he was appointed toll keeper at the new toll house, Delaware and Union Streets at \$150 per year. The New Castle & Frenchtown Turnpike was operated by the New Castle Turnpike Co. - charter January 1811. He was related to John Zimmerman, who between 1808 and 1811 built the two-story frame house and shop which preceded the brick Chase house at 126 Delaware Street.)

Immediately following his purchase, Christopher Zimmerman divided the 30' lot ~~which by that time seems to have included most of the 9' alley to the south.~~ *which was later described as 37' 4"*. The north part with the brick house which he kept for himself, later measured 18'-10". The south part, Zimmerman sold in July 1800 to Ann Miller, widow, measuring 18'-6" on Third Street and extending back with an offset halfway of its depth - to Fourth Street, and adjoining her property to the south of the former alley which divided her house from this newly purchased

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**#10 and #12 Third Street**

garden lot (now the site of #10 Third Street). There is no **evidence in any records** found that any building had ever been on the site of #10 previous to purchase by **Mrs. Ann Miller** nor for many **years afterward.**

Christopher **Zimmerman** or his heirs seem to **have** remained in **possession** of the property **now #12**, until it became the property of **George Read 3rd**. **George Read 3rd**, in 1810, married Louisa, the daughter of **Ann Dorsey** who owned **#8 and #10**. **Read and his wife**, Louisa Dorsey must have acquired the property **now #12** from **Christopher Zimmerman** or his estate, before 1816; a deed for the adjoining property to the north in that year (**#14-16**) gives **George Read Esq.** as the owner of **#12**.

In 1839, a judgment was secured in the court against **George Read 4th** as **administrator** of the **estate** of **George Read 3rd** who died in 1837, as the **result** of which the sheriff sold **#12 and #10** together to **George B. Rodney**. The **sale** is recorded in 1844. The **description** of the property in this deed **gives** the same bounds and **dimensions** as applied to the undivided house and lot when owned by **Christopher Zimmerman**. **George B. Rodney** left the property to **his** daughter **Louise** subject to a life interest of her mother.