

IMPORTANT DATES

and

List of Owners

- 1796 William Armstrong
- 1801 Daniel Lafferty - Shopkeeper
- 1804 Survey shows house
- 1820 Two (2) story brick house (described by John Maitland)
- 1827 Andrew Weston - Innkeeper, tenant
- 1863 John H. Maitland (nephew of John Maitland) sold 116, 118, 120 and 124 to John Keegan (tavern-keeper, operated as "Rising Sun" until Keegan died in 1882)
- 1882 118, 120 Sold by sheriff (56' on Harmony Street and back about 70', with a two story house, part brick and part frame, called "Rising Sun Hotel")

The Rising Sun Tavern

118 Harmony Street

Built 1796 and 1801

History of the House. Front section built by William Armstrong in 1796. Mr. Armstrong owned 118 Harmony Street and the Tile House on the Strand. Rear section probably built in 1801 by David Lafferty. Mr. Lafferty was a shopkeeper. In 1827 the house was tenanted by Andrew Weston, who is listed as an innkeeper. It is believed that he kept an inn at 118 Harmony. In 1863, this house, along with 116, 120, 122 and 124, was sold to John Keegan, who operated it as "Rising Sun" until 1882.

Original Form of House and Restoration. The front section was built first. One large and one small room on each floor, kitchen in the cellar, was connected to the upstairs by a dumbwaiter beside the fireplace. Small room at the rear had one window at the rear. Original paneling was gone when the house was purchased but sufficient marks and a few parts were left to know what was originally there. This was also true of the chair rail. So they have been replaced with old material taken from a house in Kent County, Delaware that was being demolished.

*See attached*  
The rear section, consisting of one room on each floor, is practically original. The mantel is believed to have been made by workmen working on the Charles Thomas House (Parish House) under Peter Crowding, as the one in that house is similar to the one in this house. The houses were built in the same year.

Hardware in the house has been restored, using old pieces of the period. The floors have ~~not~~ been restored on the first floor. The second floor is original.

At the time the house was used as a tavern, the front room was the public room and the rear room was used for more select gatherings. (The small window (in the cellar stairway on the river side) was used for "off" sales - those who were not welcome inside the tavern. Some of these would be dirty stagecoach drivers or itinerant tinsmiths.)

*In 1996 I served lemonade out this window to celebrate 200 yrs. of the old tavern*  
There was originally a house adjoining this house - a frame building *MM* that was torn down about 1946. Then came a carriageway which can be clearly seen. The carriageway went to the stable in the rear of the garden. Taverns were required by law to take care of their patrons' animals. A well in the garden has been opened and a pump of the period placed over it. In the rear corner of the cellar wall is a grist mill wheel, as part of the foundation. It is believed it had belonged to the mill which was located across the street at the river in the 1600's.

## LAFFERTY

Ambrose Lafferty	44	Delaware	Hotelkeeper	\$ 2,000
	53		Tailor	\$2,000/200
(1850, n. 121 and 1860 census, n. 503)				

n. 121	Ambrose Lafferty	44	Delaware	Hotelkeeper	\$2000
	Mary Lafferty	42	Delaware		
	Sarah Lafferty	19	Delaware		
	Caroline Lafferty	16	Delaware		
	Mary A Lafferty	13	Pennsylvania		
	Thomas McConologue	22	Ireland	Carpenter	
n. 122	John Callahan	23	Delaware	Blacksmith	\$1200 (1850 Census)

no. 121 Ambrose Lafferty hotelkeeper  
*Rising Sun Tavern* Located: today, 118 Harmony  
 Early history - used as early as 1796 by William Armstrong - had one room and a large room on each floor, a basement kitchen w/ a dumbwaiter located beside the fireplace connecting it to upstairs. In 1801, Daniel Lafferty added a rear portion which had one room on each floor. The front room served as the public room of the tavern and the rear room for private gatherings. There was also a service window riverside. The garden had a stable as required by law (*A Day...* 1961, p. 33)

1820 Sheriff's Sale, announcement by John Moody mentions a two-storey brick house and lot of land owned by Daniel Lafferty, bounded by Harmony St., the house and lot of Peter Bradley and the lot of John McCallmont. (*American Watchman* 2/19/1820)

Levy Court Minutes, 1847 and 1849, Lafferty mentioned  
 1800 Census, Samuel Lafferty  
 1804 tax list St. George's Hundred (Scharf 2: 990)

Sarah Lafferty m. 2 or 12/1/47, John Callahan at St. Peter's by Rev. John Cullen  
 (*Delaware Gazette*, February or December, 14, 1847)

Ambrose Lafferty sold lots, 20 ft. By 90 ft. deep, for \$100 each to James Lane, Robert Harp [sic], James S. King & William Huber and two others. (*Arthur, Delaware Gazette*, October 21, 1853)

Ambrose Lafferty has sold to Daniel R. Wolfe two lots on Orange Street b. Harmony and "Bull Hill" & two lots to Peter B. Vandever adjoining Mr. Wolfe's. Plans houses.  
 (*Arthur, Delaware Gazette*, April 21, 1854)

no. 122 John Callahan (23) blacksmith lives alone  
hotel at the corner of Callahan's Alley & Water street  
a Callahan ran a ferry from NC [but when?]

(Rogers, p. 47)  
(Cooper 1: 176-77)

1860 Census, n. 441, p. 210 at least

John Kegan	45	Innkeeper	Ireland	\$300
Rose Kegan	43		Ireland	
Ellen Kegan	10		Delaware	
Molly [?]	8		Delaware	

### RISING SUN

#### *Rising Sun*

118 Harmony used as early as 1796 (Ward, p. 149)

on the southwest side of Harmony about midway between Market and Water streets and lasted until about twenty-five years ago; kept first by Andrew Meston and then Johnny Keegan. Name reflected in "large sign in front... bearing a painted picture of the sun just rising above the horizon. Keegan "a popular, polite, shrewd and intelligent Irishman... dispensed a fine brand of whiskey called the "Mandebach"... a large patronage. (Cooper, 2: 127-28)

first built in 1796 by Wm Armstrong = one room and a large room on each floor; basement kitchen w/ dumbwaiter located beside fireplace connecting it to upstairs. In 1801, Daniel Lafferty added rear portion which had one room on each floor. The front room served as the public room of the tavern and the rear room for private gatherings. There was also a service window on the riverside. The garden had a stable as required by law .... (A Day... 1961, p. 33)

1820 Lafferty sold it to Daniel Maitland (Perry & Shaw)  
Sheriff's Sale two-storey brick house & lot of land of Daniel Lafferty bounded by Harmony Street, a house & lot of Peter Bradley, a lot of John McCallmont (HSD, *American Watchman*, 2/19/1820)

1827 ---- Meston, an innkeeper & tenant who ran an inn at 118 Harmony  
Owned by --- Maitland (Perry & Shaw)

1850 Ambrose Lafferty, hotelkeeper (1850 federal census n. 121, p. 283)

1860 Ambrose Lafferty, unnamed hotel  
(*Boyd's Delaware State Directory*, 1860, p. 235)

John Keegan (45), Ireland, innkeeper, ..../\$300  
(1860 federal census, n. 441, p. 205)

1863 John Keegan bought tavern at 118 Harmony & house at 114  
Ran it until death in 1882 (Perry & Shaw)

1870 Keegan's (Wilmington *Directory*, 1868-69, pp. 322-24)

6/11/01

MIDGE - SOME MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ABOUT THE  
RISING SUN AND SOME CONTRADICTIONS THAT MUST  
BE SORTED OUT. Q

To: Kate

From: Marion

Re: Rising Sun Tavern

7

" LITTLEIS KNOWN ABOUT Crouding, a carpenter from Philadelphia first hired to work as a contractor on George Read's house in 1797. Crouding is believed to be responsible for the construction and woodwork of several other contemporary New Castle Buildings: The New Castle Academy-----, the John Wilsy house-----, the Nicholas Van Dyke house, the addition to the Rising Sun Tavern (1801, 118 Harmony Street, and renovation in the Booth House (late 1790's, 212 Delaware Street."

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"Punch and gouge work is also present in the original fireplace surround in the South Parlour (Thomas House)-*Parish House* the fireplace on the third floor, and the exterior door frames. The South Parlour fireplace (presently church office in Parish House) is now closed up, and the surround is now located in the back room of the Rising Sun Tavern."

Architecture as Evidence:

The Charles Thomas House of New Castle, Del.

Michelle McFadden

December 10, 1987

RISING SUN HOTEL

The Rising Sun Hotel, opposite McBride's Carriage Factory, New Castle, Delaware.

"The subscriber would inform his friends and the public that he has taken the above Hotel; and having fitted it up in good style, is now prepared to accommodate them in a manner that will give satisfaction. His table will be supplied with the delicacies of the season, and at his bar may be found the best of Wines and Liquors. The public are invited to give him a call with the assurance that no effort on his part will be spared to make them comfortable."

John Keegan  
Delaware Gazette, Oct. 18, 1859

DEAR MIDGE -

I HAD A LEAD ON WHAT I HOPED WOULD BE A SUITABLE HISTORICAL THANK YOU FOR THE DELICIOUS AND ENJOYABLE DINNER THAT YOU PREPARED FOR US, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT. BUT HERE IS SOMETHING ELSE THAT YOU MAY FIND OF INTEREST.

REAROS,

Q Dallas