

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT  
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)

**1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE** (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: 81-95 Fairmount Avenue

Postal code: 19123 Councilmanic District: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: 81-95 Coates Street and the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co.

Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Building       Structure       Site       Object

**4. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Condition:     excellent     good     fair     poor     ruins

Occupancy:     occupied     vacant     under construction     unknown

Current use: Various

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary.

**6. DESCRIPTION**

Please attach a description of the historic resource and supplement with current photographs.

**7. SIGNIFICANCE**

See attached. Multiple Resources.

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: \_\_\_\_\_

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: \_\_\_\_\_

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: \_\_\_\_\_

Original owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Other significant persons: \_\_\_\_\_

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:** See attached: multiple resources.

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Please attach a bibliography.

**9. NOMINATOR**

Name with Title Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian Email Oscar.Beisert@gmail.com  
Organization Off Boundary Preservation Brigade Date April 7, 2015  
Street Address 205 Rochelle Avenue Telephone 717.602.5002  
City, State, and Postal Code Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19128  
Nominator  is  is not the property owner.

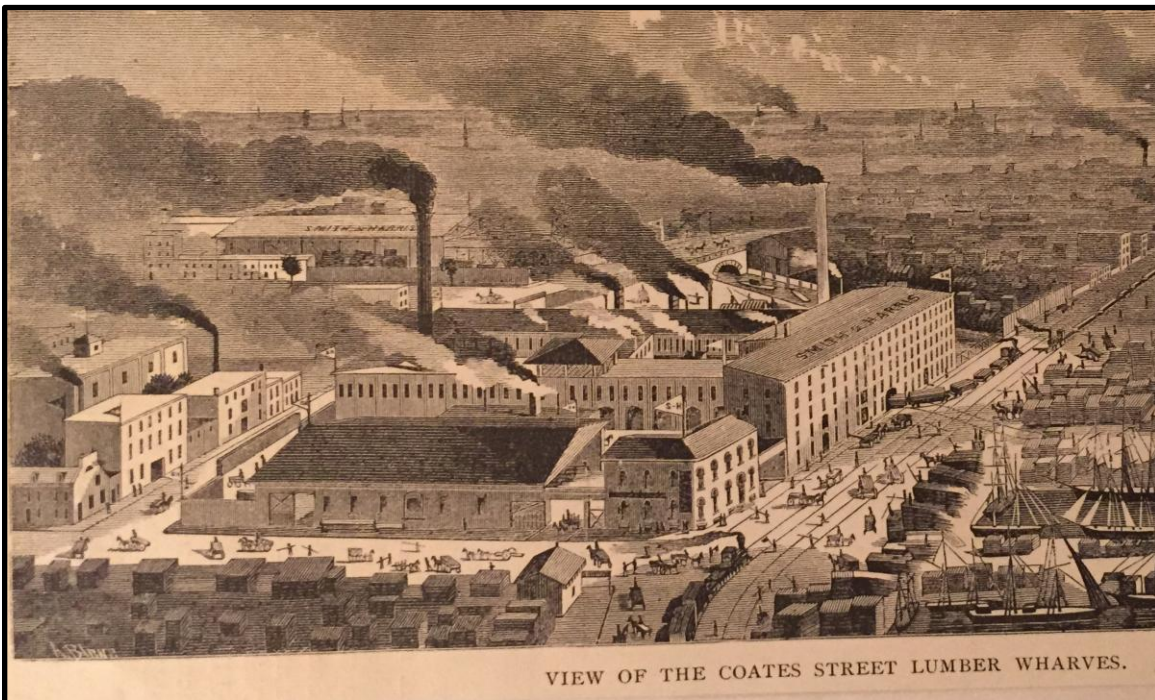
**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Notice Issuance: \_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner at Time of Notice  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Final Action: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Designated  Rejected

## Nomination for the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

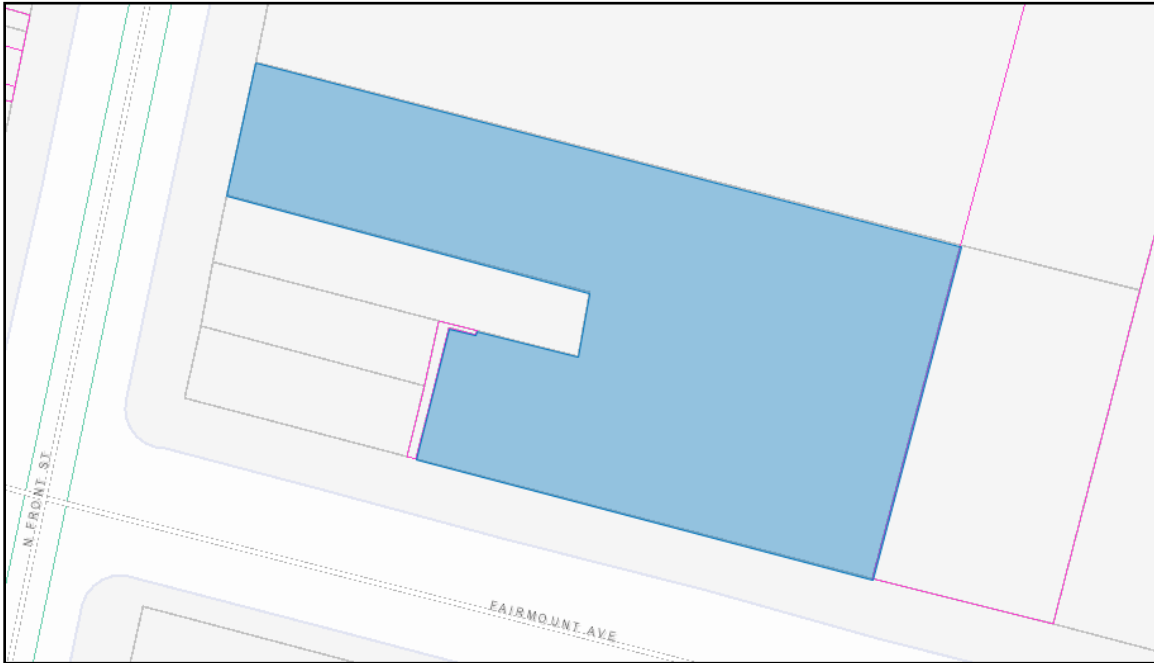


### 81–95 Coates Street (now Fairmount Avenue) & Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co.



View of the Coates Street Lumber Wharves with the Philadelphia Plaster Works at center. At the far left is the juncture of Coates (now Fairmount Avenue and Beach Streets, where one can see the first subject houses, 81 and 83 Fairmount Avenue and the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co.

## 5. Boundary Description



ALL THAT CERTAIN lot or piece of ground with the buildings thereon erected, BEGINNING at the intersection of the Northerly side of Fairmount Avenue (56 feet 11 inches wide) and the Westerly side of Beach Street (50 feet wide); thence extending North 71 degrees 40 minutes West, along the Northerly side of Fairmount Avenue, 128 feet 4-1/4 inches to a point; thence extending North 15 degrees 16 minutes East, partly along the Westerly side of a certain 2 feet 6 inches wide alley, 35 feet 3-1/8 inches to a point; thence extending South 70 degrees 41 minutes 34 seconds East, 8 feet 4-1/2 inches to a point; thence extending North 18 degrees 17 minutes East, 1 foot 2 inches to a point; thence extending South 71 degrees 40 minutes East, 29 feet 11-7/8 inches to a point; thence extending North 15 degrees 16 minutes East, 17 feet 6-3/8 inches to a point; thence extending North 70 degrees 56 minutes West, partly along the center of a 2 feet 5 inches wide alley, 100 feet and 7/8 of an inch to the Easterly side of Front Street (60 feet wide); thence extending North 15 degrees 16 minutes East, along the Easterly side of Front Street, 37 feet 1 inch to a point; thence extending South 71 degrees 40 minutes East, 194 feet 91/2 inches to the Westerly side of Beach Street; thence extending South 18 degrees 17 minutes West, along the Westerly side of Beach Street, 92 feet and 3/4 inches to the Northerly side of Fairmount Avenue, the place of beginning.

BEING Nos. 81 to 95 Fairmount Avenue, 704 to 708 N. Beach Street and 707 to 709 N. Front Street, Tax Parcel No. 005N05-0112, Tax Account No. 882966200.

For the purposes of this nomination, the parcels known as 707 and 709 N. Front Street and the structures thereon are considered non-historic.

## 6. Building Description: 81–93 Coates Street (now Fairmount Avenue)



Looking northwest. 81–95 Fairmount Avenue (left) and the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co. (right)

Perhaps the last, cohesive row of undesignated historic buildings adjacent to the Delaware River in the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia, 81–95 Coates Street is a block of two-and-one-half-story Federal style houses at 81–95 Fairmount Avenue (late Coates Street), between Beach Street at the east and Front Street at the west. At the northwest corner of Fairmount Avenue and Beach Street, this row of houses is articulated from east to west, maintaining a striking architectural presence in the neighborhood. 81–95 Coates Street includes the following buildings with their associated addresses that were first assigned in the late 1850s:

1. 81 Fairmount Avenue
2. 83 Fairmount Avenue
3. 85 Fairmount Avenue
4. 87 Fairmount Avenue
5. 89 Fairmount Avenue
6. 91 Fairmount Avenue
7. 93 Fairmount Avenue
8. 95 Fairmount Avenue

Following the Philadelphia tradition of Georgian style row houses, articulated in the Federal mode, 81–95 Coates Street features eight attached and semi-detached dwellings of load bearing, redbrick masonry construction featuring side-gable roofs. At the east and west ends of the row, fully articulated “curtain gable” ends are extant. While this gable type is a known form in Philadelphia in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, its popularity and use became quite fashionable in the late Federal period. The curtain gable ends rise the full height of the roof, creating a parapet wall, from which identical chimney stacks extend beyond, giving the row a substantial distinction. Centered at the crest of the roofline and the foot of the curtain gable is an enclosed fanlight niche. Spanning the width of eight units, the buildings are centered upon two chimneystacks between 87 and 89 Fairmont

Avenue. The brick chimneys are square in shape and sustainable in form and massing. The roof appears to be the original standing-seam metal material or a nineteenth century replacement. Some parts of the roof have been patched.

Standing two-and-one-half-stories, the eight houses represent eight units in width, which includes a fenestration of sixteen bays—one window per floor. Following the most important rule in Georgian symmetry, the windows are of equal size and perfectly aligned at the first and second floors of the primary elevation. This configuration is broken only by extant doublewide, arched doorways and the sensitively enclosed remnants of the same. Featuring simple stone lintels and sills at the first floor and simple stone sills at the second, each window within the first and second floor is flanked by operable wooden shutters with a two-panel configuration. Spanning the roofline of the building is a simple cornice of brick corbeling, projecting in three simple and single-unit tiers. Separating the cornice from the roofline is a white metal gutter beneath the eaves of the standing seam metal roof. Set within the roofline and centered on the fenestration of each of the eight units, the classic Federal style dormer with its arched lintel and pilaster, architrave projects eight times.

Of the eight houses, the first two—81–83 Fairmount Avenue—are the most impressive being at the corner. Featuring irregular apertures at the east elevation, 81–83 Fairmont is four bays wide. Within the western two bays at the first floor is a very elegant, double Federal style doorway, which may or may not be original. The aperture is defined by brickwork in a segmental arch, beneath which is a fanlight divided into ten panes of glass. A single, eight-panel wood door is flanked by panels of leaded glass and closed wooden panels, all of which is beneath the fanlight. The doorway is accessed by a flight of marble steps, which is flanked by period wrought iron balustrades. At the eastern end of the marble steps is a wrought iron boot scraper set atop a small block of granite. Extending to the north, from the rear of 81 Fairmount Avenue, an ell of load bearing, redbrick masonry construction that was likely constructed between 1875 and 1895. The ell appears to be one room in depth, extending to the northern extremity of the original property line.

Beyond the second of the eight units, containing Nos. 85, 87, 89, 91, 93 and 95 Fairmount Avenue five units span to the west maintaining a like-fenestration. The only variation from the repeated configuration is within No. 87, which features an ell extending to the northern extremity of the original property line. This addition was likely completed by 1875. Not until the eighth and final unit is another doorway present—No. 95 Fairmont Avenue. The same doorway configuration is repeated within this façade. The curtain gable end is also repeated.



Looking west.



Looking north.



Looking north.



Looking northwest.





Looking north.



Looking northeast.



Looking northwest.



Looking northeast.



Looking north.



Looking northeast.



Looking east.



Looking south.

**7. Resource: 81-93 Coates Street (Fairmount Avenue)**

*Nomination of 81-95 Coates Street (now Fairmount Avenue) and  
The Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co.* | 11



81 and 83 Coates Street. Courtesy the City of Philadelphia.

The eight buildings that embody 81–95 Coates Street (now Fairmount Avenue) comprise a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building satisfies Criteria for Designation a, d, e, and h of Section 14–1004 of the Philadelphia Code. 81–95 Coates Street:

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past;
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;

(h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City.

(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

The eight buildings that embody 81–95 Coates Street comprise a significant historic resource that meets several of the Criteria for Designation in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Criteria A: 81–95 Coates Street is the oldest intact row of houses in Philadelphia between the Delaware River and Front Street and represents the development of Northern Liberties, as well as Coates Street (Fairmount Avenue). Period of Significance: 1828–1868. Criteria C and D: 81–95 Coates Street reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Georgian tradition of architecture in Philadelphia as adapted to the Federal mode, which is illustrated in both the original fabric dating to the early nineteenth century and the 1920s restoration by Thomas Sullivan’s Terminal Warehouse Company, paying homage to the Colonial and Georgian Revival styles. Period of Significance: 1825–1860. Criteria H: 81–95 Coates Street, once a normative building type along the Philadelphia waterfront, is a rare survivor of an intact row of Federal period houses, establishing and continuing a longtime familiar visual feature of Philadelphia’s built environment. Period of Significance: 1828–Current. Criteria J: 81 Fairmount Avenue exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historic heritage of the Beach Street Mission, to become known as the Friends Neighborhood Guild, being the first “Guild House” in the neighborhood, the subject building represents that organization’s establishment and its first two decades. Period of Significance: 1879–1899. Furthermore, 81–95 Coates Street represents its use as the headquarters building for the Terminal Warehouse Company in Philadelphia, which was an entity that became the largest warehouse company in Philadelphia and the second largest in America. Period of Significance: 1920–1967.

**Criterion A: 81–95 Coates Street has significant character, interest or value as**

**part of the development of Northern Liberties, as well as the Philadelphia waterfront. The row is the oldest intact row of houses in Philadelphia between the Delaware River and Front Street and represents the development of Northern Liberties, as well as Coates Street (Fairmount Avenue).**

**Period of Significance: 1825–1860**

### **The Early History and Development of Northern Liberties**

Northern Liberties has its roots in William Penn’s original plan for the principal city of new colony. As way to encourage investors in Pennsylvania, Penn offered the first hundred purchasers, later called the “First Purchasers,” lots in the original city of Philadelphia that stretched from present-day Vine Street to South Street between the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers. An added inducement to the city lot was the right of First Purchasers to land in the section immediately to the north and west of the city called the Liberties or Northern Liberties.<sup>1</sup> As William Penn and his descendants granted warrants to survey lots in the City to First Purchasers, warrants were also granted to survey land in the Northern Liberties until most of the land was accounted for by the 1750s.<sup>2</sup>

The history of the present-day neighborhood that retains the name Northern Liberties is closely related to history of the longer European presence along the Delaware River. The first European settlements in the Pennsylvania were along the main access route, Delaware River, primarily by Swedish colonists. By the time of William Penn received his Charter for Pennsylvania there were several Swedish families well established on tracts along the Delaware as far north as present-day Tacony in Philadelphia. Most of the current Northern Liberties neighborhood was part of 350 acre tract of land granted by Governor of New York Edmund Andros to Jurian Hartsfielder in March of 1676. The property fronted the Delaware River and was between the Cohoquinoque Creek (also known as Pegg’s Run, present-day Willow Street) and Cohocksink Creek (present-day Canal Street) and stretched back roughly to Broad Street to the west. Hartsfielder moved to the site by May of 1677 probably remained for another ten years when he decided to join the Germantown settlement.<sup>3</sup>

After Hartsfielder’s departure, the entire tract became the property of Daniel Pegg. Pegg spilt the property in half along a line that ran between present-day Green Street and Fairmount Avenue. He sold the north half to his brother-in-law Thomas

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<sup>1</sup> Roach, Hannah Benner, “The Planting of Philadelphia: A Seventeenth-Century Real Estate Development,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (hereafter *PMHB*) 92 (1968): 3–47.

<sup>2</sup> See text and map in John Reed, *An Explanation of the Map of the City and Liberties of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: John Reed, 1774).

<sup>3</sup> “The Record of the Court at Upland, in Pennsylvania, 1676 to 1681,” *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, 7 (1860): 57; Gillingham, Harrold E., “Some Early Brickmakers of Philadelphia,” *PMHB* 53 (1929): 8; *Brief of Title to a Large Lot of Ground, in the County of Philadelphia, Belonging to Thomas S. Cavender* (Philadelphia: Merrihew & Thompson, 1847), 3; *Plan of the Coates and Pegg Portions of the “Hartsfield Tract” Philadelphia* (1840), HSP.



Smith in 1690 and retained the south half for himself. Pegg and Smith were partners in a brickmaking operation as early as 1685 and used part of their land for clay pits as well as brickmaking. The descendants of both families retained ownership of portions of this land well into the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

Thomas Smith was a Quaker immigrant who was in Pennsylvania by 1683 when he married Priscilla Allen at the Philadelphia Meeting.<sup>5</sup> Smith's enjoyment of the property was cut short by his death in 1693. He left the property to his wife until their three children reached the age of 21 and directed that it should be divided among them with his son Thomas receiving a double share.<sup>6</sup> When Thomas Smith, the younger, died in 1699, the property went to his sisters Mary and Ann. Mary and her husband William Rakestraw, Jr., eventually sold their rights to the land in 1714 to her sister Ann and her husband William Coats. Coats was also a brickmaker and continued the family business.<sup>7</sup> The family's fortunes, however, were supplemented with sales of land from the former Smith estate of roughly 170 acres. Coats clearly saw the property as an important asset for his family. His sales were primarily pasture lots along the western end of the property and lots along Front Street.<sup>8</sup> He retained the much of more valuable land close to Delaware River.<sup>9</sup> By the time of his death in 1748, he still owned most of the land between Front and Fourth Street, a short distance above Green Street to Poplar Street.<sup>10</sup>

The major development of Northern Liberties began to take off after 1750 when Coats heirs applied to the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas to appoint a jury to view and divide up the former Smith estate. This resulted in the creation of several large squares or blocks of land by extending the number streets north from the city to intersect with the existing roads which ran parallel to the original Pegg property division line. The resulting squares were assigned to the various heirs who began to sell off portions of them during the next forty years. By the 1790s almost all of these squares were completely filled in with buildings.<sup>11</sup> A portion of the

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<sup>4</sup> Gillingham, "Some Early Brickmakers," 8–12; *Plan of the Coates and Pegg Portions*, HSP.

<sup>5</sup> *The Papers of William Penn*, ed. Richard S. and Mary Maples Dunn, vol. 2, 1680–1684 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1982), 336.

<sup>6</sup> *Brief of Title to a Large Lot of Ground*, 5–6.

<sup>7</sup> Gillingham, "Some Early Brickmakers," 18.

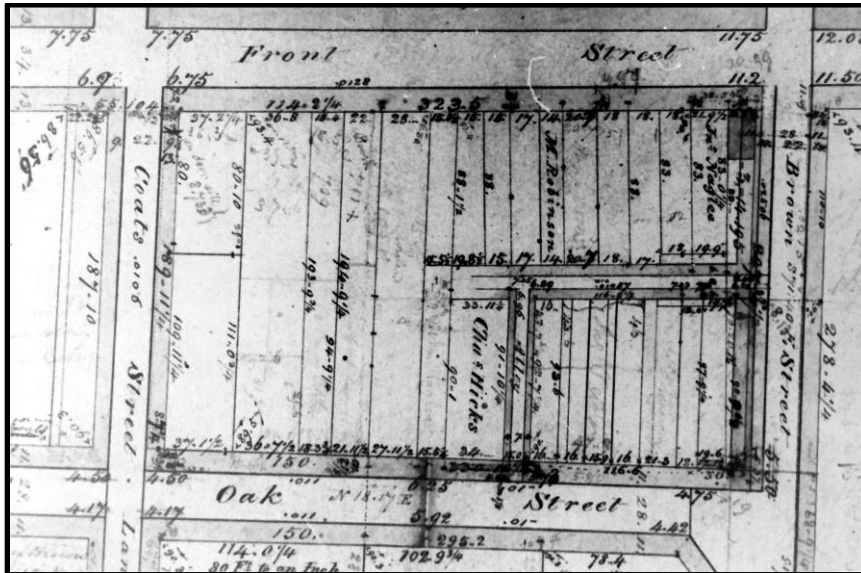
<sup>8</sup> For examples vide -- Deed: William Coats, Northern Liberties of the City, yeoman, and Rachel, his wife, to John Langdale, city tanner, 9 May 1746, Deed Book I., No. 12, p. 199; Deed: William Coats, Northern Liberties of city, merchant, and Rachel, his wife, to Lewis Evans, 1 May 1746, recited in Deed Book G., No. 12, p. 739; Deed: William Coates, of Northern Liberties, yeoman, and Rachel, his wife, to John Ord, 7 May 1746, recited in Deed Book H., No. 9, p. 21; Deed : William Coats, of Northern Liberties of city, brickmaker, and Mary, his wife, to James Estaugh, city, bolter, 14 May 1721, Deed Book F., No. 2, p. 211; Deeds of Lease and Release: William Coates, Northern Liberties of City, brickmaker, to Benjamin Franklin, city, printer, 29 & 31 July 1741, Deed Book H., No. 7, p. 423; William Coats, of Northern Liberties of City, to Samuel Pennock, of the city, carpenter, and Elizabeth, his wife, 20 May 1746, Deed Book D., No. 23, p. 157, CAP.

<sup>9</sup> *Plan of the Coates and Pegg Portions*, HSP. Lots sold prior to the Coats estate partition are indicated by the ground rent amounts and lot owners' names on the map.

<sup>10</sup> *Plan of the Coates and Pegg Portions*, HSP.

<sup>11</sup> John Hills, *This Plan of the City of Philadelphia and It's [sic] Environs, (Shewing the Improved Parts) is Dedicated to the Mayor, Alderman, and Citizens Thereof* (Philadelphia: 1796).

property at North Second Street and Fairmount Avenue became a center for the neighborhood when a market house and stalls were created in 1795.<sup>12</sup>



Early parcel map of the Northern Liberties, including the subject block in Coates Street. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

### The Development of Coates Street/Fairmount Avenue

This property traces its origin as distinct lot back to the 1746 when William Coats was selling off much of his river front land. A carpenter from the city named Isaac Reynier bought a vacant “water lot” at the northwest corner of Fairmount Avenue and North Front Street on ground rent in March 1746.<sup>13</sup> The lot was 30 feet wide and stretched 630 feet to the low tide mark of the Delaware River and sat on the north side of “a vacant piece of ground intended ... for a free wharf and landing place on [the Delaware River]” which would become Coates Street and later Fairmount Avenue. Just a few years later in 1750, Reynier signed over the title to the lot to Levi Budd (1726–1790).<sup>14</sup> When the William Coats estate was partitioned later that year, Budd and his wife Elizabeth Coates (1735–1798), a daughter of William, received the ground rent issuing from this lot, which effectively ended it.<sup>15</sup> Budd added another five feet on the north side of the lot in 1761.<sup>16</sup> Levi Budd is variously listed in the deed and tax records as merchant, trader and carpenter.<sup>17</sup> By the 1780s he built a house on the Front Street lot and made it his home. He retained the

<sup>12</sup> Act for Building A Town House and Market Place between Coates Street and Poplar Lane on Second Street Continued ..., passed March 27, 1795, *The Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from 1682 to 1801*, 15:252

<sup>13</sup> Deed: William Coats, of Northern Liberties of the City, brickmaker, and Rachael, his wife, to Isaac Reynier, of the city, carpenter, 31 March 1746, Deed Book D., No. 16, p. 454.

<sup>14</sup> Deed Poll: Isaac Reynier to Levi Budd, of Northern Liberties of City, merchant, 24 December 1750, Deed Book D., No. 16, p. 454.

<sup>15</sup> *Plan of the Coates and Pegg Portions*, HSP. All birth, marriage, and death dates of the Budd and Keen family come from the family bible records in *Publications of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania*, 5 (1914): 265–266.

<sup>16</sup> Deed: Samuel Pennock to Levi Budd, 15 December 1761, recited in Deed Book A.M., No. 61, p. 729.

<sup>17</sup> Budd was a member of the Carpenter’s Company (*The Carpenters’ Company of the City and County of Philadelphia* [Philadelphia: H.C. Coates, 1887], 88).

property until his death in 1790 and he willed it to his son oldest son George (1764–1817).<sup>18</sup>

George Budd experienced financial difficulties in the 1790s. The Budd family house on Front Street along with other properties he inherited were seized and sold at sheriff sale in July 1799. The notice of the sale describes the property as having a “two story brick messuage and a frame shop.”<sup>19</sup> George’s brother law-in-law, the lumber merchant John Britton, Jr., stepped forward and bought the properties. Britton’s intervention was clearly a move to protect his sister’s family.<sup>20</sup> In 1818 Britton formalized the effort by turning the Front Street lot and house over to George Budd in trust for his two teenage children, George Knight Budd (b. 1802) and Susannah Budd (b. 1804).<sup>21</sup>

Though the property had valuable frontage on the Delaware River, its development was hampered by the topography of the area near the mouth of Cohocksink Creek. As John Fanning Watson describes in 1830:

It is but about 30 years since the river came up daily close to the houses on Front and Coates' street, and at Coates' street the dock there, made by Budd's wharfed yard, came up to the line of Front Street. All the area of the bay (then without the present street east of Front street, and having none of the wharves now there) was an immense plane of spatterdocks, nearly out to the end of Warder's wharf, and on a line to Point Pleasant. The lower end of Coates' street was then lower than now; and in freshets the river laid across Front street. All the ten or twelve houses are north of Coates' street, on the east side, were built on made-ground, and their little yards were supported with wharf-logs, and bush-willows as trees.<sup>22</sup>

When Beach Street was put through by the 1820s and the river pushed back by wharfs, the Budds’ property was able to realize its full economic potential. In March 1828, George K. and Susannah decided to divide up the section of the property between Beach and Front Street fronting on Coates Street. George K. received the Budd Family house and corner lot at Front Street and Susannah and her husband William Williams Keen (b. 1797) took the lot at the corner of Beach and

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<sup>18</sup> Will of Levi Budd, of the Northern Liberties of the City, carpenter, dated 4 April 1789, Will Book W, p. 155, Philadelphia Register of Wills. The bequest describes the property as “my Lot of Ground whereon I now dwell, Situate on the East side of Delaware Front Street.” The location of the property described in the bequest is confirmed by the recital in the 1799 sheriff deed.

<sup>19</sup> “Sheriff’s Sales,” *Claypoole’s American Daily Advertiser*, July 3, 1799.

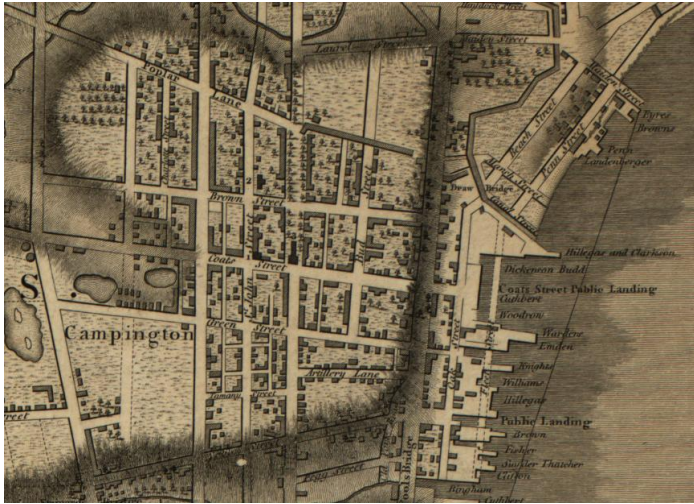
<sup>20</sup> Deed Poll: Jonathan Penrose, sheriff, to John Britton, Jr., of the Philadelphia County, lumber merchant, 3 December 1799, Sheriff Deed Book B., p. 114, Eastern District, Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Records, Record Group 33, Pennsylvania State Archives.

<sup>21</sup> Deed: John Britton, Jr., of Philadelphia County, gentleman, to George Budd, of Tincum Township, Delaware County, 1 March 1816, Deed Book M.R., No. 18, p. 546, CAP.

<sup>22</sup> John F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia: Being A Collection of Memoirs, Anecdotes, and Incidents of the City and Its Inhabitants, From the Days of the Pilgrim Founders* (Philadelphia: E.L. Carey & A. Hart, 1830), 417.

Fairmount.<sup>23</sup> Susannah and William W. immediately improved their lot by building seven row houses, financed in part with money borrowed from John Graff and Francis M. Drexel.<sup>24</sup>

**Criteria A:** 81–95 Coates Street is the oldest intact row of houses in Philadelphia between the Delaware River and Front Street and represents the development of Northern Liberties, as well as Coates Street (Fairmount Avenue), and a part of the Philadelphia waterfront that has passed from the city’s built environment. Period of Significance: 1825–1860.



Coates and Front Streets in Hills Map of Philadelphia, 1796. Courtesy of Library of Congress.



Detail show house on Front St. near Coates in November 1777. Courtesy of New York Public Library

<sup>23</sup> Deed: George Knight Budd, of the city, merchant, and William W. Keen, of the city, currier, and Susan B., his wife, to Charles Keen, of Kensington, esquire, for the house and entire lot between Front and Beach Street, 21 March 1828, Deed Book G.W.R., No. 25, p. 635; Deed: Charles Keen, of Kensington, esquire, to William W. Keen, of the city, currier, and Susan B., his wife, for a lot on the west side of Oak Street and the north side of Coates Street, 22 March 1828, Deed Book G.W.R., No. 25, p. 632; Deed: Charles Keen, of Kensington, esquire, to George Knight Budd, of the city, merchant, for a messuage and lot on the east side of Delaware Front Street and on the north side of Coats Street, 22 March 1828, Deed Book G.W.R., No. 25, p. 633, CAP.

<sup>24</sup> Mortgage: William W. Keen, of the city, currier and Susan B., his wife, to Francis M. Drexel, of the city, portrait painter, for the loan of \$3,000 secured by “four contiguous messuages” on the north side of Coates Street between Delaware Front and Oak Street (late Beach Street), 11 December 1828, Mortgage Book G.W.R., No. 12, p. 508; Mortgage: William W. Keen, of the city, currier and Susan B., his wife, to John Graff, of the city, gentleman, for the loan of \$2,000 secured by “three contiguous messuages” on the north side of Coates Street at the distance of 80ft eastward from the east side of Front, 11 December 1828, Mortgage Book G.W.R., No. 12, p. 508, CAP.

**Criteria(s) C, D, and H**

**Criteria(s) C and D:** 81–95 Coates Street reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Georgian tradition of architecture in Philadelphia as adapted to the Federal mode, which is illustrated in both the original fabric dating to the early nineteenth century and the 1920s restoration by Thomas Sullivan’s Terminal Warehouse Company, paying homage to the Colonial and Georgian Revival styles.

**Criteria H:** 81–95 Coates Street, once a normative building type along the Philadelphia waterfront, is a rare survivor of an intact row of Federal period houses, establishing and continuing a longtime familiar visual feature of Philadelphia’s built environment.

**Period of Significance: 1825–1860**

**Statement of Significance:**

81–93 Coates Street (Fairmount Avenue) reflects the environment once largely characterized by Georgian style architecture, including buildings adapted to the Federal mode. 81–93 Coates Street embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Federal style of architecture as originally constructed before 1828 and as restored in the 1920s. Once common along the waterfront of the Delaware River, similar examples of long rows of both Georgian and Federal style buildings have almost all been lost to modern development and/or poor planning and a lack of understanding. 81–93 Coates Street stands a last vestige of this once common element of the architectural landscape that defined the Delaware waterfront, rendering this group of houses particularly distinctive and important.



Real estate advertisement published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1859.

By 1828, 81–93 Coates Street was present on the current site in the form of eight red brick Federal style houses. At this time George Knight Budd and Susan Budd Keen divided their inheritance on Coates Street and Susan and her husband William W. received the lot at Coates and Beach Streets and built the row of houses on it.<sup>25</sup> The Keens maintained ownership over the properties through 1866.<sup>26</sup> From 1828 through 1866, the Keens used these properties as housing for working class and

<sup>25</sup> Deed: Charles Keen, of Kensington, esquire, to William W. Keen, of the City of Philadelphia, carrier, and Susan B., his wife, 22 March 1828, Deed Book G.W.R, No. 25, p. 632, CAP. See also notes 21 and 23, above.

<sup>26</sup> See Property Owners and Consolidation Chart of Key Properties, 1828 to 2014, Appendix A

middling income people. For example, larger houses were described in real estate advertisements as “elegant,” while these houses were specifically referred to as “pleasant.”<sup>27</sup> A wide range of individuals lived in the house from all manner of backgrounds. The attached table (Appendix B) presents information about the diverse range of occupants over time.



Queen Street near Front. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

In 1866 the Keens undertook efforts to sell the properties. 81 to 93 Coates Street were sold to various parties: 81–83 Coates Street to Constantine McLaughlin<sup>28</sup>, a liquor dealer; 85 Coates Street to Casper Braede,<sup>29</sup> a cordwainer; 87 Coates Street to John McCoy,<sup>30</sup> a watch and clock dealer, who also purchased 91 and 93 Coates Street; and 89 Coates Street to Jacob Frederick Siegle,<sup>31</sup> a glazier. At some point after this, 85 Coates street was altered to become a full three-story building with a flat roof.<sup>32</sup> In 1870, Thomas Powers purchased 81–83 Coates Street.<sup>33</sup> Two years later he acquired 89, 91, and 93 Coates Street.<sup>34</sup> Powers also used his son-in-law J.

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<sup>27</sup> “For Rent.” *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 23 July 1859.

<sup>28</sup> Deed: William W. Keen, of the 24<sup>th</sup> Ward, currier, and Susan B., his wife, to Constantine McLaughlin, of the 11<sup>th</sup> Ward, liquor dealer, 2 October 1866, Deed Book J.T.O, No. 1, p. 40, CAP

<sup>29</sup> Deed: William W. Keen, currier, and Susan B., his wife, to Casper Braede, cordwainer, 30 May 1866, Deed Book L.R.B., No. 185, p. 153, CAP

<sup>30</sup> Deed: William W. Keen, currier, and Susan B., his wife, to John McCoy, watch and clock dealer, 18 May 1866, Deed Book L.R.B., No. 181, p. 219, CAP

<sup>31</sup> Deed: William W. Keen, currier, and Susan B., his wife, to Jacob Frederick Siegle, glazier, 18 May 1866, Deed Book L.R.B., No. 179, p. 301, CAP

<sup>32</sup> Photograph of Beach Street Mission.

<sup>33</sup> Deed: Edward O'Donnell, builder, to Thomas H. Powers, manufacturing chemist, 29 June 1870, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 58, p. 407, CAP

<sup>34</sup> Deed: Jacob Frederick Siegle, glazier, and Wilhelmina, his wife, to Thomas H. Powers, 19 January 1872, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 209, p. 480; Deed: Solomon Pollack and Sophia, his wife, to Thomas H. Powers, 19 January 1872, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 209, p.

Campbell Harris to acquire 87 Coates Street in 1872.<sup>35</sup> All of which coincide with the construction of their plaster works immediately adjacent. The houses were still divided up during this time and used as rental properties, as well as space for the operations of J. Campbell Harris & Co. Given their Quaker background, Powers and Harris likely both allowed the Beach Street Mission No. 1 and/or the Friends Neighborhood Guild to rent 81 Coates Street for a nominal rate during this time. In 1880, when the Society of Friends was seeking to enlarge the space beyond the first floor, Harris agreed to pay for any needed renovations.<sup>36</sup> The Hicksite Quakers remained until 1899, when Harris sold his business to another company. 81–93 Coates Street remained under the control of the Powers Estate for another two decades.

The next major change to the site occurred in the 1920s. In June 1920, Thomas D. Sullivan, owner of the Terminal Warehouse Transfer Company, purchased 81–83 Coates Street (then Fairmount Avenue), as well as 87, 89, 91, and 93 Coates Street from the Powers Estate.<sup>37</sup> A few months later, Sullivan was able to purchase 85 Coates Street.<sup>38</sup> In 1921, Sullivan transferred the title to the buildings to his business, the Terminal Warehouse Transfer Company.<sup>39</sup> The following year he acquired the last house in the row, 95 Coates Street, and shortly after located the office at 81 Fairmount Avenue.<sup>40</sup> In preparation for using 81–95 Coates Street as the company headquarters, Sullivan restored the row to a Federal period appearance. This included some components of the interior, which are still extant.<sup>41</sup> Aside from rearranging some of the apertures, the renovation involved removing the addition from 85 Fairmount Avenue, restoring harmony to the roofline of the entire row. The choice to restore these buildings to a Federal appearance reflects a national trend toward preserving Federal-period architecture and the construction of new buildings, as subset of the Colonial Revival style. For example, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his mother Sarah Delano Roosevelt remodeled their Italianate house, Hyde Park to a Federal-period appearance. To say nothing of the hundreds of examples in Philadelphia, another example is Charles Dana Gibson’s townhouse in New York City, which is extant in its Federal-period appearance.

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453; Deed: Jonas Oppenheimer, peddler, and Theresa, his wife, to Thomas H. Powers, 19 January 1872, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 209, p. 425, CAP.

<sup>35</sup> Deed: Catharine Christoph, widow, to John Campbell Harris, manufacturer, 17 February 1872, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 212, p. 533; Deed: John Campbell Harris, manufacturer, and Mary P., his wife, to Thomas H. Powers, 6 March 1872, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 233, p. 472, CAP

<sup>36</sup> Minutes of the First-day School, 1880, Friends Neighborhood Guild Records, 1880–1962, Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.

<sup>37</sup> Deed: Girard Trust Company, trustee under the will of Thomas H. Powers, and Mary Powers Harris, to Thomas D. Sullivan, 7 June 1920, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 883, p. 441, CAP.

<sup>38</sup> Deed: William Trost, Jr., to Thomas D. Sullivan, 17 August 1920, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 984, p. 12, CAP.

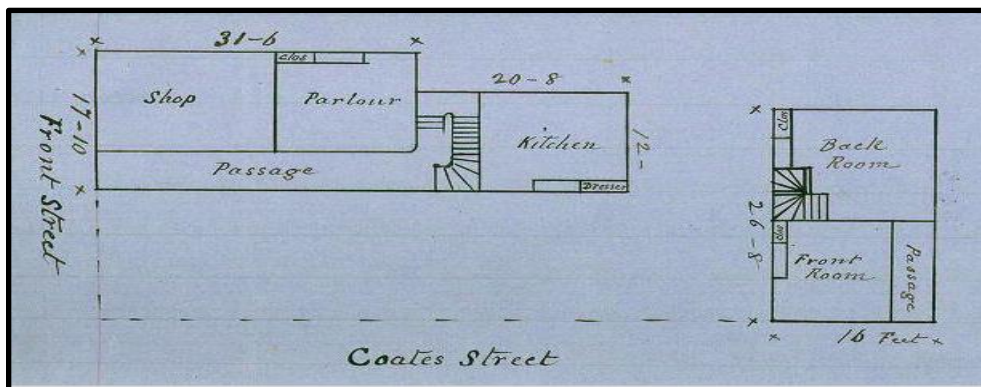
<sup>39</sup> Deed: Thomas D. Sullivan to the Terminal Warehouse and Transfer Company, 21 September 1921, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 1456, p. 538 and 1 September 1921, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 1477, p. 124, CAP.

<sup>40</sup> Deed: Daniel J. Connelly, guardian of the estate of Thomas J. Stanton, alleged lunatic, and Mary Stanton, to Thomas D. Sullivan, 6 September 1922, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 1370, p. 148, CAP.

<sup>41</sup> Note attached photographic evidence taken by Oscar Beisert in May 2015.

Regarding 81-93 Coates Street, Sullivan, while no doubt Irish, choose the Federal style to ingratiate himself in Old Philadelphia, as these buildings existed long before the arrival of his ancestors. The Terminal Warehouse Transfer Company went on to become the second largest of its kind in America and its headquarters remained at 81 Fairmount Avenue.<sup>42</sup> The property was eventually sold to the Mount Corporation in 1965.<sup>43</sup>

81-93 Coates Street is an incredible survivor from the Federal period in Philadelphia and, more specifically, in Northern Liberties, an area that has one of the least intact historic built environments in the city. A few blocks south, Stephen Girard lived in a large Georgian mansion and operated his counting house, all evidence of which is gone. Houses in the Georgian style could be found all along the water front within the first block or two of the city, almost all of which was demolished before or at the time of the development of I-95.



Insurance plan showing 95 Coates Street (on right). Courtesy the Philadelphia Contributionship.

<sup>43</sup> Deed: Terminal Warehouse Company to Mount Corporation, 4 January 1965, Deed Book C.A.D., No. 358, p. 336, CAP.





Low slung Georgian/Federal style building near the Philadelphia Waterfront in Northern Liberties (left). Industrial building, warehouse near Front and Buttonwood. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Given the socio-economic class of people who worked near the docks and on the waters of the Delaware River, many rows of dwellings were articulated boldly in the Georgian and Federal styles, but in a two-and-one-half-story form, few of which survive at the waterfront to-date. At Swanson Street, a row of three Georgian houses once came close to the water.<sup>44</sup> A less bold version of side-gable, -gambrel roofed houses, in a row of four to six once stood in Queen Street between Water and Front Streets, representing one of the earliest row houses in the city.<sup>45</sup> Also in Water Street, at Spruce, was a strong row of Georgian houses with massive chimneystacks that were articulated in the two-and-one-half-story format.<sup>46</sup> These houses were distinctive examples of Georgian architecture constructed for the “middling sort” in the eighteenth century. One of the oldest and most famous warehouses, stood at Delaware Avenue and Race Street and, while a warehouse, had from the side the same kind of row house effect with shed dormers and a row of entrance climbing the incline of Race Street.<sup>47</sup> Another important example stood at Callowhill and New Market Streets—a two-and-one-half story row of Federal style buildings that made a bold statement upon disembarking at the Delaware Riverfront.<sup>48</sup> While the house type itself is certainly in not unusual and/or unknown in all parts of Philadelphia today, it is a microcosm within the whole of the Philadelphia waterfront.

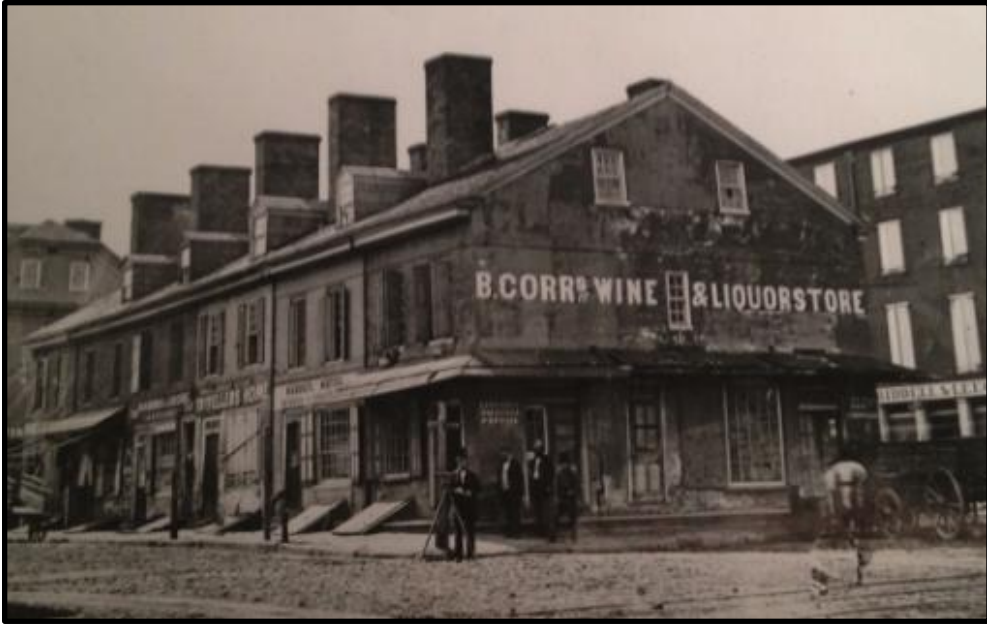
<sup>44</sup> Boies Penrose Pictorial Philadelphia Collection, Collection, V60, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereafter HSP).

<sup>45</sup> Penrose Pictorial Philadelphia Collection, HSP.

<sup>46</sup> Penrose Pictorial Philadelphia Collection, HSP.

<sup>47</sup> Penrose Pictorial Philadelphia Collection, HSP.

<sup>48</sup> Penrose Pictorial Philadelphia Collection, HSP.



Federal period houses near the waterfront, near Dock Street. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Georgian style buildings near the waterfront in Northern Liberties. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

**Criteria(s) C and D:** 81–95 Coates Street reflects the environment in an era characterized by the Georgian tradition of architecture in Philadelphia as adapted to the Federal mode, which is illustrated in both the original fabric dating to the early nineteenth century and the 1920s restoration by Thomas Sullivan’s Terminal Warehouse Company, paying homage to the Colonial and Georgian Revival styles.

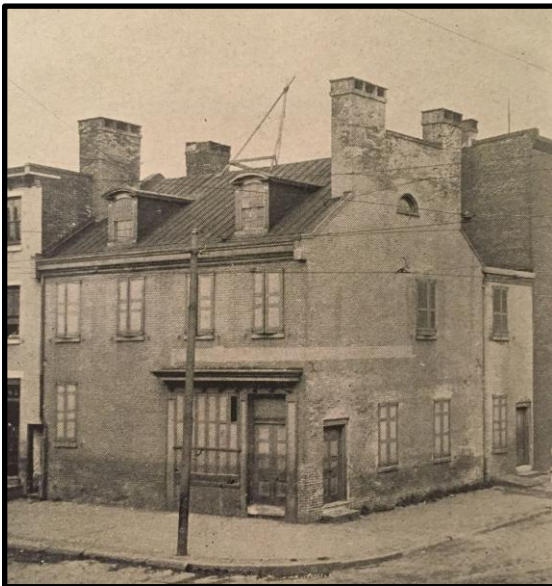
**Criteria H:** 81–95 Coates Street, once a normative building type along the Philadelphia waterfront, is a rare survivor of an intact row of Federal period houses, establishing and continuing a longtime familiar visual feature of Philadelphia’s built environment.

**Criteria I:** 81 Fairmount Avenue exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historic heritage of the Beach Street Mission, to become known as the Friends Neighborhood Guild, being the first “Guild House” in the neighborhood, the subject building represents that organization’s establishment and its first two decades. Furthermore, 81–95 Coates Street represents its use as the headquarters building for the Terminal Warehouse Company in Philadelphia, which was an entity that became the largest warehouse company in Philadelphia and the second largest in America.

**Statement of Significance:**

81 Fairmount Avenue has significant character, interest and value as part of the development of the Northern Liberties waterfront and, in particular, is related to the establishment and operation of an important and well-known Philadelphia social services organization, the Friends’ Neighbor Guild—the first of the Quaker settlement houses in Philadelphia and its first location. 81 Fairmount Avenue was owned by Thomas H. Powers, a birthright Quaker, which no doubt provided the newly formed organization with a very affordable space to serve children of the community. 81 Fairmount Avenue is the first site of a formal, organized, and neighbor-based social welfare program established by the Religious Society of Friends, Hicksite Quakers, in Philadelphia, which led to city-wide efforts in social welfare administered by private citizens and/or organization that had interest in the improvement of the greater population as a whole. 81 Fairmount Avenue also represents and exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historical heritage of the settlement house movement and the private commitment to social welfare in the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Philadelphia.

**Period of Significance: 1879–1900**



Beach Street Mission, 81 and 83 Fairmount Avenue.

Courtesy the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.

### **Beach Street Mission (Friends' Neighborhood Guild)**

In reaction to the enlargement of Philadelphia's poor immigrant population in the Northern Liberties by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the Friends' Neighborhood Guild was established as Friends' Mission No. 1 in December 1879 by "an Association of charitably inclined members" of the Religious Society of Friends. Due to its original location, the Hicksite Quaker founders first called it the "Beach Street Mission." The Mission opened its labors at 81 Fairmount Avenue (late Coates Street), known more correctly as 81–83 Fairmount Avenue, at the northwest corner of Fairmount Avenue and Beach Street. The organization prepared the site for occupation as early as November 1879.

In 1879 a First-day School [of the Mission] was started at Beach Street and Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, in an old, abandoned building. It was known as "Friends Mission No. 1" and was maintained entirely by volunteer workers.<sup>49</sup>

The "Friends' Mission No. 1" opened its doors on January 11, 1880 to fifty-three "scholars," teaching "Bible and deportment" to boys and girls "with no refining influence."<sup>50</sup> The "mission hall" occupied the first floor of the building, which was owned by the Estate of Thomas H. Powers.

Everything in the room is characterized by the same plainness, which imparts so impressive an appearance of simplicity to the interior of a Friends' meeting.<sup>51</sup>

As an early publication states, the aims of the organization were accomplished:

1. By the study of the Bible in the First-day School
2. By numerous visits to their homes by the Superintendent
3. By affording wholesome recreation through games, entertainment, picnic, etc.
4. By developing their bodies through gymnastic exercises.
5. By giving lessons in sewing, cooking and instruction to mothers in the care of their children.<sup>52</sup>

At that time immigrant-born children started school at about eight years old and completed their studies by twelve to earn a living. Because of this, the First-day School or Mission School offered a night courses. Older boys enjoyed "Object Teaching, Arithmetic, Writing and Drawing," while girls generally were enrolled in

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<sup>49</sup> *Friends Intelligencer and Journal*, 92 (1935): 90.

<sup>50</sup> Jean Barth Toll and Midred S. Gillam, ed., *Invisible Philadelphia: Community Through Voluntary Organizations* (Philadelphia: Atwater Kent Museum, 1995).

<sup>51</sup> "The Friends Mission," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 15 December 1884, 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Aims of the Friends' Neighborhood Guild* (Philadelphia: Religious Society of Friends, ca. 1880).

“sewing school” with some general conversation coursework. Temperance was also a major theme within the program.

Here every First-day there is morning worship, with short addresses, and after noon Sunday school, with a roll of 125. Tuesday evening a night school is held, under the designation of a youth’s meeting. Thursday night is devoted to a Gospel temperance meeting, and the afternoon of Saturday to a sewing school attended by eighty girls [by 1884], the garments made being given away to the most needy of the families represented. The mission is managed by committees from the Green and Race Street meetings.<sup>53</sup>

Just four years after the founding of the organization, the following appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*:

A new and well-timed project is contemplated by two of the largest and most prosperous meetings of the Society of Friends. In connection with the religious work at the foot of Fairmount Avenue they propose to open, as soon as they can get possession of the rooms over their mission hall on Fairmount Avenue, a coffee room on the general plan of penny coffee houses successfully established in London. Some modifications there may be to suit the circumstances of the case, particularly in the item of charges.<sup>54</sup>

Temperance being an important topic of the day, the Quakers also worked to influence the youth of Northern Liberties on this subject. They lobbied the Philadelphia Court of Quarter Sessions on various issues related to alcohol sales and consumption. In March 1890, D. Henry Wright, Chairman of the Committee of Friends’ Mission, represented the “Beach Street Mission,” before the court in objecting to the application for a saloon at 85 Fairmount Avenue because the neighbors were too fearful to make a public statement against the saloon.<sup>55</sup> Education on the subject of temperance was also important and methods were manifold. For example, on the evening of May 19, 1893, “a number of young Friends gave short talks,” at a regular temperance meeting.<sup>56</sup>

The progress of the Friends’ Neighborhood Guild was like many early charities and settlement houses in Philadelphia, forever changing with the tide that accompanied such movements. For example, in July 1887, eighty children of the “Beach Street Mission” participated in the “Country Week Association,” an organization that funded rural and/or non-urban excursions for poor children of the city. On July 2,

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<sup>53</sup> “The Friends Mission,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*. 15 December 1884.

<sup>54</sup> “The Friends Mission,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 15 December 1884.

<sup>55</sup> “Protesting Neighbors People Who Object to the Location of Saloons in Their Vicinity,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 20 March 1890.

<sup>56</sup> “The Yearly Meeting. Friends Discuss the Condition of Their Societies,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 19 May 1893.

the Beech Street children were taken to Cape May, taking their meals at the Windsor Hotel.<sup>57</sup> Trips to the seashore continued over the years.

The mission building was used daily; however, due to the industrial nature of the area, a new building site was desired after twenty years of occupation.

Friends Mission No. 1, at Beach Street and Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, after being operated with more or less success for nearly twenty years under the care of Philadelphia First-day School Union, was placed partly under the care of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting's Philanthropic Committee. Earnest effort was made to find those who felt called to help outfit others less fortunate than themselves in their home surroundings, with the result that the Mission has been better supplied with teachers than it had been for sometime past. During the holding of First-day School, sewing school and boys' evenings (Third- and Fifth-days) the room is filled, with others waiting an opportunity to be admitted. Were it possible to secure a building where we could have the larger children separated from the smaller, and in which the sanitary conditions were not a constant menace to health, we believed we could extend our sphere of usefulness in this locality. Insufficient light is a great detriment to the children in the sewing school. The vitiated air, due to our inability to properly ventilate the rooms, to the adjoining saloon and stable, and to the damp cellar, renders the room unpleasant, as well as unhealthy.<sup>58</sup>

In July 1899, E. C. Henszey, Treasurer of the "Beach Street Mission," acknowledged a number of entities that donated funds for the excursion. The Friends Book Association collected the donations at their office, Fifteenth and Race Streets.<sup>59</sup>

Dear Teacher: We are all down on the beach having a nice time in the ocean, barefooted. I thank you, and so do my sisters, for helping to send us.

Nellie O'Brien, 914 Beach Street

Dear Teacher: I thank you very much, for I was very sick last week, and the doctor said that he didn't expect me to live, and he said if I could get away for a week it would do me good, so I guess it will. We are having fun, and I hope some of the other girls can come and see the ocean, too.

Minnie Burns, 702 Beach Street.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> "Off to the Country the First Regular Excursion of the Country Week," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1 July 1887.

<sup>58</sup> "Friends' Mission No. 1," *Friends Intelligencer and Journal*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Richmond Conferences, 1898, pg. 103.

<sup>59</sup> "Helping Beach Street Children," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 July 1899.

In early 1899, the “Beach Street Mission” was forced to close its doors due to its being ejected from their quarters.<sup>61</sup> However, this was timely, as leadership had been calling for new quarters for some time. This led to an interruption of most of its service for nearly a year from the winter of 1899 until the new building opened in November. While an immediate search for a new place began at the time of its closure, price and location did not unite immediately.

A good sized house, situated at 151 Fairmount Avenue, has been purchased for \$4,300, \$4,000 of which was furnished by an interested friend on a mortgage at 4 per cent. Some interior alterations were necessary, as well as painting and papering throughout, and general repairs. A statement of expenses, together with a list of contributions, is given below. The house will be open for inspection by contributors and others on Fourth-day, Eleventh month 8, from 4 to 9 p. m., and all interested are cordially invited to avail themselves of this opportunity.

The name “Friends’ Neighborhood Guild” has been adopted to replace the old familiar one of Beach Street Mission, since we are now no longer located on Beach Street, and to many it has seemed desirable to substitute for the word Mission on more clearly indicating the idea of mutual helpfulness and neighborly kindness.

The Guild stayed at 151 Fairmount Avenue location into the 1920s and then moved to Fourth and Green. In the twentieth century its mission shifted towards vocation training, scholarship, social services and subsidized housing, mostly notable of which is the Venturi designed Guild House on Spring Garden Street. The Guild continues to serve the Philadelphia community to today.

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<sup>60</sup> “Communication: Beach Street Mission,” *Friends Intelligencer and Journal*, 5 August 1899.

<sup>61</sup> “Yearly Meeting Committee Reports, Women and Children,” *Friends Intelligencer and Journal*, 27 May 1899,



**Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co.  
702-06 North Beach Street  
(formerly known as 710 North Beach Street)**



On the west side of Beach Street, in the 700 block, is the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co. Built in 1873 on a lot owned by Thomas H. Powers, the eminent chemical manufacturer and J. Campbell Harris' father-in-law, the building is constructed in three distinct parts:

1. the Main (front) Block, the three-story Wagon House and residential quarters facing east on Beach Street;
2. the Center Block, a one-story private stable; and
3. the Rear Block, a two-story wagon house.

The three distinct blocks of the building reflect the original design and construction from the exterior with only minor alterations. Naturally, the condition and design of the interior is unknown and not subject to this proposed designation. Built to be visible from the primary, west elevation, the building was constructed to be within a dense urban block. The building is of load bearing masonry construction and appears to be in sound structural condition.

The Main Block features the primary, east elevation, which rises three full floors on Beach Street. The design of the fenestration is symmetrical and only one of the apertures has been altered to accommodate a pedestrian door. All of the apertures feature segmental arches—the windows having a relatively low incline. The first floor of the façade features a central vehicle bay with a segmental arch lintel. The door within the vehicle bay is a replacement version of undistinguished, homogenized design. Obscured by a projecting canvas or plastic awning (removable) of undistinguished, homogenized design, the arch and lintel of the vehicle entrance is of a greater incline, distinguishing it from the other apertures. Flanking the central bay are four apertures—all of which were originally windows

of the equal size and placement. The southern most aperture has been altered to accommodate a pedestrian door as mentioned above. The three original apertures feature replacement windows and feature stone sills. All four of the original window apertures feature brick lintels in a segmental arch form. The second floor of the façade is aligned with the apertures of the ground floor and are symmetrically placed and of equal size. Six apertures span the second floor, all of which feature replacement windows, stone sills, and brick lintels in a segmental arch form. The windows of the ground and second floors appear to be the same height. Although the ground floor clearly features a much higher ceiling height. Aligned exactly with the second floor, the third floor has a fenestration of six apertures, which features replacement windows, stone sills, and brick lintels in a segmental arch form. The windows in the third floor fenestration are about eighty percent the height of the previous floors. Spanning the entire façade, a corbeled cornice projects from the façade in a stepped projection of five bricks. A narrow fascia runs along the top tier of the cornice.

The Center Block is extant in its original one story form of load bearing masonry construction and does not appear to have been changed in its exterior form.

The Rear Block is extant in its original two-story form of load-bearing masonry construction and does not appear to have been changed in its exterior form. Two large one-story brick garages append from the rear wall and open onto North Front Street.



Looking West.



Looking Northwest



Looking Southwest



Looking West



Looking North



Looking East.



Looking South.

**Resource: Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co.**

**Criterion for Designation: C and D**

(c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style;

(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen;

**Statement of Significance:**

The Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co. reflects the environment once largely characterized by the red brick industrial, warehouse buildings of a quiet, but solid architectural statement with Georgian antecedents. The Wagon House embodies distinguishing characteristics of a livery and/or stable facility as originally constructed between 1873–74 for use of a large manufactory—in this case the chemical manufacturing industry. Once a common architectural form along the waterfront of the Delaware River, similar examples of stables have been taken down due to modern development and/or poor planning and a lack of understanding. The Wagon House stands a last vestige of a type, form, and manner of construction of a once common building to be seen within a facility used for industrial purposes. Furthermore, it is one of a small number of nineteenth century buildings that exists in close proximity to the waterfront and in the Northern Liberties.

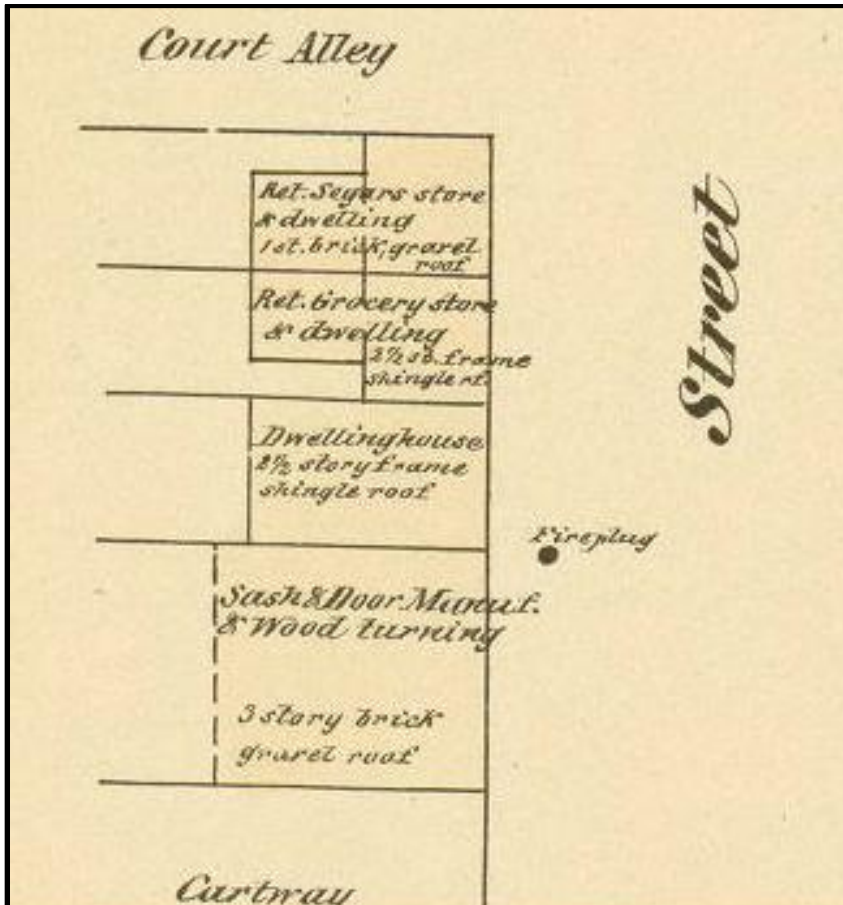
**Period of Significance: 1873–1899**



Aerial view of the environs of North Delaware, Beach Street, & etc. 1920s.

### Criterion for Designation: A & J

- A. Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; and
- J. Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.



Hexamer Survey of the parcel containing the Wagon House before its construction. Courtesy Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

### Statement of Significance:

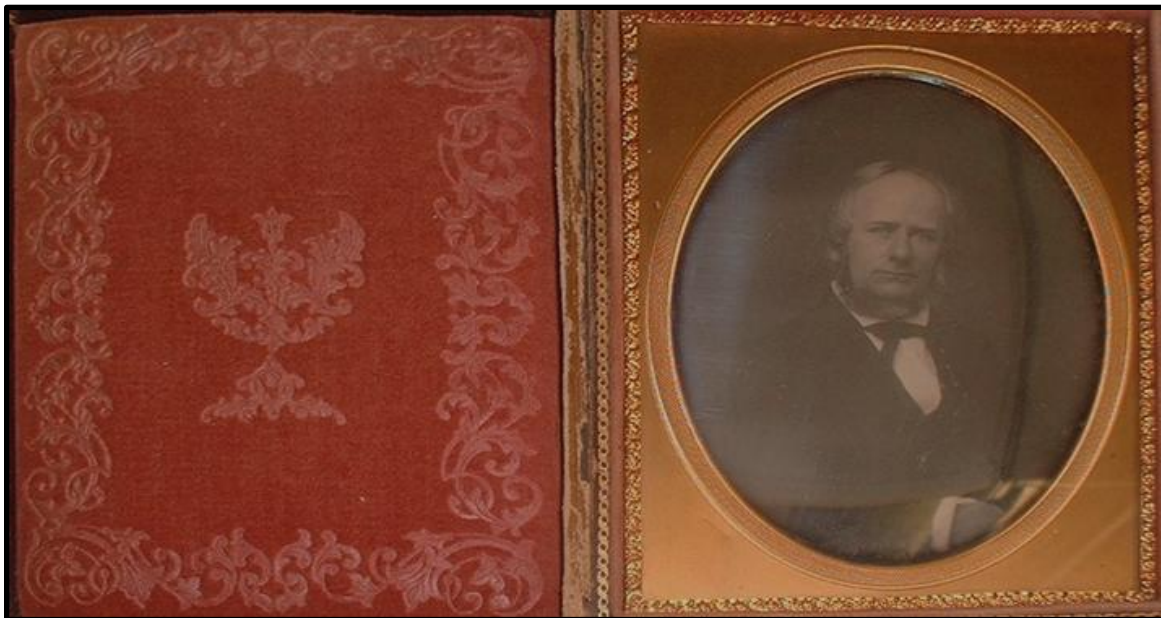
**81-83 Coates Street, 87-93 Coates, the Wagon House,** and the **Saw and Planning Mill** have significant character, interest and value as part of the evolution of the Northern Liberties waterfront and, in particular, represent the establishment and operation of Harris & Smith, which became J. Campbell Harris & Co, and its relationship to the chemical manufacturing magnate, Thomas H. Powers. Powers purchased the parcels related to these extant properties between 1869 and 1872 and his son-in-law, J. Campbell Harris, founded the Philadelphia Plaster Works to

*Nomination of 81-95 Coates Street (now Fairmount Avenue) and  
The Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co.* | 38



become the J. Campbell Harris & Co. Works. The extant buildings related to the manufactory also represent and exemplify the cultural, economic and historical heritage of chemical manufacturing in Philadelphia as related to one of the most important chemical manufacturers in America, Thomas H. Powers, as well as the importance of the Philadelphia Plaster Works as a major enterprise in the city during this period. The Wagon House represents the size of J. Campbell Harris & Co., serving as its principal distribution center in the region. The Saw and Planning Mill represent the use of the one-story industrial building and the original configuration of the plant, as a last vestige of its industrial heritage in Philadelphia and at the Delaware waterfront.

### **Period of Significance: 1871–1899**



Daguerreotype of Thomas H. Powers<sup>62</sup> Courtesy the Rosenbach Museum and Library.

### **Thomas H. Powers (1812–1878)**

A birthright Quaker of Philadelphia, Thomas Henry Powers was born on October 17, 1812, one of two children of Thomas and Susan (Pearson) Powers. However, due to the early demise of his parents, who lived at 17 North Seventh Street, he was under the care of his aunts, Mary and Martha B. Pearson—his mother’s sisters, who were mantua makers and operated a dry goods store at the above-referenced address of his parents.<sup>63</sup>

At seven years old Powers was enrolled in the Ludwick School, once located in the 600 block of Walnut Street. Having shown a great aptitude in science, Powers first apprenticed with Daniel B. Smith in 1828, who operated a pharmacy at Arch and

<sup>62</sup>James E. McClees (1821–1887), portrait of male sitter. Daguerreotype; leather case. Philadelphia, 1861. 2001.7

<sup>63</sup>Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, *The First Century of Philadelphia College of Pharmacy* (Philadelphia: 1922), 645.

Sixth Streets. Shortly after Powers' apprenticeship, Smith entered into partnership with William Hodgson, Jr., an important pharmacist and chemist. Hodgson had recently purchased the "celebrated establishment" of John Bell & Co., late of Oxford Street in London. The two businessmen formed D.B. Smith & William Hodgson, Jr., which survived for nearly two decades until it was taken over by Bullock & Crenshaw in 1848.<sup>64</sup>

Powers attended the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, from which he graduated in 1833. Around this time he inherited \$2,000 from a wealthy cousin, which would eventually aid him in his business ventures and allow him to care for his elderly aunts. At the same he also left the Quaker fold and became an Episcopalian which undoubtedly also helped him in business. In 1835, Powers was elected a trustee of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy, a post he served in for roughly six years. After graduation, Powers continued working for Smith & Hodgson, where he eventually became a minor partner.<sup>65</sup> During this time, the nascent pharmaceutical world was constantly undergoing changes and development, which led to the replacement of opium with a more refined version, morphia, as a major narcotic. Understanding that the manufacture of this drug could be a lucrative business, Powers proposed manufacturing to his partners, Smith and Hodgson, but the risk seemed to high to the otherwise solid concern.<sup>66</sup>

In 1836, John Farr, an established chemical manufacturer, took an interest in the work of Powers, which led to his removal from Smith & Hodgson to work for Farr. The firm of John Farr & Co. had been founded on Coates Street, above Fourth, in which Farr's nephew also worked—Mr. William Weightman.<sup>67</sup> An earlier concern, Farr & Kunzi, also manufactured chemicals and had a solid reputation. Powers dedicated all of his energy to the business for several years, allowing, in part, the reputation of the firm to growth rapidly.<sup>68</sup>

In 1841, Powers married Anna Matilda Cash, together having two children—only one of which, Mary Powers, would survive to adulthood. Also in 1841, John Farr & Co. became Farr, Powers, & Weightman, which evolved to Powers & Weightman in 1847 at the death of Farr. The company's manufactory was removed from Northern Liberties to the Falls of the Schuylkill. One of the great successes of the firm was the more economic manufacture of alkaloids of cinchona barks in a condition of purity, for which Powers was eventually recognized by the Franklin Institute with a Gold Medal in 1874.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> "A Memoir of Thomas H. Powers, Read before the College [of Pharmacy and Science] at a Stated Meeting December 30, 1878," *American Journal of Pharmacy*, 51 (1879): 39.

<sup>65</sup> "A Memoir of Thomas H. Powers," 42, 43.

<sup>66</sup> Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science, *The First Century*, .

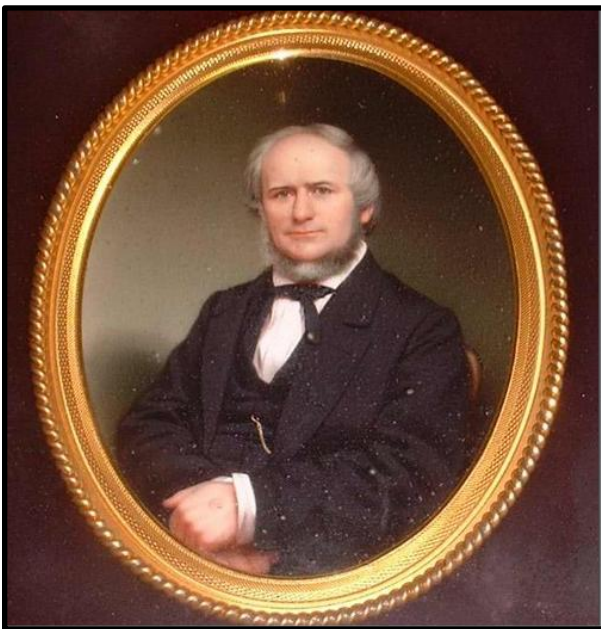
<sup>67</sup> Gerald Kutney, *Sulfur: History, Technology, Applications & Industry* (Toronto: Chemtec Pub., 2007), 36; "A Memoir of Thomas H. Powers," 44.

<sup>68</sup> George B. Griffenhagen and Mary Bogard, *History of Drug Containers and Their Labels*, Publication American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, n.s., 17 (Madison, WI : American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, 1999), 86.

<sup>69</sup> "A Memoir of Thomas H. Powers," 45, 47.

Powers & Weightman manufactured a number of products including the following chemicals, drugs and dyes: Acetanilide, Acetone, Butyric Acid, Chromic Acid, Citric Acid, Hydrobromic Acid, Hydrocyanic Acid, Muriatic and Nitric Acides, Sulphuric Acid, Tannic Acid, Tartaric Acid, Aloin, Alum, Ammonia Salts, Aqua Ammonia, Antimony Salts, Apiol, Barium Salts, Blue Mass, Calcium Salts, Calomel, Camphor-Refined, Carbon Bisulphide, Chloroform, Cinchona-Alkaloids and Salts, Codeine, Collodion, Copperas, Copper Salts, Ether, Ethyl Salts, Gold Chloride, Gold Oxide, Iodine, Iodoform, Iron Salts, Lead Salts, Lithium Salts, Lunar Caustic, Magnesium Salts, Manganese Salts, Mercury Salts, Morphine, Oils, Pills, Potash, Potassium Salts, Salts (medicinal), Silver Salts, Strychnine, and Tin Salts.<sup>70</sup>

Mary Powers married James Campbell Harris in 1869 and the young couple lived with the Powers at 1607 Walnut Street, then the most fashionable part of the city. Powers died in 1878, leaving the Weightman as the sole chemist, manufacturer, and financier of the firm.<sup>71</sup> Powers & Weightman merged with Rosengarten & Sons in 1905, which were eventually purchased by Merck & Co.<sup>72</sup>



Miniature Portrait Presumed to be Thomas H. Powers.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> "Power-Weightman-Rosengarten Co.," *The Pharmaceutical Era* 30 January 1908, 134–35.

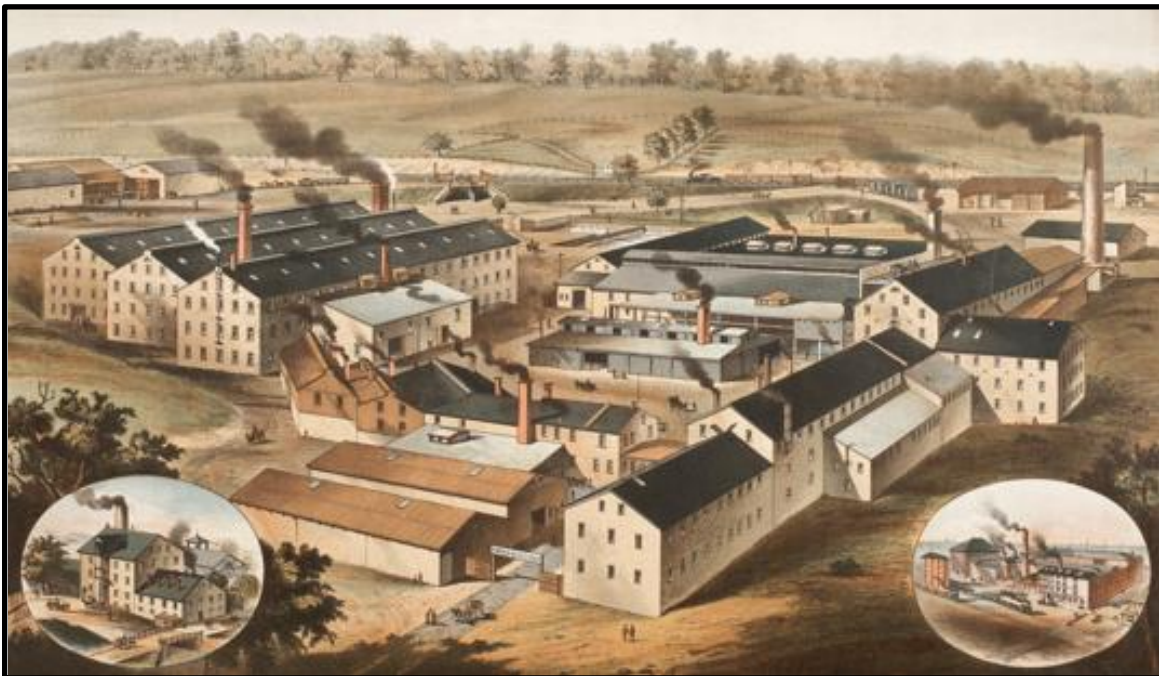
<sup>71</sup> Bromberg, Howard, *Great Lives From History: The Incredibly Wealthy* (Pasadena, CA: Salem Press, 2011) 3: 985.

<sup>72</sup> Griffenhagen and Bogard. *History of Drug Containers*, 86.

<sup>73</sup> John Henry Brown (1818–1891), portrait miniature. Watercolor on ivory; leather, glass, and metal frame. Philadelphia, 1861. Purchase funded by an anonymous donor. 2001.7



Advertisement showing the factory complex built 1825–1876 between 9th, Parrish, Brown, and Darien Streets.



View showing the laboratory complex of processing plants and storage sheds established in 1848 on Ridge Avenue near Schuylkill Falls (i.e., East Falls).

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

BENJAMIN R. SMITH AND JOHN C. HARRIS, OF PHILADELPHIA, PA.

## IMPROVEMENT IN PLASTER FOR WALLS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 111,267, dated January 24, 1871; reissue No. 5,389, dated April 29, 1873; application filed March 18, 1873.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that we, BENJAMIN R. SMITH and JOHN CAMPBELL HARRIS, both of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania, have invented certain Improvements in the Manufacture of Plaster for the Walls and Ceilings of Buildings, and for other purposes, of which the following is a specification:

### *Nature and Objects of the Invention.*

Our invention consists in the preparation of a new material for coating walls and ceilings, and for other analogous purposes, the said material being adapted for immediate use, when mixed with water, without the necessity of mixing any other substance with it. Our invention further consists in providing material by means of which walls can be finished in colors, the tint extending uniformly through the final coat of plaster, and avoiding all necessity for subsequent color-washing.

### *General Description.*

Our improved compound is prepared by mixing dried and powdered hydrate of lime with crude ground plaster or gypsum, and calcining the mixture, or in mixing the dry hydrate of lime with plaster which has been already calcined. The compound, prepared in either manner, may be colored in any stage of the process by the addition of such pigments or dyes as may be found best adapted for the purpose. In the preparation of colored plaster it is of very great importance to have the coloring matter mingled with perfect uniformity throughout the entire mass. We therefore prefer to proceed substantially as follows: We first slack the lime, and then, while it is still in pulp, thoroughly mix in the required pigment. The mixture of lime and coloring matter is then ground, then dried, and subsequently ground again. It is then mixed with calcined gypsum in proper proportions, and the mixture is finally ground to thoroughly mingle the ingredients in a homogeneous mass. Sand may also be mixed with the compound when such a finish as is given by sand is wanted, or other material to improve the working.

Our compound can be used, either white or tinted, for all purposes for which calcined plaster is employed, and it possesses all the

good qualities of the material in customary use for hard-finishing walls and ceilings.

When ordinary calcined plaster is used on walls, ceilings, cornices, &c., it is necessary to mix it before using with what is called "white-stuff," which is made by the plasterer, and the preparation of which is tedious and unsatisfactory. The process requires several days for its perfection, and as it is usually conducted in the public streets, it interferes much with the proper use of the same. The dirt and dust, which is so constantly flying, gets into this white-stuff to such an extent that, when the plaster is mixed with it, it is impossible to get a pure white finish. With our compound no such risk is run, as it is always ready for mixing with water and using, and the plasterer thereby saves the labor, time, and expense of making and manipulating the white-stuff, and gets a white wall, instead of one clouded with dirt, for his pains.

Our composition is taken to the room to be plastered in a dry state, in any necessary quantities, and as it is required for use it is mixed with water and immediately worked into the wall. A whiter and better wall is thus produced at a lower cost than by the usual process, or, if a colored or tinted wall be desired, this is produced by our process in the most satisfactory manner without any extra labor, calomining, color-washing, painting, or any other subsequent process for coloring the surface being thus superseded, and the coloring is by our process rendered much more permanent, because it extends throughout the body of the final coat of plaster.

### *Claims.*

The following is claimed as new:

1. The compound plaster produced of the materials and in the manner substantially as above set forth.
2. A homogenous tinted plaster, adapted for coating walls or ceilings, substantially as described.
3. The process hereinbefore described of mixing lime, gypsum, and coloring-matter, to produce a tinted plaster.

BENJAMIN R. SMITH.

JOHN CAMPBELL HARRIS.

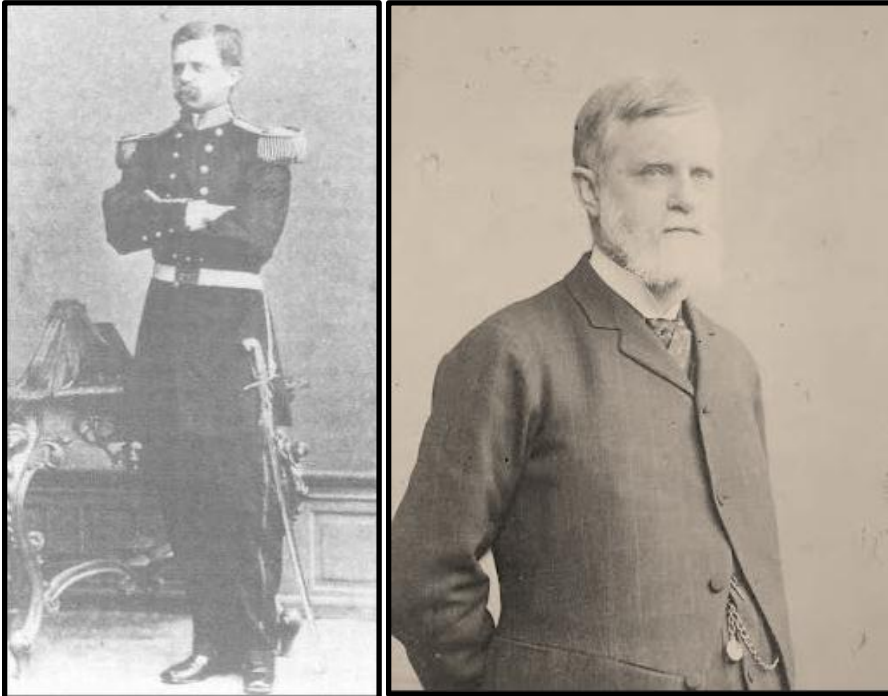
Witnesses:

WM. H. SUYDAM,  
P. WHITECHURCH.

<sup>74</sup> Pennsylvania (State) Death certificates, 1906-1963. Series 11.90. Records of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Record Group 11. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

<sup>75</sup> John W. Jordan, *Colonial Families of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: 1911).

When the Civil War broke out, J. Campbell Harris was a law student, having studied law in the office of his mother's brother P. Frazer Smith of West Chester, Pennsylvania and with a friend of the family, John G. Carlisle, in Washington, D.C.<sup>76</sup> First serving as a clerk to the commissioner, Harris became a lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps under the command of his uncle, Colonel John Harris. He experienced action under Admiral Farragut in Mississippi and with Rear Admiral Dahlgren at Fort Sumter. After the war ended, he remained in the Marines until 1869. Upon his retirement from the military, he married the only daughter of the pharmaceutical magnate, Thomas H. Powers.




John Campbell Harris. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

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<sup>76</sup> Joseph S. Harris, *Record of the Harris Family Descended From John Harris, Born in 1680 in Wiltshire, England* (Philadelphia: G.F. Lasher, 1903).

No. 121. 1874.

**WORKS and WHARVES**



**Smith & Harris,**  
Fairmount Ave. Wharves, Phila.

Calcinad, Castling, Land and Dental Plaster, Flooring, Sand,  
Cements, Whiting, Marble, Terra Alina, Silix,  
Soapstone, Patent Coating, &c.

We beg to quote as follows on board here—on 30 days time from  
date of shipment—(charges 25 cents additional,) the  
several varieties of our manufacture of

**WHITING.**

Con. Whiting, . . . . .	per 100 lbs. . . . .	\$ .60
Common " . . . . .	" . . . . .	\$ .65
Bolted " . . . . .	" . . . . .	\$ .70
Paris White, . . . . .	" . . . . .	\$ .75
Chalk, . . . . .	" . . . . .	\$ .70

SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

We will be glad to forward you samples; will secure best  
freights, if favored with your orders; and otherwise, endeavor to  
make it your interest and pleasure to continue.

*Now J. Campbell Harris & Co.*

Price list and advertisement for Smith and Harris, which had been pre-printed and changed to reflect the dissolution of the partnership and the creation of J. Campbell Harris & Co.

**J. Campbell Harris & Co.**

After his marriage to Mary Powers, J. Campbell Harris established himself as a manufacturer in Philadelphia, likely with financing provided by his father-in-law. In fact, beginning in 1869, Thomas H. Powers purchased several parcels in the vicinity of Delaware Avenue and Coates Street (now Fairmount Avenue).<sup>77</sup> When done in 1872, Powers owned the entire block bound by Delaware Avenue at the east, Fairmount Avenue at the south, Beach Street at the west, and Canal Street at the

<sup>77</sup> Deed: Charlotte H. Braban to Thomas H. Powers, 26 April 1869, Deed Book J.T.O., No. 243, p. 43; Deed: James M. Patten and wife to Thomas H. Powers, 29 April 1869, Deed Book J.T.O., No. 243, p. 46, CAP.

north.<sup>78</sup> Immediately to the west across Beach Street, Powers also purchased a number of the lots fronting Beach Street between Fairmount and Noble Streets and most of a row of building on the north side of Coates Street.<sup>79</sup> Incidentally, just before this, J. Campbell Harris had established a partnership with Benjamin R. Smith, which formed Smith & Harris. The company was located at the Fairmount Avenue wharf, which was directly across from Powers' new procurement. Smith and Harris had been working to improve the chemical compound to create better forms of plaster for specific purposes. This was first issued in Letters Patent No. 111,267, dated January 24, 1871. The patent was for an "Improved Plaster for Walls."

Our invention consists in the preparation of a new material for coating walls and ceilings, and for other analogous purposes, the said material being adapted for immediate use, when mixed with water, without the necessity of mixing any other substance with it. Our invention further consists in providing material by means of which walls can be finished in colors, the tint extending uniformly through the final coat of plaster, and avoiding all necessity for subsequent color-washing.<sup>80</sup>



<sup>78</sup> Deed: John Friend and wife to Thomas H. Powers, 1 March 1870, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 28, p. 343; Deed: Andrew J. Geiger to Thomas H. Powers, 22 June 1872, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 253, p. 466, CAP.

<sup>79</sup> Deed: William McClinchey and wife to Thomas H. Powers, 23 January 1871, Deed Book J.A.H. No. 117, p. 141; Deed: Henry R. Wishart and others to Thomas H. Powers, 31 January 1871, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 142, p. 19, CAP.

<sup>80</sup> Letters Patent No. 111,267. January 14, 1871.



Wedding invitation of J. Campbell Harris and Miss Powers. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

However, first making a new and improved fertilizer, Smith & Harris were in business as early as 1869, occupying a former planning mill within the lots described above.

The establishment is situated between Delaware avenue and Beach street, and Coates street and the Cohocksink Creek. At the corner of Beach and Coates streets stood a little one-story office belonging to Smith & Harris...

The ground occupied by Smith and Harris had a front of 160 feet on Beach street, 206 feet on Coates street, and 180 feet on Delaware avenue, on which were erected a saw and planning mill, which were mere shells, constructed of frame a two-story brick mill used for the manufacture of calcines and land plaster, fertilizer, marble dust, etc.; the office, at the northwest corner, constructed of frame, a little one-story brick store house at the corner of Beach and Coates streets, and a new office in course of erection of one story brick at the corner of Delaware avenue and Coates street, two frame stables, and one or two other small buildings. The office at the northwest corner was not destroyed and the little store-house still remains. The other buildings were totally destroyed.

#### THEIR LOSS

The buildings, which were owned by Mr. Thomas H. Powers, of the firm of Powers & Weightman, manufacturing chemists, together with the machinery and stock, belonging to Smith & Harris, were valued at \$125,000, which amount is only partially covered by insurance.<sup>81</sup>

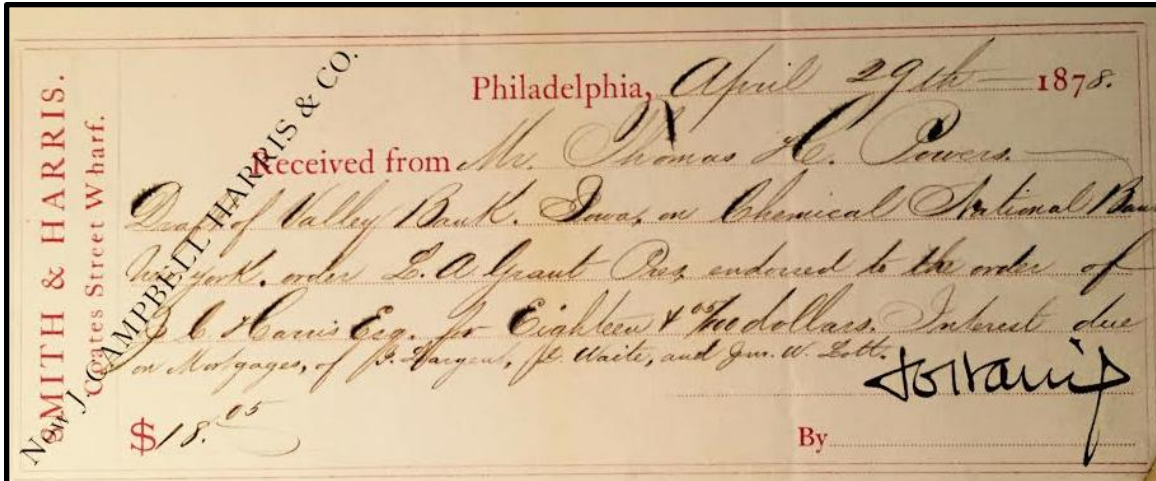
The first facility owned by Thomas H. Powers and leased by Smith & Harris was almost entirely destroyed in the disastrous fire of September 1870.<sup>82</sup> After investigations, authorities learned that the fireplug nearby was covered with more than 50,000 feet of lumber, showing that the lumber mill had been at fault regarding the conflagration.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> "Disastrous Fire: Destruction of Mill..." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 September 1870.

<sup>82</sup> "Disastrous Fire." [*Washington, D.C.] Critic*, 7 September 1870.

<sup>83</sup> "Fires," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 May 1871.



Receipt of J. Campbell Harris & Co. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Upon the completion of their new facility, the company referred to the works as the “Philadelphia Plaster Works, Smith & Harris.” According to Hexamer’s first survey in 1871–72, the Philadelphia Plaster Works was a modern facility that contained the following features:

Works situated North side of Coates between Beach Street and Delaware river, 11<sup>th</sup> Ward, Philada. Buildings entirely new & inside arrangements not quite finished. –Buildings No. 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5 on plan entirely fireproof. –Scuttle & stairs to the roof. –Cornice of brick & stone partly covered with tin. –1 strong wooden ladder kept on hand reaching to the roof of No. 11 –Lighting rod with one point on office, No. 6. –None on smoke stacks. –Steam boilers & plaster calcining furnaces located per plan enclosed by brickwalls in proper distance of woodworks. –Boiler Chimney (A) of brick plastered inside rising about 20 feet above the roof of No. 12. –Boiler chimney (B) of boiler iron rising about 30 feet above the roof of planning mill No. 1. –Office No. 6 warmed by 1-1/4 inch wrought iron steam pipes resting on iron. –Cooper shop 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of No. 11 warmed by 2 cast iron stoves well arranged. –Planning & plaster mill not warmed at all. –Fuel; anthracite coal & wood shavings. –Room lighted by gas. –No. 1 occupied as a saw & planning mill. –Plaster, cement, soapstone, marble dust, whiting, etc. manufactured in No. 9. –Dye wood cutting in No. 10. –Wood shavings vaults 4, 5, 8 one in No. 12....<sup>84</sup>

The company manufactured the following products: calcined, casting, land and dental plaster, flooring, sand cements, whiting, marble dust, terra alba, Silex, Soapstone, and Patent Whitecoating, among other products. The company also

<sup>84</sup> Earnest Hexamer, *Hexamer General Surveys* (Philadelphia: 1872), 6: plate 459.

provided “Whiting” services: Con. Whiting at \$.60 per 100 pounds; Gilder’s Whiting at \$.65 per 100 pounds; Bolted Whiting; Paris White at \$.75 per pound; and Chalk.<sup>85</sup>

By 1873, the company had begun construction of a building to the west of their facility across Beach Street.

#### RESOLUTION

Resolved by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, That Mssrs. Smith & Harris do hereby have permission to lay a twelve inch pipe across and under Beach street, to connect their properties on the east and west sides of said street...<sup>86</sup>



The Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co. Courtesy the City of Philadelphia.

<sup>85</sup> Smith & Harris Advertisement Card. 1873.

<sup>86</sup> *Journal of the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia*, vol. 1. (Philadelphia, 1873), 570.

That same year, Smith and Harris' patent was reissued, No. 5389, dated April 29, 1873, which was a quick turn around from its March 18 application.<sup>87</sup> The company had previously gotten approvals for railroad tracks in 1873 and would go on to get the same approval for a "timber shed" in 1874.<sup>88</sup>

In February 1874, Co-partnership Notices throughout the major American newspapers noted the following:<sup>89</sup>

Philadelphia. FEB. 10, 1874. The CO-PARTNERSHIP under the name of SMITH & HARRIS is this day DISSOLVED by mutual consent. J. CAMPBELL HARRIS will settle the business of the late firm.

BENJAMIN R. SMITH  
J. CAMPBELL HARRIS

The business heretofore carried on by the firm of SMITH & HARRIS will be continued at the old location by the subscriber, in the style of J. CAMPBELL HARRIS & CO.

J. CAMPBELL HARRIS<sup>90</sup>

By the close of 1874, Smith was no longer part of the business and the company was known as J. Campbell Harris & Co., the name of the facility, the Philadelphia Plaster Works, having changed to J. Campbell Harris & Co. Works. The entire facility was completed between 1871 and 1874, which included completion of the Wagon House to the west of the main facility across Beach Street. The buildings at the time include the following:

1. Saw & Planning Mill: a one-story brick; iron building constructed in 1871, including a Resaw & Planning Mill, also one-story brick and iron, constructed in 1873;
2. Plaster Mill, a two-story brick building with a slag roof, constructed in 1871 and 1872, including a smoke stack, first floor boiler room, and drying whiting area;
3. Savings Vault, three-story building of brick and iron with a slag roof at the center of the facility, which was constructed in 1872;
4. Storeroom, Fireproof Oil Room, Shipping Clerk's Office, Storing Manufacturing Material, a five-story brick building with a slag roof built between 1873-74 and includes a room developed to Oil Vaults. This section of the building also includes the Shipping & Delivering Room,

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<sup>87</sup> Letters Patent No. 5,389. April 29, 1873.

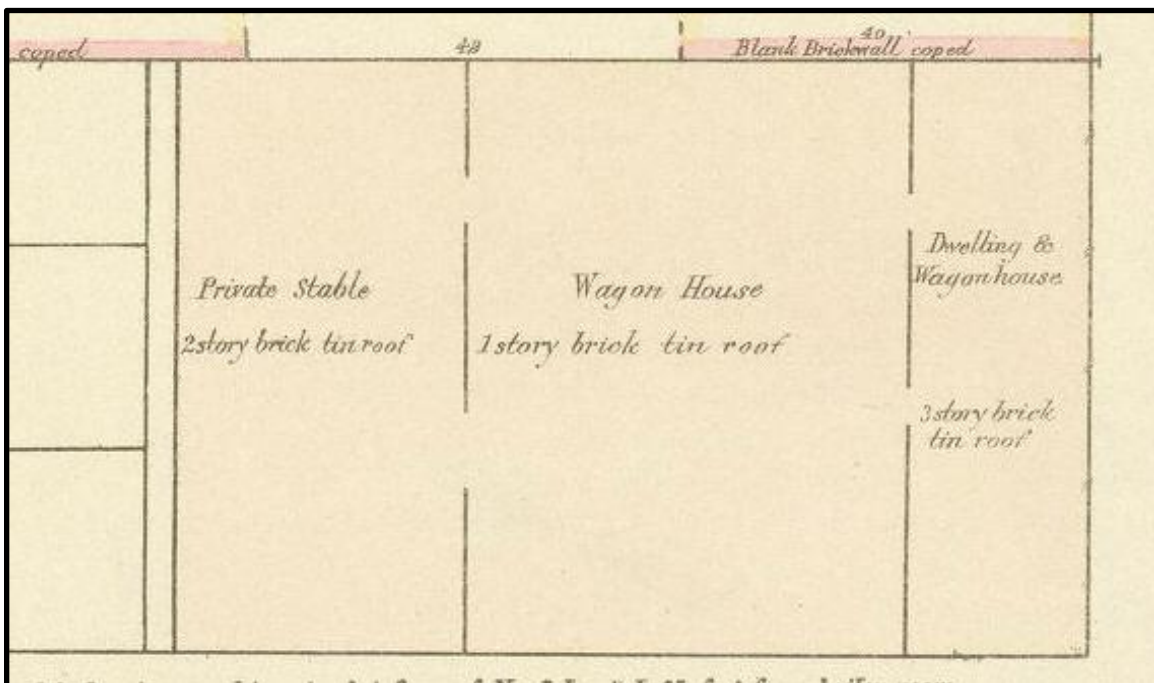
<sup>88</sup> *Journal of the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1874).

<sup>89</sup> "Co-partnership Notices," *North American and United States Gazette*, 25 February 1874.

<sup>90</sup> "Co-partnership Notices," [*Baltimore*] *Sun*, 27 February 1874.

another massive five-story brick pile with a slag roof, also constructed in 1873–74.

5. Office, a two-story brick building with a slate roof, which was built in 1871.
6. Wagon House, a three-story brick Wagon House with dwelling space, an appending one-story brick Wagon House, and a two-story brick Stable.<sup>91</sup>



Hexamer Survey of the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris. Courtesy the Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.<sup>92</sup>

Between 1870 and 1880, J. Campbell Harris established himself in Philadelphia, living at his father-in-law’s residence—1607 Walnut Street. In 1880, the household consisted of John Campbell Harris, a forty-year-old “gentleman;” Mary Powers Campbell, a thirty-five-year old woman; Thomas Powers Campbell, a school boy of ten-years-old; Alan Campbell Harris, a seven year old boy; and Henry F. Campbell, a small child. During this time, J. Campbell Harris also focused on the further development of the Powers’ property in the vicinity of Fairmount Avenue between the wharf and Front Street.<sup>93</sup> J. Campbell Harris eventually commissioned a market house at the wharf immediately above Fairmount Avenue and its construction records are a boon to the understanding of the process that such an undertaking required, involving all of the expected parties.<sup>94</sup>

By 1895, Campbell had sold J. Campbell Harris & Co to Lesley & Trinkle but the Powers Estate still owned the land on Coates Street.<sup>95</sup> Harris’ children were grown,

<sup>91</sup> *Hexamer General Surveys* (Philadelphia: 1872), 6: plate 459.

<sup>92</sup> *Hexamer General Surveys* (Philadelphia: 1872), 6: plate 459.

<sup>93</sup> Johnston-Harris Family Papers, 1776–1935, Collection 3037, HSP.

<sup>94</sup> Wilson Brothers & Co., Civil Engineers & Architects, *Specifications for a Market House for J. Campbell Harris & Co.* (Philadelphia: Robert Wood’s Commercial Printing House, 1878).

<sup>95</sup> Frank H. Taylor, *The Hand Book of the Lower Delaware River* (Philadelphia: George S. Harris & Sons, 1895), xxxii.

but still living at the family's home new home "Ravenswood" on School House Lane in East Falls.<sup>96</sup> Harris died on April 1, 1916 in Germantown and was buried at Saint Thomas Episcopal Church at Whitemarsh.<sup>97</sup>

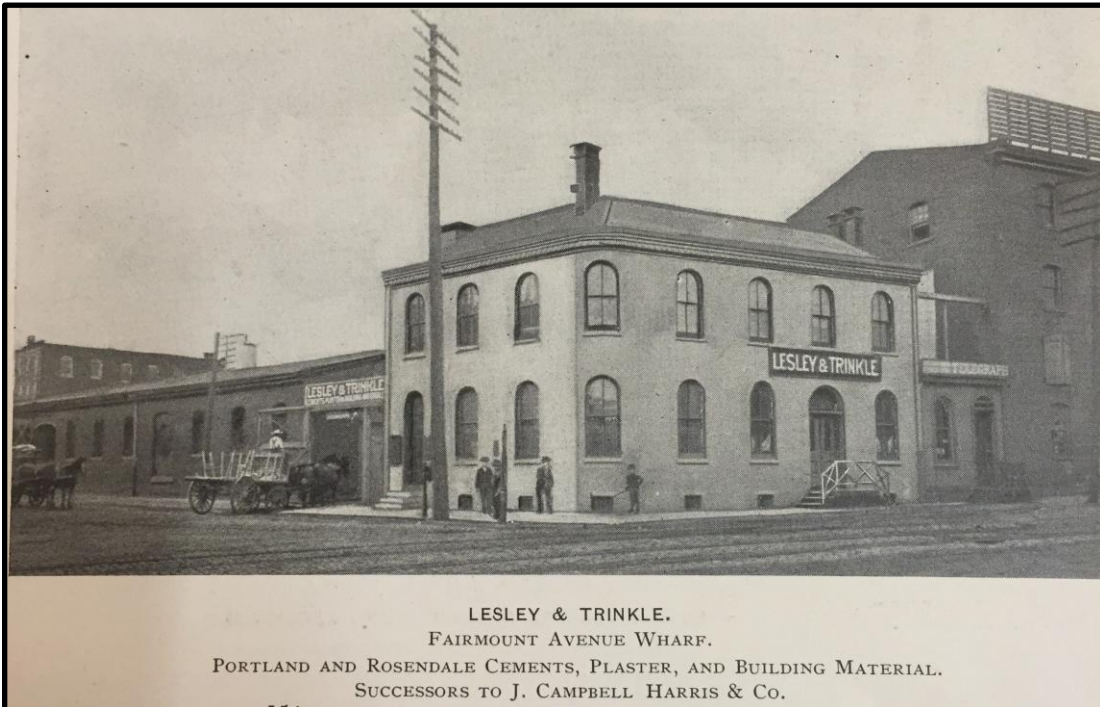
The Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co. is a building that represents the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the use of chemical innovation and, subsequent manufacture in Philadelphia, as related to Thomas H. Powers, the eminent chemist and manufacturer, and his son-in-law, J. Campbell Harris, who became a manufacturer likely under the motivations of his father-in-law. The building represents his association with Smith and Harris, as well as the advent of "improved plaster for walls," as specified in the above context. The Wagon House directly relates to this process and the business operations. It retains its original form and while having undergone changes, represents the type of buildings that once lined Delaware Avenue, Beach Street, and Front Street in the Northern Liberties, most of which have been lost due to modern development and/or lack of understanding and/or poor planning to reuse old warehouses at an earlier time. Furthermore, this building is part of a few blocks that remain adjacent to the Delaware waterfront and I-95 and is within the few blocks that weren't obliterated at that time. Images attached to this nomination illustrated these buildings as rare survivors of the industrial context that once define the waterfront from Washington to Lehigh Avenues, almost all of which has vanished. For these reasons, the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co. is an important historic building that should be placed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places for the reasons stated above.



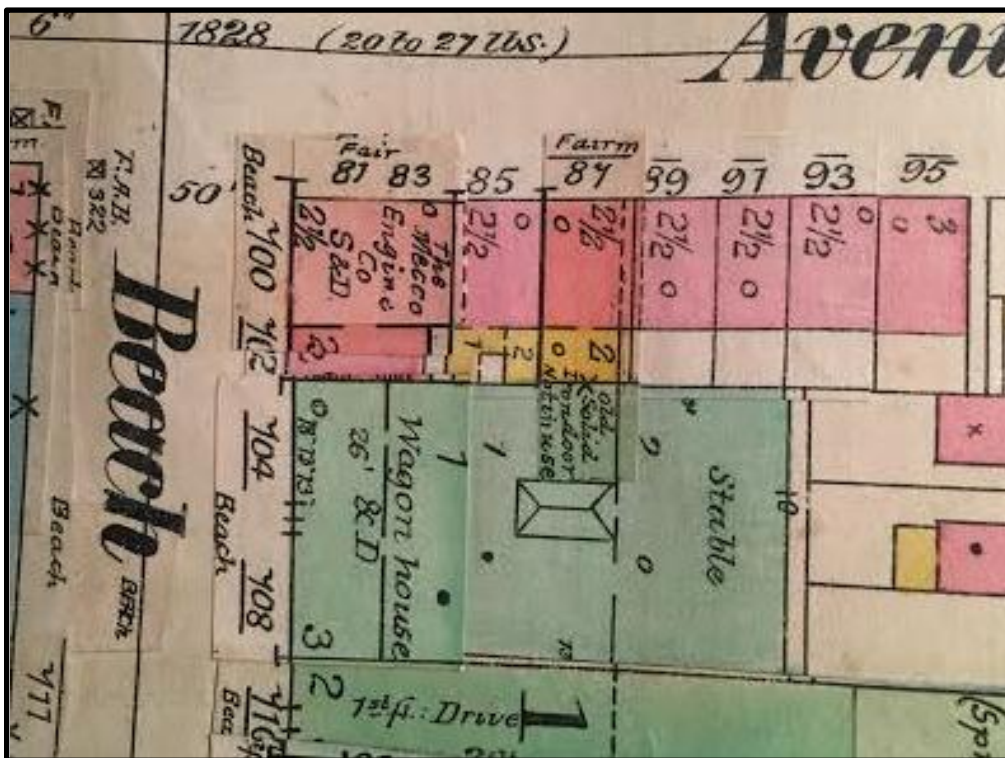
Advertisement for Smith & Harris from the *Gardeners Monthly Horticulturist*, Volume 12.

<sup>96</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls; King, Moses. *Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians* (New York: Blanchard Press, 1901), 89.

<sup>97</sup> Pennsylvania (State). Death certificates, 1906–1963. Series 11.90 (1,905 cartons). Records of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Record Group 11. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; *Find A Grave*. Find A Grave. www.findagrave.com. Accessed May 2015.



The former complex of J. Campbell Harris & Co., which became Lesley & Trinkle. The Wagon House and Planning Mill of J. Campbell Harris & Co. are extant to-date, both on left. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Hexamer Insurance Maps of the City of Philadelphia showing of the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co. and the houses of 81-95 Coates Street (now Fairmount Avenue). Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

No 252

# WARDEN'S OFFICE

OF THE  
PORT OF PHILADELPHIA



Philadelphia April 1<sup>st</sup> 1878

Know all Men by these Presents That at a Meeting of the Board of Wardens for the Port of Philadelphia held at this Office in the City of Philadelphia on the First day of April A.D. 1878 the said Board of Wardens by the authority vested in them by the Laws of the United States and the Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania authorized and by these presents do authorize Messrs J. C. Harris & Co. their executors administrators or assigns to build an extension on the south side of their pier at Fairmount Avenue Delaware River in accordance with their application dated March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1878 and the plans submitted therewith filed in this Office — Subject to the Laws of this Commonwealth the Ordinances of City Councils and the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Wardens

The Materials and Construction of said extension to be approved by the Wardens and three days notice to be given in writing to the Officers of the Board previous to the sinking of the same

**RESOLUTION OF DECEMBER 5th. 1853.**  
Resolved, that in every case where a plan is submitted to this Board, the same shall be accompanied by a correct scale, and the lines and bearings by compass, of the improvement asked for, as also of the adjoining properties, to be certified under oath by the Surveyor of the District in which the property is situated, also that there shall be furnished to the office, within three days after the sinking of any wharf, by the owner or builder thereof, a like certificate showing the exact position of said wharf, as made within its lines and bearings by compass, and if the same is not in conformity with the plan as deposited, and the license as granted the Master Warden is hereby directed, and enjoined to proceed forthwith to enforce the laws and penalties made and provided, and also that these Resolutions and stipulations be inserted in all licenses hereafter directed to be granted by this Board, and that so much of the by-laws as are hereby altered or cancelled, be, and the same are hereby repealed.

ATTEST  
John A. Lillinghaus, Secretary  
FOR THE BOARD  
J. M. [Signature] Master Warden



Port Warden's Certificate No. 252 for J. Campbell Harris & Co., April 1878. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



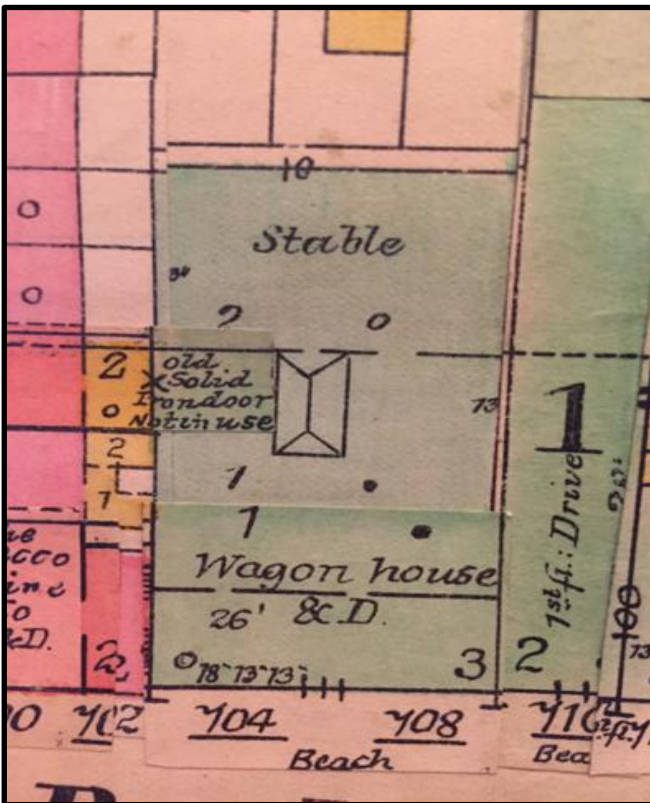
### Criterion for Designation: A & J

- A. Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; and
- J. Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

### Statement of Significance:

**81-93 Coates, the Wagon House of J. Campbell Harris & Co** have significant character, interest and value as part of the evolution of the Northern Liberties waterfront and, in particular, represent the enlargement and operation of the Terminal Warehouse Company, which was founded by Thomas D. Sullivan in 1904 and became the second largest terminal warehouse operation in America.

### Period of Significance: 1920-1960



Hexamer atlas of Wagon House<sup>98</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Ernest Hexamer, *Insurance Maps of the City of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: 1880), 4: plate 43.



Thomas D. Sullivan. Courtesy Eugene Kilpatrick.

### **Thomas D. Sullivan (1861–1929)**

Thomas D. Sullivan was born on May 3, 1861 to Cornelius and Julia (Gleason) Sullivan in Avondale, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The son of Irish immigrants, Sullivan arrived in Philadelphia at the age of eighteen and obtained employment in the Richmond Grain Elevators, which led to his interest and understanding of the warehouse business.<sup>99</sup>

Sullivan lived a relatively modest existence, working his way up the ladder. Even in 1900, Sullivan was a boarder at 1504 Green Street, despite his occupation as

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<sup>99</sup> Pennsylvania (State). Death certificates, 1906–1963. Series 11.90 (1,905 cartons). Records of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Record Group 11. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; “Thomas D. Sullivan. Financier and Head of Philadelphia Warehouse Company Dies,” *New York Times*, 6 November 1929, 25.

“President” of his newly established company.<sup>100</sup> In 1904, Sullivan founded the Terminal Warehouse Company, which became the second largest enterprise of its kind in America. However, this took time and apparently modesty, as Sullivan was still operating his “storage emporium” and living in a boarding house in 1910.<sup>101</sup> Signs of Sullivan’s success become more evident in 1913, when he is living at 1913 Spring Garden Street, and listed as “manager of the Terminal Warehouse Company, at which time he is living at 6524 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street with his wife Eleanor Blanche and two servants. Never having children of his own, Sullivan chose to invite his nephew, Ernest Vincent D. Sullivan, who had attended the University of Notre Dame, to come from Detroit, Michigan to Philadelphia in 1918 to work in the company. Ernest became Vice President in 1925 and President in 1930 after the death of his uncle.<sup>102</sup>

Sullivan, himself, controlled the following entities and served the following positions: the Terminal Commerce Building, Inc.; vice president of the Northern Trust Company and director of the Tradesman’s National Bank. He was also a member of the Union League, the Huntington Valley and Old York Road Country Club.<sup>103</sup> He also had connections to a number of Philadelphia institutions, most notably Temple University whom he provided a bequest to build a new grand Collegiate Gothic library which was completed in 1936 and today is known as Sullivan Hall.<sup>104</sup>

Sullivan died on November 11, 1929 and is buried in Holy Sepulcher Cemetery in Cheltenham, Pennsylvania.<sup>105</sup>

### **Terminal Warehouse Company**

While records prove that Thomas D. Sullivan operated a warehouse company in years prior, all accounts of his life and business point to 1904 as the year that the Terminal Warehouse Company was founded.<sup>106</sup>

The most important feature of the Terminal Warehouse Company and its establishment as an important storage concern was always the space that it could provide its clients. This required the procurement of large and diverse storage facilities in convenient locations. One of the earliest records of Sullivan’s real estate acquisition dates from March 1909, when he purchased property on Front Street near Race from Mary E. Butcher for \$26,000.<sup>107</sup> Soon after, in May 1909, Sullivan

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<sup>100</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls.

<sup>101</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910* (NARA microfilm publication T624 1,178 rolls). Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>102</sup> “Ernest V.D. Sullivan, Business Executive,” *New York Times*, 17 August 1945.

<sup>103</sup> “Thomas D. Sullivan,” *New York Times*, 7 November 1929.

<sup>104</sup> James W. Hilty, *Temple University: 125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010), 51–52.

<sup>105</sup> *Find A Grave*. Find A Grave. <http://www.findagrave.com>.

<sup>106</sup> Howell, Laurence T. “Terminal Company Founded in 1904 by Thomas D. Sullivan,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 6 April 1931.

<sup>107</sup> “The Latest News in Real Estate Settlement is Made for Sale of Large Tract of Ground at Merion,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 17 March 1909.

purchased the properties at 122–24 Race Street from William Moore for \$11,275. The property consisted of two-story warehouses formerly used by the Duncannon Iron Company.<sup>108</sup> Over the years, Sullivan purchased and sold a number of properties to suit the needs of his clients. In 1918, his nephew, Ernest V.D. Sullivan came into the company to assist with its management and expansion. That same year, in February, Sullivan purchased a five-story store building at the northwest corner of Front and Quarry Streets from Grace W. Taylor for \$20,000.<sup>109</sup>



Trucks of the Terminal Warehouse Company in celebration of the opening of Spring Garden Street. Note the Terminal Warehouse Company on left in background. Courtesy Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

In 1920, Sullivan turned his attention to acquiring the Thomas H. Powers properties on Fairmount Avenue. In January he bought the former site of the J. Campbell Harris & Co, which stretched from Fairmount Avenue to Canal Street and Delaware Avenue to Beach Street for \$150,000.<sup>110</sup> Six months later, he acquired the estate's remaining properties at the northeast corner of Fairmount Avenue and Beach Street.<sup>111</sup> To these purchases he added 85 and 95 Fairmount Avenue to complete his acquisition of the entire row of buildings on the north side of Fairmount Avenue.<sup>112</sup> By June

<sup>108</sup> "Race Street Sale Recorded," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 May 1909.

<sup>109</sup> "Review of Week in Real Estate...," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 25 February 1917.

<sup>110</sup> Deed: Girard Trust Company, trustee under the will of Thomas H. Powers, and Mary Powers Harris, to Thomas D. Sullivan, 8 January 1920, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 703, p. 590, CAP.

<sup>111</sup> Deed: Girard Trust Company, trustee under the will of Thomas H. Powers, and Mary Powers Harris, to Thomas D. Sullivan, 7 June 1920, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 883, p. 441, CAP.

<sup>112</sup> Deed: William Trost, Jr., to Thomas D. Sullivan, 17 August 1920, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 984, p. 12; Deed: Daniel J. Connelly, guardian of the estate of Thomas J. Stanton, alleged lunatic, and Mary Stanton, to Thomas D. Sullivan, 6 September 1922, Deed Book J.M.H., No. 1370, p. 148, CAP.

1921, Sullivan had begun work on his new property. The Wilson Ruff Co. was contracted to make additions and alterations to the property to the tune of \$30,000.<sup>113</sup> This included all of the houses that contained 81–93 Coates Street, as well as the Wagon House in the 700 block of Beach Street.

In December 1922, Sullivan was granted a permit to “take out partitions, reinforce joists with I-beams and brick up openings, fix plaster and general repairs.” The application was submitted by William W. Eichhom of 615 W. Dauphin Street. It appears as though Sullivan restored the houses at 81–93 Fairmount Avenue to a Federal period appearance during this renovation, as there are no subsequent permits and the buildings appear to be restored by WWII-era photographs.<sup>114</sup> The Terminal Warehouse Company was housed at this location upon completion of the renovation.<sup>115</sup>



1925 aerial photograph of Fairmount Avenue and Beach Street in the area of Delaware Avenue and Spring Garden Street. *Annual Message of W. Freeland Kendrick, Mayor of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1925).*

Sullivan expanded his interests in this area in July 1922 by buying the entire city block bound by Delaware Avenue at the east, Canal Street at the south, Beach Street at the west, and Poplar Street at the north. Heymann & Brother sold the lot and its

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<sup>113</sup> “Activities in Real Estate,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 14 June 1921.

<sup>114</sup> Building History Cards, 1906 to 1964, CAP; checked all address and corner address combinations for this site.

<sup>115</sup> Permit No. 13837 of 1922, 4 December 1922, Philadelphia Building Permits, CAP.

improvements of 14,000 square feet, representing the former occupants—the Smith Kline & French Company.<sup>116</sup>

In 1925, Sullivan made his nephew vice president of the Terminal Warehouse Company, after which he succeeded his uncle as president upon his demise in 1929. By this time, the company had greatly enlarged. In 1931, the company controlled “14 buildings devoted to warehousing of merchandise” with a “fleet of sixty-six trucks.” This amounted to roughly three million square feet of storage space. By this time the Terminal Warehouse Company was considered to be the largest of its kind in Philadelphia. Nationally it was second only to the Bush Terminal Company in New York City.<sup>117</sup>

The Terminal Warehouse Company continued to expand through the 1950s. After several years of litigation in the federal courts, the Terminal Warehouse Company was awarded a judgment of \$136,000 to be paid by the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Merchants Warehouse Company; however, a larger judgment, later awarded, was reversed by the Supreme Court.<sup>118</sup> In 1936, the company underwent the strains of labor strikes, but quickly solved the problems with workers at the Delaware and Fairmount Avenue warehouses.<sup>119</sup> While controlling interest in the company was sold outside of the family, Ernest V.D. Sullivan continued to serve in various executive capacities in the Terminal Warehouse Company until his death in 1945.<sup>120</sup> At the time of his death, Ernest V.D. Sullivan owned 9,640 shares of the Terminal Warehouse Company, which had risen from \$55 at the time of his death to \$221.56 in 1949 when the estate was finally settled.<sup>121</sup>

When Ernest V.D. Sullivan’s estate was finally settled, Peter Crosby, a Washington, D.C. builder, announced his plans to purchase the company for twenty million dollars.<sup>122</sup> While the company was sold, its management remained the same, as well as its headquarters until 1967.

In October 1967, the Terminal Warehouse Company announced that it was removing from its longtime headquarters at 81 Fairmount Avenue (late Coates Street) to a one-story building of 131,000 square feet on a seven and a half acre site in the park on the North South Freeway in New Jersey.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> “Store Property Sold,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 July 1922.

<sup>117</sup> Howell, Laurence T. “Terminal Company Founded in 1904 by Thomas D. Sullivan.” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 6 April 1931.

<sup>118</sup> “\$136,000 Awarded To Terminal Co.,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 27 March 1934.

<sup>119</sup> “50 Strike At Warehouse,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 21 September 1936.

<sup>120</sup> “Ernest V.D. Sullivan, Phila. Industrialist Dies,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 17 August 1945.

<sup>121</sup> “Stock in Estate Grew Four-Fold,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 19 April 1950.

<sup>122</sup> “20 Million Deal For Warehouses,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 5 July 1949.

<sup>123</sup> “Firm’s Executive Offices Moving to New Jersey,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 13 October 1967.



LAURENCE T. HOWELL  
PRESIDENT  
JOHN J. DEVEREAUX  
SECRETARY

## TERMINAL WAREHOUSE COMPANY

81 FAIRMOUNT AVENUE  
PHILADELPHIA 23

CONNECTING WITH  
READING  
R. R.  
PENNSYLVANIA  
R. R.

March 21, 1949.

Mr. Dan W. Kellerman  
The American Jewish Joint  
Distribution Committee, Inc.  
270 Madison Avenue  
New York (16), New York

Dear Mr. Kellerman:

I am pleased to acknowledge your letter of  
March 15 confirming our conversation of the other day  
in connection with strapping 345 cartons of Peas and  
Beans for shipment abroad.

Letterhead of Terminal Warehouse Company. Courtesy of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archives.

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### Contributors.

This nomination was assembled by the following contributors:

Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist  
J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian

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