

The Hon,

J. C. Ridgely

Congress

Treasury Department
November 25, 1811

Sir, I have the honor to return you
herewith, three transfer certificates of stock, in
favor of John Banning, with warrants annex-
ed to them. I am Sir,

very respectfully,

Your most obed. Servant,
Albert Gallatin

The Hon. Mr. Ridgely
of Delaware, in Congress.

The Honorable

Nicholas Ridgely

in Congress



Sir

One of the checks prescribed to the
Commissioners of Loans was wanting in
the certificate of three per cent stock
which you had enclosed some days ago.
It was immediately transmitted to the
Delaware commissioner in order to have
the omission rectified and has not
yet been returned.

I have the honor to be

Washington 29 Jan^r 1812

very respectfully

Sir

Your obed^t Serv^t

Albert Gallatin

Hon^{ble}

Mr Ridgely

in Congress

M. H. Ridgely esq

Treasury Department
February 16. 1812

Sir,

Enclosed herewith are three transferred
Certificates of Stock in favor of Mrs. McKee with warrants
annexed, as requested in your note of the 13th inst.

I am the honor to be, Sir,

very respectfully

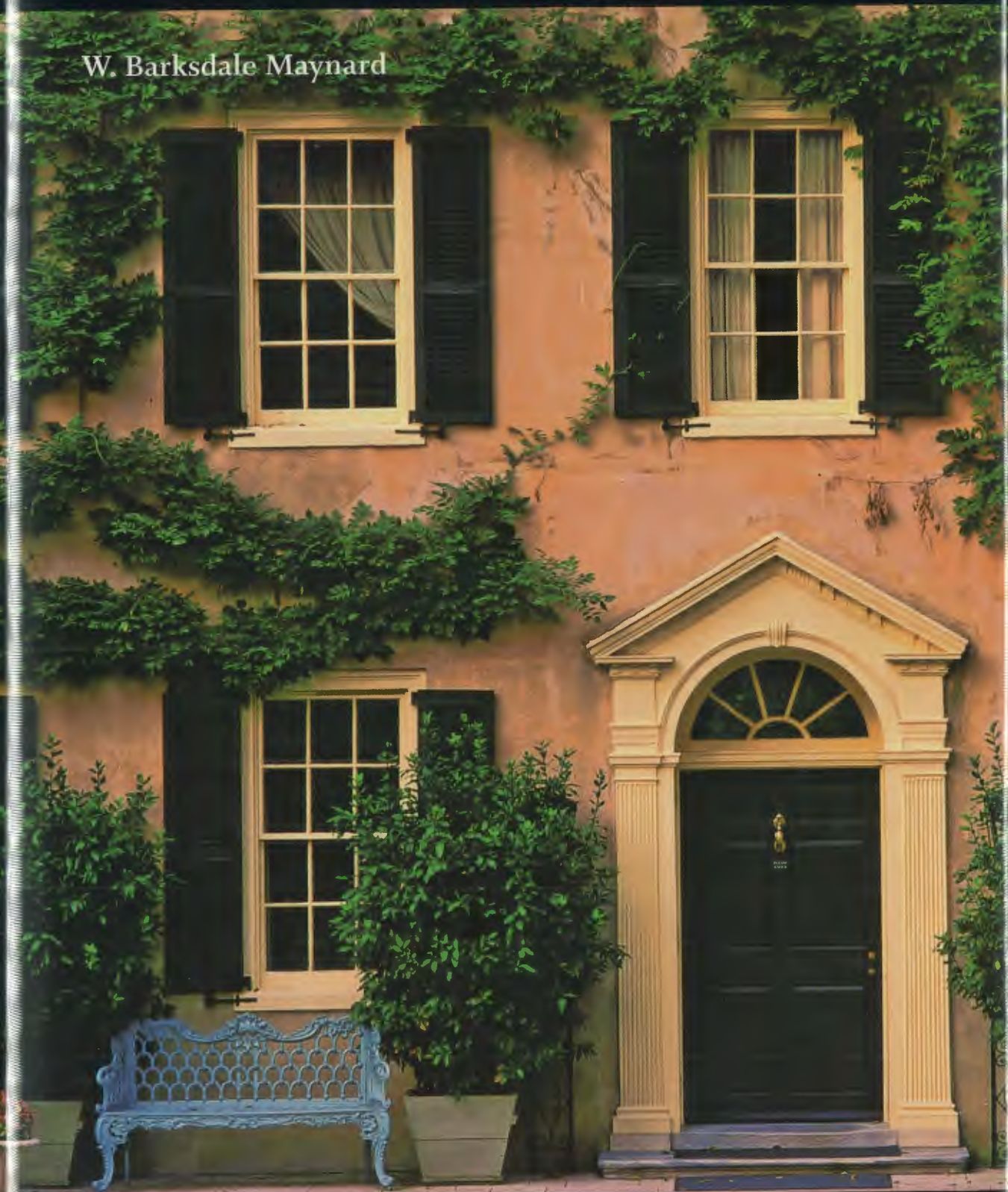
Your most obed. Servant

Albert Gallatin

W. M. Reddy Esq
in Congress

BUILDINGS OF *Delaware*

W. Barksdale Maynard





DV12 WESLEY CHURCH EDUCATIONAL CENTER (U.S. POST OFFICE, FEDERAL BUILDING), early view

office nearby, which resembles a motel—the contrast demonstrating a striking postwar decline in the quality of public architecture.

DV13 Parke-Ridgely House

1728 main section. 1764 rear wing. 1767 first floor of west end. Later alterations. 9 the Green

One of Delaware's most famous colonial houses faces the Green (see **The Green** on p. 254) just feet from the Old State House (DV14). Its name refers to Thomas Parke, who built it, and Dr. Charles G. Ridgely, who bought it in 1769 and in whose family it has remained ever since. The original four-bay section was hall-and-parlor, and the construction date, it is said, appears on both a rafter and a brick. Walls are Flemish bond with glazed headers under a handsome modillion cornice; the pent eave is now missing. Inside is extensive paneling (some of it brought from other houses by twentieth-century owners) and, in "The Hall," a fireback from Batsto Foundry, New Jersey, and a much-remarked corner stairway. A room-by-room inventory was taken when Ridgely died in 1785 and included the contents of the "Physick Shop" that he conducted, apparently in the west end. Here in town and at his plantation he owned nineteen slaves. The house has many political associations, including the visit of abolitionist Lucretia Mott in 1841 as an angry crowd gathered outside. Interiors and the rear garden of the Ridgely House are illustrated in Marion Harlan's *More Colonial Homesteads* (1899).

For decades (1894–1962) this was home to preservationist Mabel Lloyd Ridgely, who refurbished the house and made changes, in-

cluding adding the present front door with its Colonial Revival coved doorhood (in place by 1914). That door recalls the Newport, Rhode Island, work of Norman M. Isham, who would later design Legislative Hall (DV16) at Ridgely's request; but she herself might have designed it, too, as she had studied some architecture in her youth at the Metropolitan Museum of Art under Arthur Lyman Tuckerman. The garden was an Old Dover Days attraction in the 1930s, and a color photograph in *Saturday Evening Post* (1949) showed Mrs. Ridgely serving tea in the parlor. Following her death, another refurbishment was undertaken (1966, Robert Raley).

DV14 Old State House

1787–1792, Alexander Givan and others. 1873–1875 altered, James H. Windrim. 1909–1912 restored, Edward L. Tilton. 1973–1976 restored, John F. McCune III and William Harkins (for Pope, Kruse and McCune). East side of the Green

The present structure, center of Delaware government from 1792 to 1932 and now a state museum, replaced the Kent County Courthouse of 1722, supposedly reusing its bricks. The State House's form may have been derived from the Court House in New Castle (NC16), former seat of colonial power. The building became exclusively the capitol when the county moved out in 1873, at which time it was modernized with the addition of a mansard roof and a tower, which historian Harold D. Eberlein later called "ignorant and hideous." The interior was gutted. In the early twentieth century, preservationist Mabel Lloyd Ridgely



DV13 PARKE-RIDGELY HOUSE, photo c. 1960

HISTORIC HOUSES AND BUILDINGS
OF DELAWARE

by

HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN

and

CORTLANDT V. D. HUBBARD

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Dover, Delaware, 1962

After serving a diversity of purposes in more than two hundred years, the Old Academy no longer figures in any public capacity. For a long time past its function has been purely residential.

Substantially built of brick to begin with, the Old Academy is now a stuccoed structure, painted a light yellow. On a high base, it is of two-storey-and-attic height, but has no dormers. It is two full rooms deep. The front, which has a plain box cornice, has four full-sized windows on the upper floor; on the lower floor there are two somewhat smaller windows at the north and south end of the front and, between them, two separate narrow doors close together.

This arrangement suggests alterations that must have been made in all the years of varied occupancies. The varied uses and occupancies, with successive alterations and adaptations, render it pointless to discuss what may have been the original plan.

The building is devoid of distinguishing architectural characteristics that would invite attention or merit praise. Yet it has a reassuring air of unassuming, comfortable, kindly dignity, like a genial, somewhat stout, and elderly dowager.

RIDGELY HOUSE

The Green, north side, east of State Street, Dover

The Ridgely house, facing The Green in Dover, was built in 1728. It is a two-storey-and-attic brick structure, originally of four-bay width. An addition in 1767 at the west end made a frontage six bays wide. The rear wing was added in 1764. The brickwork of the south front, facing The Green, is laid in Flemish-bond with black headers. The west and east walls are stuccoed over the brick.

The plan of the house, as first built, is the pre-Georgian plan that came into southern Delaware from Virginia and Maryland. It corresponds exactly with the plan of an early house at St. Mary's City, a natural precedent for the Southern builder to follow. The plan also coincides in fundamental features with the plan of Resurrection Manor, in St. Mary's County, Maryland, and likewise with the plan of the original part of White Meadow Farm, in Sussex County. The said fundamental features being one large oblong room with a fireplace, besides which a winding stair (usually closed off by a door above the lower steps) ascended to the several bedrooms above. Additions to this plan might consist of one or, oftentimes, two adjacent rooms opening off from the one original oblong room. In the original structure, the rooms have admirable panelling and other woodwork characteristic of the period.

In many instances, as at the Ridgely house the rooms adjoining the oblong nucleus were built at the outset. The library or sitting-room at the Ridgely house represents the oblong nucleus; the present parlour and the dining-room open from it respectively at the east end and the west side.

Thomas Parke, who built the house, was apparently of the Parke and Custis Virginia connection. He was High Sheriff of Kent County from 1758 to 1760. His son, Colonel John Parke, of Revolutionary repute, was educated at Oxford and wrote a volume of verse entitled *The Lyric Works of Horace translated into English to which are added a Number of Original Poems. By a Native of America*. The book is now a rare item sought by collectors.

The Ridgelys of Delaware descend from Nicholas Greenberry Ridgely, born at Annapolis in 1694. He was the grandson of Colonel Henry Ridgely, who came from England in 1659 and founded the Ridgely family in Maryland. Nicholas Greenberry Ridgely was the son of Henry Ridgely and Katherine Greenberry, daughter of Governour Nicholas Greenberry. In 1711 when he was but seventeen, Nicholas married Sarah Worthington, a daughter of Colonel John Worthington. Ten years later he was a widower. Under the weight of his bereavements and the changed atmosphere of his paternal home, he left Maryland and came into Delaware.

In 1723 he was living near New Castle, where he married Ann French, who lived only a few years and left him with several motherless daughters. About 1735 he was living at Salem, New Jersey. There, in 1736, he married a widow with two small children; Mary, the widow of Captain Benjamin Vining and daughter



Ridgely House facing on Dover Green.

of Judge Hugh Middleton. Not long afterwards, with his new family, including his own infant son, Charles Greenberry, Nicholas settled in Dover.

Thence onward Nicholas took an active part in politics. Soon after his arrival in Dover he became a Justice of the Supreme Court of the Three Lower Counties and continued in that office until his death in 1755. In 1745, Caesar Rodney, still a minor, chose Nicholas Ridgely to be his guardian.

Having bought land west of Dover, in 1749 Nicholas Ridgely built and moved into the brick plantation house thereon. This was Eden Hill, the plantation Charles Greenberry Ridgely inherited from his father.

The foregoing explanatory interlude has been necessary because the stories of the House on The Green and of Eden Hill are so inseparably associated and because the people who have lived in them have been so identified with the public life of Delaware through a long period of years. Also, houses cannot be dissociated from the people who lived in them.

Charles Greenberry Ridgely studied medicine in Philadelphia under Dr. Phineas Bond. In 1758 he returned to Dover to practice. He married Mary Wynkoop, of Philadelphia, in June, 1761. At the death of his mother in December of the same year, he came into possession of Eden Hill.

Finding it inconvenient to practise from Eden Hill, in 1767 Dr. Ridgely moved into the old Parke dwelling on The Green and shortly afterwards bought it from Thomas Parke's estate. It was at this time that the western addition was made, affording the Doctor suitable office rooms, on the ground floor, away from the rest of the house.

Dr. Ridgely was active in political life. In 1765, before he moved into the house on The Green, he had been elected to the General Assembly and continued to serve in most sessions to the end of his life. In 1767, he urged the passage of a bill "to prohibit the importation of slaves into this government." From 1769 to 1779 he was the Treasurer of Kent County. Just before the Revolution he was Chairman of the Kent County Committee of Correspondence. And he was a member of the Constitutional Convention that framed the Delaware Constitution of 1776.

In 1772, his wife, Mary Wynkoop, died, leaving him to cope with the rearing of five young children. Of this perplexity he was relieved in 1774, when he married Ann Moore, the daughter of Judge William Moore and the Lady Williamina, of Moore Hall in the Welsh Barony of Pennsylvania. Ann was the younger sister-in-law of his old preceptor, Dr. Phineas Bond.

This marriage greatly increased an already wide family connection and also kept the family at Dover in closer touch with Philadelphia. The house on The Green became more and more a cherished destination for the many Ridgely relatives and their friends. The hospitality there dispensed extended to the numerous men in public life with whom Dr. Ridgely came into almost daily contact.

Dr. Ridgely died in November, 1785. He had not spared himself in his practice. It involved riding on indifferent roads in all weathers and at all hours and, in addition, he had given much of his energy to the service of his Country and State. His arduous life ended when he was only forty-seven.

After the Doctor's death, Mrs. Ridgely moved to Eden Hill, which had been left to her for life. She had always loved the country and was fully capable of managing the plantation. It pleased her to be able to direct farm operations on the spot.

From 1767, when Dr. Ridgely had moved into the house on The Green, Eden Hill had been in the care of a tenant-farmer. The immediate family contacts with the place had been in the frequent visits they made from town, Eden Hill was only about a mile from The Green. When Mrs. Ridgely moved to Eden Hill, the house on The Green was rented. It was not again occupied by any of the family until Dr. Abraham Ridgely rented it from 1794 to 1799.

The next member of the family to live there was Henry Moore Ridgely, the son of Dr. Charles Ridgely and Ann Moore. In 1803, as a rising young lawyer of twenty-four, he married Sarah Banning and brought his bride to live in the house where he was born.



Ridgely House, Dover. A view in the Library, the original "great room" of the house, with fireplace and winding stair beside it.



Ridgely House, Dover. Parlour, the "added" room adjoining the Library.

When only twenty-eight, he was elected President of the newly-founded Farmers' Bank of the State of Delaware and continued to hold that office until his death, forty years later. His abilities as a lawyer were highly esteemed and he stood at the top of the legal profession.

His services in public life were many. He was repeatedly elected to the State Legislature. As a leading Federalist, he was elected to the United States Congress in 1811 and 1813, but declined nomination in 1815. He was thrice Secretary of State in Delaware. In this capacity he set the files of that office in order and arranged the scattered records of the State. He asked to be made a Levy Court Commissioner in order to put the County papers in shape. This same service he also performed in his trusteeship for the County Almshouse.

In 1827 Henry Moore Ridgely was elected to the United States Senate to fill the unexpired term of Senator Nicholas Van Dyke, who had died in March, 1826.

In 1830, Chancellor Nicholas Ridgely died and Eden Hill went to the heir, Henry Moore Ridgely's thirteen-year-old son Henry. After that, Henry Moore Ridgely gave much of his time and attention to farming.

In 1841 the house on The Green was the scene of an unusual incident. It cannot be better told than in Mrs. Henry Ridgely's words:

"During this winter a speaker came to Dover, Lucretia Mott, who arrived from the north via Smyrna with a small party of Quakers. She had spoken there on Abolition. The hearers were infuriated and the men of her party were tarred and feathered. This news reached Dover Green before the lady herself arrived; Senator Ridgely heard of the outrage and decided that Dover should not be disgraced by similar behavior. When the Abolitionists reached Dover, he met them and with his sons escorted them to his house on The Green. Ann Ridgely was the hostess. Lucretia Mott was to speak from the steps of the Court House directly opposite the Ridgely house. When it was time for the speech, Mr. Ridgely and several other gentlemen escorted the party to the Court House steps. It is said they carried guns. When the meeting was over they retraced their way through a mob collected on The Green. They entered the house with its low doorstep and went into the parlor, where a window gave onto the street without.

As the crowd had gathered around the window and there were murmurs from outside, one of the guests suggested that the shutters should be closed. Henry Ridgely forbade this. He said that no one was afraid. A fire burned brightly on the hearth in the little parlor and Lucretia Mott was asked to sit near it while the family, Ann and two of her suitors included, gathered near to listen to the fascinating talker's anecdotes. Miss Mott was an animated speaker. At one point in her tale she arose from her chair to make an emphatic gesture and stepped forward, without realizing she had done so. Then, intending to resume her chair, to her surprise and to the dismay of her hearers she sat instead upon the floor.

Charles duPont ran and tenderly picked her up. Another young man in the party burst into a rude laugh and hid his face in his handkerchief. Both these men had asked Ann's hand in marriage, but up to this moment she had been unable to make up her mind. After the episode she knew that Charles duPont was her choice, and soon thereafter they became engaged."*

The house on The Green eventually descended to Henry Ridgely, the grandson of Henry Moore Ridgely.

**The Ridgelys of Delaware & Their Circle. What Them Befell in Colonial & Federal Times: Letters 1751-1890*, by Mabel Lloyd Ridgely, beginning with the birth of Nicholas Greenberry Ridgely in 1694, gives not only an intimate picture of family life at the House on The Green and at Eden Hill, and their occupants' relations with the public life of Delaware, but also much valuable information about other houses and the general history of the State. Its many engaging sidelights reveal the cultural life of Delaware with Province and State.

Nicholas Ridgely.

1 Lot in Down 4 1/2 square inches with good dwelling House and other improvements \$500-0-0	500			
1 Lot containing 1 acre no building in said town of Down	50			
1 other Lot part in, & part out of Down divided into 4 lots without any building	160		710	
			400	
			1110	
1 negro man Elijah 26 years old	50		50	
1 House £60. - 1 cow £4. -	64			
1 Bag of 80 of plate £35. 6. 8	33 16 8		97 16 8	
			200	
122 ac. land and Mill where Peter Miller lives	200		100	16 8
Personal Tax	200			
say £400.00.00	400			
	457 16 8		457 16 8	

Richard Randall.

1 Lot in Down 1 brick House in bad repair, and 4 or 5 Gran? Houses - in desperate order. Thruon	416 10		416 10	
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Williamina Ridgely, minor.

284 acres of land 200 cleared midling building at 50/-	710		710	
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Mary Ridgely, minor.

300 acres of land 200 cleared midling building at 55/-	825		825	
--	-----	--	-----	--

Henry Moss Ridgely, minor.

1 House & Lot in Down and small lot near the Pool	400			
1 Lot part in & part out of Down about 10 acres	200		600	

George W. Ridgely, minor.

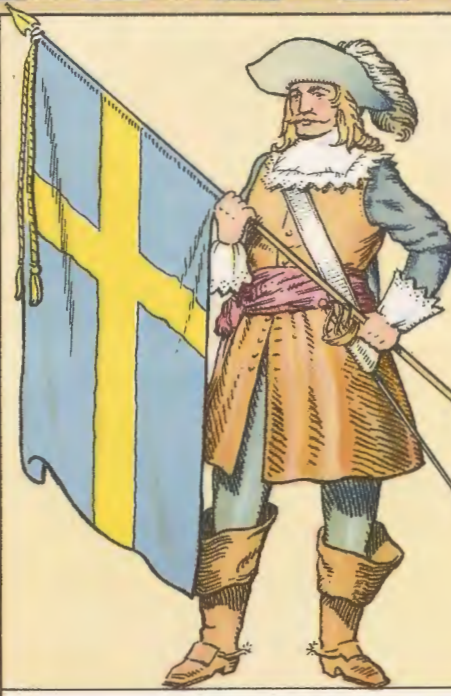
317 acres of land 200 cleared bad buildings at 40/-	634		634	
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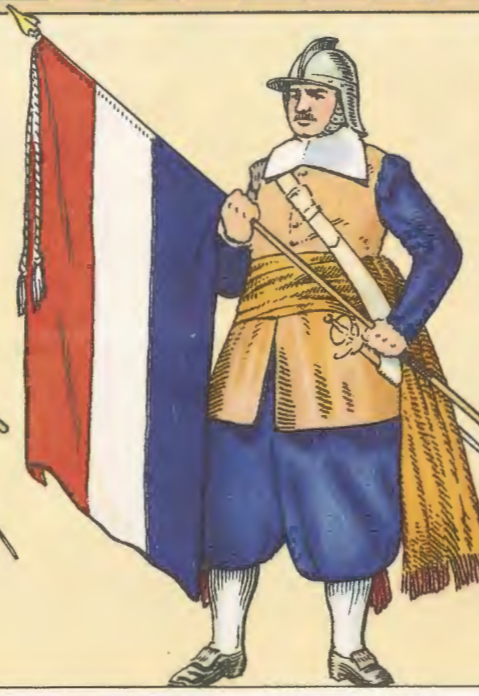


SWEDEN

The Swedes
Gustavus Adolphus, The Great King of Sweden, fostered the creation of The Province of New Sweden in America. Under his successor, Queen Christina, the first expedition of two ships, "Kalmar Nyckel" and "Fogel Grip" sailed into Delaware Bay in March, 1638.



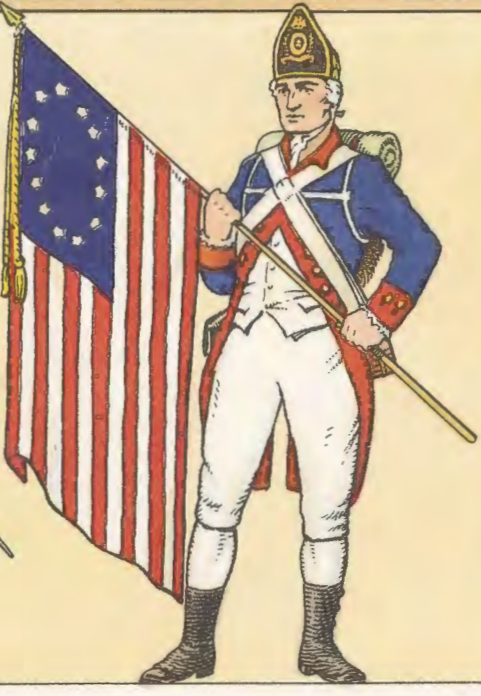
Swedish Soldier of 1638



Dutch Soldier of 1651



English Soldier of 1664



American Soldier of 1776

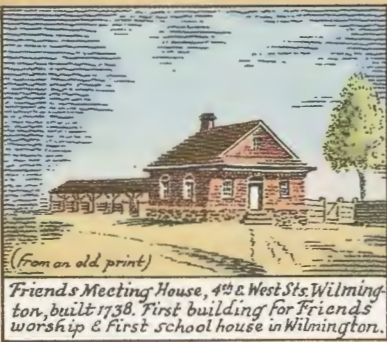


NETHERLANDS

The Dutch
In 1651 eleven Dutch ships sailed up The Delaware and Gov. Pieter Stuyvesant with 120 soldiers marched overland from New Amsterdam, and at Sandhook, (New Castle) built Fort Casimir. This was the Dutch stronghold in Delaware.



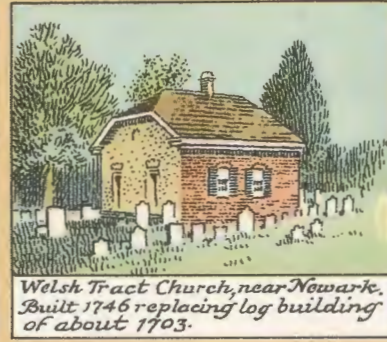
Old Swedes Church, Wilmington. Original structure built 1638-39. South porch added 1750-60. Tower bellfry 1824.



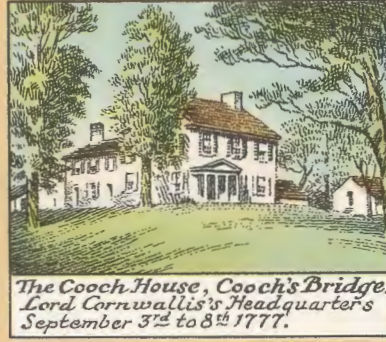
Friends Meeting House, 422 West Sts. Wilmington, built 1738. First building for Friends worship & first school house in Wilmington.



Old College, University of Delaware, at Newark. Built 1834.



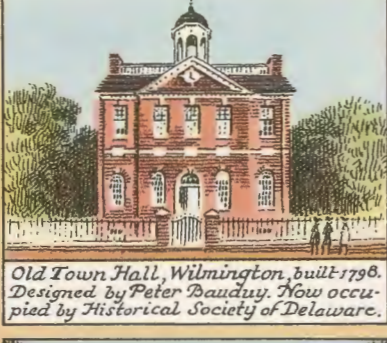
Welsh Tract Church, near Newark. Built 1746 replacing log building of about 1703.



The Cooch House, Cooch's Bridge. Lord Cornwallis's headquarters September 22 to 28, 1777.



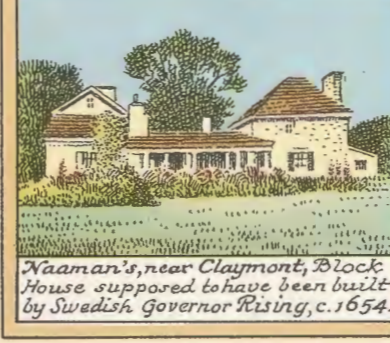
First Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, 10th & Market Sts. Built 1740. Re-erected in Brandywine Park 1916. Occupied by Colonial Dames.



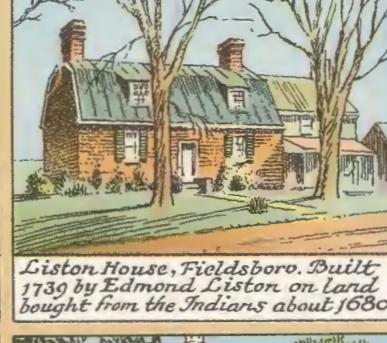
Old Town Hall, Wilmington, built 1798. Designed by Peter Bauduy. Now occupied by Historical Society of Delaware.



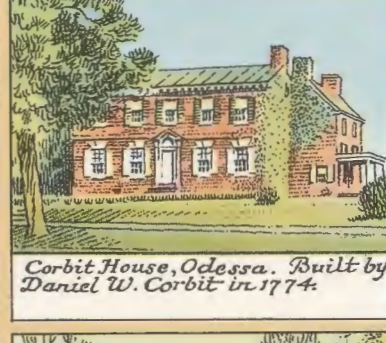
William Penn who arrived at New Castle Oct. 27, 1682 in the ship "Welcome"



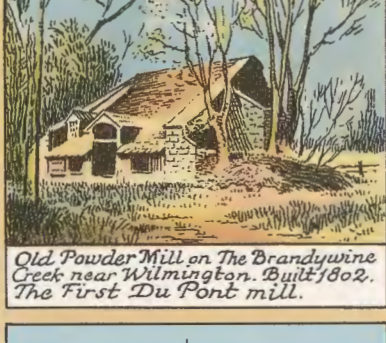
Naaman's, near Claymont, Block House supposed to have been built by Swedish Governor Rising, c. 1654.



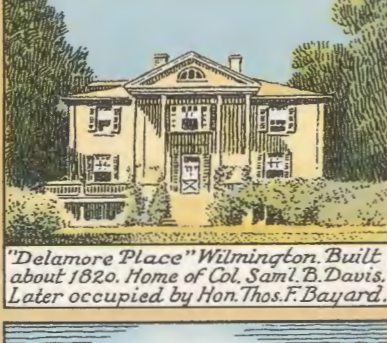
Liston House, Fieldsboro. Built 1739 by Edmond Liston on land bought from the Indians about 1680.



Corbit House, Odesa. Built by Daniel W. Corbit in 1774.



Old Powder Mill on the Brandywine Creek near Wilmington. Built 1602. The first Du Pont mill.



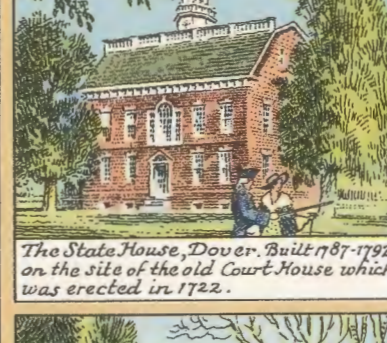
"Delamore Place" Wilmington. Built about 1820. Home of Col. Saml. B. Davis. Later occupied by Hon. Thos. F. Bayard.



Johan Printz Governor of New Sweden 1643 - 1653



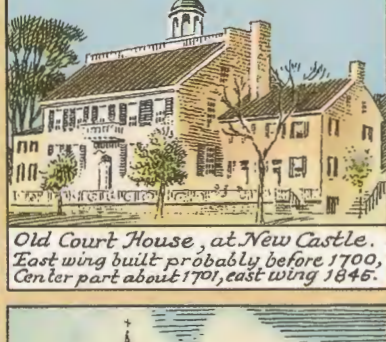
Pieter Stuyvesant Seized Fort Christina & Fort Casimir in 1653



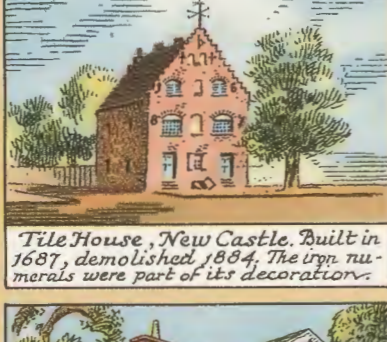
The State House, Dover. Built 1787-1792 on the site of the old Court House, which was erected in 1722.



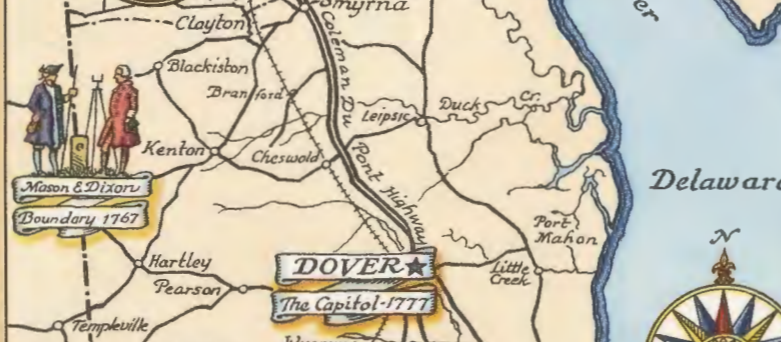
Barratt's Chapel, near Frederica. Built 1780. Hon. B. Barratt and Dr. Thos. Coke met here to arrange for Conference to organize Methodist Episcopal Church in America.



Old Court House, at New Castle. East wing built probably before 1700. Center part about 1701, east wing 1846.



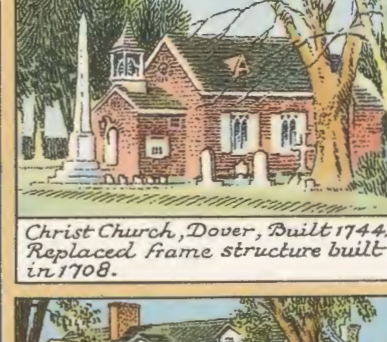
"Tile House", New Castle. Built in 1687, demolished 1884. The iron numerals were part of its decoration.



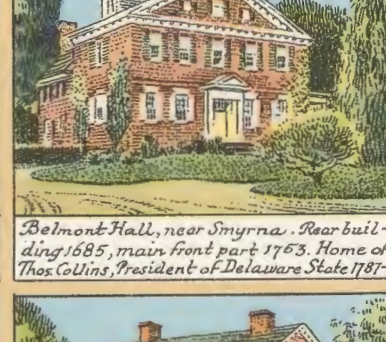
James II, Duke of York. In 1664 took over all Dutch Colonies on the Delaware.



James II, Duke of York. In 1664 took over all Dutch Colonies on the Delaware.



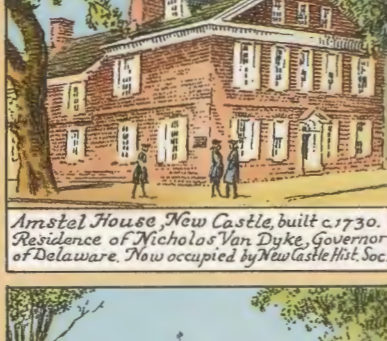
Christ Church, Dover. Built 1744. Replaced frame structure built in 1708.



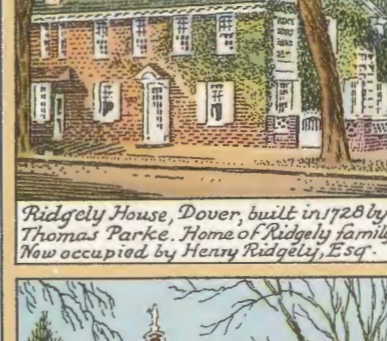
Belmont Hall, near Smyrna. Rear building 1685, main front part 1763. Home of Thos. Collins, President of Delaware State 1871-9.



Immanuel Church, New Castle. Built 1703; transept tower and steeple added 1820-22.



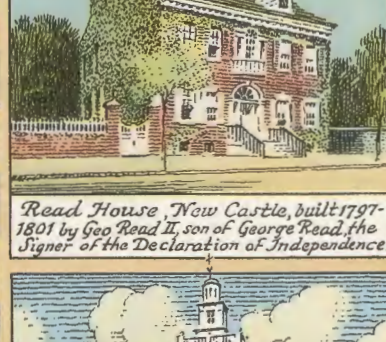
Amstel House, New Castle, built c. 1730. Residence of Nicholas Van Dyke, Governor of Delaware. Now occupied by New Castle Hist. Soc.



Ridgely House, Dover, built in 1728 by Thomas Parke. Home of Ridgely family. Now occupied by Henry Ridgely, Esq.



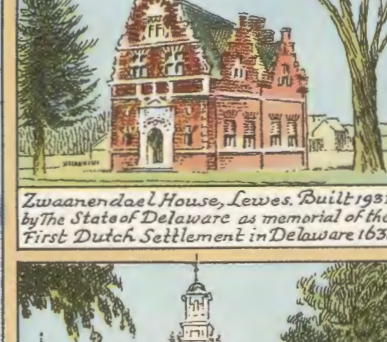
Dickinson House, near Dover, also called Loper House, built 1734 by Saml. Dickinson. Early home of John Dickinson "Penman of Revolution."



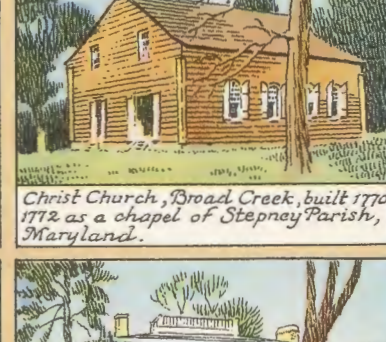
Read House, New Castle, built 1797-1801 by Geo. Read II, son of George Read, the Signer of the Declaration of Independence.



The Academy on the Green, New Castle. Began 1798, finished 1811; now the Parish House of Immanuel Church.



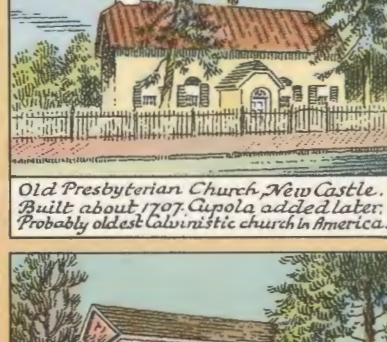
Zwaanendael House, Lewes. Built 1691 by the States of Delaware as memorial of the first Dutch Settlement in Delaware 1631.



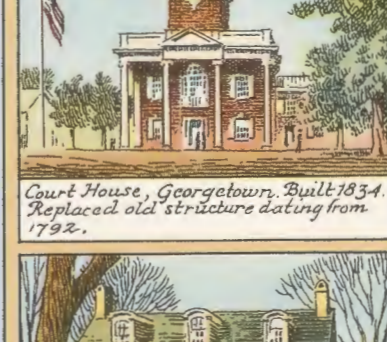
Christ Church, Broad Creek, built 1770-1772 as a chapel of Stephen Parish, Maryland.



Old Town Hall, New Castle, built 1823 by the Trustees of The Commons. The turret was formerly entrance to the market.



Old Presbyterian Church, New Castle. Built about 1707. Chapel, added later. Probably oldest Calvinistic church in America.



Court House, Georgetown. Built 1834. Replaced old structure dating from 1792.



Causery House, Milford, built 1763. Former residence of Levin Crapper, later occupied by Gov. Peter Caesar, Daniel Rogers & Judge Caleb S. J. J. Conrad.

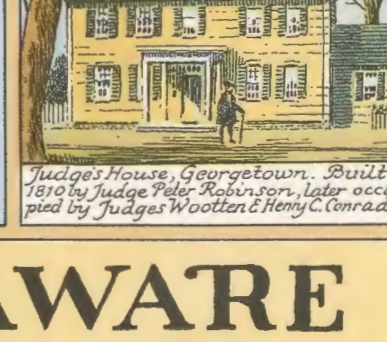


ENGLAND

The English
In 1664 Charles II gave his Brother James Duke of York all the land from Maine to New Jersey, inclusive. Two ships under Sir Robert Carr took possession of the Delaware territory, captured New Amstel and renamed it New Castle and the third national flag, that of England waved over Delaware.



Old Drawers Meeting House, located near Odesa. Organized about 1700. Present church, erected 1773, restored 1861.



Judges House, Georgetown. Built 1810 by Judge Peter Rogers, later occupied by Judges Wootten & Henry C. Conrad.



AMERICA

The Americans
Over a century after the English conquered this territory, the Americans, in 1776, asserted and maintained their Right to Independence, and Delaware was organized as a Sovereign State. "Blue Hen's Chicken"

THE STATE OF DELAWARE
First Permanently Settled by at The Rocks at the Mouth of the Christina River and Founded the Colony of NEW SWEDEN. They built Christinahamn (Wilmington). They were Pieter Stuyvesant who captured the Forts Christina & Casimir (New Castle) and held the Territory until overcome by The English Forces sent by James Duke of York in 1664. The Dutch at Zwaanendael (Lewes)