The State House Yard.

THE STATE HOUSE YARD, AND WHO OWNED IT FIRST AFTER WILLIAM PENN.

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[The following information supplements the items about the State House Yard, Philadelphia, contributed by Hon. N. S. Barratt, Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog. Vol. XXXIX, October, 1915, pp. 505-6.]

Originally this parcel of ground was only one of the many city blocks, or "squares," (but it was far from being so geometrically, being 510 by 396 feet), on the first plan, and, till well into the eighteenth century, was far, as conditions were then, from the chief settlements on the bluffs of the rivers. It was divided into sixteen equal portions, or lots, each 49 1/2 feet in width on Chestnut and Walnut Streets, and each lot 255 feet deep. (On the accompanying map of the State House Yard, I have indicated these original lots by figures 1 to 16 for convenience.) Being of little value, these lots were used by Penn as "bonus lots," which is to say, when he first began to sell his land, he gave to each purchaser of a "country lot," or a farm site, a city lot, till he exhausted his supply. Two of his city blocks he had set aside as gift lots for certain Welsh Friends, purchasers of acreage in the great Welsh Tract, and their lots were described in early records as "the Welsh Lots." One of these blocks was situated between Fourth and Fifth Streets, and the other between Fifth and Sixth Streets, both lying between Chestnut and Walnut Streets. The eastward block was given to the Welshmen settling in the townships of Merion and Haverford, and the other, which became the State House Yard, to the Radnor Welshmen. These Radnor township Welshmen, all but one from Radnorshire, the
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first owners of the Yard, were (aside from David Powell, a Provincial surveyor, and a Welshman), prominent in the affairs of the Welsh Tract, or “Barony,” (that locality adjoining Philadelphia on the west, now known as “along the Main Line” of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Of them were John Roberts, (not the founder of the “Pencoid” family); Edward Jones, (not the early physician); James Morgan and his son John Morgan; “John Evans, gentleman, from Nantmele;” David Kinsey, a carpenter; Richard and Samuel Miles, brothers, from Llanvihangel Velgyen; “Evan ap Oliver, gentleman, from Glascombe,” said to have been a shipmate of Penn, in 1682; David James, a mariner, and his son Howell James, from Glascombe; William Davies, a Church of England man, at whose home in Radnor township, the Episcopal Welsh congregation of St. David had services before the present church was built; John Jarman, at whose dwelling house the first meetings of the Radnor Friends were held; Rees Thomas, a woodsawyer, who was one of most prominent men of the Welsh Barony, and John Jones, whose quaint letter 2 gives us a queer impression of the first settlers of Philadelphia.

In the early years of the Province, the General Assembly had no permanent place for its meetings, and met at private houses, 3 the Friends’ Meeting House, and in the schoolhouse, and in forty-six years had worn out its welcome in the homes of rich Philadelphians, and then it was thinking of trying the hospitality of the homes of the rival town, Chester, for a while. This may have been only a threat, anyway it awakened the Philadelphians, and in the Spring of 1729, while the

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1 See Glenn’s “Merion in the Welsh Tract,” Browning’s “Welsh Settlement of Pennsylvania.”


3 Homes of Whitpain, Carpenter, Norris, and Shippen, according to Assembly Minutes, and at Makin’s schoolhouse.
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Assembly was hunting a place in which to hold its meeting, the Philadelphians petitioned to be allowed to erect a "State House." This seemed to be a new idea to the Assemblymen, and the suggestion pleased them, for immediately they "resolved" that "such a house was very much needed," but they declined to burden the Philadelphians with its cost, and enacted that £2000 be raised for the purpose, including the payment for a site. A committee (Messrs. Thomas Lawrence, Andrew Hamilton and John Kearsley), was appointed to select the site, get the plans for the building and contract for its erection. At this time, Mr. Hamilton, who was the Speaker, and Judge William Allen were named the trustees of the purchasing and building fund, and authorized to buy the land on which to build the State House. Thereupon, trouble began to brew in the committee. Kearsley wanted the building placed in High Street, but Hamilton urged Chestnut Street. Kearsley wanted his idea for the style of the building accepted, but Hamilton also had an opinion. Lawrence said nothing. Finally, the difference of opinion had to be submitted to the General Assembly. It settled the squabble in short order, giving the Speaker, Mr. Hamilton, full power to do as he thought best for the interest of the Province. Thus, Hamilton, who like Jefferson, had an "architectural head," won, and Kearsley, who has to his credit the design of Christ Church, Philadelphia, never got over his defeat. Thus, the State House came to be built after Hamilton's plan, and upon the site he selected. (The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has his original drawing of the elevation.) It was at this juncture, about October, 1730, when Allen and Hamilton began buying the lots (Nos. 1-8, on plan), on Chestnut Street.

Lot No. 1 (on which, in after years, and the adjoining Lot No. 2, the Philadelphia County Court House, 50 feet front, was erected), was, with Lot No. 9, given
to David Powell, the Surveyor, in payment for work for the Province, who patented it, 26 October 1715. He sold and conveyed it, by deed dated 15 Feb. 1725–6, to Rees Thomas, a sawyer, and Sampson Thomas, of New Castle, (son of William Thomas), all Welsh Friends. Subsequently, these men borrowed some money, giving Lot No. 1 as security, from a Thomas Barnard, and, by a deed dated 10 Dec. 1728, conveyed the whole lot to him. In 1731–2, when Mr. Hamilton wished to buy this lot, No. 1, for the Province, he found that the mortgage had not been paid off, and that Rees Thomas was dead, thereupon, Sampson Thomas gave deed, dated 12 June, 1732, to Mr. Hamilton, for his interest in the lot, and the said Barnard also being deceased, his relict, Sarah Barnard, gave her deed, dated 28 Feb. 1732. Mr. Hamilton secured the passage of a resolution by the Assembly, 20 Feb. 1735–6, to take over this Lot No. 1 for the Province, and to authorize Philadelphia County to erect a court-house upon it. By his will, dated 31 July, and 1 August, 1741, Mr. Hamilton devised the whole of this lot, and some others, portions of the Yard, which he had also bought for the use of the Province, in 1732–36, to Judge Allen, and by his deed, (Lib. H. XV, fo. 112), dated 13 Sept. 1761, Judge Allen and James Hamilton, the heir of Andrew Hamilton, conveyed this Lot No. 1, and the other lots devised by Mr. Hamilton, to Isaac Norris, et al., the trustees then acting in the acquirement of the portions of this block which the Province did not then own, to complete the Yard. An Act of the Assembly, 17 Feb. 1762, provided for the conveyance to Philadelphia County, of fifty feet, (or 49 1/2 feet), of land on Chestnut Street, and 75 feet along Sixth Street, which was this Lot No. 1, at the Southeast corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets,
"on which should be erected within twenty years, a building to be used for the holding of Courts," and as "a Common Hall." The balance (180 feet on Sixth Street), of this Lot No. 1 remained with the Province, and on 29 March, 1787, 15 feet on Sixth Street, were added to the County Court House lot, by an Act of Assembly, and, soon after this, the erection of the courthouse was begun, and was fairly completed in the winter of 1788-9. The subsequent history of this building having been well recounted in recent years, it would be supererogation to continue it here.

Lot No. 2, the next lot eastward, was given originally by William Penn to Richard Miles, a weaver and a Welsh Friend, as bonus for having purchased 100 acres of land in Radnor township, in the Welsh Tract, where he settled as a farmer. Miles, whose warrant for this lot was dated 22 Nov. 1683, sold his lot, by deed dated 13 Nov. 1695, to David Powell, the surveyor, (Lib. J. VI., fo. 154).

Lot No. 3, was given as a "bonus lot," by warrant dated 29 March 1683, to David Kinsey, a carpenter, and a Welsh Friend. He and Miles both came from Radnorshire, and he also bought 100 acres of land in Radnor township. On Kinsey's decease, his daughter, Madeline, succeeded to the ownership of this lot, when she was the wife of Howell James, of Radnor township, and they, by a joint deed of 10 Nov. 1695, sold it to David Powell, for £8. 15. 0. (Lib. J. VI. fo. 151).

Lot No. 4 was the "bonus lot" of Peter Edwards, who had also bought 100 acres of land in Radnor township, on 30 July, 1683, as did Miles and Kinsey, out of the 5000-acre tract there located by "Richard Davies,
gentleman of Welshpoole.' Peter assigned his claim to this lot to another Welshman, "John Evans, gentleman," from Nantmele to Radnor township, who sold the town lot also to David Powell, the surveyor.

Lot No. 5, was the "bonus lot" of "Evan Oliver, gentleman," who removed from Glascombe, in Radnorshire, to a 200-acre farm property he had bought in said Davies' great Radnor tract. After his decease, his town lot stood some time in the name of his relict and widow, Jean Oliver; she sold it also to David Powell, who patented it 17 Dec. 1689.

Thus the four lots, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, being 196 1/2 feet on Chestnut Street, and each 255 feet in depth, were owned at one time by Surveyor Powell, and he, by deed dated 26 March, 1706, sold and conveyed them to Richard Hill, merchant, after whose death, his nephew, Levin Hill, of Anne Arundel Co., Md., possessed them, and they were purchased from him (deed dated 14 Oct. 1730), by Judge Allen, as trustee, "for the use of the Province." At this date, the Judge also purchased the remaining lots, Nos. 6, 7, 8, they being 150 feet on Chestnut Street, and running back 255 feet on Fifth Street. After his lots had passed from Powell to Hill, there remained to Powell, through deeds between them, dated 26-7 March, 1706, "a strip of land one foot and a half in breadth, and in length 255 feet" off of the east side of Hill's purchase, or between Lots 5 and 6. Did he reserve this strip of land for half of an alley, as it would lie along the rear ends of his lots fronting on Fifth Street? (Exemp. Lib. VI., fo. 219.)

Lot No. 6 of the three Chestnut Street lots, was the "bonus lot," by warrant dated 8 May, 1690, of John Jarman (this name variously written Jermon, Jormon, Jermin, Jarmain, &c), a weaver, and a Welsh Friend, who removed with his family from Llangerig parish, Montgomeryshire, in 1683, to land he had bought in Radnor township. By his deed of 10 July, 1690, he
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sold this town lot to Surveyor Powell, who built a brick dwelling house on it, the first building erected in this block, or in what was to be the State House Yard. (Exemp. Lib. VI. fo. 299.) He may have himself resided here. The house was standing when the Chestnut Street lots were conveyed to Judge Allen, and it may be that the Assembly met in it, while the State House was being built. This is possible, as the house could accommodate the then Assembly, and the State House proper, being about 100 feet on Chestnut Street, erected upon Lots Nos. 4 and 5, would not encroach upon Powell's house, but when the detached offices were built it had to give way to the eastern one.

Lot No. 7 was the gift lot to John Roberts, a maltster, who purchased 150 acres of land in Radnor township, from "Richard Davies, gent." He sold his town lot to David Powell, who in turn sold it to Richard Hill, by deed dated 1 Nov. 1705, whose nephew, Levin Hill, aforesaid, sold it to Judge Allen, the Provincial trustee, 14 Oct. 1730.

Lot No. 8, at the southwest corner of "Chestnut Street and the Fifth Street from the Delaware," was the "bonus lot" of "Edward Jones, of St. Harmon, gentleman," by warrant dated 29 Nov. 1683. He had bought from Richard Davies 250 acres out of his 5000 acre tract in Radnor township. But subsequently, he sold this farm land, by deed of 4 Feb. 1690, to James Morgan, and never came to Pennsylvania. The "bonus" reverted to James, and, his son and heir, John Morgan, sold it to David Powell, 10 Nov. 1695, who sold it, with the adjoining lot, to Richard Hill, whose heir conveyed it to Judge Allen, trustee, 14 Oct. 1730. Years after, it was on this lot and part of the adjoining one the City Building was erected.

It was thus that Judge Allen, as trustee for the purchase of these lots along Chestnut Street from private parties for the use of the Province, by two deeds, dated
14 Oct. 1730, acquired from Levin Hill, and his wife, Elizabeth, the two parcels of land on Chestnut Street, one being east and west, 150 feet, and the other, east and west, 196 1/2 feet, or 396 feet on Chestnut Street, from Fifth Street, west to David Powell's lot, (49 1/2 feet front, which had been conveyed to the Trustee), at Sixth and Chestnut Streets, the whole being 255 feet in depth.

When Judge Allen bought these seven Chestnut Street lots for the State House Yard, there were four tenants on them, holding leases from Richard Hill, (several times Mayor of the city). These rents were conveyed to Andrew Hamilton, as trustee, who devised them to Judge Allen, as trustee, and by a deed dated 17 Sep. 1761, (Lib. H. XV, fo. 112) the Judge and James Hamilton, (Andrew's heir), conveyed them to Isaac Norris, *et al.*, the "State House Trustees." The citations in these leases are of interest, as one shows that, in 1720-1732, one Thomas Paglar, "a founder," (*fondeur*), who worked as one of the bricklayers on the State House, occupied Powell's brick house, with a lot 49 1/2 feet on Chestnut Street, by 75 feet deep, it being a portion of Lot No. 6. Below Paglar, resided Matthew Dowlin, (or Danlin †), a butcher, occupying a house on a lot 55 feet front on Fifth Street, and below him, on Fifth Street, was William Davies, a Welshman, on a lot 40 feet on Fifth Street, and below him, resided Michael Morris, on a lot 34 feet on Fifth Street, thus showing the irregular sizes of city lots in the "suburbs."

By the aforesaid deed of 17 Sep. 1761, of Allen and Hamilton, we learn that by further purchases, the Chestnut Street lots, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and Nos. 6, 7, 8, were extended southward about 80 feet. That is, William Hudson, a tanner, (he was the Mayor in 1726), had sold, by deed dated 28 Aug. 1732, to Andrew Hamilton, as a State House trustee, a lot of land, "82 feet" on
Fifth Street, "running back the width of two ordinary lots," or 99 feet. Subsequently, Thomas Hobbs parted with 49 1/2 by 82 feet off of his back lot, (No. 14), and, at the same time, Thomas Stappleford, a joiner, conveyed to Mr. Hamilton "80 feet" on Sixth Street, 99 feet deep, and John Becket, later, 80 by 49 1/2 feet, the back end of Lot No. 11.

But it was not until in 1761, by the final deed of 16 Sept., as mentioned, that "The Honourable William Allen, Chief Justice," &c, conveyed to the State House Trustees, the land purchased from Levin Hill. In Nov. 1733, Judge Allen had conveyed for the sum of £500, "the lots and rents," for "the use of the Province," to certain trustees, but there being some irregularity, or dissatisfaction, the Assembly, by a new Act, 21 Feb. 1736, vested "the State House and other Public Buildings with their lots" in new trustees, "for the use of the Province," and it was also enacted that Mr. Hamilton and Judge Allen should convey the land bought for the Province to them.

Returning to the period when the site for the State House was bought, we will find that it was not until in August, 1732, that Hamilton was in position to inform the Assembly he had engaged the ground, and asked for the purchase money; he also stated, that he had procured materials to build with. This decides that the actual work on the State House began some time after 8 August, 1732.

*To present-day people it may seem strange that there was no cornerstone "laid" with ceremonies, especially the Masonic, because Judge Allen was the Grand Master, in 1731-2, the first in America, and James Hamilton filled the same office in 1735, and Thomas Lawrence subsequently; but the extant records of St. John's Lodge, beginning 24 June, 1731, "Brother Ben Franklin's" private books, 1730, &c., and his "Gazette," 1731, &c., say nothing about such a function. The records or minutes of the Grand Lodge for this period cannot be found, and are probably forever lost. But it is possible that Friends' influence was still strong enough to stop such "senseless proceedings."
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Because of changes in the plans, and difficulty with the "allied trades" (for there seems to have been an incipient "trades' union" this soon, when laborers thought they had some "rights"), the building was far from finished in January 1734, and so reported to the Assembly. Nor was it much more than roofed, when, in October 1735, the Assembly had its first sitting in the State House. Nor was the second floor usable next year, much to the disappointment of Judge Allen, for he had to spread his civic banquet, as the new Mayor, in the Assembly Room, on the first floor, 30 Sep. 1736.

Mr. Hamilton did not live to see his building completed, as he died on 4 Aug. 1741, for the interior woodwork, panelling, doors, &c, was not finished till in 1744. He had rendered, in October 1738, the account of the money (£4043.16.11, Penna. Currency), he had expended, and it was satisfactory to the Assembly, which, thereupon, voted him £402, 3. 9 for his services, but only £32 each to Lawrence and Kearsley for their part. Included in Mr. Hamilton's expenditures was the cost of two office buildings, which were not included in the original estimate. These two small, two-story brick houses, which were ordered to be erected in March 1734, were unfinished in January 1736. One was built at each end of the State House, but not joining it. This was the general appearance of the State House as it stood in 1756; and, as it was without the present brick tower, in which the stairs to the second floor are now located, it has been an interesting question how the second floor was reached. Possibly, this was done by an outside stairs, as the second stories of the two adjacent office buildings were reached this way. In 1749-50, measures were taken to erect a tower, "to contain the stairway," and for "a suitable place for hanging a bell."

Sometime after 1732, when Hudson and Stappleford sold the land which was added to the State House Yard,
as mentioned, and before 1740, a brick wall was built on the back ends of the Chestnut Street lots, as indicated in map, indented by two unacquired Walnut Street lots. When transfers were made of the lots abutting on the yard, the “State House Wall” was always given as the northward boundary.

If at first there were walls along the Fifth and Sixth Streets bounds of the State House Yard, and how far they were carried, I do not find positive information, but from the following item of June, 1741, it appears that the Assembly ordered to be built “a boarded Fence from each Office to each wall, as high as the Wall, and doors fitted in the Wall adjoining the Offices, to inclose the whole;” and “part of the Brick Wall ought to be taken down, and new built, and the North End of each Wall turned round, or carried upright, to prevent Children getting over.” As to the rear, or South wall, under the same date, it was reported to the Assembly, that “the Earth being high, and the Wall low, on the South Side of the Brick Wall, the Earth should be taken away to prevent getting over.” From these items, it seems that the Yard was not open to the public. From this early report on the condition of the Yard, it may be further learned, that the builders of the brick walls could not get proper, or sufficient flat stones to top it, and, for this reason, there was fear for the stability of the brick walls through water and frost, for, it was explained, “the Bricks having many joints where water can get into the wall,” it was recommended to “put a Cornish on each side of the Wall to carry the Water,” and to cover the top with cedar shingles. As to the surface of the ground within the walls, no attempt was made to improve, or embellish it till many years later, and we can imagine the state of the Yard till in 1760–1, when measures were first taken by the Assembly to acquire by purchase the adjoining lots on Walnut Street.

Taking up the acquisition, by the trustees for the
State House, of the eight Walnut Street lots, it is found, that, in 1762, the Assembly had appointed a new set of trustees of public buildings, and passed an Act enabling them "to purchase the lots of ground then remaining in private hands of the Square [sic.] whereon the said State House now stands." For this purpose £5000 was appropriated. (Laws. vol. IV. p. 336). In due time, this Board started out to spend this appropriation, and buy the Walnut Street lots, as follows:

Lot No. 9 was given to Surveyor Powell for services, and he took patent for it, 26 Oct. 1715. As he had also acquired the lot above, (No. 1), he owned at this time the whole of the Sixth Street side of this block, as well as the whole of the Chestnut Street side and some more. By his deed of 29 Dec. 1715, Mr. Powell sold and conveyed the whole of this No. 9 lot to John Townsend, a carpenter.

Lot No. 10 was the "bonus lot" bestowed by warrant, dated 13 Oct. 1685, on John Jones, a Welsh Friend and a Radnor township settler. But he assigned his right to this town lot to William Davies of Radnor township who owned 450 acres, in three lots there. Mr. Davies had the lot patented to himself, 1 March, 1692–3. (Lib. E. IX., fo. 86). Both of these Welshmen were also owners of another Walnut Street lot, as will appear. William Davies, by deed dated 4 March, 1692–3, sold this No. 10 lot to Joshua Fearne, a Chester County land owner, on whose decease, his son and heir, Joshua Jr., of Morris River, West Jersey, inherited it and by deed dated 8 Oct. 1713, sold the whole lot to Surveyor Powell, who conveyed it, 27 Dec. 1715, to John Townsend, aforesaid. Thus, Mr. Townsend, in 1715, owned all of the two lots, Nos. 9 and 10, at the corner of Sixth and Walnut Streets.

On 14 July, 1716, by deed, John Townsend sold out of the upper part of his two lots, 211 1/4 feet by 99 feet on Sixth Street, to Hugh Lowdon, (who owned a lot at
Fifth and Walnut Streets), who by his will, 1722, devised his purchase to his nephew, Thomas Gamble, who sold it, 2 April, 1725, to Thomas Stappleford, who sold, as mentioned above, (80 by 99 feet on Sixth Street), to Andrew Hamilton, trustee, which portion eventually became a part of the first State House Yard. In 1739, Mr. Stappleford devised the balance of his lot, (131 by 99 feet on Sixth Street), to his daughter Mary, the first wife of Thomas Gordon, (1742–1772, son of Alexander Gordon of Philadelphia, merchant). By a deed dated 10 July, 1762, Thomas Gordon, and his second wife, also named Mary, (born Clark), sold and conveyed this lot to the State House Yard trustees.

John Townsend, dying intestate, the remainder of his lots, 99 feet on Walnut Street, by 43 3/4 feet on Sixth Street, went to his nine children, who by an arrangement between themselves as co-heirs, sold to a brother Charles Townsend, a carter, 67 feet on Walnut Street, (the balance of Lot 10, and a portion of Lot 9), and he sold this lot, by deed dated 6 Feb. 1769, to the State House trustees. This closed out Lot No. 10.

James Townsend, another son and co-heir of the carpenter, received the balance of Lot No. 9, which was 32 feet on Walnut Street, by 43 3/4 feet on Sixth Street, with a dwelling house. He sold the little lot and house, 26 Oct. 1756, to Edwin Erwin, a carter, and the Trustees purchased the corner from him, by deed dated 6 Feb. 1769. This closed out Lot No. 9.

Going to the corner of Fifth and Walnut Streets, or Lot No. 16, it is found to have been the "bonus lot" of John Evans, mentioned before, by warrant dated 6 April, 1683, which he patented 1 May, 1691. He was the purchaser of 350 acres of land, out of the 5000-acre tract of Richard Davies, in Radnor township, and out of this purchase he sold 100 acres to each John Jarman and John Roberts, the maltster, mentioned above. David Powell also bought this lot, by deed dated 10 Nov. 1695.
The adjoining property, *Lot No. 15*, was the "bonus lot" of David James, another Welsh Friend and a Radnor township land owner, by warrant dated 22 Nov. 1683. David died, and his daughter and sole heir, Mary James, sold the whole lot, 20 Nov. 1695, to, of course, David Powell, the surveyor. Thus this active Provincial surveyor, a Welsh Friend, an employee of Mr. Holme, the surveyor-general became the owner of all the corner lots of the State House Yard, all of its Chestnut Street front, and part of the Walnut Street side.

After Powell became the owner of Lots 15 and 16, that is 99 feet on Walnut Street, and 255 feet (half the depth of the block), on Fifth Street, he first sold to John Bird, a carpenter, the Walnut Street front, 127 1/2 feet (called also 130 feet in a deed), on Fifth Street, 14 Aug. 1695, and on 29 Aug. 1705, he sold to Bird the balance of the big lots, 127 1/2 by 99 feet, and thus John Bird owned Lots Nos. 16 and 15 in 1705, excepting the very corner of Fifth and Walnut Streets, for, by deed, dated 23 Dec. 1695, Bird had sold it, 38 feet on Walnut Street by "half the length of a common lot," or 127 1/2 (or 130) feet on Fifth Street, for £8, to John Redwood. By deed of 21 March, 1716, Bird sold the remainder of his two lots, 61 feet on Walnut Street by 127 1/2 feet on Fifth Street, to Hugh Lowdon, a merchant, for £200 Penna. Currency.

Now we shall see how these Fifth and Walnut Street lots came into the possession of the State House trustees, to be added to the Yard. John Redwood, who had built a dwelling house on his corner lot, sold his lot, 36 by 130 feet, to John Crewe, a potter, 29 June, 1698, who sold the same to John Pidgeon (*sic*), 22 August, 1701, who sold it to Robert Hinds (who worked as a bricklayer on the State House), 20 May, 1719, who took patent for it, and a lot above it, 43 feet on Fifth Street, 4 February 1745. He devised these
two lots, 17 Dec. 1746, to his daughter, Rachel, wife of Robert Tempest, and by deed dated 10 Sep. 1762, Robert and Rachel, for £1400 Penna. Currency, sold the two lots, 38 feet on Walnut Street, and 43 feet on Fifth Street, "adjoining the south side of the State House Wall," with three dwelling houses, to the Trustees.

We have seen that Hugh Lowdon owned, in 1716, two lots, namely 61 feet on Walnut Street, by 127 1/2 feet deep, and 127 1/2 feet on Fifth Street by 99 feet deep, the width of two original lots. By his will, in 1722, Mr. Lowdon devised to his wife Constance and his nephew, Thomas Gamble, the Walnut Street lot, with two dwellings on it, and to Thomas Stappleford his Fifth Street lot. In 1724, Gamble conveyed his interest to his aunt, the said Constance Lowdon, who thereupon gave the Walnut Street lot to her niece Mary (Brockcumbe), then wife of John Chappell, an inn-keeper, who patented it 24 Feb. 1745. By deed dated 26 May, 1767, Chappell, and his wife Martha, living at Mooreland, Philadelphia County, sold the lot to the Trustees, for £750 Penna. Currency. Of the balance of Hugh Lowdon’s holding here, the part he devised to Stappleford, we have seen that the latter sold it to the State House Trustees, in 1732, 82 feet on Fifth Street, which was included in the first State House Yard. The balance of his lot, 43 feet on Fifth Street, and along the State House Yard wall, passed, as above, through Hinds and Tempest to the Trustees, 10 Sep. 1762. Thus the State House Trustees acquired the corners of Walnut and Fifth and Sixth Streets, which leaves Lots 11, 12, 13 and 14 to be accounted for, and as briefly as possible.

Lot No. 11 was another "bonus lot" of the Welshman, David James, of Radnor township, in 1693, which his heiress, Mary James, sold to David Powell, of course, who sold it to one John Beckett, who sold the back end, 80 by 49 1/2 feet, "to the use of the Prov-
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ince," which portion, with Stappleford's lot, was added to the first State House Yard. The next owner of the balance of the lot was Joseph Shippen, Jr., who sold it to the Trustees, 13 Oct. 1762, for £396 Penna. Currency.

Lot No. 12 was the "bonus lot" of Samuel Miles, another Welshman, by warrant of 4 July, 1684, having purchased 100 acres of land in Radnor township. He came from Hamhanghobyeholgen parish, Radnorshire. Miles sold his town lot, 20 July, 1691, to one Thomas Hobbs, a mason, who sold it to Anthony Morris, a brewer, 16 June, 1727, who sold to Judge Allen personally, 21 Dec. 1742, who sold it, in 1762, to the Trustees, for £156. 3. 3, Penna. Currency. Because of such a tree on this lot, it was described as "Allen's cedar tree lot."

Lot No. 13 was the "bonus lot" of "the Govern's Mill'r," Ellis Jones, another Welshman, of Radnor township. He assigned his right to it, 12 Dec. 1687, to William David, who assigned it to James Morgan, both of Radnor township, Welshmen. His son, and heir, John Morgan, one of the extensive land owners of Radnor township, sold the lot to David Powell, the surveyor, from whom, through John Bird, above mentioned, it eventually came to the Trustees, in 1762.

Lot No. 14 was the gift-lot of Thomas Jones, a Welsh Friend from Llanlanread in Elvel, Radnorshire, because of his purchase of 100 acres of land in Radnor township. He assigned his right to this town lot to his nephew, John Jones, to whom the lot was warranted 13 Oct. 1685. John sold this lot, and his "country lot," in Radnor township, to William Davies, aforesaid, a Radnor neighbor, who took patent for it, 1 March, 1692, and on 4 March following, he sold the whole town lot to Joshua Fearne, above mentioned, for £13 Penna. Currency, who, in turn, sold it to Surveyor Powell, 8 Oct. 1713. In 1732, the State House Trustees bought
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82 by 49 1/2 feet off the back end, and added the same to the first Yard. Thomas Hobbs bought the balance, and eventually, or in 1762, it was purchased by the Trustees.

'Twas thus, the whole of the block, bounded by Chestnut, Fifth, Walnut and Sixth Streets, was acquired by the Province for a Yard for the State House, or for public ground, alias a "Square," and a plaza. And it has been shown that the original sixteen lots, of which the Yard was composed, were first the bonus lots of as many Welshmen, purchasers of lands in Radnor township, in the Welsh Tract, and that one Welshman next owned by purchase all but one (No. 12) of them.

The Yard remained unimproved, simply a fenced-in vacant lot, till in 1785, when an eight-foot brick wall was built on its east and west and Walnut Street sides, and the Yard was laid out into walks and flower beds; the entrance being in Walnut Street through "a ponderous high gate, and a massive brick structure over the top of it." (Watson). In 1811, this wall was cut down, and mounted with an iron railing.

After the General Assembly had removed from the old State House, and wishing to pay for the new one built at Harrisburg, it was proposed in an Act, in 1813, to continue Sansom Street through the Yard, and lay out the Yard in building lots, and sell them at auction. The City protested. Nevertheless, an enabling Act was passed 11 March, 1816, to sell the whole Yard at auction on 1 June, following, but at the same time the City was given an option to buy it at private sale before then, the State's buildings, including the clock, the bell, and the land, for $70,000. This private sale was consummated, and with the same proviso as in the Acts of 1735 and 1762, namely, that the part of this ground lying south of the State House shall never be used for any sort of building, but "shall be enclosed and remain a Public Green and Walk for ever."