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)

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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:_____1_____

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2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Historic Name:_____81-95 Coates Avenue_____

Common Name:_____81-95 Fairmount Avenue_____

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3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

x Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

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4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent x good ☐ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: x occupied x vacant ☐ under construction ☐ unknown

Current use:_Leased retail space: Dance Studio at 81-87 Fairmount Ave and vacant 89-95 Fairmount Avenue_____

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5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please see attached.

6. DESCRIPTION

Please see attached.

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

Period of Significance (from year to year): from __1828-1868 and 1879-1899_____

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration:____1828; interior alterations in 1920s_____

Architect, engineer, and/or designer:____Unknown_____

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan:_____Unknown _____

Original owner:__George Knight Budd and Susannah Budd _____

Other significant persons:____ John Campbell Harris & Company, Friends Neighborhood Beach Street Mission, Terminal Warehouse & Transfer Company _____

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

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

x (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,

x (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,

x (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

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

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8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please see attached.

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9. NOMINATOR

Name with Title:RIchelle Gewertz, PCPC intern; Sonja Lengel, PCPC Intern; Oscar Beisert and Jim Duffin

C/o Laura Spina_____ Email___laura.spina@phila.gov_____

Organization:__Philadelphia City Planning Commission_____Date:__revised 11 February 2016

Street Address_1515 Arch Street, 13th floor____Telephone__215-683-4638_____

City, State, and Postal Code_Philadelphia, PA 19102_____

Nominator ☐ is x 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

5. Boundary Description

Located in Northern Liberties, only one block from the Delaware River, this cohesive series of rowhouses are located on the North side of Fairmount Ave between Front Street and Beach Street. The eight houses are situated over seven different properties. Numbers 95, 93, 91, 89, 87, and 85 are associated with according lots 94, 20, 19, 16, 18 and 17. Numbers 81 and 83 reside on lot 24. *See Figure 5.1*

From the northwest corner of Fairmount Avenue and Beach Street, the properties extend 128 ft in length along Fairmount Avenue and extend 37 ft in depth along Beach Street. Each former dwelling is 16 ft wide and about 27 ft deep, except for numbers 81 and 83 which have a 2-story addition in the back that extends to the rear property line. *See Figure 5.1*

These rowhouses are bounded at the north by a late 19th century mixed-used Wagon House with former tenements on the upper floors. To the west of the properties, a parcel of asphalt paving sits at the northeast corner of Fairmount Avenue and Front Street. The surrounding area is a mixture of old industrial buildings and parking lots. Further west by I-95, there is a small number of late 19th century rowhouses. *See Figure 5.2*

6. Description of Historic Resource

The series of Federal style rowhouses are 2½-story load bearing red-brick masonry structure with a gable roof. Like many other Federal Style dwellings, the structure is built of brick laid in Flemish bond, a brick pattern in which each course consists of headers and stretchers that are laid alternately and each header is centered with respect to the stretcher above and below it. There are three sets of double-chimneys, one at each end and one in the middle between Numbers 89 and 87. The curtain gable end rises to the full height of the roof, creating a parapet wall, from which identical chimney stacks extend beyond, giving the row a substantial distinction. The repetitive façade of 16 bays with evenly placed double-hung windows is interrupted by two federal style entrances, one at Number 95 and the other at Number 83. Featuring simple stone lintels and sills, each window has two operable shutters of the two panel construction. Spanning the roofline of the building is a simple cornice of brick corbelling, projecting in three simple and single-unit tiers. A white metal gutter separates the cornice from the roofline. On the roof, eight gable dormers are spaced between every two windows. The dormer is a classic Federal style dormer with an arched lintel and pilaster and architrave that projects eight times. On the ground floor, the openings to the raised basement are aligned with the windows above. *See Figure 6.1, 6.2, 6.6, 6.8, 6.9*

Of the eight houses, the first two—81–83 Fairmount Avenue—are the most impressive because of their corner location. 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 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 on a small block of granite. *See Figure 6.4 and 6.7*

The east-facing elevation is penetrated by three windows on the ground floor and two on the second. House numbers 81 and 83 feature a two-story addition in the back likely constructed between 1875 and 1895, abutting the wall of the adjacent property. Centered at a crest of the roofline and at the foot of the curtain gable is an enclosed fanlight niche. The brick chimneys are square in shape and substantial in form. Above, the roof appears to be made of metal with a standing-seam construction. *See Figure 6.4*

The west-facing elevation is parged stucco covering a solid brick wall. A later addition, red painted concrete masonry unit wall seals off entry to the rear yard behind properties 85 through 95. *See Figure 6.3*

While the façade has remained largely intact, there are some signs of alteration. Originally there would have been 8 individual rowhouses, but later alterations converted the rowhouses into two large interior spaces. Several of the original doors have been filled in with windows and brick. *See Figures 6.5-6*

Numbers 89 through 95 have experienced a recent fire, resulting in its current vacancy. A few windows have been

boarded up with plywood and soot stains are located above one window. *See Figure 6.10*

Although the interior has been altered over the years and the original layout is unknown, it is likely that the original plans were Double Trinity style, a common 19th-century type. Typical Double Trinity plans have two rooms per floor. Although the 1858-60 City of Philadelphia Fire Atlas Map depicts the properties as one room dwellings with rear yards, the fire insurance plan of 95 Coates Street shows a front room and a back room. The features of a Double Trinity plan include; a gable roof where the ridge is parallel to the front of the house, a dormer on each side, two fireplaces, a basement, and a rear yard.[1] Double Trinity style rowhouses faced prominent streets where Fairmount Avenue (historically Coates Street) was once a major east to west route in Northern Liberties.[2] *See Figures 6.11-12*

The rowhouses were originally rented to tenants. An advertisement from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1859 lists one of the properties as a, 'Pleasant Brick Dwelling, No. 91 Coates st., [for] $12.50 per month.' *See Figure* Small conversions in the late 1800's, were followed by a larger interior alteration in the 1920's as all units were combined into one office space. Currently, the office building has been split in half as two leased retail spaces. *See Figure 6.13*

History of the Rowhouses

Northern Liberties had its roots in William Penn's original plan for the principal city of the new colony. In the 19th-century, the early industrial neighborhood of Northern Liberties was characterized by a patchwork of businesses, factories, and residences all on the same block. It was common to find a tannery next to a boardinghouse, which was alongside a distillery, which abutted a modest home, which was adjacent to a church, which was beside a glue factory.[3] In an age prior to street cars and public transit, workingmen often lived as close as they could to the sites of their labors.[4] *See appendix for further history*.

The rowhouse properties were originally a part of the William Coats' estate. It passed between a number of owners eventually being sold to John Britton Jr. in 1799. Britton formally transferred the property to his niece and nephew George Knight Budd and Susannah Budd Keen in 1818.[5] The property's development was hampered by the topography of the area near the mouth of the 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 then 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.[6]

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 and build 8 brick rowhouses. Later the dwellings were passed to Susannah Budd Keen's descendent, William

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[1] Rachel Simmons Schade, *Philadelphia Rowhouse Manual: A Practical Guide for Homeowners* (Philadelphia: City of Philadelphia, 2008), 6.

[2] Harry Kyriakodis, *Northern Liberties: The Story of a Philadelphia Riverward* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012), 33.

[3] Kyriakodis, *Northern Liberties*, 69.

[4] Russell Frank Weigley, Nicholas B. Wainwright and Edwin Wolf, *Philadelphia: A 300 Year History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982), 374.

[5] Deed: John Britton, Jr., of Philadelphia County, gentleman, to George Budd, of Tinicum Township, Delaware County, 1 March 1816, Deed Book M.R., No. 18, p. 546, CAP.

[6] 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.

W. Keen Sr. who was the owner of successful leather factory. The dwellings were built as housing for skilled workers of the nearby factories.

In the mid-1860s, each property was sold to foreign-born tradesmen, mostly skilled German artisans, whose known occupations included shoemaker, peddler, clothier, and glazier, but also an Irish Liquor dealer who would use his property as a BR&D, Bar Room and Dwelling.[7] Unlike the earlier workers who rented the properties from Keen, the second generation of owners was immigrants who had achieved a modest prosperity, enough to purchase their own houses. Due to the increasing number of building and loan associations available in the mid-19th century, a larger proportion of skilled middle-income workers were able to purchase small rowhomes by investing their savings in shares of the association and borrowing up to the matured value of those shares at a modest interest rate.[8]

By the late 1800s, the residential settlements along the Delaware River began to transform into a corridor of industrial activity. As a major lumber center, the nearby wharves became burgeoning lumber imports that were bringing in as much as a quarter of a million feet in the year 1915.[9] Within the vicinity of 81-95 Fairmount Avenue there were at least eight different companies related to lumber. *See Figure 6.15*

In 1870, Thomas Powers purchased 81–83 Coates Street.[10] Two years later, he acquired 89, 91, and 93 Coates Street.[11] John Campbell Harris, Thomas Powers' son-in-law, acquired 87 Coates Street in 1872. During this period they were building 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. Harris converted Number 87 into use as a stable that was connected in the rear to a wagon house immediately north of the properties at 702 North Beach Street. Given their Quaker background, Powers and Harris likely both allowed the Beach Street Mission No. 1 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.[12] 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. *See Figure 6.14*

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. 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."[13] The mission hall occupied the first floor of the building, which was owned by the Estate of Thomas H. Powers. 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 offered night courses. Older boys learned object teaching, arithmetic, writing and drawing while girls generally were enrolled in sewing school with some general conversation coursework. Temperance was also a major theme within the program.[14] *See Figure 6.16*

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[7] U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989 (database on-line). Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2011.

[8] Allen F. Davis and Mark H. Haller, *The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower-Class Life, 1790-1940* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1973), 178.

[9] Edward F. Henson, "Philadelphia's Opportunity as a Lumber Center," *The Timberman* (August 1916): 35.

[10] Deed: Edward O'Donnell, builder, to Thomas H. Powers, manufacturing chemist, 29 June 1870, Deed Book J.A.H., No. 58, p. 407, CAP

[11] 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. 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.

[12] Minutes of the First-day School, 1880, Friends Neighborhood Guild Records, 1880–1962, Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.

[13] Jean Barth Toll and Midred S. Gillam, ed., *Invisible Philadelphia: Community Through Voluntary Organizations* (Philadelphia: Atwater Kent Museum, 1995).

[14] Courtesy of the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.

Even though the land surrounding the properties was becoming highly industrialized and the German- and Irish-born residents had moved to other parts of the City, the neighborhood was absorbed by a new wave of immigrants who arrived from Southern and Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. It is likely they continued as rentals to even after Harris sold his properties. *See Figure 6.17*

By 1920, most industry in the area had been replaced by large warehouses to store goods. At this time, the Terminal Warehouse & Transfer Company took ownership of the rowhouses and the old Wagon House, combining the small dwelling units into offices. The properties were a convenient location for the business as their Dry Storage House was located only a few blocks away, on the south side of Green Street (now Spring Garden) between Delaware Avenue and Beach Street. The continual adaptation of these rowhouses is one of the reasons they have been able to survive. *See Figure 6.18*

For the past fifty years, the properties, now converted into two retail spaces, have been leased to numerous businesses by Kaplan Groll, formerly known as Mount Corp, a property management company. The rowhouses have hosted a car dealership in the early 1970s, an industrial realty management firm in the late 1970s, the American freight Corporation in the 1980s, and a caterer in the 1990s.[15] Currently, the Living Arts Dance Studio resides at property number 81, while the western half of the properties remains vacant. *See Figure 6.19*

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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, H, and J of Section 14–1004 of the Philadelphia Code. According to 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). The period of significance is from 1828–1868. According to Criteria D, the rowhouses are typical of the Federal style architecture in Philadelphia with the period of significance from 1828–1868. According to Criteria H, this cohesive block of rowhouses was 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. The period of significance is 1828-1868. According to Criteria J, 81-83 Fairmount Avenue exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, and historic heritage of the Beach Street Mission, later known as the Friends Mission No 1. This was the first Guild House in the neighborhood started by the Hicksite Quakers. The period of significance is 1879–1899.

These rowhouses represent a period of development of Northern Liberties. As the neighborhood was one of the many early manufacturing centers that led to the rise of Philadelphia as an industrial stronghold in the 19th century, the history of these dwellings is not only important to the local community, but also to Philadelphia at large. Originally a portion of William Penn's Liberty Lands that were to develop as farmland surrounding the commercial center of the old city limits,[16] between 1810 and 1830, the area rapidly populated[17] as manufacturers constructed factories of noxious industries that were banned by Philadelphia ordinances.[18] Before its annexation to the City of Philadelphia in 1854, the former borough was the fastest growing precinct adjacent to Philadelphia's northern border.[19] *Criteria A*

In the 19th-century, Northern Liberties thrived as a center of industry and manufacturing, as many mills, breweries,

[15] "Amidst a Redeveloping Waterfront, An 1830s Row Lives On." http://hiddencityphila.org/2013/04/amidst-a-redeveloping-waterfront-an-1830s-row- lives-on

[16] Weigley, *Philadelphia*, 7.

[17] Kyriakodis, *Northern Liberties*, 20.

[18] Kyriakodis, *Northern Liberties*, 98.

[19] Kyriakodis, *Northern Liberties*, 14.

leather tanneries, carriage and wagon makers, chemical works and iron foundries were established north of Philadelphia, close to the Delaware River.[20] While only a few heavy industries utilized large factories, many manufacturers operated small workshops that employed skilled or semi-skilled laborers.[21] As a result, many German tradesmen who immigrated to Philadelphia settled in Northern Liberties before the American Civil War. The properties were rented and later owned by artisans who perhaps used the first floor space as a workshop; these former dwellings are connected to the early industries of Northern Liberties that benefitted Philadelphia's economic power. *Criteria A*

The rowhouses at 81-95 Fairmount Avenue embodies distinguishing characteristics of the Federal Style, a period of American architecture between 1780 and 1850. Considered American Classicism, this style is characterized by refined elegance in terms of balanced proportions in its design and restraint in the use of decorative details. In terms of elevation, surfaces are treated as thin, shallow projections with delicate non-architectonic embellishments. *Criteria D*

This continuous block of rowhouses was a typical characteristic of the neighborhood. Similar examples of long rows of Federal and Georgian style rowhouses have been lost to industrialization, warehouses, parking lots, and highways. 81–93 Coates Street stands as 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. *Criteria H*

As the location of the Friends Mission No. 1 rowhouses 81-83 represent the charitable work established by local Quakers to lessen the social ills brought about by industrialization. They provided services to immigrants through education, spiritual lessons, home supervision, recreation, physical fitness through gymnastics, and lessons to mothers for the care of children. These rowhouses represent the social charitable heritage of a community responding to an industrial environment. *Criteria J*

This section of Northern Liberties between the Delaware River and Front Street was at one time characterized by this type of 2 ½ story rowhouse.(H) This row of Federal Style dwellings adds to the architecturally varied landscape of Northern Liberties.(D) While its history has been long forgotten, these rowhouses stand as a testament to the former era of small workshops and skilled artisans who helped Philadelphia become a leading industrial city in the 19th century.(A) The rowhouses use as a charity organization, represent the national movement of education and reform.(J) These adaptable buildings, which have been dwellings, offices, and even a stable, can continue to be reused. As the neighborhood revitalizes, the rowhouse of 81-95 Fairmount Street have adapted and stood the test of time and should be included in the rebirth of this neighborhood.

8. Major Bibliographical References

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[20] Kyriakodis, *Northern Liberties*, 20.

[21] Weigley, *Philadelphia*, 429.

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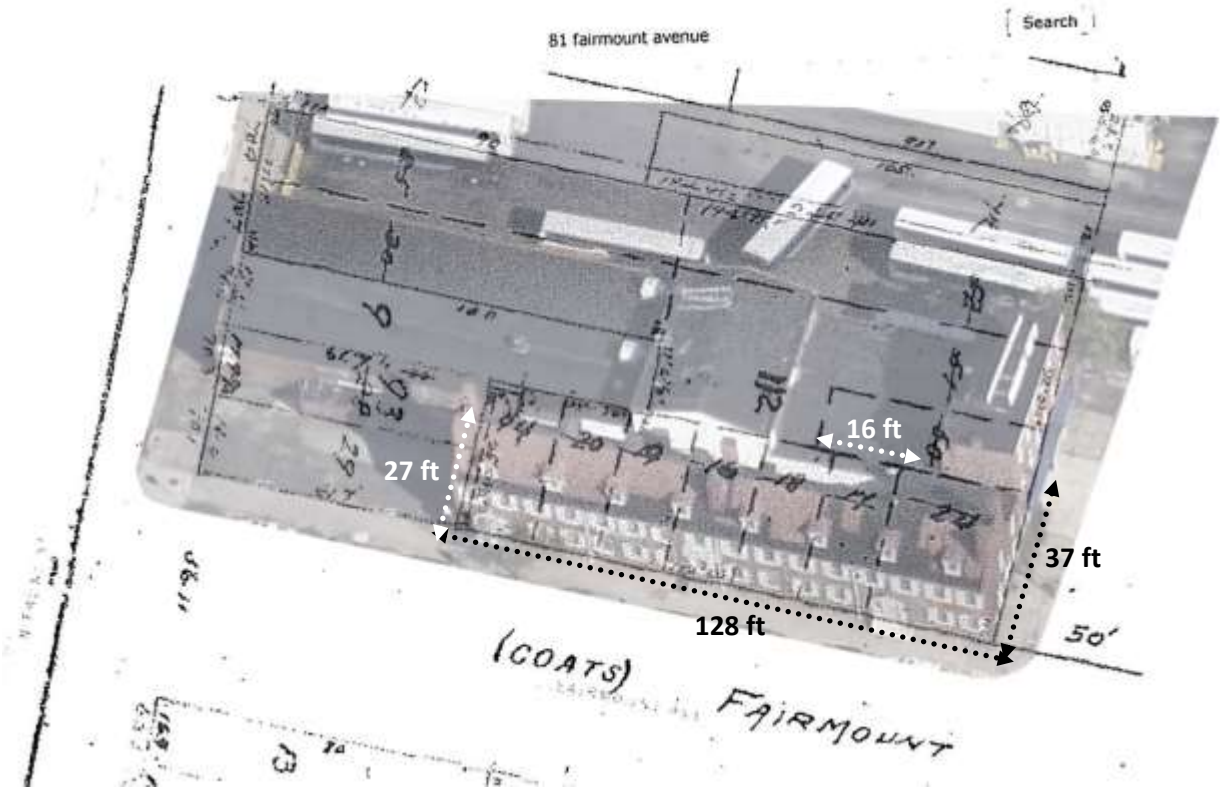

Figure 5.1 | Site Boundaries with Dimensions Noted

2014 Google Maps Aerial View overlaid Philadelphia Department of Records ParcelExplorer Map

Figure 5.2 | Current Site Context; 81-95 Fairmount Ave circled

2014 Bing Maps Birds-eye View

Figure 6.1 | Front Elevation in Panoramic View, April 2013

Above: Image courtesy of Richard Gonzalez via Hidden City Philadelphia Article, "Amidst a Redeveloping Waterfront, An 1830s Row Lives On"

Figure 6.2 | Three Quarter View, Photograph by Oscar Beisert

Figure 6.3 (right) | Side Elevation facing East along Beach Street

Image courtesy of Richelle Gewertz

Figure 6.4 (left) | Side Elevation facing West towards Front Street

Image courtesy of Richelle Gewertz

Figure 6.5 (right) |Signs of Repaired Brickwork at Number 87

Image courtesy of Richelle Gewertz

Figure 6.6 (left) | Signs of Repaired Brickwork at Number 85

Image courtesy of Richelle Gerwertz

Figure 6.7 (left) | Federal Style Door and Details

Image courtesy of Oscar Beisert

Figure 6.8 |Looking Northeast, *Image Courtesy of Oscar Beisert*

Figure 6.9 |Dormers

Image courtesy of Richelle Gewertz

Figure 6.10|Signs of Recent Fire in Numbers 89 through 95

Image courtesy of Richelle Gewertz

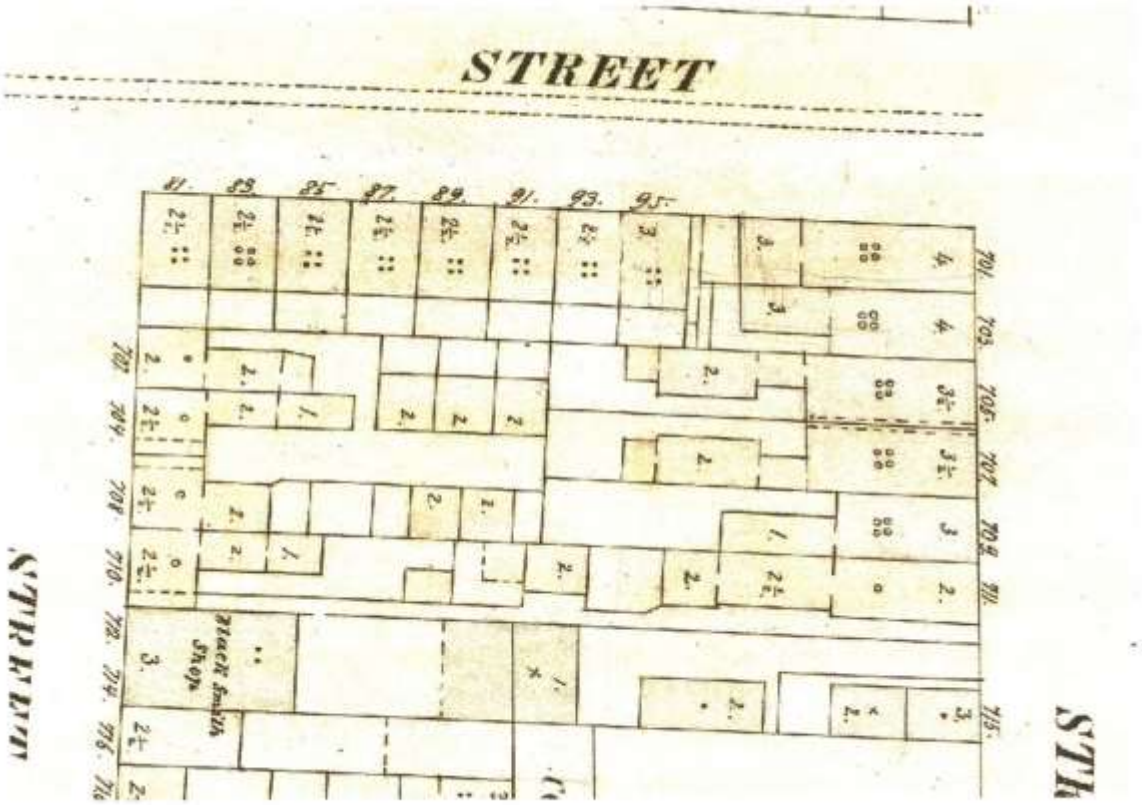

Figure 6.11|The Dwellings of 81-95 Fairmount Avenue depicted in 1858-60 City of Philadelphia Fire Atlas Map

Image courtesy of Free Library of Philadelphia via the Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network (www.philageohistory.org)

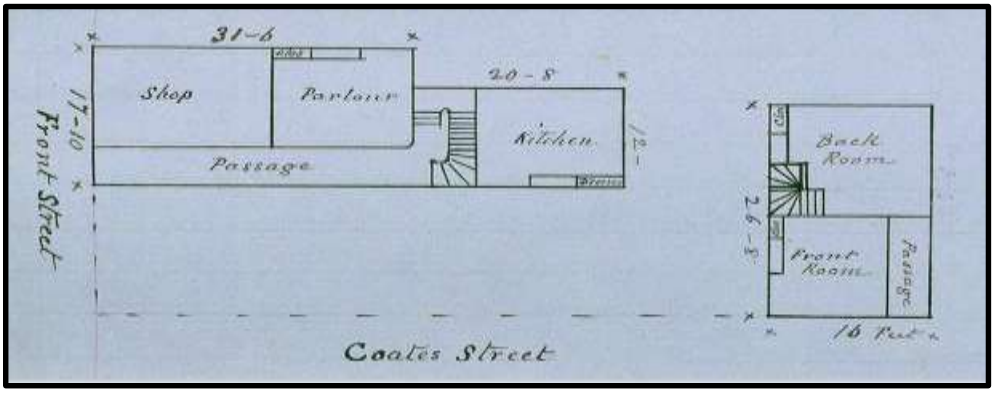

Figure 6.12 |Insurance Plan of 95 Coates Street Courtesy of the Philadelphia Contributionship

TO RENT—Handsome and convenient DWELLING, No 119 Friedlander street.
Very convenient and comfortable Dwelling, No. 1817 Vine street.
Three-story Dwelling, corner of McIlwain and Fifth sts, at $12 per month.
Pleasant Brick Dwelling, No. 91 Coates st., $12 50 per month.
Large Dwelling, Stable and Lot of Ground, corner of Clearfield street and Trenton Avenue: rent very low.
C. F. FOLWELL,
Central Real Estate Office, 419 Cherry st.

Figure 6.13 |Real Estate advertisement published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* 1859

81-95 Fairmount Ave Image Index |History of the Rowhouses

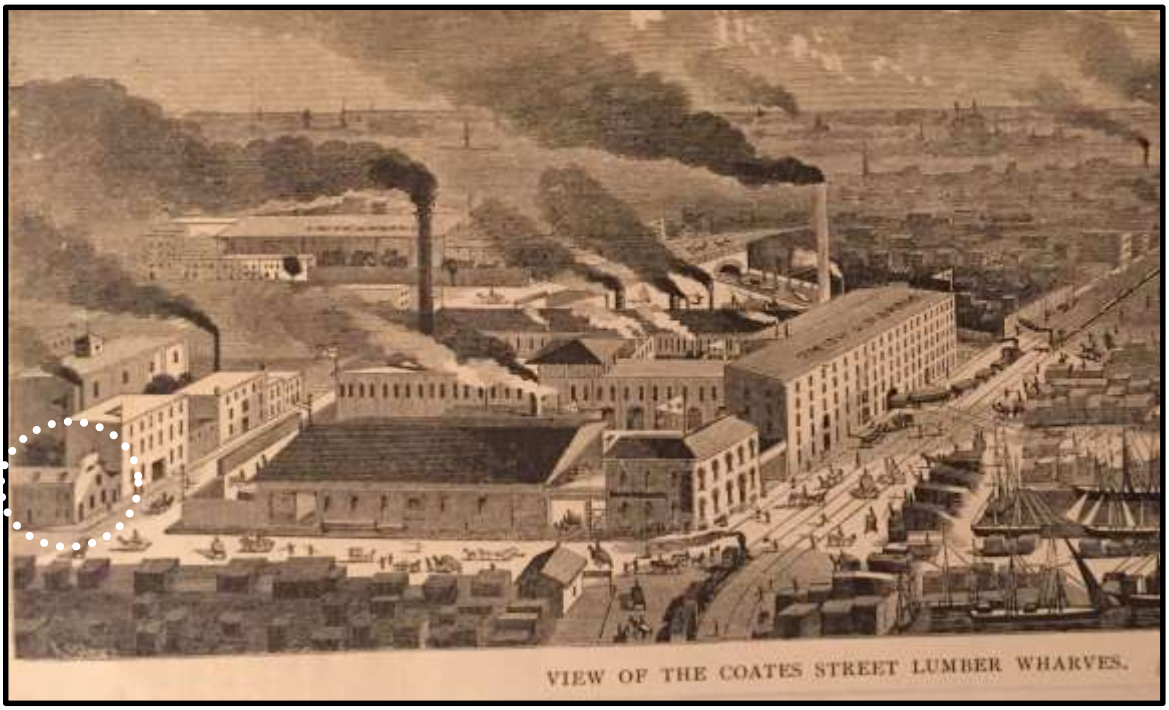

Figure 6.14|View of the Coates Street Lumber Wharves with the Philadelphia Plaster Works at center. At the far left is the juncture of Coates and Beach Streets, where one can see 81 and 83 Coates Street.

Image courtesy of Harry Kyriakodis via Northern Liberties: The Story of a Philadelphia Riverward; originally from Philadelphia and its Environs, 3rd Ed. (1875)

Figure 6.15 |Surrounding Context depicted in 1875 City Atlas of Philadelphia; 81-95 Fairmount Ave shaded in blue; Land associated with Lumber Companies shaded in red and green

Image courtesy of a Private Collection via the Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network (www.philageohistory.org)

Figure 6.16 |Beach Street Mission, 81 and 83 Fairmount Avenue

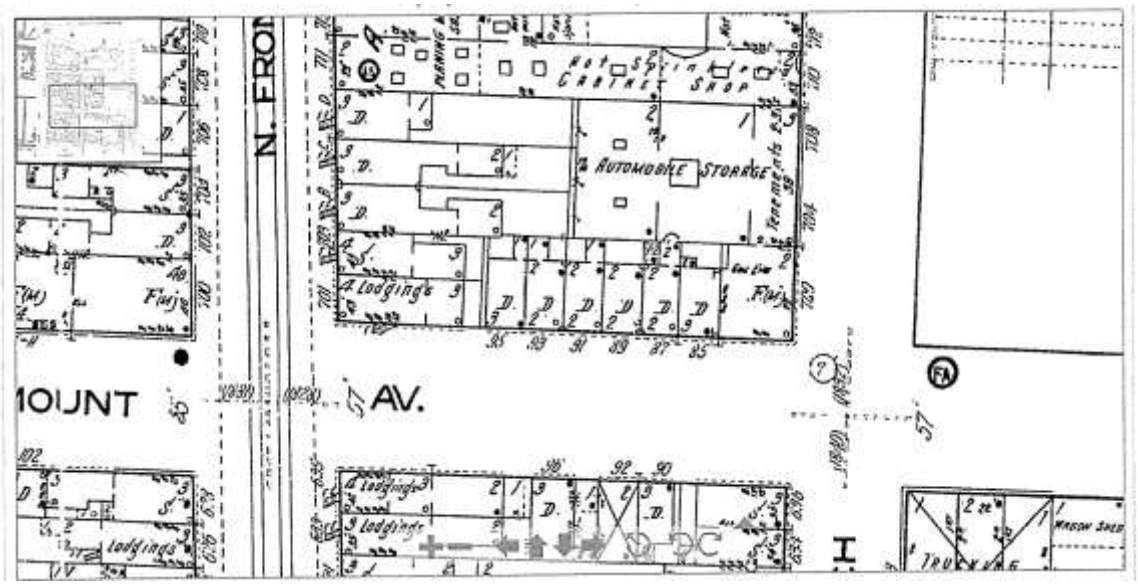

Figure 6.17 | Uses of 81-95 Fairmount Ave and Nearby Properties labeled in 1916 City of Philadelphia Fire Insurance Map

Image courtesy of the Map Collection at the Free Library of Philadelphia

81-95 Fairmount Ave Image Index |Description of Historic Resource **|**Use **|**1920-1965

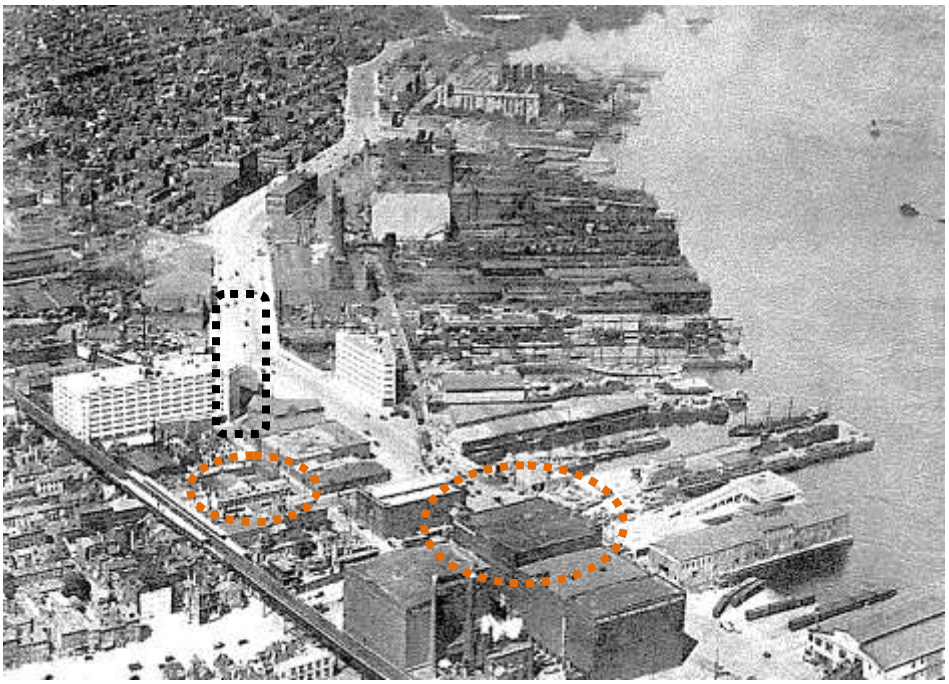

Figure 6.18 |Aerial View of Delaware Avenue and the Frankford Elevated in Northern Liberties, about 1925; 81-95 Fairmount Ave and Terminal Warehouse & Transfer Company Dry Storage House are circled

Image courtesy of Harry Kyriakodis via Northern Liberties: The Story of a Philadelphia Riverward; originally from Annual message of W. Freeland Kendrick, Mayor of Philadelphia (1926)

Figure 6.19 | 81 and 83 Coates Street, Courtesy the City of Philadelphia, 1954

81-95 Fairmount Ave Historical Supplement Index |

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.[1] 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.[2]

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

[1] 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.

[2] See text and map in John Reed, *An Explanation of the Map of the City and Liberties of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: John Reed, 1774).

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.[3]

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 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.[4]

Thomas Smith was a Quaker immigrant who was in Pennsylvania by 1683 when he married Priscilla Allen at the Philadelphia Meeting.[5] 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.[6] 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.[7] 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.[8] He retained the much of more valuable land close to Delaware River.[9] 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.[10]

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. [11] A portion of the property at

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[3] "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.

[4] Gillingham, "Some Early Brickmakers," 8–12; *Plan of the Coates and Pegg Portions*, HSP.

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

[6] *Brief of Title to a Large Lot of Ground*, 5–6.

[7] Gillingham, "Some Early Brickmakers," 18.

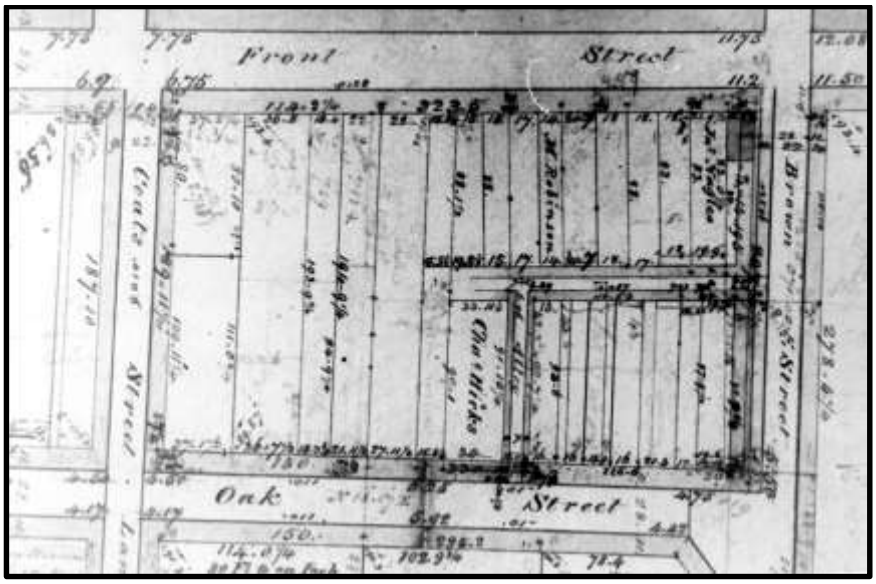
[8] For examples vide -- Deed: William Coats, Northern Liberties of the City, yeoman, and Rachel, his wife, to John Langdale, city, tanner, 9 May 1746, Deed Book I., No. 12, p. 199; Deed: William Coats, Northern Liberties of city, merchant, and Rachel, his wife, to Lewis Evans, 1 May 1746, recited in 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.

[9] *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.

[10] *Plan of the Coates and Pegg Portions*, HSP.

[11] 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).

North Second Street and Fairmount Avenue became a center for the neighborhood when a market house and stalls were created in 1795.[12]



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.[13] 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).[14] 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.[15] Budd added another five feet on the north side of the lot in 1761.[16] Levi Budd is variously listed in the deed and tax records as merchant, trader and carpenter.[17] By the 1780s he built a house on the Front Street lot and made it his

[12] 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

[13] 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.

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

[15] *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.

[16] Deed: Samuel Pennock to Levi Budd, 15 December 1761, recited in Deed Book A.M., No. 61, p. 729.

[17] 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).

home. He retained the property until his death in 1790 and he willed it to his son oldest son George (1764–1817).[18]

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."[19] 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.[20] 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).[21]

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 then 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.[22]

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 Fairmount.[23] 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.[24]

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[18] 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.

[19] "Sheriff's Sales," *Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser*, July 3, 1799.

[20] 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.

[21] Deed: John Britton, Jr., of Philadelphia County, gentleman, to George Budd, of Tinicum Township, Delaware County, 1 March 1816, Deed Book M.R., No. 18, p. 546, CAP.

[22] 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.

[23] 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.

[24] 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.

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