

Nelson-Galt House Historical Report, Block 9 Building 7 Lot 26 & 27

Originally entitled: "Colonial House No. 126, Block 9-2, Lots 26 and 27"

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COLONIAL HOUSE NO. 126 Obsolete Block 9-2, Lots 26 and 27 1940 Map



One of the trustees of the city, William Robertson (Hening's *Statutes* , Vol. III, p. 431) was the first grantee of lots 26 and 27 as the following deed proves:

"January 22, 1707.

Feoffees

to

Robertson, William of James City County

Consideration: 30 shillings of good & Lawful Money of England

Two certain lots of ground in the city of Williamsburg designed in the plot of the said city by the figures 26 and 27 with all woods thereon growing or being together with all profitts To be had & hold of our Sovereign Lady the Queen in ffree & common coocage yielding & paying the Quitrents.

Shall build within 24 months one or more good dwelling houses according to Act of Assembly 1705.

(*York County Records - Deeds, Bonds* - Vol. II, p. 268)"

The fact that Robertson rather than the trustees granted part of lot 26 the next year indicates that he had complied with the Act of 1705 requiring a house to be built on each lot. Robertson sold the northwest corner out of the lot adjoining Marott's lot 25 to the latter as the following deed indicates:

May 24, 1708

"Robertson, William

to

Marott, John

Consideration: 5 Pounds current Money

One certain piece of land lying and being in the City of Williamsburg, on the South side of the Duke of Gloucester Street, containing forty foot square, being part of that lot of ground in the said city described in the plat thereof by the figures 26, and bounded on the North by the said street on the West by the lot of ground belonging to the said Marott, and on the South and East by the said William Robertson his Lotts

And also that he the said William Robertson his heirs [etc.] . . . shall & will at any time hereafter during the Space of three Yeares next Ensueing the date hereof at the Reasonable Cost & Charges in the Law of the said John Marott make such further Conveyance & Assurance for the better assuring of the said granted premisses

At a Court held for York County, July 24, 1708.

(*York County Records - Deeds, Bonds* - Vol. II, p. 295)"

It seems that this plot of ground leased or sold to John Marot had at the time no house on it. This is deduced from the small sum (£5) involved and the lack of information about houses in the deed. Robertson still held lot 27 and a major part of lot 26.

Perhaps sometime during the first two years Robertson had built the house on the lots facing Frances Street. It seems logical to assume that he also built a house facing Duke of Gloucester Street. At any rate, in 1718, he sold the part of lot 27 on the Duke of Gloucester Street with "houses" on it to John Brown. The £50 paid seems to be due to a dwelling:

"November 10, 1718.

Robertson, William

to

Brown, John

Consideration: 50 Pounds Current money.

All that parcel of ground lying and being in the City of Williamsburg, (being part of the said Robertsons lots whereon he now lives,) Beginning at that corner of Lot 27, which joins on Duke of Gloucester Street and the Capitol Square and running thence South $\frac{1}{4}$ of a degree East 12 poles thence West $\frac{1}{4}$ South 2 poles 6 links to a stake standing about 4 foot from the corner of the said Robertsons milk house thence North 12 degrees 5 minutes West 8 poles to the third post of the garden pales a little above the upper corner of the Barbers shop Thence West a $\frac{1}{4}$ South 3 poles 22 links thence North a $\frac{1}{4}$ West along Sullivants pales to his corner post on the Main Street 4 poles and thence along the street to the place where it began.

With all houses.

(Ibid. - Deeds & Bonds - Vol. III, p. 267)"

Five years later Robertson sold his dwelling house to John Grymes. The wording of the deed shows that the house faced Francis Street and contained parts of lots 26 and 27:

"December 12, 1723

Robertson, William - Gent

to

Grymes, John - Esq. of Middlesex

Consideration: 200 Pounds Lawful Money of Great Britain

All that dwelling house with the outhouses thereunto belonging wherein the said William Robertson lately dwelt together with the Garden yard & appurtenances, being part of two lots of ground denoted in the plan of said city by the figures 26 and 27, bounded on the South by the Street called Francis Street, on the East by the Capitol Square, and part of the said lots formerly sold to Dr. John Brown, on ye North by other part of ye sd lots sold to said Brown and to John Marot, dec'd, and on the West by the lots late of said John Marot and now in the tenure and occupation of Anne Sullivan.

(*York County Records - Deeds, Bonds* - Vol. III, p. 411)"

This is the last deed found that deals directly with this property facing Francis Street. From deeds concerned with the property on these lots facing Duke of Gloucester Street, it is evident that the owners of the southern part of the property were William and Thomas Nelson. (See William Prentis and Peter Scott, Executors of John Stott, to Nathaniel Burwell, *York County Records - Deeds* -Book V, p. 288, May 13, 1749; Nathaniel Walthoe to John Palmer, Ibid., Book VI, p. 187, March 1, 1759; William and Elizabeth Page to Jean Lewis Roy and Peter Dela Croix, Ibid., p. 128, August 16, 1782; Peter Dela Croix to John Drewidz, Ibid., p. 243, September 7, 1784.)

In all the deeds from 1762 on, only Thomas Nelson's lot is mentioned.

The ownership of this lot by a Nelson or Nelsons was checked against the two maps, the Unknown Draftman's and Bucktrout's. There it is found that all of lot # 26 and the part of lot #27 on Francis Street have the name "Nelson" written in them.

From 1785 until 1854, Thomas Nelson or Thomas Nelson's estate was taxed for 2 lots, then 1 lot in the city of Williamsburg. From 1820 to 1840, the house and lot were valued at \$1100. From that time until the name Nelson disappears from the tax records in 1854, the lot and house were valued at \$1600.

The records by which the house passed to its present owner are not yet available.

Venerable residents whose memory reaches back into the middle nineteenth century make the following comments on the Galt house:

Lyon G. Tyler, *Williamsburg* , p. 253: "This house, on the north side of Francis street, nearly opposite to the Chiswell

house, is said to be one of the old houses of Middle Plantation. One of the traditions of the place is that the house of burgesses held a meeting there. In 1677, when Jamestown was built, the assembly met at the house of Otho Thorpe at Middle Plantation. Was this house Otho Thorpe's?"

Mr. Charles, "Recollections", p. 55: "On the Francis Street side of this square there were at the time of which we write no houses except the old "Galt" house and a story and a half frame building just east of the "Galt" house that stood with side to Francis Street and was used as servants' quarters. Both of these buildings are there now and differ little in appearance from what they did many years ago."

Mrs. Victoria Lee, "Williamsburg in 1861", p. 8: "Diagonally across the road from the old Bowden House was the Galt House (north side of Francis). This house, including the tiny, one and a half story, office, looks today exactly as it did in '61. This House was owned by Miss Sallie Galt and was occupied by refugees from Hampton."

Summer, 1940.

M. E. M.

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