

Captain Joseph Johnson House
1/2 and 1 Streets, S. W., Buzzards Point
Washington, D. C.

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Photographs

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 10

Reduced Copies of Measured Plans to

Historic American Buildings Survey
Major n. Brooks Price, District Officer
1316 New Hampshire Avenue, Washington, D. C.

JOSEPH JOHNSON HOUSE
49 T Street, SW.
Buzzard's Point
Washington, District of Columbia

Owner: Mrs. John C. Kondrup (?).

Date of Erection: Approximately 1800 (see following page);
shortly after 1800 (Sunday Star: see reference below).

Architect and Builder: No record.

Present Condition: Poor.

Number of Stories: Two, and basement.

Materials of Construction: Brick.

Other Existing Records: See text.¹

Additional Data: See following pages.

¹ Also see the Sunday Star, Washington, D.C., September 7, 1930, "Old Carrollsburg and Buzzards Point." (May be obtained in Fine Arts Division, Library of Congress).

JOSEPH JOHNSON HOUSE

Buzzard's Point

The history of Buzzard Point as a settlement or as a proposed settlement precedes the signing of the Declaration of Independence by six years, for it was during the latter part of 1770 that a sub-division of the proposed town of Carrollsburg was filed at Upper Marlboro, Maryland in which the town site was located.

In 1874, when the authors of "Washington in Embryo" wrote to Henry Brooke at Marlboro for information regarding Carrollsburg, they received the following reply:

"The property in Carrollsburg was subdivided into lots, streets, alleys, etc. about the latter part of 1770 by virtue and authority of a deed of trust dated the 2nd day of November, 1770, from Charles Carroll, Jr. to Henry Nozer, Daniel Carroll and Notley Young."

The plot of Carrollsburg shows 8 streets running east and west, they being designated by numbers from 1 to 80, and 5 streets running north and south, the one running closest to James Creek is named St. James Street, in order going east are middle, Union, North and South Streets. The lots were numbered 1 to 268, the last one including a whole block. Lot No. 1 was at the river end and was smaller than the rest and was triangular in shape.

When the Capitol City was laid out it was agreed upon by the Commissioners to exchange an equivalent in city lots for Carrollsburg lots in order that Carrollsburg as such might be obliterated and that l'Enfant might be able to plot the entire city without respect to any

former plans. This unfortunately opened up an avenue that most likely led to some unusual profits for although a few lots had been sold prior to July 6, 1790, nearly all had been disposed of by lottery--and these lots, which were to a large extent on swampy ground and which had not offered any inducement for permanent occupation by either farmer or fisherman, and before the coming of the white man was even shunned by the Indians, were in many cases probably bought for a song and traded in for city lots, the majority of these exchanges being made in 1793 and 1794.

The lots were supposed to be chanced off by lottery right after the town was laid out in 1770 and many of the names recorded as exchanging lots are those of men who did not come into this part of the country until after it was decided to place the capital here, and indeed it cannot help but give one the impression that the little paper town of Carrollsburg, after all, might have had considerable to do with bringing the capital to this part of the country.

Among the names listed as owners of lots is Captain Joseph Johnson.

The last named operated for many years a line of steamboats between Alexandria and Washington, and is said to have run the first steamboat on the Potomac river. He remained on Buzzard's Point after the exchange of lots and erected a very nice brick home there which is still standing. Captain Johnson was an ancestor of Mrs. John O. Kondrup.

Article and photo in Sunday Star, 1-8-33

Art. by John Claggett Proctor.

power plant site at Buzzard's point.

This old building--a mansion in its day--was built by Joseph Johnson of whom little is known except that he was born in Bladensburg, Maryland, from where he came into the District of Columbia at about the time this house was built. From the house there was a most beautiful outlook upon the surrounding waters and the hills beyond the Eastern Branch.

References: Sunday Star, mag. section, page 8-9, 9-7-30.

John Claggett Proctor - "Old Carrollsburg and Buzzard's Point."

Author: Major W. Brooks Price, District Officer

By *Wm. M. Rittenhouse*

Reviewed 1936 by H.C.F.