

Johnson House  
6306 Germantown Avenue  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

HABS NO. 7-7

HABS  
PA  
51-GERM,  
55.

*Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District No. 7  
Eastern Pennsylvania

Historic American Buildings Survey  
E. Perot Bissell, District Officer  
1901 Architects Building,  
Philadelphia, Pa.

HABS  
PA-  
51. GERMAN  
55

THE JOHNSON HOUSE  
6306 Germantown Avenue, Germantown  
Philadelphia  
Pennsylvania

Owner: Women's Club of Germantown.

Date of Erection: 1768.

Architect and Builder: No record.

Present Condition: Good.

Number of Stories: Two, and cellar.

Materials of Construction: Stone.

Other Existing Records: See text. <sup>1</sup>

Additional Data: See following pages.

<sup>1</sup> See also the following reference:

Eberlein, H.D. and Lippincott, W.M., The Colonial  
Homes of Philadelphia and Its Neighborhood, 239.

PHILA  
PA.  
51-GERM  
55

THE JOHNSON HOUSE  
6306 GERMANTOWN AVE., PHILADELPHIA, PENNA.

Dirck Jansen, an ancestor of the Johnson family, was one of the original lot owners in Germantown. The family came from Holland and the house reflects the architecture of the homeland.

The house was built by John Johnson in 1768. It stood in the thickest of the fight in the Battle of Germantown, October 4, 1777. John Johnson, alarmed by the noise, went to the door to look out. A British officer riding by advised the family to seek a place of safety. It was early in the morning and the maids had just brought in the morning's milk from the barn. They hastily left it and quickly sought refuge in the cellar. After the Battle the British soldiers swarmed through the house, drank the milk and cleared the kitchen of everything eatable.

There are bullet holes still visible through three doors and a cannon ball knocked a piece out of the north corner of the house. Back of the house there were a wall and a fence about a hundred feet apart. The British were behind the wall and the Americans behind the fence. A spirited engagement took place in which the Americans got the worst of it as the bullets easily penetrated the fence. This fence, riddled with bullets, stood until 1906, when it was removed to the Museum of the Germantown Historical Society.

John Johnson died in 1805. His son Samuel who inherited the place died in 1847. His wife lived there until her death in 1876. The two daughters occupied it until 1905 when it became the property of another Samuel. In 1917 it was bought by the Woman's Club of Germantown.

During the Civil War the house was a station of the "Underground Railway" which conveyed fugitive slaves from the South to Canada.

When it was built, the house was one of the largest and most substantial in Germantown, and on this account gave some concern to members of the Society of Friends, of which body the Johnsons were members.

Changes in the grade of the street must have been made, the frontage of the house having suffered a rise.

The house is interesting architecturally on account of its quaint exterior which clearly shows the Dutch influence. The detail of the interior finish,

expecially the paneled ends of rooms and the stairway,  
is outstanding.

The above account is taken from the "Guide  
Book to Historic Germantown" by Charles F. Jenkins, 1904,  
p. 94, and "The Colonial Homes of Philadelphia and its  
Neighbourhood" by H. D. Eberlein and H. M. Lippincott,  
1912, pp. 239-241 - See also "Ancient and Modern  
Germantown" by Rev. S. F. Hotchkin, 1889.

*E. Paul Brant*

District Officer.

*Reviewed 1936 by H. C. F.*