

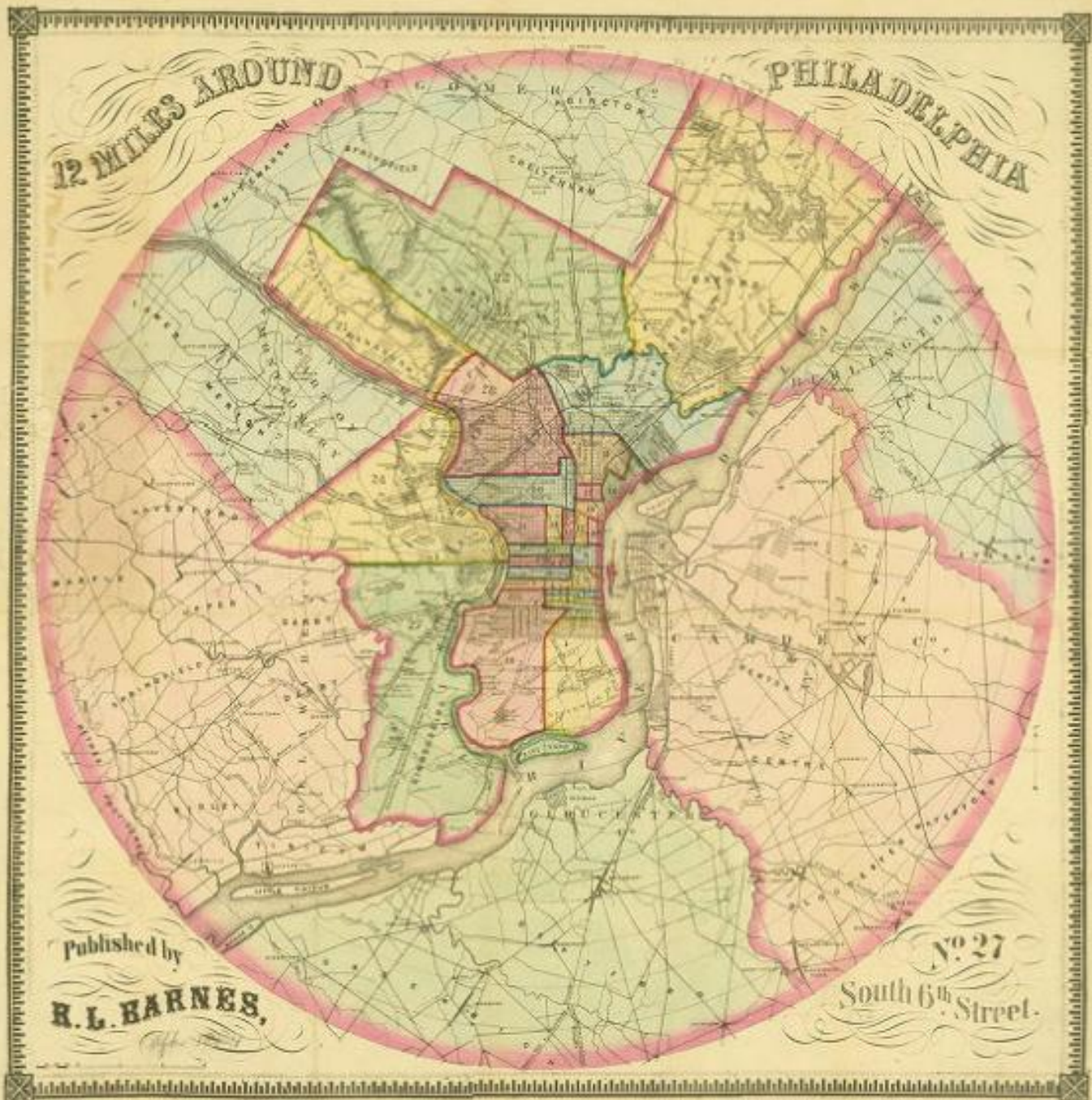
How to Hunt for Hidden Histories

Charlene Mires
Rutgers University-Camden

Delaware County Heritage
Commission Seminar

October 23, 2021





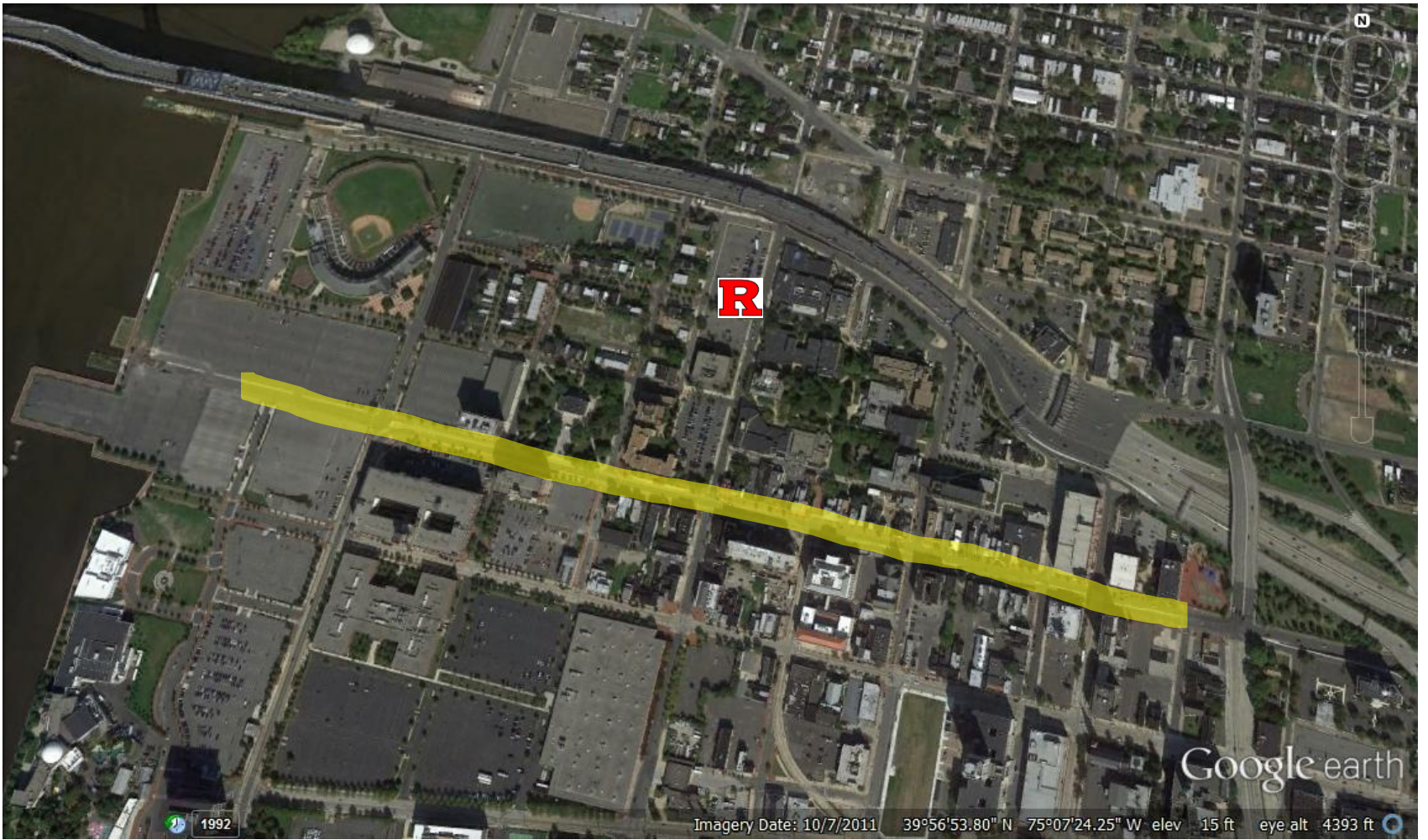
12 Miles Around Philadelphia

Published by R.L. Barnes, 1867

Historical Society of Frankford
(via Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network)

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF DELAWARE RIVER BRIDGE CONNECTING PHILADELPHIA, PA., AND CAMDEN, N. J.



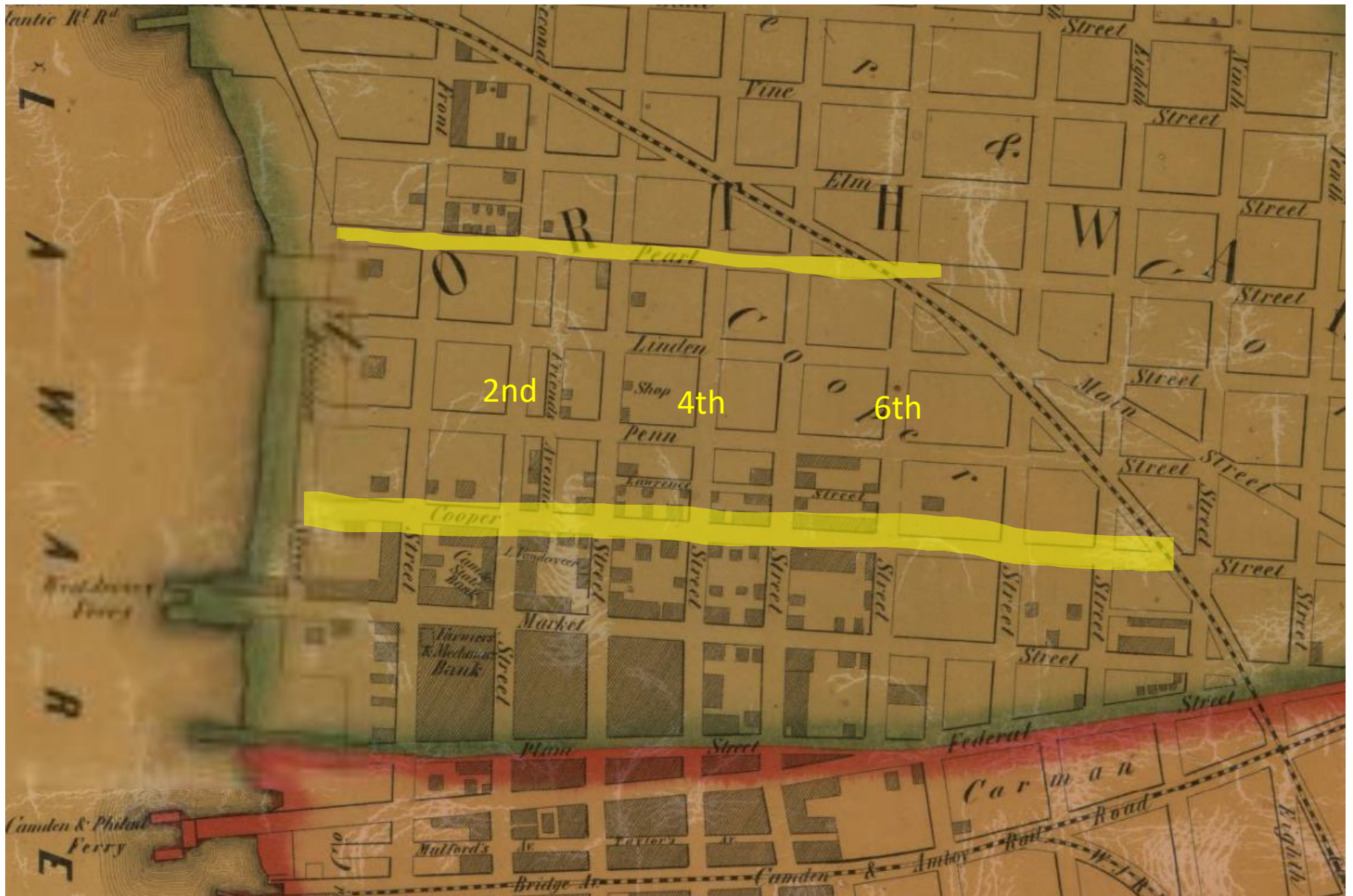


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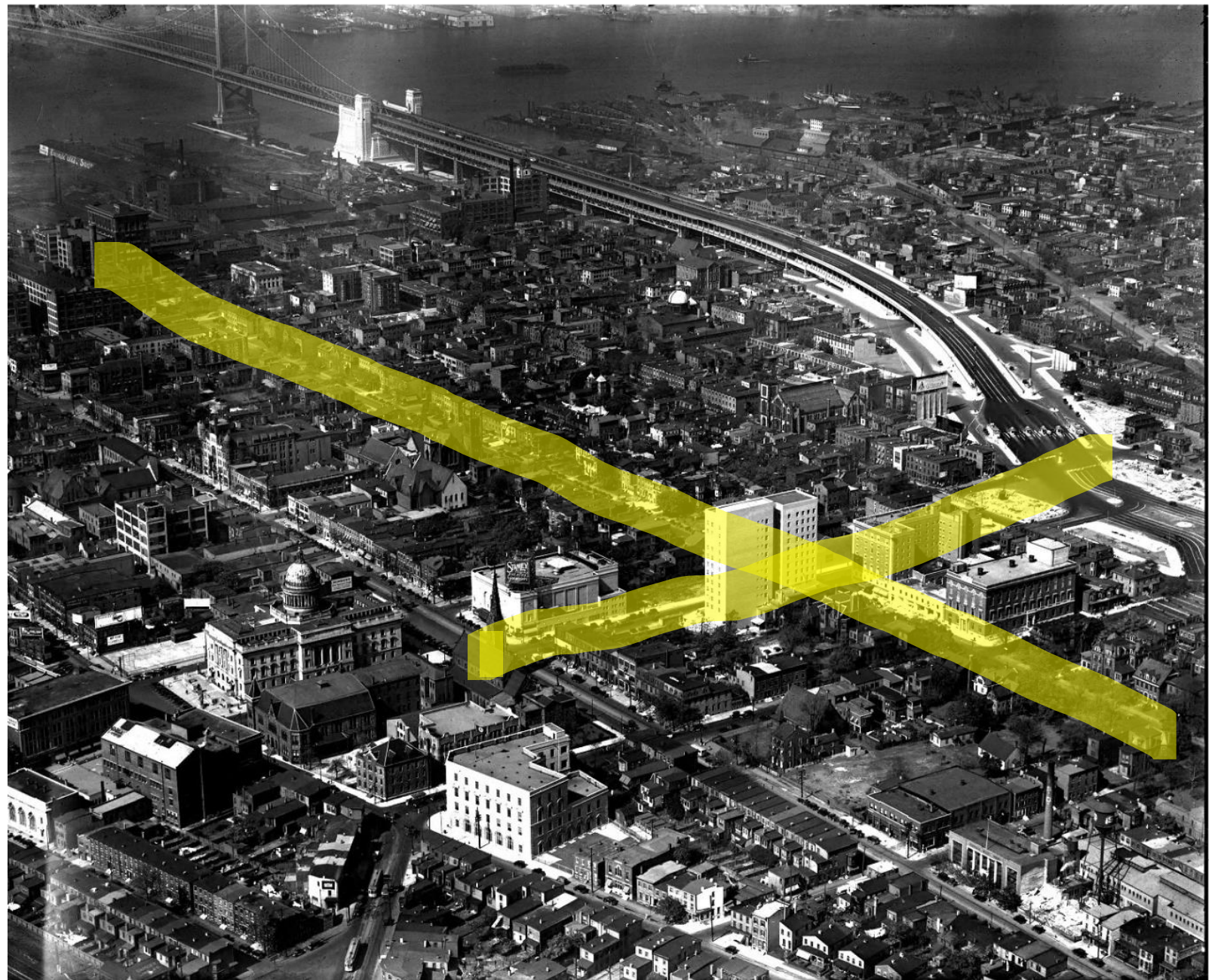
Google earth

Imagery Date: 10/7/2011 39°56'53.80" N 75°07'24.25" W elev 15 ft eye alt 4393 ft

1992



1857 – inset from Camden County map, Library of Congress



Bridge Approach, Camden, New Jersey, c. 1926
Aero Service Corporation / Library Company of Philadelphia



Patterns of built environment

- Lenape land, prior to 1680s
- Cooper family farmland (north of Cooper Street) predominantly, 1680s-1840s. Some buildings on south side of Cooper Street.
- After 1840s, residential development includes north side of Cooper Street.



Rowhouses of 1840s-50s
Prominent leaders of
business, government,
industry, professions.

Extended families.

Domestic workers.



Smaller rowhouses,
1850s – rental
properties occupied by
working class.

(400 block of
Lawrence Street,
behind Cooper)

Patterns of built environment

- 1880s-1920s: Grander homes, some designed by architects, fill empty lots and in some cases replace earlier structures.
- Early 1900s: Apartment buildings, hotels.
- 1920s: Conversions of single-family homes into businesses and apartments.

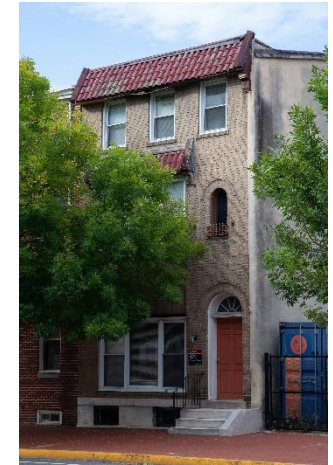


Grander homes of 1880s-1890s.

Prominent leaders of business, government, industry, professions.

Extended families.

Domestic workers.



Older rowhouses remodeled for businesses / apartments.



Learning From Cooper Street
<http://omeka.camden.rutgers.edu>

**U.S. Census, City Directories, Newspapers, More
28,000+ Records**

Storyscape

Stories live in people's minds. But they also live in places: indeed specific places are often essential to their survival. And though we cannot see and touch stories in the same way as buildings, they too are part of the meaning of places and, eventually, of their heritage.

Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation.*

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Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation.*



Camden County Historical Society

A diverse population

Women as heads of household

Domestic servants

Connections with Philadelphia

Complex transitions

Patterns of investment and disinvestment



Domestic Servants on Cooper Street

At least 1,027 individuals, 1850-1948

343 identified immigrants

272 Irish

19 from Germany

13 from Newfoundland

12 Scandinavian

10 from England

243 identified African Americans

81 born in southern states

39 Virginia

29 Maryland

5 Georgia

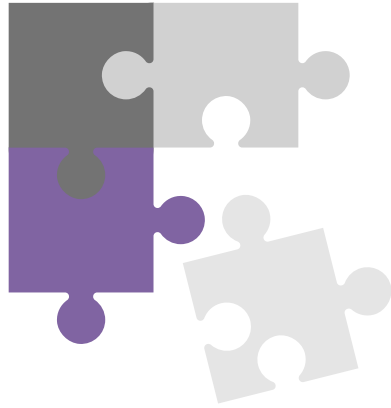
5 North Carolina

1 Florida

1 South Carolina

1 Tennessee

Think like
a genealogist.



How we find the history of a house, even if it no longer exists ...

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1885-1950

City directories, digitized 1839-1943, with gaps

U.S. Census, 1790-1940, but not 1890

No street addresses until 1880

No own/rent data until 1900

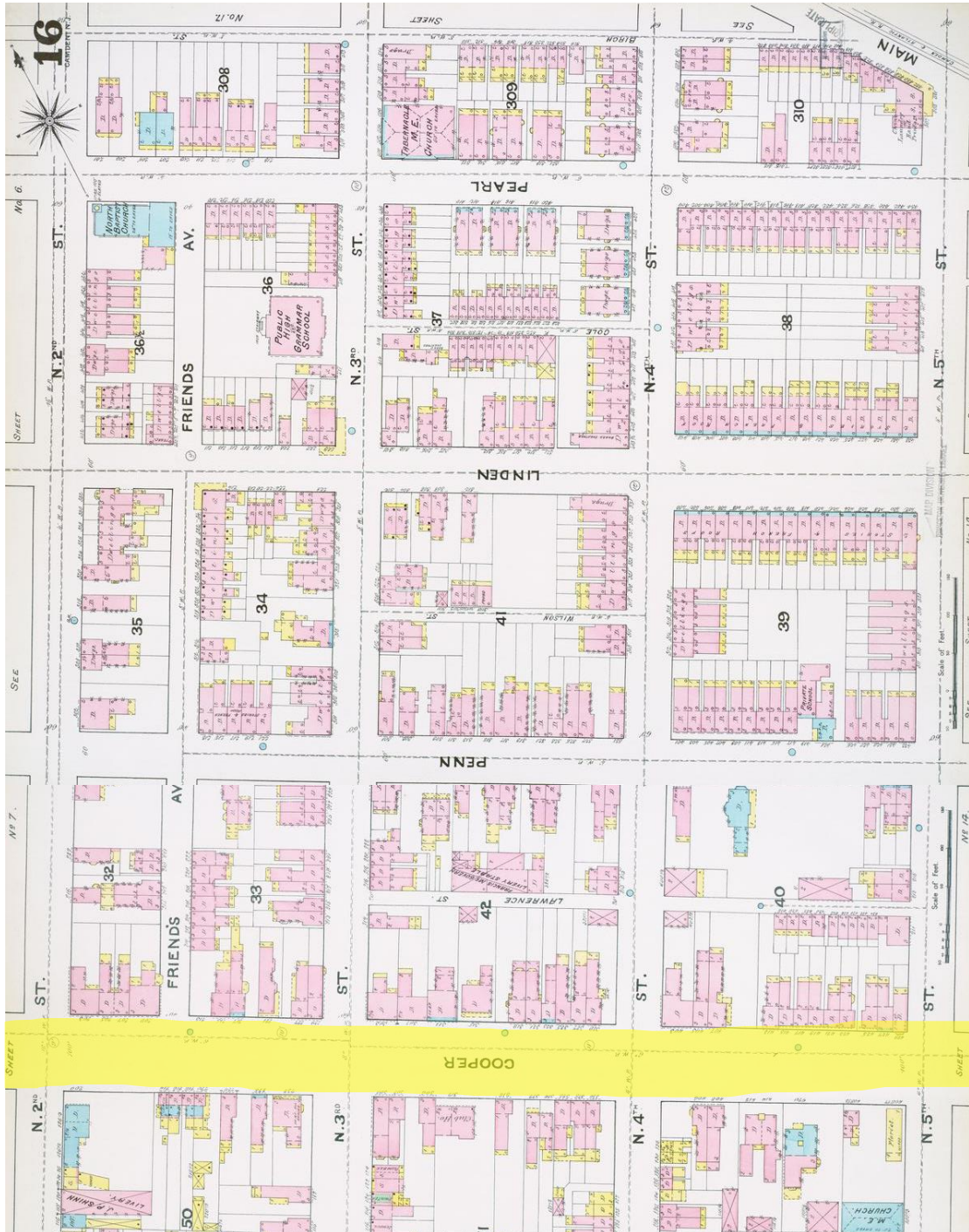
NJ Census, 1865-1915

No street addresses until 1905

Camden newspapers, digitized c. 1870-present

Property deeds, digitized for Camden County
1844-1912 and digital index 1978 to present.

Other sources we find along the way



1891
Sanborn Insurance
Company Maps

Princeton University Libraries



228 Cooper Street
Built 1867
Photographed in 2010

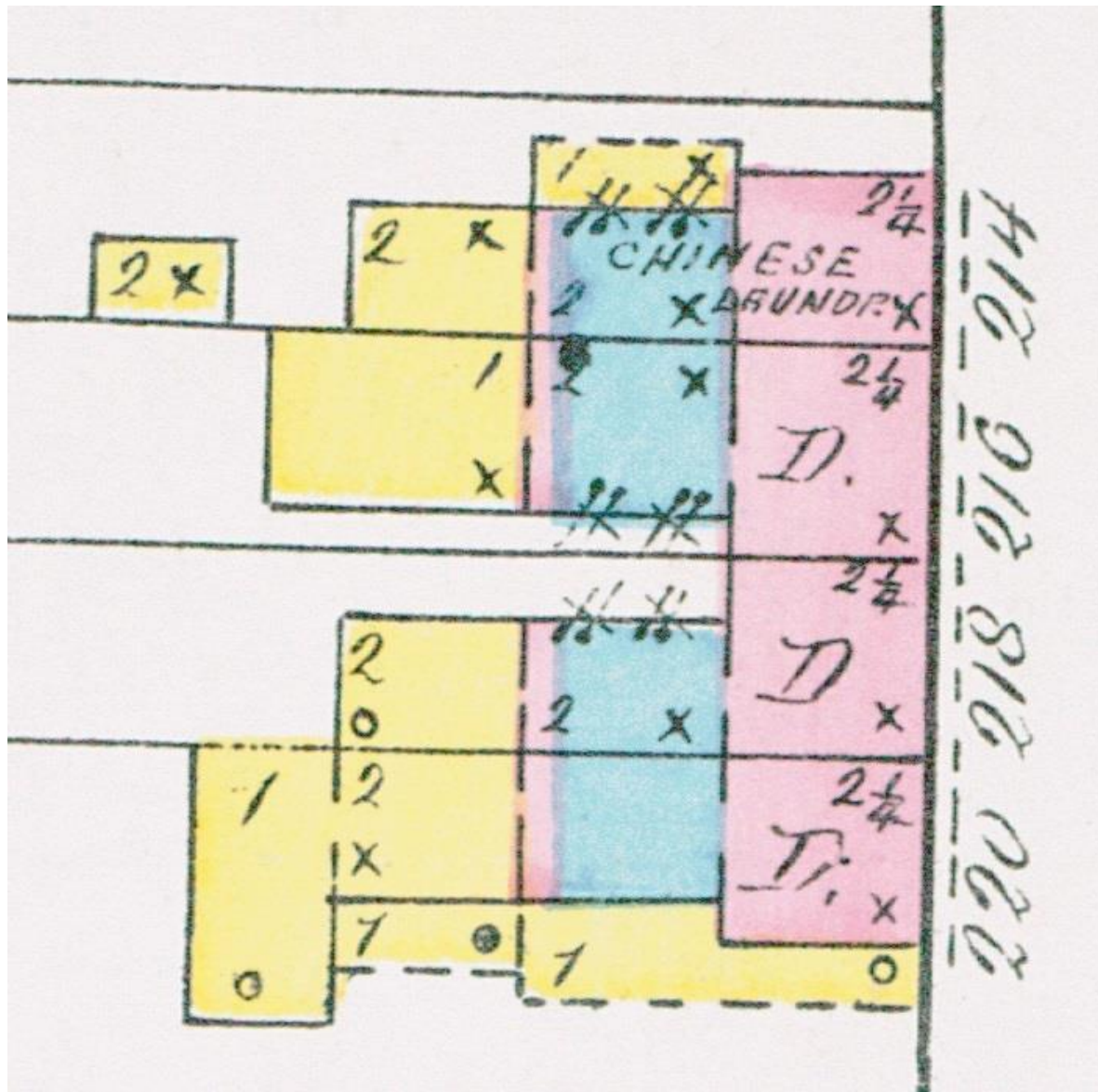


Sallie (Wilkins) Ackley

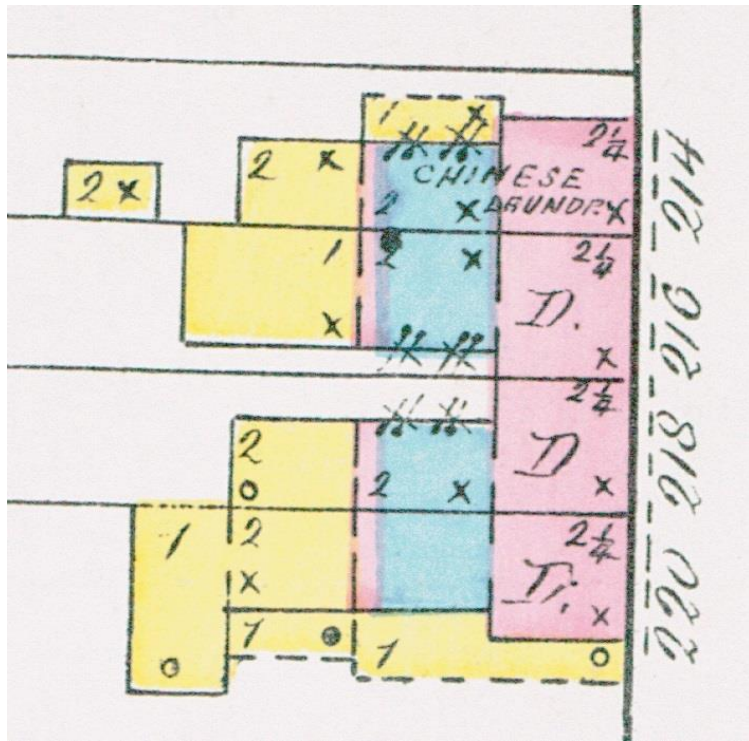
DVRBS.com

House photograph 2019

by Jacob Lechner



1891, Sanborn Insurance Company Map
Princeton University Libraries



1891, Sanborn Insurance Company Map
Princeton University Libraries

ROBBED A CHINAMAN

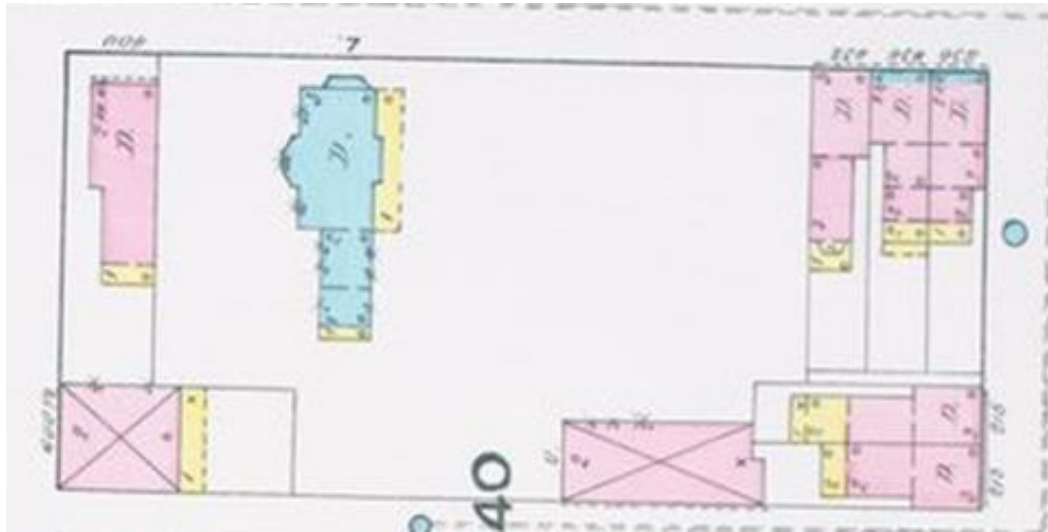
Three Thieves' Bold Work in a Camden Laundry.

While Lee Ying was industriously polishing shirts in his laundry at 214 Cooper street, Camden, about 10 o'clock last night two white men and a colored man came in. The Chinaman turned to wait on them when he was seized by the throat by one of the trio, another thrust a revolver in his face and the third man skillfully went through the frightened Celestial's clothes and the money drawer.

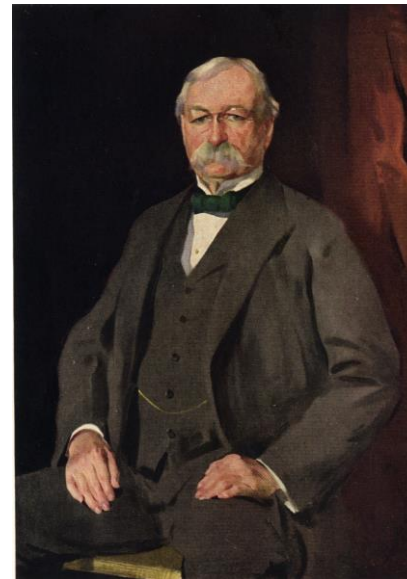
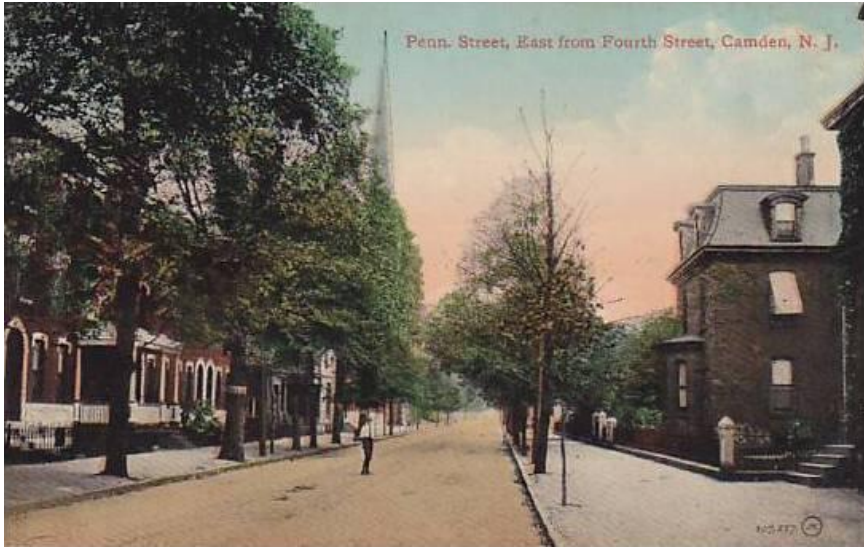
The thieves secured about \$15 and then fled. No arrests have been made.

Philadelphia Inquirer, June 27, 1897

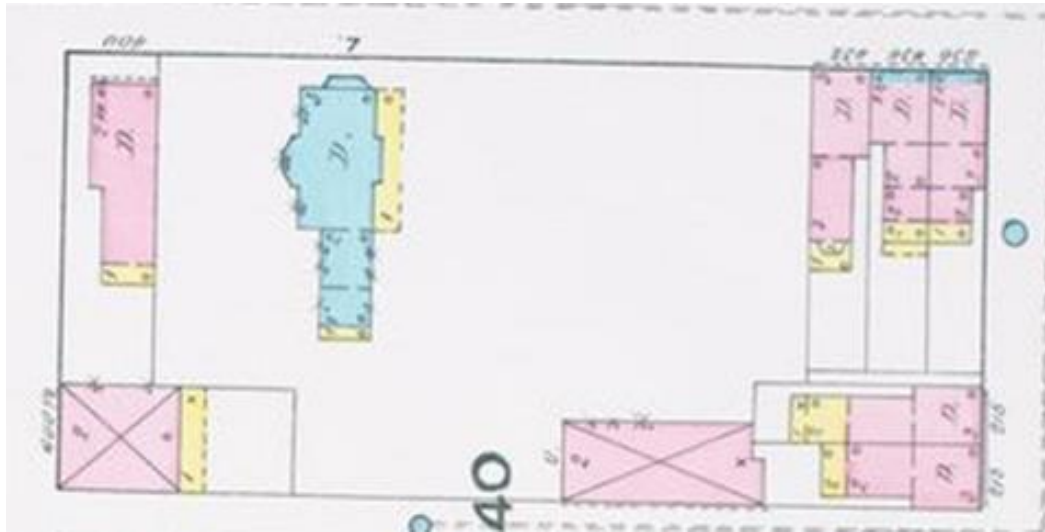




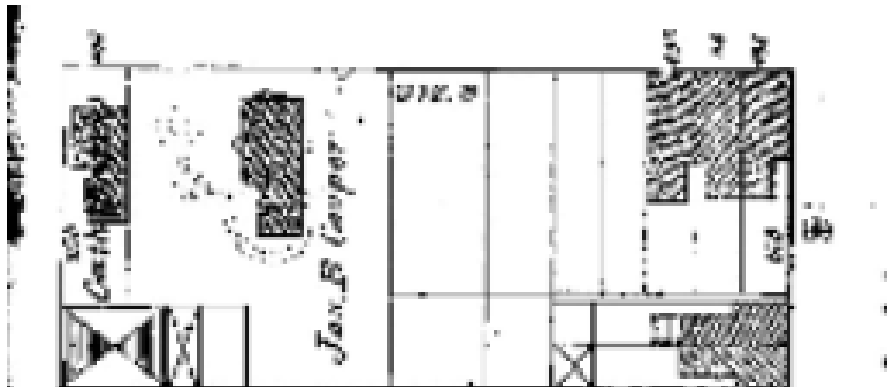
1891
Sanborn Insurance
Company Map
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Francis Wayland Ayer
 (Pennsylvania Center
 for the Book)



1891
Sanborn Insurance
Company Map
Princeton University Libraries



1877
Camden City Atlas
Camden County Historical Society

recorded June 20, 1877 by Geo. W. Brown, Registrar

Joseph B. Cooper
and wife
To
Rhanderia G. Ayer

This indenture made the Twentieth day of June
in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight hundred and
Seventy Seven Between Joseph B. Cooper of the City and
County of Camden and State of New Jersey and Elizabeth
K. his wife of the first part, and Rhanderia G. Ayer wife of
Francis W. Ayer of the City and County and State aforesaid of the second

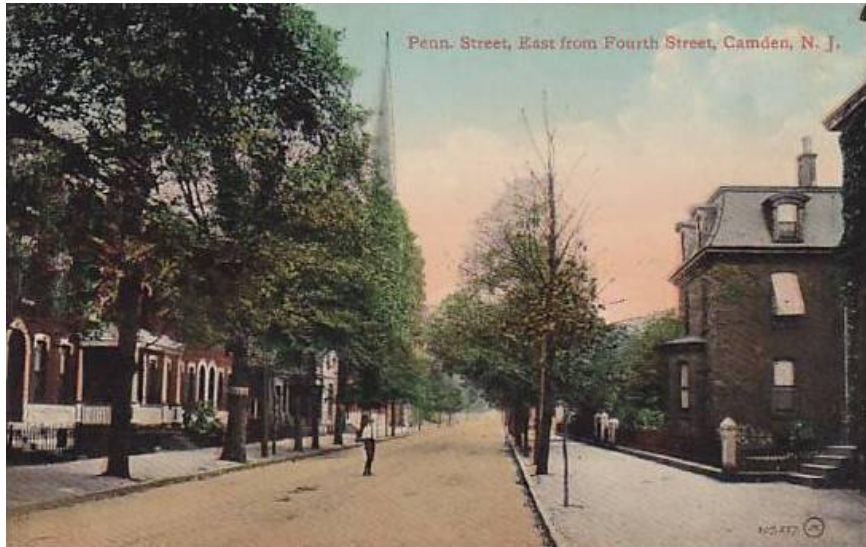
\$25000-

part: Witnesseth, That the said party of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of Twenty five Thousand Dollars lawful money of the United States of America well and truly paid by the said party of the second part, to the said party of the first part, at and before the executing and delivery of this presents the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have granted, bargained, sold, aliened, enfeoffed, released, conveyed and confirmed, and by this presents do grant, bargain, sell, alien, enfeoff, release, convey and confirm unto the said party of the second part, her heirs and assigns, all that tract of Land and premises hereinafter particularly described situate in the City of Camden aforesaid
Beginning at a point in the South line of Penn Street at the distance of
Thirty feet Eastward from the East side of Fourth Street, thence (1) Southward parallel with the said Fourth One hundred and fourteen feet across and to the South line of a certain through wide alley opening into Fourth Street thence (2) Eastward parallel with Penn Street fifty feet thence (3) Southward parallel with Fourth Street thirty six feet to the North line of Lawrence Street, thence (4) Eastward by the North line of Lawrence Street ninety two feet three inches thence (5) Northward parallel with Fourth Street One hundred and fifty feet to the South line of Penn Street, thence (6) Westward by the North line of Penn Street One hundred and forty two feet three inches to the place of beginning, together with the use and privilege forever of the aforesaid through wide alley being certain Lots of Land above described together as one lot that were con-

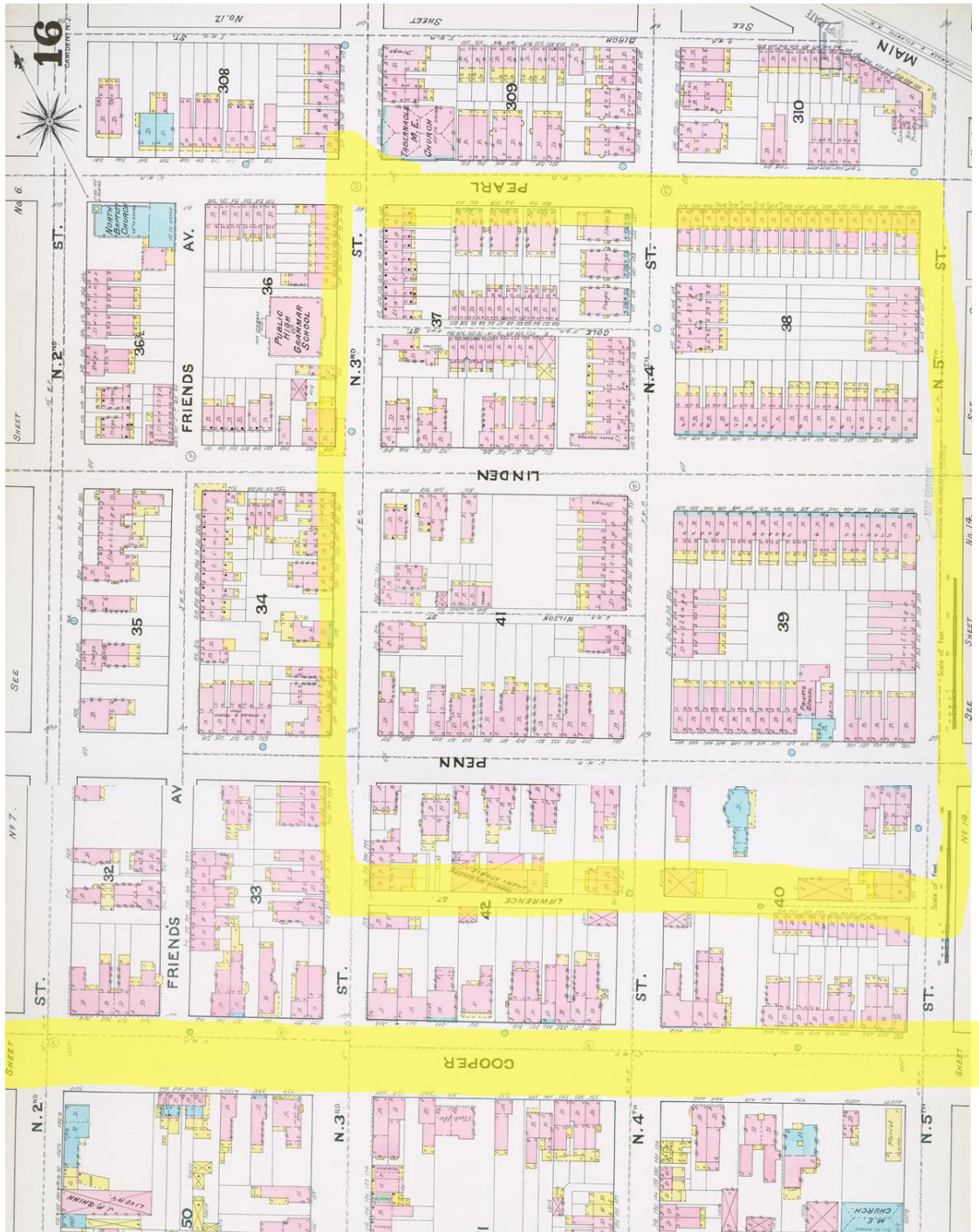
June 27, 1877

Property description

Previous conveyance

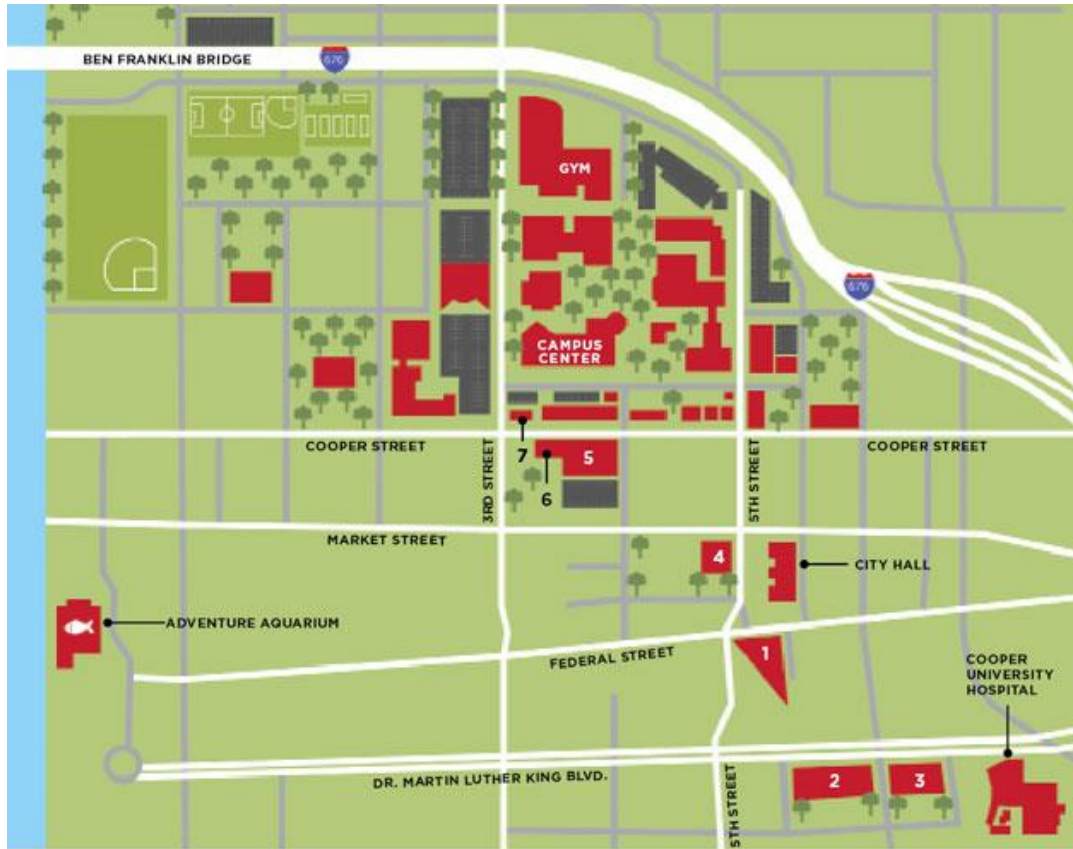


406 Penn	1870 Cooper	Joseph	B.	42 male	white	builder	US Census
406 Penn	1870 Cooper	Elizabeth	K.	39 female	white	keeping house	US Census
406 Penn	1870 Cooper	Rebecca	H.	4 mo.	female	white	US Census
406 Penn	1870 Williams	Charles		36 male	mulatto	coachman	US Census
406 Penn	1870 Jubilee	Elizabeth		15 female	black	domestic servant	US Census
406 Penn	1870 Mattin	Eliza		18 female	black	domestic servant	US Census



1891 Sanborn Insurance Company Maps

Princeton University Libraries

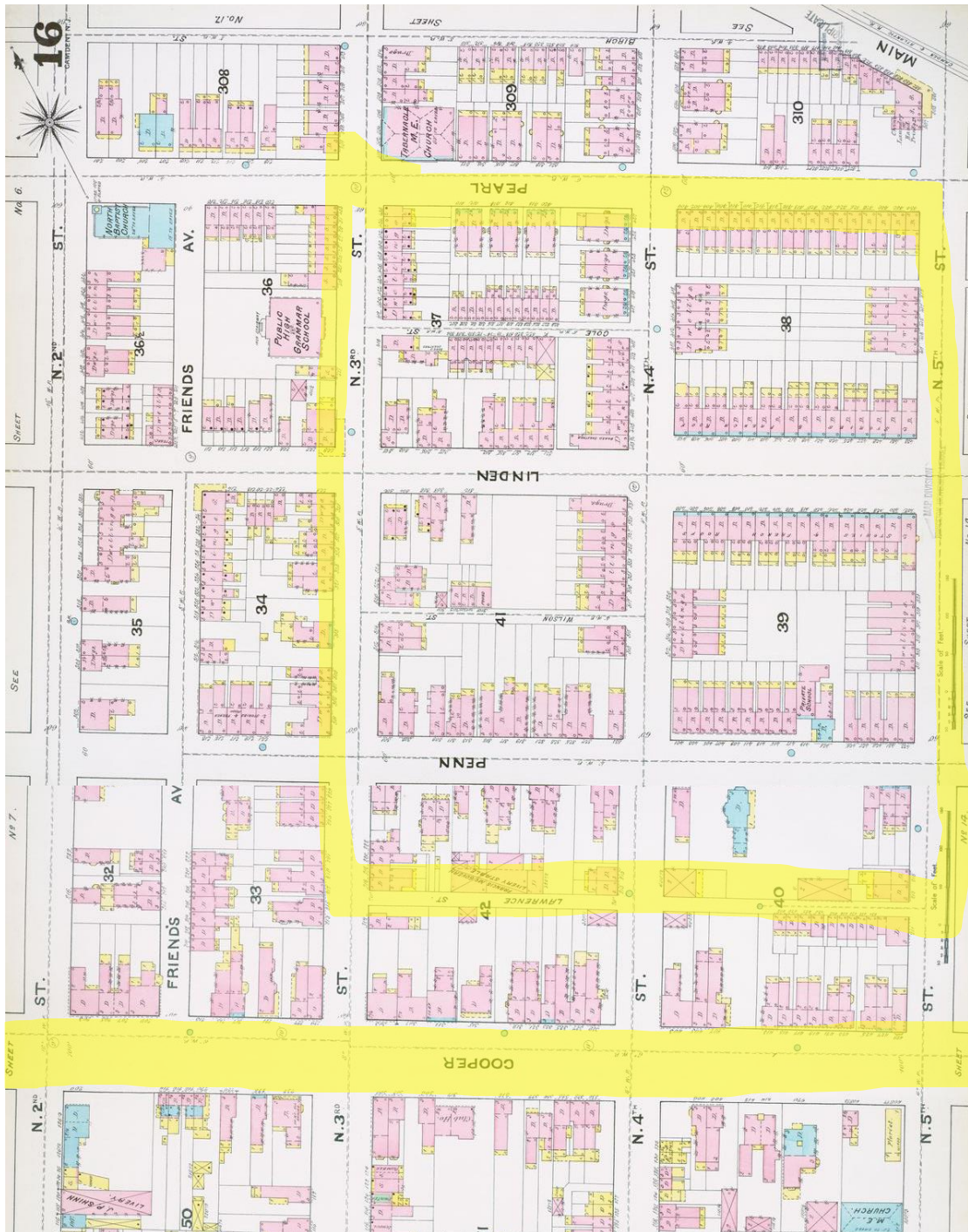


Wikimedia Commons

New and Proposed Facilities

(Rutgers-Camden Magazine, December 2017,
<https://magazine.camden.rutgers.edu/2017/12/camden-rising/>)





1891
Sanborn Insurance
Company Maps
Princeton University Libraries

Preliminary findings:

- Built 1860s-1870s
- Predominantly white, 1860s-1950s
- Transitions to boarding houses, 1890s-1920s
- Apartment conversions, 1920s-1930s
- Puerto Rican presence, 1940s+
- Increasing African American presence, 1950s+
- Urban renewal initiated by Rutgers, 1958



JEWEL M. CAREY LIKES TWENTY-ONE

Energetic 'Realty-Lady' Picks Out All the Twenty-Ones on Cooper Street

"Twenty-one" must be a lucky number for Jewel M. Carey. She sold Pat Harding and others 321 Cooper street, then 421 Cooper street, and finally 521 Cooper street. This was during the hectic times of last year. Now she is managing the properties and all three of the "Lucky Twenty-ones" are being remodeled under her direction.

The building at 321 Cooper street is being remodeled into an eight-family apartment house and title is being taken to it in the newly-formed "Carey Corporation."

In the next block, 421 Cooper street has been remodeled into an office building and the Carey office is leasing offices here.

At 521, Patrick Harding and Judge Kates will have offices, and other legal luminaries will also have suites in the same building.



Camden Evening Courier, Sept. 11, 1926

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