

# PARK IMPROVEMENT STILL CONTINUES

## An Old Mansion Is Being Fitted Up for Use

### PLACE HAS A HISTORY

#### Alterations Are Nearly Com- pleted, So That the Building Can Be Fully Utilized

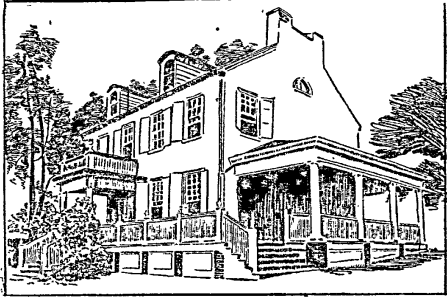
Work is progressing rapidly on the alterations that are being made in the old mansion, at Greenland station, in Fairmount Park, a part of which is to be devoted by the Park Commissioners to the purposes of a waiting and retiring house for women and children. The two apartments on the north side of the house are now in the hands of the plumbers and painters, and it is expected they will be thrown open to public use about August 1. Many improvements are being made in the old house itself, among which the one that will strike the eye first is a very handsome colonial porch, which encircles it on all four sides:

Park Guard Jesse G. Phy, who has used the old mansion as a residence for almost twenty years past, and who is the oldest Park Guard but one, in point of service, will continue to occupy the residence part of the house. A woman to be paid by the Commissioners, will assist in taking charge of the place. It is also proposed to lay out the grounds around the house in handsome style, though it is questionable if any gardener's art can improve on the charming beauty of the spot.

#### FULL OF HISTORY.

Park Guard Phy to whom the house has become endeared from old associations, is a veritable compendium of information on its history. He was born within a stone's throw of the spot, some sixty-seven years ago, on the estate of Jesse George, whose name survives in George's Hill, and after whom Mr. Phy is named, his father having been in the employment of Mr. George for more than thirty years.

"My earliest recollection of this house," said Mr. Phy yesterday, "was in the year 1837, when I was about 8 years old. My father's house stood at Forty-ninth street and Elm avenue, and I remember distinctly walking over the way with him to look



GREENLAND MANSION

at the ruins of the old Falls Bridge, which had been burned down that day. I recollect the circumstances very well from the fact that I picked up some of the old rails of the bridge, and burned my hands with them. The house was then very much as it was till lately.

"It was then occupied by old Doctor Luckey M. Service, who was the best known physician of these parts and whose three sons, Drs. John Service and Cortland Service, of West Philadelphia, and another son, also a physician, who lives out near Bala, were in here on Friday to take a look at the house. Dr. Service, I believe, married a widow named McClintock, who lived here before him. Mrs. Arnold, the wife of Judge Arnold, is either her niece or the niece of the old doctor.

#### "KING JONES."

"After the doctor's death, some time about the war, the house was purchased by John Jones, a well-known Philadelphia butcher, who made a big fortune during the war supplying meat to the troops. He



JESSE G. PHY.

was popularly known as "King Jones." Jones turned the house into a private club, and many a festive day he and his friends spent under the shade of these trees. He or his heirs sold Greenland, with the eighteen acres of land which were attached to it, to the city. I was appointed a Park Guard by the influence of Mr. George on May, 1869, and in that year came to live in Greenland Mansion, and I have lived here continuously since.

"All this section of the Park is as familiar to me as the spot on which I was born. I have lived here practically all my life, though I spent eleven years as a police officer, having been appointed by Mayor Henry, June 12, 1858. I was attached to what was then the old Sixteenth district, at Thirty-seventh and Market streets, and served under Lieutenants Leach and Talbot. I resigned when Mayor Fox entered into office and on the next day was appointed a Park Guard. I was assigned to this district and I have been here since."