

THE FABER HOUSE AS IT LOOKS TODAY

Once one of the plushiest homes in Charleston, the Faber House today is weather-beaten and abandoned. (Staff Photo by Evans)

Foundation To Refurbish And Retain Faber House

A weathered building that a century ago was one of the grandest homes in Charleston is due for refurbishing.

The Henry F. Faber House, which has also been known as the Joshua Ward House and the Cooper View Apartments, will be preserved and held for business or institutional use, the Historic Charleston Foundation announced last week.

The ante-bellum mansion, located at 631 East Bay St., was built in 1838 and is one of the "fine examples of Palladian architecture in the United States," the foundation said.

Recently the city was con-

sidering condemning the Faber House property to build a low-income public housing complex. Later Charleston City Council and the Historic Charleston Foundation offered the house and surrounding property to the State Ports Authority (SPA) for a new SPA headquarters.

The SPA board declined the offer saying it lacked funds for a new headquarters office building and could grant no assurance of future use of the East Bay block.

Last week the foundation's board of trustees met and decided to refurbish the building to some extent and retain it until suitable tenants are located.

Faber sold the house to Joshua Ward, a rice planter and one-time lieutenant governor of South Carolina. It was turned into a hotel for Negroes after the Civil War. Known as the Hametic Hotel,

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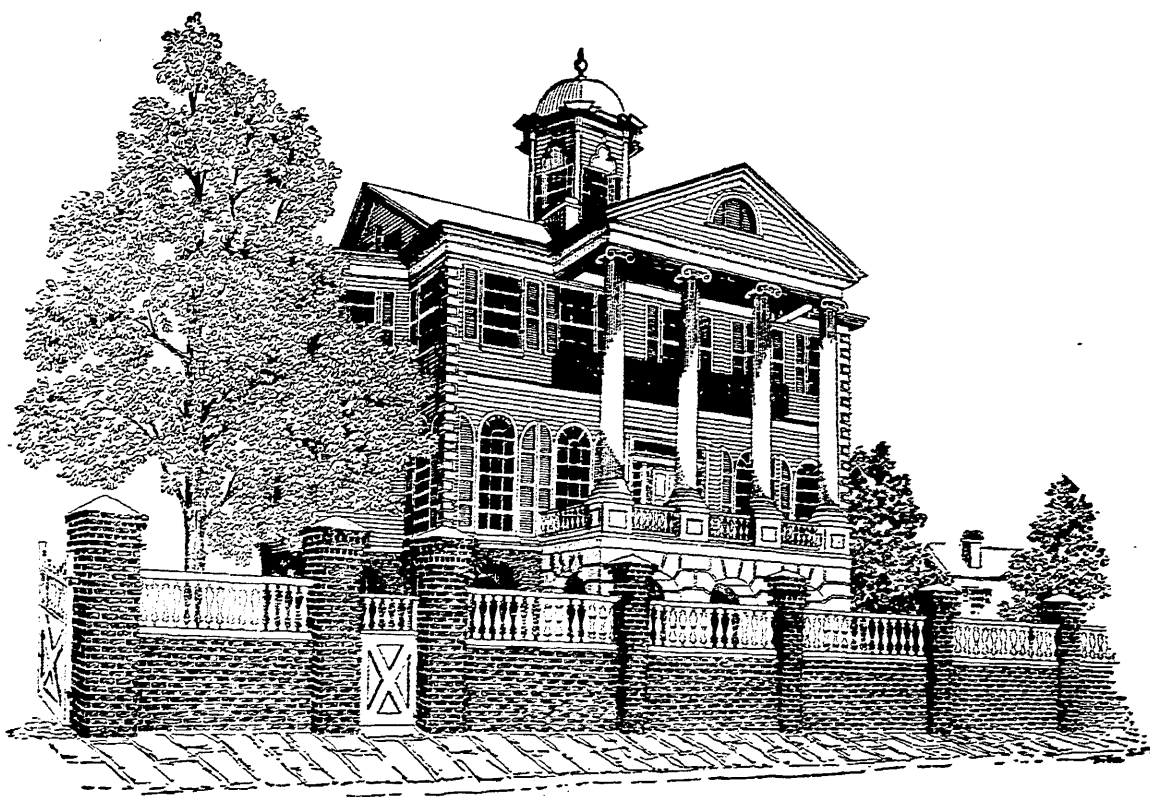
it was never profitable and folded after a year and a half.

It was left vacant for a time. Around 1933, vandals carted away everything that was movable, including the plumbing fixtures and the

solid mahogany doors. Even the magnificent marble mantelpieces were removed.

Hyman Lipman bought the cruelly mishandled house in 1937 and spent \$8,800 on improvements and leased apartments to tenants. Two smaller houses were also built on the property.

Originally the house had 12 rooms — four on each of its three stories. Every room had a marble mantelpiece. The woodwork and plaster were examples of master craftsmanship and the solid mahogany staircase was a beautiful piece of work, according to many architects who appraised the building.



FABER HOUSE WHEN REFURBISHING IS COMPLETED

This drawing by J. Thomas Bell indicates what the grand old home will look like after the Historic Charleston Foundation completes a partial renovation of the building.