

# 41 Chapel Street



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## Introduction

41 Chapel Street, at first glance, looks like any other simple Charleston single house. Few would take a second look, and many would dismiss it as insignificant when compared to the many classic houses found in Charleston. Yet, 41 Chapel represents an important part of Charleston history - that of the working class rental house. The property is found within Mazyckborough, a neighborhood that began as a wealthy suburb of Charleston, but was split up over and over again throughout the decades until it became small narrow lots for working class housing. The introduction of the railroad only brought more workers to the Mazyckborough neighborhood. Rebecca Cordes was one such wealthy landowner, who bought a large plot in Mazyckborough in 1818 that included what would eventually become 41 Chapel. Eventually the property was broken into smaller portions until it is the lot size it is today. William H. Houston, the builder of 41 Chapel, capitalized on the growing city of Charleston and the need for housing. He ended up building and owning many rental properties throughout Charleston. Taking a unique approach with only a single-story piazza, 41 Chapel served many families throughout the decades as a home. Today it has been renovated closer to its historic appearance, and still serves families, albeit of a more middle class nature.

# History of Mazyckborough

Long before the house that is currently at 41 Chapel Street was constructed, the lot was farmland on the outskirts of Charleston.<sup>1</sup> The area, known as Charleston Neck, developed slowly due to its distance from the bustling industrial hub of merchants and wharves farther down the peninsula. Charleston Neck was mostly filled with country homes for the wealthy elite, with middle class attorneys, physicians, and the like buying or renting homes in between and around the larger lots.<sup>2</sup> In 1786, Mazyckborough, part of the East Side of Charleston, was divided into lots based on the large lot of land acquired by Alexander Mazyck in the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> 41 Chapel Street was originally part of present-day 36 Charlotte Street, or 46 Charlotte Street based on the original 1786 plat (Fig. 1).<sup>4</sup> Mazyckborough was marked by wide thoroughfares and dead end streets that hindered the transportation of goods from the wharves.<sup>5</sup> As Charleston grew and developed, the Charleston Neck area became a welcome space for African-Americans, especially those that were either free or slaves that were allowed to live and work on their own. These African-Americans held many different jobs,<sup>6</sup> and Chapel Street was a strong reflection of this mixed population up to the end of the twentieth century.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Mazyckborough was thoroughly without commercial spaces, as they were all concentrated on King Street, a few blocks to the west edge of the neighborhood. For the residents at the time on Chapel Street, grocers were concentrated on

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<sup>1</sup> Dale Rosengarten, et al., *Between the Tracks: Charleston's East Side During the Nineteenth Century* (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), 8, accessed November 20, 2017, <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/lcdl/catalog/lcdl:53539>.

<sup>2</sup> Rosengarten, *Between the Tracks*, 8-9.

<sup>3</sup> Rosengarten, *Between the Tracks*, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Rebecca Cordes House: 36 Charlotte Street. From a vertical file at the Margareta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation, Charleston, SC.

<sup>5</sup> Rosengarten, *Between the Tracks*, 14.

<sup>6</sup> Rosengarten, *Between the Tracks*, 9.

Charlotte Street or Elizabeth Street, which is only a short walk away.<sup>7</sup> In the mid-nineteenth century, wharves and lumber yards along the eastern boundary brought new industry into the East Side and Mazyckborough in particular. Wood yards were particularly popular in this area, and it greatly affected the construction of 41 Chapel Street.<sup>8</sup> Chapel Street saw immense growth during the time of 41 Chapel Street's construction, as the lots in East Side just outside of the city limits were larger and cheaper.<sup>9</sup> The railroads, which had also come to Charleston just before this period, saw the marshland on the east edge of Mazyckborough as a potentially good location to expand their railway lines closer to the wharves than the original rail lines (Fig. 2).<sup>10</sup> It wasn't until the 1850s that a rail depot came to the end of Chapel Street, a prime location as it terminated at a wharf, unusual for a Charleston railroad depot at the time. The Northeastern Railroad Company built the depot to help connect its Wilmington-Manchester line (Fig. 3).<sup>11</sup>

Today, Chapel Street, and Mazyckborough in general, has greatly changed since its days as a working class neighborhood at the end of railroad lines. While still no match for the South of Broad or Ansonborough neighborhoods, Mazyckborough has become a residential neighborhood full of renovated historic homes, green spaces, and idyllic corner stores. 41 Chapel sits in the middle of the block, with a beautiful park and flower shop at the west end, and the east side leads to East Bay Street, ending in a restaurant in an old train depot. Mazyckborough has followed the trend that much of Charleston has adopted in the recent decades of renovating and improving the area.

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<sup>7</sup> Rosengarten, et al, *Between the Tracks*, 20-21.

<sup>8</sup> Rosengarten, et al, *Between the Tracks*, 22.

<sup>9</sup> Rosengarten, et al, *Between the Tracks*, 24.

<sup>10</sup> Rosengarten, et al, *Between the Tracks*, 113.

<sup>11</sup> Rosengarten, et al, *Between the Tracks*, 116.

## Architectural Description

A classic Charleston single house, 41 Chapel Street presents a paired down version of the form. Situated with the northern elevation of the building along the south end of Chapel Street, the two-and-a-half story structure positions the narrow portion of the house along the street to accommodate the narrow and long lots found throughout Charleston (Fig. 4). The north façade is two bays wide, with a single-story piazza to the west side of the structure, which is an unusual feature for the Charleston single house form. Throughout the rest of the Mazyckborough neighborhood and Charleston in general, two-story piazzas are more commonly found. Not too far away from 41 Chapel, 48 Elizabeth Street (now the Aiken-Rhett House) had recently converted its single-story piazza into a two-story piazza when it got upgraded in the Greek Revival style in the 1830s (Fig. 5). William H. Houston, a prominent builder in the mid-nineteenth century, constructed 41 Chapel in 1846.<sup>12</sup> While there is no clear connection between Houston and the Aiken-Rhett house, there was some precedent of single-story piazzas in Mazyckborough prior to the construction of 41 Chapel. 43 Chapel Street, the neighbor to the west of 41 Chapel, perfectly mirrors 41 Chapel and was built by Houston around the same time. The two houses stand as an anomaly to the Charleston single house two-story piazza form.

Houston's own home, 44 Charlotte Street, built in 1834<sup>13</sup> represents a higher-style Greek Revival house, meant to show off his skill and technique as a builder (Fig. 6). When constructing 41 Chapel though, Houston took a simpler approach, only including a few Greek Revival elements in the simple Doric columns along the piazza, a simple piazza screen door surround

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<sup>12</sup> Brittany Lavelle, "41 Chapel Street – William Henry Houston Tenement," 2012. From a vertical file at the Margareta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation.

<sup>13</sup> William H. Houston House: 44 Charlotte Street. From a vertical file at the Margareta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation, Charleston SC.

with a transom light, and an emphasized pediment in the gable of the roof with a tripartite window. In photos of 41 Chapel from a 1985 survey, the piazza has unadorned columns (Fig. 7). The current Doric columns must have been a newer renovation, but the columns at 43 Chapel Street are similar to those currently found at 41 Chapel. While unknown, it is probable that 41 Chapel underwent a few campaigns of repairs over its time, the current columns are close to the original ones. Nine-over-nine windows are found on both the first and second story, with six-over-six windows found in the gables. The west façade has five bays along the piazza, and the middle bay of the first story in the piazza serving as the front door. The 1985 survey photos also show a protruding window on the middle bay above the piazza, which has since been removed. A former outbuilding constructed at the same time as the house lies directly behind. It follows a typical Charleston outbuilding shape, long and narrow, to fit into the long and narrow lot. Both structures are clad in white weatherboard siding, with shutters and red press tin roofs.

41 Chapel has been updated throughout the decades. At some point a rear addition was added onto the main structure. One bay wide, it adds an enclosed portion at the end of the piazza. Other additions have been added to the back of the original structure, creating an unusual shape for the rear (Fig. 8). No clear date can be found for these changes, but records show work was done during the 1930s for significant amounts.<sup>14</sup> The outbuilding has been clearly updated as well, and now is now a single-family residence. 41 Chapel would have originally followed a Charleston single house floor plan of one room wide and two rooms deep, with a central passage including a staircase between the two rooms. A fireplace placed in the middle along the east wall

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<sup>14</sup> Kevin R. Eberle. "Building Records of the City of Charleston, 1882-1936." Microsoft Excel database, Margaretta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation, 2012 (updated 2017).

in both rooms on both the first and second floor would have provided heat for the house. 41

Chapel was recently sold in 2016, and from realty photos it appears that some of the original Greek Revival fireplaces still remain (Fig. 9). Paneling and wide baseboards can be found in the 2016 photos as well. They follow styles found at the time of its construction, but without further investigation it is unknown whether these are original or not (Fig. 10). The original floor plan of the house appears to remain intact, with some minor changes to allow for modern conveniences.



## Origins of 41 Chapel (1818 – 1845)

The Mazyckborough neighborhood was first laid out in 1786, but the first record of sale of 41 Chapel Street was on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1818. Rebecca Cordes and her son James L. Cordes bought the property from William Hasell Gibbs, who was acting as “Master of Equity for the Eastern Circuit of Charleston,” for a \$20,000 bond. At this time, 41 Chapel Street was part of present-day 36 Charlotte Street. The northern edge of the lot along Chapel Street measured 85 feet, the eastern boundary measured 414 feet, the southern boundary along Charlotte Street measured 80 feet, and the western boundary measured 382 feet and six inches. The property is four-times as large as it is today. Originally this lot was referred to as Lot 46, as it was in the 1786 plat (Fig 11).<sup>15</sup>

Born in 1777, Rebecca Cordes (nee Jamieson) married Thomas Cordes, Jr. in 1797. Thomas Cordes passes away in 1799, the same year their daughter Elizabeth Jamieson Cordes was born.<sup>16</sup> Rebecca was left as a widow at the age of twenty-two with a son and a brand new daughter, though fortunately her mother was residing with her at the time.<sup>17</sup> The 1800 United States Census lists Rebecca Cordes as a head of household with one white male and one white female under the age of ten living with her, and one female between the ages of 26 and 45. She was also listed as owning 104 slaves.<sup>18</sup> Little is known of Rebecca’s life after her husband passed away. But in the 1819 Charleston City Directory, she is listed as a Plantress, living at Charlotte

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<sup>15</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book D9, p. 106.

<sup>16</sup> Rebecca Cordes House, Margareta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Second Census of the United States, 1800*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1800. M32, p. 195. Retrieved from familysearch.org. {accessed October 10, 2017}

Street, in Charleston Neck.<sup>19</sup> In the 1810 U.S. Census she is listed with 114 slaves<sup>20</sup> and by 1840 she only had 32 slaves.<sup>21</sup> Rebecca provided for her family up to her death in 1841. Her daughter, Elizabeth Jamieson Cordes, married John Harleston, a prominent Charleston family, in 1819. In 1821 their son Thomas Cordes Harleston was born, and in 1830 their daughter Elizabeth Cecilia Harleston was born. Unfortunately, in the next year Rebecca's daughter Elizabeth and her husband John passed away from bilious fever.<sup>22</sup>

In her will, Rebecca leaves all her property and land on Charlotte Street (including the lot that will eventually become 41 Chapel) to her son James, Edward Harleston, John Harleston, and her grandson Thomas Cordes Harleston – the executors of her will. The land and property is to be sold and put into a trust for her granddaughter Elizabeth Cecilia Harleston. Her slaves are distributed amongst the executors of her will. Her grandsons Thomas, Lucas, and James Cordes (the sons of James Cordes), each receive money for the purchases of watches.<sup>23</sup> The house on Lot 46 (present-day 36 Charlotte Street) is listed today as the Rebecca Cordes House. She originally purchased the property in 1818, yet the house standing there today was not built until the 1830s.<sup>24</sup> There are clear Greek Revival influences in the Charleston single house, from the classic fluted Doric columns and the tripartite window in the gable-end of the roof (Fig. 12).

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<sup>19</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1819*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>20</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Third Census of the United States, 1810*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1810. M252, p. 440. Retrieved from familysearch.org {accessed October 10, 2017}

<sup>21</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Sixth Census of the United States, 1840*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1840. Roll: 509, p. 189. Retrieved from Ancestry.com {accessed October 27, 2017}

<sup>22</sup> Rebecca Cordes House, Margaretta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation.

<sup>23</sup> "Last Will and Testament of Rebecca Cordes," South Carolina, Wills and Probate Records, 1670-1980 Book I & J, 680. Retrieved from Ancestry.com. {accessed November 8, 2017}

<sup>24</sup> "Dwelling is Example of Transition," 36 Charlotte Street, January 19, 1970, from a vertical file at the South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library, Charleston, SC.

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1845, 41 Chapel was sold by Thomas Cordes Harleston, the grandson of Rebecca Cordes. Harleston split the original Lot 46 almost in half, with a stretch of property on Charlotte Street and a separate property officially on Chapel Street.<sup>25</sup> Harleston sold half of the property in 1845 to William H. Houston, who resided not far from Harleston on Charlotte Street. Much like the rest of the Cordes family, Harleston lived on Charlotte Street, residing at 347 Charlotte Street in 1860 working as a bookkeeper in a bank<sup>26</sup> and 23 Charlotte Street in 1880 while working as a phosphate clerk.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book T11, p. 121.

<sup>26</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1860. M653\_1216, p. 273. Retrieved from Ancestry.com {accessed October 27, 2017}

<sup>27</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1880. Roll: 1222, p. 281A. Retrieved from Ancestry.com {accessed October 30, 2017}

## Construction: The Houstons (1845 – 1890)

When Houston bought the property, it was twice as wide as it is today. The property measured 85 feet on the northern edge along Chapel Street, 162 feet nine inches along the eastern boundary, 80 feet along the southern edge, and 133 feet six inches along the western edge.<sup>28</sup> It was during Houston's time that the current house at 41 Chapel Street was built, and he split the lot in half again and built an identical house at 43 Chapel Street. He built the houses as rental properties, as many on Chapel Street were at the time. Houston resided a couple of houses down from Rebecca Cordes when he constructed his own house at 44 Charlotte Street in 1834. Built about the same time as the Cordes' house, Houston also incorporated Greek Revival influences in his home, especially in the detailing along the piazza. With the piazza and front door along the street, 44 Charlotte stands out in a city that orients its houses in the opposite direction (Fig. 6). As is expected in the house of a builder, Houston integrated many high-style aspects into his home, including high ceilings, heavy plaster moldings, marble mantels, heart pine flooring, paneling, medallions, and wide baseboards.<sup>29</sup> His house at Charlotte Street was the most expensive house he owned at his death, worth \$4,000 in 1876.<sup>30</sup> Many of these features can be seen in a much simpler form in 41 Chapel Street.

Houston built and owned many rental properties throughout Charleston, including 41 Chapel. He was also a prominent man within the community, serving as an Alderman for Ward Number 5 from 1856 to 1858.<sup>31</sup> In the 1861 City of Charleston Census, Houston owned 23

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<sup>28</sup> Charleston County, RMC, Book T11, p. 121.

<sup>29</sup> William H. Houston House, Margaretta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation.

<sup>30</sup> "William H. Houston Probate Record," Wills of Charleston County, Book 239-8 (Recorded Inventory Book 2, p. 526). South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library.

<sup>31</sup> City Directory, "Aldermen," Charleston Mercury Newspaper, April 29, 1856 to April 14, 1858, in America's Historical Newspaper Database. {accessed October 13, 2017}

properties, including many along Charlotte Street and John Street.<sup>32</sup> Houston died on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1876, with seventeen properties listed in his probate record. His properties were to be divided amongst his three sons and his wife, with 41 Chapel being the only property listed as specifically given to his son William W. Houston. His son William worked at the West End Mill wood yard, up unto 1882 when he became a general collector,<sup>33</sup> and presumably rented 41 Chapel from the time of his father's death until he eventually sold the property.

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<sup>32</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1861*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>33</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1877-1882*. South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

## Twentieth Century Working Class Life (1890 – Present)

In 1890, on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, William W. Houston sold 41 Chapel Street to William Lawrence Millar for \$7,500. This is the first sale of the property as 41 Chapel, as it had previously been referred to as 13 Chapel Street throughout the Houston family's time. The lot is also now sold at its current size, 42 and a half feet along the north edge of the lot along Chapel Street, 162 feet nine inches along the eastern boundary, 41 and a half feet along the south edge, and 155 feet along the west (Fig. 13).<sup>34</sup> Millar is listed as living at 41 Chapel from 1890 to 1909, the first person to own and reside at 41 Chapel since its construction.<sup>35</sup> In the 1880 United States Census, Millar and his family are listed as living at 13 Chapel (eventually 41 Chapel). Millar was a cotton broker, his wife Elizabeth is "keeping house," and they have two children named Charles and Eugenie.<sup>36</sup> Based on the 1880 United States Census, it can be surmised that the Millars were renting 41 Chapel, until they were able to purchase the property from Houston.

Millar passed away in 1905,<sup>37</sup> and his widow Elizabeth Millar is listed as living in the property until 1915, when she started renting out the property.<sup>38</sup> In both 1914 and 1931, the Millar family repaired 41 Chapel, spending \$500 and \$200 respectively.<sup>39</sup> This shows their commitment to their rental property, as at the time that would be a considerable amount of

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<sup>34</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book E21, p. 299.

<sup>35</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1890-1909*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>36</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1880. Roll: 1222, p. 281A. Retrieved from Ancestry.com {accessed October 30, 2017}

<sup>37</sup> "William Lawrence Millar," Find a Grave, last modified September 28, 2010, accessed November 14, 2017, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59329676/william-lawrence-millar>.

<sup>38</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1905-1924*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>39</sup> Kevin R. Eberle, "Building Records of the City of Charleston," Margaretta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation, 2012 (updated 2017).

money. From 1915 on, the property is rented to a long list of white tenants until it is sold in 1955. The tenants throughout this time included Navy yard machinists, a traveling salesman, a car repairman, a carpenter, an employee at the Chero-Cola-Nehi Bottling Company (abbreviation used by the United States Census), and a saleswoman at Regal's Department Store.<sup>40</sup> They represent the typical working class community found in Mazyckborough throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The property stayed in the Millar family until 1924, when it was sold on November 3<sup>rd</sup> by the Estate of W.L. Millar to Louis P. Dotterer for the price of \$1,700. The property retains the size and shape from the 1890 sale of 41 Chapel Street.<sup>41</sup> Dotterer (Fig. 14) was a prominent dentist in Charleston, "widely known and admired."<sup>42</sup> 41 Chapel remains a rental property during his time. He was born and raised in Charleston, and attended Dr. W. H. Tarrant's private school in Charleston. He then went on to the Dental School of the University of Maryland. At the age of 25, he was named the president of the South Carolina Dental Association. He was heavily invested in the Charleston community and a member of many local clubs and societies.<sup>43</sup> Dotterer passed away in 1929,<sup>44</sup> and in the following decade, the property passes back and forth between the Millar and Dotterer families through different mortgages.

In 1936 on February 29<sup>th</sup>, Mae H. Millar sells the property to Elizabeth F. Dotterer, the wife of former owner Louis P. Dotterer for \$5 and the assumption of a mortgage.<sup>45</sup> While unclear

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<sup>40</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1915-1958*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>41</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book D33, p. 173.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Petrigu Lesesne, *History of Charleston County, South Carolina* (Charleston: A.H. Cawston, 1931), 266.

<sup>43</sup> Lesesne, *History of Charleston County*, 266.

<sup>44</sup> "Dr. Louis Picquet Dotterer," Find a Grave, last modified January 12, 2009, accessed November, 14, 2017, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/32887589#>.

<sup>45</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book N38, p. 567.

how exactly the property passed to Mae H. Millar from Louis Dotterer, Mae Millar is the daughter-in-law of W. L. Millar, married to his son William Lawrence Millar, Jr. Her father was Scottish, and her mother was born in South Carolina, but Mae was born in New Jersey. In 1920 her occupation is listed as a musician in an orchestra and her husband is a retail merchant at Puller and Metal Company.<sup>46</sup> As the Great Depression bore down on Charleston, Mae and W. L. Millar acquired a range of jobs from second hand auto parts to “junk dealers.” At the time they did not reside at 41 Chapel, but rented it out to different tenants.<sup>47</sup> Not much is known about Elizabeth Dotterer, other than her marriage to the dentist Louis Dotterer.

By December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1936, Elizabeth F. Dotterer sells the property to DeWitt W. King,<sup>48</sup> a prominent real estate agent in Charleston.<sup>49</sup> King purchased the property for \$5 and other valuable consideration. He owned his own real estate company in Charleston, DeWitt W King Real Estate and Insurance Company, of which he was president and founder. Heavily invested in the Charleston real estate and commerce community. He was president of both the Charleston Real Estate Board and the Charleston Chamber of Commerce at different points in his life.<sup>50</sup> He quickly sells the property to Marie deTreville Sanders and Lily Blake Sanders on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1937 for \$2,000.<sup>51</sup> The two sisters, daughters of a cotton salesman, are never listed as having

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<sup>46</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1920. Retrieved from Ancestry.com {accessed October 30, 2017}

<sup>47</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1934-1936*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>48</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book F39, p. 617.

<sup>49</sup> Obituary, “DeWitt W. King, 92 Veteran Realtor, Dies,” *Charleston News and Courier*, April 14, 1978, accessed November 2, 2017, in America’s Historical Newspaper Database.

<sup>50</sup> Obituary, “DeWitt W. King,” *Charleston News and Courier*, April 14, 1978.

<sup>51</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book X37, p. 294.



careers in any census or directory, but own 41 Chapel as a rental property. Throughout the time they own 41 Chapel, they reside at 166 Wentworth Street.<sup>52</sup>

The Sanders sisters own the property until 1955, when they sold the property to Samuel B. King on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. The son of DeWitt King, Samuel King, buys the property for \$4,200.<sup>53</sup> After serving in World War II, Samuel King ran his father's realty company, DeWeitt W. King, Inc. and King Agency, Inc.<sup>54</sup> 41 Chapel is then sold by Samuel King on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1956 to a family of women again, this time Carrie Nelson and her two daughters, Beatrice Nelson and Lucille Nelson. They buy the property for \$9,500, a marked increase from the \$4,200 Samuel King paid less than a year earlier. The property stays in the Nelson family for the next 50 years.<sup>55</sup> Carrie Nelson worked as head ironer at Charleston Linen Service in 1958. Her daughter Beatrice was a maid at Lyda-Anne Beauty Shop, and Lucille was a school teacher at the Jennie Moore Elementary School (Fig. 15).<sup>56</sup> An Equalization school founded in 1954 in Mt Pleasant for black students, the Jennie Moore Elementary School has now become an elementary school for the creative arts.<sup>57</sup> By 1975, Carrie Nelson's other children had grown up, and her son Alex Nelson was an employee at the Naval Shipyard, Beatrice was a maid, Bernard a porter at C & S National Bank, Bernice a student, and Lucille a teacher at Whitesides Elementary School.<sup>58</sup> Hurricane

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<sup>52</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 138-1955*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>53</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book O60, p. 420.

<sup>54</sup> "Samuel Blackwell King," Find a Grave, last modified June 21, 2010, accessed November 14, 2017, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/53975895/samuel-blackwell-king>.

<sup>55</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book W60, p. 393.

<sup>56</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1958*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>57</sup> Rebekah Dobrasko, "South Carolina's Equalization Schools, 1951-1960," 2017, accessed November 29, 2017, <http://www.scequalizationschools.org/known-schools.html>.

<sup>58</sup> City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1975*, South Carolina Historical Society, Addlestone Library, Charleston, S.C.

Hugo hit 41 Chapel while under the Nelson's care, but there was only minor damage to the windows, downspouts, and gutters, with major damage to the metal roof covering.<sup>59</sup> The Nelson children, all nine of them, dispersed throughout the country as they grew up and explored their own avenues.<sup>60</sup>

In 2005, the Master in Equity for Charleston County sold 41 Chapel for the heirs of Carrie Nelson. At the time of her death in 1981, Carrie Nelson left her property to her nine children: Lucille Nelson, Beatrice Nelson, Alexander Nelson, Peter Lucas, Solomon Lucas, Ermine Williams, Alethia Sampson, William F. Nelson, and Bernard Nelson. Peter Lucas, at the time of his death in 1992, left his share to Karen Lucas. Alexander Nelson left his share to Alex Angelo Nelson at the time of his death around 1984. Lucille Nelson left her share to Beatrice Nelson, Alethia Sampson, William F. Nelson, Solomon Lucas, Bernard A. Nelson, Ermine Williams, Karen Lucas, and Alex Angelo Nelson. Ermine Williams, William Nelson, and Alethia Sampson sell their share to Bernice McCoy, the daughter of Beatrice Nelson, in 2001. It is unclear who resided at 41 Chapel during this time, though Beatrice Nelson resided in Charleston until her death in 2009, and presumably remained at 41 Chapel. Beatrice Nelson and Bernice McCoy file a lawsuit against Louise Nelson, representative of the estate of Bernard Nelson on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005. As part of the settlement, the court decides to sell the property under the Master in Equity for Charleston County. 41 Chapel is sold on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005 to Vision OPP. Investments, LLC for \$530,000.<sup>61</sup> It is finally sold on July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006 to Lindsey and Katherine

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<sup>59</sup> Hurricane Hugo Damage Assessment Survey Collection, 1989. On microfiche, Margaretta Childs Archives, Historic Charleston Foundation.

<sup>60</sup> Obituary, "Bernice McCoy," *Post and Courier*, 2009, accessed on November 20, 2017, <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/charleston/obituary.aspx?n=beatrice-nelson&pid=134508550&>.

<sup>61</sup> Deed lists where to find the other deeds granting the different shares to Bernice McCoy. Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book P535, p. 418.

Nevin for \$630,000.<sup>62</sup> The property then splits into two separate single family houses, the original Charleston single house and the outbuilding, and they have been sold as separate houses multiple times since 2006.

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<sup>62</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne of Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book X592, p. 259.

## Conclusion

41 Chapel Street has had a long and storied history that fully situates it within the working class of Charleston. Houston built the property in a simpler form as a tenant house, which is clearly visible when compared to his own house. Architecturally, 41 Chapel is unique for its single-story piazza. Today, many of those simple features have been restored and considered the main identifying historic components of the house. Its simple architectural character at the time allowed it to be affordable to most in Charleston throughout its time. 41 Chapel welcomed a diverse working class tenant through its doors, while creating a snapshot of the average person's life in downtown Charleston. The story of 41 Chapel unfortunately prioritizes the wealthy owner of the property, and little is known of the many families who rented the house and made it a home.

## Appendix A

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### Annotated Chain of Title - 41 Chapel Street

**6/22/1818**

Grantor: Master in Equity

Grantee: Rebecca Cordes

Book & Page: D9-106

Type: Mortgage (\$20,000?)

Lot: 85' on northern edge along Chapel St, 414' on east boundary, 80' on south boundary along Charlotte St, 382'6" along western edge

Rebecca Cordes took out a \$20,000 bond along with her husband James L. Cordes, and Rebecca Cordes obtained a mortgage from William Hasell Gibbs, who was acting as "Master of Equity for the Eastern Circuit of Charleston." The lot stretches all the way from Chapel Street to Charlotte Street, the only mention of a lot of this size. The lot is also referred to as Lot 46.

**11/5/1845**

Grantor: Thomas Cordes Harleston

Grantee: William H. Houston

Book & Page: T11-121

Type: Conveyance

Lot: 85' north along Chapel St, 162'9" along the eastern boundary, 80' along the south, and 133'6" along the west

The lot has been cut in half, not extending to Charlotte Street anymore. It is still a double lot, the last time it is mentioned as this size. While there is no mention in the deed how Harleston acquired the land, he shares the same name as Rebecca Cordes from the previous deed.

The lot number is also never mentioned in the deed. To the East is lot 43, to the West is lot 49.

**9/22/1890**

Grantor: William W. Houston

Grantee: W.L. Millar

Book & Page: E21-299

Type: Conveyance (\$7,500)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

William W. Houston is the son of William H. Houston, named in the previous deed. In W. H. Houston's will, he names his son William W. as the recipient of 13 Chapel Street (later 41 Chapel Street, as listed in this deed). William H. Houston owned 17 properties at the time of his death in 1876. The other 16 properties were to be evenly split between his three sons (including William W.) and his wife.

Those named who live on either side of the property are the same listed up to the most recent deed.

**11/3/1924**

Grantor: Estate of W.L. Millar

Grantee: Louis P. Dotterer

Book & Page: D33-173

Type: Conveyance (\$1,700)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

**2/29/1936**

Grantor: Mae H. Millar

Grantee: Elizabeth F. Dotterer

Book & Page: N38-567

Type: Conveyance (\$5 and assumption of a mortgage)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

A mortgage made in 1924 to Louis P. Dotterer is referenced in the deed. Unclear how the property passed to Mae H. Millar. The mortgage deed number is also not listed in any of the deeds.

**12/2/1936**

Grantor: Elizabeth F. Dotterer

Grantee: DeWitt W. King

Book & Page: F39-617

Type: Conveyance (\$5 and other valuable consideration)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

Elizabeth F. Dotterer is the wife of Louis P. Dotterer, listed in the 1924 deed.

**1/18/1937**

Grantor: DeWitt W. King

Grantee: Marie deTreville Sanders and Lily Blake Sanders

Book & Page: X37-294

Type: Conveyance (\$2,000)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

**7/23/1955**

Grantor: Marie deTreville Sanders and Lily Blake Sanders

Grantee: Samuel B. King

Book & Page: O60-420

Type: Conveyance (\$4,200)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

Samuel B. King is the son of DeWitt W. King, listed in the 1937.

**1/3/1956**

Grantor: Samuel B. King

Grantee: Carrie Nelson, Beatrice Nelson, and Lucile Nelson

Book & Page: W60-393

Type: Conveyance (\$9,500)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west



**5/2/2005**

Grantor: Master in Equity for Charleston County

Grantee: Vision OPP. Investments, LLC

Book & Page: P535-418

Type: Conveyance (\$530,000)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

Master in Equity for Charleston County sold the property as the result of a case brought in front of the Court of Common Pleas by Bernice McCoy and Beatrice Nelson as plaintiffs and Louise Nelson, as personal representative of the estate of Bernard Nelson, et al. as defendants. The three grantees in the previous deed passed their shares in the property to their heirs. The interest of Carrie Nelson passed to her nine children: Lucille Nelson, Beatrice Nelson, Alexander Nelson, Peter Lucas, Solomon Lucas, Ermine Williams, Alethia Sampson, William F. Nelson, and Bernard Nelson. Between 1981, the year of Carrie Nelson's death, and the date for this deed, the shares in the properties were either passed to their heirs, left for one of Carrie Nelson's other children, or bought by Bernice McCoy or Beatrice Nelson. There is no mention of Louise Nelson.

**7/28/2006**

Grantor: Vision OPP. Investments, LLC.

Grantee: Lindsey Nevin and Katherine C. Nevin

Book & Page: X592-259

Type: Conveyance (\$630,000)

Lot: 42.5' North along Chapel St, 162'9" on the eastern boundary, 41.5' along the south, 155' along the west

Still states butting and bounding as "to the East on land late of William L. Holmes, to the South on land late of L.P. Smith, and to the West on land late of Miss L. A. Wynne."

## Appendix B - Illustrations

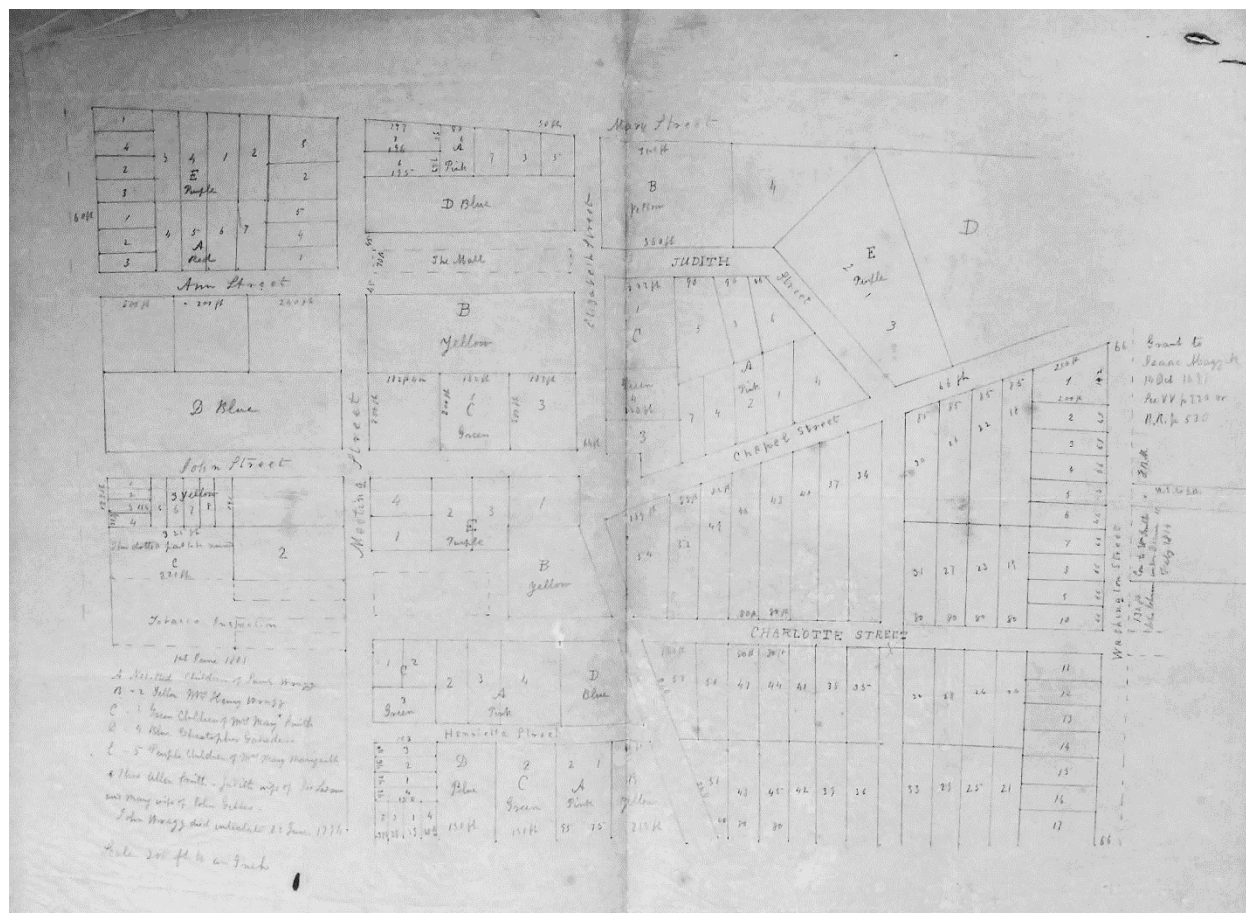
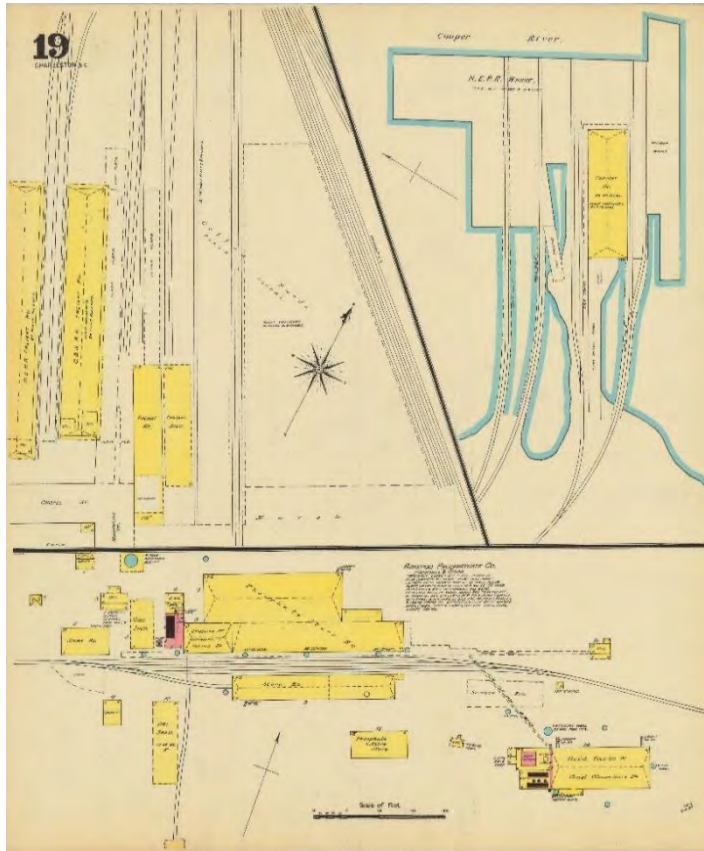
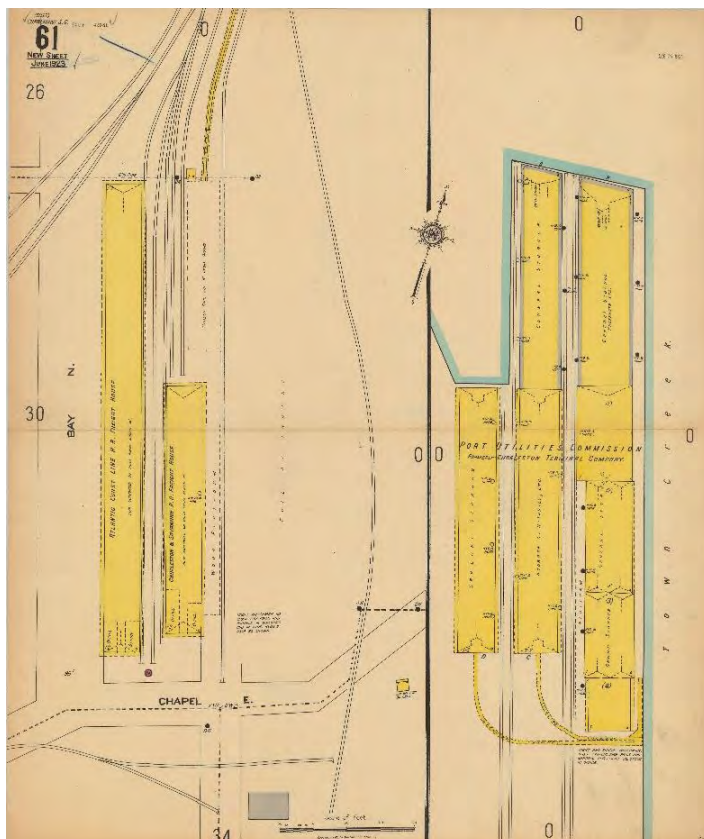


Fig. 1: Plat of Mazyckborough, 1801. Courtesy of South Carolina Historical Society.

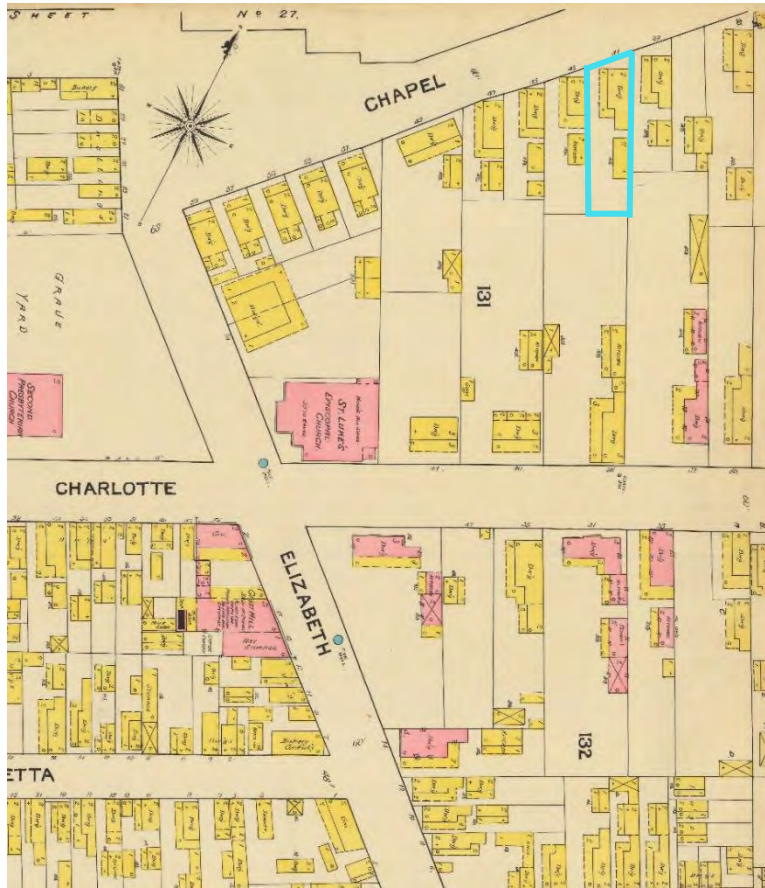


*Fig. 2: 1888 Sanborn Map showing increased growth of the eastern edge of Chapel Street with the construction of the railroad depots and wharves. Courtesy of University of South Carolina Library.*



*Fig. 3: 1923 Sanborn Map showing eastern boundary Chapel Street and the railroad depots of the Atlantic Coast Line and the Charleston & Savannah Railroad. Courtesy of the University of South Carolina Library.*





*Fig. 4: 1888 Sanborn Map showing 41 Chapel Street built within a narrow and long lot as is typical of houses in the neighborhood. Courtesy of University of South Carolina Library.*



*Fig. 5: Proximity of Aiken-Rhett House (48 Elizabeth Street) to 41 Chapel Street. Image from Google Maps.*





*Fig. 6: 44 Charlotte Street. William H. Houston house. Courtesy of Redfin.com*







*Fig. 8: South elevation with noticeable additions to the original structure. Courtesy of Estatefy.com.*



*Fig. 9: The large Greek Revival fireplace, with a coal-burning insert, is clearly visible in this realty photo from 2016. Courtesy of Estatefy.com.*



*Fig. 10: 2016 realty photo shows wide baseboards and paneling under windows in the dining room. Note the simple Greek Revival fireplace, found in other rooms of the house. Courtesy of Estate.com.*



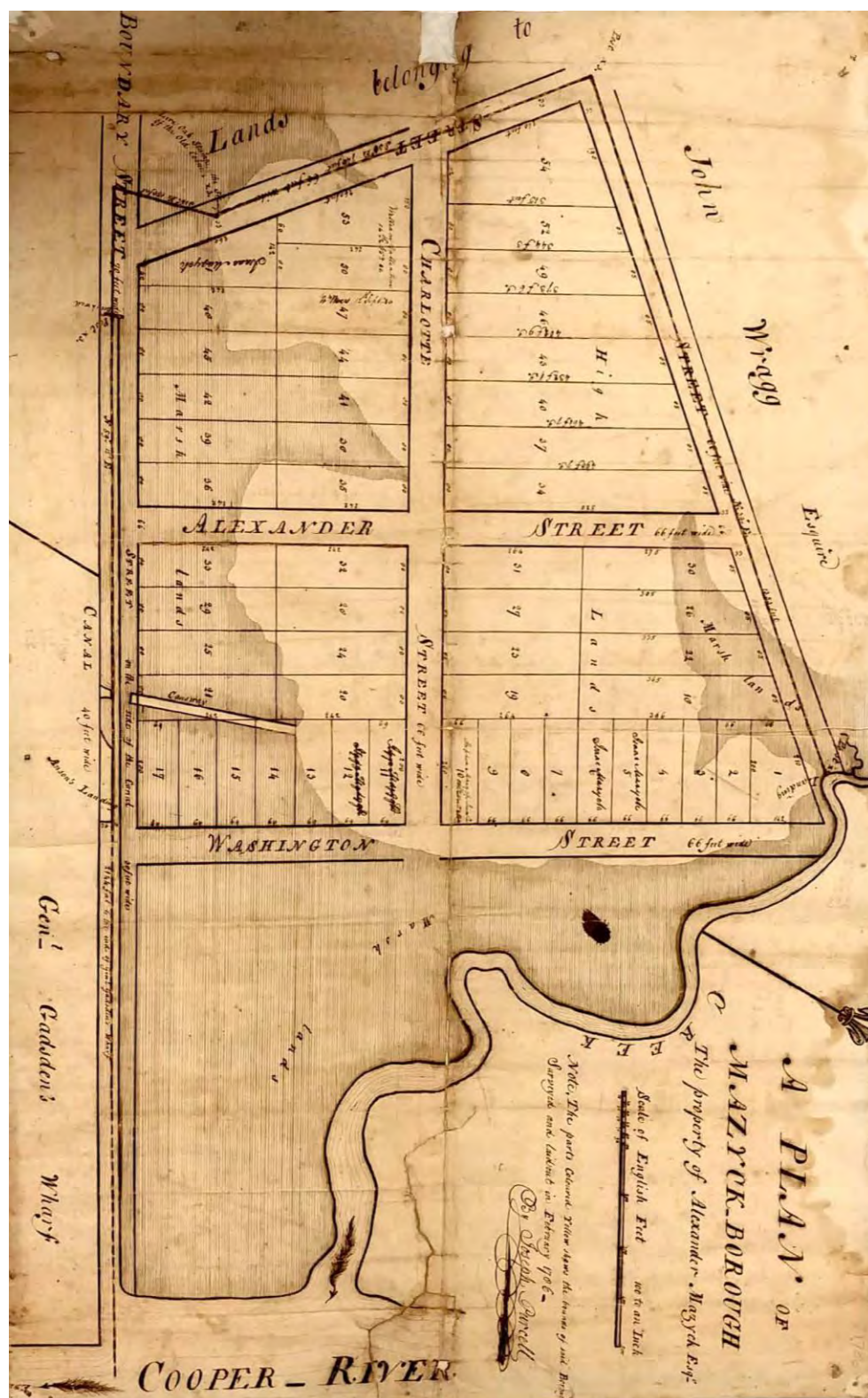
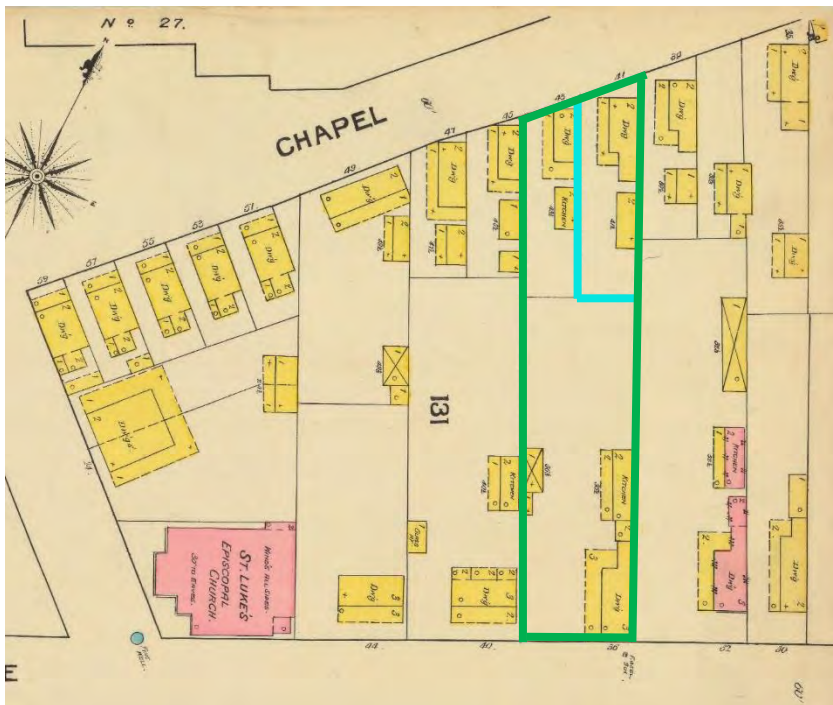


Fig. 11: Original plat of Mazyckborough. 41 Chapel Street was part of Lot 46 at this time. Courtesy of South Carolina Historical Society





*Fig. 12: 36 Charlotte Street, the Rebecca Cordes house. Courtesy of Zillow.com.*



*Fig. 13: 1888 Sanborn Map showing the current size of 41 Chapel Street (outlined in blue), as well as its original lot (outlined in green). Courtesy of the University of South Carolina Library.*



*Fig. 14: Louis P. Dotterer. Courtesy of Findagrave.com.*



*Fig. 15: Jennie Moore Elementary School, a South Carolina equalization school for black students. Courtesy of SCEqualizationSchools.org.*

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