

Research Fails to Support Theories About 45 Anson St.

By ROBERT P. STOCKTON

It has been speculated that the building at 45 Anson St. was originally an outbuilding to Col. William Rhett's c. 1712 mansion house of Rhettisbury Plantation.

If that were true, the structure would be among the earliest surviving outbuildings in Charleston.

However, outbuildings being generally difficult to document, research has revealed no evidence to support that theory.

Also, the "fly in the ointment" regarding this theory is the brickwork of the structure. Its bricks are laid in American bond, a type of construction generally accepted by architectural historians as typically 19th Century.

The earliest documented incidence of American bond in Charleston appears to be in a building at 6 Greenhill St.,

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the former outbuilding for 143 Tradd St. The Greenhill Street structure, or at least a structure on its site, appears on a plat dated 1817.

It is valid to assume, then, that the present structure at 45 Anson St. is considerably younger than Col. Rhett's mansion at 54 Hasell St., and was built long after his plantation was broken up into town lots.

Since the fire of April 27, 1838, also swept through that part of Ansonborough, it is probable also that the present building dates after the fire,

although some buildings, notably Col. Rhett's house, did survive.

At the time of the 1838 fire, the site of 45 Anson, a lot then measuring 45 feet by 100 feet, was owned by Nathaniel Hunt and his wife Ann.

Mrs. Hunt, the former Ann Rivers White, had inherited the lot from her great-uncle, Thomas Rivers, who had bought it in 1819 from James Hasell Ancrum, one of the heirs to Rhettisbury.

A "List of Suffers" published in the Charleston Courier after the fire lists several structures owned by the Hunts on the west side of Anson Street as having been destroyed:

"Three small wooden houses owned by Mr. Hunt."

"A one story house, owned by Mr. Hunt, and occupied as a grocery."

"A two and a half story wooden house, owned and occupied by Mrs. Hunt."

In 1847, James R. Stevens, trustee under the Hunts' marriage settlement, conveyed the site, with a "Two Story Brick House thereon," to Ann Johnson, for \$1,500. The deed contains the first mention of a brick house on the property.

A ward map of 1882 and the Sanborn Insurance Map of 1888 show a two story brick house on the street line in front of the northern half of present-day 45 Anson.

The maps show present-day 45 Anson as a double tenement of two stories of brick, with a common wall between the two dwelling units and wooden piazzas in front of each unit. The two units were numbered 45 and 47 Anson, respectively.

There is no doubt that 45 Anson was built as a double outbuilding. Its position on the lot, its construction, the apparent original floor plan, with a dividing wall down the center, identifies it as such.

It is possible that it was built as the service building to a double residence, one half of which survived into the 1880s to appear on the ward and insurance maps, the other half of which disappeared before that time.

Ann Johnson, who bought the property from the Hunts in 1847, sold it in 1849 for \$1,500 to Mary Just, who sold it in 1850 to Joshua Burie for \$1,500.

Burie died in 1872, leaving to his son, Daniel Burie, his "House and Lot of Land in Anson Street." The younger Burie, in 1874, sold the "lot with the buildings" to Bernard F. Hube for \$800.

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(Staff Photo by Bill Jordan)

45 Anson St.

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"But," Perkins said, "we'll be back."

...Anson St.

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The property remained in the Hube family until 1906, when Margaretha Hube sold it to Virginia E. Holloway.

Mrs. Holloway, in 1930, bequeathed the property to her daughters, Beulah Coggins and Virginia E. Hazelton. Mrs. Hazelton bought her sister's half of the property in 1950.

Mrs. Hazelton sold the property, then known as 45-47 Anson, to Bobbie L. Tucker in 1972.

Tucker restored the building, which received the top award for noteworthy preservation from the Preservation Society of Charleston, in 1974. The same year, he sold it to Steven M. and Robin S. Bluestein.