

THE HAPPOLDT HOUSE

This vernacular, wood, two-story Charleston single house was probably constructed between 1853 and 1857 by Albert W. Happoldt, a Charleston butcher who lived on nearby Cannon Street. He had acquired a tract consisting of several lots in this newly opened street of Cannonsborough in May 1848 from Thomas Gates. The Happoldts were a prominent German immigrant family which originally immigrated from Brausbach, Germany prior to the American Revolution. They were active members of St. John's Lutheran Church and the German Friendly Society. Albert seems to have been born after his family temporarily returned to Germany in 1805, but by his early adulthood, he was again living in Charleston. J. M. Happoldt (c. 1805-1881), apparently a brother of Albert, was a gunsmith and maker, living and working at 45 State Street. The Happoldt's are considered to be the finest makers of guns in South Carolina prior to the Civil War. The Charleston Museum has two examples of their work.

After this house was completed, it was temporarily occupied by J. H. Happoldt, son or nephew of Albert, who was also a gunsmith. After Albert's death, the house was sold in settlement of his estate in 1859 to F. Postelle Thackam, a clerk in the Ogilvie dry goods store and mortgaged to Charles Macbeth. Sometime during the Civil War, Macbeth acquired full title and Thackam disappeared from the records. The house was sold by the executors of the will of Henrietta Macbeth in July 1889. After the War Between the States, the house seems to have remained rental property until well into the twentieth

century, occupied by freed slaves holding occupations such as porter and blacksmith. It was owned by a succession of middle-class black Charlestonians.

The conformity of the house, and its adjacent out buildings are shown on a plat dated November 15, 1859. It may be the oldest house in this block of Smith Street. The property was acquired by Historic Charleston Foundation from the estate of Oliver Hasell in 1984. It has been unoccupied for several years, and had been cited for condemnation by the City.

The House was purchased by the Foundation under its revolving fund and rehabilitated primarily with funds from a Dept. of Housing and Urban Development Block grant administered by the City of Charleston. It is the last of a series of fifteen dwellings rehabilitated by the Foundation under its Home Ownership Program, begun in 1979, and designed to save small dwellings of architectural merit and return them to single-family ownership by residents of the area of moderate income.

The building is under contract of sale to HOP applicant, Ms. Dana Campbell, a former long-term resident of the area. Ms. Campbell is in the process of completing the required "sweat equity" work on the interior of the building.