

20 Church

73 F

It is interesting that the small house that James Verree built about 1754 should contain the only room in Charleston that is fully paneled in mahogany. In 1764, Stephen Duvall bought this house for his bride, and it is thought that he installed the mahogany. The living room mantel is also of mahogany with unusual inlay. At one point, there were closets on either side of the mantel. They have long since been removed to enlarge the small room, but the original doors were retained as false doors on either side of the chimney. On the mantel are Spode garnitures dating from about 1820. The painting over the mantel depicts Piazza San Marco in Venice, and the girandoles are, in fact, altar pieces which came from a small family chapel in France.

JAMES VERREE'S HOUSE

60 Church Street c. 1754

Mrs. M. K. Hard

Built well before the Revolution, this house is an excellent example of the typical Charleston single house, one room wide on its street side with entrance door placed at the side. This plan, unique to Charleston, but widely used here for houses of all sizes during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, gives an amazing amount of privacy on the long narrow lot which is most often found in the oldest part of this city. Note that the house has one side with few if any windows and no doors. This blind side offers privacy, and in a row of single houses, offers privacy for each.

This house and the two immediately south were built by James Veree, a carpenter and builder of colonial Charleston. It is believed that he built No. 58 Church Street for his own use and that this house and No. 56 Church Street were built for income property.

In 1764, Stephen Duvall, a bar pilot whose job it was to safely conduct ships in and out of Charleston harbor, bought this house for his second bride. Duvall was an officer in the South Carolina Navy during the Revolution and, as a leading patriot, he was imprisoned in the Provost under the Exchange Building when the British occupied Charleston in 1780. He died there of a fever a few months later, but his widow continued to live here until her death in 1821.

A complete inventory of the furnishings of the house was made at the time of Duvall's death and survives, belonging to a descendent who lives here in Charleston. He has graciously loaned it for display in the sitting room. The 18th Century custom for furnishing rooms with a great deal more than we use today is emphasized by the amazing length of the list of furniture for this room. The only piece known to remain in family possession is a handsome grandfather clock, made by William Wasbrough of Bristol, England about 1770.

Stephen Duvall is believed to have added the fine mahogany panelling in the sitting room. Mahogany panelling, this extensively used, is unique in Carolina at this period and this room is in excellent condition. Note the beautiful inlaid frieze which obviously came from the workshop of a fine local cabinet-maker of the day, possibly Thomas Elfe. Note the doors on either side of the fireplace. When the room was originally fitted with mahogany, these doors were set flush with the edge of the fireplace and concealed closets. At a later period they were set back against the wall and the closets were removed. In a strong light you can tell that the side walls beyond the level of the fireplace are slightly different than the remainder of the room.

This house is unusually elaborate throughout for such a small dwelling. The woodwork in the stair hall is also mahogany. The dining room and both rooms on the second floor are panelled from floor to ceiling with cypress. Cypress is the wood usually used for panelling in Charleston in the 18th Century. It is a good clean wood which works easily when freshly cut and becomes impervious to termites and dry rot as it hardens with age. Unfortunately it often tends to crack apart with age and much early panelling has been lost.

This little house has a place in the hearts of many Charlestonians. It was purchased nearly thirty years ago by Mrs. J. S. Hanahan, Sr. and her daughter, Miss Louise Hanahan for their residence. At that time a building was constructed for the kindergarten Miss Hanahan had started some years before. The Louise Hanahan Little School has continued to operate under the ownership of the J. S. Hanahan family. Mrs. M. K. Hard is Director of the school.

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO HOSTESSES:

Guests may exit through a door in the south wall of the dining room and walk in the garden if they desire.

THE JAMES VERREE' HOUSE

Built before 1774; extensive wing added in 1982

60 Church Street

Builder possibly James Verree'

James Verree', a French Huguenot carpenter, bought the tract from which this lot derived in 1754 and probably constructed the house a decade or more later. He also built the two houses immediately to the south but may have constructed this dwelling for himself. Verree' moved to Burlington, New Jersey and sold the house by deeds of lease and release in 1771 to Stephen Duvall. The outstanding feature of the house is the west, first floor room. This space is fully panelled in mahogany with fretwork inlay in a lighter wood. It has been pointed out by Historic Charleston Foundation Curator, Tom Savage, that the style of the inlay is very similar to the great Holmes family bookcase made in Charleston in the 1770s (today shown in the Heyward-Washington House). Savage has noted the style of the inlay as that of a cabinetmaker trained in the German style of the period and theorized that it could be the work of Martin A Pfeninger, Sr. (working 1772-1782), a member of the German Friendly Society, who had advertised in the South Carolina Gazette on April 13, 1773, that he performed: "Cabinet-Making, in all its branches, Also, Inlaid-work in any Taste."

Duvall was a bar pilot who assisted ships in entering and clearing Charleston harbor. As an officer in the South Carolina Navy in the Revolution, he died of fever in the dungeon under the Exchange building in 1780. A room by room inventory survives of Duvall's possessions, taken at his death. His finest furnishings including mahogany dining table, sideboard, china table, desk, case clock, and tea table, as well as one dozen mahogany chairs and extensive silver, china, and glass were located in the mahogany room, described as the "Front Room below." He also had seven slaves, including two men, Fortune and Sampson, trained as pilots.

The property was sold to settle the estate of Duvall's wife in 1821.

JAMES VERREE'S HOUSE  
60 Church Street  
Home of Mr. and Mrs. Dean Andrews

1991

This two-story frame dwelling and the two others that stand to the South are believed to have been built by James Verree, a carpenter and builder in Colonial Charles Towne. Verree is thought to have built one house for himself and used the other two as rental properties, or tenements as they were called then. Charleston in the 18th century needed accommodations for legislators, sailors, and planters' families whose seasonal moves to the city revolved around the legislative, shipping, and social seasons.

In 1771 Verree sold this house to Stephen Duvall, a harbor pilot, who served as a naval officer during the Revolution and was captured and imprisoned in the Provost dungeon under the Exchange Building--at Broad and East Bay Streets--when the British captured Charleston in 1780. He died there of fever, as did many of his fellow prisoners, but his wife lived here until 1821.

HALLWAY:

Still life water color by Mrs. Andres. The carved and hand painted chickens are from one of the Andres' winter trips to Jamaica. Mrs. Andrews is a painter and most of the paintings in the home are her work.

DRAWING ROOM:

This room is fully paneled in mahogany and is recognized as one of the most beautiful Georgian drawing rooms to survive from this period. It is extremely unusual to find an entire room crafted from mahogany. This expensive and rare wood was usually reserved for use in furniture and in bits of fretwork or other decorative details of paneling. In many 18th century houses, such as George Washington's Mount Vernon, the rooms were paneled in more common woods such as pine, and then "grained" to resemble mahogany. One possible explanation for the existence of this room is that the builder may have used it as a "model" to display his skills. Note the frieze of the mantel where the fretwork is inlaid with lighter wood strips.

Furnishings - Contemporary furniture, fabrics and art work have been combined nicely with the 18th century interior by our talented hostess. The porcelain box is capopimonte -- 1840's France. The two ashtrays are 1920's.

DRAWING ROOM:

Over the mantel is an English lithograph. On the mantel is a Chin Pei Keng Chinese porcelain headrest, c. 1800 and two Imari plates. The paintings of Drayton Hall and First Scots Presbyterian Church. Of interest is the small painting in the corner is a study of this room. The small still lifes along side the door were also painted here. All of these paintings are by Mrs. Andrews.

Between the windows is an English Regency drop leaf table with a Jamaican lion on it. The painting over the table is a still life by Mrs. Andrews.

The chicken painting over the sofa is a lithograph from a larger painting of the port of Newburyport, Massachusetts.

DINING ROOM:

On the mantel are Venetian candlesticks c. 1200 and an Iranian tray and goblets.

In the bookcase is a painted Chinese terracotta mounted warrior, originally part of a temple gate ornamentation, believed to be from the Ming Dynasty. Also in the bookcase is an Empire clock, a Japanese woodblock, a small Netsuke collection. The Picasso like plate is by the Andrews' 14 year old son, Justin.

The lion on the table is carved from cedar.

Paintings -

1. A fascinating recent acquisition is the large (dog and banana) oil by Jamaican artist Saul.
2. the two small oils are by two of the old Haitian men known as the 'Five points of the Sun'.
3. Between the windows is a painting by Mrs. Andrews' business partner, Carter, now working in Portland, Maine.
4. Over the mantel is an oil by Mrs. Andrew, titled "Dreaming of Jamaica".
5. The Sunflowers - oil.
6. Landscape is of Round Hill, Montego Bay, by Mrs. Andres.

Walk through the contemporary Kitchen and Den and out through the back garden.

JAMES VERREE'S HOUSE  
60 Church Street  
Page 3

**BREAKFAST ROOM:**

The breakfast nook was converted from a porch in 1983, along with the addition including the den and bedrooms above. All of the watercolors in this area are by Mrs. Andrews. The big rug is a Dhurrie. The cupboard is homemade and dates to the Civil War era.

**DEN:**

The den has Matisse posters from the Soviet-U.S. art exchange project shown at the National Gallery in Washington last Spring.

The coffee table is a 19th century English breakfast table cut down to its current size.

Pottery bowl is by local artist and gallery owner, Nina Liu, on State Street.

Art work next to door is handmade paper.

**BACK GARDEN:**

The back porch was added by the Andrews in 1988 along with the French doors and windows. The garden was converted from a playground that accompanied the Little School, built in 1944, and operated until 1988.

The Little School was converted into a painting studio for Mrs. Andrews and plans for adding a guest room are in process.

*Moved*

**Garden of the James Veree's House  
60 Church Street  
c. 1754  
Residence of Dr. And Mrs. Charles Gudas**

**1997**

This 2 story frame dwelling and the two others to the south are believed to have been built by James Veree, a carpenter and builder in Colonial Charles Towne. Veree built one house for himself and the other two for rental properties. Charleston in the 18<sup>th</sup> century needed accommodations for legislators, sailors, and planters' families whose seasonal moves to the city revolved around shipping and the social season.

In 1771 Veree sold this property to Stephen Duvall, a harbor pilot. He served as a naval officer during the Revolution and was captured and imprisoned in the Provost dungeon under the Exchange Building (Broad and East Bay) - when the British captured Charleston in 1780. He died of fever but his wife lived here until 1821.

The walkway to the garden area has been softened with edging plantings of a variety of Lowcountry perennials. The hard surface of the walkway is made up of orchard stone in its various colorings and shapes which also help to diminish its length.

The rear yard has been divided into welcoming "rooms" to delineate activities. The patio and bricked area near the house is accented with an irregularly shaped pool edged with natural stone and "planted" with water greens and filled with golden gold fish. Pots filled with blooming annuals punctuate the area with color. A restful area for family activities

A brick path leads to the guest house on the left and straight ahead to the pool area. This is enclosed with a Holly hedge and one of Leland Cypress along the length of Mrs. Whaley's very attractive wooden fence. A Bignonia Vine with yellow trumpet-shaped flowers has grown over from her yard. The visitor can enjoy the vista across the fence along with viewing this garden.

A large Camellia stands in the brick-edged bed on the south and colorful spring annuals have been added. The flower beds are filled with newly planted Lowcountry perennials which will soon fill them. A Loquat tree has been espaliered on the brick

wall and a few Yew (*Podocarpus*) are in the bed along the guest house. Holly Fern, Illicium Shrubs, Hydrangas and Sago Palms are a few of the plant specimens seen.

Historic Charleston Foundation