

cently released national survey. The office outside of Nashville in Charleston

and renovations for the Hunley Park

Sumter, and Shaw Air Force Base in

Street Linked To Military Figures

By JANE E. ALLEN
Post-Courier Reporter

N 10 GILLON ST 1783

Gillon Street, a small street just yards from the Exchange Building near Broad and East Bay streets, has been linked to distinguished figures in the military history of the last 200 years.

It bears the name of Commodore Alexander Gillon, a Dutchman who emigrated to Charles Towne in 1765, took up residence and became the first man to reach the rank of commodore in the United States. More recently, 10 Gillon St. was the working address of Louis Dawson Jr., a Charleston engineer who distinguished himself in World War II by rebuilding the Burma Road.

The street named for the Commodore appears as Gillon Street as early as the turn of the 19th century. Gillon was born Aug. 13, 1741, to a wealthy family in Rotterdam, Holland. He was said to speak seven languages, write five and live in a high style that ultimately proved the undoing of his estate. After apprenticeship at a banking house in Holland and next in London, he began a nautical career. He was master of the brigantine Surprise and arrived here in February 1765. He married Mary Splatt Cripps, widow of William Cripps, and became the owner of much waterfront property, both downtown and on the Ashley River.

In 1774 he was made captain of the German Fusiliers. In 1775, Gillon was elected a member of the Provincial Congress of S.C. and also served as president of the German-Friendly Society. In 1778, he was appointed a commodore in the South Carolina

Do You Know Your Charleston?

Navy, which had been formed to keep trade open with the west Indies. That year, Gillon helped capture two British vessels blocking Charles Towne Harbor. He commanded a 59-vessel fleet that captured the Bahama Islands.

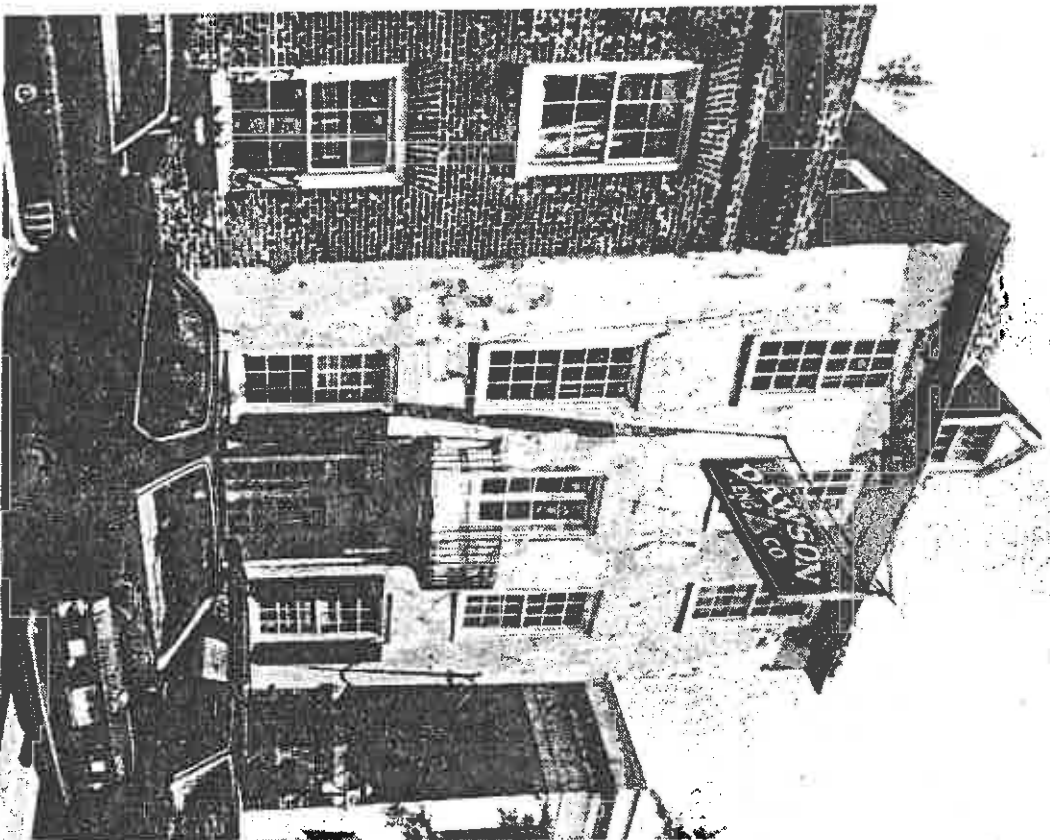
After traveling to Europe, Gillon was engulfed in political intrigue over acquisition of ships and ammunition for the colonies, and he found himself in Amsterdam again in 1780.

He returned, and served for several terms in the House of Representatives of South Carolina. He was chosen lieutenant governor in 1783, but did not choose to serve. He was elected to Congress in 1784 and served in 1793-4. He was a member of the S.C. Constitutional Convention. Among his community services was his presidency of the Charleston Chamber of Commerce.

The tract of land that bears his name was conveyed by wealthy Charleston merchant Richard Beresford to merchant Florian Charles Mey in 1772. Gillon was one of two executors of Beresford's estate, the other being the Rev. Robert Smith, rector of St. Phillips Church, a founder of the College of Charleston, and later the first Episcopal Bishop of South Carolina.

The property was east of East Bay Street (then known as The Bay), but-

See Gillon Street, Page 2-B



Staff Photo by Tom Spain

10 Gillon St.

Horry Minister Charged With Hubcap Tampering

By BILL KOVARIK
Post-Courier Reporter

He was released on his own recognizance Saturday morning by Judge G.W. Tumbleston Jr.

Mr. Weathers was in Charleston for the weekend to fulfill his duties as a U.S. Air Force Reserve

two years.

on overcrowding legislation that would give the governor emergency powers to release prisoners. The bill would allow the governor to shorten sentences for non-violent criminals to release overcrowding at critical stages avoid court action.

Jet Bill
The House finished work last week on a \$2.1 billion state budget for 1984. The money bill calls for a 5 percent across the board cost-of-living raise for the state's 55 thousand employees. The budget also includes \$100 million for education and corrections. The legislation, which must go through one more vote in the House before it goes to the Senate, also deals for a year indexing on individual income taxes and for six months the sales tax on utilities.

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...Gillon Street

Continued From Page 1-B

ting on what was known as the Current Line, named for the old city wall. It was north of the Exchange Building, with the Cooper River to the East and John Burns Wharf to the north. The area was occupied by various merchants throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. For example, John Johnson and Richard Fordham had a blacksmith's shop there, according to an 1822 City Directory. By 1882, most of the lots on the north side of the street belonged to a merchant named George Gibbon.

Between 1826 and 1842, Gibbon managed to obtain the corner lot with a house facing the Bay as well as an adjacent lot belonging to James Adger, and the lots farther east that had been held by Johnson, Fordham and Daniel Perkins.

The current street, with two narrow alleys, one of which leads to the upstairs floors of 10 Gillon St., appears much the way it did on an 1862 map. Today, the stuccoed brick buildings house commercial busi-

nesses. The second and third floors of 10 Gillon, now occupied by Avery Saylor and Associates, an advertising agency, are thought by its owners to have been the home of Commodore Gillon, although his name does not appear in any property records except when he was executor for the whole tract. It is possible, however, that he leased the waterfront property there, but never owned it.

Titles and deeds indicate that he owned property farther north on East Bay Street, near Lodge Alley, had a wharf on the Cooper River and land on the Ashley River. In addition, he owned acres of plantation land throughout the state, including many acres at Gillon's Retreat on the Congaree River, where he died Oct. 6, 1794.

Since 1935, part of 10 Gillon St. has been occupied by the offices of Dawson Engineering, whose consultant engineer, Louis Y. Dawson Jr., rebuilt the Burma Road destroyed by Japanese forces during World War II.

Dawson, then a lieutenant colonel with the Army Corps of Engineers, was called one of the "engineering immortals" by the New York Times for

his work in constructing more than 700 miles of highway through curving mountain roads, using only eight pieces of rundown machinery, 50 skilled workers and 40,000 Chinese laborers. He bridged 400 streams and worked in areas with elevations as high as 9,200 feet. Dawson also supervised the building of the Salween bridge, the longest wooden bridge in the world.

He was awarded a Legion of Merit from the U.S. Army for his work. In 1958, Dawson was awarded the Nationalist Chinese Government Medal of Cloud and Banner for his services. Dawson was also a city zoning engineer who helped set up the city's original zoning plan in 1930-31. He also served as chairman of the building code for the Charleston Chamber and was named provisional president.

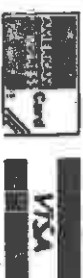
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