



The Hugh P. Cameron House
12 Bull Street
circa 1851

William Blacklock, builder of the imposing house which still bears his name, once owned the lot at 12 Bull Street and perhaps intended it as part of the spacious gardens surrounding his own house at 18 Bull. However, he sold the house and adjacent lot; the latter passed through several hands and in 1849 was purchased by architect Edward Brickell White, who designed the wings of Randolph Hall and the Porter's Lodge, as well as other notable Charleston buildings. White resided at Tradd Street, and his intentions as to building on his Bull Street land remain unknown. In 1851 the property was sold to Hugh P. Cameron, a crockery merchant. In that same year Cameron built the antebellum house which appears deceptively small behind its elegant piazzas. Actually, the house is comfortably

large and varies from the traditional double and single house designs, with a two-story east wing attached to the main structure. The brickwork and slate hip roof are extremely fine.

In 1892, clothing merchant David Bentschner bought the house and soon after had the interior changed to the Colonial Revival style, then a vogue. Despite the neo-Colonial mantels, ceiling medallions, and wall panels, remnants of the original plasterwork still survive. Bentschner also installed the front gate, carrying his initials, to complement the antebellum wall and gateposts.

When the College acquired the lovely antebellum house in 1972, it had been divided into apartments. The College soon restored the house, which has since served as the home of the Academic Dean and his family.

the cotton exporting business with T.G.S. Lucas. He died at 164 Broad in 1917. His residence at 164 Broad is two and one-half stories of frame, with a three story square tower and a gabled front extension. The house at 166 Broad is smaller but similar in detail; a distinctive element is the truncated gable end of the roof. The two and one-half story frame house at 168 Broad is more conservative in style, with traditional side piazzas. The chimneys, typical of c. 1890, date after the house was moved.

(Stockton, DYKYC, Oct. 1, 1980.)

180 Broad St. -- Built c. 1850, this three story wooden, Greek Revival house was used as a prison for Union officers during the Civil War. The house, with its giant order Tower of the Winds columns, is notable architecturally.

Q2 (Stoney, This is Charleston, 17. Waddell, "Introduction of Greek Revival," 7. Whitelaw & Levkoff, 34-35.)

Bull Street

Bull Street was named for William Bull, a native South Carolinian who was the last to fill the Royally-appointed office of lieutenant governor.

(Rogers, Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys, 61. Smith & Smith, Dwelling Houses, 312, 315. "Streets of Charleston.")

2-8 Bull St. -- This group of two story frame rental units in 1907 by E.M. Hacker. The row was acquired by the College of Charleston in the 1970s and restored as administrative offices.

12 Bull St. -- Built in 1851 by Hugh P. Cameron, a crockery merchant, this house has an unusual plan, with two parlors in front, a small room and stairhall at the rear, and the entrance in a pavillion on the east side. The interior was remodeled in the 1890s in the Colonial Re-

vival style. The initials of one owner, David Bentschner, a clothing merchant, appear in the cast iron gate. The College of Charleston restored the house in 1972 as a faculty residence.

(Thomas, DYKYC, May 1, 1972.)

- 18 Bull St. -- The William Blacklock House, built in 1800, is one of the nation's most important Adamesque houses. The house is two stories of brick on a high brick basement. The Charleston grey brick, laid in Flemish bond, is accented by stone trim. The facade features a large lunette in the pediment, openings set in blind arches, delicate tracery in the fanlight and sidelights, and a double flight of iron-railed steps. The date of the house is engraved in stone under the stairs. The interior has fine Adamesque woodwork and plasterwork and a graceful circular stair under an unusual vaulted ceiling. The property has Gothic Revival outbuildings. No architect has been identified for this sophisticated structure. It shows similarities to the work of Gabriel Manigault, however. Blacklock was a member of the building committee for the bank (now City Hall) which was built in the same year and is attributed to Manigault. The most distinctive similarity is the use of the Tuscan column with a fluted neck, which Manigault used on the Orphan House Chapel. The house has had a series of prominent owners and occupants, including Emil H. Jahnz, who was the German consul in 1916. Now the College of Charleston Club, the house was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974.

(Stockton, DYKYC, May 19, 1975. Deas, 86-87. Smith & Smith, Dwelling Houses, 317-318. Rhett & Steele, 74-75. Whitelaw & Levkoff, 91. Stoney, This is Charleston, 17. Ravenel, Architects, 68, 70. Simons & Lapham, 127-132. Iseley & Cauthen, 16. Rogers, Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys, 54, 70. Leland, Charleston: Crossroads of History, 32, 34. Waddell, "Introduction of Greek Revival," 11.)

12 Bull Street

Hugh P. Cameron House

Constructed c. 1851; altered 1890s

Built by crockery merchant Hugh P. Cameron, this house has an unusual plan with two parlors in front, a small room and stair hall at the rear, and the entrance in a pavilion on the east side. The interior was remodeled in the 1890s in the Colonial Revival style. The initials of a subsequent owner, David Bentschner, a clothing merchant, appear in the cast iron gate.

The College of Charleston purchased the house in 1972 for use as a faculty residence. It currently serves as the Caroline and Albert Simons Jr. Center for Historic Preservation for the program in historic preservation and community planning at the College of Charleston.

18 Bull Street

William Blacklock House

Constructed 1800; restored 1973

The William Blacklock House is one of the nation's most important Federal style houses. The brick house is two stories on a high brick basement. Its 18" thick Charleston grey brick laid in Flemish bond is accented by stone trim. The facade features a large lunette in the pediment, openings set in blind arches, delicate tracery in the fanlight and sidelights, and a double flight of iron-railed steps. The date of the house is engraved in stone under the stairs. The interior has fine Adam woodwork and plasterwork and a graceful circular stair under an unusual vaulted ceiling. The property has Gothic Revival outbuildings.

No architect has been identified for this sophisticated structure, although it is often attributed to Gabriel Manigault. One of Charleston's wealthiest British merchants, Blacklock was a member of the building committee for the structure that is now Charleston City Hall, which was built in the same year as this house. The most distinctive similarity to Manigault's known work is the use of Tuscan column with fluted necks, which Manigault used on the Orphan House Chapel. The house represents a suburban retreat (for at that time, this

neighborhood was sparsely populated) from the bustle of Charleston's busy mercantile district.

This house has had a series of prominent owners and occupants, including Emil H. Jahnz, who was the German consul in 1916. Over time, it also served as a fraternity house, a boarding house, and even an apartment complex. In 1958, Dr. Maxcy Harrelson obtained the city's permission to demolish the house. Fortunately, Dr. Harrelson never exercised his authority and his permit to demolish expired.

With assistance from philanthropist Richard H. Jenrette, the College of Charleston purchased the house in 1971 and undertook a massive restoration effort, after which the building served as an event venue. The house was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974. Today it houses the college's alumni office and is available as a rental to faculty, staff and alumni.

24 Bull Street

Benjamin Lucas House

Constructed c. 1858; rehabilitated 1969

This three-and-a-half story, stuccoed brick house in the Greek Revival style was built by Benjamin Lucas, a builder and city building inspector, who used it as his residence. Beginning in the 1880s, it served as the Lucas Academy for young ladies. For most of the 20th century, it has been used as apartments. The building was rehabbed in the late 1960s. The College of Charleston purchased the building in the 1970s and is now used as student housing.

43 Bull Street

John C. Simons House

Constructed c. 1850

This house features interesting ironwork and a notable fountain in the garden. It was built by John C. Simons, a prosperous merchant on King Street who dealt in paints, oils and hardware. From 1946 to 1961, it was the home of Judge Joseph Fromberg, an outspoken proponent of judicial and prison reform.

CVF Buildings - - 12 Bull St

From: Scrapbooks of Charleston, SC Architectural Inventory
1973

OWNERSHIP RECORD

Present Owner College of Charleston
Mailing Address 66 George Street
Original Owner Hugh P. Cameron
457/4/1163

Assessor Map # 457/4/1163

Approximate Lot Size 65x123
or Acres

Property Currently Zoned

Assessment: Land
Improvements
TOTAL

Physical Condition: Good Fair Poor
Structure
Grounds
Neighborhood

(Restored 1972 by C.O.C. as residence
for college dean)
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Facade Material Brick
Foundation Brick
Roof Form Hip
Porch or Veranda 2 Height
Building Height in stories 2
Roof Dormers
Chimneys 4 Where centered
Facade Emphasis Little
Window Sash: 1st 2nd 3rd
Entrance: Fan Lintel Trans
Sidelights undecorated

(Unusual front entrance in
side cabinet)

INTERIOR DETAILS

Mantels Overmantels
Staircase Wainscoting
Interior Doors of Period
Door and Window Frames
Other Panelling
Ceiling Cornices
Chair Rails Base Molds
Wallcoverings of Period
Hardware
Ceiling medallions
Original Floors
Other Plan off-balance
treatment

Significant Outbuildings

Landscaping

(Most of interior dates +
after 1892)

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY FORM

Address 12 Bull Street
Area Charleston Village

Architect/Builder Builder: Hugh P. Cameron

Date of Construction 1851

Source of Date SC HMC (H.M.J. Thomas)

Architectural Style undecorated

Present Use Residence

Original Use Residence

Incidence in Area

Importance to its neighborhood:

Great Moderate Minor

Accessible to the Public Easy

Historic Notes: see full history

in NW 7th Governor's

May 1, 1912

Architectural Significance

National Valuable to City

Valuable Notable Worthy of

Mention Other

Significance of Interiors Remodelled 1891

Significance of Landscaping

Historic Significance

Representation in Other Surveys

This is Charleston (page)

National Register

State Survey

HABS Year



By W. H. J. THOMAS
Staff Reporter

The two-story brick dwelling house at 12 Bull St., now divided into apartments, has been purchased by the College of Charleston Foundation and will be restored as a single-family residence.

Though appearing small and very much screened behind its broad two-tiered front piazzas, the antebellum residence at 12 Bull is a spacious house of strongly individualistic design, being both typical of other Charleston houses of its period yet an innovation in several aspects.

The dwelling's exceptionally careful brickwork, its fine slate hip roof, and the rather delicate quality of the front piazza columns and the pleasantly classical entablature have led many persons to associate 12 Bull's origins with that of the notable Blacklock House at 18 Bull, immediately to its west.

While 12 Bull does stand on property which was formerly part of the Blacklock family unit, the house at 12 Bull was apparently constructed some 51 years after its handsome neighbor and not by a member of the Blacklock family.

The lot at 12 Bull, along with the lot and houses at 18 Bull, were sold to the wealthy planter William Clarkson by the Blacklocks. Following Clarkson's death in 1848, his widow, Mrs. Elizabeth A. Clarkson, and his son William Clarkson the younger, sold the parcel of land to William Bull Pringle.

Pringle quickly subdivided and conveyed the lot where 12 Bull now stands (measuring as now, 65 feet on the front and 122.9 feet in depth) Nov. 28, 1849 for \$1,800. The phaser was the accom-

plished master architect Edward Brickell White, the designer for several portions of the present College of Charleston campus.

White was a resident of Tradd Street at this period and whether or not he intended to build on this lot remains a mystery. He made a plat of property soon after purchasing it, but then two years later sold the land for \$2,200 on Nov. 27, 1851, to Hugh P. Cameron, listed in the city directories of that day as a "crockery dealer".

Do You Know Your Charleston?

It is quite certain that Cameron built the present dwelling, though a casual glance at its exterior suggests any of a number of earlier dates as possible times of construction. Those interior portions which do not date from circa 1890-1900, are distinctly of the 1850s, and all other indications from records point to Cameron as builder.

Cameron died in 1854 and in the dividing of his estate in 1855, the property was sold out of the Court of Equity for \$10,000 to Simons Lucas, George Buist and George Buist the younger, as trustees. In March of 1860, the dwelling was conveyed to Henry Buist, an attorney, for \$10,000.

The property remained in his name until his death in the 1880s, when it passed by will to his widow, Mrs. Eliza Rutledge Buist. Mrs. Buist retained the property until Nov. 22, 1892, when she sold it to David Bentschner, a clothing merchant, for \$5,810.

Bentschner left the property to his daughter, Mrs. Sarah Bentschner Visanska, as his sole heir. The house was next conveyed to Julius M. Visanska, who then headed the clothing firm of Bentschner and Visanska (located at the southeast corner of King and Hasell streets).

It does not appear that Visanska occupied the residence during his ownership, as he had his own yellow brick villa on East Battery, and 12 Bull was leased out until July 19, 1930, when it was sold for \$10,000 to Grange S. Coffin. From the early 1930s into the 1950s, the house was operated as a boarding house by Mrs. Nell M. Mitchell.

The Coffin family retained the property until this year when it was purchased by the College of Charleston Foundation to be restored as a faculty residence.

The Cameron dwelling follows an unusual plan, with its main portion in a four-square block joined to a two-story eastside pavilion. On the entrance story, two parlors, opening into each other, take up the front of the dwelling, with a small room and stairhall across the back.

The entrance is in the east pavilion, with this wing continuing back to the kitchen areas. The second story follows a roughly similar plan, though the arrangement has been confused by the removal of the staircase (one portion of which was luckily tucked away safely to await the restorationist).

It is obvious that during the 1890s, apparently with the purchase by Bentschner, the dwelling was fully made over in the then-popular Colonial revival style. The surviving ex-

amples of Cameron's time may be seen in the east parlor where the ornate, high-relief plasterwork of the 1850s still survives.

Bentschner's work may be

noted in the delicate neo-Georgian ceiling medallions, large Colonial revival mantels, decorative wall panels, parquet flooring and richly-colored tiles.

While the wall and gate posts are obviously of the antebellum period, it appears that Bentschner added the front entrance gate that now carries the initials "DB" at its center.



12 Bull Will Be Restored

Antebellum dwelling was constructed in 1851 by Hugh P. Cameron, a crockery merchant, on old Blacklock family land. (Staff Photo by Burbage.)



Post-Courier File Photo

12 Bull St. to be site of Charleston Architecture Center.

Clemson Set To Establish Architecture Center Here

By LAURA NELSON
Post-Courier Reporter

With the College of Charleston's help, Clemson University architecture students may be able to gain practical experience by studying the Lowcountry's historic buildings.

The college is allowing Clemson to establish a Charleston Architecture Center in its former provost's house at 12 Bull St., says James F. Barker, dean of the College of Architecture.

"Things are moving right along. Our plans are to open it in January," Barker said. Clemson has South Carolina's only school of architecture.

Back in March, Barker announced that Clemson was looking for a site for its Charleston center because the historic city is an ideal training ground for architecture students. He said architecture students cannot learn their craft without "seeing" architecture.

But, at the time, Barker said Clemson's major obstacle in the plan would be finding a facility to use

in downtown Charleston at no cost.

"The college is giving us this space primarily because they want us to be on their campus and we want to be on their campus because of its rich architectural history," Barker said.

"I think one of the things that is unique about this is that two universities are cooperating like this. I just think it's terrific. Our students are excited about it and the faculty is excited too.

"Everybody benefits. It's rare to find an opportunity like this," he said. "The (College of Charleston) president is the one who had the vision to say this is really a good thing for us to do."

Barker said the college will pay the utilities and maintenance of the house, but Clemson will have to furnish the building as an architecture studio — 20 work stations with drawing boards and other equipment.

To raise \$20,000 for furnishings, the Charleston section of the American Institute of Architects is

See CLEMSO

CLEMSO TO ESTABLISH CENTER

Continued From Page 1-B

spearheading a development effort called "Friends of the Charleston Center," Barker said.

"I'm confident we can meet that," he said. "And that's the last piece in the puzzle. The architects in Charleston are very excited about this."

The plan does have one more hurdle — approval from the state Commission on Higher Education, and Barker said the center will go before CHE this fall.

Clemson's plan is for about 20 of its third- or fourth-year students to study at the Charleston center for a semester. The students will take six to eight credit hours of liberal arts courses at the college, and a similar number of architecture courses. The architecture classes will be taught by a Clemson professor and a local architect, who will serve as an adjunct professor for Clemson, Barker said.

Although the visiting faculty member will live in an apartment in the former provost's house, students in

the program either will live in college dorms or private housing, Barker said.

College President Harry M. Lightsey Jr. said the two institutions will divide the student fees. "We will get the FTE (full-time equivalent student) count for the undergraduate courses the students take, and Clemson will get the architecture credit the students take," Lightsey said.

The Clemson students will pay the college to live in its dorms and have use of college services such as the library and student center, he said.

"The main thing we're interested in ... is the help it will be for the architectural community here in Charleston and the general public. We're hoping for the general public to take some of those courses," Lightsey said.

He said the summer courses offered by the center will include seminars, possibly on such topics as historic architecture and restoration, which may interest area architects and the public.

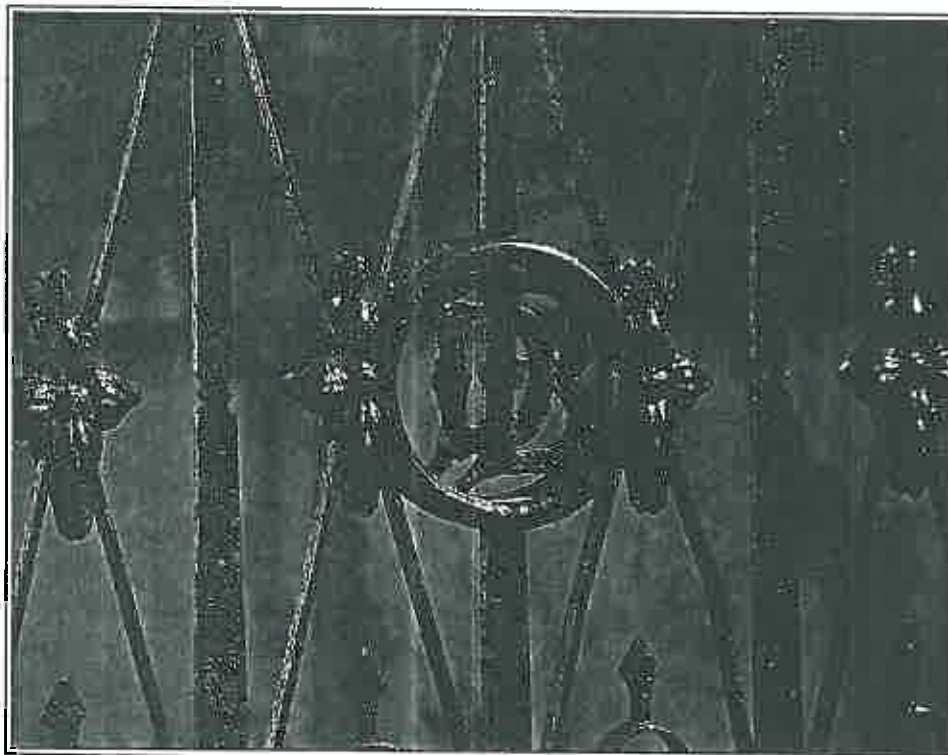
Chapter Eight *Other Historic Buildings*

While the buildings discussed in the previous chapters are those most often noted, there are others that are worthy of consideration either for their history or for their architectural value. Twenty-one buildings on the campus are listed as historically important and this chapter will discuss several of them. If the Cistern buildings, the President's home, Blacklock House, Sottile House and Avery Institute are the gems in the crown of the College of Charleston, then these other buildings are the semi-precious stones that complete the tiara.

Hugh P. Cameron House **12 Bull Street—circa 1851**

This substantial home at 12 Bull Street is on a lot that was once part of the spacious gardens for the Blacklock House, which it adjoins. When Blacklock sold his home, however, this lot was separated and after passing through several owners, was purchased in 1849 by Edward Brickell White the architect who would later design the wings of Randolph Hall and also the Porter's Lodge on the Cistern. Since White already had a residence on Tradd Street, it is not known whether he intended to design and build a new house for himself on the property or intended to sell it. In any event, in 1851 he sold the lot to Hugh P. Cameron, a crockery merchant of the city, who built this antebellum house in the same year. The house appears deceptively small behind its elegant piazzas. Actually, it is comfortably large and varies from the traditional double and single house designs that are common in this area. The house has a two-story east wing attached to the main structure. The brickwork and slate hip roof are extremely fine.

In 1892, clothing merchant David Bentschner bought the house and soon after had the interior remodeled in the Colonial Revival style then in vogue in Charleston. Despite the neo-Colonial mantels, ceiling medallions and wall panels, remnants of the original plasterwork still survive.



*Initialed Gate—
Cameron House*

Tommy Thompson

Bentschner also installed the front gate, which includes his initials, and the complementing wall and gateposts. When the College acquired the property in 1972, it had been divided into apartments. The college restored the house and it has served several uses for the school. It is presently used by the School of Architecture of Clemson University for its part of a joint program with the College that focuses on the preservation and renovation of historical architecture.

**Bolles Female Academy
5, 7, and 9 College Street
—circa 1826-1835**

The three houses that were once 5, 7 and 9 College Street, but now line the brick-paved promenade that replaced the closed street, record the prosperity of a Connecti-

cut school teacher. It was natural that the presence of the College would attract other schools around it and when Abiel Bolles came to Charleston around 1807 he did so with the intent to "assume the humble post of school teacher." He bought the College Street property in 1826 and approximately three years later built number 5 where he relocated his well-known Bolles'

female academy. As his school prospered, the enterprising teacher expanded his interests. The second of his Charleston single houses, number 7, was built in 1830 and the largest and most elaborate of the trilogy, number 9, was finished in 1835. That same year, Bolles sold number 9 to Dr. John Bellinger who held the chair in surgery at the Medical College and pioneered in abdominal surgical techniques. Bolles later sold 7 College Street but he lived in number 5 until his death at age 80. Nine College is the finest of the three buildings and includes an impressive Regency style fanlight and sidelights in the doorway to the piazza. The main entrance is at basement level under a small columned portico. The main stair has mahogany newels in the empire scroll design and the mantels in the building are in the Greek Revival style. The buildings now serve as