

## Henry Sigwald House

107 Spring Street

c. 1855



On January 7, 1815, **Thomas Milliken** paid \$2350 to a trustee who was holding the property at the southeast corner of Spring Street (Elliott Street) and Rutledge Avenue (Pinckney Street) (285 feet on Spring Street and 115 feet deep) as part of a marriage settlement between Andrew Smylie and Suzanna Smith.<sup>1</sup> It included everything from the future 107 Spring Street to the corner of Rutledge Avenue.

Ten years later, Mr. Milliken sued, alleging that he had financed the sale of his property to Henry Chalmers who then,

without having paid off a mortgage, sold the property to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Williman. A public auction was held on June 23, 1825, at which **Thomas Hanscome** was the highest bidder at \$5000 for the lot with the first house on it. Mr. Hanscome flipped the house to **Hugh Wilson**, a Johns Island planter who was already in possession of the house, perhaps as a renter, for \$5250 on July 7, 1825.<sup>2</sup>

The property, which included a three-story wooden house on a brick foundation with piazzas on Rutledge Avenue in which Mr. Wilson resided, was subdivided into five lots by a plat filed on August 13, 1855 (below). (Mr. Wilson remained in the main house despite subdividing the rear and part of the side.) Two lots (Lots D and E) had been the rearmost portion and would eventually become 105 and 107 Spring Street. In particular, Lot E, which would become 107

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<sup>1</sup> Deed book M8, page 417

<sup>2</sup> Deed book Q9, page 145

Spring Street (outlined in red), included most of a one-story building located behind a one-story shed and a two-story kitchen and stables.<sup>3</sup>



Mr. Wilson sold Lot E of the newly subdivided property to South Carolina Railroad engineer **Henry William Sigwald** for \$800 on August 21, 1855, with no buildings mentioned.<sup>4</sup> It seems that Mr. Sigwald built the house on the lot; he mortgaged the property for \$1000 to the South Carolina Building & Loan Association on September 7, 1855. (The mortgage was marked paid off on August 21, 1858.)<sup>5</sup> Mr. Sigwald lived at "55 Spring Street" (using the old numbering system) starting at least by 1859 (the first directory published after 1855) with his family.

<sup>3</sup> Plat book A, page 127

<sup>4</sup> Deed book R13, page 32

<sup>5</sup> Book Q13, page 523

Mr. Sigwald was born on May 28, 1824, and worked as an railroad engineer for about forty years, including the entire time he owned 107 Spring Street. In the 1860 census, he was listed at the house with his wife, Leonora Adella (nee Bass), and their two children; Mr. Sigwald was listed as the owner of \$3000 in real estate that year. By the 1880 census, Mr. Sigwald was listed as a railroad engineer with his wife, Leonora; five children; a boarder; and one servant. According to the 1888 Sanborn maps (below, left), there was a 1½ story frame building in the rear that was perhaps used as a rental.



Mr. Sigwald married a second time to Mary Daggett Sigwald in 1888 after Leonora's death in August 1883. He himself died on July 19, 1889, leaving a life estate in the house to his new wife, Mary. For the next several decades, the house became a rental property, and Mrs. Sigwald moved to Ansonborough. For the first few years after Mr. Sigwald's death, tenants stayed only briefly,<sup>6</sup> but railroad car repairer Joseph T. Badger moved into the house by 1896. The Badgers—including the family of their widowed son-in-law, Rodwell Martin—remained beyond Mr. Badger's death on May 1, 1917; and even beyond the death of his widow, Ellen, in 1920.

Mary Sigwald died in May 1927, and the house was sold for \$2100 to railroad mailman **Benjamin Harrison Sharp** on December 21, 1927.<sup>7</sup> On April 26, 1930, the house was photographed as part of a lawyer's documentation of the scene of an automobile accident, showing the house as a classic Charleston single house with a three-part, wide attic gable window, two windows on the front of the house per floor, and a two-story piazza with a hood over the piazza door

<sup>6</sup> City directories listed the house as vacant in 1890 and 1891, but then identified renters as W.J. Lambert (1892), Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hudson (1892), Joseph Letts (1893), C.H. Bendt (1894), and W.J. Skinner (1895).

<sup>7</sup> Deed book F28, page 414

(above). When the house was included in the 1902 Sanborn insurance maps (below, middle), it still included a detached, one-story building in the rear, perhaps originally a kitchen. By the time of the 1940 updates to the insurance maps (below, right), the one-story building was gone, but a small garage had been added in the southwest corner of the lot.

Mr. Sharp died at the house on October 29, 1938, leaving the house to his wife, **Orrie Pauline** (nee Coursey) **Sharp**.<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Sharp moved home to Greenwood, South Carolina and resided with her father and began using 107 Spring Street as a rental property.<sup>9</sup> She sold the house



to **Louise Palmer Brown and Alice Simmons** for \$5000 on May 8, 1967,<sup>10</sup> but the house was vacant in at least 1968 and 1970. Ms. Brown married Navy Supply Center employee James Parker Diggs in August 1971. On January 31, 1973, **Mr. and Mrs. Diggs** bought out Ms. Simmons' interest<sup>11</sup> and used the house as their residence. After both owners died,<sup>12</sup> the house passed on May 27, 2015, to a niece, **Rose M. Deal** of Florida.<sup>13</sup>

Ms. Deal sold the house together with 92 Spring Street for \$850,000 to **JJR Development, LLC** on September 27, 2016.<sup>14</sup> On January 12, 2017, plans for the restoration of the house, construction of an addition, and the relocation of a guest cottage were approved by the Charleston Board of Architectural Review.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>8</sup> She did not die under December 1985 in Greenwood, South Carolina.

<sup>9</sup> Through the following years, one- and two-room apartments were listed for rent in the newspaper. Just some of the renters included the following: W.H. McAlister (1939), Otto and Alice Runge (1941), Marion Weldon Bowers (1942), Charles Searles (1943), Helen Bowers (1942-1943), George O. Windham (1944), Walter and Susie Brumfield (1944), Mrs. Frank Spriggs (1945), and Julian Porter (1952-1965).

<sup>10</sup> Deed book U87, page 63

<sup>11</sup> Deed book B101, page 309

<sup>12</sup> Mr. Diggs died in July 2013, and Mrs. Diggs died in February 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Deed book 478, page 624

<sup>14</sup> Deed book 585, page 768

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.charleston-sc.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/\\_01122017-2611](https://www.charleston-sc.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_01122017-2611)