

One of Historic Houses on Today's Tours

(This is one of the historic houses featured today in the series of tours conducted by Historic Charleston Foundation. Four tours are conducted daily, from 10 a. m. to 1 p. m. and from 4 to 6 p. m. Tickets are on sale at the Dock Street theater.)

Francis Simmons, who created an unsolved Charleston mystery by leaving his wife immediately after they were married and thereafter maintaining a casual, though friendly, acquaintance with her, acquired this property in 1800 and would appear to have built this very handsome "single" house upon it shortly thereafter. Later he acquired a lot and wooden house to the south. On his death he left this, during her widowhood, to a relative, prohibiting her from building between her house and the street anything that could interfere with the air or prospect of his brick house adjoining.

George Edwards, who bought both properties in 1816, two years after Simmons' death, disposed of the wooden house which, according to tradition, was rolled down the street to become the present No. 1 Legare street. He then made a garden of the south lot and em-

bellished it with the fine fence and gates and his house with its formal entrance. With proper pride he marked his work by placing his initials in the centers of the two curving iron grills that flanked his front door. Tradition says that he ordered this iron work and the elaborate marble cappings of his additions direct from Italy. The story goes that he sent a live oak acorn to serve as a model for the tall finials, but the Italian marble cutters would have none of this and substituted the conventionalized pineapples instead. Edwards constructed also a very handsome fence between his yard and garden, the heads of which form an interesting pattern of intersecting curves.

This place has long been a joy to the city and its owners, and it has been fortunate in them. For even, when one, yielding to the fashion of the time, substituted mid-nineteenth century marble mantels in some of the rooms, he stored those he removed in the attic whence they were brought back into place a half century later.

—SAMUEL GAILLARD STONEY

Belle and Bobbe Hove, assistant