Broad Street House Built For Comfort

The man who brought the poinsettia to the United States lived in the house at 110 Broad St. and ate food baked in an "eye-level" oven — a century and a quarter ago.

The house itself is an architectural museum piece that has remained unchanged since its construction prior to 1728 by William Harvey.

Benjamin Harvey, a son of the builder, leased the house to Provincial Governor James Glen. Six years later, the very wealthy Ralph Izard of Goose Creek purchased it and the lot to the west. It remained in the hands of Izard's descendants until 1858 when Judge Mitchell King bought it.

The house was the residence of his great niece, Miss Rebecca Bryan, until her death in 1976. It is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Roddis Jr.

Joel Roberts Poinsett, a Charlestonian who served the United States in the foreign service section of the State Department, introduced the poinsettia to this country while he was ambassador to Mexico. He married a granddaughter of Ralph Izard, Mrs. John Julius Pringle, who had inherited 110 Broad St.

They lived there and the handsome Italian marble mantels in the four principal rooms were brought by them from Italy.

The house is simply arranged with four rooms on each of three floors. These are centered around chimneys that serve both as heating adjuncts and as supports for the heavy heart-pine beams and other woodwork.

The floor to ceiling paneling is pine. It has the raised centers so popular in the early 18th century with the doors receiving somewhat more intricate carving than is normally found. Panels are of very wide planks with some of the over-mantel panels at least three feet.

On the second floor, the drawing room (east) can be paired with the smaller parlor on the west side by opening wide hinged doors connecting the two. These doors are six feet wide and are unusual in that sliding doors normally would be used in such a location.

The late John Mead Howells, internationally known architect, described the detail of the major interior doorways as unique. These are arched openings with fanlights above the rectangular solid pine doors. However, the door framing is set inside the arched opening almost as if it were a picture frame.

The drawing room mantels are of grained white Italian marble with delicately carved figures. These include animals and a central scene in which Ceres, goddess of the harvest, is the main figure. Wooden mantels of the pre-Adam era exist in the remaining eight rooms of the main house.

A one-story, wooden, modern kitchen now connects the main house with the old "cook kitchen-wash kitchen" building at the rear. Half of this two-story building has been made into a charming small apartment.

110 Broad — House, built before 1728, is an architectural museum pie

The "cooking" half remains in its original state. A central chimney is about 16 feet wide. It incorporates a massive arched fireplace with a warming oven at its left. Atop the warming oven and at the eye-level height so proudly promoted by modern oven manufacturers, is a quaint bake oven with an arched iron doorway. This type oven was common in the early 18th century but most of them have disappeared here.

When the Charleston Museum was restoring the Heyward-Washington House on Church Street, it copied the kitchen fireplace and oven at 110 Broad as part of the out-building restoration work.

The former carriage house and double stable has been converted into a residence. The wide arched carriage doorway and its flanking single-horse stable doors were made into windows. This carriage house is one of the Charleston outbuildings decorated in the Gothic style during a revival of that fashion in architecture.

A cistern once stood above ground ne kitchen. This large (10 by 20 feet) reservoir filtered water into a catch where a wooden pump lifted it to l level. The wooden pump was succeeded iron one that still remains as a support f The rectangular cistern hatch cover part of the entrance stoop to the c house.

No. 110 Broad is a house built b comfort and show. Dances were held second floor drawing room until long af Civil War and the layout of the house possible to entertain there in the grar during the eras when Charleston prosperous plantation center.

Its thick brick walls serve as ins against both heat and cold and its trem kitchen affords the best in cookery.

No detail was overlooked. In the nc corner of the lot, the two "necessari stand. They are of massive brick cons and, while the inner furniture has lor disappeared, in the corner of one remains of a miniature fireplace compl its own tiny brick chimney.

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