



Invoice #3B1043

House History
No. 18 Anson Street
Charleston, South Carolina

No. 18 Anson Street was constructed c. 1894 by Irish immigrant Margaret Magrath, and served as the Magrath family residence until 1909.

Originally, the lot now occupied by No. 18 Anson Street sat at the northern edge of a creek (now the area known as North and South Market Streets) on a nine-acre piece of high land called Colleton Square. It was named after Sir Peter Colleton, who was granted this land in 1681. By the 1730s, this area of Anson Street was originally laid out as Charles Street, named after nearby resident Charles Pinckney and ran from Market Street to Pinckney Street. It wasn't until 1805 that Charles Street was renamed to become the southern extension of Anson Street (*Charleston Courier*, August 29, 1868).

As early as 1830, the property served as part of the estate of Daphne Hampton, a free African American born in 1790. Although she was registered in the 1830 City of Charleston Directory as residing on the property, this section of Ansonborough was severely damaged by the Great Fire of 1861 and many of the buildings on the block were destroyed. Daphne died in 1865 and bequeathed this property to her children, Elizabeth Cotton, a dressmaker, and W.R.H. (Robert) Hampton, a tailor (*Charleston County Deed Book R21*, pg. 555; *1890 City of Charleston Directory*; *1860 United States Census, Charleston, SC*).

1888: An 1888 map of the property confirms that there was no house on the property at this time (*Figure 1: 1888 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 10*).

1893: The lot now occupied by No. 18 Anson Street was part of the estate of William "Robert" R.H. Hampton. Hampton was a politically active African American in Charleston post Civil War, and was elected as Alderman of Ward 4 in 1868, which according to law books helped set a precedent in Charleston policy and procedure. At this time, Hampton was registered as living on Kirkland Lane (*1890 City of Charleston Directory*).

5 Sept. 1893: W.R.H. Hampton died and through his will requested his heirs, Sarah Ann Barkly (Barclay) and his son-in-law James H. Halloway to sell his property on Anson Street, Kirkland Lane and Rutledge Avenue at a public sale (*Charleston County Deed Book R21*, pg. 555).

31 May 1894: Sarah Ann Barkley (Barclay) sold the property to Margaret Magrath for \$315. At the time of this purchase, Margaret's husband, Patrick H. Magrath, ran a horseshoeing business next door at 20 Anson Street. Patrick is recorded as running a business there as early as 1879 (1879, 1893 *City of Charleston Directory*).

On September 5, 1894, the *Charleston News and Courier* published an article titled "New Buildings," and included the following entry:

"Margaret Magrath, 18 Anson, two story wood."

Subsequent tax assessment records of the property in 1894 confirm Margaret Magrath "[built] newhouse" at No. 18 Anson Street (*City of Charleston Tax Assessment Records, Ward 3, 1893-1894*).

Margaret Brennan Magrath was born in Ireland in 1847. She most likely traveled to Charleston with her family at a very young age during the 1840s and 1850s, a period of mass emigration from Ireland due to starvation and disease caused by the Potato Famine. Her husband, blacksmith Patrick H. Magrath, was born in Ireland in 1835, and was recorded as arriving in Charleston in 1850. After meeting in Charleston, 23-year-old Margaret and 35-year-old Patrick were married in 1870 and already had two children, Mary (2) and James (3 months). They lived briefly on Hasell Street and at the time of Margaret's purchase of 18 Anson, they resided on Pinckney Street (1870, 1900 *United States Census, Charleston, SC*).

The Magrath family was part of a larger, working class Irish community that settled within Charleston's East Side neighborhoods. Ansonborough, known historically to the Irish as "the Borough," stayed heavily Irish-American until the 1950s, and many of the Irish residents worked as blacksmiths, similar to Patrick Magrath, and railroad and utility workers (*Post and Courier*, March 17, 2011).

5 Jun. 1900: Margaret Magrath lived with her husband Patrick, two sons James (29, blacksmith) and Mortimer (25, printer) and four daughters Margaret (21, telephone operator), Annah (20, telephone operator) Katherine "Tearsie" (18, at school) and Genevieve (13) at 18 Anson Street. Patrick maintained his horseshoe blacksmith shop at 20 Anson Street, and worked with his eldest son James (1900 *United States Census, Charleston, SC*; 1900 *City of Charleston Directory*).

1902: No. 18 Anson Street first appears on historic maps of Charleston as a two story dwelling with a two-story piazza (*Figure 2: 1902 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 58*). By this time, the Magrath property also included the one-story blacksmith shop 20 Anson Street and a one-story dwelling located at 13 Pinckney Street, both of which no longer stand today.

10 Jan. 1908: At age 74, Patrick Magrath died at 18 Anson Street from a stomach ulcer (*Figure 4: Magrath Family Grave, St. Lawrence Cemetery, Charleston, SC; Charleston County Death Record, Charleston Public Library*). The following obituary was published in Charleston's *Evening Post* on Friday, January 10, 1908:

"Death of a Well Known Old Citizen After a Short Illness: Mr. Patrick Magrath, since 1850 a resident of Charleston, died at his home on Anson Street at 3 o'clock this morning in his seventy-fifth year, after a short illness.

He was a native of Limerick, Ireland and loved with an unfailing love his native land. But his loyalty was to America, whither he came for that freedom denied him at home. This loyalty to the new government under which he lived soon ripened into the strongest ties for the new friends among whom he mixed, and into the warmest attachments for the new country which became in time the birthplace of a large family of children. So that he died, loving Ireland and America with equal devotion.

A wife and seven children survive him, whose sorrow is consoled by the recollection of his unblemished life and death filled with Christian resignation.

His funeral will be held at St. Joseph's church at 3:30 o'clock on Sunday afternoon."

Patrick's daughter, Katherine "Tearsie" Magrath, was in the midst of completing post-graduate work at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston at the time of her father's death. Growing up in No. 18 Anson Street, she completed nursing school by 1902 at St. Francis Xavier Infirmary Training School for Nurses, today known as Roper St. Francis, and shortly after Patrick's death, entered the Army Nurses' Corp, where she became chief nurse with the rank of first lieutenant. She went on to become chief nurse at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Army's flagship medical center from 1909 to 2011, and during World War I, she organized and led a group of more than a hundred nurses to France (*Lieutenant Magrath Obituary, The Bulletin of the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia, July 25, 1942*).

Patrick and Margaret's eldest son James immediately acquired ownership of Patrick's business next door at 20 Anson Street and established the horseshoeing company Stothart & Magrath (1908 *City of Charleston Directory*). The Magrath family maintained business at 20 Anson Street until 1928 when the building was listed as vacant, and ultimately demolished by 1944 (1928 *City of Charleston Directory*; 1944 *Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 58*).

18 Oct. 1909: A year and a half after her husband's death, Margaret divided her property in half in preparation to sell both her husband's business lot at 20 Anson (Lot A) and her family's residence at 18 Anson (Lot B). Between 1902 and 1909, a one-story auxiliary structure was added to the rear 18 Anson Street (*Figure 3: 1909 Plat of Magrath Property; Charleston County Deed Book R25, pg. 66*).

9 Dec. 1909: Margaret Magrath sold No. 18 Anson Street (Lot B) to Italian immigrant James Sotille for \$1,800 (*Charleston County Deed Book R25, pg. 66*). At this time, James was 22 years old and was living on Rutledge Avenue with his wife Louise.

No. 18 Anson Street was recorded as “vacant” throughout James Sotille’s short ownership of the property, which suggests James updated or “flipped” the house in order to gain a profit, or used the house as a depository (*1909-1911 City of Charleston Directory*).

27 Feb. 1911: James Sotille sold the property to Sarah Hartnett for \$2,250 (*Charleston County Deed Book D26, pg. 30*).

After James sold No. 18 Anson Street, he began to invest in major development projects throughout the area. By 1913, he owned a majority of Isle of Palms and became the president of the Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company, which developed pavilions and amusements on the island. He also became vice-president and general manager of the Charleston Hotel Company. In 1913, James was the first to petition to the city for the building of a bridge over the Cooper River, a feat that would not be completed until 1929 (*Moultrie News*, August 16, 2014).

Sarah Jane Hartnett was born on Jan. 19, 1877 in Charleston to Irish immigrant Dennis Carey and Charlestonian Ann O’Neill. Her husband, Hugh J. Hartnett was born on Oct. 7, 1881 and worked as a boilermaker for a railroad company (*1910 United States Census, Charleston, SC*)

From 1912 to 1920, Sarah and her husband Hugh were registered as residing at 18 Anson Street with their young son John (b. 1906). The Harnett’s also rented out rooms, or possibly a floor, to various tenants, such as Navy Yard engineer John E. Meredith, who came to Charleston from Eutaw, Alabama to work in the reserve torpedo division (*Charleston News and Courier* January 6, 1911), and his two sisters from 1912 to 1915. John Hartnett most likely helped his parents manage the rented rooms at a young age, for in 1920 at age 14 he was registered as a keeper of a “Rooming House” on Hasell Street (*1920 United States Census, Charleston, SC*).

28 Nov. 1919: Sarah Hartnett sold No. 18 Anson Street to William Edgar Sease for \$4,000 (*Charleston County Deed Book O29, pg. 116*).

William Edgar Sease was born Sept. 20, 1878 in Midway, SC to John Lucius Sease (b. 1834) and Ann E. Kicklighter Hughes (b. 1835). Prior to his arrival in Charleston in 1910, Sease was a young farmer living in Midway and at the age of 22 was married to Mamie Alice Padgett Sease with a one-year-old daughter.

On June 25, 1909, Mamie died at age 28 from “Septicemia [blood infection], Measles and Miscarriage,” and immediately by 1910, William was registered as residing in Charleston. Within the next two years in 1912, William remarried Summerville native Jennie Carroll, who was 21, and living on St. Philip Street (*William Edgar Sease World*

War I Draft Card; 1900 United States Census, Charleston, SC; News and Courier, December 4, 1942, Charleston SC).

At the time of his purchase, Sease was registered as a lineman for the Charleston Consolidated Railway and Light Company, which became the South Carolina Power Company in 1928. This company controlled all street railway and lighting in the City of Charleston. The term lineman usually referred to those who maintained, repaired and installed the lines on a regular basis (*1919 City of Charleston Directory*).

10 Jan. 1920: William E. Sease (41) was residing in No. 18 Anson with this wife, Janie (31), son William E. (17), Mary E. (15), Edna M. (8), Louis E. (3) and John L. (9 months) (*1920 United States Census, Charleston, SC*).

26 Nov. 1929: Nearly ten years later, 51-year-old William Edgar Sease conveyed ownership of 18 Anson Street to his wife, Janie Carroll Sease (*Charleston County Deed Book O29, pg. 116*).

4 Apr. 1930: In the 1930 census, William and Janie (Jennie) Sease were registered as living at 18 Anson Street with their daughter, Edna M., three sons Louis E., John L. and Eric B, and one boarder, John H. Holmes. William was still serving as a lineman for the South Carolina Power Company (*1930 United States Census, Charleston, SC*).

Six days later, William E. Sease died of a stroke. He was 51 years old and was buried in Ehrhart, SC – right outside Midway where he was born (*Charleston County Death Record, Charleston Public Library*).

12 Jan. 1938: Janie Sease transferred ownership of No. 18 Anson Street to Jennie Carroll Sease for \$10.

When William Sease conveyed the property to his wife in 1929, the deed was recorded as conveyed to “Janie Sease,” a name used interchangeably with “Jennie Sease” in directory and census records associated with William. This conveyance was most likely Jennie Carroll Sease’s way of ensuring the property was registered under her correct name (*Charleston County Deed Book S40, pg. 694*).

4 Dec. 1942 Jennie Carroll Sease died “at a local infirmary” at the age of 53, and at her death bequeathed her residence at No. 18 Anson Street to her sons, Louis Earl Sease, John Lucius Sease and Erich Benedict Sease (*News and Courier, December 4, 1942, Charleston SC; Charleston County Deed Book R44, pg. 372*). All three sons lived in No. 18 Anson Street with their wives and families (*1942 City of Charleston Directory*).

1 May 1944: Erich B. and John L. Sease sold their portion of the property to their brother, Louis E. Sease. Both Erich and Louis worked as pipefitters in the Charleston Navy Yard (*Charleston County Deed Book R44, pg. 372; 1944 City of Charleston Directory*). By this time, the structure of the dwelling

had not changed since it was constructed (*Figure 5: 1944 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 58*).

8 July 1948: Louis S. Sease sold the property to Martschink Realty Company for \$7,500 (*Charleston County Deed Book P49, pg.59*). Martschink Realty Company is still alive today through the realty services of Miles H. Martschink, a third generation Charlestonian realtor.

19 Apr. 1949: Martschink Realty Company sold the property to George Osterman for \$9,000 (*Charleston County Deed Book P50, pg. 607*).

1950: Erich B. Sease was recorded as still living at No. 18 Anson Street with his wife and two children. He remained an instrument maker at the Navy Yard and most likely rented No. 18 Anson Street since his brother sold it in 1948. George Osterman also rented rooms to the family of Benjamin Cooper (*1950 City of Charleston Directory*).

26 May 1951: George Osterman sold No. 18 Anson Street to Charles Ellison for \$6,300 (*Charleston County Deed Book R53, pg. 263*) From the time George Osterman's bought the building in 1949 to the time he sold it two years later, the value declined by \$2,700.00. Despite the drastic decrease in value, the property dimensions remained, although a one-story rear addition was added to the dwelling (*Figure 6: 1951 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 58*).

1955: Navy Yard worker John A. Hoffman and his wife Lucile A. rented No. 18 Anson Street from Charles Ellison. They also resided with their five children, only one of who was over 16 (*1955 City of Charleston Directory*).

1 Jan. 1958: Charles Ellison sold No. 18 Anson Street to Clarence and Ursula G. Major for \$6,850. (*Charleston County Deed Book C66, pg. 623*) Clarence Major was an African American barber with his own shop on Coming Street.

Clarence and Ursula owned No. 18 Anson Street until 1976, yet by 1968 they had moved to Moultrie Street and rented the property to several boarders, such as public works laborer Samuel M. Jackson, his wife Anetha and their four children in 1971 (*1971 City of Charleston Directory*).

17 Sept. 1976: Clarence and Ursula Major sold No. 18 Anson Street to Mary Ann S. Hanckel for \$15,000 (*Charleston County Deed Book K110, pg. 290*).

Figure 1: 1888 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 10

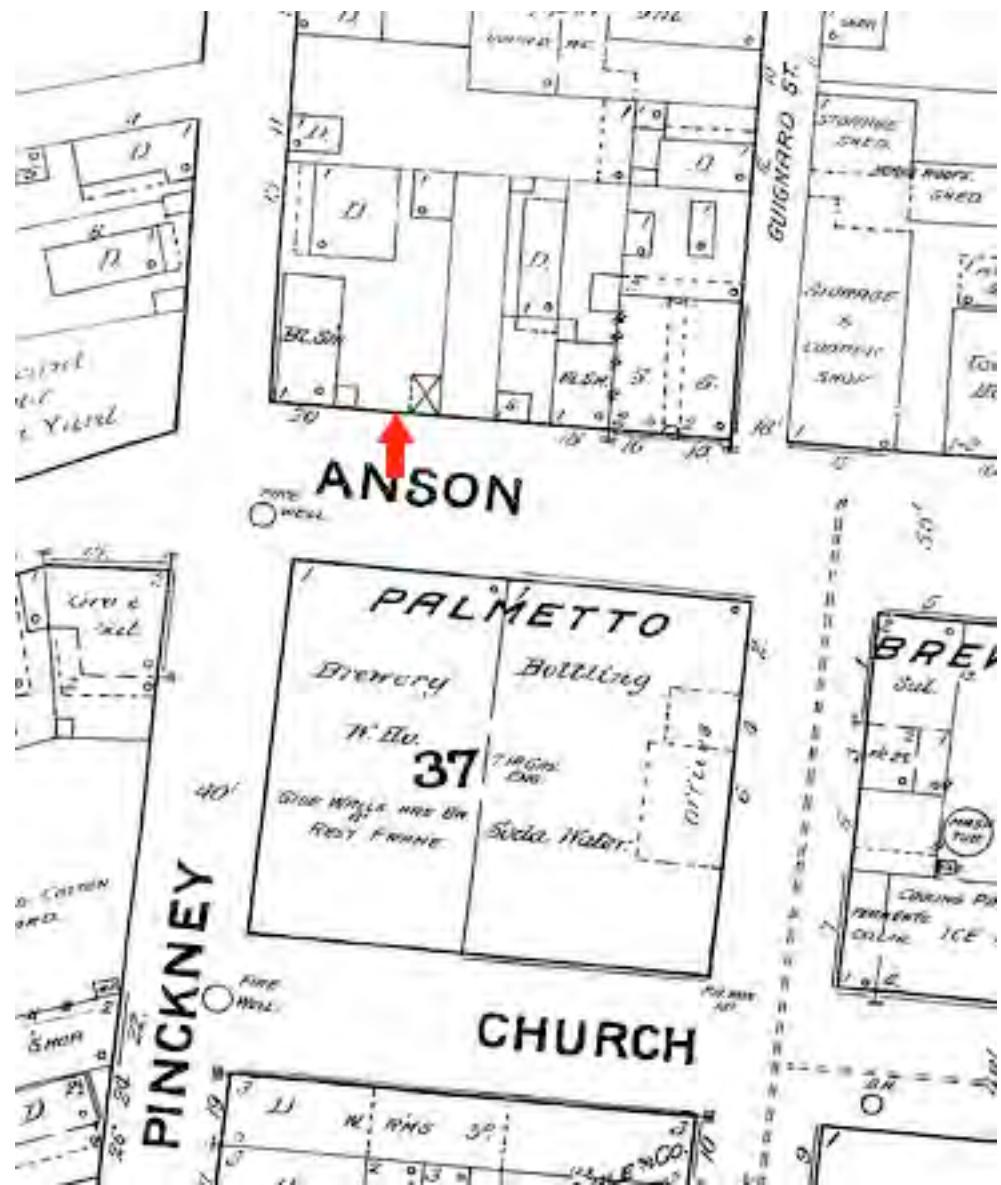


Figure 2: 1902 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 58



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Figure 3: 1909 Plat of Magrath Property; Charleston County Deed Book R25, pg. 66

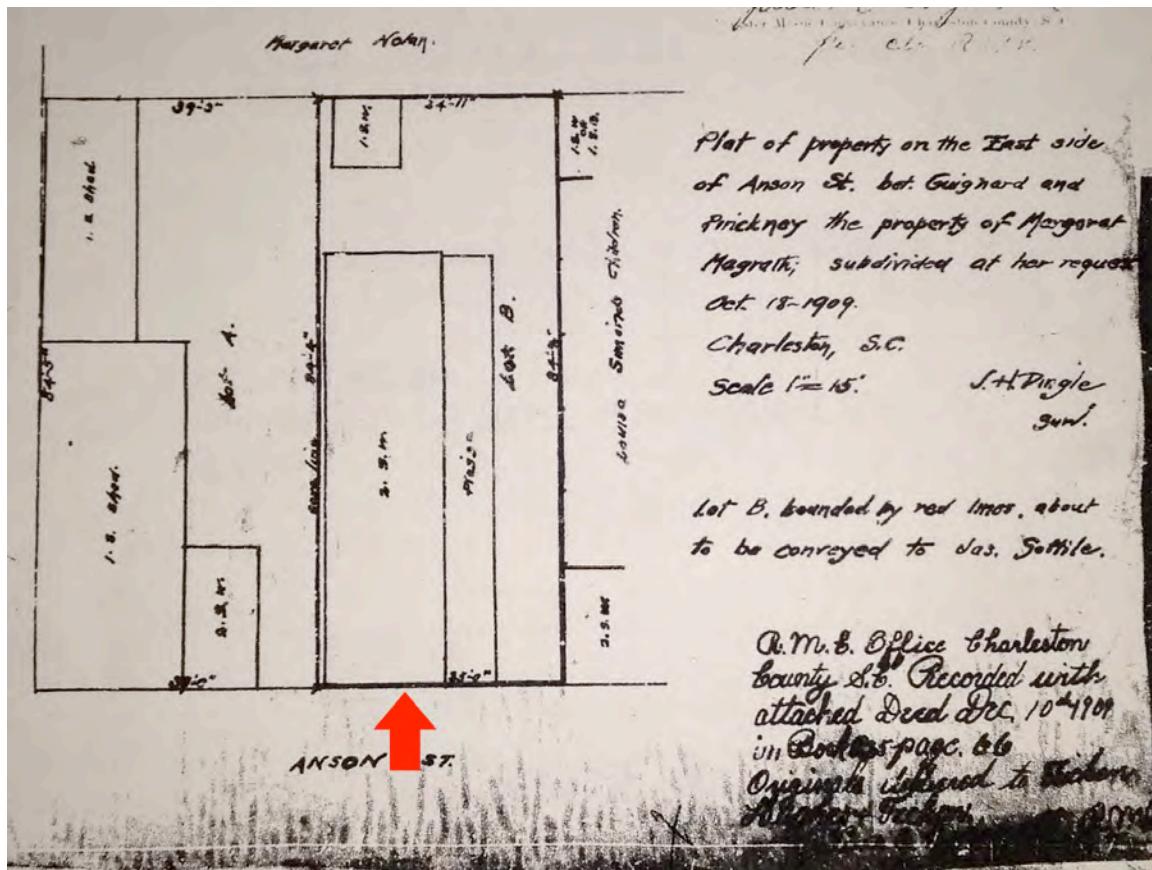


Figure 4: Magrath Family Grave, St. Lawrence Cemetery, Charleston, SC

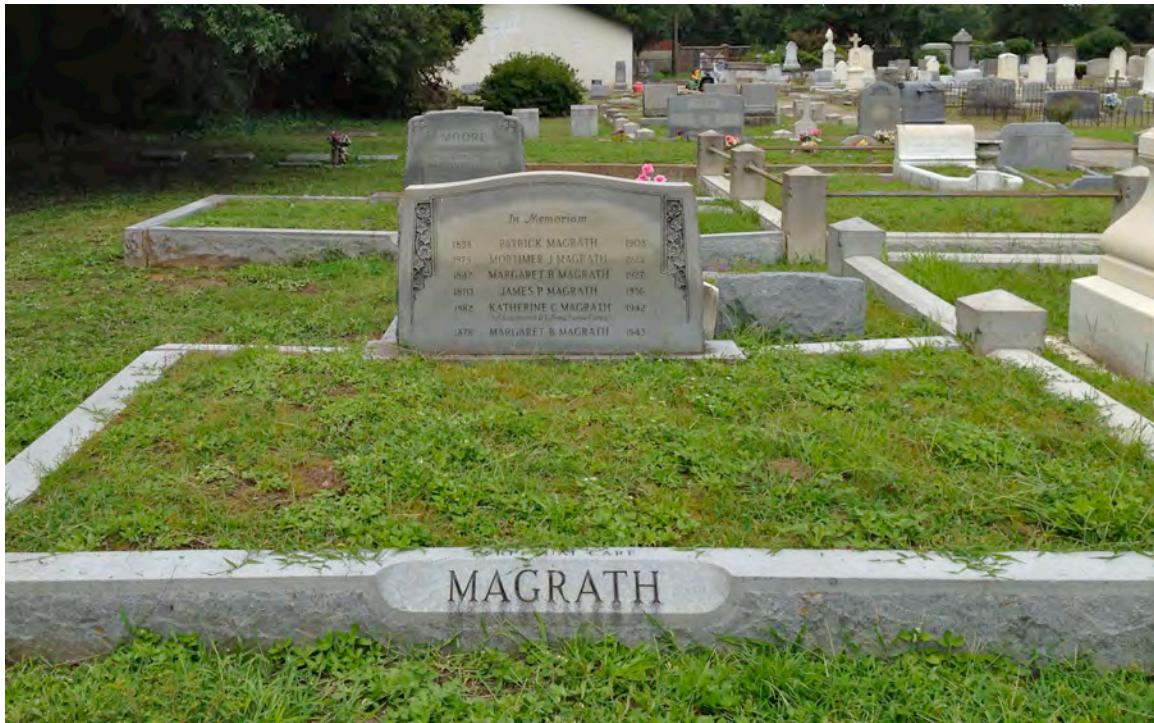
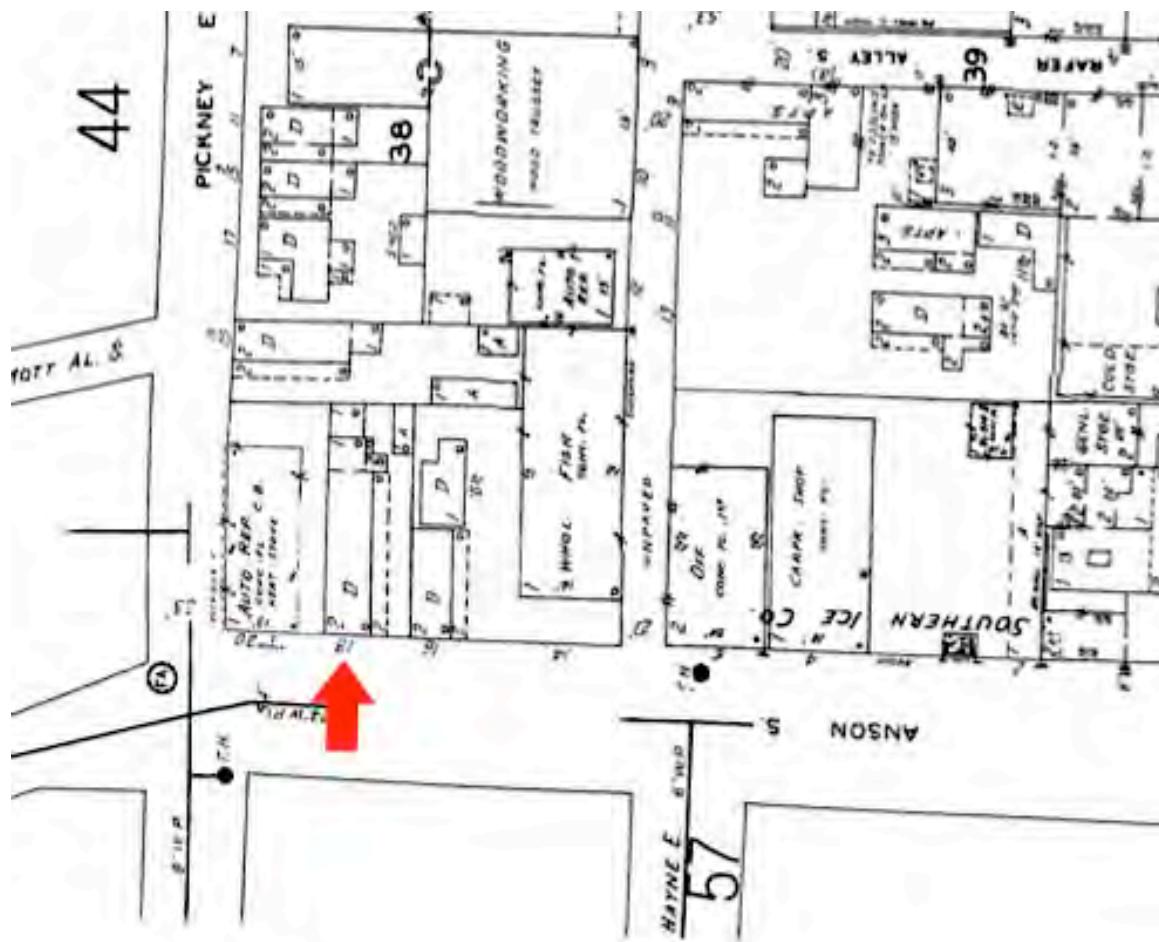


Figure 5: 1944 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 58



Figure 6: 1951 Sanborn Map of Charleston, Sheet 58



Board of Architectural Review Photos

1991



18 Anson Street

3/22/91

1995



2003



2004



2005

