

35 Legare St. -- This two and one-half story frame single house was built before 1828, when it was mentioned in the will of Rebecca Screven. She built the house on property inherited from her mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Williams. The property was purchased in 1879 by Louisa J. McCord, wife of Edward McCord, editor of Statutes at Large of South Carolina. A daughter of Langdon Cheves, who was president of the Bank of the United States, she was one of the most prominent women writers in antebellum South Carolina.

(Greene, unpub. MS.; SCHS.)



**Description**

Unidentified house and garden, but likely 35 Legare Street, ca. 1900s. Dog sits on top step near door.

# City of Charleston Tour Guide Training Manual

Two German merchants, Jacob E. A. Steinmetz and Paul Emil Lorent, bought the Holmes property in parcels between 1803 and 1818. Before 1818, they built both the masonry and frame portions of the house and linked them together with a frame addition, as the three portions appear on a plat of that year.

Also appearing on the plat is the brick wall on Legare Street which disproves the legend that Madame Talvande built the wall to prevent the girls at her boarding school from eloping – the wall was already there when her husband, Andrew Talvande, bought the property in 1819. However, the elopement which inspired the legend is apparently did occur: Col. Joseph Whaley's daughter, Maria, and George W. Morris of New Jersey, eloped in 1828. Because of a law prohibiting aliens from owning property, an act of the Assembly was necessary in 1835 to confirm Madame Talvande's right to inherit the property from her husband, who had died without becoming a U. S. citizen.

In 1849 the property was purchased by George A. Hopley, a merchant and British consul. Noted for his elegant hospitality. Hopley added a game room and some details in the Empire style, such as the marble mantel in the ballroom. Hopley also added the famous Sword Gates which had been made a decade earlier by Christopher Werner. The ironworker had been commissioned in 1838 to make gates with Roman swords for the Guard House at Broad and Meeting streets and made one more pair than was needed. The crossed swords are symbols of authority.

In 1881, this became the home of Judge Charles H. Simonton, speaker of the S.C. House of Representatives and U.S. District and Circuit Judge.

Author Hervey Allen was a tenant here in 1921-22. Mrs. Jessie Lincoln Randolph, a granddaughter of Abraham Lincoln, owned the property in the '30s but never lived here.

## 35 Legare Street

### Rebecca Screven House

*Constructed before 1828*

This two-and-a-half story frame single house was built before 1828, when it was mentioned in the will of Rebecca Screven. Mrs. Screven built the house on property inherited from her mother, Elizabeth Williams. The property was purchased in 1879 by Louisa J. McCord, wife of Edward McCord, editor of *Statutes at Large of South Carolina*. A daughter of Langdon Cheves, who was president of the Bank of the United States, she was one of several noteworthy females writers in antebellum South Carolina.

## 37 Legare Street

### James Streater Glenn House

*Constructed c. 1820*

Planter James Streater Glenn built this house sometime between 1818 when he acquired the land and 1822 when he sold it "with improvements." He inherited the site from John Glenn, who assembled the back parts of two lots fronting Tradd Street, by 1789. Initially this was a plain single house; the extension on the north side was added in the early 1920s.

Augustine Smythe bought the property in 1903 for his daughter Susan Bennett, wife of John Bennett (1865-1956). Bennett was a native of Ohio who became famous for his novels about Charleston – *Madame Margot*, *Doctor to the Dead*, and *The Treasure of Peyre Gaillard*. He also wrote children's books and the first scholarly treatise on the Gullah dialect, c. 1905. The Poetry Society of South Carolina was founded by Bennett, Hervey Allen (author of *Anthony Adverse*), and DuBose Heyward. Bennett introduced Heyward to a publisher and *Porgy* was born over drinks in this house.

## 39 Legare Street

*Constructed c. 1852*

The three-and-a-half story brick house was built by either Mary Jane Fraser in 1852 or before that date by John E. Glen.