



*Do not use any kind of tape  
to tape runners to the floor,  
to other runners or to  
anything else.*

## HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION

### ELIZABETH WILLIAMS HOUSE

35 Legare Street

c.1780-1790

Property of Historic Charleston Foundation

2015

*Special Warnings: The house is under construction.*

Although the structure of 35 Legare was not built until the late 18th century, the lot has an expansive colonial history dating back to Charles Town's move from Albemarle to Oyster Point. Purchased by the Huguenot family of St. Julien from its original owner Joshua Redwood in the 1690s, the property was passed down through familial lines until Elizabeth Damaris de St. Julien Moultrie, heir to the St. Julien family, sold it in 1771 to Benjamin Huger.

Huger, in turn, sold it to Elizabeth Williams in 1772 and it was Williams who is the likely builder of the property. Williams has been noted through city directories to reside on Legare Street in 1790 and 1794.

The house itself has passed hands numerous times, but it remains unique for the reason that ownership was largely retained by women; while this is of little consequence today, property owning women were a rarity for the colonial, antebellum, and reconstructionist society. After Williams's death in 1796, the property was willed to her daughter Rebecca Screven who was shown to live on Lynch Street; this lends the possibility that the Legare Street property was set up as a rental unit.

In 1879 Louisa McCord purchased the property and for the next 47 years made her mark as the longest female resident at 35 Legare. McCord, not to be outdone by her husband, Edward McCord - historian and lawyer responsible for the editing of *Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, and her father, Langdon Cheves, President of the Second Bank of the United States, Louisa established herself as a prolific and well known author of essays ranging in topic from economics to women's rights.

The Victorian additions of the mansard roof and the bay window at the front were added in the 1870s to bring the house up to the style of the time.

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The property also retains a note-worthy Loutrel Briggs garden. Briggs, urban garden designer from New York and graduate of Cornell University, first came to Charleston in the 1920s as part of a large Northern migration to rediscover the city's charm and architectural majesty. Briggs had a variety of commissions throughout Charleston, but the epitome of his work can be seen here on Legare. Utilizing both historic and modern elements, Briggs creates a semi-private escape filled with traditional walkways and an expansive wealth of horticultural sightlines. His goal aimed at following the architectural detail from the structure into the garden to maintain the ideals of the Lowcountry.

### **FRONT ROOM**

The original wide plank floor boards exist below the narrow boards throughout the first floor. These narrow floor boards were popular during Victorian times and were likely installed when the mansard roof and bay window were added to the house.

The baseboards, crown molding, and window surrounds are original. The mantel is not original house, likely salvaged from another house.

### **SECOND FLOOR - FRONT AND REAR ROOM**

The floors on the second floor are original, as are the baseboards, mantel and hearth, and window surrounds.

### **FIRST FLOOR - DINING ROOM**

Same comments as front room. Mantel is also not original to the house.

### **STAIR HALL**

The stair hall is period appropriate for a 1790s house and was the first indicator that the house dates prior to 1800.

### **DEPENDENCY**

The mantel leaning against the wall on the first floor is likely from one of the first floor rooms in the main house. The rear opening in the dependency was for a horse carriage. The existing exterior stair was added in the mid 1900s.

### **Garden:**

Loutrel Briggs design from the 1960s.