

THE McCULLY RIGHTON HOUSE
11 Water Street
c. 1778-88
Residence of Mr. & Mrs. R.E.L. Holt, III

1997

On February 4, 1778 McCully Righton purchased a part of lot 298 of the Grand Model on the east side of Church Street and on the south side of the canal that is now Water Street. The fire map of 1788 shows a building on what is about the site of the present building. This map also shows Water Street from just east of this point as being still a creek.

The directory of 1790 lists McCully Righton at 120 Church Street and Joseph Righton at 118 Church Street. Both are listed as coopers. Since Water Street was still a creek, the Church Street addresses are understandable. By the time of the 1801 directory, they have numbers on Water Street. Note that the marsh was being filled and houses were being built eastward, so that the closer to East Battery, the newer the buildings become.

The will of McCully Righton gives the house at 11 Water Street (recorded as "the house in which I now live") to his daughter Elizabeth Righton and upon her death (1819) to the children of his daughter Rachel Righton Poulton. One feels that the building was built between 1778 and 1788; additional research might narrow this down.

The property remained in the Righton family with several transfers back and forth until it was sold to David Briggs 1858-60. A plat made in 1858 shows the building more or less as it is today as far as the porches and rear brick part are concerned.

After the war, in 1868, David Briggs was bankrupt and the property was sold. In 1874 Henry Siegling acquired the property and one might suspect that Siegling added the Victorian details on the entranceway. In 1922 the estate of Henry Siegling sold the property to Virginia Porcher who converted it into apartments and made an addition to the west side of the building.

Mr. and Mrs. R.E.L. Holt, III purchased the house in 1970, the 1922 addition was torn down and the entire house was restored, also the glass breakfast room was added. The house was thus returned to its original single family status.

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LIVING ROOM

The exquisite needlepoint carpet was handmade in Portugal.
The paintings and prints are by a local artist.

DINING ROOM

Like the living room, the dining room has been painted an attractive contemporary color.
The handsome small sideboard is Hepplewhite.

GARDEN

The garden is a perfect example of the typical Charleston walled garden - totally private and planted with traditional shrubs: Sweet Olive, Pittosporum, Gardenia, Holly, Azaleas, Cleyera, Crepe Myrtle, Photinia, with a Lady Banksia Rose cascading over the east wall.

The front wall is covered with Ficus and Jasmine and small Boxwoods border the curved beds.

Flanking the front door into the house are two Ligustrum in pots and opposite the Charleston bench are pots of Maidenhair Fern and Fatsia.

The glassed in addition to the kitchen at the end of the piazza houses a sunny breakfast room.



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

HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION

McCULLY RIGHTON HOUSE
11 Water Street
c. 1778-88
Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Hicklin Jr.

2007

This property is being preserved through a protective easement.

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HALL

Watercolor, Passenger Pigeon (now extinct), painted near Statesboro, GA in 1791, by John Abbot
Print, Cotton Plant, English, hand colored single stone lithograph, after the original by Thomas Bangs Thorpe

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STUDY

Flat wall cupboard, by Mordecai Collins in Davidson County, NC in the late 18th century.

Slab or hunt board, opposite the cupboard, by an unknown maker, second quarter 19th century, from coastal GA.

Chest, paint decorated, from the valley of VA likely Winchester

Map, by Henry Mouzon, shows the two Carolinas in 1776

Prints, by Mark Catesby (Magnolia Grandiflora)

Engraving, first-edition, by Robert Havell from the watercolors of J.J. Audubon, over the mantel

Painting, of the beach, of Edisto Island, by William Aiken Walker

Sculpture, of the bear, by Anna Hyatt Huntington, 1937

Stoneware, made in the Edgefield District of SC, second quarter of the 1800s. recognized by their distinctive slip decoration

FIRST FLOOR - DINING ROOM

Whereas the furniture in the parlor was classical in style, the furniture in the rest of the house is Southern and for the most part from the back country, not urban centers like Charleston.

Sideboard, from Fayetteville, NC

Chest, from Yadkin County, NC

Chine press, from Roanoke River Valley

Dining table, from Petersburg, VA

Paintings, most are still-lifes of fruit

Painting, by Thomas Wightman, painted in Charleston, c. 1850, over the mantle

KITCHEN

Table, Lazy Susan style, from Greene County, GA, note the original surface

Looking from the kitchen to the piazza, note the 19th century cast iron dog made by J.M. Fiske and Company. He gets along very well with the cats. On the outside wall to the right is another piece of figural iron, this one an angel attributed to the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, VA. The fountain is a bronze figure of a young girl (whom the homeowners have named Blossom) by Mable Conkling, 1825.