

268 Calhoun

MUSC readies Sebring-Aimar House for alumni center

The Medical University of South Carolina is preparing to open its new Alumni-Development Center in the historic Sebring-Aimar House at 268 Calhoun St.

The antebellum residence was purchased by the Medical University's Health Services Foundation in 1985 and renovations for a cost of about \$300,000.

The house has been completely refurbished with the installation of new wiring, plumbing, a heating and air conditioning unit, replacement of wood sections, repainting of the entire house, relocation of the kitchen and reconstruction of existing fireplaces. The house's interior structure also has been

changed to accommodate an elevator.

The Sebring-Aimar House will be occupied by the offices of Alumni Affairs and Development. The house also will serve as a site for meetings and receptions for alumni groups and university benefactors.

The house was built between 1838 and 1846 and was named after the only two families who ever owned and lived in the house. The antebellum residence is located on the northwest corner of Calhoun Street and Ashley Avenue. It was built by Edward Sebring, a New York native who made his fortune in Charleston.

The house was pillaged by Federal troops after Confederate forces evacuated Charleston

on Feb. 18, 1865. In 1882 Charles P. Aimar, a druggist, purchased the house from Sebring's widow and it remained in the Aimar family until its purchase by the Health Sciences Foundation.

It is a two-story frame building with piazzas supported by a high brick basement. The original layout contained a dining room, game room, two store rooms, laundry, kitchen, bath and a front and back hall in the basement.

The second floor included a parlor, library, front hall, bath and service kitchen. A back hall contained a curved stairway with mahogany railing leading to the third floor which contained four large bedrooms,

two baths and halls front and back.

After the Civil War the house was slightly altered by architect John Devereaux. The back stairway between the second and third floors was removed and flooring was installed to complete a room.

Dr. G. Fraser Wilson, a Charleston physician and an alumnus of the Medical University, has been actively involved in the Sebring-Aimar House restoration and has assisted the university in maintaining the historic integrity of the structure.

He recently received the Order of the Palmetto, the state's highest award, for his efforts in renovating the Governor's Mansion.

268 Calhoun St.

S.C. Historical Society - 1964

- B. EDWARD SEBRING'S HOUSE (c.1838)
268 Calhoun Street
Residence of Mr. and Mrs. T. Ritchie Simmons

Edward Sebring, a native of New York State, made a fortune in Charleston as a merchant tailor, a bank president, and a promoter of Magnolia cemetery. He bought this choice property in 1838, removed buildings that were on it and built this residence in the style of the time. Its style is indicated by an entablature that hides the relatively flat roof and gives some touches of monumental character to the


exterior. The entablature is carried out about the piazzas. Practicably it contains a number of louvers that ventilate the attic. The same fine formality is carried out in the large, spacious rooms, halls and stairways. The Greek revival detail is modified very comfortably. Ample living was the rule of the time; Sebring built well for the purpose.

The Sebring family sold to the Aimars in 1882. Charles P. Aimar, first of the name to own the house, came of a French family. He was one of the founders of G. W. Aimar & Co. whose fine old drug store has dispensed health and comfort to generations of Charlestonians. His son, Dr. Charles P. Aimar, a physician and surgeon, was also a naturalist and a hunter, as his collections of deerhorns and birds' eggs demonstrate. They, with other relics and heirlooms, fill out the big rooms with illustration of a family history. The third, fourth, and fifth generation of this family that has now owned the house for over eighty years, is represented here by Mrs. Simmons, formerly Miss Agatha Aimar, a daughter of the doctor, with her children and grand-children.

267 Calhoun was built by Levi C. Boland, a traveling salesman, on land purchased from the Calhoun Securities Company. The rest of the houses were built by the Calhoun Securities Co., which then sold them to individual home owners. The Halsey Lumber Co., which used the mill pond for its sawmills for many years, filled this portion of the pond in the early 1900s and sold the lots on the Calhoun Street side to the Calhoun Securities Co. in 1910.

"Show-off" technology is demonstrated in the curve of the piazza at 267, with no columnar support at the corner, and in the two story bays at 269, 271 and 273 which have no visible support.

(Stockton, DYKYC, June 23, 1980.)



268 Calhoun St. -- This large frame house in the Greek Revival style was built between 1838 and 1846 by Edward Sebring, a native of New York and president of the State Bank of South Carolina. His bank built the Italianate building at 1 Broad St., c. 1853, and he built the building at 3 Broad in the same year. He razed an earlier house to build this mansion on the shore of Bennett's Mill Pond, which lay on the opposite side of Calhoun Street. A painting of the mill pond by H. Jackson, shows the house in 1846. The two story wooden house on a high brick basement was, according to tradition, pillaged in 1865 by federal soldiers who took Sebring's silver and broke two pier mirrors. In 1882, Sebring's widow sold the property to Charles Pons Aimar, whose descendants owned and lived in it for six generations. Tradition says that Sebring, during a period of abstinence, hid some wine in the house; it has been searched for, for more than a century, to no avail. On the main floor, the drawing room, library and front hall open into each other by folding doors. The interior has handsome moldings and a curving

~~stair.~~ In the rear is a large brick outbuilding.
(Simmons, DYKYC, Feb. 16, 1948.)

274 Calhoun St. -- Margaret Cannon House, built c. 1802 by Daniel Cannon, lumberman and builder, for his daughter, is a two and one-half story wooden house on a high basement, with a hipped roof and wide piazza. The house also has valuable Adamesque interiors and a large brick outbuilding. From 1838 to 1855 it was the home of William Gregg. He was born in 1800 in Pennsylvania and came to South Carolina in 1824 as a jewelry master workman, a member of the famous firm of Hayden & Gregg, operating first in Columbia and then in Charleston, and accumulating a large fortune. In 1844-45 he published a series of articles promoting industrialization in South Carolina, and in 1845 organized the Graniteville Manufacturing Company, a large scale cotton factory operation which was highly successful. For many years Gregg was opposed to sectional hostility, but in 1860 was a member of the Secession Convention. During the Civil War his textile manufactory at Graniteville became a resource for the Confederacy "second only to a munitions factory."
(DYKYC, Sept. 7, 1938. Wallace, 451-454, 530.)

286 Calhoun St. -- Jonathan Lucas, Jr., built this handsome house between 1803, when he purchased the site, and 1809 when he is listed in a city directory. He was a son of Jonathan Lucas, Sr., an English millwright who came to South Carolina after the Revolution and between 1787 and 1792 built the first water-powered and tide-powered rice mills in this country, on some Santee River plantations. Jonathan Lucas, Jr., also born in England, established the first toll mill in 1801 at Middleburg Plantation and in 1808 and 1819 received Federal patents for improved hulling and polishing of rice. He bought from Daniel Cannon's estate in 1803 a tract of 83½ acres which then