

**48 Bull Street:
Past and Future**

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A
REMARKABLE CHARLESTON HOUSE**

by

Robert P. Stockton

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Introduction

The house at 48 Bull Street is a plantation style dwelling house which was constructed in three stages. The first stage was a hall-and-parlor type house, built perhaps by Lieutenant Governor Isaac Holmes after he purchased the property in 1786, or perhaps by Manuel Antonio, a merchant of Charleston and Columbia, prior to his selling the property in 1808. The second stage was the construction of the east wing and the redesign of the south facade. According to a plaque on the facade, the work was done in 1813 by I. A. Kelly for George Keckeley, a planter in St. James, Goose Creek, Parish. The third stage was the construction of a rear addition sometime after 1852 by the Seyle-Burges family, who owned the property from 1837 to 1882, and again from 1916 to 1941. The property was converted to apartments in 1941 by the South Atlantic Life Insurance Company.

The house is rated in the Historic Architecture Inventory of the City of Charleston in Group 3: Significant. The group includes buildings of "good architectural quality," which are recommended to be retained and protected.

The Village of Harleston

The Village of Harleston, now an integral part of the City of Charleston, was laid out as a suburb in the 1770s by the Harleston family. The suburb, known variously as the Village of Harleston, Harlestonborough, or Harleston Green, constituted a subdivision of a plantation known as Coming's Point. The Harlestons had inherited the land from John Coming, by whom it had been acquired a century previously.

John Coming and Henry Hughes initially had been granted land at the tip of the Charleston peninsula, known as Oyster Point or White Point, in spite of the fact that Gov. William Sayle had directed in 1670 that Oyster Point be reserved for a town and fort. Therefore, when Anthony, Lord Ashley Cooper, one of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina, directed in 1671 that a town be laid out at Oyster Point, and sent over a plan for the proposed town, it was necessary to extinguish the titles, to land on the site, which were held by Coming and Hughes. This was done on February 25, 1672, when Hughes and Coming, the latter with his wife Affra, voluntarily surrendered half their lands at Oyster Point "to be employed in and toward the outlaying of a town." On the same date, the Grand Council

of the Province directed that the town was to be laid out and was to be called Charles Town, transferring the name from the settlement which had been established at Albemarle Point, on the Ashley River, in 1670. This excited the opposition of some of the settlers at Albemarle Point, and the government of the province was not moved officially from that site (afterwards called Old Town, and now Charles Towne Landing) until 1680.¹

Coming and Hughes were compensated with grants of additional lands farther up the peninsula. On July 27, 1672, the same day on which a warrant was issued to the provincial surveyor, ordering him to lay out the town, warrants also were issued for the surveyor to lay out 225 acres for Henry Hughes, next to the town, and 325 acres for John Coming, above the town.² The warrants estimated the area, between the original town line (present-day Beaufain Street) and present-day Calhoun Street, at 550 acres. The area actually contains 319 acres, of which 133 acres were granted to Coming and the remaining 186 acres were granted to Hughes and afterward acquired by Coming.³

Both Coming and Hughes were part of the original settling party in 1670. Coming arrived in the colony as mate on the ship Carolina, and Hughes as a settler.⁴ They were apparently partners who shared a grant of 150 acres at another location.⁵

Coming's grant, dated April 17, 1675, and an

accompanying plat, indicate 133 acres of land stretching across the peninsula between the Ashley and the Ittwan (Etiwan or Cooper) rivers.⁶

Hughes' land was to the south of Coming's, adjacent to the town. Coming acquired title to Hughes' grant by February, 1680, when he conveyed 10 acres of it to Maurice Mathews.⁷ On Nov. 19, 1698, Affra Coming, "widow Relict and Sole Executrix" of John Coming, sold to Thomas Pinckney and other 10 acres, "Being part of a Plantation of one Hundred Eighty Six Acres Joyning to Charles Towne aforesaid, which my Said Late Husband Dyed Possessed of and was first Laid out to Mr. Henry Hughes."⁸

John Coming was a "hardy Devonshire sailor," who, according to a family tradition, once lost a ship and was accused of cowardice, whereupon he built and rigged with his own hands a longboat, in which he crossed the Atlantic. His name survives in Comingtee Plantation at the T (tee) formed by the conjunction of the Eastern and Western branches of Cooper River, where the ruins of his plantation house remain.⁹

Affra Harleston arrived on the ship Carolina as a servant, although she had been gently raised as a daughter of John Harleston, gentleman, of a family long seated at South Ockenden, Essex, and having estates in Ireland.¹⁰ She and John Coming were married after they arrived in Carolina.¹¹

The marriage was childless, and when John Coming died on November, 1, 1695, of "the gout which seized him after a violent manner," he left all his real estate to his widow.¹²

The Widow Coming donated 17 acres to the minister of the Church of England in Charlestown, and his successors in office forever, on December 10, 1698. The gift, which became known as the Glebe Lands, encompassed the area now bounded by Coming, George, St. Philip and Wentworth streets.¹³ On November 19, 1698, she sold to Thomas Pinckney another 10 acres, which in 1724 became the Free School Lands and in 1786 became the site of the College of Charleston. That tract included the area now bounded by George, St. Philip, Coming and Calhoun streets.¹⁴

The eastern part of the Coming plantation, extending from the Free School and Glebe lands to the Cooper River, passed out of the Comings' hands and later became the suburbs of Ansonborough, Rhettisbury, Laurens Square and Middlesex.¹⁵

However, the western portion of the Hughes-Coming grant, a tract known as Coming's Point, remained intact, and would remain in Mrs. Coming's family for nearly a century after her death.

In her will, dated December 28, 1698, and probated on March 9, 1699, Affra Coming directed that all her estate be devised to two collateral members of the family: her own

nephew, John Harleston of Dublin, Ireland, son of her brother John Harleston, late of Malling, County of Essex, England, and her late husband John Coming's nephew, Elias Ball, son of his half brother, William Ball.¹⁶

Elias Ball received Comingtee Plantation and other properties, while John Harleston received, along with other properties, the lands near Charles Town which were then known as Coming's Point, and afterwards were identified with the Harleston name.¹⁷

The deed to the Free School Lands, in 1724, describe them as being bounded to the southwest on "the Land of Captain John Harleston, and to the South East on a path leading from the Broad Path by the Parsonage to Capt. Harleston's Land."¹⁸

John Harleston, who immigrated to South Carolina about 1699 to take charge of his inheritance, died in 1738, leaving his real estate to his three sons: John (1708-1767), Nicholas (1710-1768) and Edward (1722-1775). All three became prominent members of the community, serving in the Commons House of Assembly and in other public offices.¹⁹

Capt. John Harleston of St. Thomas Parish, planter, son of John Harleston the immigrant, noted in his will, dated May 21, 1767, that he and "my two Brothers Nicholas and Edward are entitled unto and possessed of Sundry Lands in or near Charles Town which we have agreed shall be

called by the Name of Harleston-Borough and to lay out the same into lots with streets and passages between the said lots."²⁰

Capt. Harleston's will devised his interest in "Harleston-Borough" to his son, John,²¹ The son, however, apparently predeceased the father, both dying in 1768, and the younger John Harleston named as executors of his estate his uncle, Edward Harleston, and his cousin, John Harleston, son of Nicholas.²²

The Commons House of Assembly of South Carolina, on April 7, 1770, authorized the opening of streets through the Glebe Lands and the Harleston lands on what was then "commonly called Coming's Point, and parts adjacent thereto."²³

The "Plan of Harleston" (Figure 1) was surveyed by William Rigby Naylor, who was also the architect of the Exchange and Custom House at 122 East Bay Street. Streets in Harleston-borough or the Village of Harleston were named for noted men of the day. For instance, Bull Street was named for Lieutenant Governor William Bull. Other major streets were named for the Royal Governor, Lord Charles Greville Montagu; Benjamin Smith, Speaker of the Commons House of Assembly; Hector Beranger de Beaufain, Collector of Customs and member of His Majesty's Council; William Pitt, Isaac Barre, and Charles Watson Wentworth, Marquess of Rockingham, prominent English Whigs who defended

Colonial rights in Parliament; as well as John Rutledge, Thomas Lynch, Peter Manigault and Christopher Gadsden, leading members of the Commons House of Assembly. Naylor's plat indicates that, although Harleston included a great deal of high land, the subdivision was heavily indented by the marshes of Coming's Creek.²⁴

In the family division of the new suburb, John Harleston, son of Nicholas, received numerous lots including those in the area bounded by Bull Street on the south, Coming Street on the east, Manigault Street (present-day Calhoun Street) on the north and Coming's Creek on the west (Figure 2). The tract included Lots 123, 124, 125 and 126, on the north side of Bull Street, between Pitt and Smith streets (including the site of present-day 48 Bull Street), which were partially high land and partially marshland. They each measured about 106 feet, six inches, in front on Bull Street.²⁵

John Harleston, on September 7, 1779, conveyed most of his lots in that area to Edward Lightwood, Andrew Lord and William Greenwood. The three were merchants who apparently acquired the lots as an investment. The deed for the 1779 transaction is not found on record, but is recited in a document of 1784, by which Lightwood mortgaged his one-third interest in the lots for £3,150 Sterling. In that document, the property was described as Lots Nos. 124 through 139, fronting south on Bull Street; Lots 119, 120,

152 and 153, fronting east on Coming Street and the School Lands; Lots 154 through 162, fronting north on Manigault Street, then called Boundary Street; Lots 121, 150 and 151, fronting on Pitt Street; Lots 145, 148 and 149, fronting on Smith Street; Lots 143, 144, 146 and 147, fronting on Rutledge Street; and Lots 140 through 142, fronting on Lynch Street.²⁶

Subsequently, by some means not found recorded, there was a division among the three partners. The results of the division, plus conveyances to other parties, is illustrated on a plat of the area, dated 1794 (Figure 3), showing lot ownership at that time. The plat indicates that Lightwood's share in the division included Lot 126, at the northeast corner of Bull and Smith Streets, and the lot adjacent to the east, numbered 125. Owners of the other two lots on the north side of Bull Street, between Smith and Pitt streets (Nos. 123 and 124), are not identified on the plat.²⁷ Other records reveal their ownership, however.

Lot 123, at the northwest corner of Bull and Pitt streets, was enlarged by John Harleston, at the expense of Lot 124, adjacent to the west, and Lot 150, adjacent to the north, so that it measured 130 feet in front on Bull Street and 335 feet on Pitt Street. Harleston sold the enlarged lot, still vacant, in 1778 to the Rev. Henry Purcell, rector of St. Michael's Church. Subsequent owners included

Henry Coape, who purchased it from Nicholas Eveleigh in 1784 and conveyed it to Thomas Ogier in 1792. In 1795, it was acquired by William Fair, who operated a tanyard there.²⁸

The remainder of Lot 124 (not the whole of the original lot, as implied by Lightwood's 1784 mortgage), was sold by Harleston to Lightwood, Greenwood and Lord in 1779. Lightwood, Greenwood and the executors of the estate of Andrew Lord conveyed that portion of Lot 124 and a portion of Lot 125 to Isaac Holmes in 1786.²⁹

Edward Lightwood (1736-1797) is listed in the city directory of 1782 as a merchant, and in the directories of 1790 and 1794 as a planter. He lived at the southeast corner of Meeting Street and Lightwood Alley (present-day Atlantic Street), and owned plantations on James Island, in St. Andrew's Parish, in St. Mark's Parish, and on the Congaree and Wateree rivers. He also acquired other lots in Harleston, including property at Wentworth and Pitt streets and at Wentworth, Coming and Montagu streets.³⁰

Lightwood conveyed several lots to Thomas Bennett in the 1790s. They were Lot No. 135, at Lynch and Bull streets, sold to Bennett in 1791, and Lots 137 and 138, at Bull and Barre streets, in 1794. He also leased Lot No. 126, at the northeast corner of Bull and Smith streets, to John Wielfing, in 1793, for 14 years, with the condition that Wielfing build a house on the lot. This is the only

documentation found indicating development of Lightwood's lots in Harleston during his ownership.³¹

Lightwood and his family lost his Harleston property due to his considerable indebtedness. Fourteen of the lots were sold at a sheriff's sale on July 7, 1794 (Figure 3). The remainder were lost in sheriff's auctions in 1797. In one case, a creditor, John Parker, on March 24, 1795, filed suit in the Court of Common Pleas for the District of Charleston, contending that Lightwood had defaulted on a bond, signed by him on May 21, 1792, for the penal sum of 600 Pounds Sterling. Judge Aedenus Burke, Senior Associate Justice, issued a writ of fieri facias, dated August 16, 1796, directing all district sheriffs to seize the assets of the said Lightwood. John Hart, Sheriff of Charleston District, held a public auction on February 6, 1797, at which 26 of Lightwood's lots in Harleston were sold.³²

Purchasers at the public auction in February, 1797, included Lewis Poppenheim, who purchased Lot No. 161, at the southwest corner of Smith and Boundary streets. Others were Ann Tighe, who acquired Lots No. 128 and 159; Archibald Smith, Jr., Lot No. 139; Edward Brown Newell, Lots Nos. 143 and 150; John Bee Holmes, Lots Nos. 119, 152 and 153; William Holmes, Lot No. 154; Nicholas Schrinier, Lot No. 127; and Solomon Pollock, Lot No. 131. The largest purchaser was Thomas Bennett, who submitted a high bid of 439 Pounds, seven shillings, Sterling, for 11 lots: Nos.

132 through 134, 141, 142, 144, 146 through 149, and 158. A plat which accompanied the deed (Figure 4) indicated these lots, to which Sheriff Hart was transferring title to Bennett. Another sheriff's sale was held on August 8, 1797, the result of a suit filed on March 27, 1797, by another creditor, Alexander Philson. In that auction, Bennett acquired Lightwood's Lot No. 164 on Coming Street.³³

Lightwood died sometime in 1797, leaving a brief and simple will in which he directed that his estate be divided equally between his wife, Elizabeth Peronneau Lightwood, and their several children.³⁴

Finding the estate diminished considerably, the widowed Mrs. Lightwood on November 6, 1797, petitioned the Court of Common Pleas for dower rights to the Harleston lots, contending that, at the time of the sheriff's sales in 1794 and 1797, she had not relinquished her dower interests in all of the lots, and therefore should be compensated. Mrs. Lightwood filed with her petition a plat (Figure 5) indicating the lots in question. In addition to their numbers, the lots are marked with initials. Some initials indicate the then owners of the property. For instance, several are marked "T.B.," indicating Thomas Bennett as the owner. Other lots are marked "E.L.," for "Elizabeth Lightwood," apparently indicating those lots to which Mrs. Lightwood had not yet relinquished her dower.

For instance, Lots 125 and 126, at Bull and Smith streets, are marked "E.L."³⁵

Other lots depicted on Mrs. Lightwood's plat are initialed "T.B.," for Thomas Bennett, who was the progenitor of a prominent family of lumbermen, rice millers, contractors and architects who contributed to the development of Harleston Village. Bennett, who acquired much of the land to the south of Coming's Creek, and Daniel Cannon, who owned the land to the north of the creek, cooperated in the late eighteenth century to build a system of water-powered sawmills along the creek. The project involved damming the creek to create a very large mill pond which would serve the lumber mills, and later rice mills as well.³⁶

A plat drawn in 1807 (Figure 6) depicts the mill pond, then still known as Cannon's Pond, but later as Bennett's Mill Pond, penetrating the block on the north side of Bull Street, between Smith and Pitt streets, just behind the site of present-day 48 Bull Street.³⁷

48 Bull Street - The History

John Harleston's Lots

The house at 48 Bull Street stands on a portion of Lot 125 of the general plan of Harleston, as drawn by William Rigby Naylor, surveyor, in 1770 (Figures 1 and 2). The property also includes, on the east side, a portion of Lot 124 of Harleston. There were four lots, numbered 123, 124, 125 and 126, on the north side of Bull Street, between Smith and Pitt streets, according to the plan of Harleston. All were included the share of John Harleston, son of Nicholas Harleston, in the division of the Harleston lands in 1770 (Figure 2). The current tax records indicate that the north side of Bull Street, between Smith and Pitt streets, measures 426 feet.¹ Four lots of equal size would have, therefore, each measured 106 feet, six inches, in width. That this was the approximate size of the lots is confirmed by a deed of 1797, which describes Lot 126, at the northeast corner of Bull and Smith streets, as measuring 106 feet, 3 inches in front on Bull Street.² The original lot lines were compromised, however, by John Harleston and subsequent owners, who adjusted them to suit their own preferences.

Lightwood, Greenwood and Lord

John Harleston sold Lot 125 and a portion of Lot 124, along with most of his other lots in the area bounded by Bull, Coming and Manigault (now Calhoun) streets, on September 7, 1778, to Edward Lightwood, William Greenwood and Andrew Lord. Lightwood mortgaged his one-third interest in the several lots, on November 19, 1784, for £3,150 Sterling.

Andrew Lord died sometime before April 15, 1785, when his will was probated. By the will, which does not mention the Harleston properties, William Ancrum became the executor of Lord's estate.³

Isaac Holmes Purchases the Site

By deeds of lease and release, dated January 1 and 2, 1786, William Greenwood, Edward Lightwood and William Ancrum, as executor of Andrew Lord's estate, conveyed to Isaac Holmes a lot on the north side of Bull Street in Harleston, measuring in front on Bull Street 130 feet, and 335 feet in depth. The lot is not identified by number but is described as butting and bounding to the east on a lot belonging to Henry Coape.⁴ Henry Coape, at the time, owned the lot at the northwest corner of Bull and Pitt Streets, measuring 130 feet in front on Bull Street and

identified in documents as being composed of the whole of Lot 123 in the plan of Harleston and portions of Lots 124 and 150 in the said plan.⁵ The lot conveyed to Holmes measured 130 westward from Coape's property line; therefore it included a portion of Lot 124 and a portion of Lot 125 in the plan of Harleston. It included, on the portion of Lot 125, the site of the present house at 48 Bull Street. The deed to Holmes does not mention a house or other buildings on the property. The purchase price, \$20,000 in Continental dollars, would have been an enormous sum in normal money. However, the large figure is illustrative of the debasement of the Continental currency in that post-Revolutionary period, which gave rise to the expression, "Not worth a Continental."⁶

Isaac Holmes was a planter on John's Island and had a town house in Legare Street. He and his wife Elizabeth Holmes, by deeds of lease and release dated February 17 and 18, 1786, conveyed the Bull Street property to Norwood Conyers, merchant, for £600 in South Carolina currency. Again there is no mention of a building on the property.⁷

Norwood Conyers

Conyers retained the property only briefly. In the meantime he mortgaged it for small sums, £500 and £200, to Andreas Everardus Van Braam Houckgeest.⁸

Back to Holmes

Norwood Conyers, Gentleman, conveyed the property back to Isaac Holmes by lease and release dated October 27 and 28, 1786, for £724 in South Carolina currency. The difference between what he paid for the property in February, £600, and his selling price, £724, would not appear to indicate any substantial improvement in the value of the property. Again there is no mention of a building on the property.⁹

Manuel Antonio

No record was found relating how and when Isaac Holmes disposed of the property, and no record was found of how and when it was acquired by Manuel Antonio, a merchant of Charleston and later of Columbia. Antonio possibly was in possession of the property by 1803, when he was listed in the city directory of that year as residing in Bull Street.¹⁰ The directory listing possibly indicates that Antonio was living at present-day 48 Bull Street, in the oldest portion of that structure, which possibly was built by Isaac Holmes sometime after his repurchase of the property in November, 1786, or by Manuel Antonio sometime before the 1803 directory listing. If the supposition that

Manuel Antonio lived in the house at 48 Bull Street is valid, he was the first known resident.

42 Bull Street

On May 1, 1805, Antonio leased the eastern portion of his property, measuring 60 feet, 4 inches, in front on Bull Street and 335 feet in depth, to Jeremiah Wilcox. The lease specified that Wilcox (or his heirs or assigns) was to pay Antonio \$100 per annum in quarterly payments, for a term of seven years. Renewal of the lease for a second term of seven years was optional, upon agreement of both parties. At the expiration of the lease term, "any building or buildings [the lessee] may have erected," were to be valued by two or more disinterested persons, and Antonio would be at liberty to purchase the building or buildings at that value. Otherwise, the lessee was to remove the building or buildings within three months after the expiration of the term.¹¹

On April 1, 1811, Antonio conveyed that property to John Duncan for \$2,400. At the same time, Wilcox assigned the unexpired lease to Duncan, along with "all the buildings erected on the premises," for \$3,000.¹² The foregoing documents appear to indicate that the present house at 42 Bull Street, or perhaps a predecessor, was constructed by Jeremiah Wilcox under the terms of the

lease.

First Mention of A House

Manuel Antonio retained the western portion of his property, including the site of present-day 48 Bull Street, until 1808. On November 21, 1808, he conveyed that property to Peter Suau, a Charleston merchant. The deed describes the property as "All that Two Story House and out building and Lot of Land," on the north side of Bull in Harleston Green, then known as No. 13 Bull Street. The lot measured 71 feet, 10 inches in front on Bull Street and 335 feet in depth.¹³ The 1808 deed contains the first mention of a house on the property, which later was known as 12 Bull Street, then as 20 Bull Street and still later as 48 Bull Street.

Peter Suau

Peter Suau, merchant, is listed in the city directory of 1809 as residing in Bull Street.¹⁴

Suau conveyed the property, described in the same terms as in the previous deed, to Henry Rose on April 11, 1809, for \$4,000.¹⁵

The Rose Family

Henry Rose, merchant, is listed as living at 42 Broad Street in the 1809 directory.¹⁶

Rose, on May 1, 1810, conveyed the lot and buildings at 13 Bull Street to Martin Strobel, an attorney, as trustee for his wife Petronile Rivers Rose. The consideration was "love and affection" which Rose had for his wife, and 10 shillings.¹⁷

Petronile Rivers Rose conveyed the property, still identified as 13 Bull Street, to John Mathias Ehrick, William Wightman and George Keith, on March 3, 1812. The consideration was 10 shillings and "a certain deed of release" by Ehrick, Wightman and Keith, the details of which are not revealed in the deed of conveyance, and which is not found recorded.¹⁸

Ehrick, Wightman and Keith

City directories identify John Mathias Ehrick as a merchant, residing at 1 St. Philip Street in 1809 and at 259 East Bay in 1813. There were two men named William Wightman living in Charleston at the time. One was a painter and glazier located at 26 Hasell Street in 1809 and at 152 Meeting Street in 1813. George Keith was a carpenter, living at 23 Society Street.¹⁹

Ehrick, Wightman and Keith conveyed the property, described as a "Lot of Land with a two Story House and out Buildings thereon," on the north side of Bull Street in Harleston Green, to Thomas Bennett the Younger, on November 2, 1812. The consideration was \$5,000.²⁰

Intendant Thomas Bennett

Thomas Bennett, Jr., at that time Intendant (Mayor) of Charleston and later Governor of South Carolina, was listed in the city directory of 1813 as living on "Bull-st, west end."²¹ His residence probably was the house at Bull and Lynch streets, now numbered 113 Ashley Avenue, which he built c. 1800, or one of several houses built by the Bennett family on the west end of Bull Street.²²

Major James Hamilton

Thomas Bennett conveyed the property to Major James Hamilton, on April 26, 1813, for \$4,000. It was again described as a "Lot of land with a two Story house and out buildings thereon," known as 13 Bull Street.²³

George Keckeley

An octagonal marble plaque on the facade of the house

at 48 Bull street has the inscription, "Built by I. A. Kelly for G. Keckeley, May 1813." Major Hamilton was the owner of the property at that time. George Keckeley was a planter in St. James, Goose Creek, Parish. If the plaque is correct, Keckeley had the east wing of the house erected as a lessee of the property, probably in an arrangement similar to the lease agreement between Manuel Antonio and Jeremiah Wilcox, cited above, for the erection of the house at 42 Bull Street. There is no documentation, other than the plaque, to connect Keckeley with the property.

Keckeley, if he resided at the address, did not do so for long, as he was listed in 1816 as living on King Street Road, and later built a house at Meeting and Ann streets, where he resided.

The Hamilton Family

James Hamilton, planter, is listed in the city directory of 1816 as living at 28 Bull Street.²⁴ Hamilton subsequently lived at Church and South Bay (now South Battery) streets.²⁵

James Hamilton died intestate in November, 1833.²⁶ He left as heirs his son, ex-Governor James Hamilton, Jr., a daughter, Harriott Cleland Hamilton, and a daughter, Elizabeth Lynch Hamilton Prioleau, wife of Samuel Prioleau.²⁷

The Hamilton heirs conveyed the property to Samuel Seyle, for \$6,100, on April 1, 1837. The property was described as a lot in Bull Street, "with a two Story Brick House & Wooden out Buildings thereon."²⁸

Samuel Seyle

Samuel Seyle, who previously had operated a saddlery and a long room (tavern) in King Street, was living at 12 Bull Street, as the house was then numbered, by 1840, and resided there until his death in 1856.²⁹ Other members of his family who lived there during his ownership included his wife Mary S. Seyle; son Philip Wesner Seyle, a carpenter; son Robert E. Seyle, a clerk; and son Charles O. Seyle, a clerk. Another son, John Henry Seyle, a prominent architect, lived nearby at 14 Bull Street, while son Florence O. Seyle, a finisher, lived at 49 America Street. A daughter, Margaret Eliza D. Seyle Burges, after the death of her husband, James Burges, also lived with her father at 12 Bull. Another daughter, Mary Susannah Seyle Jackson, wife of William J. Jackson, lived at Society Hill in Chesterfield District.³⁰

Samuel Seyle enlarged his holdings by purchasing, on February 16, 1847, the lot adjacent to the west from Thomas Aston Coffin, for \$1,200. It was described as a lot, "with the buildings thereon," measuring 32 feet in front on Bull

Street and 279 feet in depth.³¹

The West Lot

That lot, which remains part of the property of present-day 48 Bull Street, was conveyed to Coffin, a planter, on June 20, 1833, by Betty Stobo, "a free Coloured Woman." She conveyed the property in return for \$1 and Coffin's agreement "to maintain me and my child Tenah during our respective lives."³² No record was found of when and from whom Betty Stobo acquired the property, which formerly had been part of Edward Lightwood's Lot 125 in the plan of Harleston. No further record was found of Betty Stobo or her child Tenah. The house on the lot, a two story frame structure set back from the street and known as 14 Bull Street, was the home for many years of John Henry Seyle, the architect.³³ The house was removed, burned or demolished sometime between 1856 and 1881.³⁴

Other Seyle Property

John H. Seyle and Samuel Seyle also acquired the large lot at the northeast corner of Bull and Smith streets, measuring 130 feet in front on Bull and 279 feet on Smith, which remained in the family from 1835 to 1859. That property included the sites of present-day 52, 54, 56 and

58 Bull Street, and 70, 72, 74, 76 and 78 Smith Street.³⁵

Samuel Seyle's Will

Samuel Seyle, on September 26, 1844, conveyed the family residence and the lot at Bull and Smith streets to his son-in-law, James Smith Burges, in trust for his wife, Mary Suzanne Seyle.³⁶

Samuel Seyle made his will, dated May 20, 1856, which provided for the payment of his debts, then bequeathed all his real and personal estate to his wife Mrs. Mary Suzanne Seyle, with remainder, after her death, to their two daughters and five sons. The will specified that Seyle's "House and Lot No. 12 Bull Street Measuring Seventy one (71) feet ten (10 inches in front by three Hundred and Thirty four (334) feet, in depth and also the lot adjoining to the West, Measuring Thirty Two (32) feet in front by two Hundred and Seventy Nine (279) feet in depth," were to be appraised by three impartial persons to be chosen by the executors of the estate, for the purpose of a division of the estate.³⁷

Seyle's will also bequeathed to Mrs. Seyle "My Negroes, Susan and Dinah."³⁸ According to family tradition, the descendants of the Seyle slaves continued to live in the quarters at 48 Bull Street into the twentieth century.³⁹

Seyle died May 25, 1856, and his widow Mary Suzanne Seyle died three days later.⁴⁰

Mrs. Burges and Mrs. Jackson

The estate was divided on January 1, 1859, when Philip Wesner Seyle and Charles C. Seyle, as executors of the estate of Samuel Seyle and the various heirs conveyed the property at 48 Bull Street to Mrs. Margaret Eliza Darley Burges and Mrs. Mary Suzanne Seyle Jackson, daughters of Samuel Seyle and Mary Suzanne Seyle.⁴¹

Mrs. Burges lived at the address, known successively as 12 Bull Street and 20 Bull Street, until her death in 1877. Mrs. Jackson also resided in the house in the 1870s, having returned from Society Hill.⁴² During the bombardment of the city by Federal batteries on Morris Island in 1864-65, a cannonball entered the roof and continued to the basement without exploding. Mrs. Burges had the shell buried in the back yard.⁴³

The Property Leaves the Family

Mrs. Margaret Eliza Darley Burges died February 12, 1877, and Mrs. Mary Suzanne Seyle Jackson also died on June 27, 1877.⁴⁴ On November 17, 1881, C. D. Bateman, as executor of the estate of Mrs. Jackson, filed suit in the

Court of Common Pleas, Charleston County, against Samuel E. Burges, executor of the estate of Mrs. Burges, requesting a judgement in relation to the real estate belonging to the two estates. The case was heard on April 16, 1882, and the court decreed that the property be sold by the Master in Equity. At the Master in Equity auction, May 18, 1882, Mrs. Sophie Marie Brunjes acquired the property for a high bid of \$3,900.⁴⁵

Mrs. Brunjes's Family

Mrs. Brunjes, widow of William Brunjes, a grocer, resided in the house. The address was 20 Bull Street until 1909, when the number became 48 Bull Street. Also residing at the address were Mrs. Brunjes' daughter, Mrs. Sophie M. C. Grovermann, widow of John Henry W. Grovermann, a grocer, and her children. They included Annie M. Grovermann Bouronich and her husband Vincent Bouronich, a contractor; Sophie M. Grovermann; and William F. Grovermann, and Henry J. Grovermann, who operated W. F. Grovermann and Brother, grocers, at 354 Meeting Street. John H. Brunings, a partner in Stuhr & Brunings, undertakers, and John H. D. Brunings, a clerk at Klink Wickenberg & Co., grocers on East Bay, also lived at 20 Bull in the 1880s. Thomas Leighton, a contractor, and his wife Annie, and James W. Leighton and Joseph Leighton (the latter with his wife,

Mattie) foremen for Thomas Leighton, also lived at 48 Bull in 1912-13.⁴⁶ Mrs. Brunjes died about 1910, and devised the property to her daughter, Mrs. Grovermann.⁴⁷

Mrs. Grovermann and Mrs. Bouronich

Mrs. Grovermann died February 22, 1915, leaving the property to her four children. On June 30, 1916, Mrs. Annie L. C. Bouronich purchased her siblings' interest in the property for \$4,875.⁴⁸

The Bouronich family continued to live at 48 Bull Street until Mrs. Bouronich sold the property in 1918. Also living there were her mother-in-law, Mrs. Elizabeth Bouronich, widow of Vincent Bouronich, Sr.; William F. Grovermann, grocer, and his wife Evelyn.⁴⁹

The Burges Regain the Property

On November 26, 1918, Mrs. Bouronich sold the property to Julius E. Burges and Gertrude E. Burges, two of the children of James Smith Burges and Margaret Eliza D. Burges, for "valuable considerations" and \$5.00.⁵⁰ Thus the Burges family reacquired the property.

The Burges family returned to 48 Bull after repurchasing the property. Members of the family residing there included Julius E. Burges, owner of the Burges Fruit

Company in Market Street, and later bookkeeper for the Citizens and Southern National Bank, and his wife Anna D. Burges; Miss Gertrude Elizabeth Burges, vice principal of the Memminger High and Normal School; Miss Jessie E. Burges, proprietress of the Primrose Beauty Shop in Hasell Street; Mrs. Eveline O. Burges, widow of Samuel E. Burges; Mrs. Bertha W. Burges, widow of James Elbert Burges; and Miss Kate E. Burges, a stenographer at the Charleston Navy Yard. Harry J. Graham, superintendent of the Charleston Literage and Transfer Company on Middle Atlantic Wharf, and his wife Elizabeth Graham, resided there in 1928.⁵¹

Julius E. Burges conveyed his half interest in the property to his wife, Anna D. Burges, for "love and affection" and \$5.00, on May 17, 1921.⁵² Anna D. Burges subsequently died intestate, leaving her half interest to her husband Julius E. Burges, Sr., and their two children Julius E. Burges, Jr., and George T. Burges. Julius E. Burges, Sr., died intestate in 1927, leaving as heirs the two sons.⁵³

South Atlantic Life

The property left the Burges family again in 1941. Gertrude E. Burges, Julius E. Burges, Jr., and George T. Burges conveyed the property to The South Atlantic Life Insurance Company, a South Carolina corporation, for

\$6,500, on September 10, 1941.⁵⁴

The South Atlantic Apartments

The South Atlantic Life Insurance Company, an Orvin family business, converted the house into apartments and constructed the frame apartment building in the rear of the property. The South Atlantic Apartments, as they were called, were developed to take advantage of the acute shortage of housing caused by the expansion of Charleston's military and war support population due to World War II. Servicemen and shipyard workers and their families predominated among the tenants in the eleven apartments during the war. After the war, the complex housed blue collar and white collar workers and their families.⁵⁵

Almost Demolished

In 1964, the owners sought to redevelop the property by demolishing the existing buildings and building a new 30-apartment complex in a Colonial style of architecture, designed by architect Augustus E. Constantine. The City Board of Architectural Review placed a stay of demolition for a ninety day period, during which preservationists persuaded the owners to abandon the redevelopment project.⁵⁶

The South Atlantic Life Insurance Company conveyed the property to Orvin Enterprises, Inc., a South Carolina corporation, for \$35,000, on April 8, 1965. Jesse W. Orvin signed the deed as president, and William H. Orvin as secretary, of the South Atlantic Life Insurance Company.⁵⁷

The McAbees

Orvin Enterprises, Inc., sold the property to Jeanne J. McAbee, for \$25,000, on June 10, 1971. Mrs. McAbee was identified as a resident of the Grove Park Inn, Asheville, North Carolina. John W. Orvin signed the deed as president of Orvin Enterprises.⁵⁸

During the early 1970s, due to the expansion of the College of Charleston, students began to be predominate among the tenants. That pattern has remained.⁵⁹

On the death of Jeanne J. McAbee, the property was inherited by her husband, George R. McAbee. On August 7, 1977, McAbee, then living in Palm Beach, Florida, conveyed the property to Nancy Conner Smythe, wife of attorney Augustine Smythe, for \$107,000.⁶⁰

The Smythes

On April 11, 1979, the Smythes obtained an easement or right of way for the installation and maintenance of a

sewer line and water line over the property at 80 Smith Street, granted by Emory L. Phillips and Mary P. Phillips, the owners of that property.⁴¹

Bull Street Associates

Mrs. Smythe conveyed the property known as 48 Bull Street to the Bull Street Associates, a South Carolina general partnership (Lt. Col. C. W. Watson and Chris B. Staubes, Jr. are the partners) with offices at 291 East Bay Street, for \$400,000, on March 1, 1989. The transaction included the utility easement across the property at 80 Smith Street.⁴²

Hurricane Hugo

On September 21, 1989, the house was damaged extensively by hurricane Hugo. The owners have begun restoration.

The Architecture

The house at 48 Bull Street was built in three major stages; the first between 1786 and 1803/08, the second in 1813 and the third sometime after 1852.

The Original House

The house began as a small two story brick house with a hall-and-parlor plan, which documentary sources, complemented by the architectural evidence, indicate was built between 1786 and 1803/08 (see the historical narrative). The site is set well back from Bull Street and originally overlooked a marshy branch of Coming's Creek, which penetrated the block (Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) just to the north of the house site.

The conformation of the original house is physically evident (Figure 7). It consists of two stories of brick, set on a raised basement, with a hipped roof. It consists of the west end of the present house, two bays wide and five bays deep. The south, west and north windows are still exposed, while the east windows have been enclosed within the expanded house. The fenestration is regular,

but the windows of the front and the first two bays of the west side are larger than those to the rear. There is an oculus centered in the south front, at the basement level. The oculus is now concealed by the front piazza but was undoubtedly meant for display. The oculus and the window heads, unlike the walls which are of typical Carolina grey brick, are trimmed with a smaller red brick which is atypical of the Charleston area. The red brick trim possibly was placed for contrast with the brownish red brick of the walls. However, the exterior walls were stuccoed and scored to simulate stone block. A simple corbel cornice of brick continues completely around the original house. The hipped roof was covered with wood shingles which are still in place under a later tin roof.

Unusual Features

The original house is unusual in its orientation, with its original entrance facing eastward, rather than westward, as would have been more typical for such a site in Charleston. If the original house had a piazza, it faced east, whereas most Charleston piazzas face west or south to catch the prevailing breezes.

The original floor also was unusual for Charleston. The plan consisted of two rooms per floor, with a chimney shared by both rooms. The entrance was possibly into a

small foyer on the east side of the chimney, from which a door to the left led to the large front room and a door to the right led to the smaller rear room. Alternatively, the main entrance may have been directly into the front room on the first floor. The stair, which must have been very narrow, may have been housed in a small space to the west of the chimney, or may have arisen from one of the rooms to the second floor. The latter alternative has a counterpart in the house at 51 Laurens, the original (rear) portion of which was built about the same time as the original portion of 48 Bull Street. Further examination of the structure could reveal evidence of the stair. The original floor plan has been altered by the division of the large front room into two rooms, the removal of the staircase and the installation of bathrooms and closets.

The Basement

The floor plan is mirrored on the basement level, where the large chimney served two fireplaces. The fireplace in the rear room had an oven beside it, indicating that room was used as a kitchen. The front room was perhaps a wash kitchen or an office. The chimney, as revealed in the basement, was constructed of the same small red brick as the exterior trim. The window openings on the basement level were fitted with iron bars for security.

Early Federal Style

The woodwork and mantelpieces of the original portion of the house are stylistically typical of the immediate post-Revolutionary period or early Federal period, specifically that of the 1780s before the more decorative Adamesque style arrived in Charleston about 1790. The cornices and mantels are rather plain, relying on dentils and corbelling for decorative effect, but are less robust than such features were in the pre-Revolutionary Georgian period. Decorative elements in the plain Federal style were new in Charleston the 1780s, but continued to be used by conservative builders into the early part of the 19th century, despite the greater popularity of the Adamesque.

First Mention of a House

The first mention of a house on the property is in a deed of 1808, by which Manuel Antonio conveyed the property to Peter Suau. The deed describes a "Two Story House and out building."¹ It may have been the same house in Bull Street in which Antonio was listing as residing in 1803.² Manuel Antonio may have been the builder, but having no record of when and how Antonio acquired the property, and no knowledge of whether there was a house on the property when he acquired it, complicates the question.

Mystery: Who Built It?

Alternatively, the house may have been built by Isaac Holmes, who acquired the property, apparently still vacant, in 1786.³ But again, having no record of how and when Holmes disposed of the property, and not knowing whether there was a house on the property when he disposed of it, complicates the question.

Another alternative, made possible by the break in the chain of title between Holmes and Antonio, is that there were one or more intervening owners, who could have built the house.

Lacking definitive evidence, it is not possible to say when the original house was built, or by whom.

Keckeley's East Wing

In 1813, according to the octagonal marble plaque on the facade, the east wing of the house was constructed by I. A. Kelly for George Keckeley. That James Hamilton, and not George Keckeley was the owner of the property at the time is immaterial. There were numerous cases of construction being undertaken by lessees of property, with the provision that the land remained the property of the lessor, while the construction was the property of the lessee, who could sell it along with an unexpired lease,

sell it to the property owner at the expiration of the lease, or remove it from the lot. For instance, Manuel Antonio in 1805 leased the lot adjacent to the east (present-day 42 Bull Street) to Jeremiah Wilcox, with the understanding that Wilcox was to erect a building or buildings on the site. When Antonio sold the property to John Duncan in 1811, Wilcox conveyed the unexpired lease, and the buildings which he had erected on the lot, to Duncan at the same time.⁴

Leases Authorizing Construction

In 1793, Edward Lightwood leased the lot at the corner of Bull and Smith streets, known as No. 126, to John Wielfing, with the understanding that Wielfing was to construct "erections and buildings" on the property.⁵ There is no record of what became of that building. In 1808, Christian Henry Faber leased his land at Smith and Boundary Streets to Nathaniel G. Maxwell, with the provision that Maxwell would at his "own proper Costs and Charges. . .erect set up and finish one good and Substantial Building of Timber brick or Stone upon the said Ground."⁶ That building is the present house at 91 Smith Street.

Although no substantiating record has been found, it is logical to assume that James Hamilton leased his

property on Bull Street to George Keckeley with an understanding that Keckeley could at his own cost construct an addition to the existing house. It also is logical to assume that Keckeley, who seems constantly to have been short of cash, overextended him his budget in building the east wing, and had to give up the building and his lease.

Who Was I. A. Kelly?

Documentation of I. A. Kelly, the builder of the east wing, has proved elusive. Possibly he was John A. Kelly (the letter "I" often was used in place of "J" in formal inscriptions). John A. Kelly was George Keckeley's brother-in-law, who died in New York sometime before 1834.⁷ It is not known whether he was a builder, however. No other Charleston buildings have been associated with "I. A. Kelly."

Keckeley's 1813 wing consisted of a two-part hall running along the east face of the original house, and a large drawing room, with a chamber of the same size above it, located to the east of the hall (Figure 7).

The hall reoriented the house to the south, where the new main entrance was located. The front of the hall gave access to the large new drawing room to the right, and the front room of the original house to the left. The front hall ended at a doorway into the back hall, which was a few

feet wider, probably to accommodate the staircase.

Where Was the Stair?

John Harris, a Seyle-Burges family descendant, recalled that the staircase leading to the second floor was in the back hall, with a stair below it leading to the basement. Further examination of the structure could determine the exact location of the stair. A chimney serving the drawing room fireplace and that of the chamber above, is situated in the rear (north) wall of the wing.

The floor plan of the wing has been altered by the closing of the doorway between the front hall and the former drawing room, the conversion of the back hall into a kitchen, the removal of the stair, and the division of the large square drawing room into two rooms (Figure 7). Mantelpieces in the east wing have been removed. Surviving woodwork is typical of the period, c. 1813.

The New South Facade

In constructing the east wing, Keckeley redesigned the south facade, integrating the old and new elements under a common hipped roof, and centering a pediment with a lunette over the middle two bays. The new facade consisted of the two original south bays plus four new bays. The new

entrance, with its handsome transom light, was placed off-center, in the third bay from the left, but under the pediment. A single story piazza, with a tent roof, slender columns and a simple baluster, ran across the south front of the house. Windows on the first level of the south front, including the two original bays, were given gib doors opening onto the piazza.

Photographs taken c. 1940-41 (Figures 8 and 8-A) show the south front before the building was remodeled by the South Atlantic Life Insurance Company. The lunette, which more typically would have been glazed, was covered with louvers. Windows on both levels had shutters, with those on the first level being floor length to cover the gib doors as well as the windows. The single story piazza was intact. The brick steps and concrete walkway were added by Gertrude E. Burges in 1932-33.⁸

Adverse Changes

Subsequently, the south facade was remodeled, with the addition of a second level piazza and stairs ascending from the first level piazza. The gib doors were removed or covered over, probably for security. The balustrade and the shutters have disappeared.

Keckeley's wing gave the house a distinctive "L" shape which is depicted on the Bridgens and Allen Map of 1852

(Figure 9).⁹

The Seyle-Burges Addition

Sometime after 1852 and before 1881-82, the Seyle-Burges family, in order to accommodate their increasing numbers, constructed an addition to the rear of Keckeley's wing. The addition squared off the back of the house, as shown on a City Engineer's Block Plat of 1881-82 (Figure 10).¹⁰

The Seyle-Burges rear addition's apparently had one large room on each floor, which subsequently were subdivided by partitions (Figure 7). Wooden mantelpieces in the Greek Revival style are found on both floors, served by a chimney which is situated in the east wall of the addition.

The house has a fourth chimney, situated near the center of the roof, the function of which has not been identified.

The house was damaged seriously in the earthquake of 1886, as evidenced in particular by scars on the east wall of the rear addition.¹¹

Outbuildings

There were outbuildings on the property, first

mentioned in the 1808 deed from Antonio to Suau.¹² The deed of 1837 from the Hamilton heirs to Samuel Seyle, describes "a two Story Brick House & Wooden out Buildings."¹³

The Bridgens & Allen Map of 1852 does not show the outbuildings, not because they did not exist but because the surveyors omitted most outbuildings (Figure 9).¹⁴

The City Engineer's Block Plat of 1881-82 (Figure 10) depicts two outbuildings to the rear of the house at present-day 48 Bull. One was a large two story brick outbuilding, the other a smaller two story wooden one. The Sanborn insurance map of 1902 (Figure 11) depicts the two story brick outbuilding, having a one story piazza along the east side. The wooden outbuilding had disappeared by then. The brick outbuilding can be discerned in a c. 1940 photograph (Figure 8-A).¹⁵

A plat of the property, surveyed September 4, 1941, by William Lucas Gaillard (Figure 12), identifies the main house as 48 Bull Street and the west lot as 50 Bull Street. It depicts, to the rear of the main house, the brick outbuilding, and on the east lot line, two garages.¹⁶

The Garage Apartments

In 1942, the South Atlantic Life Insurance Company received permission from the City of Charleston to

construct a 12-car, five-apartment garage apartment building, of frame on a brick foundation, with a tin-clad gable roof. The contractor was the Days Work firm. The estimated cost was \$5,000.¹⁷

The two story wooden structure, known as 48 1/2 Bull Street, was depicted on a corrective overlay, dated 1944, on the Sanborn insurance map of 1902 (Figure 13). The overlay also shows a one story addition on the rear of the brick outbuilding.¹⁸ Subsequently, the brick outbuilding was demolished.

Other Repairs and Changes

The South Atlantic Life Insurance Company made \$1,000 in repairs to the garage apartment building in 1962, and \$100 in repairs to the piazza of the main house in 1965, according to city records. The company also made applications for building permits in 1941, 1950, 1962, and 1964, the records of which have been lost.¹⁹

Nancy C. Smythe received permission from the city in 1978 to construct two efficiency apartments at a cost of \$9,400, and in 1979 to construct another garage apartment at a cost of \$2,400. Permission was granted in 1979 for unspecified demolition on the property, at a cost of \$7,000, and for unspecified exterior and interior alterations at an unspecified cost.²⁰

Recommendations

The house at 48 Bull is of great architectural and historical importance to the city of Charleston. Its restoration therefore should be undertaken with the utmost care.

Historically, the building has been filled with people, not just since its conversion to apartments, but under the ownership of the Seyle-Burges family and the Brunjes-Grovermann-Bouronich family, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Houses are built to house people and cease to serve their historical function when a museum approach to their restoration and conservation is taken.

The house at 48 Bull Street is suitable for a large family or alternatively for numerous tenants. Whether the house is kept in apartments or returned to single family use, certain historical conditions can and should be restored.

The facade of the house can be restored to its documented appearance of 1940-41, which probably was not too dissimilar from its earlier historic appearance. Based on the evidence of the 1940-41 photographs, the piazza can

and hall. If it is not practical for it to be a usable door, the restored door could be sealed, in which case it would serve its original aesthetic purpose, while continuing to function as part of the wall.

In the south room of the original portion of the house, the dentil cornice has been removed from the half of the room which is north of the partition wall. The missing sections of cornice should be replicated from the existing cornice and restored.

Below that room, in the basement, is a large room with a fireplace which historically functioned as a wash kitchen, servants quarters, office, or perhaps a dining room. It would be appropriate to return that space to a useful purpose, perhaps as an additional room for the basement apartment.

The property formerly contained a second house on the west lot, and at least two outbuildings to the rear of the main house. It is recommended that archaeological excavations be undertaken by qualified experts, on those sites.

Isaac Holmes

Isaac Holmes, who acquired the site of 48 Bull Street in 1786 and may have had the oldest portion of the building constructed, was a prominent planter and merchant and served as Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina.

Holmes was a son of Isaac Holmes (d. 1763) and Rebecca Bee. He was a grandson of Isaac Holmes (1702-1751) and John Bee, Jr. (1707-1749), both of whom had been active in South Carolina politics.¹

Holmes had plantation property on John's Island and property in Charleston. His town property included a lot in Broad Street, which he leased to Robert Pattison in 1780, and a house and lot in Legare Street, in which he resided.²

Holmes was listed in the federal census of 1790 as living in St. John's, Colleton, Parish and St. Philip's and St. Michael's Parishes, and in the city directory of 1790 as living at 15 Legare Street. He was listed at 16 Legare in 1794 and 13 Legare in 1803. In 1809 he was listed as living on John's Island.³

The 1790 census lists twenty slaves as part of his household in St. John's, Colleton, and twelve slaves in St.

Philip's and St. Michael's.⁴

Holmes entered politics in 1779, when he was chosen in a special election in St. John's, Colleton, to serve in the Commons House of Assembly.⁵

During the Revolution, Holmes served as a militia officer. He was captured in 1780 and exiled by the British to St. Augustine until he was exchanged in Philadelphia in 1781.⁶

Holmes was elected as warden of Charleston's Ward 10, from 1784 to 1786.⁷

In 1785, he was elected to represent St. John's, Colleton, in the General Assembly, in which he served until 1789. He resigned in that year upon being elected Lieutenant Governor, a post in which he served two terms.⁸

He was a member of the Privy Council of South Carolina from 1784 to 1790.⁹

Holmes was appointed as collector of customs for South Carolina in 1791. He served in that post until 1797, when he was removed from office for his inability to collect delinquent debts.¹⁰

He returned to the General Assembly, representing St. John's, Colleton, in 1806, serving to 1808.¹¹

Holmes was a member of the Independent (Congregational) Church and of the South Carolina Society.¹²

On January 5, 1779, Holmes married Elizabeth Legare,

widow of James Air. They had seven children: William Waring, Richard, Francis, Henry Peronneau, Pierce, Edward, and Emily. Elizabeth Legare Holmes died January 31, 1796. Holmes wed again on November 6, 1797, to Elizabeth Elliott Baker, daughter of Richard Bohun Baker and Elizabeth Elliott. She predeceased him on November 25, 1807. Isaac Holmes died on the afternoon of April 3, 1812, after a severe illness.¹³

Manuel Antonio

Manuel Antonio, who may have built the original house at 48 Bull Street sometime before selling the property in 1808, was a merchant in Charleston and later in Columbia.

His origin is not known. Based on his name, he could have been Italian, Spanish, Portuguese or Latin American. His first name was variously spelled Manuel, Manoel and Emanuel. Occasionally, his last name was spelled Anthony.

Emanuel Anthony, mariner, was residing at 24 Elliott Street in 1790.¹ Manuel Antonio, merchant, was residing in Bull Street in 1803, and Manoel Antonio, merchant of Columbia, was listed at 13 Bull Street in 1806. He was listed as a Columbia merchant in 1807, after which he ceased to be listed in Charleston directories.²

It is not known when he acquired the Bull Street property. He owned it by 1805, when he lease the east portion to Jeremiah Wilcox.³ He later conveyed that property to John Duncan in 1811.⁴

He sold the house and lot, now known as 48 Bull Street to Peter Suau in 1808.⁵

Emanuel Antonio was married on January 24, by the Rev. Mr. LeMercier, rector of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church,

to "the amiable and accomplished" Miss Mary-Ann Eleanor Champy.⁴

In Columbia, Antonio was in the grocery business with General Faust.⁷ He died in Columbia sometime before December 21, 1830, when an inventory of his estate was made.⁸

George Keckeley

George Keckeley, who, according to the plaque on the facade of the house, built the 1813 east wing at 48 Bull Street, was a planter in St. James, Goose Creek, Parish.

Keckeley was a son of Conrad and Mary Keckeley. On the death of his father about 1789, he and his brothers Michael and William inherited the plantation on which their father had resided, containing 453 acres on the "High Road" in St. James, Goose Creek. George and William Keckeley conveyed their interests in the plantation to Michael Keckeley in 1803.¹

George Keckeley married Ann D. Kelly, daughter of Mary Kelly of Charleston, and her husband, whose name is not documented. He was the brother-in-law of John A. Kelly, who possibly was the "I. A. Kelly" identified on the marble plaque as the contractor who built the east wing.² George and Ann D. Kelly Keckeley had five children: Dr. Edward C. Keckeley, Ann Laura Keckeley, Thomas Jefferson Keckeley, Emma Eugenia Keckeley, and Jane Keckeley. Jane Keckeley married one Wharton and had several children: George Cochran Wharton, James Edward Wharton and Thomas Jefferson Wharton.³

Keckeley owned a plantation in St. John's, Berkeley, Parish, which he conveyed to J. E. Calhoun in 1800. He and his brothers owned a plantation containing 130 acres on the west side of the Ashley River, in St. Andrew's Parish, which they sold to John Lloyd in 1803.⁴

Keckeley owned Spring Grove Plantation in St. James, Goose Creek, Parish. The plantation contained 1,000 acres of cotton, provision and pine land, and was located between the Strawberry Road and the Moncks Corner Road. He is listed as living in St. James, Goose Creek, in 1813. Keckeley mortgaged the plantation to Michael Keckeley and John Riley in 1817, and mortgaged it to the Union Bank of South Carolina in 1821, and then to the Bank of the State of South Carolina in 1822.⁵

In 1816, Keckeley was listed as residing on King Street Road.⁷ That undoubtedly was a house at the corner of King and Morris Streets, in which Keckeley and his family resided in 1824. Keckeley did not own the land but held it by lease. He mortgaged the house to Christian M. Logan in 1822.⁸

In 1818, Keckeley purchased from William Moor a lot at the southeast corner of Meeting and Ann Streets (the present site of the Charleston Museum), measuring 100 feet in front on Meeting Street and 150 feet in depth. He mortgaged the lot to Samuel Wharton in 1820, and assigned the mortgage to Jacob Ford and others in 1821. The lot in

1830 was described as having thereon a kitchen, stable and other outbuildings.⁸

In 1824, because of his indebtedness, George Keckeley had to assign his property to his brother Michael. Listed in the transaction were Spring Grove Plantation, then containing 950 acres, the lot at Meeting and Ann streets, and the lot on lease at King and Morris streets.⁹

Keckeley made his will on September 13, 1829, directing that all his estate, real and personal, be sold to pay his debts. Out of the remainder, \$950 was to be paid to his son Dr. Edward C. Keckeley, "being the full amount of his Four Negroes Sold." The remainder was to be divided between his wife and children. Keckeley was either illiterate or too infirm to sign his name, as he made his mark in signature of the will. He was dead by October 3, 1829, when the will was probated.¹⁰

Following his death, Spring Grove Plantation and the lot and buildings at Meeting and Ann streets were sold, in 1830.¹¹

His widow, Ann D. Kelly Keckeley, died sometime between June of 1834 and February of 1838.¹²

Gov. Thomas Bennett, Jr.

Gov. Thomas Bennett, Jr., who owned the property at 48 Bull Street from 1812 to 1813, was born August 14, 1781, a son of Thomas Bennett, Sr., and Anna Hayes Warnock. In his youth he attended the College of Charleston.¹

As a young man he was a partner with his father in Thomas Bennett & Son, lumber millers at the west end of Bull Street. The partnership was dissolved in 1802, after which he continued the business alone. He called his lumber and rice mill establishments the Cannonsborough Mills and the Ashley Mills. He continued the policy, established by his father, of acquiring land for the expansion of the mill complexes and mill pond. In 1847, he turned over the operation of the Cannonsborough Mills to his son-in-law, Jonathan Lucas, III. He retained the Ashley Mills until his death in 1865. Also, he built the Bennett Mills, a rice and lumber milling operation, at the east end of Wentworth Street, on the Cooper River. These he turned over to his son, W. Jefferson Bennett. Only the handsome facade of the Bennett Rice Mill, propped up by a steel framework of braces, stands at that location.²

The facade of the Bennett Rice Mill testifies to his talent as an architect. He may also have designed the

Apprentices' Library Society hall, built in 1850 in Meeting Street and destroyed in the great fire of 1861. Bennett had a house, c. 1800, at the northeast corner of Bull and Lynch (now Ashley) streets, built by him or by his father. He also is credited with building the lovely Adamesque residence at 113 Ashley Ave., which he sold in 1825. About the same time, the Governor constructed his beautiful residence, known as Bennettsville, at present-day 69 Barre St. Bennett had a framing yard, for the construction of house frames, on the mill pond to the rear of present-day 128 Bull St., at which at least one "portable house" was built in 1849 and shipped to California. The portable house was shipped on the vessel, Thomas Bennett, which Gov. Bennett constructed at his wharf at the west end of Bull Street. The ship, after transporting a large party of Charlestonians attracted by the Gold Rush, was used for fill under the streets of San Francisco.³

Gov. Bennett also was a planter. Through his second marriage he acquired Moreland Plantation (1,386) acres, Pagett's Landing Plantation (1,317 acres), both on the Cooper River, and Brick Yard Plantation. The 1850 slave schedules indicated that he owned 260 slaves in St. John's, Berkeley, Parish, and in Charleston. The 1860 census valued his real and personal property in Charleston at \$275,800.⁴

Gov. Bennett entered politics with his election to the

South Carolina House of Representatives in 1804, representing the city parishes of St. Philip and St. Michael. Serving to 1805, he was reelected in 1808 and served in the House until 1817. He was Speaker of the House from 1814 to 1817. Bennett served in the South Carolina Senate from 1819 to 1820, when he was elected as Governor as a Democratic-Republican.⁵

Bennett was Governor of South Carolina from 1820 to 1822. As Governor, he promoted internal improvements. He also denounced the inhumanity of the slave trade, and advocated more leniency in the punishments imposed under the state's criminal and slave codes. After the revelation of the alleged Denmark Vesey conspiracy to stage a slave revolt in 1822, however, Gov. Bennett concluded that, although the institution of slavery was an admitted evil, it was a necessary one, "and we can do no more than steadily to pursue that course indicated by stern necessity and a not less imperious policy."⁶

As Governor in 1821, Bennett characterized the U.S. Constitution as "an emanation of Divine wisdom." During the Nullification crisis of 1832, Bennett joined James L. Petigru, Joel R. Poinsett, Hugh Swinton Legare, and others who were prominent Unionists.⁷

Bennett returned to the South Carolina Senate in 1837 and represented the city parishes in that body until 1839.⁸

Locally, Bennett was Intendant (Mayor) of Charleston (1812-1813), and warden for Charleston's Ward 13 (1809-1810) and Ward 4 (1810-1812). He was firemaster from 1811 to 1815, a commissioner to assess damages due to the widening of State and Union streets, in 1811, and a commissioner to purchase the debt of the state in the same year. He was a commissioner of the Charleston Orphan House (1812-1814, 1820-1824) and a commissioner to widen Charleston streets in 1817. Bennett was a commissioner of public schools in Charleston, 1811-1820.⁹

Bennett was a director of the Homespun Company in 1808, a commissioner to open subscriptions to incorporate the Planters' and Mechanics' Bank of South Carolina in 1810, and a director of the Bank of the State of South Carolina from 1811 to 1814, and in 1826-1827. In 1828, Bennett served on a Chamber of Commerce committee to collect and report information on the building of railroads, a study which led to the establishment of the South Carolina Rail Road. He also was a member of a special committee to represent South Carolina's stock in the Louisville, Cincinnati, and Charleston Railroad, 1836-1837.¹⁰

Gov. Bennett was an ex officio trustee of the South Carolina College, 1814-1818 and 1820-1822. He was a member of the Circular Congregational Church, the Charleston Chamber of Commerce, the South Carolina Society and the

Hibernian Society.¹¹

Gov. Bennett was married twice. On February 19, 1801, he married Mary Lightbourn Stone (1782-1832), daughter of Benjamin Stone (d. 1789) and Love Rivers (d. 1796). They were the parents of seven children: Thomas Benjamin Bennett (1802-1811); Mary Hayes Bennett (1804-1844), who married Jonathan Lucas, III (1800-1848); Love Angelina Bennett (1806-1807); Washington Jefferson Bennett (1808-1874); Julia Cecilia Bennett (1810-1812); Anna Margaret Bennett (b. 1812), who married James Butler Campbell; and Thomas Benjamin Bennett (b. 1821). Mary Lightbourn Stone Bennett died July 4, 1832. Gov. Bennett's second wife, whom he married March 5, 1840, was Jane Burgess, widow of John Gordon. They had no children. Gov. Bennett also had an adopted son, Christopher Gustavus Memminger, who was taken from the Orphan House at age 11 and went on to become the Confederate Secretary of the Treasury.¹²

Gov. Bennett died January 30, 1865, at the age of 85, at Flat Rock, North Carolina, and was buried at St. John-in-the-Wilderness there.¹³

The Governor was esteemed by his contemporaries. Joel Roberts Poinsett said of him, "His heart overflows with kindness and never resists an appeal from those he loves."¹⁴

1770

Commons Land

The Hon^{ble} Peter Mangault's Land
Mangault St. N 72 E 70 feet

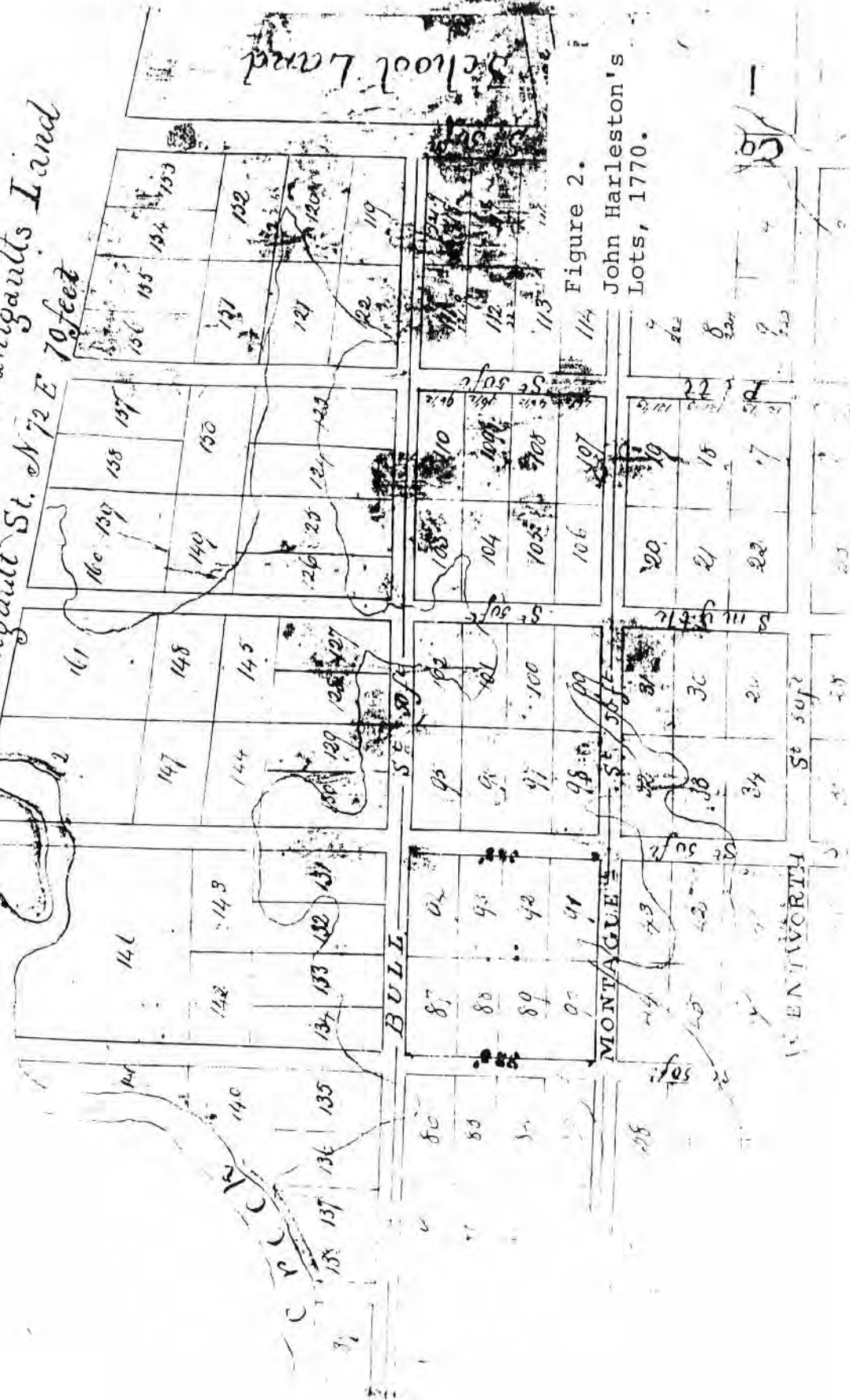


Figure 2.
John Harleston's
Lots, 1770.

WENTWORTH

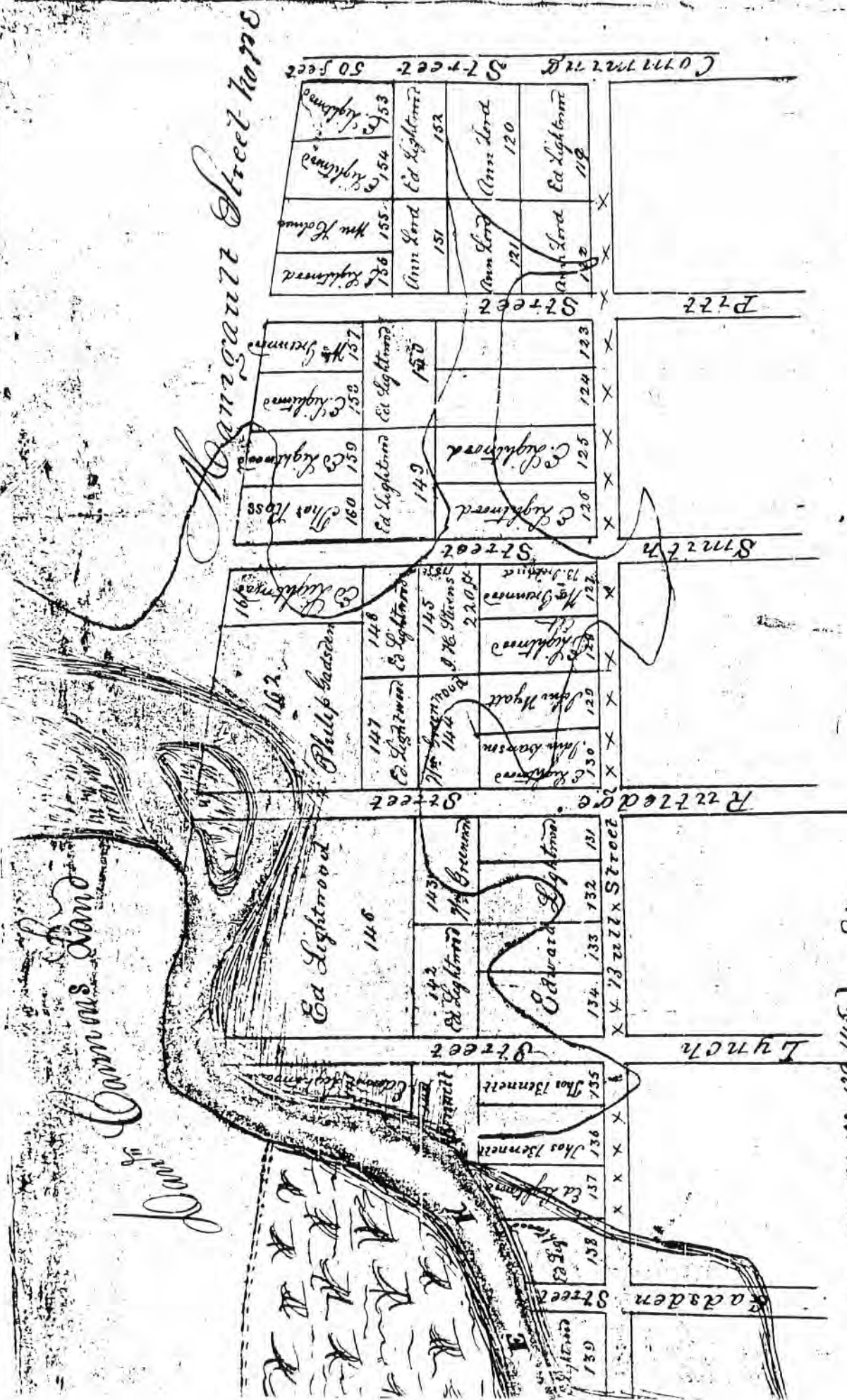


Figure 3.
Plat of 1794.

Scale 200 feet per inch

710 120. 121. 122. 129 145. } 14 Lots
151. 155. 157. 160. 162.
163 127 143. 144

7th July 1794 sold at Sheriff's Sale
14 of these Lots

1609

Scale 200 ft to an inch.

16 1200.00
 40
 32
 80

S. J. J.
 City Engineer

Rep. R. M. E.

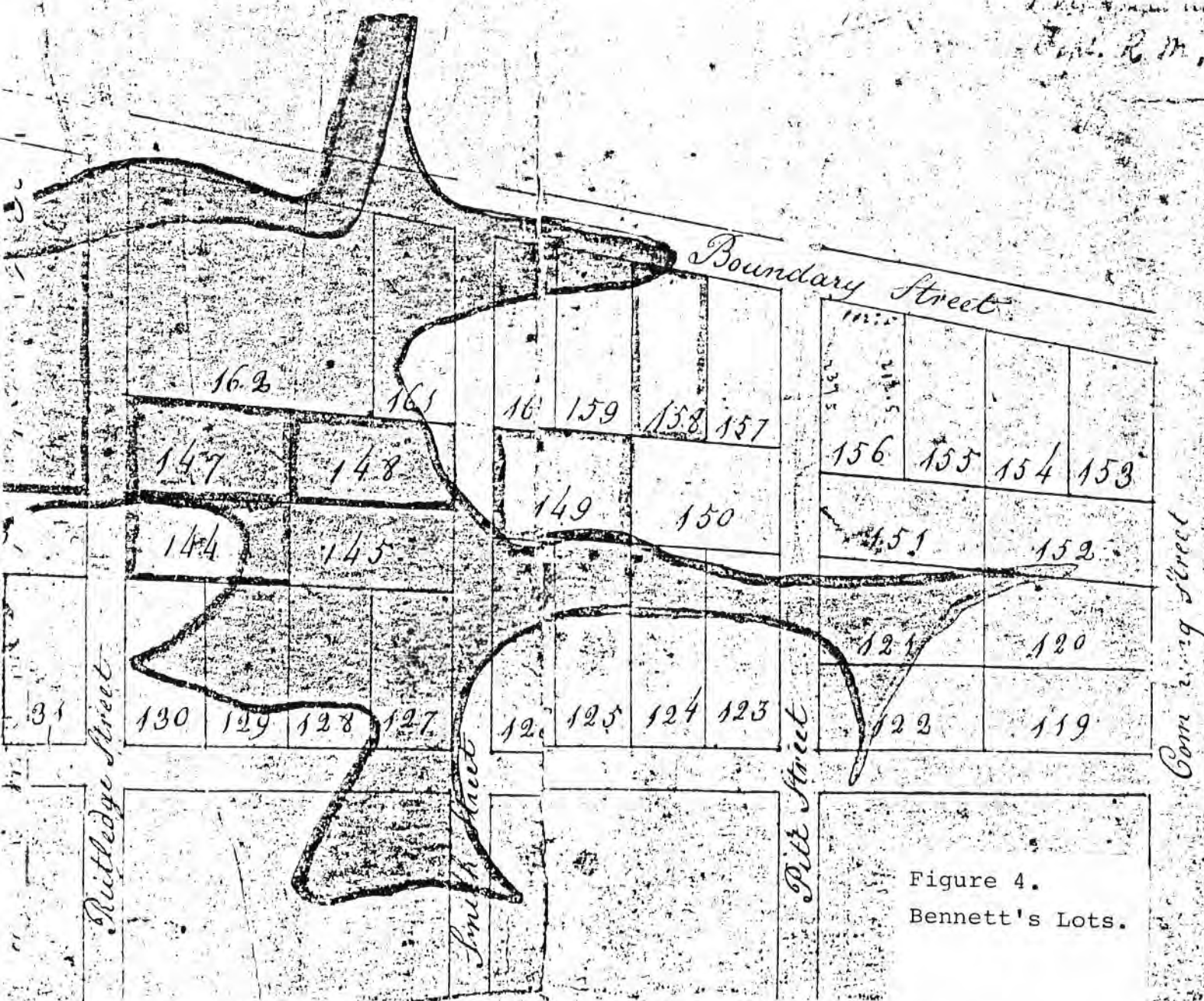
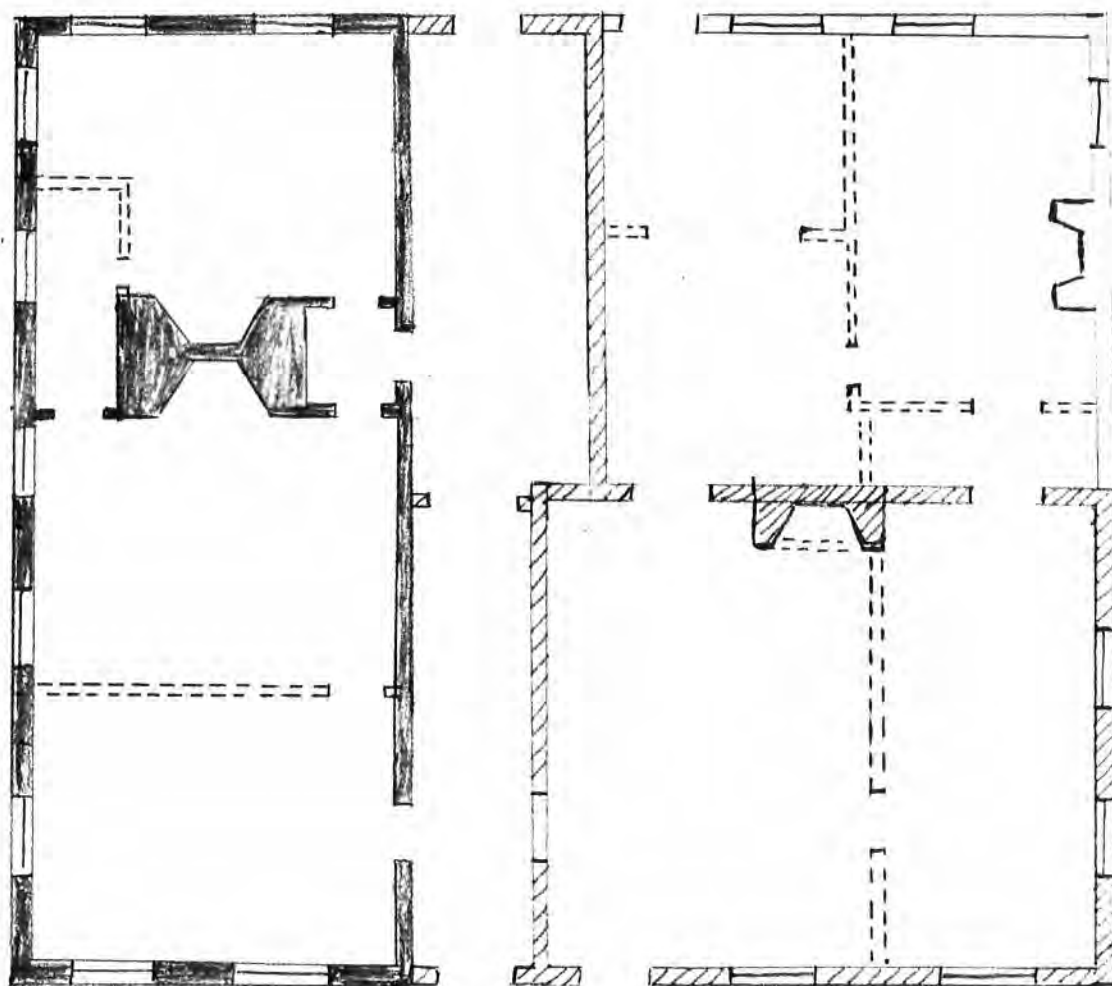
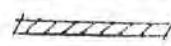


Figure 4.
 Bennett's Lots.



KEY:

 1786-1808

 1813

 post 1852

 1941-42

Figure 7.

Plan of 48 Bull.

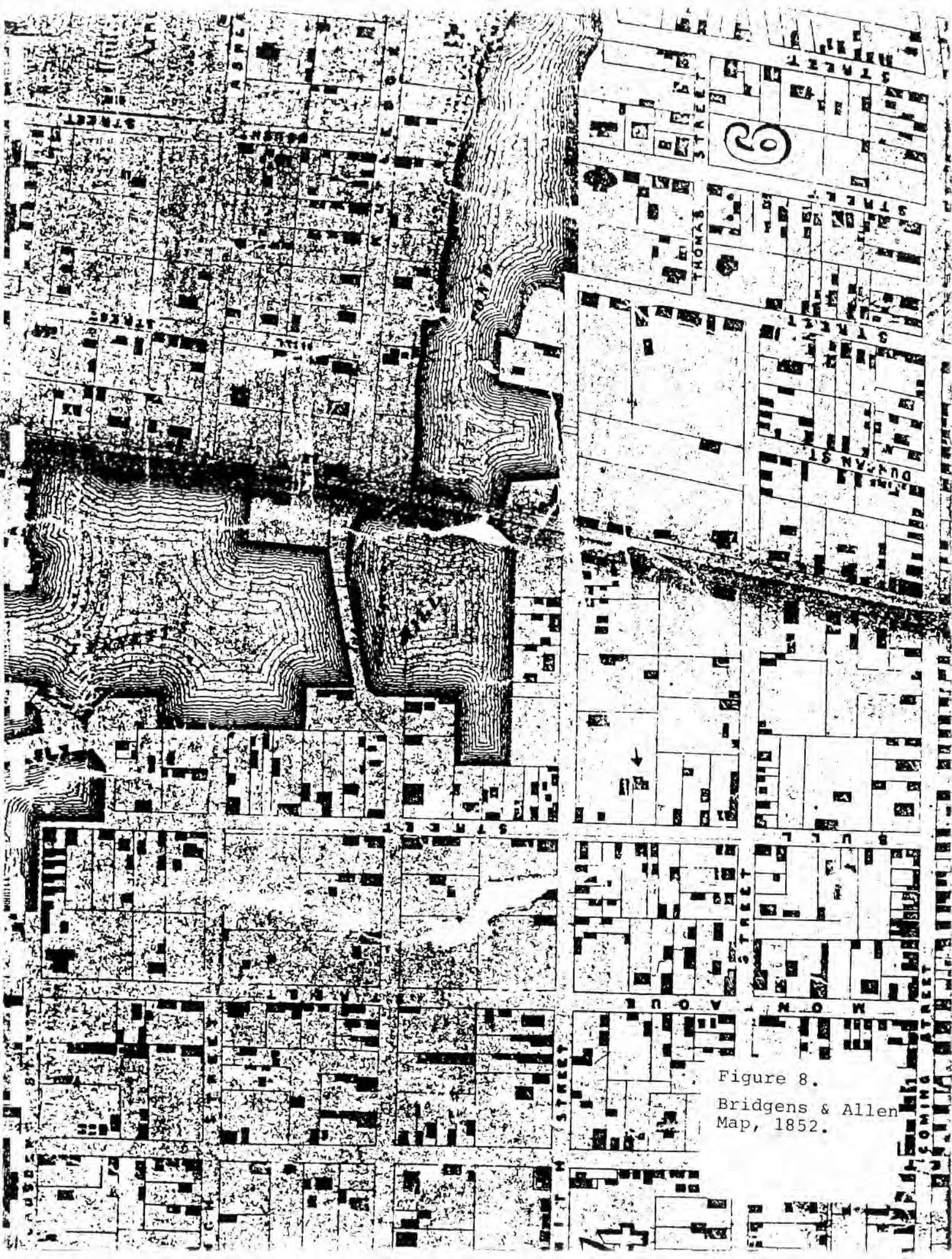


Figure 8.
Bridgens & Allen
Map, 1852.



Figure 8-A.

48 Bull, c. 1940.

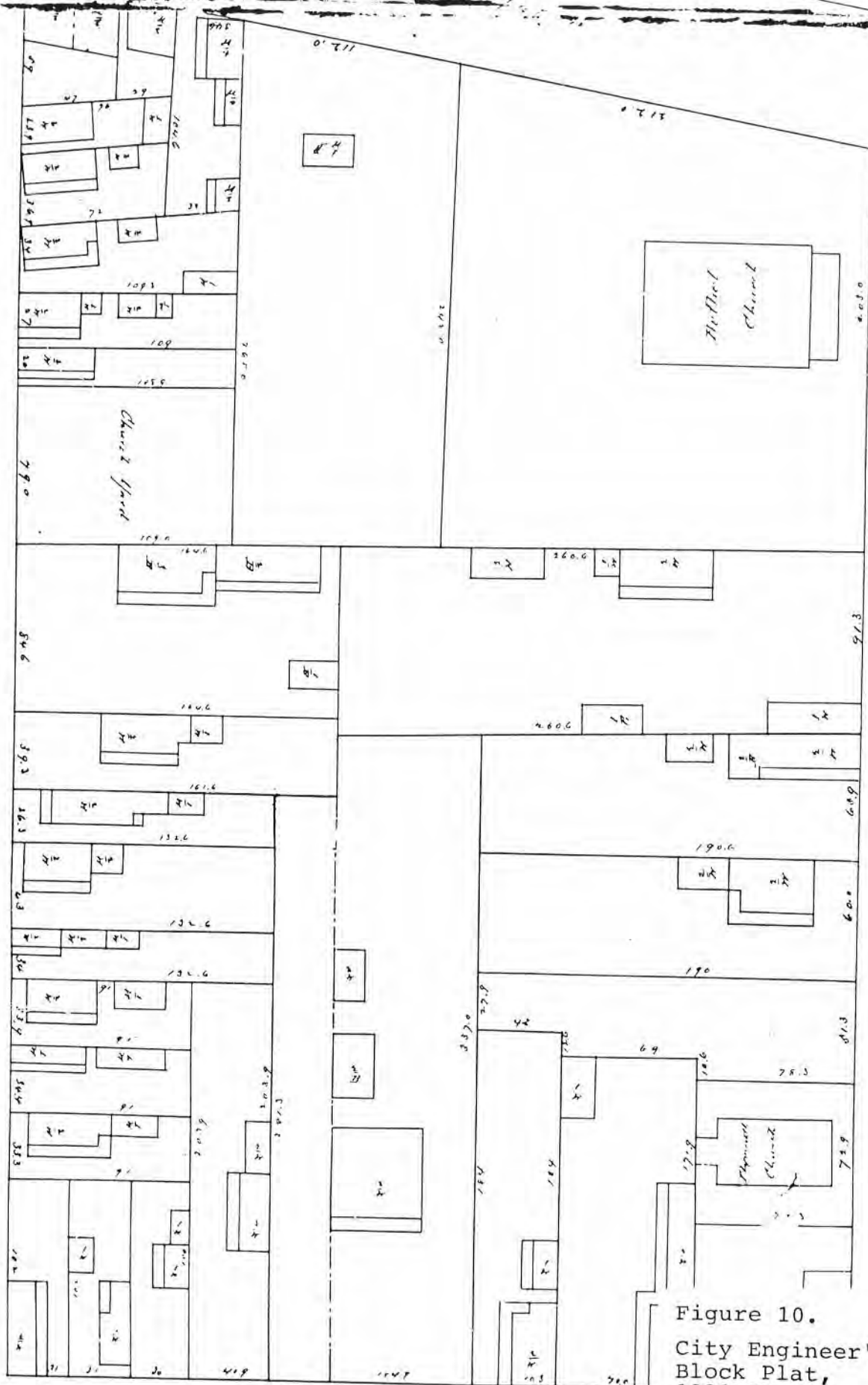


Figure 9.

Photo of 48 Bull
c. 1940-41.

Street

Street



Street

Street

Figure 10.
City Engineer's
Block Plat,
1881-82

Roll



BETHEL

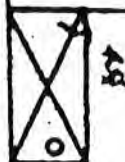
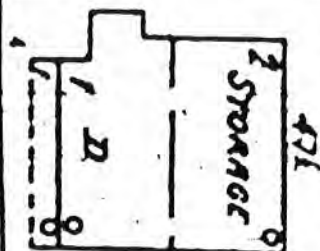
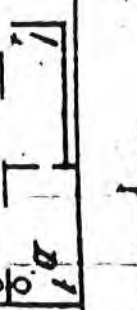
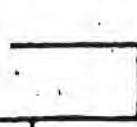
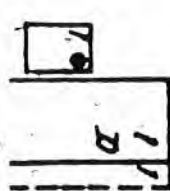
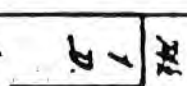
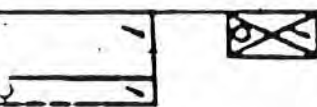
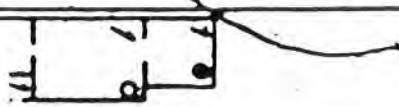
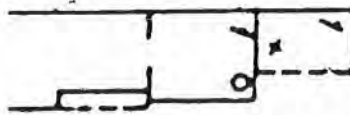
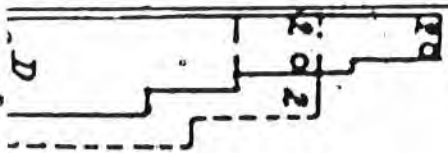
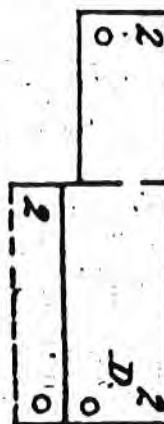


Figure 11.
Sanborn Map,
1902.

1A



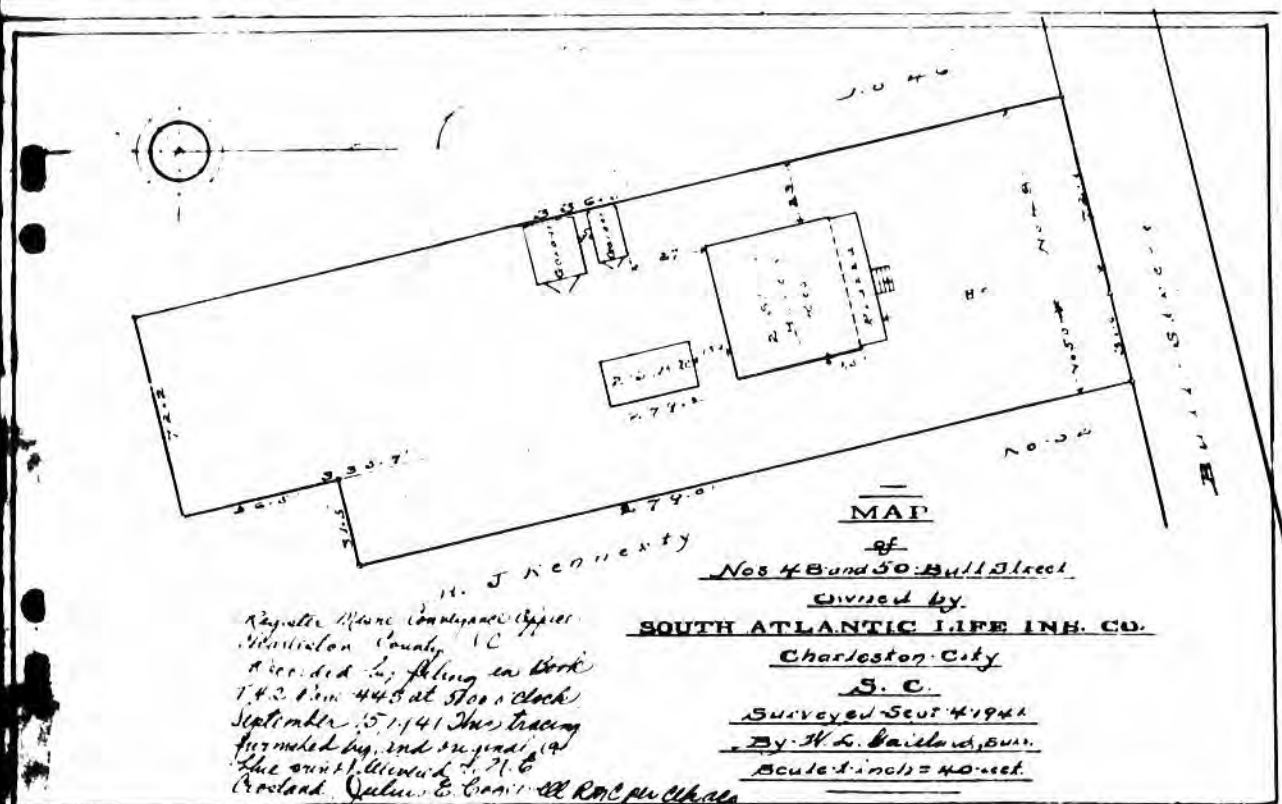
28

26

24

20

18



1 2 3 4 5 6
51 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

Figure 12.
Gaillard Plat,
1941.

BETHEL

1A

2

R & R's

12. cars

481

201

481

28

20

42

18

52

50

48

46

Figure 13.
Sanborn Map,
Overlay of 1944.

Figure 13.
Sanborn Map,
Overlay of 1944.

Notes: Harleston Village

¹Langdon Cheves, ed., "The Shaftsbury Papers and Other Records Relating to Carolina. . . to the Year 1676," Collections of the South Carolina Historical Society, 5 vols. (Charleston, 1897) 5:378-379; Marguerite C. Steedman, The South Carolina Colony (London, 1970) 34; Isabella Gaud Leland, Charleston, Crossroads of History (Woodland Hills, Calif., 1980) 5; Robert Rosen, A Short History of Charleston (San Francisco, 1982) 9, 12; Lewis P. Jones, South Carolina: A Synoptic History for Laymen (Lexington, S.C., 1971, reprint 1981) 23-24; Edward McCrady, The History of South Carolina Under the Proprietary Government, 1670-1719 (New York, 1897; repr. New York, 1969) 129, 162-163; Ernest McPherson Lander, Jr., South Carolina: The Palmetto State (Chicago, 1970) 23; David Duncan Wallace, South Carolina, A Short History, 1520-1948 (Columbia, 1951; repr. Spartanburg, 1969) 29-30; Henry A.M. Smith, "Charleston -- The Original Plan and the Earliest Settlers," South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine (hereafter SCH&GM), 9:13-14; Alexander S. Salley, Jr., ed., Journal of the Grand Council of South Carolina; August 25, 1671-June 24, 1680 (Columbia, 1907) 24.

²Henry A.M. Smith, "Charleston and Charleston Neck; The Original Grantees and the Settlements along the Ashley and Cooper Rivers," SCH&GM, 19:7-8.

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⁴Ibid., 8.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., 9; Charleston County, Register of Mesne Conveyance Office, Deeds, G3:462.

⁷South Carolina, Records of the Register of the Province and of the Secretary of the Province, G (1675-1696, 1703-1709) 102, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia; Smith, "Charleston and Charleston Neck," 10.

⁸Records of the Register of the Province, D (1696-1703) 102; Smith, "Charleston and Charleston Neck," 9.

⁹Mrs. St. Julien Ravenel, Charleston: The Place and the People (New York, 1906; repr. New York, 1922) 11; Samuel Gaillard Stoney, Plantations of the Carolina Low Country (Charleston, 1938; repr. Charleston, 1977) 62; "Harleston Family," File Folder of Miscellaneous Information, 30-4, South Carolina Historical Society; Elias B. Bull, Historic Preservation Inventory, Berkeley County (Charleston, 1979) 28; Anne Simons Deas, Recollections of the Ball Family of South Carolina and the Cominqtee Plantation (Charleston, 1909) 12-13.

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- ¹¹Stoney, Plantations, 62.
- ¹²Ibid; Charleston County, Probate Judge's Office, Wills (Works Progress Administration Transcripts) 1 (1692-1693) 58; Smith, "Charleston and Charleston Neck," 8.
- "Harleston Family" File.
- ¹³Samuel Gaillard Stoney, This is Charleston; A Survey of the Architectural Heritage of a Unique American City (Charleston, 1944; repr. 1970) 126; Alice R. Huger Smith and Daniel E. Huger Smith, The Dwelling Houses of Charleston, South Carolina (New York, 1917) 311; Ravenel, Charleston, 19-20.
- ¹⁴Records of the Register of the Province, D (1696-1703) 102. Deeds, E:326; D:262; V8:200; J.H. Easterby, A History of the College of Charleston (Charleston, 1935) 24-25; Smith & Smith, Dwelling Houses, 311; Smith, "Charleston and Charleston Neck," 10.
- ¹⁵George C. Rogers, Jr., Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys (Norman, Okla., 1969) 40, 57, 60-61, 63; David Duncan Wallace, The Life of Henry Laurens (New York, 1951) 62-65; David Ramsay, History of South Carolina, From Its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1808, (Charleston, 1858) 2:128; Smith & Smith, Dwelling Houses, 270-272, 277, 281-290, 311; Stoney, This is Charleston, 126-129; Smith, "Charleston and Charleston Neck," 7-8, 10; Ravenel, Charleston, 172-173.
- ¹⁶Wills (W.P.A.) 1 (1687-1710) 14; "Harleston Family" File.
- ¹⁷Stoney, Plantations, 62; Smith & Smith, Dwelling Houses, 312; Stoney, This is Charleston, 126.
- ¹⁸Deeds, E:326; D:262; Easterby, History of the College, 24-25.
- ¹⁹Walter B. Edgar and N. Louise Bailey, Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives: Volume II: The Commons House of Assembly, 1692-1775 (Columbia, 1977) 304-308.
- ²⁰Wills (W.P.A.) 11:329.
- ²¹Ibid.
- ²²Wills (W.P.A.) 11:334.
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- ²⁴Charleston, City Engineer, Plat Book, 57; Rogers, Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys, 61, 110; Smith, "Charleston and Charleston Neck," 9-10; Smith & Smith, Dwelling Houses, 311-312, 315-317; Stoney, This is Charleston, 126, 129.
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- ²⁶Deeds, L6:293.
- ²⁷McCrary Plats, 3705.
- ²⁸Deeds, B5:34; V5:256; O6:230; H6:313; T7:241.
- ²⁹Deeds, V5:352, 358; R5:44.
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N. Louise Bailey and Elizabeth Ivey Cooper, Biographical
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³²McCrady Plats, 7:3705; Deeds, S6:368, 370, 372; 378.
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³⁴Wills (W.P.A.) 27:689; Bailey and Cooper, Biographical
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(Albany, N.Y., 1902) 41.
³⁵"Mrs. Elizabeth Lightwood, Petition for Dower Rights."
Deeds, C7:352.
³⁶Craig Miller Bennett, "Family Records of Governor Thomas
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of Charleston (Charleston, 1945; repr. 1964) 81-86.
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Historical Society Collections.

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- ⁴Deeds, V5:358.
- ⁵Deeds, B5:34; H6:312; O6:230; Q6:89; T7:246.
- ⁶James West Davidson, William E. Gienapp, Christine Leigh Heyrman, Mark H. Lytle and Michael B. Stoff, Nation of Nations; A Narrative History of the American Republic (New York, 1990) 1:276-279.
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- ⁸Deeds, R5:134; W5:1.
- ⁹Deeds, V5:352.
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- ¹³Deeds, X7:201.
- ¹⁴City Directory, 1809.
- ¹⁵Deeds, Z7:38.
- ¹⁶City Directory, 1809.
- ¹⁷Deeds, B8:280.
- ¹⁸Deeds, E8:110.
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- ²⁰Deeds, F8:425.
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- ²⁸Deeds, Q10:291.
- ²⁹City Directories, 1813-1856; Death Records Index.
- ³⁰City Directories, 1840-1856; Deeds, W13:724, E14:509, E14:512; E14:579; Wills (WPA) 47:797.
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- ³²Deeds, V10:199.
- ³³City of Charleston, Assessments, 1852-1856; City Directories, 1840-59; Wills (WPA) 47:797.
- ³⁴Ibid.; City of Charleston, City Engineer's Block Plats, 1881-82, City of Charleston Archives.
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- ³⁶Deeds, P11:369.
- ³⁷Wills, 47:797.
- ³⁸Ibid.

- ³⁹Mrs. Mary Eveline Harris Trussel, interview May 27, 1990; John Harris, interview June 2, 1990.
- ⁴⁰Death Records Index.
- ⁴¹Deeds, W13:724; Y13:247; Y13:248.
- ⁴²City Directories, 1859-1873; Death Records Index.
- ⁴³John Harris, interview, June 2, 1990.
- ⁴⁴Death Records Index.
- ⁴⁵Deeds, W18:51.
- ⁴⁶City Directories, 1881-1910.
- ⁴⁷Deeds, H28:42.
- ⁴⁸Deeds, H28:42.
- ⁴⁹City Directories, 1915-1918.
- ⁵⁰Deeds, T28:227.
- ⁵¹City Directories, 1919-1940.
- ⁵²Deeds, S29:349.
- ⁵³Deeds, T42:445, M82:409.
- ⁵⁴Ibid.
- ⁵⁵City Directories, 1944-1968.
- ⁵⁶Charleston Evening Post, February 2, 1964, February 29, 1964.
- ⁵⁷Deeds, R82:26.
- ⁵⁸Deeds, W96:232.
- ⁵⁹City Directories, 1970-1989.
- ⁶⁰Deeds, G113:141, K113:282.
- ⁶¹Deeds, V118:360.
- ⁶²Deeds, G182:640.

The Architecture - Notes

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²City Directory, 1803.

³Deeds, V5:358.

⁴Deeds, Q7:406, C8:272, C8:273.

⁵Deeds, K6:212.

⁶Deeds, Z7:113.

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⁸One photograph is in the Carolina Art Association collections, another in the South Carolina Historical Society collections. E. W. Hagen was the contractor for the brick steps and concrete walk, which cost an estimated \$55.00 (City of Charleston, Building Permits, 1932, No. 519, City of Charleston Archives).

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⁴Deeds, C8:272.

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- ²Wills (WPA) 42:81.
- ³Wills (WPA) 38:616, 42:81.
- ⁴Deeds, E7:5, I7:138.
- ⁵Deeds, R8:248, O9:261, K9:35, K9:349, ; City Directory, 1813.
- ⁶Deeds, B9:109, H11:168.
- ⁷City Directory, 1816.
- ⁸Deeds, O9:261; K9:170.
- ⁹Deeds, O9:261.
- ¹⁰Wills (WPA) 38:616.
- ¹¹Deeds, A10:177, H11:168.
- ¹²Wills (WPA) 42:81.

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