

Francisco Montaner y Morey House

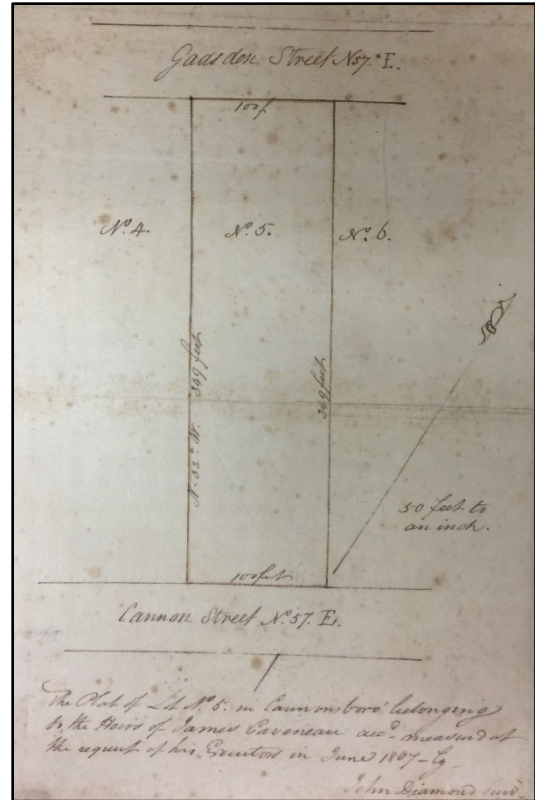
101 Spring Street

c. 1854

In the late 18th century, **Daniel Cannon** carved his large swath of property into large lots and sold them off. The house at 101 Spring Street was built on the northwest portion of Lot 5—100 feet wide on Cannon Street and 350 feet deep, running all the way through the block to Spring Street (known as Gadsden Street at the time). Through later subdivisions, the single lot would become 76 Cannon Street, 78 Cannon Street, 99 Spring Street, and 101 Spring Street.

The deed for Mr. Cannon's first sale of Lot 5 has not been located, but **James Caveneau** had certainly acquired it before 1795; on October 1, 1794, when Mr. Cannon agreed to sell Lot 4 (to the west), that deed named Mr. Caveneau as the adjacent property owner to the east.¹ When Mr. Caveneau died, his executors had a plat of Lot 5 prepared in June 1807 which did not include any indication of any improvements.² They auctioned the property, and **James Harvey and Leslie Thompson** placed the high bid of \$1600, acquiring Lot 5 on June 25, 1807.³

When Messrs. Harvey and Thompson defaulted on their mortgage, Lot 5 sold to **Dr. Philip Moser** at an auction on October 1, 1810, for \$2680. The sale was recorded on March 20, 1811, most likely to give Dr. Moser the time to first pay off the purchase price.⁴ Soon Dr. Moser resold Lot 5 for \$6000 to the editor of the



¹ Deed book O6, page 209

² Deed book E8, page 92

³ Deed book U7, page 214

⁴ Deed book D8, page 93

Charleston City Gazette, printer **Ebenezer Smith Thomas**, on July 19, 1811.⁵ That enormous increase in value in less than a year and the added reference to a house in the deed's description of the property indicates that Dr. Moser had the house built at 76 Cannon Street on the yet-undivided lot.

Mr. Thomas quickly sold Lot 5 for \$5000 to **John Lewis Linsser** on February 25, 1812.⁶ When Mr. Linsser died, the property passed to his wife, Mary Margaret Linsser,⁷ who was responsible for selling off pieces of the large, original lot. Mrs. Linsser sold off the 52 by 150 foot northwest quadrant to **Peter J. Sires** for \$850 on April 23, 1853.⁸ Mr. Sires's family was heavily involved in the development of the area and constructed several of the finer houses on the west end of Spring Street in the 1850s. Mr. Sires had the house built, probably for immediate resale, by the time the property was assessed in 1854 when the lot was first recorded with a 2 ½ story house in the ward books. Mr. Sires conveyed it to bank bookkeeper **Samuel Kingman** for \$4500 with a dwelling and outbuildings on November 23, 1855.⁹

The next owner of the house, **Francisco Montaner y Morey**, was both a partner in a shipping operation and also the Mexican vice consul.¹⁰ Mr. Montaner bought the Spring Street house on May 1, 1858, for \$4500;¹¹ lived there according to the 1859 city directory; and kept it about ten years. On September 1, 1854, Mr. Montaner had joined with two of his brothers-in-law, Jonathan Alfred Cay¹² Adolphus A. Cay,¹³ and began the shipping firm of Cay, Montaner & Co. upon the retirement of his father-in-law, John E. Cay. (Mr. Montaner was married to Mr.

⁵ Deed book D8, page 312

⁶ Deed book E8, page 92

⁷ b. abt. 1792

⁸ Deed book A13, page 47

⁹ Deed book R13, page 93

¹⁰ "Foreign Consuls," New York Herald, Mar. 13, 1854, at 4; *The National Almanac and Annul Record for the Year 1864* at 123 (Philadelphia, PA, 1864)

¹¹ Deed book F14, page 34

¹² He was born in about 1829. He married Georgiana J. Plumeau on November 7, 1849. He died in November 1909.

¹³ Adolphus A. Cay was born in about 1831. He was married to Annais E. Cay. He died in 1859.

Cay's daughter, Elvina.¹⁴) At about the same time Mr. Montaner bought the house, the partnership broke up on November 1, 1858 (perhaps upon the death of Adolphus A. Cay).

Mr. Montaner remained in Charleston during the Civil War at least. In February 1862, a report was filed by a U.S. Navy commander who found papers and a container of pistols on Mr. Montaner aboard the *Major Barbour* off the coast of Louisiana.¹⁵ He reported to the federal sailors that he was the vice-consul in Charleston, but it is unclear whether he returned to the city after the war.¹⁶ No references to Mr. Montaner's life have been located after the Civil War, but his extended family remained in the Spring Street house. Mr. Montaner's father-in-law and his brother-in-law insurance agent Alfred Cay were living at 49 Spring Street (the house's old number) in 1867 at least.

On May 21, 1868, the property was sold at a public auction following a lawsuit between Mr. Montaner and his lending bank, Charleston Savings Institute, over a mortgage.¹⁷ **John Christian Sigwald, Jr.**¹⁸ paid \$3000 and acquired the house on June 15, 1868. For more than the next thirty years, the house was used as a rental property with occupants remaining usually just a year or two.¹⁹



Mr. Sigwald died in 1901, and to satisfy a debt he owed to his son, George Henerie Edwin Sigwald, the house was sold to **George Sigwald** for \$2500 on

¹⁴ Elvina, who was born about 1833 and was not married by 1850.

¹⁵ *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, series I, vol. 17 at 89 (1905).

¹⁶ Mr. and Mrs. Montaner appear to have been in Columbia, South Carolina in September 1863. On September 6, 1863, Francisca Eugenia Monaner (8 years, 9 months) died of scarlet fever in Columbia; she was the daughter of Francisco and Elvina Montaner. *Charleston Mercury*, Sept. 11, 1863, at 2. The couple perhaps moved to Europe after the war; Mrs. Montaner died in Palma, Majorca on January 13, 1897; Francisco had already died.

¹⁷ Deed book D15, page 223

¹⁸ (b. Apr. 30, 1840; d. Nov. 23, 1901)

¹⁹ Apparent renters included A. Porcher (1874); W.W. Sale (1875); Edward and Stover Hutson (1877); Albert Hudson (1878-1880); John Terrell (1881); James Veronee (1883); Arthur Hoffman (1884); F.W. Mattison (1886); C.W. St. Amand (1890); H.B. Jennings (1893); Warren S. Hubbard (1894-95); J.H. Quincy (1895); Henry G. Dehrmann (1896); James E. Lloyd (1897); D.L. Roberts (1899-1900); and H.G. Muldrow (1902).

February 2, 1903.²⁰ George Sigwald began a long occupation of the house and remained until his death on August 23, 1938. He had been an active member of St. Andrews Lutheran Church and various social organizations. Professionally, he worked with the Charleston Bag Manufacturing Co. for most of his life until he retired in the 1920s.²¹

Mrs. Adele Jager Sigwald,²² George's widow, remained in the house through at least 1941 by which time the house was divided into two apartments.²³ On May 23, 1948, there was an ad for the house that described the house as a "well arranged two family house, built of old time material" with one unit on the first floor and another on the second floor and attic.²⁴ Other ads said the house might be converted to a commercial use²⁵ and mentioned a two-car garage and a four-room outbuilding.²⁶



Another long term family of owner-occupants had the house for the second half of the 20th century. Mrs. Sigwald sold the house for \$9100 to Navy Yard carpenter **Rollins Jones Mikell**²⁷ on July 30, 1948.²⁸ Mr. Mikell immediately conveyed the house to his wife, **Sadie Eugenia Lucas Mikell**, on August 4, 1948,²⁹ and building permit for \$300 of alterations was pulled in August 1948.³⁰ Throughout the Mikells' ownership, the house was divided into at least two apartments, one (and sometimes both) of which were home to the Mikell family.

²⁰ Deed book N24, page 2

²¹ "Death Claims G.H.E. Sigwald," Evening Post, Aug. 23, 1938, at 11

²² (b. abt. 1878)

²³ Renters included William and Elizabeth Schroeder (1939-1940); Whaley P. Rentiers (1940-1948); and Howard Lloyd (1948).

²⁴ News and Courier, May 23, 1948, at 9E

²⁵ News and Courier, May 30, 1948, at 8E

²⁶ News and Courier, June 25, 1948, at 9B

²⁷ Mr. Mikell was born March 8, 1912. He seems to have died in 1987. Sadie Eugenia Mikell was born about 1915 and died on March 15, 2010.

²⁸ Deed book R49, page 11

²⁹ Deed book R49, page 13

³⁰ News and Courier, Aug. 7, 1948, at 13

More than four decades after acquiring the house, Mrs. Mikell conveyed a life estate to their two surviving sons, Rollins J. Mikell, Jr. and Timothy Mikell (as a trustee for Sadie), on May 4, 1992.³¹

The next few owners were each relatively short term. First, boat builder **Franz Baichl** bought it from the Mikells for \$298,000 on September 16, 2003.³² Then, Mr. Baichl sold it on July 21, 2005, for \$525,000 to **George C. Metcalfe**.³³ Lastly, Mr. Metcalfe sold it to **101 Spring LLC** on June 10, 2008, for \$450,000.³⁴



During the restoration of the house, a worker melted a gas line under the house. The resulting fire burned for more than two hours. The plans for the house—a salon on the first floor and two apartments above—were delayed, but eventually the restoration was completed.³⁵ Salon Vari, an upscale hair salon, opened in October 2014.³⁶

The house is a particularly fine example of an antebellum single house. The two-and-one-half story dwelling has a wide, two-story piazza with piazza screen and elaborate door hood and surround. The house is distinguished by the gib doors on the first floor front of the house.

³¹ Deed book L213, page 82

³² Deed book G467, page 576

³³ Deed book D546, page 201

³⁴ Deed book W661, 175

³⁵ Andy Paras, "Fire delays plans - Owner says she'll finish salon, rentals despite setback," Post and Courier, May 12, 2010, at B1

³⁶ "United store front: Peninsula shops to team up for holidays," Post and Courier, Nov. 5, 2014, at Business-4