



HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION

51 MEETING STREET ∴ CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29401

ADAM TUNNO'S HOUSE, 89 EAST BAY, c.1780 by Samuel Gaillard Stoney

Residence of Mrs. Alexander Martin

From the time that Charleston began to thrive there was always a community of Scots in business here. This house, and the land it stands upon, was closely connected with several of them.

The land itself was acquired in 1745 by George Seaman, one of the earliest of his nation to make a fine fortune in Carolina. From him it passed to John Deas, son of a fellow countryman and husband to Seaman's step-daughter, Elizabeth Allen. Deas sold it with the present house upon it in 1787 to Adam Tunno, nineteen years president of the St. Andrew's Society and called the "King" of the Scotch in Charleston.

The house appears to have been built about 1780, and shows on the plat with the deed of 1787. By this we see that Tunno widened the passage to the south and must have added a very attractive flight of stone steps carried on well designed stone posts (since destroyed) that led up to the residential part of the building. His offices were in the first floor. His yard stretched back to Bedon's Alley and included the two houses to the west of this one and others that have disappeared. On this establishment he lived and worked for forty-three years.

In 1936, just within a century and a half from the time when her kindred had sold it, Elizabeth Allen Martin, who got her name from Elizabeth Allen Deas, bought this house, restored the upper stories, remodelled the lowest one, and formed the present handsome garden in part of Adam Tunno's yard.

This information was given me by Mrs. Alexander Martin
89 East Bay owned by Mrs. Alexander Martin

In the Evening Post (Charleston) of April 2, 1938, in an account
of one of St. Michael's town tours, is the following (I do not know who
wrote it):

"Old Peach Tavern, 89 East Bay street: The home of Mrs. Alexander
Martin. It was built before the revolution and was formerly a tavern with
a long room above, reached by an outside staircase. It was advertised in
the South Carolina Gazette in this way: "The elegant long room above
the Tavern where consorts of musik were held." Various societies had
huge dinners there and dancing and entertainments were given. It was kept
by Mrs. Peach, who advertised it as her "Tavern 'in the Row' on East Bay".

The following references are to books in the Mesne Conveyance Office,
Charleston.

C-38, 568. Feb. 10, 1938. Mrs Elizabeth Martin bought the house and lot
from Charleston Constructor's Inc..

Q - 32, 574. May 16, 1933. Charleston Constructors, Inc. bought it
from Jane D. Hervey (al).

F - 36, 76. Aug. 3 1931. Jane D. Hervey bought it from Mary C. McKelvin.

R-24, 200. July 19, 1904. Mary C. McKelvin bought it from Mary A.
Murphy. It was described as a "Three Story Brick Dwelling House with
extensive Brick Stores thereon, known formerly as the residence of the late
Adam Tunno and numbered Seventy- seven- - which said lot of Land was conveyed
in fee unto Charles O. Witte by Hugh E. Vincent by deed Dec. 28, 1868, K.15
No. 1, p. 256."

K.15, Nol, 256. Dec. 28, 1868. Charles O. Witte bought it from Hugh E. Vincent.

Y - 10. 659. Nov. 17, 1843. Hugh E. Vincent and Hugh E. Vincent, Jun. bought
it from Robert Adger, merchant, who had it from the Assignees in
Bankruptcy of Neil McNeill and William Blair.

H-10, 157. 1843. Shows that Adam Tunno had owned it.

(I was unable to trace it beyond Adam).

from This is Charleston
89 East Bay
Pre-Revolutionary. Valusble to City

tile firm of Smiths, DeSaussure & Darrell, this is a four story, stuccoed brick commercial-residential building, converted to a residence. Partners in the firm were George Smith, Josiah Smith, Daniel DeSaussure and Edward Darrell. The covered passage on the south side formerly was enclosed at each end by wooden gates.
(Stockton, "Rainbow Row." _____, DYKYC, April 9, 1979.)

87 East Bay -- James Gordon, a merchant and planter apparently of Scots origin, built this four story stuccoed brick house, with quoins on the corners, sometime after 1792.

(Stockton, "Rainbow Row." _____, DYKYC, Sept. 27, 1982)

89 East Bay -- This three and one-half story brick house was built in 1787 for John Deas, Jr., scion of a prominent family of merchants and planters. The one story extension to the south, containing a garage and guest quarters, was built in 1936 and designed by Simons & Lapham, architects.

(Stockton, "Rainbow Row." _____, DYKYC, April 16, 1979. Stoney, This is Charleston, 42.)

90 East Bay -- This two story stuccoed brick building with a hipped roof was built c. 1835 as the office of James Hamilton and Co., whose presiding officer was Intendant of Charleston, Governor of South Carolina, a general and a leader of the Nullifiers.

(Stoney, This is Charleston, 42. _____, April 13, 1958)

91 East Bay -- Built by the merchantile firm of Leger and Greenwood (Peter Leger and William Greenwood), sometime before 1788, the building has undergone metamorphosis at least twice. Built originally as a store with a

properties in this area. In the 1920s Dorothy Porcher Legge purchased 99 and 101 East Bay and began to renovate them.

The name, Rainbow Row, was coined in the 1930s when the buildings were painted in a variety of pastel shades. Common myths claim the houses were painted in the various colors so that intoxicated sailors coming in from port could remember which houses they were to bunk in. In another myth, the colors of the buildings date from their use as stores; purportedly the colors were used so that owners could tell illiterate slaves which building to go to for shopping. Neither is true, as the buildings did not feature their pastel paints until the 20th century.

Instead, the pastel palette began with Mrs. Dorothy Porcher Legge, who chose to paint her houses pink based on a colonial Caribbean color scheme. Other owners and future owners followed suit, creating the "rainbow" of pastel colors present today.

79-81 East Bay Street Lindsay-Bullwinkle Property

Constructed 1778-85 and 1845; renovated 1887, 1953, 1982

This building retains the walls of two structures: a three-story brick building, built by Henry Bullwinkle, a prosperous grocer and grist miller, in 1845 and a three-and-a-half story brick building, constructed c. 1778 by merchant Robert Lindsay. The two buildings were both severely damaged by the 1886 earthquake after which they were rebuilt behind a common facade by John Henry Klenke, a grocer, as his store and residence. The building was used by the Gaud School from 1940 to 1953. It was then remodeled as a residence by eliminating the storefront (except for a single cast iron column) and the addition of a fanlighted door and windows.

83 East Bay Street William Stone House

Constructed c. 1784; restored c. 1941

The William Stone House was built in the transitional style between the Georgian and

Federal periods, characteristic of the years following the Revolution. Stone, a Tory merchant, had the four-and-a-half story, stuccoed, brick store and residence built after the fire of 1778, by which time he had moved to England. Stone's representatives likely rebuilt the damaged building immediately after the fire. The property passed through a succession of merchant owners who used the ground story as counting houses and later as a grain and feed store.

The house was rehabilitated in 1941 by Susan Pringle Frost who added the fanlighted doorway. An early brick warehouse located to the rear of the property was demolished except for its exterior walls. The brick ruins serve as part of a courtyard landscape designed by Loutrel Briggs.

85 East Bay Street

Smith, DeSaussure, and Darrell Building

Constructed c. 1785-87; restored 1930s, 1996-97
This building was built by the mercantile firm of Smiths, DeSaussure & Darrell. Partners in the firm were George Smith, Josiah Smith, Daniel DeSaussure, and Edward Darrell. The covered passage on the south side formerly was enclosed at each end by wooden gates. The four-story, stuccoed brick building has Georgian and Neoclassical woodwork.

87 East Bay Street

James Gordon House

Constructed c. 1792; rehabilitated c. 1930

James Gordon, a Scottish merchant and planter built this four-story stuccoed brick house, after acquiring the site in 1792. A previous tenement belonging to English merchant George Seaman was destroyed in the fire of 1778

Susan Pringle Frost purchased the house in 1920, adding the second-floor balcony before selling the house in 1955.

89 East Bay Street

Deas-Tunno House

Constructed c. 1780-87

This three-and-a-half story brick house was built for John Deas Jr., scion of a prominent family of merchants and planters. A previous house on the

lot belonging to George Seaman burned in the fire of 1778, and Deas built this structure either during or just after the Revolution. It was purchased by Adam Tunno, another wealthy and prominent Scots merchant in 1787. Tunno was called the "King of the Scots in Charleston" and served as steward of the St. Andrews Society until his death in 1834.

The one-story extension to the south, containing a garage and guest quarters, was built in 1936 and designed by architects Albert Simons and Samuel Lapham.

90 East Bay Street

Ancrum's Wharf Building

Constructed 1790s

This property was granted in 1773 to Parker Quince and John Ancrum, both from North Carolina, who were married to Susannah and Mary Rhett respectively. The Rhett sisters were heirs to The Col. William Rhett House, c. 1712, on Hasell Street.

This two-story stuccoed brick building with a hipped roof was long thought to be a 19th century structure; however, it has been identified as one of the few 18th century wharf buildings surviving in Charleston. The large windows of the second floor hide all evidence that this tall space was once two floors. The roof framing suggests 18th century construction and comparison of the existing building to the elevation in a 1793 plat suggests that the current building is the building portrayed in the plat. Further inspection of the roof framing revealed evidence of dormers that had been removed.

During the 19th century, 90 East Bay St. was the offices of James Hamilton and Co. In 1836, Hamilton organized the Savannah and Charleston Steam Packet Company, which offered steamship service to Savannah.

Today the house is a handsome single-family residence.

91 East Bay Street **Inglis Arch House**

Constructed c. 1778, c. 1782; rehabbed 1938; 2004-05

The Inglis Arch House was so called because of its location on the site of a pre-Revolutionary building leased by George Inglis and possessing an archway leading to an alley. Inglis' dwelling burned in the fire of 1778. After the Revolution the mercantile firm of Leger and Greenwood rebuilt on the site. Leger and Greenwood were importers of tea in the years before the Revolution and it was their tea seized by Charleston citizens in the Charleston Tea Party in 1775. The building was remodeled in the Greek Revival style, probably by Charles West, who operated a ship chandlery on the ground floor. The building was heavily damaged during the Federal bombardment in 1864.

Restored as a residence in the 1930s, the Greek Revival facade with its storefront and parapeted roofline was replaced with the current ground story and the upper pediment with a bulls-eye opening. A major stabilization and rehabilitation was completed in 2004-05.

93 East Bay Street

James Cook House

Constructed c. 1782-87; restored 1941, early 1990s

James Cook, a house carpenter, is believed to have built this three-and-a-half story, stuccoed brick house as his dwelling sometime after purchasing the property in 1778. Commission merchant Moses Hyams purchased the building in 1836. He gutted the interior for warehouse space and remodeled the exterior with a Greek Revival facade.

Preservationist Susan Pringle Frost purchased the building in 1920 and sold it to the McGowans, who restored it in 1941 along with several other houses in this block. The McGowans attempted to restore the building to its likely original appearance. The garden was designed in the 1940s by Loutrel Briggs.