



**HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
CERTIFICATION APPLICATION –**

**PART 1**

**NPS Office Use Only**

Project Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Gatewood House and Kitchen House**

Property Name

21 Legare Street, Charleston SC

Property Address

**5. Description of physical appearance:**

The Gatewood House at 21 Legare Street is a rectangular masonry townhouse with a narrow rear wing, a piazza along the south elevation, and a two-story kitchen house attached by a one-room deep hyphen to the rear of the main house. Laid up in Flemish bond, the principal east façade is divided into three sections, with the main core set off by brick quoins from the recessed side bays. The piazza screen is articulated as a section of the façade, and the main entry is set at the north side.

The building comprises two full stories and an attic above a full finished basement. At the façade, a marble belt course separates the upper levels from the ground floor with its brownstone sills and lintels. Main floor windows have marble architraves, and the shorter upper level windows have simple marble sills and lintels. A stuccoed paneled parapet conceals the low roof and carries around the wide piazza, which wraps at the back of the house to the rear wing. The north elevation, seen only from a narrow alley, is laid up in running bond. The rear and south elevations are stuccoed.

The piazza's arcaded ground floor level has masonry pavers, and the upper tiers have turned balustrades and heavy Tuscan columns, with paneled plinths beneath the columns at the second level. Triple-hung windows provide access to the piazza from the primary rooms.

The kitchen house is a narrow two-story masonry building with a gabled roof and gabled parapets, and a portico with brick piers and a hip-roofed upper deck at its south elevation. A two-story masonry hyphen connects the kitchen to the main house. This hyphen structure is shown on the 1888 Sanborn map (the first available) and might have been added before the 1886 earthquake.

The historic rear carriage house behind 21 Legare Street was subdivided as a separate residence, 21-1/2 Legare Street, in 1959.

The interior plan of the Gatewood House reflects the three planes of the east façade: living space at the center of the house flanked by the piazza and a grand stairhall along the north elevation. Primary street entry is at the north bay. At each main level are paired rooms, connected by pocket doors, with a third room in the rear wing. The main rooms each open to the stair hall, where there are rounded-arched niches at east and west ends. Three chimneys rise along the south wall of the main house and wing; the kitchen house fireboxes are at the north elevation.

The house retains much of its historic fabric: heart-pine flooring, molded cornices, paneled door and window surrounds with acanthus-leaf cornerblocks, paneled doors, fire plaster medallions, and marble mantelpieces. Except the entry level of the stair hall, the finished ground floor and attic rooms have simple wood trim. The kitchen house retains a late-19th or early 20th century stair.

21 Legare Street is presently being rehabilitated and will continue in use as a single-family residence. The rear west exterior wall had been poorly repaired after the earthquake, and jeopardized by modern openings at the ground level. It has been completely relaid and stuccoed. The south wall and chimneys have been repointed and stabilized, and all the mechanical systems upgraded. The original rear stair was removed from the main house at some point, and has been replaced by a stair in the two-story hyphen. A recent upper stair, its design based on elements found in the attic, rises from the south side of the second floor hallway to the attic.

Date of Construction: ca. 1843

Source of Date: Poston, Buildings of Charleston, p. 246

Date(s) of Alteration(s): 1943, 1959-60

Has building been moved?  yes  no If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Statement of significance:**

#21 Legare Street is a fine example of a mid-19th century masonry townhouse with attached kitchen house. In setting, size, scale, mass and material, both buildings contribute to the streetscape and to the surrounding Charleston Historic District. This is Charleston (1944) included the building as "valuable," and the 1973 Feiss-Wright Inventory includes the property in Category 2: Excellent. "High style regional architecture – fine "Charleston Style" – well designed and proportioned – good detail – spirited, dignified, frequently innovative, rare, and always attractive and interesting. Of irreplaceable importance, to be preserved in situ at all costs."

**Historical background**

William C. Gatewood (1807-1861) was born in Virginia, and by 1830 was a resident of Charleston. He spent more than a decade keeping a lottery office on Broad Street, then by 1855 he was the proprietor of a cotton press and a factor. After Gatewood's death, in 1863 his widow sold their home on Legare Street.

The Gatewood House and its outbuildings (kitchen house and carriage house) were erected soon after Gatewood's 1843 purchase of this lot. Samuel G. Stoney (in News & Courier 4/12/1964) tentatively attributed the design to architect E. B. White. This attribution is supported by the advertisement for the sale of the property (Charleston Mercury, 1/3/1863), which claims that "the above buildings were built new recently; built under the superintendence of Col. White, Architect, of the best material, and finished in the finest style and workmanship..." Gatewood had first built about twenty years earlier, but there is no evidence that the existing building was a replacement for a previous residence. The word "recently" was probably the advertiser's exaggeration.

The Gatewood House remained a private residence from 1867 until 1942, occupied by four families in succession. When sold to Mrs. Adele Deas in 1943 it was in some disrepair, but the World War II housing boom encouraged its conversion into small apartments and single-room rentals under the management of Mrs. Samuel J. Beckley. The main house and kitchen house were still rental apartments in 1959, when they were sold separately from the carriage house. The purchasers, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Drury, restored the main building with attached kitchen as a single-family residence.

The 10' wide driveway along the north elevation that separates the Gatewood House from the White-Williman House at 25 Legare Street is known as Sass's Alley, for the 1871 purchasers of 25 Legare Street. This alley leads to the historic carriage house behind 21 Legare Street, which was subdivided as a separate residence in 1959, and to the house (now designated 23 Legare Street) directly behind 25 Legare Street.

**7. Photographs and maps.**

Attach photographs and maps to application

Continuation sheets attached:  yes  no