

House Typical Of Its Period

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Special Writer

Theodore Gaillard Jr., a prosperous factor and planter, apparently built the large frame house at 96 Ashley Ave. by 1816.

Now the property of Dr. and Mrs. John Gatgounis, the house is in the Regency or late Federal style, typical of its period.

The site of the house was historically part of Lot No. 44 in the plan of the Village of Harleston, or Harlestonborough, which was laid out by the Harleston family in the 1770s.

John Harleston of St. Thomas' Parish, planter, devised the lot to his daughter, Margaret, as part of his estate. She subsequently married Thomas Corbett, a Charleston merchant.

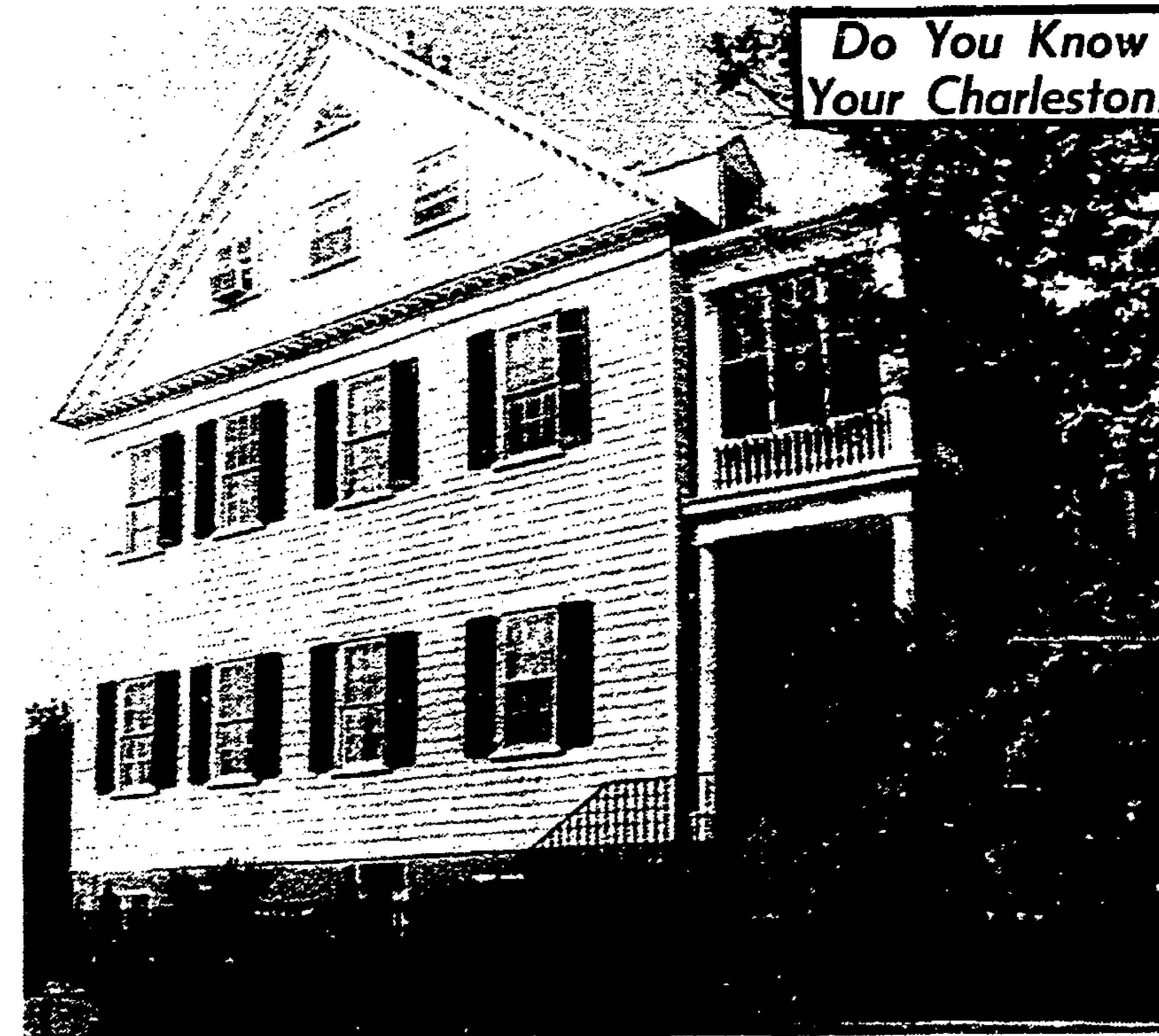
Thomas and Margaret Corbett sold Lot No. 44, at the corner of Montagu and Lynch (now Ashley) streets, measuring 121 feet, 4 inches in width and 212 feet, 6 inches in depth, to Thomas Tunno on Sept. 4, 1800, for 543 pounds, 15 shillings.

The purchase price, in comparison with purchase prices of other lots in "Harleston's Green" in 1800, would indicate that the lot was then still vacant.

Thomas Tunno, a Charleston merchant, gave his business partner, John Price, power of attorney to sell the lot, which he did on August 20, 1802, to William Doughty, for \$2,571.44. The purchase price would again indicate that a house of the size and elegance of the present structure still had not been erected on the lot.

William Doughty sold the lot to his son-in-law, Theodore Gaillard Jr., on Oct. 1, 1803, for 600 pounds.

Gaillard was then living in the fine Adamesque style residence which he built at 60 Montagu Street around 1802 and which he sold in 1815 to Gen. Jacob Read.



Staff Photo by Tom Spain

96 Ashley Ave.

Gaillard is listed as living in Lynch Street (now Ashley Avenue) for the first time in the 1816 city directory. The documentary and architectural evidence would indicate he probably built his house at the corner of Lynch and Montagu streets about the same time he sold his house at 60 Montagu St.

Gaillard had, on June 24, 1807, conveyed the lot to Samuel Gourdin, esq., in trust for Gaillard and his wife, Martha. Gourdin was a planter in St. John's Parish.

Gaillard died in 1824, directing in his will that "all my property Should

be Sold as soon after my death as convenient."

After his death, his son Augustus T. Gaillard was appointed as trustee of the property. He filed suit in the Court of Equity, requesting that the court order the property sold. The court so ordered and the property was offered at auction on Feb. 15, 1825.

Dr. Willis Wilkinson, a physician, purchased the property at the public auction for a high bid of \$11,200. Wilkinson was thereafter listed in city directories as residing at the location.

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Wilkinson sold the property on Nov. 15, 1849, to the Rev. Paul Trapier Keith and his wife, Annabella, and Allard H. Belin, C. Gustavus Memminger and John Alexander Keith, as trustees. The purchase price was \$10,000.

Ninety-six Ashley Avenue is a double house of 2½ stories of frame on a high stuccoed masonry basement. It has two tiers of piazzas across the south side.

An unusual feature is the placement of the piazza entrance. The entrance was recessed one bay to accommodate a flight of stairs leading from the street to the piazza.

The house in its proportions is reminiscent of the Gov. Thomas Bennett House on Barre Street.

The main portion of the house is five bays wide in its south or principal facade. The side of the house facing Ashley Avenue is four bays wide with widely spaced windows.

The broad west gable has three smaller windows in the tympanum, with a louvered fan-shaped opening centered above the three windows. Dormers along the south side also light the half-story.

Exterior decorations include a wooden cornice with modillions which continues around the house and is repeated in the gables. The narrow cornerboards are reeded.

The piazza entrance has a simple surround with fan-shaped tracery in the transom light.

The interior plan is that of a modified Charleston double house, with a central hallway and two rooms on either side.

The interior has fine workwork and plasterwork typical of the Regency period, with decorations more lavish than that of the Adamesque period which preceded it.

A typical Regency period motif, paneling outlined in raised molding in the shape of a rectangle with chamfered corners, is found among the interior details of 96 Ashley.