



33 HAYNE IS NOW PRIVATE CLUB
Building dates from 1850s. (Staff Photo by Evans.)

Building Shows Victorian Influence

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Twelfth in a series of articles on Charleston's early commercial and industrial buildings. The thirteenth article will appear next Monday.)

By W. H. J. THOMAS

The four-story building now listed as 33 Hayne St. is one of only a few remaining commercial units in the city still possessing the handsome terra cotta window and cornice ornaments that became popular here in that last prosperous decade before the Civil War.

The building, containing in part a private club named the A and N Stardust, is a good match with other Charleston structures such as the old St. John Hotel, the building at 15 Broad St., or the tall row houses on Bull Street between Rutledge and Ashley avenues, where window pediments are formed of scrolls and scallops, supported by ornate brackets.

The 1850s brought to

Charleston the early Victorian styles which still used much of the classical revival expression and had not yet given itself over to the demands of an industrial society as we would later see in the heavy use of iron fronts.

One might say that 33 Hayne St. is that last response of the antebellum South before an "iron age" came, with that great faith in the machine, with large fortunes gained in war speculation, with dark stones replacing the pleasant reds of brick in dwellings and public buildings.

Of course, the temper of this later age is in evidence on Hayne Street in two ways. What the architectural writer Lewis Mumford has called the "spurious romanticism that made up the architectural achievement of the 19th century" was not wholly left out of the building.

Charleston's natural conservative taste, as in each of our periods of building, controlled the design, but the excessive number of brackets

at roof level would not meet the standards of "order, fitness, comeliness, and proportion" that Mumford would claim as virtues of earlier periods. No doubt, he would probably wish to know if all those brackets are supporting the cornice or hanging from it.

On the ground level — with openings now filled-in typically with salvage brick — we find

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a true iron front, perhaps of post-war addition. The engaged columns with Corinthian capitals, the consistent bracketed entablature, flanked by the faces of maidens, are true reflections of a period when even men's collars and cuffs of painted sheet-iron were advertised for sale.

As with many of the buildings in the area just east of Meeting Street, the four-story unit at 33 Hayne has served a variety of purposes and has been vacant for

several years at a time. From the 1870s until the beginning of the 20th century it was owned by the estate of E. B. Lawrence.

It does not appear to have served any business during the 1890s but took on a certain amount of prosperity in 1905 when it was purchased at a sale for \$5,000 by Henry J. Miler, a hardware merchant.

At this time the area had a slightly more stable quality than later periods it has suffered through. The buildings near 33 Hayne appear to have been properly filled with business activity. On the south side, within a block's distance we find the Germania Brewery, the stationer's shop of H. B. Brux, the Charleston Light Infantry Armory, several dry goods firms, the offices of the Illustrated News and Advertiser, and the Edmonds T. Brown wholesale hat firm.

On the north side, of course, stretched the Charleston Hotel, which should have been a proper source of business stimulation.

After Miler's purchase of

the property the tall building (which measures 25 feet on front and 117 feet to the rear) was headquarters for Thompson-Miler Hardware Co. until 1920 when it was sold to Benjamin H. Owen for \$10 and "other valuable considerations".

It served after this as facilities for Geer Drug Co., later being purchased by that firm. In the 1930s it was bought by Abe J. Novit, who later sold the building to Georgia Palassis and Emanuel Banis.

During the late 1930s and during part of the World War II years we find the building listed as vacant in city directories. In 1948 it served as Corvette's Refrigeration Co. but was again vacant during part of the 1950s.

In 1955 the building was sold to A. F. Shahid and Sons, Inc., for \$6,000. Following this purchase we find 33 Hayne listed under a lithographing company. It was leased and then conveyed to Frank J. Clark in 1967.

As with a number of buildings in this area of

Market and Meeting streets which appeared to have lost steady use, 33 Hayne was developed as a club. A string of lights now decorate the bracket work over the entrance.

Several upper windows have been boarded and the pediments have been left to go back to the rich natural terra cotta shade which is almost salmon pink. The building now stands in a grouping of four period structures which form one of the more interesting groups of commercial buildings to be found off such important streets as Broad or Meeting where a larger number of Victorian fronts are still retained.

Being such a close neighbor to the Victorian units on the west side of Meeting between Market and Hasell — a stretch of period buildings that have attracted the attention of many national preservationists — it seems not unlikely future restoration efforts in the mid-town districts might succeed in saving these Hayne Street buildings as well.