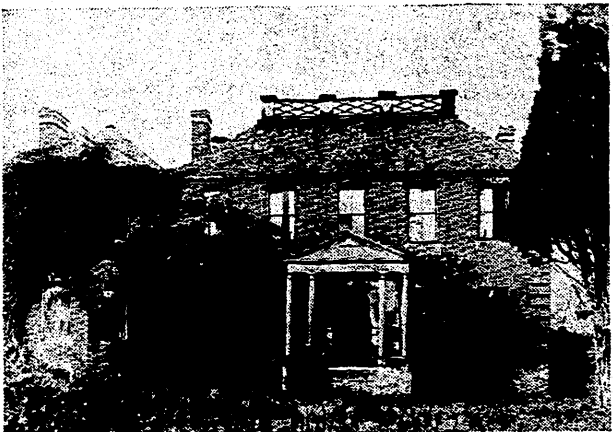


Do You Know Your Charleston?

Fenwick Hall



AT TOP—A VIEW OF FENWICK HALL as it appears today. (Staff Photo by Waring.) Below, as it looked before the restoration.

200-year-old John's Island Mansion, in Ruins Many Years, Restored by Mr. and Mrs. Morawetz as Lowcountry Home

Bearing the name of one of Carolina's most colorful early families, 200-year-old Fenwick hall on John's Island now is the residence of Mrs. Victor A. Morawetz who, with her late husband, restored the residence and developed the grounds so that once again it takes a preeminent place among the fine homes of the South Carolina Lowcountry.

An additional interesting feature is the cactus garden, the pride and joy of Mr. Morawetz, who brought the desert plants across the country from the arid Southwest.

The story of Fenwick hall is told in "Plantations of the Carolina Lowcountry," by Samuel G. Stoney, edited by Albert Simons and Samuel Lapham, which is to be published this fall by the Carolina Art association. The book will have an introduction by John Mead Howells, New York architect who is a winter resident of Charleston, and photographs by Benjamin J. Lubshech and Frances Benjamin Johnston.

This plantation house marks the crest of a wave of prosperity that followed the Proprietary government, the text of this new book will say.

"The house also signifies the arrival at a considerable wealth of

an interesting family", the book continues. "Robert Fenwick, one of the 'Red Sea Men', who upon their arrival in Carolina on the privateer Loyal Jamaica, were bonded to behave themselves during their sojourn, came of a good, sometimes prominent, county family in England. John Fenwick followed his elder brother to the province, where he shortly prospered exceedingly in business, in politics, in war, and in marriage."

By 1721, John Fenwick owned the plantation on the Stono and in 1730 is said to have replaced a log house with the central portion of the present Fenwick hall.

Two-story brick flankers were added about 1750, the book says, by Edward Fenwick, John's son, the northern one being used as coach house and stable. It now is the garage. The southern one, no longer standing, was a stable for a string of thoroughbreds celebrated in American turf history.

As the result of a law suit in

1787, Mr. Stoney writes, the second Edward sold out to his cousin and neighbor, John Gibbes, who seems to have added the northern wing with octagonal ends and to have built the small portico, shown in the accompanying picture made before the restoration. The more delicate woodwork is of white pine and the heavier panels, carvings and moldings of cypress.

"Romances have battened to an extraordinary extent on the hot-blooded tribe that held this house for half a century," Mr. Stoney writes. "The Fenwicks gave food for legend, but fancy has outrun fact, with both them and their buildings. Typical of this overgrowth is the legend of an underground passage (almost as common an attribution to any Lowcountry house as a ghost) that led, according to the stories, from the deep English basement of Fenwick hall down to the Stono. It was, of course, designed for the escape, possibly necessary, of any desperate character and, in its more ambitious versions, was designed so lavishly that a boat could be hidden in its river end. In fact, however, all this dwindled pitifully to the proportions of a serviceable large drain, through which a not too large boy might creep without great discomfort to dislodge the carcass of a cat."

One of the most persistent stories of Fenwick hall is that the Fenwicks used it as a distribution depot for pirates' booty.

Of late years it fell into ruins, and became a favorite place for young boys and other venturesome spirits to go exploring. The house was little more than a shell when Mr. and Mrs. Morawetz restored it, with great regard for architectural tradition. In a separate building is a swimming pool supplied with filtered salt water from the Stono.

Unlike many of the Northern residents, Mr. and Mrs. Morawetz made a practice of passing the entire spring and much of the summer at their estate. Many notable visitors have been guests there.

Funeral Notices

MARCHANT—The relatives and friends of Daniel Hazel Marchant are invited to attend his funeral services Monday at 11 a. m. at St. Paul's Methodist church, Orangeburg. Mr. Marchant died Saturday night.

Be sure to read...