

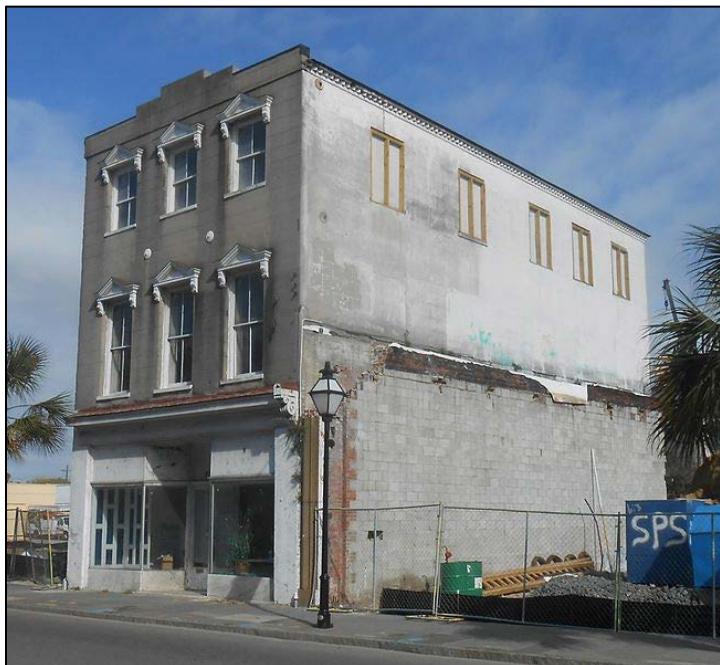
Thomas Fleming House

564 King Street

c. 1814-1825

The three-story brick house at 564 King Street¹ originally occupied a 65' by 231' King Street lot formed by joining sections of a large parcel that had belonged to planter **Stephen Lee**. Mr. Lee died in 1808, and his holdings at the southeast corner of King and Spring Streets were platted into large lots and sold off. First, **Jacob Alison and Regina Alison** sold Lot 3 (65' by 181') on King Street for \$1500 in August 1810 to **Mordecai Cohen**² who flipped it in January 1811 to **Thomas Fleming** for \$1770.³ Next, Mr. Fleming bought Lot 5 (50' by 226') on Spring Street that abutted Lot 3 at the rear for \$600 at an auction of December 1, 1813,⁴ from the estate of Mr. Lee.⁵ Mr. Fleming pared off part of the Spring Street property and added it to the rear of the King Street lot to deepen the King Street property to 231'.

The prices for the two lots were much lower than one would have paid for improved real estate. Moreover, the assembling of the lots helps establish the earliest date for the house. According to the 1888 Sanborn maps, the main house with its long dependencies was more than 181' feet and would not have fit on Lot 3 before it was deepened by adding part of Lot 5, the sale of which was not recorded until February 1814.



The Flemings have not been located in the 1820 census to approximate their place of residence. In both 1822 and 1825, Robert Fleming's address was given in city directories as the corner of King and Spring Streets; it is unclear whether Robert Fleming was living at 564 King Street or perhaps with his Adger relatives in their neighboring household to the north. In early 19th century directories, street numbers were not given for upper King Street, and descriptions such as "corner" were loosely applied.

While the house was built no earlier by 1814, the opposite end of the construction window can be pegged at

¹ Until recently, the three-story house was 562 King Street while a since-demolished one-story store was 560 King Street.

² Deed book C8, page 146 (recorded Aug. 24, 1810)

³ Deed book B8, page 534 (recorded Jan. 18, 1811)

⁴ Deed book H8, page 215 (recorded Feb. 9, 1814) Mr. Fleming also bought Lot 6 to the east of Lot 5 on Spring Street (50' by 219' by 50' by 226') for \$500 at the same sale. Deed book H8, page 214

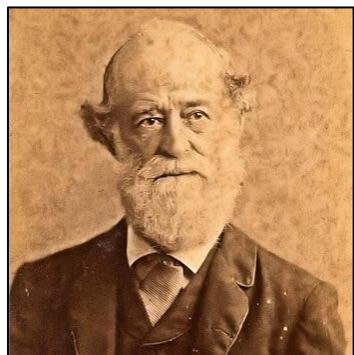
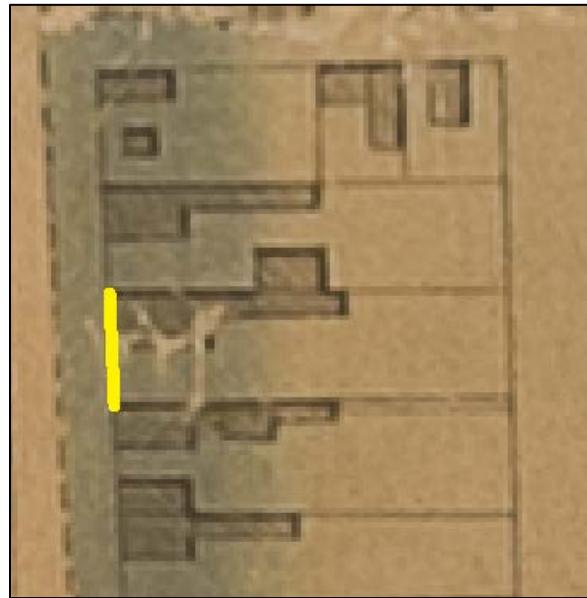
⁵ Stephen Lee was married to Dorothea Lee and died in 1809.

1825. On July 12, 1825, Mr. Fleming of Charleston sold the recently assembled 65' by 231' lot to his son, **Robert Fleming**,⁶ who had recently moved to Philadelphia, for \$12,000. (Oddly, two different deeds describing the same transfer were recorded on the same day.⁷) The sales price in 1825 clearly indicates that a large house had been added by Thomas Fleming before the sale.

Robert Fleming lived on the east side of King Street between Woolfe and Spring Streets in 1829 and at an unspecified house in the 1830 census next to James Adger. Both of those would have referred to the house at 564 King Street.

Thomas Fleming ran an ad for a large, brick house for a genteel family adjacent to James Adger's house in 1834.⁸ The ad noted that the house had "lately been improved and repaired," suggesting that the house was not new by 1834 and might be weak evidence that the house was built nearer the early end of the 1814-1825 range. Thomas Fleming was perhaps listed as the contact for the rental if his son was living in Philadelphia.

The house did not sell in 1834 but was perhaps used as a rental property instead. When Robert Fleming died in Philadelphia, he left the house to his niece **Elizabeth Ann Ellison**⁹ by a will of 1844. In 1852, the Bridgens & Allen maps showed an existing building on the lot as shown with a yellow line (right).



In 1856, an ad ran for the sale of the three-story brick house with double piazzas between land of James Adger (to the north) and George Hacker (to the south).¹⁰ The Ellisons sold the lot with a brick house to **Daniel Gabriel Wayne** (left) on June 8, 1857.¹¹ Mr. Wayne relocated both his residence and his shop from St. Philip Street to the east side of King Street, three¹² doors south of Spring.¹³ Mr. Wayne was a master carpenter in 1860 and was married to Harriet Wayne¹⁴ at the house for the 1860 and 1870 censuses. Despite earlier descriptions of his job as a woodworker, he was also a leading architect as well as

⁶ Robert Fleming was the son of Thomas Fleming and the brother-in-law of Robert Adger.

⁷ Deed book Q9, page 154; deed book P9, page 490

⁸ Charleston Courier, Apr. 8, 1834, at 3

⁹ She was the daughter of Robert Adger and (Robert Fleming's niece) Elizabeth Ann Fleming-Adger. She was married to William Harrison Ellison.

¹⁰ Charleston Courier, May 7, 1856, at 3

¹¹ Deed book T13, page 182

¹² In 1861, an ad described him as living two doors south of Spring Street. Charleston Mercury, July 12, 1861, at 2. An ad in September 1861 listed his house as three doors above Cannon. Charleston Mercury, Sept. 7, 1861, at 2.

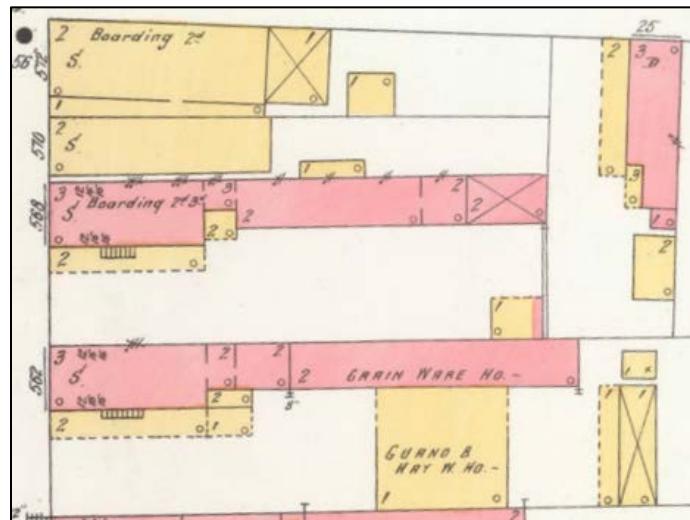
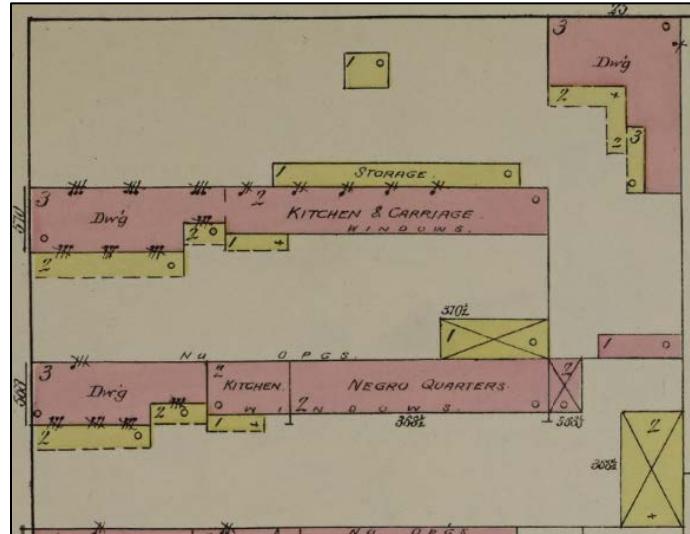
¹³ Charleston Mercury, Aug. 18, 1857, at 3

¹⁴ (b. abt. 1820)

contractor in Charleston.¹⁵ He designed the several similar-looking fire stations that were built after the 1886 Earthquake.¹⁶

In 1888, the house was the second house south of Spring Street with the number 568 King Street. The house was only about 55' long before the house narrowed a bit before the start of the “Negro Quarters.” However, now the main house is a rectangle with no indentations; the grouping of the windows at the southeast corner (before being obscured by the adjacent hotel to the south) is perhaps a sign that that portion is infill. In the 1902 Sanborn, the rear section was rechristened as a “Grain Ware Ho[use].” Also a large “Guano & Hay [Ware House]” was added to the rear yard, and the frame building at the extreme rear of the lot seems to have been replaced.

A very likely photo of the building exists. The photo has a note written in 1907 on the reverse saying that the building was on King Street above Cannon Street. There were only four possible matches based on the 1902 Sanborn maps, and known photos of those buildings seem to exclude all but 564 King Street. More importantly, the end cap for the trim over the storefront is a perfect match for the extant detail on 564 King Street. Likewise, the front façade earthquake bolt in the photo is a match for 564 King Street as are the thin window sills. Finally, the tops of the windows are visible on the piazza side of the house, and there were three windows closely clumped together at the rear of the third floor. That unusual window pattern is a match for the pre-hotel photo of 564 King Street.



¹⁵ Mr. Wayne was born June 30, 1817. He was the last surviving pallbearer of John C. Calhoun. He died on March 18, 1901. “Mr. Daniel G. Wayne, Sr.,” News and Courier, Mar. 19, 1901, at 10

¹⁶ “Fire Department Finds Use For 43-Year Old Windows,” News and Courier, May 27, 1930, at 2

On the other hand, the existing building does have differences. Most importantly, the building is covered in scored stucco and is not exposed brick. And, while the existing building has a hipped roof, the front façade has a stepped parapet. The building has metal window hoods too that are not in the 1907 photo. Possibly, the house was reworked after the Earthquake of 1886. The window hoods are very clearly not original to the 1810s/1820s and were likely a Victorian addition, proving that at least some reworking happened in the late 19th century. Interestingly, the window hoods are very similar to those used on the city fire stations (designed by the house's owner, Daniel G. Wayne, in the late 1880s). Obviously, the piazzas were removed, but their earlier presence is well-documented with Sanborn maps.

Some reworking of the house might have been done by its next owner who intensified the commercial use of the property. Mr. Wayne sold the property to **Meta Schmancke** on May 6, 1890, for \$6675.¹⁷ Ms. Schmancke seems to have used the building as a commercial rental. Among her tenants, she leased the store at 562 King Street to Morris Ellison for \$75 per month on June 21, 1919.¹⁸ She leased 562 King Street to E. Melgood on February 19, 1926.¹⁹

Mrs. Schmancke not only rented out the former house for commercial uses,²⁰ she added a new, frame building designated 560 King Street in the side yard which was also rented out.²¹ Mrs. Schmancke pulled a building permit in November 1910 to add the new building worth \$2500 at the property.²² The



¹⁷ Deed book E21, page 202

¹⁸ Deed book M26, page 551

¹⁹ Deed book Q32, page 202

²⁰ Over time, many different businesses operated out of the house including the Gold Mine Loan pawn shop (1923-1950), the Oyster Bar (1941-1945), a Junior League Thrift Shop (1955-1959), and the Low Country Postal Specialties (1991).

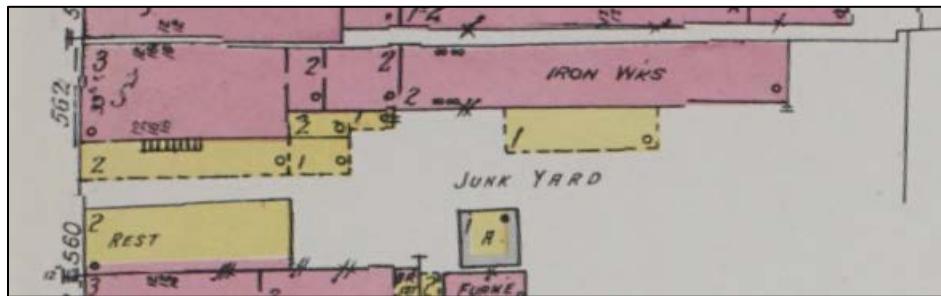
²¹ Eventually, in addition to Ellison's Dry Goods at 560 King Street (1913-1930), the side building was also the Manhattan Café (1941-1944) and the P.M. Record Shop (1948) among others.

²² "Building Permits," Evening Post, Nov. 8, 1910, at 2

new store at 560 King Street benefits from an interest in a strip of land conveyed by the owner of the property to the south, H. Fechter, to Mrs. Schmancke.²³ Mrs. Schmancke leased the new store at 560 King Street to Aleck Ellison on November 22, 1919²⁴ and relet it to him on May 2, 1921.²⁵

In late 1929, Mrs. Schmancke lost the property to **John Meyer** at a court-ordered sale.²⁶ The auction was held on December 19, 1929, with a \$4000 bid which covered both 560 King Street (21' by 116') and 562 King Street (the rest of the lot). (The price might have been lower than the assessed price if the sale was caused by a suit brought by Mr. Meyer to foreclose on a mortgage Mrs. Schmancke owed to him.)

Mr. Meyer sold 560-562 King Street to **Basil Kerr** on February 16, 1935, for \$13,200.²⁷ Mr. Kerr conveyed the properties to his company, Palace



Realty Co., on May 25, 1938.²⁸ The long row of service buildings were used by J. Sabal, an ironworker, in the 1940s, a use reflected in the 1944 Sanborn maps. In December 1942, a two-story frame building at the rear of the lot burned down.²⁹ In 1955, the space was remodeled as the Junior League Thrift Shop.³⁰

In 1950, Mrs. Schmancke's 1910 wooden building in the side yard was torn down and replaced by Mr. Kerr. He awarded a contract to Liberty Construction Co. to build a \$40,000 one-story store. The earlier building was torn down in early 1950. The new building was going to be a 40' by 125' building suitable for any business and was designed by Augustus E. Constantine.³¹ The storefront was the Parks Furniture Store first (1951-1969), but later occupants included Southeastern Business College (1973-



²³ Deed book W25, page 217

²⁴ Deed book K30, page 10

²⁵ Deed book K30, page 352

²⁶ Deed book H34, page 94 (recorded Dec. 29, 1929)

²⁷ Deed book V37, page 671

²⁸ Deed book E40, page 279

²⁹ "Fire Destroys Warehouse," News and Courier, Dec. 22, 1942, at 9

³⁰ "Shop Reopens," News and Courier, Sep. 3, 1955, at 3A

³¹ "Everybody's Business," News and Courier, Dec. 24, 1949, at 11

1978), a short-lived gym (Charleston Hawks Athletic Club), the Rush Institute, and Nehemiah Ministries.³²

For many years, a development of 2.4 acre tract at the corner of Spring and King Streets, including 560-562 King Street, was planned. Palace Realty Co. sold many properties to **Charleston Midtown, LLC** on June 18, 2003, including 560 and 562 King Street, for \$6.4 million.³³ Work on the massive \$80 million Hyatt Hotel-anchored development began in 2003.³⁴ The 1950 commercial space at 560 King Street was razed as part of the development, but the historic house at 562 King Street remained and was encircled by new buildings. At some point in the redevelopment, the historic house's address was renumbered from 562 to 564 King Street.

Charleston Midtown, LLC sold a great many properties to **Regent Charleston, LLC**, including 560-562 King Street.³⁵ Regent Charleston LLC sold the large assemblage to **Regent/BN Charleston Holdings, LLC** on December 28, 2011.³⁶



³² "Ministry moves facilities downtown," Post and Courier, June 23, 1994, at Peninsula insert 1

³³ Deed book H453, page 544

³⁴ Warren L. Wise, "Work to begin on Midtown project," Post and Courier, Aug. 18, 2003, at Business 1

³⁵ Deed book H637, page 724

³⁶ Deed book 0224, page 910