



# 60 AMERICA STREET

Charleston, SC

An architectural and social history of 60 America Street, a property in the East Side neighborhood of Charleston, South Carolina.

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## Introduction

The story of 60 America Street is a quintessential American tale. From its colonial roots to its 21<sup>st</sup> century progression; it has persevered, evolved, and adapted to become a mainstay of its community. Through its many owners and architectural alterations, the building that stands on the southeast corner of Amherst and America Street today is truly significant to the historic fabric of the East Side neighborhood of Charleston, South Carolina. This research paper has been compiled to support and illustrate this considerable historical significance, by attempting to research every facet of the buildings history. This includes its architectural development, its ownership record, and most importantly of all, the trials and tribulations of its various inhabitants.

Naturally with any research project spanning back into the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, there are some holes and inconsistencies and some of the information gathered poses more questions than answers. However, every effort has been placed in seeking the truth and representing it in the most objective way possible.

Moreover, there is certainly room for further research and development of the information collected in this report. Barring the Charleston Museum sponsored project *Between the Tracks* in 1987, there has been little to no true scholarly research into the East Side, which means reports such as this one are vital in building up resources for future investigations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987)

## Charleston, Hampstead, and the East Side

### Charleston

To begin with some geographical and historical context, 60 America Street is located in what is referred to in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the East Side of Charleston. Charleston was originally founded in 1670 as Charles Towne, a city in the newly founded colony of South Carolina.<sup>2</sup> As a port city, it quickly became an integral piece of the British colony in North America, and the planters and traders of the city began to reap the rewards.<sup>3</sup> The upper levels of Charles Towne's society looked to land to invest their money, and the untouched areas surrounded the city began to become more and more appealing to the wealthy and business savvy elite.<sup>4</sup>

### Hampstead and the East Side

In 1769, a “prominent merchant and slave broker” by the name of Henry Laurens procured and resurveyed land along the eastern shore of the peninsular to create the village of Hampstead.<sup>5</sup> As seen

in this 1769 plat of Hampstead, Laurens laid out the town around a square in the center, with corresponding lots circled around in a

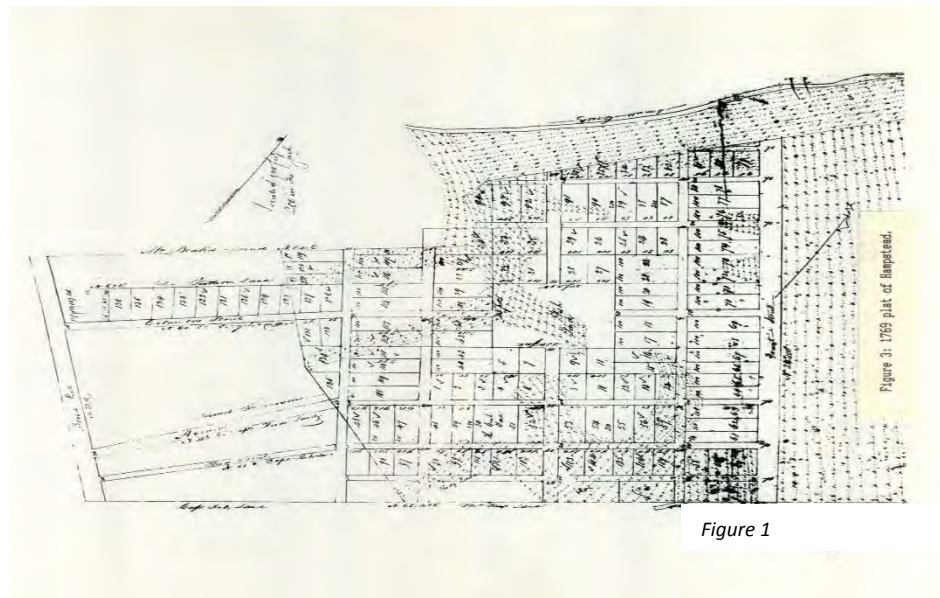


Figure 1

<sup>2</sup> Thomas D. Wilson. *The Ashley Cooper Plan*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 10.

grid system. Unfortunately for Laurens, the village of Hampstead became the front line during the siege of Charleston in the Revolutionary War, preventing the village from truly developing until the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup>

It wasn't until the 1820's that Hampstead became an established Charleston neighborhood and became the working class, diverse area that it has remained as to this day.<sup>7</sup> Immigrants, manufacturers, merchants, and people of color found modest dwellings in amongst the larger lots of the planters and social elite.<sup>8</sup> Hampstead ultimately remained this way right up until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and with the introduction of the cigar factory and the economic plight of many of Charleston's planter class following the Civil War, the East Side began to emerge as the neighborhood we know today.

## 60 America Street

### Location

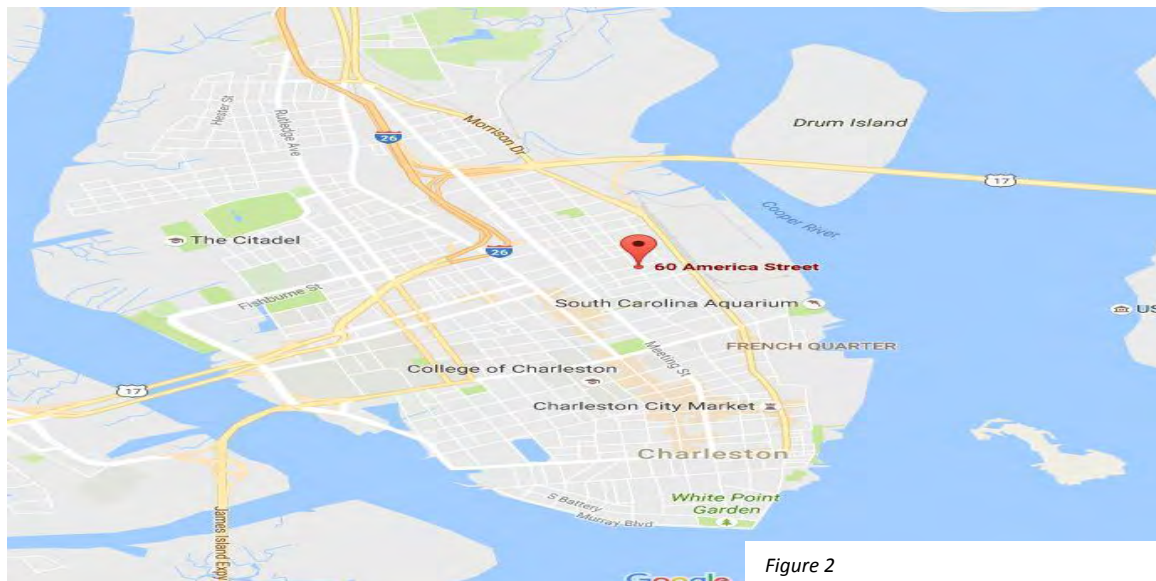


Figure 2

<sup>6</sup> Susan Millar Williams. *East Side History Series: Hampstead*. (Charleston: Palmer News, 2016). <http://ttcpalmernews.blogspot.com/2016/10/east-side-history-series-hampstead.html>

<sup>7</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 9.



The property at 60 America Street today has witnessed and been very much a living part of the history of Hampstead and the East Side. There is no evidence of the building being moved from its current location, and historic maps have proved incredibly useful in illustrating the geographical context of the property and how it relates to Charleston and its immediate neighborhood. You can see from the 1872 birds eye map of Charleston that compared to Figure 1 it has remained central to its urban setting throughout its life-span.<sup>9</sup>



Figure 3

<sup>9</sup> C.N. Drie. "1872 Birdseye View of Charleston." Library of Congress, South Carolina: 1872. <<http://www.loc.gov/item/75696567/>>

### *Architectural Description*

By all accounts, the building that stands on the lot today is the original and has maintained its structural integrity into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The core architectural identity of the building is that it is a two story wooden framed single house, with a gabled roof and boxed



Figure 4

cornice. A two story piazza stretches across the south side of the building as is the custom across the city to allow for optimal air circulation and sun exposure throughout the day.



Figure 5

The exact construction date of the property cannot be explicitly pinpointed to an exact year, but a structure is visible at the location on the 1852 Bridges and Allen map in Figure 5.<sup>10</sup> Even though the war of 1812 had no direct involvement with Charleston, the East Side was

<sup>10</sup> R.P Bridges and Robert Allen. "An Original Map of the City of Charleston, South Carolina." Hayden Brother & Company: 1852. Charleston County Public Library.



again used to create a buffer zone in case of British invasion meaning the destruction of numerous properties.<sup>11</sup> The fact that 60 America Street is a plat of land on the corner of what has always been a major intersection, has meant that the property has always been used for commercial purposes on the street level. This fact has proven to be both helpful and confusing throughout the research process, but in the case of determining a possible date of construction it may help narrow the potential time frame. The property was historically a grocery store throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as displayed by the 1888 Sanborn Map and the information in numerous city directories.<sup>12</sup> It isn't until the 1849 city directory that grocers begin to appear as professionals working on America Street, so it may be relatively safe to assume that the property was constructed no earlier than 1845 and no later than the Bridges and Allen map of 1852.<sup>13</sup>

There have only been a handful of major architectural alterations to the structure. Naturally roof systems have evolved since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the wood shingled roof mentioned in the 1886 earthquake survey has since been replaced with a standing seam metal roof at some point during the 1900's.<sup>14</sup> The two story piazza that is visible in both the 1888 and 1902 Sanborn Maps has also been bricked up at some point before 1985 as the picture used in the East Side national register nomination survey illustrates in Figure 5.<sup>15</sup> Also clearly visible on

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<sup>11</sup> Nic Butler. The Lot and Neighborhood. (Charleston: Follynot Blog, 2013). <https://follynot.org/lot-and-neighborhood/>

<sup>12</sup> Sanborn Map Company. *University of South Carolina: 1888. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps"* <<http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/sanborn.html>> (Accessed November, 2016).

<sup>13</sup> Charleston City Directory, 1849, South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library, Charleston, S.C.

<sup>14</sup> Winham & Lester. "City of Charleston South Carolina, Record of Earthquake Damages," Atlanta: 1886. Charleston County Public Library.

<sup>15</sup> Sanborn Map Company. *University of South Carolina: 1888 and 1902. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps"* <<http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/sanborn.html>> (Accessed November, 2016).



Figure 6 compared to Figure 4 is the interior chimney that is set on the ridge at the rear of the gable end. This more recent renovation could have been made for numerous reasons, but most likely the fact chimneys have become

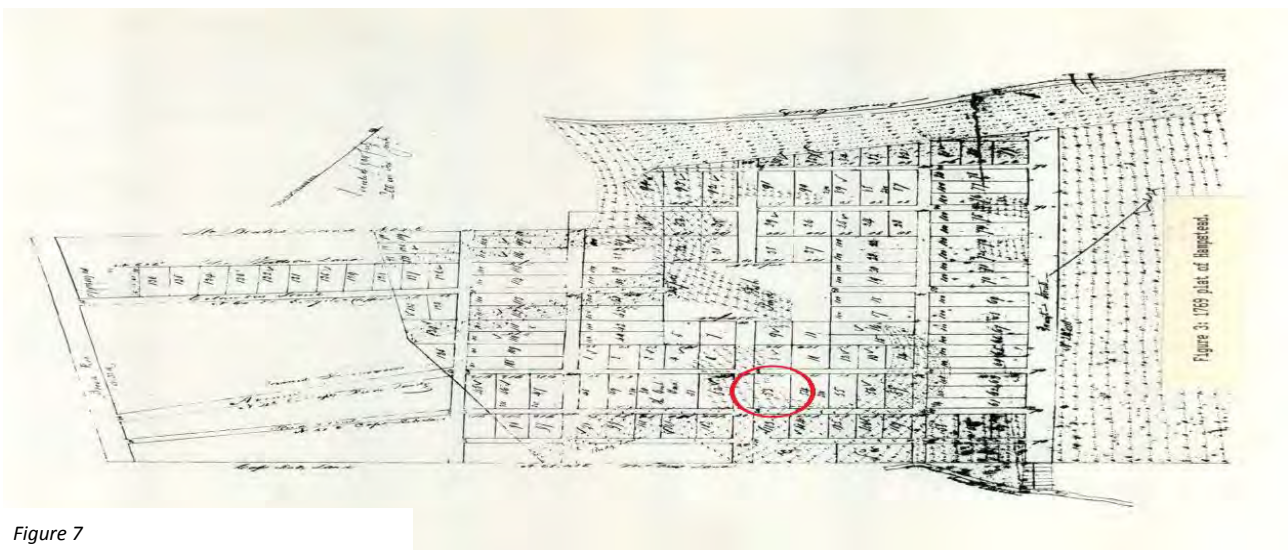


redundant to modern buildings and could be viewed as causing an unnecessary risk of water infiltration into the house could have led to its removal.

## History

### 18<sup>th</sup> Century

60 America Street and its owners can be distantly traced back to Henry Laurens himself when he laid out his plat for Hampstead in 1769.<sup>16</sup> On this original plat, 60 America is listed as lot 53 and would have been most likely sold to a currently unknown land investor to divide up or build



<sup>16</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 10.

on as they pleased. As previously mentioned, the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 caused Hampstead to stutter before truly establishing itself from the 1820's onwards. It isn't out of the realm of possibility that a property was built on lot 53 and torn or burnt down over the course of the next 50 years, but the earliest mention of ownership is that of Robert Martin who is believed to include the land of modern day 60 America Street in his will to his wife Milberry in 1852.<sup>17</sup>

### 19<sup>th</sup> Century

From the information available, it is fair to surmise that it was most likely Robert Martin who was responsible for building the corner store on the corner of America and Amherst Street, as this falls between the period previously mentioned between the Bridges and Allen map in 1852 and emergence of grocery stores on America Street in the 1840's.<sup>18</sup> Martin's will also mentions instructions for his children to not start receiving interest from his estates "until the age of twenty-one," and to not receive their monetary inheritance until the "age of thirty."<sup>19</sup> The fact he is listed in the 1830 city directory as a "merchant" based out of "Boyce's Whf." would also help confirm that Martin was a wealthy man who could have easily owned numerous estates in Hampstead, so when his wife sold 60 America Street to Richard Flemming and James Doolan in 1859 it completes the circle of ownership.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Wills and Miscellaneous Probate Records, 1671-1868*; "Will of Robert Martin," Book L 1851-1856 p.126. South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library.

<sup>18</sup> R.P Bridges and Robert Allen. "An Original Map of the City of Charleston, South Carolina." Hayden Brother & Company: 1852. Charleston County Public Library.

<sup>19</sup> *Wills and Miscellaneous Probate Records, 1671-1868*; "Will of Robert Martin," Book L 1851-1856 p.126. South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library.

<sup>20</sup> Charleston City Directory, 1830, South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library, Charleston, S.C.

in the 1800-1889 cross index, as it shows the sheer number of properties that Milberry had inherited from her husband and decided to sell following his death in 1852.<sup>21</sup>

The second and arguably

1863  
 Mrs. Milberry S. Martin,  
 Charleston,  
 S. C.  
 R. Filed Oct. 6, 1866.  
 13<sup>th</sup> Ex. -  
 Record of ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> Judge  
 Bryan, U. S. Dist. Judge.  
 Returned Oct. 6, 1866.  
 Withouge, & Co.  
 Received from  
 Department of Justice  
 December 19, 1899.  
 S. S. P. 402965.

<sup>22</sup> Milberry S. Martin. "Application for Presidential Pardon" (Charleston, 1865-1867). Accessed through: Ancestry.com. *Confederate Applications for Presidential Pardons, 1865-1867*.

The main source of confusion across the whole chain of title occurs from 1852 – 1880. A plat drawn by a man named Charles Parker in 1853 that's mentioned in all the conveyances between widowed Mrs. Martin and the lessees of her late husband's property would solve all of the confusion, but is unfortunately unavailable at this time.<sup>23</sup> Consequently, two transactions occur in the 1850's between Mrs. Martin and two separate families who both go on to have direct association with the address 60 America Street in the following decades. The most likely solution to this problem is that either the grocery store and the living quarters above it were sold separately, or there are two properties on the plat of land, and one of them became modern day 60 America Street, and the other took on another address at a later date.

In line with the demographic of the Hampstead community as identified by *Between the Tracks*, the two grantees of the land during this period were Irish and German immigrants.<sup>24</sup> This proves even more fitting as *Between the Tracks* goes as far as to discuss the significant trend of German's becoming shop keepers in the area, and the relationships between the diverse cultures living in Hampstead:

Groceries and grog shops often owned and operated by German immigrants, proliferated on the Neck. Neighborhood businesses provided a place to meet, to purchase supplies, and to barter. The relationship between shopkeeper and customer was mutually beneficial. In general, German immigrants enjoyed a more congenial relationship with the city's colored residents than did their Irish counterparts, who competed directly with blacks for jobs.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book V12, p. 39. & Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book L14, p. 23.

<sup>24</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> The Charleston Museum. *Between the Tracks*. (Charleston: The Charleston Museum, 1987), p. 20.



The first to buy land on the plat of modern day 60 America Street was a German by the name of John Tiencken in 1853.<sup>26</sup> The land was purchased for \$2200 and measured 40 feet out onto America Street and 100 feet along the border of “neighboring lot 54.”<sup>27</sup> This aligns up well with Figure 7 and the original plan for Hampstead by Mr. Laurens as modern day 60 America is on lot 53. This purchase is further supported by the city directories of 1855 and 1860 as John Tiencken is clearly labelled as being a grocer on the corner of America and Amherst Street.<sup>28</sup>

The second grantees of land from Mrs. Martin were Irish immigrants by the names Richard Flemming and James Doolan as of June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1859.<sup>29</sup> The lot size is very similar to that of Mr. Tiencken’s purchase 6 years earlier, measuring 33’ by 100’, again raising logistical questions as to who lived where exactly on the lot.<sup>30</sup> Why the two men purchased the house together is yet to be determined, but it is certain that in 1861 Richard Flemming is listed as the only person at the property.<sup>31</sup> In addition, the 1870 census reveals even more information about Mr. Flemming,

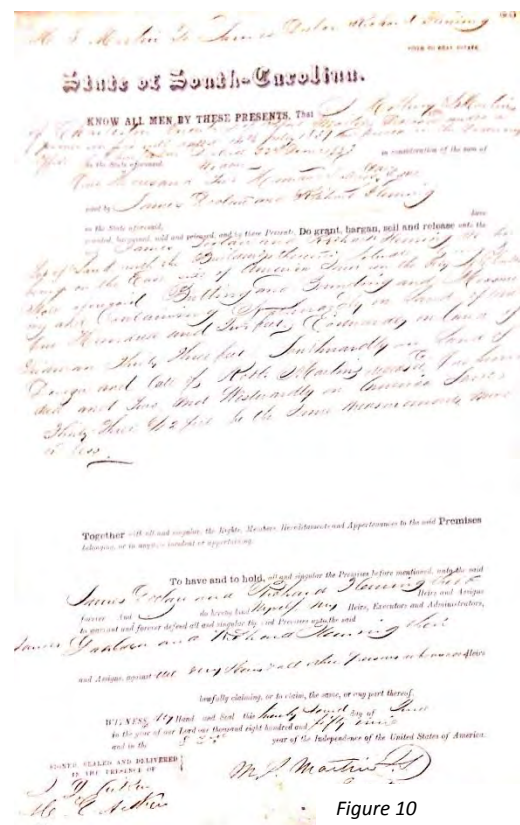


Figure 10

<sup>26</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book V12, p. 39

<sup>27</sup> RMC. Charleston, S.C. Deed Book V12, p. 39.

<sup>28</sup> Charleston City Directory, 1855 & 1860, South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library, Charleston, S.C

<sup>29</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book L14, p. 23.

<sup>30</sup> RMC. Charleston, S.C. Deed Book L14, p. 23.

<sup>31</sup> City of Charleston. Census of the City of Charleston 1861. Frederick A. Ford. Charleston, S.C.

James Doolan on the other hand seems to disappear from record after the purchase of the property in 1859, and the only logical explanation for this is that he died during the ensuing Civil War. Figure 11 depicts a February 24<sup>th</sup> 1862 Charleston Mercury report that lists a “James Doolan” as being part of the 10<sup>th</sup> company of Irish Volunteers, so this theory seems to be the only plausible reason for his disappearance from future deeds and records.<sup>33</sup>

Figure 11

<sup>32</sup> Ancestry.com. *1870 United States Federal Census*. Charleston, 1870. Accessed online, Nov. 2016.

<sup>33</sup> Public Advertisement, Charleston Mercury, February 24, 1862, from America's Historical Newspapers

<sup>34</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book Z15, p. 55.

discharged” from this moment on.<sup>35</sup>

However, Richard Flemming stops showing up in records past the 1870 census and 1871 mortgage deal with W.M. Muckenfuss who was the special referee for the transaction. His grave stone at Saint

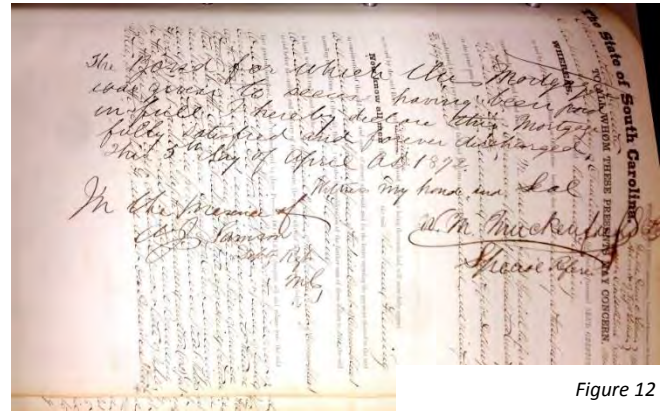


Figure 12

Lawrence Cemetery in Charleston, SC confirms that he died in 1872, and the unavailability of the Will has proved quite troublesome to truly cementing the chain of title.<sup>36</sup>

60 America Street truly aligns itself with the Tiencken family when it falls into the hands of a John August Tiencken on July 27<sup>th</sup> 1875.<sup>37</sup> The property was purchased at a Sheriff’s auction

NAME	Tiencken, Mr. J.	Male
Age	43 yrs. 2 mos.	<del>Female</del>
Mar.	Mar.	White
Sin.	Sin.	<del>Negro</del>
Wid.	Wid.	<del>Free</del>
Place of Birth	Germany.	<del>Slave</del>
Pl. Residence	Charleston 22 yrs.	Occupation.
Disease	Chronic Hepatitis	
Physician	Dr. W. M. Fitch	Place of Interment
Date of Death	21st Aug 1867	America St.
Remarks		

Figure 13

by decree of a judge in the Court of Common Pleas for \$1435, and the deed itself offers far more questions than answers as to how it arrived at that point in time.<sup>38</sup>

The sequence of events listed in the conveyance begins with his

death in 1867, as pictured in Figure 13 at the age of 43 at a property on America Street (most

<sup>35</sup> RMC. Charleston, S.C. Deed Book Z15, p. 55.

<sup>36</sup> Find a Grave. Grave of Richard Flemming, located through findagrave.com, November 20114.

<sup>37</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book G16, p. 88.

<sup>38</sup> RMC. Charleston, S.C. Deed Book G16, p. 88.

likely 60 America).<sup>39</sup> His Will decreed that his wife Magretha Sabina Elizabeth Tiencken get “one third of my real and personal estate,” and that the residue go “to my beloved two children who are named respectively John Hinrich Tiencken and Chathrina Maria Elizabeth Tiencken.”<sup>40</sup> The 1875 deed states that Magretha S.E. Orphan, who has now re-married to a man named John Orphan, filed a bill of complaint with the court of common pleas.<sup>41</sup> The complaint seems to be against the ownership of the property by the two children who were at that point still minors, ultimately leading the court to declare the property go to auction.<sup>42</sup> Why Magretha filed this complaint or whether it was to do with her new marriage to John Orphan is unclear, but it finally ends with John August Tiencken owning the property who must be a cousin or extended family member of Mr. Tiencken who was just 19 years his senior.<sup>43</sup>

Census reports and ward books in the coming decades continue to confuse the matter of outright ownership of what is now modern day 60 America Street, but it is ultimately John A. Tiencken who leaves the 19<sup>th</sup> century with sole control of the property. The 1876 ward book lists John A. Tiencken at “SE 60” America Street in reference to the store being on the south east corner of the intersection.<sup>44</sup>

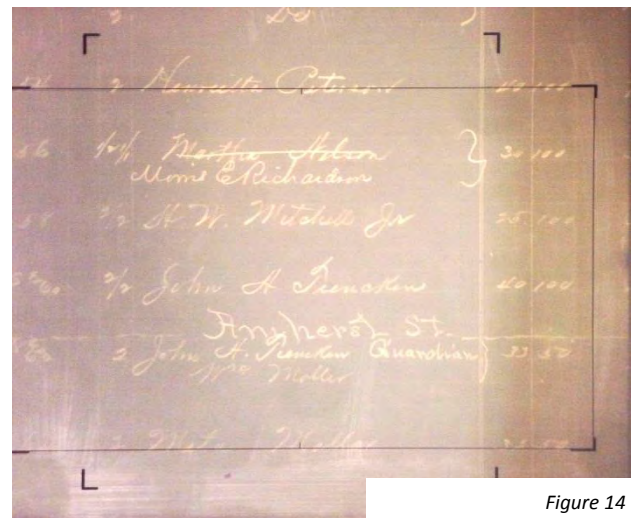


Figure 14

<sup>39</sup> Charleston County Public Library. Death Cards 1819-1926. John Tiencken. SC Room, Charleston, SC.

<sup>40</sup> *Wills and Miscellaneous Probate Records, 1671-1868*; “Will of John Tiencken,” Book 180, p.23. South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library.

<sup>41</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book G16, p. 88.

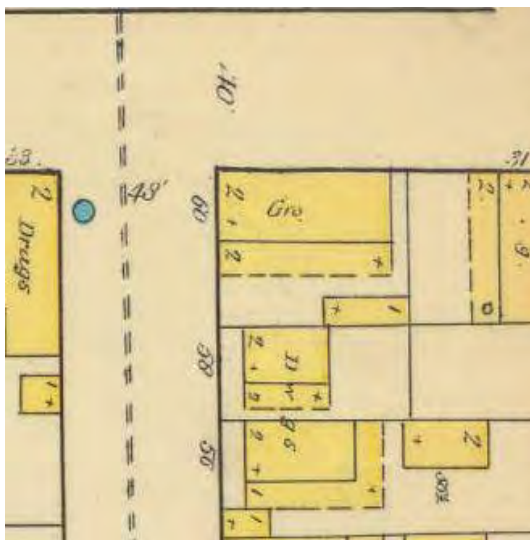
<sup>42</sup> RMC. Charleston, S.C. Deed Book G16, p. 88.

<sup>43</sup> Charleston County Public Library. Death Cards 1819-1926. John A. Tiencken SC Room, Charleston, SC.

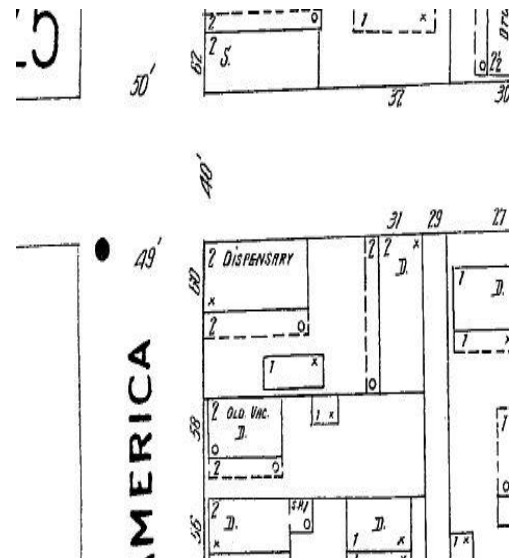
<sup>44</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Ward Book 1870-1875.



However, the 1880 federal census has Ann Flemming living at 60 America Street with her children. It isn't out of the realm of possibility that John A. Tiencken allowed them to continue to live there following Richard's death but it is also possible that they were on a separate building from the main corner store but still on the lot of 60 America.<sup>45</sup> The 1880 census also has John A. Tiencken living at 46 America Street, with the 1877 city directory also claiming him to be a working grocer at that location.<sup>46</sup> This information makes the goings on at the 60 America Street during this period particularly unclear, but Figure 15 comparing the 1888 and 1902 Sanborn maps certainly suggest not only that the building is being maintained as a grocery store, but that Mrs. Flemming could be living at the smaller outbuilding on the property.<sup>47</sup>



1888 Figure 15 1902



<sup>45</sup> Charleston County Public Library. Federal Census of Charleston 1880. SC Room, Charleston, SC.

<sup>46</sup> Charleston City Directory, 1877, South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library, Charleston, S.C

<sup>47</sup> Sanborn Map Company. *University of South Carolina: 1888 and 1902. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps"* <<http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/sanborn.html>> (Accessed November, 2016).

By 1887, records only mention John A. Tiencken at 60 America Street. The earthquake that rocked Charleston in 1886 has left an incredibly useful paper trail for researchers including brief structural surveys as well as damage assessments.<sup>48</sup> The survey conducted by the city of the property at 60 America lists John A. Tiencken as the store owner as well as the dweller, and includes a brief architectural description, as well as offering a damage assessment of \$25.<sup>49</sup> Ultimately, despite his store being described as being in “good condition” he received a total of \$48 dollars from the government, \$33 for earthquake relief and \$15 for plater work.<sup>50</sup> The actual vouchers for 60 America Street are no longer available, but Figure 16 is a sample voucher for work done that would have been identical to the one Mr. Tiencken received on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 1886.

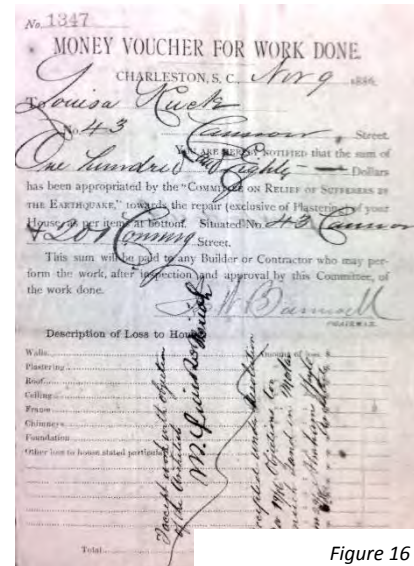


Figure 16

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century

60 America Street enjoyed a period of stability to start the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with John A. Tiencken holding onto the property until his death in 1922.<sup>51</sup> Maybe in acceptance of his growing age and in an effort to clear up the lay of the property for future sales, Figure 17 is a plat of Mr. Tiencken’s property drawn by a surveyor by the name of D.C. Barbot, which remains consistent with the previous two Sanborn’s depiction of the area.<sup>52</sup> The 1920 Federal Census

<sup>48</sup> Winham & Lester. “City of Charleston South Carolina, Record of Earthquake Damages,” Atlanta: 1886. Charleston County Public Library. p.153

<sup>49</sup> Winham & Lester, pub. 1886, p.60

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 70

<sup>51</sup> Charleston County Public Library. Death Cards 1819-1926. John A. Tiencken SC Room, Charleston, SC.

<sup>52</sup> D.C. Barbot. RMC, Charleston, SC. Recorded Dec 12 1911. Book D, page 189.

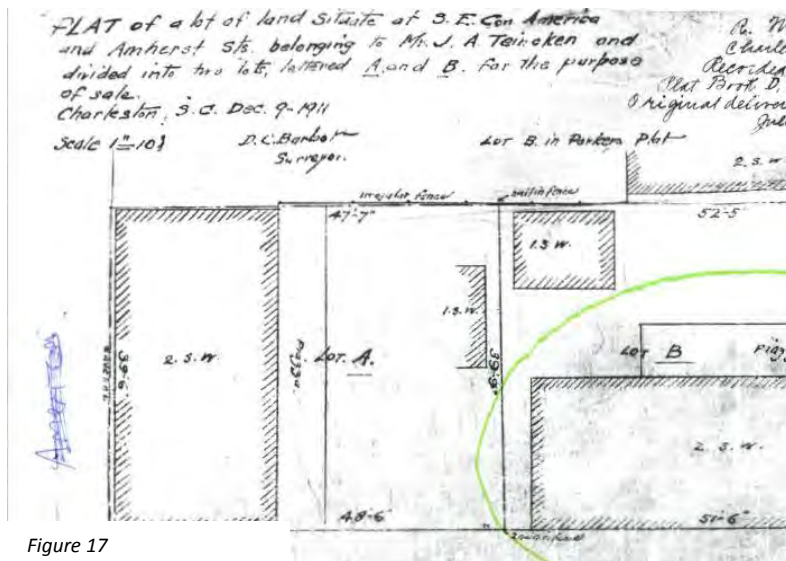


Figure 17

captures J.A. Tiencken just before his death 2 years later, not only cementing his location on 60 America, but offering valuable information about his life, particularly a set age and designating his birth place as Germany.<sup>53</sup>

On November 9<sup>th</sup> 1922, 60 America Street passed on to John. A. Tiencken's grandson, Mr. John F. Sughrue.<sup>54</sup> John Tiencken's daughter Annie had married John's father James E. Sughrue, whose son John had evidently got into the grocery trade as he is listed in the 1914 city directory as a grocer at 31 Amherst.<sup>55</sup> Thus ended the longest period of single ownership of the property, at just under 50 years by John August Tiencken, who is responsible for reinforcing the buildings central role in Hampstead as a corner store for much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

John Sughrue would continue this tradition through the great depression into the 1930's, as the Ward Books list him as living at SE 60 America Street presumably still as a grocer up until he decided to sell the

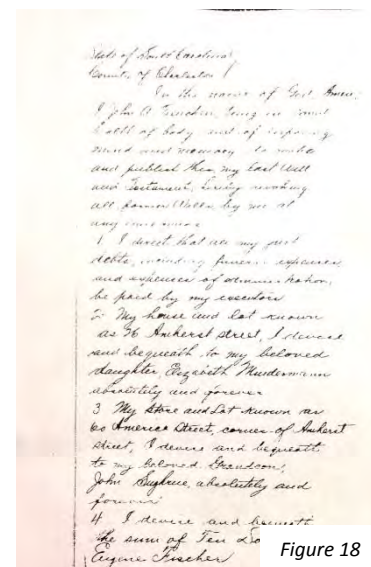


Figure 18

<sup>53</sup> Federal Census of Charleston 1920. Accessed through ancestry.com. November 2016.

<sup>54</sup> Will of John August Tiencken. Will A.A. p.86. Accessed from Probate court of Charleston November 24

<sup>55</sup> Charleston City Directory, 1914, South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library, Charleston, S.C

property in 1934.<sup>56</sup> The purchase in 1934 by Aman Realty Company for \$1700 sparks a string of successive transactions that would spell a period of disuse for the property as a functioning store.<sup>57</sup> By 1937 Aman Realty unloads the property to Hyman Lipman, for “\$5 and other valuable considerations,” in a deal which included 26 Amherst Street.<sup>58</sup> It is fairly safe to presume that Hyman most likely paid full price for 26 Amherst and the realty company threw in the corner store property of 60 America Street to complete the deal.

Like with most of the grantees of 60 America Street throughout the years, Hyman had a history as a grocer in the area, a status which is confirmed by his World War I draft registration card in 1918, as pictured in Figure 20.<sup>59</sup>

Seeing as the card dates September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1918 it is highly



Figure 19

Figure 20

unlikely that Hyman’s military duty stretched beyond that of registering for the draft itself, but being 38 at the time it meant that he would be too old to be called into action for the Second World War which spans the time of his ownership of 60 America.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Ward Book 1930-34.

<sup>57</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book V37, p. 365.

<sup>58</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book W39, p. 144.

<sup>59</sup> Hyman Lipman, WW1 Draft Reg. *South Carolina*; Registration County: *Charleston*; Roll: *1852499*; Draft Board: *2*

<sup>60</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book W39, p. 144.



Just before wars close in 1944, Lipman sold the property to Henry Finkelstein for \$4000.<sup>61</sup> Mr. Finkelstein has proven to be one of the better documented residents of 60 America Street over the course of its life, primarily because of his successful petition for naturalization in 1939.<sup>62</sup>

Born in Kalushyn, Poland in 1910, Finkelstein immigrated to the United States via New York on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1920.<sup>63</sup> A Jewish man, his race on



Figure 21

the document was listed as “Hebrew,” he is also listed as declaring his intent to become a U.S. Citizen in New York in 1932, so would have arrived in Charleston in the coming years before citizenship was granted in South Carolina in 1939.<sup>64</sup>

As far as his seven year tenure at 60 America Street goes, he is described on his biographical page made by his living relatives on findagrave.com as being a “retired grocer,” so it is again safe to assume that he purchased the property to continue Hyman Lipman’s grocery operations.<sup>65</sup>

In 1969 Mr. Finkelstein sold the property for a \$3000 dollar profit at \$7000 to Theodore R. Foster Sr., the largest profit margin in the properties history.<sup>66</sup> Such a large profit margin in

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<sup>61</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book Z44, p. 671.

<sup>62</sup> Petition for Naturalization. Henry Finkelstein, Charleston SC, 1938. Accessed through ancestry.com

<sup>63</sup> P.F.N, Finkelstein, 1938.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Find a grave. Henry Finkelstein, 1910-2004. November 2016.

<sup>66</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book A93, p. 358.

relation to earlier sales can in much part be explained by the economic boom in America following the Second World War, and the growing demand for real estate. Despite being born in the same year as Henry Finkelstein, Theodore R. Foster Sr. has significantly less available information. The most prevalent document that is the basis for the majority of information about him is found in the 1940 Federal Census. Here, he is listed as a 30 year old “male negro,” whose married and currently living at 57 Poinsette Street.<sup>67</sup>

Figure 22

It is again safe to assume from the form of the building that Mr. Foster’s involvement with 60 America Street would have been as a proprietor of the corner store until his death in 1980 and the inheritance of the property by his daughter Annie.<sup>68</sup>

When Annie finally inherited the property from her father in 1984 she would become the final private owner to date of 60 America Street. Described as “Ms. Annie Florence “Aunt Annie” Foster,” in her obituary in The Post and Courier after her death in 2011, Annie’s tenure

<sup>67</sup> Federal Census of Charleston 1940. Accessed through ancestry.com. November 2016.

<sup>68</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book 80, p. 462.

of the property was brief.<sup>69</sup> This is most likely been due to the fact that she did not live or have any real stake in the property, so selling it in 1987 to put it back into commercially minded ownership makes plenty of sense.

The East Side Neighborhood Council purchased the property from Ms. Foster for \$22000, most likely to help save the store from falling into disrepair or to take first hand control of community affairs.<sup>70</sup> Whether the council chose to lease the property to businesses to continue to run a commercial operation out of the building or whether they just held on to the property waiting for the right opportunity is currently unclear.

The neighborhood's reputation quickly developed following the Second World War from a diverse community of various races and backgrounds to a hub of crime and poverty. According to a 2011 Post and Courier article, "By 1990 median household income in the area had fallen to less than \$10,000 a year," with "three quarters of kids under the age of 5 living in poverty."<sup>71</sup> So transitioning into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the use and function of central buildings in the community such as 60 America Street became more and more crucial to direction of the neighborhood going forward.

## *21<sup>st</sup> Century*

The decision was made in 2003 to start a "community based organization" to help act as a "liaison" between the community's citizens and city officials in order to "sustain" the

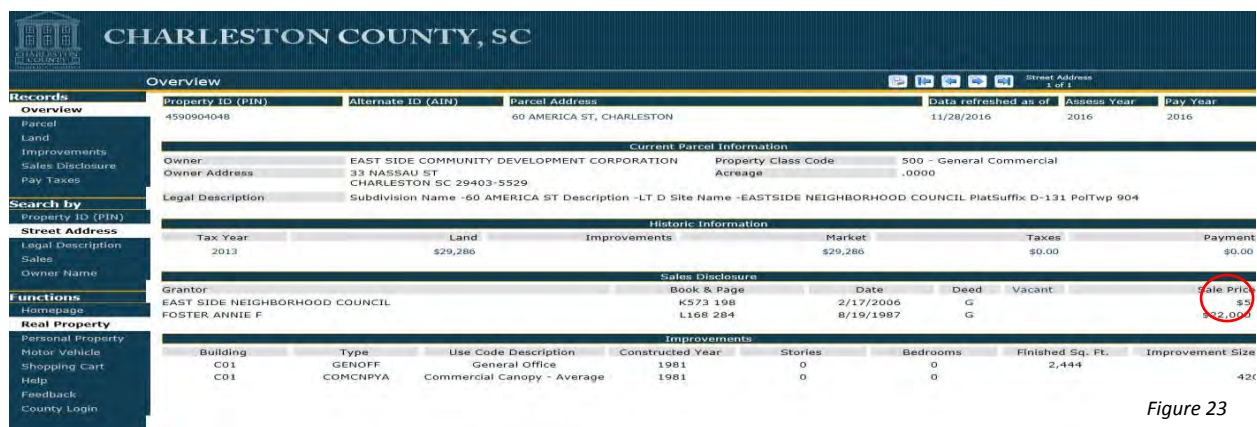
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<sup>69</sup> The Post and Courier. Annie Florence Foster Obituary. August 19, 2011.

<sup>70</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book L168, p. 284.

<sup>71</sup> The Post and Courier. Revival of America Street. Wade Spees, Sep 10, 2011.

community by “providing economic and social services.”<sup>72</sup> The East Side Neighborhood Council was able to do this by gifting the property to the newly formed organization for just \$5 as displayed in Figure 23.<sup>73</sup>



CHARLESTON COUNTY, SC									
Overview									
Property ID (PIN)	Alternate ID (AIN)	Parcel Address	Data refreshed as of	Assess Year	Pay Year				
4590904048		60 AMERICA ST, CHARLESTON	11/28/2016	2016	2016				
Current Parcel Information									
Owner	EAST SIDE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION		Property Class Code	500 - General Commercial					
Owner Address	33 NASSAU ST		Acreage	.0000					
Legal Description	Subdivision Name -60 AMERICA ST Description -LT D Site Name -EASTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL PlatSuffix D-131 PolTwp 904								
Historic Information									
Tax Year	Land	Improvements	Market	Taxes	Payment				
2013	\$29,286		\$29,286	\$0.00	\$0.00				
Sales Disclosure									
Grantor	Book & Page	Date	Deed	Vacant	Sale Price				
EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL	K573 198	2/17/2006	G		\$5				
FOSTER ANNIE F	L168 284	8/19/1987	G		\$22,000				
Improvements									
Building	Type	Use Code Description	Constructed Year	Stories	Bedrooms	Finished Sq. Ft.	Improvement Size		
C01	GENOFF	Commercial Canopy - Average	1981	0	0	2,444	426		

Figure 23

The company's Facebook page is very positively reviewed and is very active in organizing community events, with various initiatives to benefit the people and reputation of the area.<sup>74</sup> Such community events include teen cooking classes, monthly meetings, and reminders for citizens as to how and get involved with government meetings concerning the community.<sup>75</sup>



Figure 24

<sup>72</sup> Facebook. East Side Community Development Page. Mission Statement, Accessed November 2014.

<sup>73</sup> Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book K573, p. 198.

<sup>74</sup> Facebook. East Side Community Development Page. Accessed November 2014.

<sup>75</sup> Facebook. Acc. Nov. 14



This proactive effort to revitalize the area has been considerably picked up in recent years, as frequently commented upon by the local press. The Charleston City Paper released an article in 2014 titled, “It’s hip, it’s getting safer, and the rent is going up in Charleston’s Eastside.”<sup>76</sup> The article’s author, Bowers, writes extensively as to how the area used to be a “bogeyman” for downtown developers, but has since seen a “real estate revival.”<sup>77</sup> Bowers credits this rise in much part to the gradual curbing in violence that has occurred in recent years, despite the odd exception to this rule such as homicides and drug deals that have been known to sadly still occur.<sup>78</sup>

Thus ends the current tale of 60 America Street. Whether it will finally become a completely residential property is to be determined, but its status as a significant property historically and culturally has well and truly been established.

## Conclusion

Having stood for the best part of two centuries, the original building at 60 America Street has undoubtedly been witness to history. It was there for the rise of Hampstead in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, housed all demographics of races and ethnicities synonymous with the area, withstood economic and natural ruin, and all the while been a constant servant of the community.

Despite countless hours of research, the tale of 60 America Street still has holes and inconsistencies to fill, and mysteries and treasures to discover. But the one undeniable factor

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<sup>76</sup> The Charleston City Paper. Paul Bowers. East Side Story, January 22, 2014. Accessed November 2014

<sup>77</sup> Bowers. Charleston City Paper. 2014

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

that has arisen from this investigation is that 60 America Street is both culturally and historically significant to the community and city as to which it resides. Research projects past and present such as this one are vital for not only documenting and understanding the past, but planning and preparing for an uncertain future.

For what it's worth, I personally have no doubt in my mind that 60 America Street has had, does have, and will have a central role in serving and stabilizing the community it has always strived to be such an integral part of.

## Appendices

### A. List of Illustrations

- Fig. 1: Henry Laurens 1769 Plat of Hampstead, from *Between the Tracks*, 1987.
- Fig. 2: Satellite view of Charleston, SC. Taken from Google Maps, November 2016.
- Fig. 3: 1872 Birdseye View of Charleston with 60 America highlighted.
- Fig. 4: Photo of 60 America Street, taken by Matt Amis, November 2016.
- Fig. 5: 1852 Bridges and Allen Map of Charleston, SC Room, Charleston, SC.
- Fig. 6: Picture on 1985 Survey of the East Side. SC Room, Charleston, SC.
- Fig. 7: Henry Laurens 1769 Plat of Hampstead with 60 America St location highlighted.
- Fig. 8: RMC, Charleston, S.C. Milberry Martin Cross Index 1800-1881.
- Fig. 9: Mrs Martin's Confederate Applications for Presidential Pardon, 1865-1867
- Fig. 10: Deed: Mrs Martin - R Flemming and James Doolan. RMC, Charleston, SC. Book L14, p.23
- Fig. 11: James Doolan listed as Irish Volunteer. Charleston Mercury, 1862.
- Fig. 12: Mortgage: W. Muckenfuss - R. Flemming. RMC, Charleston, S.C. Book Z15, p.55.
- Fig. 13: Death Cards 1819-1926. John Tiencken. SC Room, Charleston, SC.
- Fig. 14: SE 60 America St. J.A. Tiencken. RMC, Charleston, S.C. Ward Book 1870-1875.
- Fig. 15: 1888 and 1902 Sanborn Map. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps Charleston, SC.
- Fig. 16: Example of money voucher, 1866 earthquake, Charleston County Public Library.
- Fig. 17: 1911 Plat of J.A. Tiencken's land. RMC, Charleston, S.C. Book D, page 189.
- Fig. 18: Will of John A. Tiencken. Taken from Probate Court, Charleston, SC.
- Fig. 19: Deed: Aman Realty - Hyman Lipman. RMC, Charleston, S.C. Book W39, p. 144
- Fig. 20: Hyman Lipman's WW1 draft registration card. accessed through ancestry.com.
- Fig. 21: Picture of Henry Finkelstein provided by family member through ancestry.com.
- Fig. 22: 1940 Federal Census of Charleston, accessed through ancestry.com.
- Fig. 23: Charleston County overview of property information, 60 America St. 2016
- Fig. 24: East Side Community Development Corporation Facebook Page. 2016

*B. Annotated Chain of Title*

***December 12/1852***

Grantor: Robert Martin  
Grantee: Milberry Martin  
Book & Page: L – 126  
Type: Will  
Price: N/A  
Lot: N/A

Will very specifically leaves instructions to divide Robert's financial fortune up equally between his children, but they are not permitted to earn interest on his properties until they are 21, and can't get the money he has left them until they are 30 and married. His will is incredibly specific and accounts for many scenarios. He leaves his home on Charlotte Street and its possessions including house slaves to his wife Milberry Serena Martin. The will was written on July 14<sup>th</sup> 1839, but was not proven by his wife until his death in 1852. I believe the land that modern day 60 America sits on today was originally owned and built upon by Robert Martin.

***December 12/1853***

Grantor: Milberry S. Martin  
Grantee: John Tiencken  
Book & Page: V12 – 39  
Type: Sale  
Price: \$2200  
Lot: 40' by 100'

Land purchased for \$2200 and measured 40 feet out onto America Street and 100 feet along the border of "neighboring lot 54."

***June 22/1859***

Grantor: Milberry S. Martin  
Grantee: James Doolan and Richard Flemming  
Book & Page: L14 - 23  
Type: Sale  
Price: \$1200  
Lot: 33' by 102'

Interesting joint purchase from two Irish immigrants. 1861 and 1870 Census confirms that Richard Flemming is the owner. Also should be highlighted that the 1855 and 1860 city directories states that John Tiencken was the grocer at 60 America, James Doolan disappears from records following this transaction.



***April 21/1871***

Grantor: Richard Flemming

Grantee: W.M. Muckenfuss (special referee court of common pleas)

Book & Page: Z15 - 55

Type: Mortgage

Price: \$585 (2 payments of \$292 ½)

Lot: N/A

The mortgage itself that is at the RMC has writing over it stating that the mortgage has been paid in full. 1871 ward book confirms Flemming to be in ownership of property.

***July 27/1875***

Grantor: Sheriff C.C. Bower

Grantee: John August Tiencken

Book & Page: G16 - 88

Type: Sheriff Sale

Price: \$1435

Lot: 40' by 100'

Plot of land sold at Sheriff auction by decree of judge in the court of common pleas. Magretha Sabina Elizabeth Orphan (former wife of John Tiencken) and her new husband John Orphan filed a complaint with the court to have the land taken away from John Tiencken's children (John H T + Chatherine T) who were minors at the time. It was decided that the land would be sold by sheriff sale on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1875, at which time John August Tiencken bought the property for \$1435. The will of John Tiencken that caused this controversy is found in book number 180, page 0023 in the SC room. 1876 ward book has J.A.T owning 60 America. 1886 Earthquake also has John A Tiencken as store worker and dweller. 1898 Ward book has John A Tiencken at 60 America as does 1920.

***November 29/1922***

Grantor: John A. Tiencken

Grantee: John F Sughrue

Will & Page: A.A – 86

Type: Will

Lot: N/A

John A Tiencken left 26 Amherst to his daughter Elizabeth Mindermann and 60 America St to John F Sughrue, his grandson. 1930-34 ward book has John Sughrue at 60 America

***October 25/1934***

Grantor: John Sughrue  
Grantee: Aman Realty Company  
Book & Page: V37 - 365  
Type: Sale  
Price: \$1700  
Lot: N/A

Property was listed without a street number just simply S.E. in Ward book 9 from 1930's going backwards, under America Streets section.

***June 15/1937***

Grantor: Aman Realty Company  
Grantee: Hyman Lipman  
Book & Page: W39 - 144  
Type: Sale  
Price: \$5 and other "valuable considerations"  
Lot: 51'6 east, 39,9 south, 40' north, 52'5 west + 26 Amhurst St

Was sold by the real estate company for "\$5 and other valuable considerations," most likely package deal with 26 Amherst.

***July 19/1944***

Grantor: Hyman Lipman  
Grantee: Henry Finkelstein  
Book & Page: Z44 - 671  
Type: Sale  
Price: \$4000 cash  
Lot: 51'6 east, 39,9 south, 40' north, 52'5 west

Deed contains first reference to Platt by D.C. Barbot from 1911.

***August 6/1969***

Grantor: Henry Finkelstein  
Grantee: Theodore R. Sr. Foster  
Book & Page: A93 - 358  
Type: Sale  
Price: \$7000  
Lot: N/A

Straightforward sale between two unrelated men.

**1984**

Grantor: Theodore R. Sr. Foster

Grantee: Annie F. Foster

Book & Page: 80 - 462

Type: Will

Lot: N/A

Theodore R. Sr. Foster died in 1980, left the property to his daughter Annie Florence Foster.

**August 19/1987**

Grantor: Annie F. Foster

Grantee: Eastside Neighborhood Council

Book & Page: L168 - 284

Type: Sale

Price: \$22 000

Lot:

This is the highest price paid for this property that I have discovered so far. Was \$22 000 a lot of money in the late 1980's for a property? If not was the property damaged?

**February 17/2006**

Grantor: Eastside Neighborhood Council

Grantee: Eastside Community Development Corporation

Book & Page: K573 - 198

Type: Sale

Price: \$5

Lot:

Current owners have owned the property since 2006 and have used it as a community center. From the records of street view on Google Maps it has become clear that it has been renovated during this ownership.

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