

573 King Street

John Bulow House, c. 1826 – 1952

Altman Furniture, c. 1952



The corner of King and Cannon Streets is Lot 17 of the lands of Rowland Rugeley created in a plat of 1804.¹ Mr. Rugeley owned a very large piece of land along St. Philips Street—six complete city blocks, from Morris Street to Bogard Street—when he died. On February 17, 1806, an auction was held to sell off the remainder of the Rugeley lands, and **John Joachim Bulow** was the high bidder for five lots (Lots 15, 16, and 17 on King Street and Lots 33 and 76 on St. Philips). Each of the King Street lots was 58 by 200 feet.

Mr. Bulow was born in the Newberry, South Carolina district about 1768. He was a very successful businessman and retired after the War of 1812. He married Carolina Amelia Lehre in 1818 and spent the rest of his life as a planter. When he died, he owned Long Savannah, a cotton and rice plantation with about 8000 acres in St. Andrew's Parish.

Two suits were filed concerning the Rugeley lands, in 1819 and 1834, and the court ordered that title be confirmed in the hands of Mr. Bulow in exchange for \$2000.² The deed confirming ownership by Mr. Bulow was not recorded until March 22, 1834. Despite the clouded title, Mr. Bulow made his home on the outskirts of Charleston on upper King Street on the corner lot. A city directory from 1825 listed his address on lower Montagu Street, but on May 3, 1827, Mr. Bulow advertised his Sullivan's

¹ Deed book W8, page 385

² Deed book G10, page 115

Island house for rent and included his city address at King and Cannon Streets. In the 1831, 1835, and 1837 city directories, Mr. Bulow lived at the corner of King and Cannon Streets working as a planter. The 1840 directory listed his address as simply on King Street, but he clearly remained in the same house. In 1840, he was living by himself with 90 slaves in the house and died there on June 23, 1841.

His property must have passed to his son, **Thomas Lehre Bulow** who, in 1852, lived at his

AUCTIONEERS' PRIVATE SALES

Estate Sale, by order of the Executor.—A Handsome and Desirable Residence in King-street, and a Large Building Lot.

CAPERS & HEYWARD

Will sell, at Private Sale, all that LOT OF LAND, with the commodious three-story Brick Residence and outbuildings thereon, situate on the northwest corner of King and Cannon streets. The Residence contains six upright rooms, dressing room and pantry, large and commodious outbuilding, servant's accommodations, carriage house and stable, all of brick. The Lot measures 57 feet front on King-street, by 200 feet deep on Cannon-street, more or less.

Also,
A fine BUILDING LOT, adjoining the above on King-street, measuring 55 feet front on King-street, by 200 feet deep, more or less.

For terms, and further particulars, apply at our office,
SOUTH SIDE ADGER'S WHARF,
June 16 stuth 3

father's house at the corner of Cannon and King Streets. In 1852, the property already was assessed at \$8000, suggesting that the large, brick house was already present, given the relative value for other neighboring lots. (At \$8000, the house was assessed higher than any other house on Cannon Street, with most buildings averaging less than \$2000. Other houses assessed for the same amount included the Col. Stuart House at 106 Tradd Street, the Otis Mills House at 37 Meeting Street, the Charles Elliott House at 22 Legare Street, and the Charles Pinckney House at 7 Orange Street.) When Thomas Bulow died in 1855 from an inflammation of the stomach, an estate sale was held at the

house to dispose of his personal property in 1858, including carriages and his furnishings. Between at least October 12, 1858, and April 2, 1860, the house was listed for rent.

The sale of house itself took some time. An advertisement ran on June 1860 with details, specifying that the house had six main rooms (typical of a Charleston single house) and many functional buildings in the rear. The same advertisement also listed the lot to the north which was sold as a building lot, suggesting that no improvements had been made next door. **Charles D. Carr**³ paid \$8000 for Mr. Bulow's house when he bought it from the estate on July 23, 1860, but he did not buy the neighboring Lot 16 (577-579 King Street).⁴ The 1861 Charleston census captured Mr. Carr as residing at the house, still known as 2 Cannon Street.

Desirable Investments on King and Queen streets.

BY T. A. WHITNEY.

On TUESDAY, 18th January, at 11 o'clock, at the north of the Exchange, will be offered for sale,

All that LOT OF LAND, with the three story Brick House and two story brick kitchen and back store thereon, situated on the northwest corner of King and Cannon streets, known as the property of the late Major Bulow. The House contains six large upright rooms and two unfinished attics, two large dressing rooms, fine pantry, and store rooms. Plazas to the west enclosed with glass, connecting the main building with a nursery and nurse's room; the two story piazza on the south, on Cannon street, enclosed with blinds. On the premises are ample accommodations for servants, horses and carriages; yard well paved, and every building on premises in the most complete order. The Buildings extend, on north and south lines, about 184 feet, all of which are slated or tiled. The Lot measures, on King street and on west line, 88 feet; and in depth, from east to west, 192 feet, more or less. These premises offer an opportunity as an investment, or a business locality, in the Upper Ward. The main building could easily be converted into an extensive store at a trifling expense, having the advantage of a range of back stores, with three large doors on Cannon street.

Mr. Carr did not remain in the house for long and less than two years later placed advertisements to sell the house. On January 3, 1863, an ad ran in the *Charleston Mercury* which gave more detail about the house and suggested converting the house to a store. Mr. Carr sold the property for \$10,000 to **Charles O. Witte** on February 7, 1863. The deed specifically described a three-story brick house, a two-story brick kitchen, and out stores in the rear.⁵

³ Charles Daniel Carr was born on July 24, 1810, in New York. He died on September 20, 1869.

⁴ Deed book Z13, page 355

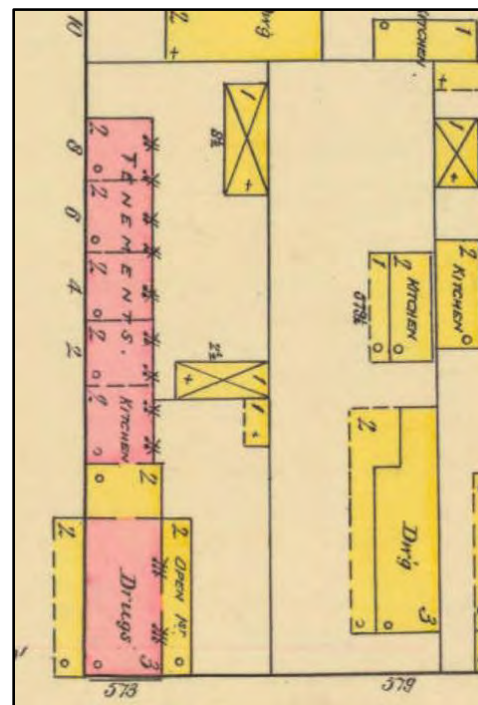
⁵ Deed book R14, page 144

Mr. Witte sold Lot 17 to **Jacob Stackley**⁶ (in trust for his wife, Catherine Stackley⁷) for \$11,000 on July 21, 1866.⁸ Ms. Stackley was a *feme sole* trader. Her status was a legal declaration that allowed her to conduct business in her own name with no liabilities (or advantages) flowing to her husband simply as his wife. Two mortgages were given on the property: one for Mr. Witte in 1866⁹ and one to Henry Sedgewick in 1871.¹⁰

Because of a default regarding the second mortgage, the property was sold at a public auction on August 7, 1873, and **Herman O. Hastedt** bid \$7860 for the lot with “buildings.” It was recorded on July 2, 1874.¹¹ At about the same time, the house and dependencies were present to be included in the 1872 Bird’s Eye View maps of Charleston with its distinct piazzas projecting over the sidewalk of Cannon Street and was still standing when the 1884 Sanborn maps were drawn.

Mr. Hastedt seems to have been the first owner who dedicated the property to commercial and rental use. Druggist Charles Otto Michaelis had carpenters and painters working at the house in late 1875¹² and moved his drug store there at the end of 1875.¹³ His drug store remained there until at 1888 when the business relocated to the converted police station at 567 King Street.¹⁴ At least three other families shared the buildings as their dwellings in the 1880 census.

At about the same time that the long-time drugstore closed, Mr. Hastedt was responsible for subdividing the northern half of the lot and building a two-story, wood building (575 King Street) on it 1888 or early 1889.¹⁵ The June 1888 Sanborn maps show the house just before it lost its yard. It was positioned at the extreme southeast corner of the with two-story piazzas built over the sidewalk to the south. Even more unusual is that the string of two-story brick dependencies were almost as wide as the main house and



⁶ Johann Jacob Stackley was born on June 22, 1819, in Germany. He married Catherine Charlotte Witcofskey in 1846. He died on January 27, 1896, in Florence, South Carolina.

⁷ Catherine Charlotte Witcofskey was born on March 8, 1828, in Germany. She married Johann Jacob Stackley in 1846. She died on January 10, 1898, in Florence, South Carolina.

⁸ Deed book A14(7) page 434

⁹ Deed book Q14, page 353

¹⁰ Deed book Q15, page 311

¹¹ Deed G13, book page 52

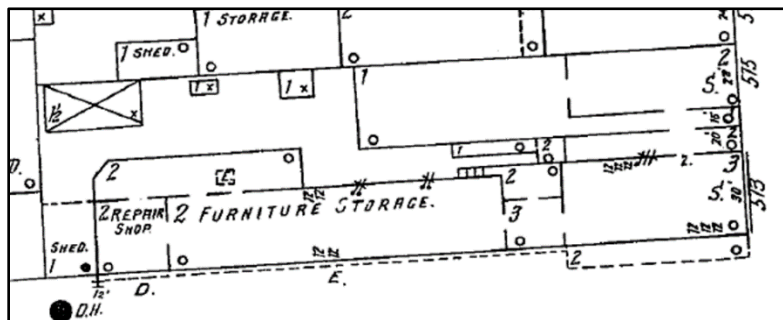
¹² Charleston News & Courier, October 30, 1875, at 4

¹³ Charleston News & Courier, November 2, 1875, at 2

¹⁴ News & Courier, Nov. 8, 1888, at 3

¹⁵ "A City Full of Homes," News & Courier, Feb. 16, 1889, at 8 (Sep. 1888-Jan. 1889 recap of permits)

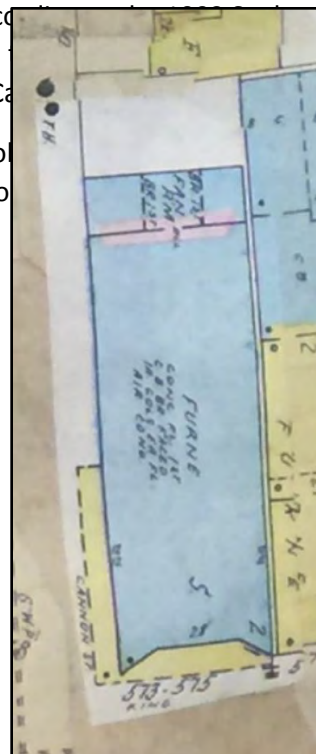
filled almost the entire back yard. By the time of the 1888 Sanborn map, the spaces had been converted into a kitchen and four separate rental units known as 2, 4, 6, and 8 Cannon Street. Meanwhile the empty “garden” area to the north had had two wooden utility buildings added.



For the next few years, the main house and the new, adjacent building at 575 King Street were used independently: C.A. VonDohlen operated a grocery store out of the main house and a furniture store named Buell & Roberts operated out of 575 King Street. Then, in 1895 or 1896, Mr.

Hastedt added to the rear of the main house, repaired the building, and reworked the front of the building.¹⁶ In August 1895, Buell & Roberts¹⁷ outgrew the space at 575 King Street and relocated its furniture business next-door to the main house. Meanwhile, the company kept its presence at 575 King Street and converted into a dry goods business which it also operated.¹⁸ Based on advertisements, there was little physical difference in the stores; they were jointly listed in single advertisements of departments of Buell & Roberts at 573-575 King Street. According to the 1898 Sanborn map, the buildings were attached at least on the first floor. Although the map shows the furniture storage, the peculiar projecting piazzas over the Cannon Street side of the buildings were still in place.

Enjoying a very long stay at the spot, the Buell & Roberts building was still there at least 1934. Starting by 1938, the two storefronts were independent, housed by the Buell & Roberts building (in 573, 1938-1951), a wholesale grocery operated by Robert Kahn (in 575, 1938-1949), the South Atlantic Life Insurance Company (in 573, 1945-1947).



¹⁶ “Building Up the City,” News & Courier, Sept. 11, 1897, at 9 (Sep. 1896-Sep. 1897 recap of permits)

¹⁷ The furniture business was owned by George Buell and Daniel L. Roberts.

¹⁸ “Business Up-town,” Aug. 29, 1895, at 4

Mr. Hastedt died December 29, 1893, but he devised only a life estate to his wife, Anna Rosalina Hastedt, meaning that although she could remain for her entire life, she could not sell the house beyond her life. She remarried Meyer and then died later. On October 13, 1947, Herman Hastedt's estate sold the buildings along with three houses on



Woolfe Street to **The Charles Real Estate Company** for \$78,500.¹⁹ Altmans' Furniture pulled a permit to demolish 575 King Street in April 1951.²⁰ In May 1951, the Charles Real Estate Company pulled a permit to build a \$60,000 building.²¹ On March 3, 1952, the new furniture store opened by brothers Israel,²² Samuel, and Isadore Altman, moving from nearby at 559 King Street.²³ The business closed in 2006 because of increasing stiff competition and because there were no clear successors of maintain the business.²⁴

The family did not have an interest in selling their real estate and wanted to take part in the new development of upper King Street. Since 2014, the building has been home to Affordabike, a bicycle store, on the first floor. A suite of offices at 575 King Street has been used by professionals including Altman & Derfner, a law firm whose named partner, Sam Altman, is the son of one of the furniture store founders.

¹⁹ Deed book E48, page 59; "King, Woolfe Street Sales Bring \$78,500," Evening Post, Oct. 3, 1947, at 1

²⁰ "Building Permits," News & Courier, Apr. 5, 1951, at 13B

²¹ "Building Permits," News & Courier, May 24, 1951, at 13A

²² Israel Altman died on April 12, 1993.

²³ "Altman Furniture Co. Opens New Store Here Tomorrow," News & Courier, Mar. 2, 1952, at 3

²⁴ John P. McDermott, "King St. Fixture Closing Its Doors," Post & Courier, Dec. 17, 2005