

44 South Battery “The Johnston Home”

Charleston, South Carolina

A Property History

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Development of South Bay Street.....	4
Property History	
Robert Mackenzie and 44 South Battery	7
Robert Mackenzie and The Charleston Tea Party	10
Charlotte and Anna Johnston.....	12
The Rutledge Family- Benjamin Huger Rutledge.....	15
The Rutledge Family- Dr. Edward Rutledge.....	18
The Rutledge Family - Eliza Huger Wells Rutledge – Suffragette... 	20
The Rutledge Family – Anna Wells Rutledge.....	23
Changes to the Home.....	24
Architectural Description.....	28
Conclusion.....	31
Appendix A: Annotated Chain of Title.....	32
Appendix B: Sanborn Maps.....	35
Bibliography.....	38

Introduction

The story of the house currently known as the Misses Johnston house at 44 South Battery is a story that resonates with Charleston's vibrant history. Many of the house's occupants have played critical roles in the development of Charleston. Some of these notable occupants include: Robert Mackenzie, who participated in the Charleston Tea Party, Ann and Charlotte Johnston, who built the house now known as 44 South Battery, Eliza (Lillie) Huger Wells Rutledge, a suffragette¹ who participated in the petition to allow women voting rights, Anna Wells Rutledge, a famous artist in Charleston, Sabina Wells, another Charleston artist and photographer who was also the sister of Lillie Wells Rutledge, and many more. Despite the fact that so many prominent and influential individuals have occupied the house, there are actually only two families who have ever lived in the house over its almost two-hundred year history. First, the Johnston family, then the Rutledge family. Many generations of the Rutledge family came to live in this house as it was inherited through time. The house lived to see the civil war, the earthquake of 1886, and many hurricanes.

This report will provide a history of the land and house currently residing at 44 South Battery, as well as insight into the history of its inhabitants and their many accomplishments. This report was developed as part of Professor Katherine

¹ Charleston News and Courier (Published as The News and Courier) – June 26, 1915- Page 8 (Accessed October 20th 2019)

Pemberton's Historic Research Methods class, a class that is a part of the Historic Preservation Graduate Program at Clemson University and College of Charleston.

Development of South Bay Street

The story of the house at 44 South Battery is almost as long as Charleston's history itself. The neighborhood that was developed at the south end of Legare Street and below Lamboll Street became a neighborhood where many generations of Charleston families would eventually live. This area of town is still a quiet, residential area today. Furthermore, some of the houses below Broad Street can be dated back to when an early Charleston family purchased and developed the land.

The land on which 44 South Battery now sits was purchased sometime before 1770 by four men: Robert Mackenzie, William Gibbs, Edward Blake, and George Kincade.² Together, they purchased lots 283 and 284 as seen in the 1680 Grand Modell of Charleston.³ In addition to the two lots purchased, they also purchased the low water lots just to the south. In the 1680 Grand Modell map, it is evident that the land was surrounded by both Conseiller's Creek and the marsh that goes into the Ashley River. Together, the above four men filled in the land and made it more habitable. This job included building retaining walls and adapting the land to create more living space. In order to divide the land among themselves, the four men sold the land to Samuel Legare and then bought it back from him in four separate transactions.⁴ This way, the men had their own share of the land to do with what as they wished.

² Preservation Society of Charleston. Halsey Map Project: The Alfred O. Halsey Map, (Original published 1949). "7 Gibbs Wharf and City Market," [accessed November 12, 2019], <http://halseymap.com/Flash/window.asp?HMID=66>).

⁴ Gibbs Wharf and City Market: Halsey Map Preservation Society of Charleston <http://halseymap.com/Flash/window.asp?HMID=66> [Accessed November 9th, 2019]

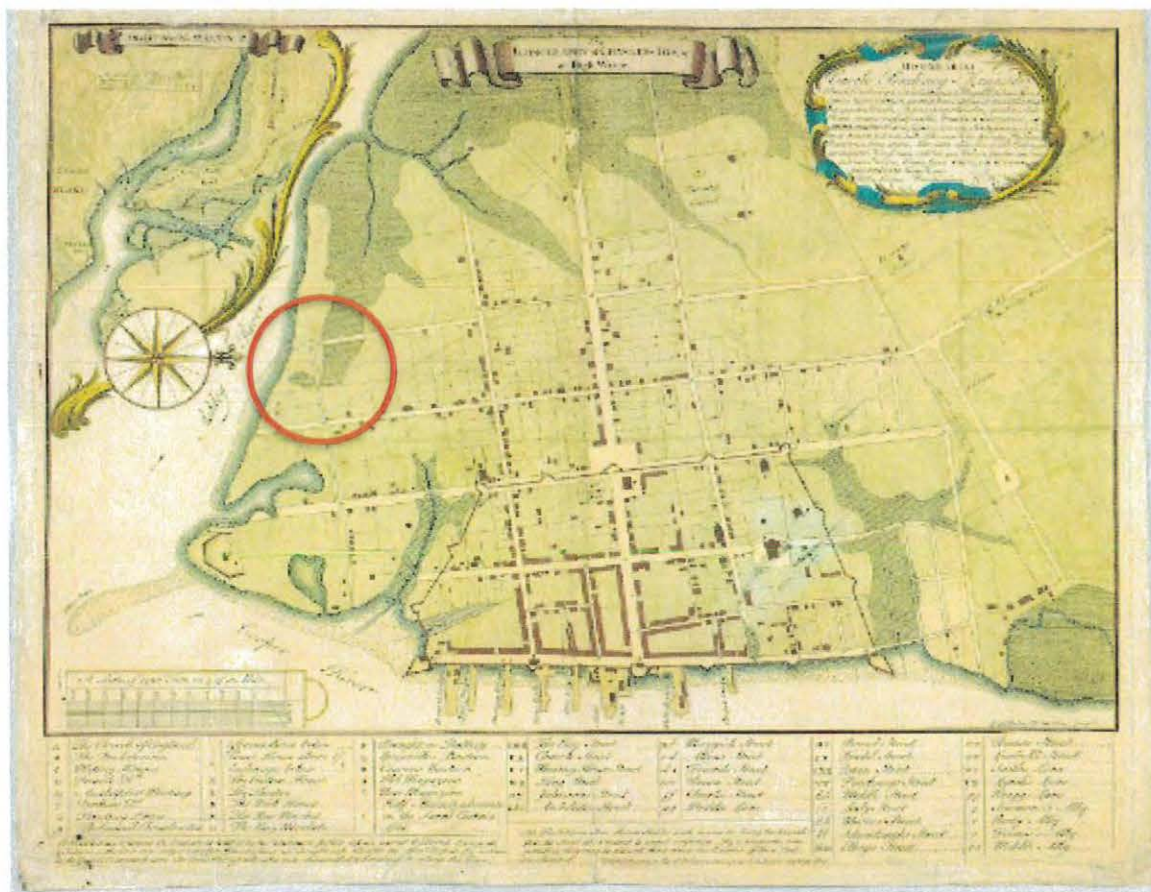


Figure 1: Iconography of Charles Town before 1733 at High water – Before Robert Mackenzie acquired the land.

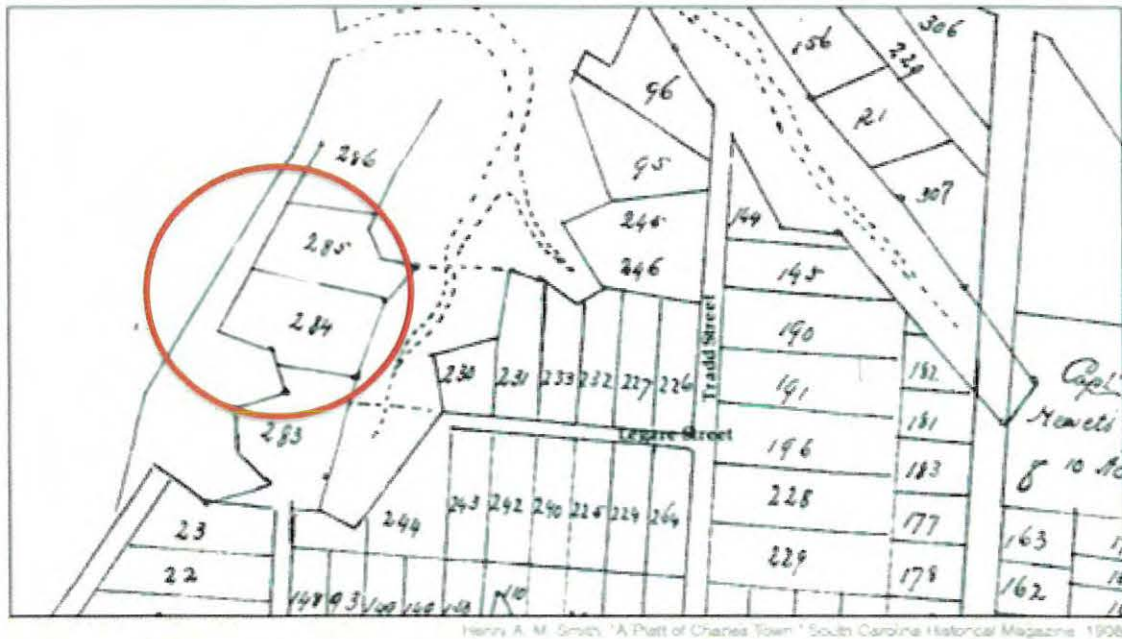


Figure 2: H.A.M Smith reconstruction of the Grand Modell of Charleston

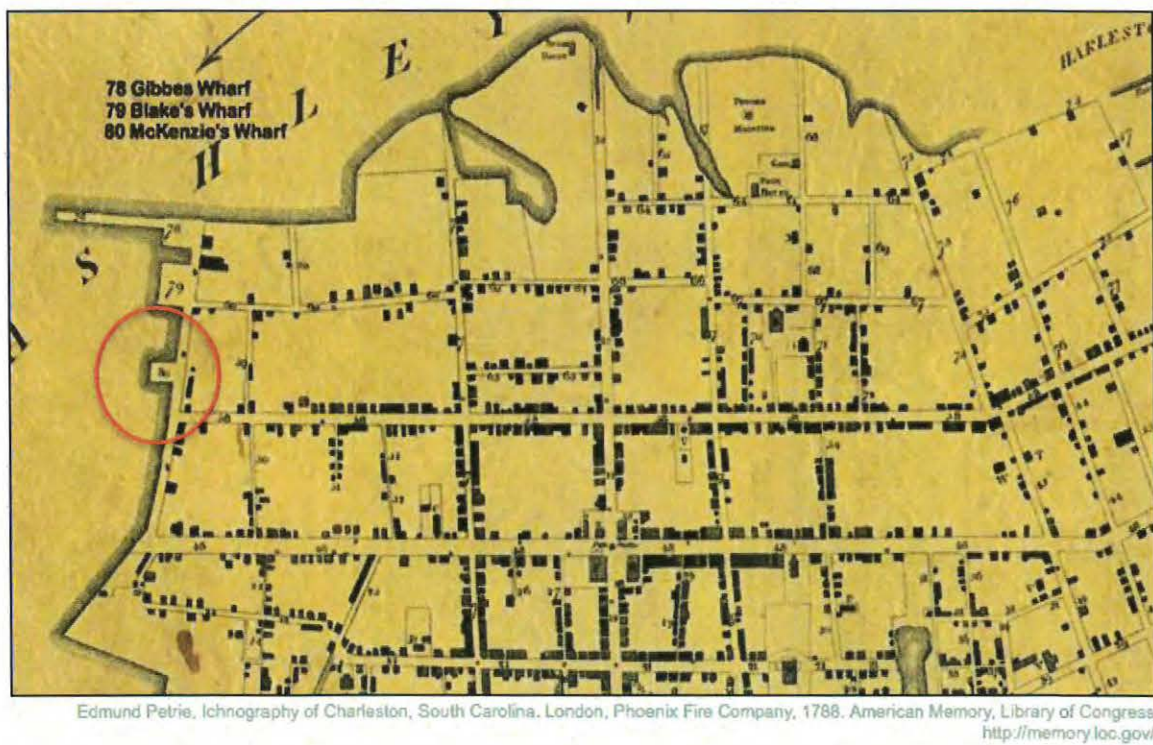


Figure 3: Robert Mackenzie's wharf. As seen from the 1788 Iconography of Charleston.

Property History

Robert Mackenzie and 44 South Battery

One of these early developers was Robert Mackenzie, a Scottish merchant likely born in the early eighteenth century. Mackenzie specifically helped to develop the piece of land where the house at 44 South Battery now sits.⁴ Evidence suggests that Mackenzie both lived and worked on this land.

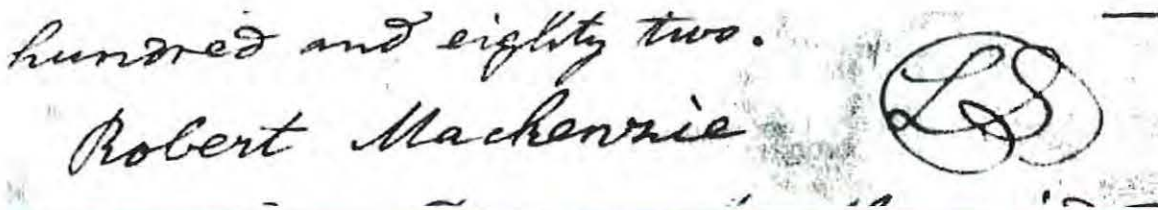


Figure 4: Robert Mackenzie's signature in his will dated to 1782. From Ancestry.com.

In his will, dated to 1787, Mackenzie left “that Lot of Land whereon I formerly lived the South Bay in Charles Town” to his grandson, Robert Mackenzie Johnston.⁵ Mary is the only daughter of Robert Mackenzie, and marries Charles Johnston, their son is Robert Mackenzie Johnston.⁶ In fact, Robert Mackenzie named Charles Johnston, his son-in-law and husband to his only daughter, Mary Mackenzie Johnston, as the executor to his will. Additionally, Robert Mackenzie specified “to all that lot of land on the North side of South Bay in Charles Town South Carolina, to my grandson Robert Mackenzie Johnston when he shall obtain the age of twenty one.”⁷

Once Robert Mackenzie passed away in 1789, Charles Johnston gained ownership of the land at South Bay. Although Mackenzie wanted the land to go to

³ Gibbes Wharf and City Market: Halsey Map Preservation Society of Charleston.

⁵ “Last Will and Testament of Robert Mackenzie,” South Carolina Wills and Probate Records 1670-1980. [database online] : Ancestry.com. Accessed on October 25th 2019. <https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/9080>.

⁶ “Last Will and Testament of Robert Mackenzie,” South Carolina Wills and Probate Records.

⁷ Ibid.

his grandson Robert Mackenzie Johnston, there is not a deed that can be located that traces the land on South Bay back to Robert Mackenzie Johnston.

Charles Johnston wrote his own will in 1804. In the will, he stated,

"all the rest of my estate I bequeath in equal division to share and share alike of all my children to wit, my son Robert, my daughters Kattie, Marian, Charlotte and Anna and where as my daughters Kattie and Marian have already received part of my estate it is my will that such sum shall be deducted from their share without interest, when my executors after mentioned/shall make such division of my estate as they may think best for the common interest of my children for which purpose I nominate constitute and appoint my son Robert Mackenzie Johnston, my son in law James Macbeth, and my son in law Peter Porcher, to be my executors with power to divide or otherwise dispose of my estate as may seem best for the interest of the whole.⁸"

Robert Mackenzie appears in various newspaper articles as he sold off portions of his land in this same area. In 1788 Mackenzie appeared in the City Gazette and Daily Advertiser newspaper looking for a "convenient house for a store on South Bay."⁹ This information tells us that the land was developed enough to be able to hold businesses and residences. Over time the neighborhood developed mostly due to the efforts of Mackenzie and his three business partners mentioned earlier. These four men and their development efforts led to creation of many of the historic houses in the South Battery area of Charleston, many of which are still standing today. By 1922 the south end of the Charleston Peninsula was filled in by Murray Boulevard as part of the city's "West End" improvements.

⁸ "Last Will and Testament of Charles Johnston," South Carolina Wills and Probate Records 1670-1980. [database online]: *Ancestry.com*. [Accessed on October 25th 2019].

⁹ December 18, 1786 | *Columbian Herald* (published as *The Columbian Herald* or the *Patriotic Courier of North-America*) | Charleston, South Carolina | Advertisement | Issue 238 | Page [3]

Robert Mackenzie also had a wharf located just off the end of the property at

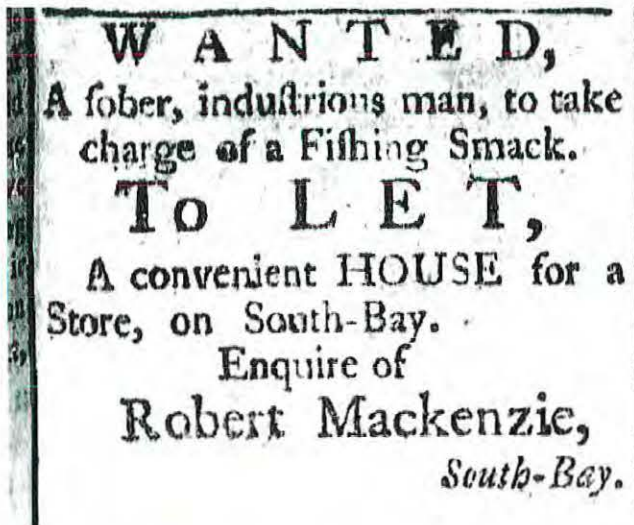


Figure 5: Advertisement from the City Gazette and Daily Advertiser 1788.

44 South Battery into the Ashley River, from which he conducted business.¹⁰ The wharf appears in the 1788 Iconography of Charleston map¹¹ and this information can also be found in "An Architectural Guide to Charleston, South Carolina."¹²

In a newspaper advertisement from 1788 Mackenzie sought out a "sober industrious man to take charge of a fishing

smack."¹³ A fishing smack is a term for a fishing boat.¹⁴ This is further evidence that Mackenzie owned residential property on South Bay and conducted business there as well.

¹⁰ "Advertisement." City Gazette (Charleston, South Carolina), November 2, 1790: [3]. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank.com>

⁵ Petrie, Edmund, Adam Tunno, and Phoenix Fire-Company Of London. *Iconography of Charleston, South-Carolina: at the request of Adam Tunno, Esq., for the use of the Phœnix Fire-Company of London, taken from actual survey, 2d August.* [London: E. Petrie, 1790] Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/80692362/>.

⁶ Thomas, W. H. Johnson Simons, Albert, 1890-1980. "An Architectural Guide to Charleston, South Carolina, Ante-Bellum Period: The Misses Johnston's House," Lowcountry Digital Library, Historic Charleston Foundation, 1971.

¹³ Advertisement - City Gazette (published as City Gazette and Daily Advertiser.) - April 29, 1788 - page [1] April 29, 1788 | City Gazette (published as City Gazette and Daily Advertiser.) | Charleston, South Carolina | Advertisement | Volume VI | Issue 934 | Page [1]

¹⁴ Ibid.

Robert Mackenzie & The Charleston Tea Party

The Charleston Tea Party occurred November 7th 1774, when “an oblation was made to Neptune”¹⁵ as described by the South Carolina Gazette. This was the act of throwing tea into Charleston Harbor in protest against the taxes on tea imposed by the British government at the time. This was in response to the “Tea Act” put forth by the British for the East India Company to have a monopoly over tea in the colonies. The larger of these protests happened in Boston where protestors dressed as Mohawk Indians lead by Samuel Adams boarded ships carrying the tea and dumped the tea into the harbor. In the Charleston Tea party, four men: Messers, Lindsay, Kinsley and Mackenzie took the tea that was shipped to them from the East India Company and dumped the chests into the Charleston Harbor.

In the instance of the Charleston Tea party, there is evidence that Robert Mackenzie dumped his chest of East India Tea, which was shipped to Charleston by the Britannia, into the harbor. What is not certain is where his loyalties were. There is evidence that he was forced to dump his chest of tea into Charleston Harbor against his own will.¹⁶ Mackenzie would not have wanted to dump his newly acquired tea, which he was going to sell, into the harbor because he would lose a profit. Mackenzie may have been loyal to the British crown because he was known to have been “notorious among the sons of liberty” and against the “rebels” of the

⁸ South Carolina Gazette. (1774, November). Charleston Tea Party. South Carolina Gazette, p. 2.

¹⁶ Brinkmeyer, Robert H., and Walter B. Edgar. *Citizen-scholar: essays in honor of Walter Edgar*. Columbia, South Carolina: The University of South Carolina Press, 2016.

colony who caused an uproar over tea.¹⁷ Additionally, Mackenzie was seen in the newspaper in the State Gazette of South Carolina as owning a clothing store with John Tunno.¹⁸ Tunno was also a known sympathizer with the British crown.¹⁹ Therefore, it is possible that since these two men were business partners, and possibly even friends, their loyalties may have been similar. Although the continental army ultimately won the American Revolution, Mackenzie stayed in Charleston, South Carolina till his death in 1789.

Robert Mackenzie left a legacy attached to the Johnston home at 44 South Battery. Without him, the current house may not exist as he was responsible for the development of the land on which the house now sits. To be clear, the house he lived in on South Bay is not the same house that sits at 44 South Battery currently as the home was not constructed until the early- to mid-nineteenth century by his granddaughters.

In a city directory from 1790, Robert Mackenzie's son-in-law, Charles Johnston, is listed as living on Lamboll's Lane.²⁰ Mackenzie owned the land up to Lamboll's Lane, so it is likely that Johnston was probably living on his father-in-law's land at the time. After this point in time, this piece of land was listed on plats as "heirs of Robert Mackenzie"²¹ since he was the one who originally owned the land.

¹⁷ Brinkmeyer, Robert H., and Walter B. Edgar. *Citizen-scholar: essays in honor of Walter Edgar*.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ *Charleston City Directory*. 1790 p.19

²¹ R.K. Payne, *Plan of a Tract of Land on South Bay Street*. [microfilm] No Date. Charleston County Public Library, South Carolina room.

Charlotte and Anna Johnston

Charlotte and Anna Johnston were the granddaughters of Robert Mackenzie and the daughters of Mary Mackenzie and Charles Johnston. Charlotte and Anna lived in the home at 44 South Battery. In a deed of conveyance dated in 1812, Charlotte and Anna Johnston purchased a sliver of land from the adjoining lot from their sister Marian who lived next door.²² This small sliver of land allowed the two sisters to make their lot square. At some point in around the 1830s, Charlotte and Anna built the house that now stands at 44 South Battery. It is for this reason that the house became historically named "The Johnston Home."

Charlotte and Anna were also in the ward book as owning the property 1850-1856.²³ In an 1859 city directory, Anna Johnston is listed as living at 26 South Bay, the historic address of 44 South Bay.²⁴ In an undated plat by R.K. Payne, the home was labeled as "The Misses Johnston home."²⁵

In a history written about the sisters, they left the property in 1861 in order to flee the bombardment of Charleston during the civil war.²⁶ After the civil war, Anna and Charlotte Johnston moved back into the home at 44 South Battery,²⁷ then known as 26 South Bay. It's possible that Charlotte passed away during the time of

²² Charleston County. Records of the Register Mesne Conveyance (RMC), Charleston, S.C. Deed Book W15 p. 346.

²³ City Ward Books. Ward 2 1852-1856.

²⁴ City of Charleston. *Charleston City Directory, 1859* [microfilm], South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library, Charleston, SC.

²⁵ R.K. Payne, *Plan of a Tract of Land on South Bay Street*. No date [microfilm] South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library.

²⁶ Thomas, W. H. Johnson Simons, Albert, 1890-1980. "An Architectural Guide to Charleston, South Carolina, Ante-Bellum Period: The Misses Johnston's House" Lowcountry Digital Library, Historic Charleston Foundation, 1971.

²⁷ Ibid.

the civil war, since she is not listed in the family wills. This is not certain, however, because a death certificate could not be located.

Not much is known about whether or not the sisters ever married. In a will from a family member named Mary Corbett, she says that Charlotte Johnston was married to a J.J. Engler of Jacksonville, Florida.²⁸ However, a marriage certificate could not be located either.

The sisters became legendary among the deeds of conveyance going forward for this house because they are mentioned as the original owners of the house all the way till present day. In a deed of conveyance dated in 1871, Mary Corbett conveyed the home to Benjamin Rutledge and from this point forward, ownership of the residence passed through several generations of the Rutledge family up until present day.²⁹ It is unclear when Mary Corbett was conveyed the home from Charlotte and Anna Johnston. Mary Corbett is a relative of Anna and Charlotte Johnston, but it is not clear how she is related. It is believed she might be a sister-in-law because in her will she calls Peter Porcher her brother.³⁰ Peter Porcher is the husband of Charlotte and Anna's sister, Marian. In the 1870s ward book, Charlotte and Anna's names are crossed out and Benjamin Rutledge's name is inserted.³¹

²⁸ "Last Will and Testament of Mary Corbett" South Carolina Wills and Probate Records 1670-1980. [database online]: *Ancestry.com*. November 24, 2019.

²⁹ RMC, Charleston, S.C. Deed Book W15, p. 346.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ City of Charleston. City Tax Assessment Ward Books, Charleston, S.C., Ward 2 1876-1880, p. 38[microfilm] South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library.

The Rutledge Family – Benjamin Huger Rutledge

After the Civil War, Benjamin Huger Rutledge bought the Johnston Home from Mary Corbett. Benjamin Huger Rutledge was a Captain in the 4th Carolina



Figure 7: Benjamin Huger Rutledge Jr.

Calvary during the Civil War and was a signer of the Ordinance of Succession.³² He was an influential person in Charleston society and a prominent lawyer with the law firm Messers, Pettigru and Lesene.³³ He attended Yale College and graduated with “distinguished honors.”³⁴ At the start of the Civil War, he was given the rank of Captain in the Charleston Light Dragoons.

Rutledge took military service seriously and dedicated himself to his troops during the Civil

War. Rutledge’s Light Dragoons participated in some of the toughest fighting of the Civil War while in Virginia.³⁵ Once the war concluded, Rutledge returned to Charleston to practice at his law firm. Eventually he opened his own law firm with his partner called Rutledge and Young.³⁶ He practiced law for more than 20 years

³² *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina, Issue 3* (Walker, Evans & Cogswell Company, Printers, 1894), p. 26-28.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

following the war and was involved in some of the most important cases tried in Charleston courts at the time.³⁷

In 1858, Benjamin Huger Rutledge married Eleanore Maria Middleton, daughter of Oliver Middleton.³⁸ Together they had seven children: Benjamin Huger Rutledge, Oliver Middleton Rutledge, Alice Weston Rutledge Frost, Hugh Rutledge,



Figure 8: Benjamin Huger Rutledge

Edward Rutledge, Eleanore M. Rutledge, and finally Mary Ellen Rutledge. Only four of the seven children survived to adulthood: Benjamin Huger Rutledge, Oliver Middleton Rutledge, Alice Weston Rutledge Frost and Edward Rutledge.

In March of 1893 Benjamin Huger Rutledge passes away. After his passing the home is left to his children. In a deed from 1905, Benjamin Rutledge conveyed the home to his four children.³⁹ The property was to be divided up among the four

children, one forth each. In that same deed, one year later, the two oldest children: Benjamin Rutledge and Oliver Rutledge negotiated a deal with their younger

³⁷ *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina, Issue 3* (Walker, Evans & Cogswell Company, Printers, 1894), p. 26-28.

³⁸ "Matrimony Notice." *Charleston Courier* (Charleston, South Carolina), January 25, 1858: [2]. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org/>

³⁹ RMC, Charleston, S.C. Deed Book F24. p. 688.

siblings Edward Rutledge and Alice Weston Rutledge Frost which resulted in the two younger siblings then having full ownership of the entire property together.

During the time the Rutledge family owned the home, the original “two-four-six” scheme of the home was altered in order to accommodate the many generations of the Rutledge family that came to live in the home.⁴⁰ This new layout allowed for more room for the multiple Rutledge families that live in the home at one time.

By the time the 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map is created, the Rutledge family lives at 44 South Battery. In this image we can see that there is a two story wooden piazza, a brick main house, a brick and wood portion of the home and some out buildings as well as a stable. This is the first time 44 South Battery shows up on a Sanborn Map.

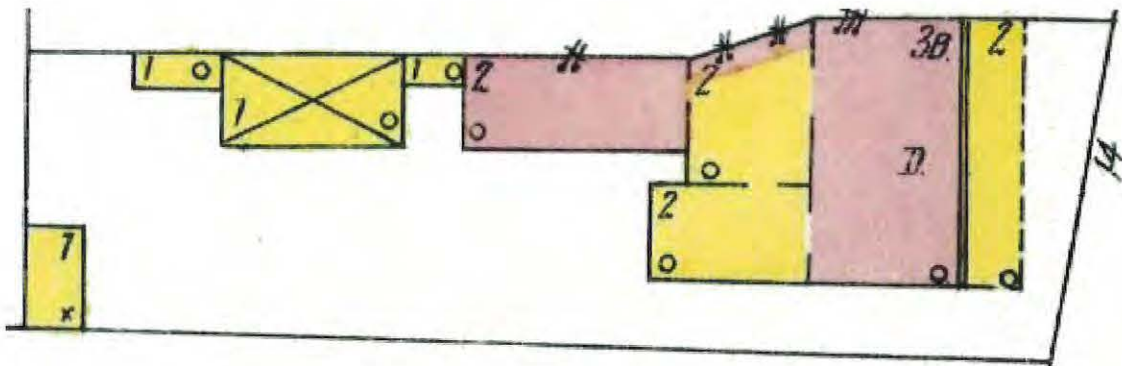


Figure 9: Sanborn Map from the South Carolina Room.

⁴⁰ Thomas, W. H. Johnson Simons, Albert, 1890-1980. “An Architectural Guide to Charleston, South Carolina, Ante-Bellum Period: The Misses Johnston's House” Lowcountry Digital Library, Historic Charleston Foundation, 1971.

The Rutledge Family – Dr. Edward Rutledge

Dr. Edward Rutledge was born on June 28, 1870 to Benjamin and Eleanore Rutledge. It was shortly after his birth that the family moved into 44 South Bay. Dr. Rutledge, a descendant of colonists and likely named after his ancestor, Edward

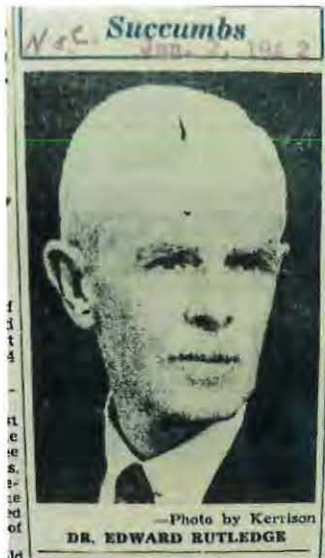


Figure 10: Dr. Edward Rutledge

Rutledge, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Dr. Rutledge was destined for success. He became a well-known doctor in the Charleston area in the early twentieth century, running a practice at the northeast corner of Meeting and Queen Streets.⁴¹ Well-known among Charleston families, Rutledge became a family physician to many. He was also a professor at the Medical College of Charleston (MUSC) and continued teaching after he retired. Furthermore, he was a surgeon to both the fire department and a local orphanage.⁴²

Edward lived in the house at 44 South Battery with his wife, Eliza Huger Wells Rutledge, also known as “Lillie,” and together they had three daughters: Anna Wells Rutledge, Ella M. Rutledge, and Eliza H. Rutledge.⁴³

In 1914, Dr. Edward Rutledge wrote his last will and testament. In his last will and testament, Edward expressed his love and devotion to his wife and children. He wished that the house at 44 South Battery be left to his wife, Lillie Wells Rutledge. Furthermore, he stipulated that after Lillie's passing, the house was

⁴¹ Charleston News and Courier (Charleston, South Carolina), January 9, 1942: 2. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org/apps/news/document->

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ancestry.com. 1920 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Images reproduced by Family Search.

to go to their three daughters.⁴⁴ In the case that Edward survived his wife, Lillie, the house was to be returned to him. Therefore, it is this will and deed that put the house into Lillie's possession.

However, before Edward could convey the house and land to his wife, Lillie, he had to obtain the other fifty percent of the property that was owned by his sister Alice Rutledge Frost. He could not give away the entire property to his wife unless he had full ownership of the property. In a deed of conveyance from 1917 Alice Rutledge Frost conveyed her part of the land at 44 South Battery to Lillie Rutledge.⁴⁵ Then the property at 44 South Battery was in the full ownership of Lillie Wells Rutledge.

Edward Rutledge passed away at the age of seventy-one in 1942. In a newspaper clipping from 1942, his obituary states that he passed away in his home at 44 South Battery.⁴⁶ Edward was survived by his wife Lillie Rutledge and his three daughters, Eliza, Anna and Ella.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ RMC, Charleston, S.C. Deed Book F25 p.440 [on microfilm].

⁴⁵ RMC, Charleston, S.C. Deed Book R28 p. 133 [on microfilm].

⁴⁶ Charleston News and Courier (Charleston, South Carolina), January 9, 1942: 2. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org/apps/news/document->

⁴⁷ Ibid.

The Rutledge Family - Eliza Huger Wells Rutledge - Suffragette

Eliza Huger Wells Rutledge, also known as “Lillie” was born in 1872 in Charleston, South Carolina to Edward W. Wells and Anna Mason Smith. She married into the Rutledge family when she married Dr. Edward Rutledge. Eventually she became a prominent social figure among Charleston society. She was well-known among the other ladies in the area and frequently attended social gatherings in



Figure 11: Eliza “Lillie” Huger Wells Rutledge

Charleston. She hosted a number of social gatherings at her own home on 44 South Battery as advertised in the paper.⁴⁸ One of these parties was a “card party” to raise money for Roper Hospital. It is likely that her connection to this fundraiser and her passion from the cause was due to her husband’s profession as a physician.⁴⁹ Lillie also loved to travel with her husband. Specifically, she traveled to Blowing Rock North Carolina and stayed in a cottage according to a newspaper article from 1918.⁵⁰ In a passenger manifest from 1939, Eliza traveled to Bermuda with her husband.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Evening Post (Charleston, South Carolina), January 17, 1916: 6. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org/apps/news/document-view?>

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Evening Post (Charleston, South Carolina), August 16, 1918: 4. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org/apps/news/document-view?>

⁵¹ Ancestry.com. *New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820-1957*[database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

Eliza can easily be summed up as a Charleston socialite. She was a member of several clubs in the area such as the Confederate College Board.⁵² One of the most important clubs that Eliza was a part of was a Women's Equal Suffrage League. Eliza also knew other important people who would become historical figures in the women's suffrage movement in the Charleston area. Her name was listed second to Susan Pringle Frost in a petition to congressman Whaley for women's voting



Figure 12: Eliza "Lillie" Huger Wells Rutledge – West Indian Expo Photograph

rights.⁵³ Eliza wanted equal voting rights for women and went to the meeting at Susan Pringle Frost's residence in order to speak to congressman Whaley about obtaining women's rights. Not much else is known about Eliza's involvement in the equal suffrage league.

On October 4th 1918, tragedy struck the Rutledge and Wells families. News detailing the death of Eliza's brother reached Charleston. A friend of Edward L. Wells from Montana traveled to Charleston to deliver the news to the family. While in Charleston he stayed at 44 South Battery as detailed by the Charleston News and Courier.⁵⁴ Edward L. Wells, Eliza's brother was a captain in the First Division American Expeditionary Force. While fighting in Exermont in the Argone in France during World War I, Captain Wells died trying to

⁵² Evening Post (Charleston, South Carolina), February 3, 1920: 11. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org/>

⁵³ Charleston News and Courier (Charleston, South Carolina), June 26, 1915: 8. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org/>

⁵⁴ Charleston News and Courier (Charleston, South Carolina), February 29, 1920: 17. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org>

save his company from enemy fire. Captain Wells was honored with the distinguished service cross for his bravery in battle as well as the Croix De Guerre a service metal from the French military.⁵⁵

During the time that Captain Wells was away fighting in World War I, Eliza's mother, Anna, and sister, Sabina, came to live with the Rutledge family at 44 South Battery according to the 1920 census.⁵⁶ By the time the 1944 Sanborn map was published, the stable in the backyard has been converted into an "auto" for cars. The building labeled 44 and $\frac{1}{2}$ became larger with one more floor. This building was a two-story brick masonry structure with a wood frame third floor later added. This building was probably used for the extra family members that came to live with the Rutledge's, such as Eliza's mother, Anna, and sister, Sabina.

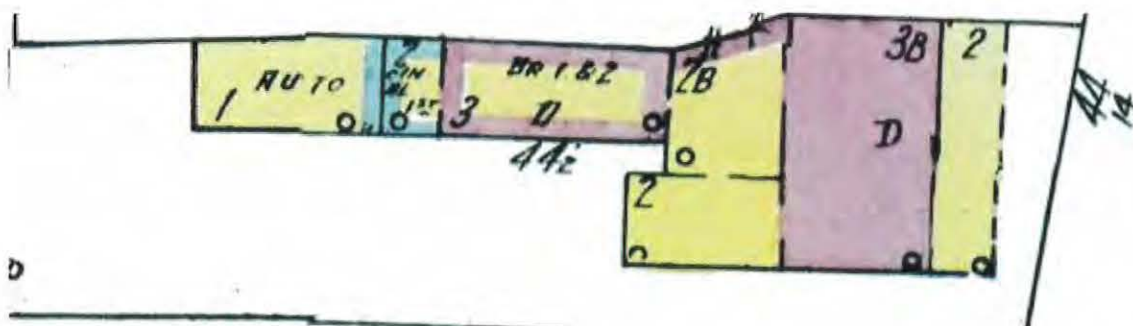


Figure 13: 1944 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 44 South Battery.

In May of 1959, Eliza "Lillie" Huger Wells Rutledge passed away after leading an eventful life.⁵⁷ At her passing, her husband's will was carried out for 44 South

⁵⁵ Charleston News and Courier (Charleston, South Carolina), May 25, 1919: 1. NewsBank: America's News – Historical and Current. <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.ccpl.org>

⁵⁶ Year: 1920; Census Place: Charleston Ward 2, Charleston, South Carolina; Roll: T625_1687; Page: 4A; Enumeration District: 23

⁵⁷ City of Charleston, Death Certificates Charleston, S.C. Rutledge, Lillie., Ancestry.com [database online]

Battery and the house was passed on to their three daughters: Anna, Eliza, and Ella. In a deed of conveyance from 1959,⁵⁸ the house was officially in the hands of their daughters. Anna and Eliza went on to live in the house with their individual families.

The Rutledge Family – Anna Wells Rutledge

Anna Wells Rutledge is the daughter is Eliza “Lillie” Wells Rutledge and Edward Rutledge and is born on June 22nd 1907.⁵⁹ Anna inherited the home at 44 South Battery with her sisters and lived there until her death in 1996. She became well-known in the Charleston area for her artistic talents and was also a well-known art historian nationally and in Charleston. She was a patron of the South Carolina Historical Society and loved any type of history. Anna was also the curator at the Gibbs Museum of Art for several years. In 1978 Anna won the William Gilmore Simms Award for her extensive research on the state’s art history.⁶⁰ Anna’s studies into art history came from a well-rounded education. She is associated with the Yale University Library and the American Philosophical Society.⁶¹ She studied the arts at the National Portrait Gallery in London and at the British Museum.⁶²

Anna was found in the driveway of her home on 44 South Battery after falling from a second story window to her death in 1996.⁶³ At the news of her death the Charleston community mourned. She was well loved in the area and much like her

⁵⁸ RMC, Charleston, S.C. Deed Book W68 p. 497 [on microfilm].

⁵⁹ Ancestry.com. *U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2014.

⁶⁰ *News and Courier*. June 6th 1978 p 8-A.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

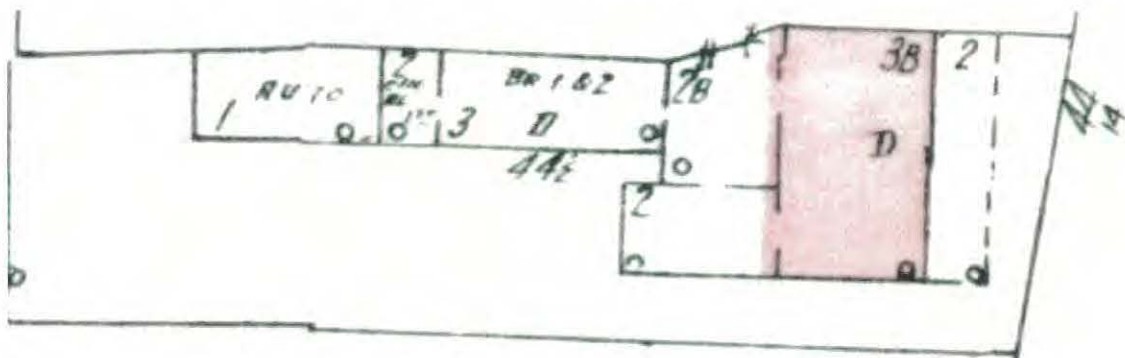
⁶³ *Post and Courier*. Biography Rutledge, Anna Wells. June 15th 1996.

mother, was a Charleston socialite. After her death a memorial internship fund was set up in her name. This fund is a scholarship for graduate students in the field of humanities. Anna is still talked about today among Charleston natives and is well remembered.

The house stayed in the ownership of the three sisters with Eliza as the main person on the deed until her death in 2012. In a deed of conveyance from 2012, the Rutledge family house finally left the family and the Carlson family bought it.⁶⁴

Changes to the Home

Right before the three Rutledge sisters, Anna, Ella, and Eliza own the home, the 1955 Sanborn map shows no changes since the 1944 Sanborn.



*Figure 14: 1955 Sanborn map – Charleston County Library
South Carolina Room*

⁶⁴ RMC, Charleston, S.C. Deed Book GE 0301 p. 071.

The home retained its white picket fence for many years which dates to when the home was built by Charlotte and Anna Johnston. The front gate of the white picket fence became a central icon of the front of the home. In 2001, Donald McPherson, Eliza's husband, applied to the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) to paint and repair the front fence.⁶⁵ Repairs were made to the front fence all the way until 2013.



Figure 15: White Gate that is said to be original to when the home was built. Photographed October 2019 by Lisa Gardiner.

At some point after that, the front fence was replaced by a masonry wall, but the fence still retains the historic front gate. Finally, in 2014, Emily Carlson applied to the BAR for interior non structural demolition and removal of rotted, non historical awnings.

In a damage assessment done on the home after hurricane Hugo, it was found that the damage was minimal.⁶⁶ There was just some debris in the front yard. The damage assessment from the

earthquake of 1886 was also minimal.⁶⁷ The only repair to the home was done to a chimney which was

rebuilt at the cost of three hundred dollars.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ 44 South Battery Property File. Board of Architectural Review Charleston.

⁶⁶ 44 South Battery Property File. Hurricane Hugo Damage Assessment Survey Collection, 1989. Historic Charleston Foundation, Margarette Childs Archives.

⁶⁷ 44 South Battery Property File. Earthquake of 1886 Damage Assessment Survey Collection. Historic Charleston Foundation, Margarette Childs Archives.

⁶⁸ 44 South Battery Property File. Hurricane Hugo Damage Assessment Survey Collection, 1989. Historic Charleston Foundation, Margarette Childs Archives.



Figure 16: Photographs taken after hurricane Hugo to assess damage to the home and neighborhood. Courtesy: Historic Charleston Foundation Archives.

Architectural Description

Setting

44 South Battery sits on a rectangle lot below Broad Street on South Battery in Charleston South Carolina. The house is in a residential part of the Charleston Peninsula. The South Façade of the house faces South Battery where as the east and west facades face other residential homes. The lot that the home sits on is small in size.

Summary

The house is five bays wide on the front façade and three bays deep. This house is white in color with green window shutters. The roof of the house is a hipped roof with the main approach to the house on the side gable. The main house is a brick frame dwelling with stucco finish. The front façade of the house that sits on South Battery boasts a two story piazza. The two story piazza has six doric columns across the front of the piazza on each floor. In between the columns is a row of classical balusters on both floors of the piazzas. The first floor of windows are two over two over two triple sash windows. The windows on the third floor piazza are nine over nine double sash windows. The muttons on the windows on the third floor are thin in size. The shutters on the windows on the bottom floor are louvered shutters as well as on the third floor. There is a central front door on the first floor of the piazza that has six panels. There is a fanlight above the front door on the first floor as well. There are two side lights on either side of the front door too.

The second floor piazza has a central door that leads out to the piazza. The door has a three paneled transom light above the door. The ceiling on both piazza floors has a coffered ceiling. The home rests on a raised masonry foundation.

Behind the main house is a converted kitchen house which is brick on the first two floors and wood frame on the third floor. Next to the kitchen house is a three car garage.



Figure 17: 44 South Battery as viewed from a 45 degree angle. Photo taken by Lisa Gardiner in October 2019.



Figure 18: Photo taken from the front of the house. Photo taken by Lisa Gardiner in October 2019.

Conclusion

The Johnston Home, 44 South Battery, has a long history that goes back over one hundred years. The house that sits on this property is an important part of Charleston's architectural history because it is an early example of the homes that would be built on this end of the peninsula. The sisters Charlotte and Anna built the house on the lands that their grandfather developed. Since that time the home has seen different owners descended from either the Johnstons or the Rutledges. From those families, historical figures from Charleston history lived in the home. A suffragette, Eliza Huger Wells Rutledge, who helped secure women's voting rights in America. Edward Rutledge who was prominent Charleston doctor and physician to many. Anna Wells Rutledge an art historian that was loved by many native to the Charleston area. There are many more in this list. This home is historically significant because of it's architecture and the families who built and lived in the house. For that reason, this house should be preserved for as long as possible.

Appendix A:

Annotated Chain of Title for 44. South Battery

By: Lisa Gardiner

Date: 1770

Grantor: Robert Mackenzie

Grantee: Charles Johnston and his Wife

Book and Page: ? Not Found

Type: ? Not Found

Comments: Robert Mackenzie helped develop the neighborhood with other Scottish merchants at the time. Robert Mackenzie owned the Mackenzie wharf that ran into the Ashley river as well as land up to Lamboll Street. Robert Mackenzie has only one daughter named Mary married Charles Johnston. Charles and Mary Johnston own the land after this time. In the 1739 map of Charleston, prior to Robert Mackenzie's ownership, shows this area in the marsh/water. In the 1788 Iconography of Charleston map, the wharf is shown just off the front of the property.

Date: C. 1835

Grantor: Charles Johnston and Mary Johnston

Grantee: Ann and Charlotte Johnston

Book and Page: ? Not Found

Type: Not Found

Comments: According to an architectural guide to Charleston from 1971, Charles Johnston and his wife leave the land to their daughters Ann and Charlotte Johnston. It is the two daughters who build the house on the land that is now 44. South Battery.

Date: 1871

Grantor: Mary Corbett

Grantee: Benjamin Rutledge and Eleanore Rutledge

Book and Page: K15 p. 54.

Type: Conveyance

Comments: It is not clear how the house came into the possession of Mary Corbett. According to her will, Charlotte and Anna Johnston are her sisters in law. According to an architectural guide to Charleston from 1971, Ann and Charlotte Johnston lived at 44. South Battery till the Civil War. They left the city once the war started. During that time the house was plundered of its furnishings. By the time the war has ended, Charlotte has passed away and the house belongs only to Ann Johnston. Mary Corbett comes into possession of the house at some point but this is not clear. She conveys the house to Benjamin Rutledge and the house stayed in the Rutledge family for many years onward.

Date: 1905

Grantor: Benjamin Rutledge and Eleanore Rutledge

Grantee: Benjamin Rutledge (Jr.), Oliver Rutledge, Edward Rutledge, Alice Rutledge

Book and Page: F-24 p. 688

Type: Conveyance

Comments: Benjamin Rutledge and Eleanore Rutledge leave the home to their four children after their death.

Date: 1906

Grantor: Benjamin Rutledge (Jr) and Oliver Rutledge

Grantee: Edward Rutledge and Alice Rutledge Frost

Book and Page: F-24 p.688

Type: Conveyance

Comments: When their parents, Benjamin and Eleanore Rutledge conveyed the house to their four kids, the two oldest kids, Benjamin Rutledge (Jr) and Oliver Rutledge conveyed the home to their two younger siblings, Edward Rutledge and Alice Rutledge Frost.

Date: 1914

Grantor: Edward Rutledge

Grantee: Lilly Rutledge

Book and Page: Y-25 p. 440

Type: Conveyance

Comments: In 1914 Edward Rutledge writes his will and from that day on the home is owned by Lilly Rutledge for her to have the rest of her life until her death. If Lilly dies first, then the home goes back to Edward Rutledge for the rest of his remaining life. The will states that after both of their deaths the home is to go to their three children. All of this information is translated onto the conveyance from the original will.

Date: 1917

Grantor: Alice Rutledge Frost

Grantee: Lilly Wells Rutledge

Book and Page: R-28 p.133

Type: Conveyance

Comments: Since Edward Rutledge owned only half of the property with his sister Alice Rutledge Frost, he could not give the entire property to his wife Lilly. Four years after Edward Rutledge wrote his will, Alice Rutledge Frost gave up her part of the property to Lilly Rutledge for Lilly to live out the rest of her life.

Date: 1959

Grantor: Lilly Wells Rutledge

Grantee: Anna Wells Rutledge, Eliza Huger Rutledge McPherson, Ella Middleton Rutledge Moore.

Book and Page: W-68 p.497

Type: Conveyance

Comments: Lilly Wells Rutledge passes away in 1959. At the time of her death, as stated in her husbands will, the home goes to their three surviving children, Anna Wells Rutledge, Eliza Huger Rutledge McPherson, Ella Middleton Rutledge Moore. In this conveyance, Anna Wells Rutledge and Ella Middleton Rutledge Moore give their half of the property to Eliza Huger Rutledge McPherson as her estate to live out her life in.

Date: 1995

Grantor: Eliza Huger Rutledge McPherson

Grantee: Donald Duncan McPherson

Book and Page: S-263 p. 890

Type: Conveyance

Comments: Donald Duncan McPherson, is listed as the "remandermen" after Eliza's death in 1995.

Date: 2012

Grantor: Eliza Huger Rutledge McPherson and Donald Duncan McPherson

Grantee: Carlson Eat LLC

Book and Page: 0301 GE 0071

Type: Conveyance

Comments: 44 South Battery is still listed as the life estate of Eliza Huger Rutledge McPherson at this point in time even though her husband is last family member living in the house until his death. The property is then sold to Carlson Eat LLC. from this point forward, therefore leaving the Rutledge family.

Appendix B:



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1902. South Carolina Room Charleston, County Public Library.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1944. Charleston County Public Library. South Carolina Room.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1955. Charleston County Public Library. South Carolina Room.

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