

41 Bogard Street

(c. 1853)



For more than 160 years, the two-story building at the southeast corner of Bogard and Percy Streets has been a commercial anchor for Elliottborough, serving as a tavern by 1853 and remaining a grocery or dining establishment for almost its entire existence.

Rev. William Percy¹ owned about eight acres in the neighborhood, which he had received from his brother-in-law, planter **Barnard Elliott**, in 1786. When

Rev. Percy died, a suit was brought to divide his holdings among his seven children and their families,² and his holdings were divided into 140 lots.³ In 1848, as part of the partition, his son **Rev. Barnard Elliott Percy** received a 1/7th interest made up of 20 of the lots, including Lot C-79, upon which 41 Bogard Street would later be built.⁴

In series of transactions with the different heirs of Rev. William Percy, **William Christopher Dukes**⁵ scooped up many of the neighborhood lots. On September 23, 1850, Rev. Bernard Percy sold three lots to Mr. Dukes for \$750: Lots C-45 (23 Percy Street), C-51 (21 Percy Street), and C-79 (41 Bogard Street).⁶

The particular lot upon which 41 Bogard Street was built was assessed at only \$300 in 1852 but then \$1500 in 1853. Given the relatively stable assessment for unimproved lots on the street, the increase is solid evidence of the date of construction, making the store one of the oldest buildings in the neighborhood.

¹ Rev. Percy was born in England in 1744 and died in 1819. He married Catherine Elliott (1748-1818) on May 18, 1776.

² Rev. Percy had had nine children, but two died without heirs before the property was partitioned.

³ Plat book A, page 36

⁴ Deed book A12, page 382

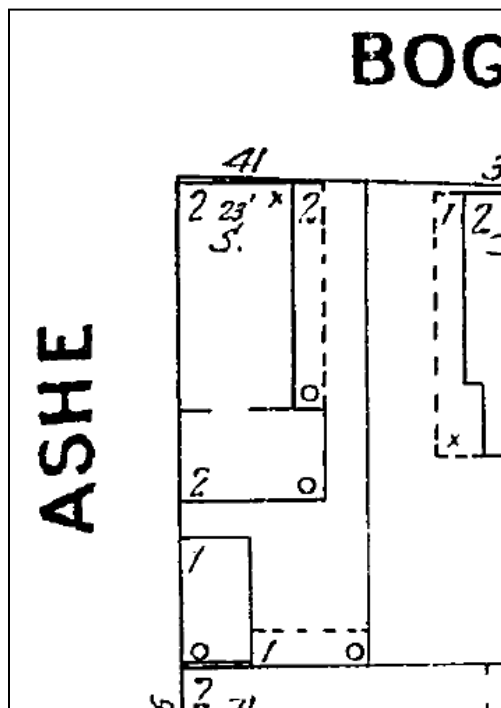
⁵ (b. Mar. 14, 1794; d. June 11, 1867)

⁶ Deed book G12, page 464

Mr. Dukes perhaps had the corner store built on his land, but he almost certainly was never connected to its actual operation. Mr. Dukes was a wildly successful cotton broker in the years before the Civil War, operating his own trading house. In addition, he was an officer or director with insurance companies and at least one bank.⁷

Instead, the first clear reference to the new building came in November 1853 when Mr. Stephen Busch applied for a license to operate a tavern there. Mr. Busch died in September 1857, and his widow, Anna Busch,⁸ took over the operation of the tavern. She was still operating the couple's tavern at the outbreak of the Civil War, but the final reference to the tavern appeared in October 1861.

Thereafter, the building was used as a grocery for at least some time. During the post-bellum period, a majority of groceries in Charleston were operated by immigrants from German, Prussia, and nearby nations. In at least 1867-70, one such immigrant couple from Prussia, H.J. and Mary Lange, operated a retail grocery at the site.



The property's owner, Mr. Dukes, died in 1867, and three of his children, as trustees for his estate, sold 41 Bogard Street to German-born grocer **Johan "John" Heinrich Heyer**⁹ for \$1200 on March 27, 1874.¹⁰ Mr. Heyer continued to use the building as a grocery and occupied the second floor with his family. When Mr. Heyer died in 1894, his daughter **Martha Catharina Albers**¹¹ received the property in about 1894.

Although Mrs. Albers retained the property for the rest of her life, she seems to

⁷ Charleston Daily News, June 14, 1867

⁸ (b. abt. 1812; d. May 2, 1887) In 1860, she was working as a grocer and occupied the house with her children. The youngest child was Stephen Busch, who was born in about 1858.

⁹ (b. March 13, 1818; d. May 26, 1894)

¹⁰ Deed book Q16, page 64

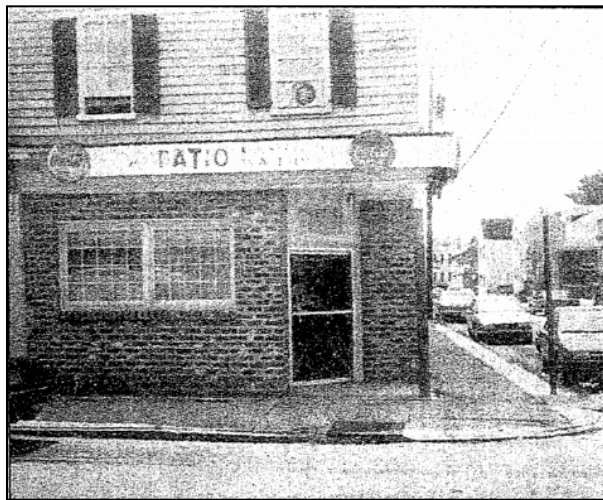
¹¹ (b. July 2, 1848; m. John Albers; d. Feb. 16, 1911)

have rented the building out to others who continued its use as a corner grocery.¹²

Mrs. Albers died in 1911, and the building was inherited by her children, **Anna M.S. Heins** and **John H. Albers**. On February 29, 1912, Mrs. Heins paid her brother \$2500 for his one-half interest in the property and became its sole owner.¹³

Mrs. Heins turned right around and sold it to **Peter A. Seres** on February 29, 1912.¹⁴ The Seres family had already been operating a grocery store at the site since 1907. Emma Seres, the matriarch of the family, was the grocer (and resident) until her death at the house in 1937. After her death, the building remained a grocery, but it was no longer operated by the family.¹⁵

Isaac Evans, who was living at the property by at least 1961, bought it on April 17, 1963, for \$10,000.¹⁶ How he used the first floor is unknown, but in August 1967, Mr. Evans got permission to have two apartments in the building.¹⁷



(pictured), the first floor had been bricked in.

Mr. Evans, who served as a national leader of a major black masons group,¹⁸ died on September 21, 1975, while residing at the house. **Mary C. McKnight** received a life estate by will in 1975 (giving her the ownership of the property only for her natural life), and resided in the house in 1975 to 1996. Mrs. McKnight had been operating the Famous Patio Tea Room since about 1961. At same point, at least by 1993

¹² From 1895 to 1904, German-born Martin D. and Meta Holling operated a grocery at the building. Later, it was operated by W.T. Hoffman (1905-06).

¹³ Deed book H26, page 95

¹⁴ Deed book F26, page 109

¹⁵ The store was Nolte's Grocery (1938-55), operated by Gustav Nolte, who always lived at the house. In 1958, Mrs. August Groves operated Groves Grocery and lived above.

¹⁶ Deed book Y78, page 118

¹⁷ "Orvin to Remodel Downtown Motel," News & Courier, Aug. 22, 1967, at 8B

¹⁸ "Evans Named to Masonic Position," News & Courier, Feb. 10, 1973, at 6A; "Local Man Appointed to Masonic Post," Evening Post, Feb. 8, 1973, at 11A

In 1999-2001, Cornell Owens occupied the house. A company, 9 Bogard Street, LLC, bought the remainder of Ms. McKnight's life estate on September 10, 2003.¹⁹

In 2008, Ken Vedrinski, the first chef in South Carolina to receive a five-star Mobil rating for his restaurant at the Woodlands Resort in Summerville, began operating an Italian restaurant named Trattoria Lucca.²⁰ The storefront had been vacant since the mid-1990s at that time.

¹⁹ Deed book Z467, page 133

²⁰ "Lowcountry chef plans to expand to peninsula," Charleston Post & Courier, Feb. 23, 2008, at B9