

Architectural Guide to  
Charleston

THE WILLIAM BLACKLOCK HOUSE

c. 1800

18 Bull Street

The closing years of the American Revolution were the most sanguinary and destructive with the British forces occupying Charleston while partizan resistance, with all its ferocity, raged throughout the state. The departing British ships left the city despoiled and its formerly prosperous merchants without capital to promote new enterprise ("Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys", George C. Rogers, Jr.) As agriculture recovered the vacuum in mercantile capital began to attract enterprise from other regions especially from England and New England.

Among the merchant adventurers from England who have left the most distinctive architectural contribution is William Blacklock who built has fastidiously designed and executed house at 18 Bull Street on a lot large enough to give a proper setting for out-buildings planned with equal consideration.

Not only the overall disposition of its elements but in the refined felicity of every detail this entire composition betrays the hand of an experienced and sensitive architect. Who he was, we do not know.

In its skillful use of red brick relieving arches with white marble key stones and impost strips it shows a family resemblance not only to the Nathaniel Russell House but also to Vanderhorst Row. This undeniable similarity may be the result of the prevailing mode of the same period and until further research can establish documentary proof this suggestion of the same authorship must remain only an intriguing supposition.

Within the house on the second floor unfortunate alterations have been made which deprive this area of architectural interest. However, the third floor has not been greatly changed and still accords with the quality of the exterior.

This house now lies within the proximity of the College of Charleston which recently has received it as a treasured gift from the generosity of Mr. Richard H. Jenrette. In its over all development the College expects to put the building in proper repair and use it for Bachelor Faculty Quarters and a Guest House. Its appreciated use thus will be assured.

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