

ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY
Neighborhood Housing Services Area

Performed by:
Department of Planning & Urban Development
City of Charleston, South Carolina
Summer, 1979

HISTORIC CHARLESTON FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

This architectural survey on the Gadsden Green area is the first one on this part of town. The object of the survey is to identify the buildings and their architectural style, record the buildings by photographs, research dates of construction, and look into any historical importance, attached to a building in the area.

The first step was to photograph the buildings for identification purposes and record architectural information on the forms used. (See Appendix I)

The Sanbourne maps and plat maps from the city archives were also consulted at this time. The buildings suspected of having any historical significance were then researched using tax maps, wardbooks, plat maps, assessment books, deeds, and mortgages. Since there was a time limit, the title search was preliminary, to get a basic idea of the older sections in this area. The notable architectural styles of this area were then researched, and the buildings placed in their proper categories according to their styles.

This survey has also been done to make the residents of this area more aware of their neighborhood's history. Since this area is the location of a major housing rehabilitation program (the Neighborhood Housing Services) it is hoped that this survey will make residents more aware of the architectural value of their homes, and more willing to emphasize these points when making renovations.

The Gadsden Green area is bounded by King Street to Hagood Avenue east to west, and the Crosstown Highway through to Congress Street south to north. This land consisted originally of the Wilson Farm which extended from King Street to Rutledge Avenue, and Shepherd Street to Race Street, and several independent lots to the west of Rutledge Avenue originally owned by T.W. Gadsden. There were a few other farms east of Rutledge Avenue, such as those owned by George Johnson and Frances Charlon but this area was not annexed into the city until 1849, and was considered as being "out in the country". (See Appendix II) The oldest wardbook of 1859 has recorded these few farms near King Street, but no structures to speak of.

The oldest recorded buildings appear in Ward Book Eight for the year 1880.

Although the approximate date of construction of these dwellings is not recorded, many of the houses erected by 1880 are still standing to-day.

These structures are mostly one story "single houses", homes one room wide made of wood with brick foundations - (See Appendix III). The roofs have the form of gables, and most of the buildings have porches built on to the sides of the structures facing west, away from the sun. The use of the side porch made for cooler summer breezes passing through the rooms. The façade materials for these houses are mostly shiplap and weatherboard siding.

These houses are found west of Rutledge Avenue, particularly along Larne Street, Fishburne and Ashton Streets, with a few on Norman, Rutledge Avenue and Fludd's Court. There were more plots of land available for sale on these streets, and many of the homes were built for the freedmen after the Civil War, thus the name "Freedman's" house.

The more recent homes were built mainly in the first 35 years of the 20th Century, and are of the bungalow style, one and two story structures with gently pitched

broad gables. (See Appendix IV) A lower gable covers an open or screened porch, and a larger gable covers the main portion of the house. These structures appear mostly in the area east of Rutledge Avenue. When these homes were constructed, this area was predominantly white. The U.S. Census of Population and Housing for the year 1960, shows that in this area, there lived 2,643 Whites as opposed to 1,790 Blacks. To-day, the area east of Rutledge Avenue is predominantly Black. Maps as early as 1859 (such as the Charleston Directory compiled by Means and Turnbull) show that most of the current streets did not exist in the Gadsden Green area, with the exception of President, Ashley, Rutledge, Line, Race, Congress, and King Streets. The reason for this is that the land up to President Street from the Ashley River between Sumter and Line Streets was under water, and only in the last 75 years has been filled in. This gives reason for the high tide marks which flood the area from the police station to-day up to Fishburne and Sumter Streets. (See Appendix V) Since this area was considered "out in the country", there was little need for a multitude of streets. Little has been written of this area, basically because there was nothing much here until at least 1900. On a map from 1900, there is shown the location of the Old Folk's Home, which was situated between Congress and Sumter Streets on the farthest west end toward the Ashley River. This institution is no longer standing, and it is not known when it was torn down. (See Appendix V)

From another map drawn up by Alfred O. Halsey in 1949, we know that a tornado swept through the area along President, Allway, Ashton and Fishburne Streets on September 29, 1938. (See Appendix VI) Although we do not know the extent of damage done to the properties, it appears probable that many homes were damaged. Soon after the tornado, in 1941 and 1942, the Gadsden Green Homes located on Allway Street and Hagood Avenue were built, providing 172 units for low income families in this area. The cost of building these homes

was approximately \$614,000; and they were constructed for a 60 year life, built of hollow tile, with a rough exterior finish, smooth interior, tile roofs, concrete floors, and vermin proof.

Another major construction in the Gadsden Green area is the Crosstown Highway built in the late 1960's. It's a direct route joining the lower Ashley River Bridge with the two Cooper River Bridges across the congested peninsular city. This \$5.7 million roadway divides what was once a coherent neighborhood, and now serves as one of the boundaries for the Gadsden Green area.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

FREEDMAN'S HOUSES

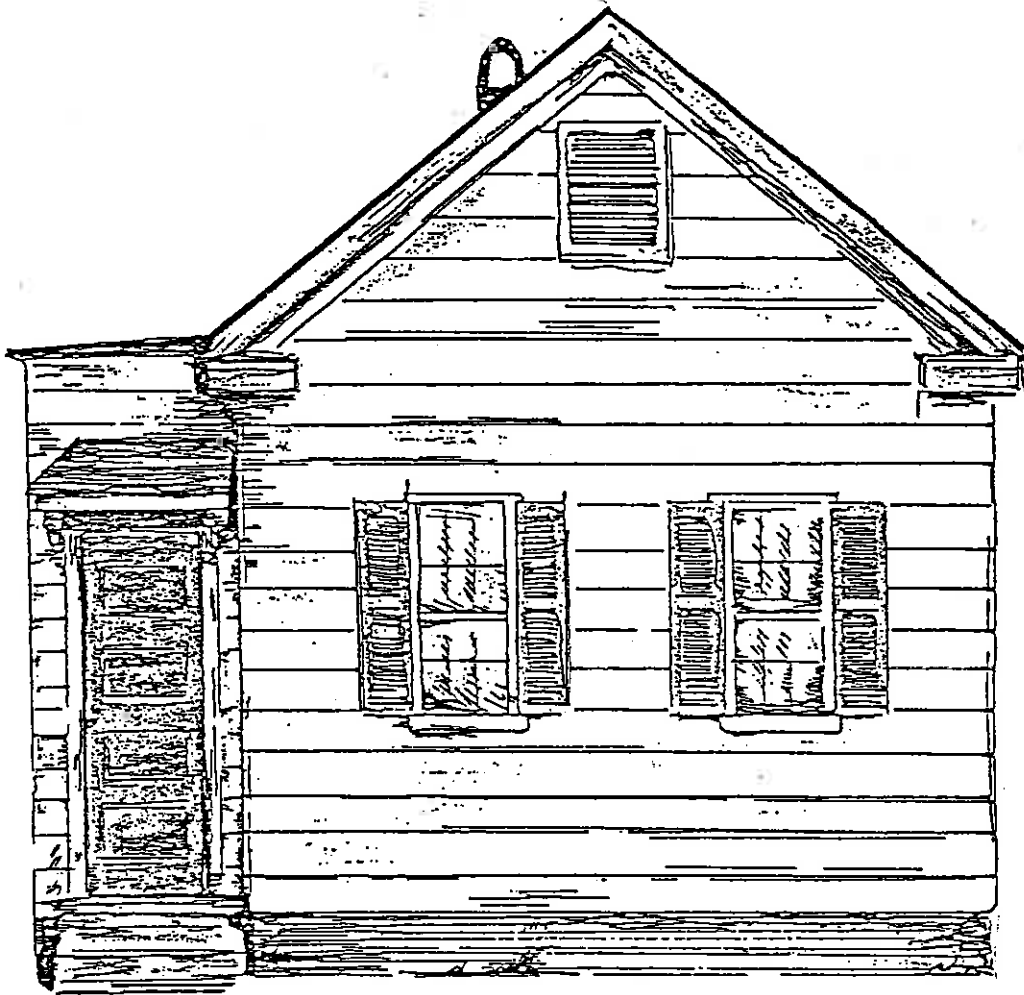
The architecture of the "Freedman's" house is very simple, thus making these structures relatively easy to point out. (See Appendix III) Since most of these houses were built from the late 1870's through the late 1880's, they were all built of wood with mostly brick foundations, though some have since been covered with cement through the years. These one story structures are one room wide and usually only two or three rooms deep, however, many have had rooms added on to the side and back. Chimneys mostly are situated on the single gable roofs or to the side.

Weatherboard siding was the most popular wood siding used with the boards slightly overlapping one another down the exterior of the house. The houses have no ornaments, as they were built strictly as simple dwellings. Though many owners have replaced their windows with modern fixtures, most houses were built with window sashes of six panes of glass over another six panes. The entrance ways are mostly plain, though some were built with transoms, a pane of glass sometimes divided into sections, above the doorway. More recent homes in the area have both a transom and sidelights, panes of glass along the sides of the doorway.

Many of these structures have since been covered with asbestos, aluminum, or vinyl siding, making it difficult to tell if, in fact, they are old, or copies of the "Freedman's" house. There are several examples of these houses in the Gadsden Green area. Examples of the oldest ones can be found among these houses:

Allway Street - 9, 33
Ashton Street - 1, 5, 7, 17, 19, 41
Carolina Street - 8
Carondelet - 7, 9, 11, 14, 15
Congress Street - 139, 147, 185, 233 & 235
Court Street - 7, 15
Fishburne Street - 170, 172, 207, 209, 211, 233, 235
Killian Street - 3, 5

APPENDIX III



Freedman's house

Larne Street - 2, 6, 11, 19
Nunan Street - 27, 29, 31, 51, 53, 56, 77, 83, 85
Orrs Court - 2, 6, 8, 10
President Street - 300, 304, 306, 308, 312
Sumter Street - 367, 374, 407, 409, 411, 426
Woodall Court - 1, 3½, 7, 9, 11

Other examples include:

Ashton Street - 21, 26, 29
Carondelet - 5, 12, 13
Court Street - 5, 20
Fishburne Street - 174, 176, 177, 190, 221, 225, 227
Killian Street - 12, 14, 15, 16
Larne Street - 10, 14, 21
Nunan Street - 12½
Rutledge Avenue - 553
Orrs Court - 16, 18, 22
President Street - 307
Race Street - 396, 422
Woodall Court - 20, 41

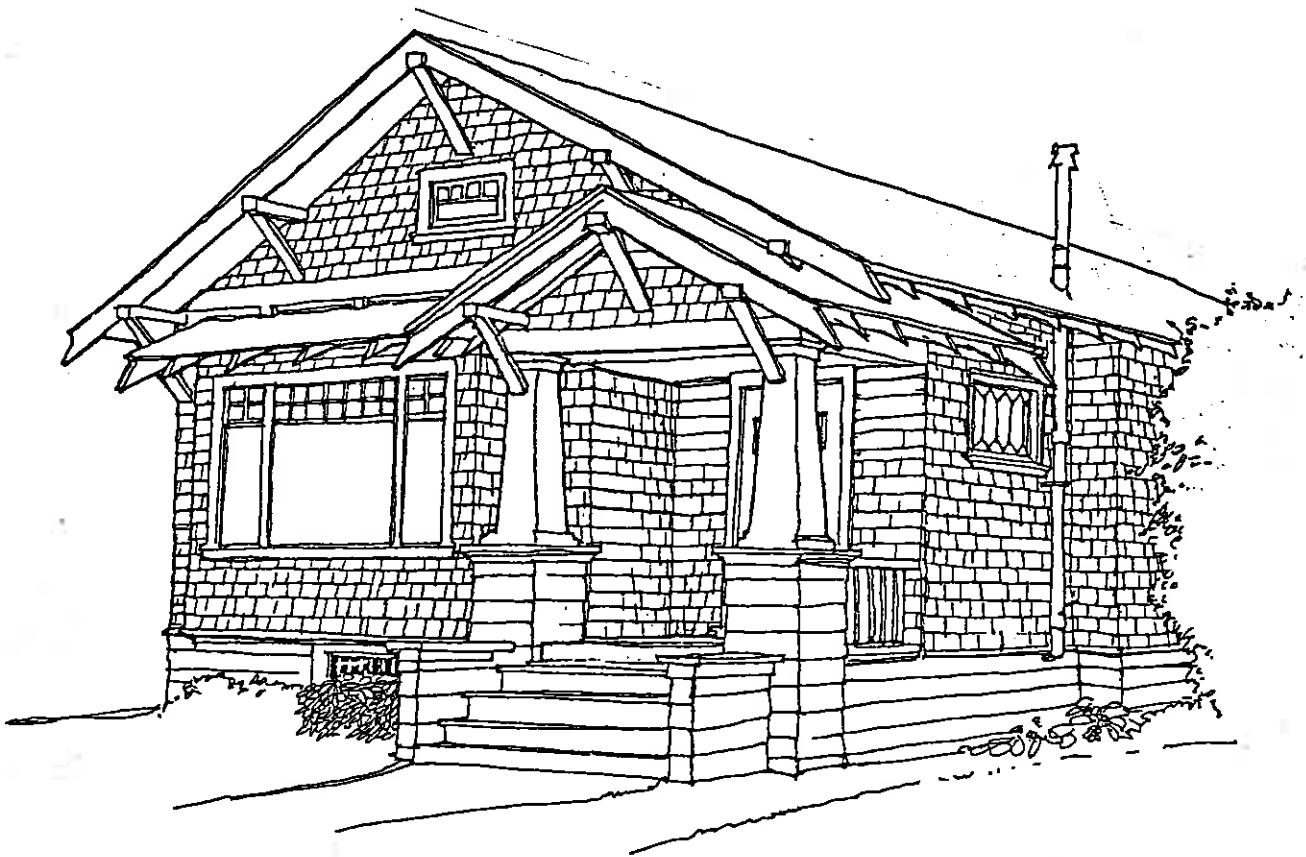
BUNGALOW STYLE

On the other hand, the Bungalow style, popular in the early 1900's, is more recent and varied than the older structures. (See Appendix IV) Whereas the "Freedman's" house is easy to pick out, the Bungalow style can vary in appearance in different areas. The basic Bungalow style is typically a single story house with one or more broadly pitched overhanging gables. Brown shingles usually cover the house, though sometimes woodsiding is used instead, as in the Gadsden Green area. The Bungalow style structures in this area have mostly cement block or brick foundations with only one large gable. Most houses of this style vary throughout the area, no two more than a block apart looking exactly alike, though two next door to each other may resemble each other. An extra gable may be replaced by a dormer window. Most of these houses, however, have front porches with at least one gable, and are small.

Examples of the Bungalow style may be found on these streets:

Carolina Street - 9
Nunan Street - 58
Race Street - 11, 31
Sumter Street - 341

APPENDIX IV



Bungalow style

Variations of the Bungalow style are shown by these houses:

Allway Street - 23A, 23B, 25, 27, 27B, 31
Ashton Street - 11, 13, 30
Carolina Street - 6, 53
Congress Street - 251
Court Street - 6, 8, 10
Fishburne Street - 102
Larne Street - 3, 23
Nunan Street - 33, 35, 59, 63, 79
Parkwood Avenue - 4, 6, 10
President Street - 232, 295, 298, 301, 316
Sumter Street - 333, 380, 444
Tracy Street - 26

RECTANGULAR STYLE

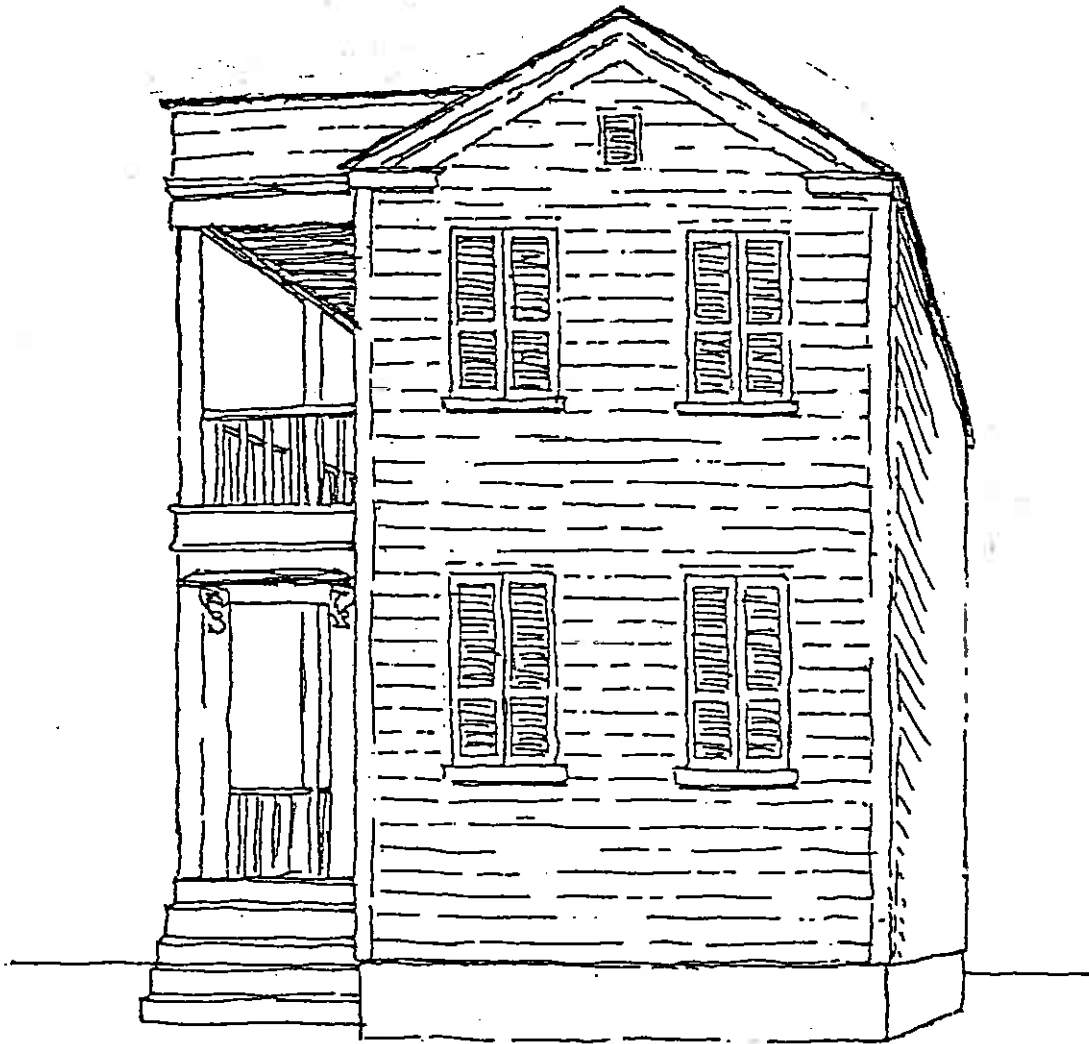
There are several different types of architecture in the Gadsden Green area, but it would be difficult to go through each style, as many houses are combinations of different styles. The two styles already explained are predominant. A third style, which appears more often than not is nameless, so we shall call it the Rectangular style. (See Appendix VII) The structures are all at least two stories high, are single houses, one room wide, and have weatherboard or shiplap siding, single or double gables, and brick foundations. They are like two story "Freedman's" houses.

They have porches as in the single story structures, but some are in the front of the house, and not on the side. They are also simple like the "Freedman's" houses, and have the same window sash structure of six panes on six panes. The chimneys are either on the gable or more commonly at the back of the house on the side.

Several of these structures, particularly on those streets containing the older houses, are old themselves. Preliminary title searching in ward books has shown that some two story buildings were standing in 1880. There are several examples of this type of structure:

Allway Street - 7, 11, 13, 15
Ashton Street - 3, 6, 15, 22-24, 26, 28, 29, 33, 33½, 35, 42
Carolina Street - 2, 40, 57
Congress Street - 237, 249
Fishburne Street - 109, 181, 200, 217

APPENDIX VII



Rectangular style

Killian Street - 2, 8
Larne Street - 4, 5, 13, 14, 16, 18, 22
Nunan Street - 4, 5, 10, 11, 12½, 13, 15, 18, 21, 22, 57, 61
Perry Street - 7, 12
President Street - 216, 240
Race Street - 420
Sumter Street - 296, 299, 302, 306, 311, 312, 314, 371, 373, 375, 378,
390, 393, 395, 404, 414, 418, 422
Tracy Street - 39
Woodall Court - 4, 24

CLASSIC BOX STYLE

One other style of structure in the Gadsden Green area is notable, and this architecture resembles the Classic Box style. (See Appendix VIII) These structures are two stories high, but usually have the first floor porch only. Most of these buildings also have roof dormers and either a hipped or gabled roof. The gabled roof is not part of the Classic Box style.

Built of wood, they usually have weatherboard or shiplap siding with a brick foundation. Several of these houses have window sashes of two panes over two panes. Most of the chimneys are in the middle of the roof. There are several examples of this type of structure which was popular in the early 1900's. No structure of this kind is completely like the next. Some are ornate as in the Classic Box style, others are simple.

Carolina Street - 4, 14, 20, 23, 27, 28, 34, 36, 49, 51, 61, 63
Coming Street - 292
Congress Street - 169, 181, 183, 257
Fishburne Street - 100, 214
Parkwood Avenue - 4, 12, 14
Perry Street - 9, 11, 15
Sumter Street - 283, 293, 301, 313, 332, 336, 337, 350



Classic Box Style

REFERENCES

Sarbourne Maps - Charleston Library Society

Plat Maps 1883 - Charleston Archives

Ward Books - 1859, 1880-1898 - Assessors Office

Assessment Books - County Court House

Conveyance Books - R M C Office

Mrs. R. F. Cole

This is Charleston - Samuel Gaillard Stoney

Charleston Grows

Savannah Architecture Survey - Beth Lattimore

Charleston Map 1949 - Compiled and delineated by Alfred O. Halsey

Charleston County Library Newspaper Clippings

American Architecture - Whiffin

CITY OF CHARLESTON
ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY FORM
NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES AREA

ADDRESS _____

OWNERSHIP RECORD

Present Owner _____

Mailing Address _____

Original Owner _____

Tax Map # _____

Approximate Lot Size _____ X _____
or _____ Acres

Property Currently Zoned _____

Assessment: Land _____

Improvements _____

TOTAL _____

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Facade Material _____

Foundation _____

Roof Form _____

Porch or Veranda _____ Height _____

Building Height in Stories _____

Roof Dormers _____

Chimneys _____ Where _____

Facade Emphasis _____

Window Sash: 1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____

Entrance: Fan _____ Lintel _____ Trans _____

Sidelights _____ Undecorated _____

Physical Condition: A B C D

Structure _____

Grounds _____

Significant Outbuildings _____

Landscaping _____

INTERIOR DETAILS

Form Completed By _____

HISTORICAL RECORD

Architect/Builder _____

Date of Construction _____

Source of Date _____

Architectural Style _____

Present Use _____

Original Use _____

Incidence in Area _____

Importance to its neighborhood:

Great _____ Moderate _____ Minor _____

Historic Notes: _____

Sources: _____

Architectural Significance:

National _____ Valuable to City _____

Valuable _____ Notable _____

Worthy of Mention _____ Other _____

Significance of Interiors _____

Significance of Landscaping _____

Historic Significance _____

ATTACH PICTURE

APPENDIX II & V



Old Folk's Home

Freedman's house

Rectangular style

APPENDIX VI



Bungalow house

Classic Box style

Path of
Tornado

Gadsden
Green
Homes