

#23 Legare Street  
Robert T. Chisholm's House  
c. 1838

General William Washington, of Revolutionary fame, married Jane Reilly Elliott, in 1782. She was the daughter of Charles Elliott, who had owned and lived at #22 Legare Street at least since 1767. He was in turn the son of Thomas Elliott (1699-1760) and grandson of Thomas Elliott ( ? -1731) and his first wife, Mary Gibbes, daughter of the original grantee of lot #231, in 1694, Robert Gibbes. This included, apparently, almost all (except that on the south line a strip may have been added) of the properties at #21, 23, and 25 Legare Street. With his bride Washington acquired this lot, after the death of her father in 1782.

S.C. Hist.  
Soc. Mag.  
Vol. XI  
pp. 56-61

S.C. Hist.  
& Gen. Soc.  
Magazine  
Vol. IX p.22

RMCO  
G-6, p.114

Enclosure:  
Un-dated plat,  
probably  
c.1770-80.  
S.C. Hist.Soc.

Enclosure:  
Map, 1788,  
(Detail)

This lot he sold, in 1790, with much other town real estate, for what reason we do not know, to Charles Lining, for £2000 sterling. From the price, considering the number of lots sold, it seems doubtful that any of the lots contained valuable houses, but on the Petrie map of 1788-89 there appears a brick building at #25 Legare Street and there seems to be a wooden building a little south of the site of #21 Legare Street.

That Charles Lining built upon the land is quite possible, but it is more likely that he remodeled the northern one. He appears in the directories of 1801, and 1802, in which latter year the house number is #8.

S-10,p.105

On 28 June 1838 Edward B. Lining, et al., heirs and trustees of Charles Lining, deceased, sold to Robert T. Chisholm the large lot now including #21, 23, and 25 Legare Street, measuring 120 feet on Legare Street by 305 feet in depth, for \$13,000.

R-10,p.524

By a deed of 20 August 1838, Chisholm sold the southern (not the western) portion to William J. Bull, 66 feet on Legare Street, for \$6000. Later, Chisholm repurchased almost half of that lot, the western 150 feet.

W-10,p.236

On 3 September 1838 Chisholm sold the northern lot, 44 feet on Legare Street by 145 feet deep, which apparently included the Linings' house, for \$5150.

Chisholm must have needed the money to build his own house, for the financial panic of 1837 drove all the merchants of the city to varying extremes of necessity, and there were several spectacular failures. This panic is generally attributed to the financially restrictive policies of President Andrew Jackson, who may be said to have hated all banks and banking.

About 1838, presumably, he must have begun to recover enough to build this house, his finances restored by the big prices he had received for the two lots on Legare Street.

A-12,pp485-487

Chisholm conveyed the house and lot in 1847 to his

B-12,p.560

wife, Providence Hest Chisholm, who conveyed it in 1849 to Arthur P. Hayne. He conveyed it to George A. Trenholm in 1862, who conveyed it to Jacob K. Sass in the following year.

F-14, No2

The property remained in the Sass family until 1960, when the widow of the noted author and naturalist, Herbert Ravenel Sass, and Harriott R. Parker, conveyed it to the present owners.

S.G.Stoney:  
Notes for  
"William  
Shingler's  
House" S.C.  
Historical  
Society Tours,  
February, 1968

Chisholm's financial problems in 1837, which undoubtedly prompted him to sell off what may have seemed to him the most desirable parts of the property, had most fortunate, serendipitous results. He was left with probably a waterfront lot, facing so as to catch the southwest breeze in summer. It had moreover, been discovered that the fever-bearing mosquitoes could not fly far enough to cross the wide Ashley River, nor would they fly against the prevailing winds. Thus his location was an extremely healthy one.

His selection of this surprisingly secluded site, whatever the reasons which prompted it, has created for generations of Charlestonians a sort of "enchanted garden".

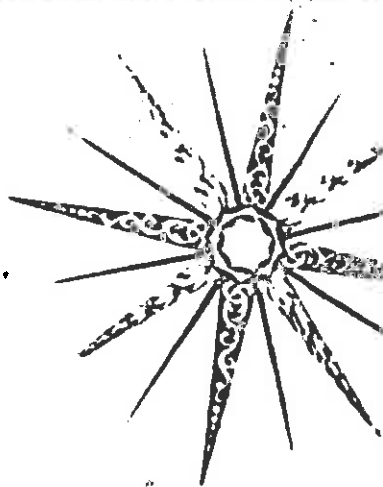
L.Louis GreenIII

28 October 1968





1788



ILLINOIS

