

Buildings - 72 King

No. e.

PTEMBER 21, 1931

Charleston

Old Bakery Stand Is Vacant for First Time in 100 Year

Tradd Street Corner Building Housed Brea
Shop Through a Century—Last Tenant

Moved to Opposite Corner

For the first time in more than 100 years there is no bakery on the southeast corner of King and Tradd streets. This stand, probably one of the oldest devoted consistently to a single type of enterprise in the city, since long before Confederate war days, has been a source of bread supply to Charleston families.

Some of the finest bakers of the city have done business there at one time or another during their careers. It was left vacant recently when the last tenant moved across the street.

The building, with its double house and archway on the ground floor, is the property of Mrs. Annie H. Gerard, widow of F. J. Gerard, who for about twenty-four years was the baker installed on the traditional corner stand. He died some twenty years ago.

The first baker recorded in the long list of those operating the stand, now known as 72 King street, was an Irishman named David M. Burns. This was long before the Confederate war. Burns sold the building to John F. Merkhardt, a German baker.

Throughout the war the bakery supplied bread to the Confederate army, and through the old arched gateway on King street came the long, weary lines of commissary wagons seeking bread for the soldiers.

Forty-odd years ago, according to Alex L. Easterby, veteran real estate dealer, it was acquired by the Gerard family, and was operated by the for more than twenty years. Since the death of Mr. Gerard, his widow has leased the establishment to a number of bakers.

Some of these have brought their trade with them from all parts of the city. Many of the outstanding bakers of Charleston have plied their trade for long and short intervals at the stand which has been for so many years devoted exclusively to its ancient uses.

Constructed entirely of brick, the old bake house possesses concrete floors. It bears many evidences that it was fashioned from early times for the purpose to which it has been put without cease, while the century rolled on its way bringing changes to the city at large which were only echoed within the ancient walls. There is an old English oven, still in good repair. The upper floor of the building, which stretches across the archway in an unbroken line, was used in the old days to house supplies of one kind and another, though it lies neglected at present.

Is this the bakery shop on the corner? It's a frame bldg. today.