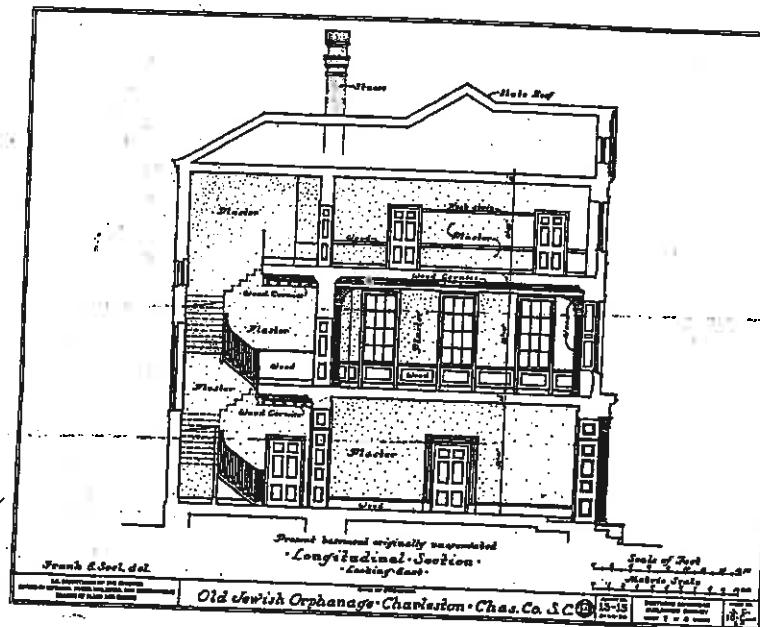


THE HEBREW ORPHANAGE

Constructed before 1811
88 Broad Street

Lying across from the side of the future State House, an early house stood on this lot by the time of the Ichnography of Charles-Town" map of 1739. Acquired by the wealthy Laurens family, the building on the property was described variously as the "large House" and "Messuage or Tenement" known as "White Hall." From the 1740s to the 1790s, the "Lot of Land" is not distinguished in the deeds as containing any buildings. Owned by various members of the Laurens and Ramsay families, it was sold to Edward Trescott in 1804 with a clause stipulating the lot was then occupied by "the Directors of the Branch Bank of the United States of America." There is some debate about whether the building was constructed by a member of the Laurens family for the bank, which subsequently moved to the corner of Meeting and Broad (the current City Hall), or whether Trescott built the present structure.

William Tresscott initially rented this building to the Bank of the State of South Carolina, but by 1833, it had been sold to the Hebrew Orphan Society. The Society, founded in 1801, was intended to provide relief to widows and to educate, clothe, and maintain orphans of the Jewish faith, generally in private homes, as an alternative to the City Orphan House. It primarily assisted destitute women and children. The building only briefly served residential purposes, primarily being used as other fraternal order halls nearby, for meeting



Hebrew Orphanage, [uncaptioned HABS drawing]

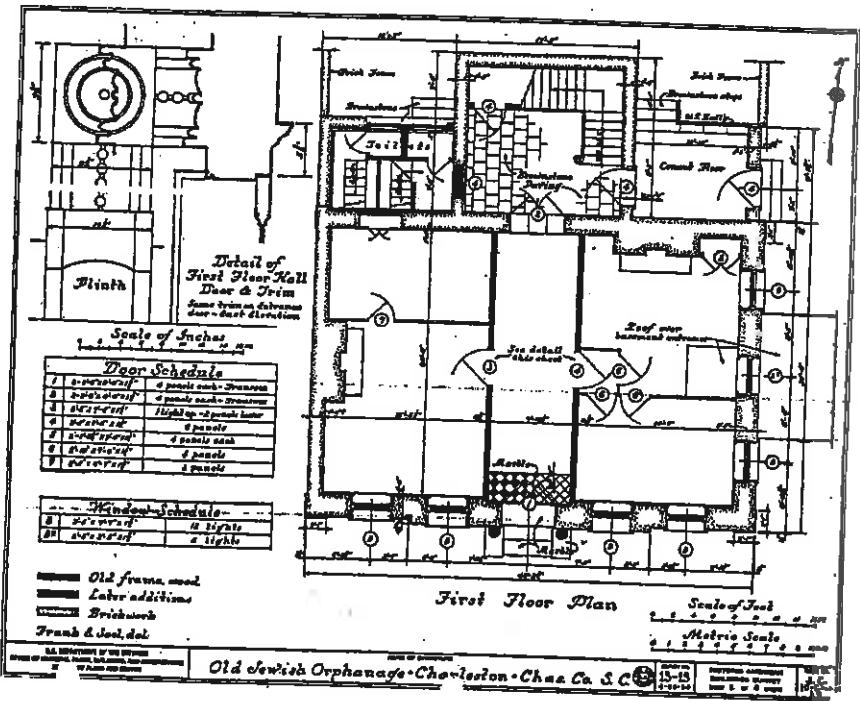
rooms and a school. After the loss of Beth Elohim Synagogue in the Ansonborough Fire of 1838, the congregation used the building for services until completion of the new Beth Elohim in 1840.

The front facade is dominated by a central pavilion surmounted by a pediment with a lunette window. The principal door is via a marble platform supporting a surround with engaged Corinthian columns. On the interior the principal rooms are trimmed with woodwork which may date after the acquisition of the property by the Orphan Society. The rear stairhall projection, however, includes original, neoclassical detailing in the cornice and frieze and in the stairhall. The Hebrew Orphanage was somewhat altered in the mid-twentieth century. Damaged in Hurricane Hugo but stabilized, it still awaits repair.

Sources:

Hagy, James. *This Happy Land*

The Old Jewish Orphanage," Datasheets, Historic American Building Survey



Hebrew Orphanage. [Uncaptioned HABS drawing]