

# Settlement Society Annual Meeting Tour 1976

and useful. It is said that the site was part of a "green" where Hessian soldiers drilled during the Revolution.

The interior of the house is characterized by a distinguished simplicity. The paneling and plain plaster walls provide the perfect setting for the handsome furniture and collections of the owners.

The Morrison House has been owned by the Peronneau and the Lowndes families. Since 1957 it has been the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence O'H. Stoney.

## HOUSE "B"

32 Legare Street. The Sword Gate House (ca 1818).

Many legends and misconceptions have surrounded the Sword Gate House since it was built in 1818. The lot was originally owned by Solomon Legare, a Huguenot immigrant, and his heirs. German-born merchants, Jacob Steinmetz and Paul Emil Larent, acquired the property and built the square frame portion and the masonry portion of the house as well as a frame portion connecting the two.

In 1819 the property was sold to Andrew Talvande and his wife who operated a boarding school for young ladies. The brick wall which runs along the north side of the property was said to have been erected to prevent the elopement of her students. However, it has recently been proved that the wall was built before the Talvandes purchased the property.

The famous "sword gates" were installed by George A. Hopley, who bought the property from Mme. Talvande. They are said to have been ordered as a part of the grillwork for the New Guard House in 1838, but were rejected as too expensive.

The estate changed owners many times and the property was added to and improved. While in the ownership of the Allston family (1905--1929), Hervey Allen, the popular novelist, resided at the Sword Gate House and collaborated with DuBose Heyward on the book Carolina Chanson.

Henry T. Gaud purchased the property in 1949 and began restoring the house and gardens. The house was open to tourists and several apartments and four motel units were constructed within it.

The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. David March, can be justly proud of their home. It has weathered its 150-odd years of the changing styles and tastes of its owners to remain one of the city's most charming houses.

The ceiling medallion in the entrance hallway is Victorian; to the left is a Regency-style arched doorway, cut originally to unite the wood and brick portions of the house, but now sealed. The beautiful woodwork and molding in the dining room is probably original. The ceiling medallion in the dining room is identical to that in the ballroom and may be a reproduction of it. Note also the beautiful mantels throughout the house. They are in the Adam style, having replaced the original marble mantels of the Regency style.