

123 Cannon Street

c. 1855-1859

John W. Hernandez acquired the two lots immediately east of Islington Court in the 1850s. He first bought Lot O of the A.G. and Emma C. Magrath Tract (which had been divided in 1849) at the southeast corner of Islington Court and Cannon Street on March 25, 1850, for \$365.¹ About five years later on April 27, 1855, he paid \$700 for Lot N to the immediate east in a master's sale.² A notice of the master-in-equity's public auction included no reference to the existence of a house at that time.³ The house at 123 Cannon Street was built on that second lot.

John W. Hernandez⁴ and his wife, Susan Burn Hernandez, were living at the house by at least 1859. Mr. Hernandez worked as a machinist with the South Carolina Railroad for the first several years in the house, but in the 1870s he apparently formed a business known as Hernandez & Shirer, a woodyard on Spring Street. The family remained at 123 Cannon Street until at least 1895.

Anna Pattani bought both lots on November 13, 1897, for \$2100,⁵ holding it for only a short time before reselling it to R.P. Tucker for \$2300 on September 11, 1899.⁶ During their short ownerships, it seems that the house had renters in it.

Catherine Steffens (Mrs. John Steffens) paid \$2500 on January 12, 1901, for both lots.⁷ The Steffens lived across the street at 126 Cannon Street, and it



¹ Deed book H12, page 47

² Deed book ___, page ___

³ Charleston Courier, April 3, 1855, at 3

⁴ John W. Hernandez married Susan Burn on December 23, 1847. He was widowed by 1910 when he lived in Berkeley County. He was 84 then. He was born in October 1826. Susan was born August 1828. He worked as a machinist in 1880 when he and Susan lived at 81 Cannon Street with their children. He died on January 5, 1916.

⁵ Deed book E23, page 305

⁶ Deed book H23, page 330

⁷ Deed book C24, page 13

seems that their new house at 123 Cannon Street was used as a rental property instead of as a personal dwelling.

Herman D. Bulwinkle⁸ and his extended family occupied the house starting at least by 1902. Capt. Herman Bulwinkle operated a steamboat business, making island runs. After many years of being a renter in the house, his wife, Emma E. Bulwinkle, acquired the two lots on March 8, 1920.⁹ After their purchase, the Bulwinkles remained in the house as owner-occupants. Eventually, on February 18, 1938, Emma E. Bulwinkle conveyed the two lots to her son, Elbert Herman Bulwinkle.¹⁰ At least by the late 1930s, the house was used as a duplex with the Bulwinkle family occupying one unit and others renting the second unit.

Elbert Bulwinkle sold just Lot N to John Bowles Baldwin for \$11,000 on October 13, 1945,¹¹ separating the house from the adjacent property for the first time since the house was built. Nevertheless, the Bulwinkles remained in part of the house for several more years.

On October 6, 1971, Helen R. Freeman (later Latten) bought Lot N for \$15,000.¹² When she died, her personal representatives sold the house on November 23, 2004, for \$250,000 to Kelly O. McSweeney.¹³

The house is a two-and-a-half story, traditional Charleston single house with two-story piazzas on the western façade. At some point, an addition was added along the entire eastern façade, allowing the front door to be moved to the Cannon Street side. A bay window is featured on the first floor of the front of the house.

⁸ (b. Feb. 9, 1859; d. Jan. 31, 1931)

⁹ Deed book Z29, page 7

¹⁰ Deed book M39, page 807

¹¹ Deed book V45, page 389

¹² Deed book S97, page 78

¹³ Deed book Z516, page 98