

R, CHARLESTON, S. C., MONDAY MORNING, MARCH 16, 1936

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Know Your Charleston?

Hirsch-Israel Building



—Photo by Jacobs

Familiar Dome to Be Removed from King and Wentworth Streets as Former Store and Bank Structure is Changed

Within a few weeks two landmarks near the intersection of King and Wentworth streets will have disappeared.

Work has begun already on remodeling the old Hirsch-Israel building at the northwest corner of King and Wentworth streets, which will include removal of the dome and the third floor from the building. The other landmark which will disappear will be the clock tower from the old Stephen Thomas building, which is to be incorporated into the Woolworth store at 259 King street.

The Hirsch-Israel building was begun about 1897 and finished by 1899, and was used as a clothing store by the Hirsch-Israel company until about 1919, when it was acquired by the Dime Savings bank. Up to this time, the triangular piece of pavement at the corner was occupied by a circular display window, surmounted by a conical dome and a flagpole over which the doorway arch formed a sort of canopy.

After the building's acquisition by the bank, the display window was purchased by the late Hyman Pearlstine and removed to the lawn of his home at Rutledge avenue and Bogard street, for use as a greenhouse.

Part of Peoples Chain

The Dime Savings bank became later the Dime National bank. In 1923, it was consolidated with the Peoples-First National bank and was operated as a branch of that bank. Later, the name was changed again to the Peoples State Bank of South Carolina. When the bank failed to open in January, 1932, the property came on the market, being purchased last October by the King-Wentworth corporation for \$65,000.

This corporation has employed the Dawson Engineering company to change the building. Besides removing the third story and dome, the building is to be extended to the street lines at the corner, the elevator is to be removed and the second floor entrance changed. Decorative tile is to be used on the exterior.

Both the Hirsch-Israel and Metz buildings are of a composite type of architecture much in vogue at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, being a conglomerate of many architectural schools.

Above the archway over the entrance to the Hirsch-Israel building are two recumbent female figures.

Two Buildings Pictured

At the elbow of each figure is a picture of a building, one of which is said to be the building now used as the Elks home, in Wentworth street, which was the home of Morris Israel, father of three of the partners in the clothing firm. The

other building is the Hasell Street synagogue. Members of the Hirsch-Israel firm were I. W. Hirsch and Samuel, Arthur and Louis Israel.

The Stephen Thomas building is not so elaborate as the Hirsch-Israel building, being a wooden structure. The outstanding feature is the clock tower, which juts out from the front of the second story. For many years the clock has not run and its face has become much weatherbeaten.

After Stephen Thomas's jewelry business was discontinued, the building was occupied by the Metz Jewelry company. It was purchased several years ago by Woolworth's from the Thomas family for \$45,000, but the Woolworth company has leased it out until the recent decision to expand its local store.

J. V. N., Jr.

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