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THE JAMES HAMILTON COMPANY BUILDING
18 South Adger's Wharf
c. 1850
Home of Mr. and Mrs. David Simmons

1993

HISTORY OF ADGER'S WHARF

During the antebellum period, this wharf was the terminus for James Adger and Company which instituted the first steamship line between Charleston and New York. One could book passage to New York each Saturday and twice a month to Havana. One of its finest ships, the James Adger, happened to be in New York harbor when the Civil War broke out. It was confiscated by Union authorities and was used throughout the war by the US Navy.

After the War, this area was eventually revitalized and the buildings became cotton warehouses and offices. However, in the 1920's when this commodity was decimated and the maritime industry moved up the peninsula, these buildings became derelict. It was not until the 1940's that the first efforts in renovation were begun on this street.

This full three story, narrow building very well could have served either as a warehouse or offices for the shipping companies. However today, it houses a young family ! It is constructed of brick with a painted stucco overcoat. The house sits on one of the few remaining cobblestone streets in Charleston.

Note how well the small front yard area has been used with brick edged beds filled with boxwood and blooms. The tall Japanese yews on the left provide a privacy screen from the house next door and for the entranceway. Carolina Jessamine surrounds the doorway.

Work on the building was completed two years ago. The renovated floor plan has much in common with a London townhouse; the dining room and kitchen are located on the ground level with formal living area on the second floor.

In the hallway and throughout the house the woodwork is embellished with rope trim which adds a distinctive design element.

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DINING ROOM

The owner worked closely with her interior designer resulting in this very creative and interesting mix of furnishings. Both the dining room table and chairs are covered with patterned and brocade-type fabrics. The wonderfully flowing window curtains add to the luxurious look of the room. The Italian garden scene is composed of panels that were removed from a demolished Charleston theatre, the Palace.

Mirror, gilded, from ante-bellum Charleston house on Ashley Avenue.

Pair of Sconces, gilded, metal, unusually decorative back plates.

Chandelier, European, curved metal frame, crystal prisms
Small Oil Painting, American, of a child

KITCHEN / SITTING ROOM

Sofa, Regency style, cane-backed, very elegant

Two Chairs, painted, reminiscent of ones produced in America by the Hitchcock Company

Small Wall Lantern, from a monastery

Black and White Photographs, done by Mrs. Simmons of her children

The rear courtyard with its plants and statuary brings a bit of the outdoors into this room.

DRAWING ROOM

This high ceiling has been enhanced with tall, south facing windows which are hung with very sophisticated Fortuny type fabric. This is also used on the amply proportioned sofa.

Chest, leather, painted, ancient looking

Astrolobe, ancient looking, instrument for determining the position of the sun or stars. The wallpaper design picks up the same motif with its scattered stars.

Pair of Chairs, modified Empire style, in front of windows

Biedermeier Table

Side Chair, painted back and upholstered seat

Slipper Chair, related to France's Second Empire period

Bookcases wall, filled with leatherbound volumes and vintage novels

Cocktail Table, painted mirrored top

Portraits, 19th century, American

Chandelier, metal, 1920's reproduction

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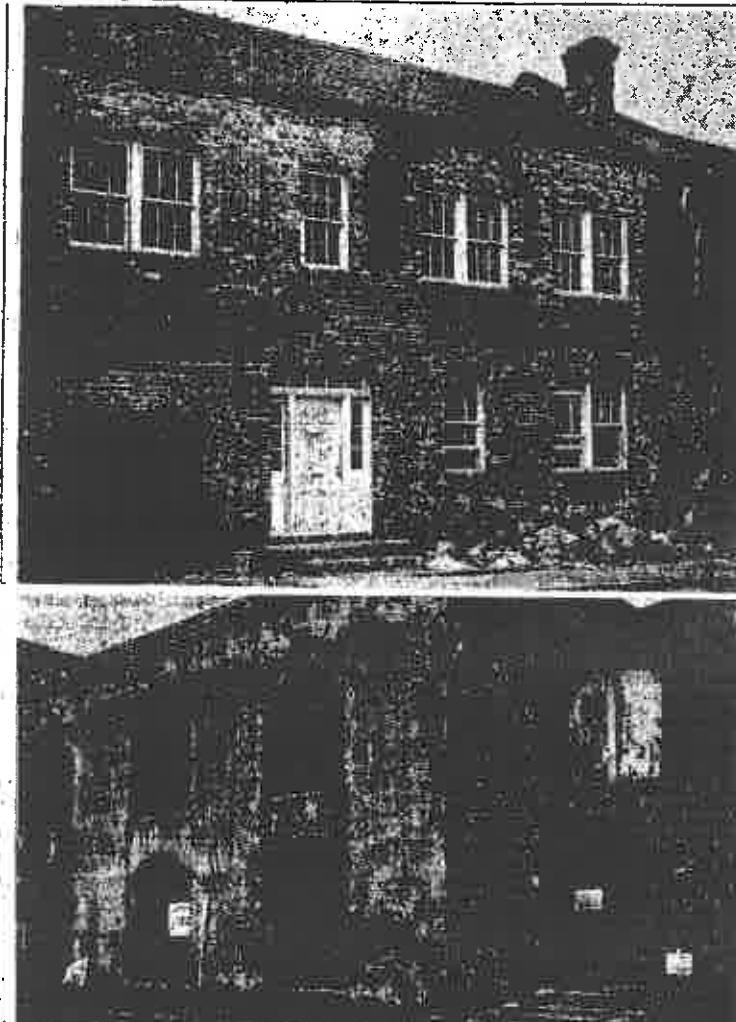
BEDROOM

This will be ribboned off. Visitors may glance in. The children's room and a guest room are on the third floor with a breeze catching rooftop terrace above.

Metal Bench, at foot of bed, curving arm rests, very graceful
Pair Arm Chairs, Louis XV style
Small Mirror, giltwood, circular, on rear wall

HALL

Reverse Painting on glass - dog -
Handsome Oriental Runner on the stairs

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SOUTH ADGER'S WHARF—Two adjacent sections of the old warehouse on South Adger's wharf, at the east end of Tradd street, are shown above. The top view shows the part just remodeled by Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Cheves, III, for their dwelling. Work is still progressing. Below is shown the portion owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harold W. Simmons, where work has not yet begun. The houses have a view of the harbor and although near the water, are built on high ground. (Staff Photos by Reilly).

Extensive Brick Warehouse Being Remodeled To Provide Homes on South Adger's Wharf

By KITTY RAVENEL

An extensive brick warehouse, dating from before the War Between the States, is being partially remodeled to provide homes, on South Adger's wharf, overlooking Charleston harbor. One such dwelling, No. 10, is so near completion that its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Cheves, III, have moved in. Work has not yet begun on the others, although architect's plans have been drawn for the section just west of No. 10, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harold W. Simmons. Plans for the rest, owned by Charleston Constructors, Inc., still are incomplete.

Mr. Cheves designed his home himself, and Charleston Constructors, with which he is connected, carried out his ideas. Entering by a hallway from which the staircase rises, one turns right into a large living room with windows on the street and a fireplace set with Welsh tiles. An archway connects this room with the dining room, which has windows on a courtyard. Twin corner cabinets are built in. This floor also has a modernly equipped kitchen and furnace room.

Upstairs, the drawing-room, which has unusually attractive proportions, overlooks the street and harbor. Overhead are massive beams, retained where they were originally but oiled and turned to a dark hue. The fireplace has Welsh tiles similar to those on the floor

below. Opposite, on the west wall are bookshelves and a built-in gun case with a glass door. The walls are a light green, with the shelves and baseboard a darker tone of green. The floor is of wide timbers planed and waxed.

The three bedrooms have ample closet space. The child's bedroom also has shelves and lockers for toys. A large linen closet opens into the hall. One bath already is installed and space is reserved for another to be added later.

Back of the house is a courtyard with a large tree, shut off from the outside world by the walls of the warehouse which forms a hollow rectangle between North and South Adger's wharf. The courtyard will be shared by the Cheves house and the next apartment, as yet unremodeled, to its east.

The section west of the Cheves house, belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Simmons, has an 80-foot front, 60 feet of which is covered with stucco, and runs back about 55 feet. Albert Simons, of Simons & Lapham, architects, has prepared plans and specifications, which include cutting out a piece on the northwest for a garden. On the southwest a portion will be removed to provide a porch. While the arched windows of the street facade upstairs probably will be squared off

to give more light, the four arches downstairs are to be preserved. Those at the ends will be fitted with wrought-iron gates, the western one entering the porch.

The house will contain a center hall and winding staircase, a large dining room, a living room 16 by 30 feet, with old paneling and mantel from a Charleston mansion which no longer stands, and a morning room with cypress paneling and basement windows opening on the garden. There will be three bedrooms, including a master bedroom measuring 16 by 30 feet; two baths, and a glazed porch upstairs. The living room and morning room will be connected by a door similar to some at Fenwick Hall, cut in the wall without interrupting the paneling.

Plans for the rest of the building are not yet settled. Charleston Constructors, which has its office in the east end of the building, may possibly move it to make an apartment to rent, a spokesman for the company said.

"There are no vacancies," he added.

The company bought the warehouse last year from the Fort Utilities commission. It is believed to be at least 100 years old. Two shell fragments from the bombardment of Charleston, in the War Between the States, have been found in its joists.

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Streets and Structures

Robert P. Stockton

Adger's Wharf

Adger's Wharf is one of the several streets in the made land to the east of East Bay Street, which still carry the names of wharfs. Adger's Wharf began its history as a "low water lot" (land exposed at low tide) belonging to Robert Tradd and situated across Bay Street (now East Bay) from his residence at Tradd and the Bay. Robert Tradd, a son of Richard Tradd and, according to tradition, the first English child born in South Carolina, died in 1731, bequeathing the "Water Lott" to Jacob Motte and his children. Motte was for many years the Public Treasurer of South Carolina and was also a prominent merchant, a sometime partner of James Laurens (brother of Henry Laurens). He built on Tradd's low water lot a large wharf known as "Motte's Wharf" or "Motte's Bridge." Buildings on Motte's Wharf included a "scale house," where items were weighed, and which apparently was large enough for Motte to locate his office and store there after the great fire of 1740.

North of Motte's Wharf, which later became known as Adger's South Wharf, was Greenwood's Wharf, which later became known as Adger's North Wharf. Greenwood, a British merchant in Charles Town, was one of the consignees of tea taxed under the Tea Act of 1773. Under pressure, he and the other consignees allowed local authorities to store the hated tea in the basement of the Exchange.

To the south of Motte's Wharf, at the foot of Tradd Street, was a site set aside for public use. The 1739 map called the "Ichnography of Charles-Town at High Water," shows the Exchange, with a courtroom above it, on the site. Later, a market was

built on the site, which Charles Fraser remembered as a "low wooden building." Subsequently, the market was removed and the site became part of the right of way of South Adger's Wharf.

By the end of the 18th century, both Motte's and Green-Wood's Wharfs had been acquired by William Crafts, and were known as Crafts' North and South Wharfs. The wharfs were acquired in 1822 by Arthur Middleton, as administrator of the estate of Nathaniel Russell; later Middleton acquired them for himself. In 1835 he sold part to James Hamilton, and for a time the wharfs were known as Hamilton & Co., and Middleton & Hamilton's Wharfs. Middleton was one of the Middletons of Middleton Place. Hamilton was Intendant of Charleston, Governor of South Carolina, a general and a leader of the Nullifiers.

In the 1830s and '40s the wharfs were acquired by James Adger & Co., and became the southern terminus of the first steamship line between Charleston and New York. The lucrative line helped James Adger to become, allegedly, the richest man in South Carolina. One of Adger & Co.'s best ships, the James Adger, happened to be in New York harbor when the Civil War broke out. The ship was confiscated by Union authorities and used throughout the war by the United States Navy.

Over the years, substantial brick buildings were constructed lining the streets known as Adger's North and South Wharfs. The Sanborn insurance map of 1884 indicates that Adger & Co.'s office was at 90 East Bay, while the buildings on the south side of North Adger's Wharf and north side of South Adger's Wharf were cotton warehouses. The brick range on the north side of North Adger's Wharf also housed warerooms for cotton on the first level, with brokers' offices above.

After port activities moved up the peninsula, the wharfs were abandoned and the buildings converted to residential and office use.

South Adger's Wharf is one of Charleston's few remaining

cobblestone streets (others being Chalmers and Gillon streets and Maiden Lane). The granite base of Adger's South Wharf, where the Adger ships formerly docked, still projects into the Cooper River and has been made into a public park.

(Stockton, DYKYC, Oct. 8, 1973. _____, "Rainbow Row." Greene, unpub. MS. Rogers, Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys, 14, 43, 56. Fraser, 32-33. Stoney, N&C, April 13, 1958. "Ichnography," 1739. "Ichnography," 1788. Bridgens & Allen Map, 1852. Sanborn Map, 1884.)

Alexander Street

Alexander Street originally extended from Boundary (now Calhoun) to Chapel Street and was laid out as part of the suburb of Mazyckborough in 1786. It was named for Alexander Mazyck, developer of the suburb. Middle Street, in Gadsden's Middlesex, between Laurens and Boundary streets, was made part of Alexander Street in 1903. The east end of Judith Street in Wraggborough became part of Alexander Street in the 1880s. ("Streets of Charleston.")

5 Alexander St. -- This three story clapboard single house was built about 1813 by Simon Jude Chancognie, French consul and merchant. The interior has fine Adamesque woodwork and an interesting, graceful stair. The roofline was remodeled in the late 19th century. Chancognie also built the house around the corner at 48 Laurens St.
(Thomas, DYKYC, Dec. 7, 1970.)

6 Alexander St. -- Francis Nelson, a ship's carpenter, built this house sometime after purchasing the site in 1799. It remained in his family until 1853. This is a variation of the single house, unusual in that there is no central hall and the fenestration on the piazza side is unusual.

(Stockton, DYKYC, Feb. 20, 1978.)

ADGER'S WHARF

North and South Adger's Wharves are two of several streets in the infilled land east of East Bay Street that still carry the names of wharfs. Adger's Wharf began its history as a "low water lot" (land exposed at low tide) belonging to Robert Tradd across Bay Street (now East Bay). Robert Tradd, son of Richard Tradd and according to tradition the first English child born in South Carolina, died in 1731, bequeathing the "Water Lott" to Jacob Motte and his children.

Motte was public treasurer of South Carolina and a prominent merchant, a partner of James Laurens, brother of Henry Laurens. He built on Tradd's "low water lot" a large wharf known as "Motte's Wharf" or "Motte's Bridge." Buildings on Motte's Wharf included a "scale house," where items were weighed, and which was large enough for Motte to locate his office and store there after the fire of 1740.

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South of Motte's Wharf, at the foot of Tradd Street, was a site set aside for public use. The 1739 map called the "Ichnography of Charles-Town at High Water" shows the Exchange with a courtroom above it on the site. This courtroom sat inside a triangular brick fortification called a redan, one of three redans built along the brick harborside fortifications of the walled city, which also included two corner bastions and half-moon battery. The courtroom likely burned in 1740 and the redan was taken down to permit access to the Lower Market that was established here. Built in the 1750s, the Lower Market sold a variety of food stuffs and provisions. It was closed in 1799 and the site became part of the right of way of South Adger's Wharf. Archaeology under the auspices of the Mayor's Walled City Task Force

was conducted in South Adger's Wharf in January 2008 which successfully located the brick redan and also shed new light on the Lower Market. Further excavations just south of the street in 2009 yielded a number of artifacts that helped researchers learn more about this 18th century site.

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Over the years, substantial brick buildings were constructed along Adger's North and South Wharves. The Sanborn insurance map of 1884 indicates that Adger & Co.'s office was at 90 East Bay St., while the buildings between the wharves were cotton warehouses. The brick range on the north side of North Adger's Wharf also housed cotton on the first level with brokers' offices above.

As port activities moved up the peninsula, the wharves were abandoned and the buildings converted to residential and office use. The granite base of Adger's South Wharf, where the Adger ships formerly docked, still projects into the Cooper River. The site has now been incorporated into Waterfront Park.