

BEFORE AND AFTER PICTURES SHOW POSSIBILITIES  
This Was Servants' Quarters Before Restoration Began

NO. 43 QUEEN ST. NOW IS HANDSOME  
Imagination And Work Paid Off

## Do You Know Your Charleston?

# Brick Servants' Quarters Aided Queen St. Cleanup

**Editor's note:** With a petition before the Zoning Commission to have the area classified as an A residential district, instead of the B residential district which it now is, the part of town about Chalmers, Queen and State Streets is much in the news. Two houses on Chalmers St. and one on Queen are the pivotal point of a controversy over parking lots within this old and historic Charleston district.

By ISABELLA G. LELAND

Two condemned frame houses and an old brick servants' quarters in dilapidated condition sparked the cleanup of Queen Street, between Church and Meeting.

Until the automobile superseded the horse and buggy this section of Queen was for some time the center of a lively horse and mule trade. One establishment accommodated 200 horses and mules. Others had not only animals, but carriages, wagons and buggies for hire. With the passing of this era the former stable sites as well as many of the original fine houses had deteriorated into slums.

About 1950 the frame house formerly occupying No. 45 was torn down and the one next door repaired and made into two apartments, both having been condemned by the city. At the same time the brick servants' quarters

to the rear of No. 45 were converted into a comfortable home. Built approximately 1750, the quarters are of unusually charming appearance, with a unique and practical ventilator at the peak, and none of their beauty has been lost in the conversion.

### QUEEN'S ROW

With the block from State Street being completely restored within recent years, and the north side turned into a queen's row of colorful homes, renovation has within the year taken a spurt in this section.

It is an excellent area for it. The Huguenot Church and Dock Street Theatre are at the corner, St. Philip's and the "pirate" house north, and cobbled Chalmers Street and the Wightman house to the south. Its residents are justly proud of being part of the "old and historic" Charleston district. They are not so pleased with being classified a "B residence district." Like those of State Street to the east the owners of this block of Queen, seeing many of the fine houses restored, do not look forward to a lowering of these improved property values by intrusion of business interests.

From the beginning of Queen Street through this block, almost every house is listed in "This Is Charleston," architectural guide to the city. Their classifications range from "valuable to the city

through "worthy of mention." In this particular block No. 38 and its neighboring frame, two-story are both worthy of mention. No. 41 is notable and adjoining 46, valuable to the city. The two were built by Abraham Sasportas in the 1790's as a tenement for investment purposes. Sasportas was agent for French privateers operating out of Charleston, and it was he who built "Ryan's Jail," the large brick tenement now replaced by a parking lot at 19 Queen.

### BEING RESTORED

Both 38 and 46 are in process of restoration. The unsightly portico of the former has been replaced by an iron balcony, matching guards on the street windows, and house painted a dusty rose. No. 46 and its three unusual accessory buildings are being carefully restored and converted for modern comfort by their owner.

No. 50 and 52 are both listed as worthy of mention, and 54, a small frame with two attractive chimneys is quite similar to the house at the northwest corner of Church and Queen, and shows its age by the beading on the edge of the weatherboarding.

On the opposite side of the street the Dock Street Theatre runs from the corner to No. 44. There is then a large parking lot between No. 47 and 53.

**IN FINE CONDITION**  
No. 53 is a three-story brick house of good construction and appears in fine condition, with a handsome large drawing room, a full size enclosed basement and several attached buildings to the rear. This is one of three houses which will be torn down should a controversial parking lot be permitted here. The residents of the street feel that this is an invaluable section of town. They think that with No. 53 in as good condition as it is and an attractive example of the architecture of 1800, it would be a shame to allow its

# Queen Row Well Built

By ROBERT P. STOCKTON

A distinguished father and a distinguished son formed a partnership to build one of Charleston's best remaining tenement rows — that at 22-28 Queen St.

William Johnson Sr. and William Johnson Jr. bought the site, a large tract of land, extending westward from Kinloch's Court (now Philadelphia Alley), on Sept. 15, 1801.

The Johnsons paid Dr. Alexander Barron 2,500 pounds sterling for the property. A plat accompanying the deed shows the tract, measuring 86 feet, three inches on Queen and 371 feet, six inches on Kinloch's Court, divided into vacant lots.

On June 1, 1803, William Johnson Sr. and William Johnson Jr. signed a deed of partition which indicates the present four tenements fronting on Queen Street had been built.

The deed of partition released to William Johnson Jr. "those two westernmost Tenements situate on the said lot fronting on Queen Street with all the Land now ... occupied therewith..."

The deed of partition released to William Johnson Sr. "the two Easternmost of the said Tenements with the land occupied therewith..."

The document also gave Johnson Sr. and Johnson Jr. joint use of an alleyway along the rear of the properties, running westward from Kinloch's Court.

Evidence in the land records would indicate that William Johnson Sr. and William Johnson Jr. built the row of tenements sometime between Sept. 15, 1801 and June 1, 1803.

William Johnson Sr., born in New York in 1741, had come to Charlestown at age 23, established prosperity first as a blacksmith, then as a planter.

The elder Johnson early established his sympathies with the American patriot cause, meeting under the Liberty Tree with the "Sons of Liberty" in 1766.

During the Revolutionary era, he served in the Provincial Congress and subsequently in the S.C. House of Representatives, until 1792. He died in 1818, revered as a leader of the Revolution.

William Johnson Jr., born in Charlestown in 1771, graduated from Princeton

in 1790 and studied law under Charles Cotesworth Pinckney.

He was in the S.C. House of Representatives, 1794-98 and was speaker of that body in 1798.

Johnson Jr. was a judge of the S.C. Court of Common Pleas, 1798-1804 and associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, from 1803 until his death in 1834.

Johnson's Row, as the line of buildings

at 22-28 Queen St. may be called, was built for rental purposes, yet built very well.

Of three and a half stories of brick, the tenements have high and broad gable roofs, each with two dormers front and back. The end tenements are finished with simulated quoins and all have a line of brick cornice and horizontal string courses of masonry accentuating the

various floor levels.

A photograph taken in the early part of this century, before garages were installed at street level, shows the ground level of each tenement had three openings originally, a door and two windows, in balance with the window openings above them.

The four tenements share two chimneys of substantial size.



(Staff Photo by J.R. Burbridge)

Johnson's Row