

Documenting Vernacular Buildings and Neighborhoods:

Resources and Case Studies for Researching Working Class,
Immigrant, and African American Urban Spaces

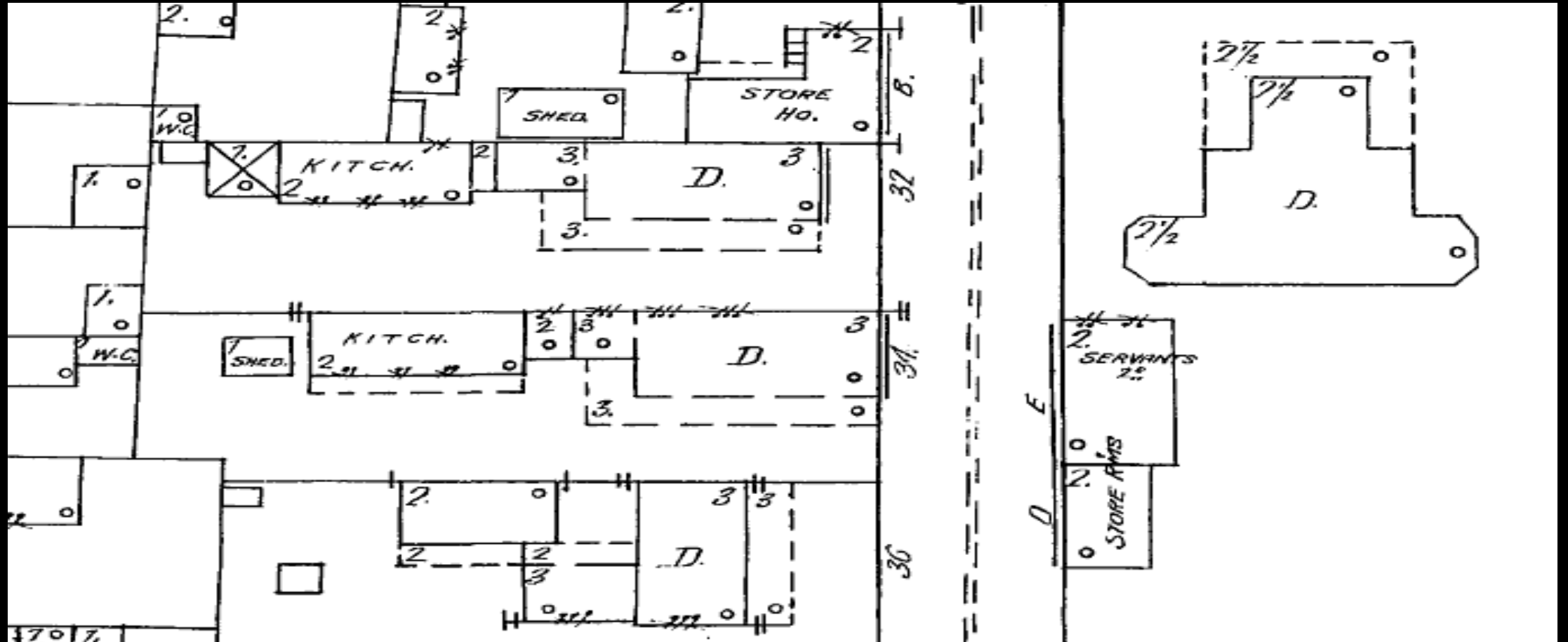
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For the 2018 South Carolina Historic Preservation Conference

Outline:

- Working parts of cities
 - Slaves spaces, work spaces, etc.
- Context/ area canvassing
- Public records
- Physical documentation
 - Sanborns
 - Photos
 - Material analysis
- Biographical research
- *Case studies throughout*

Working class parts of cities: spatial arrangement of servants and slaves



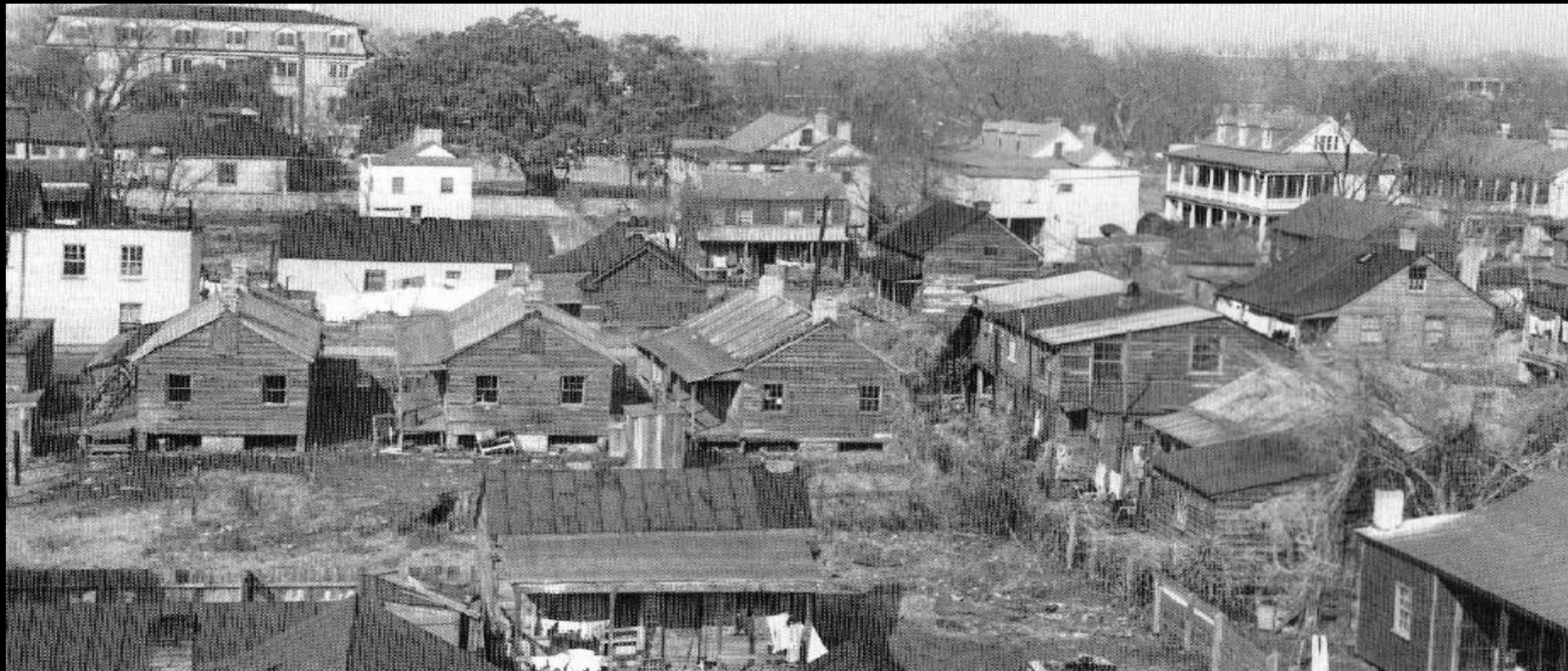
View of Single houses on Society Street, circa 1888, with hyphenated kitchens

Yard buildings and spaces

- Kitchen house and laundries
- Slave and servants quarters
- Stables
- Workshops
- Work yards and formal gardens
- Rented space in larger houses
 - Duplexing and multiple units in former single family houses
- Tenements and cottages



Rear yards in Radcliffeborough, 1930s



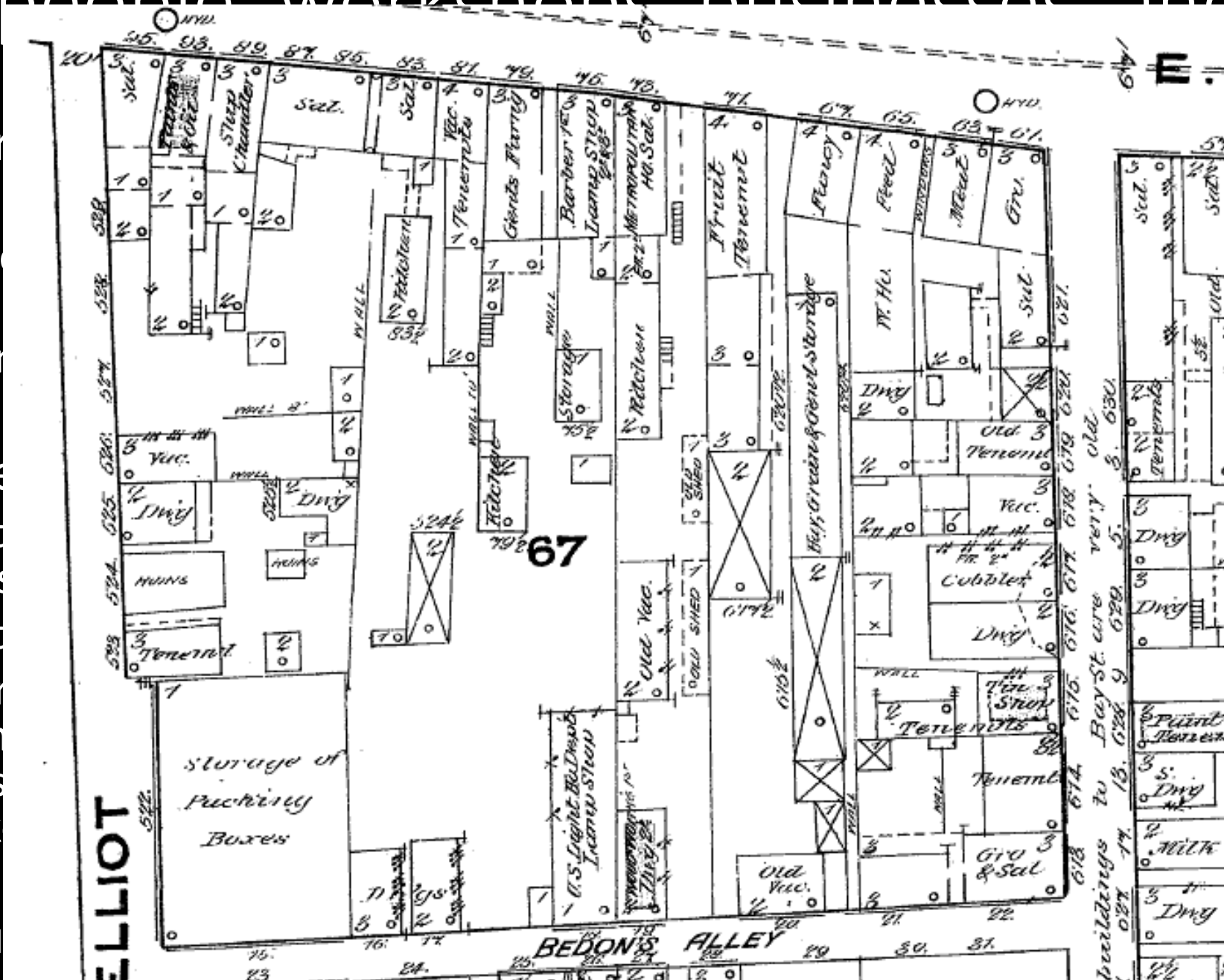
Slaves lived in more diverse places than we think: The Elliott Street town houses where Billy was “living out”



Tradespeople: workshops, businesses and home

- Many tr shops
 - Appro did e
 - Comm floor
- Sold the
 - Most (not s
 - Most
 - Before prom loans work

Top right: Rainbow
a typical shop and



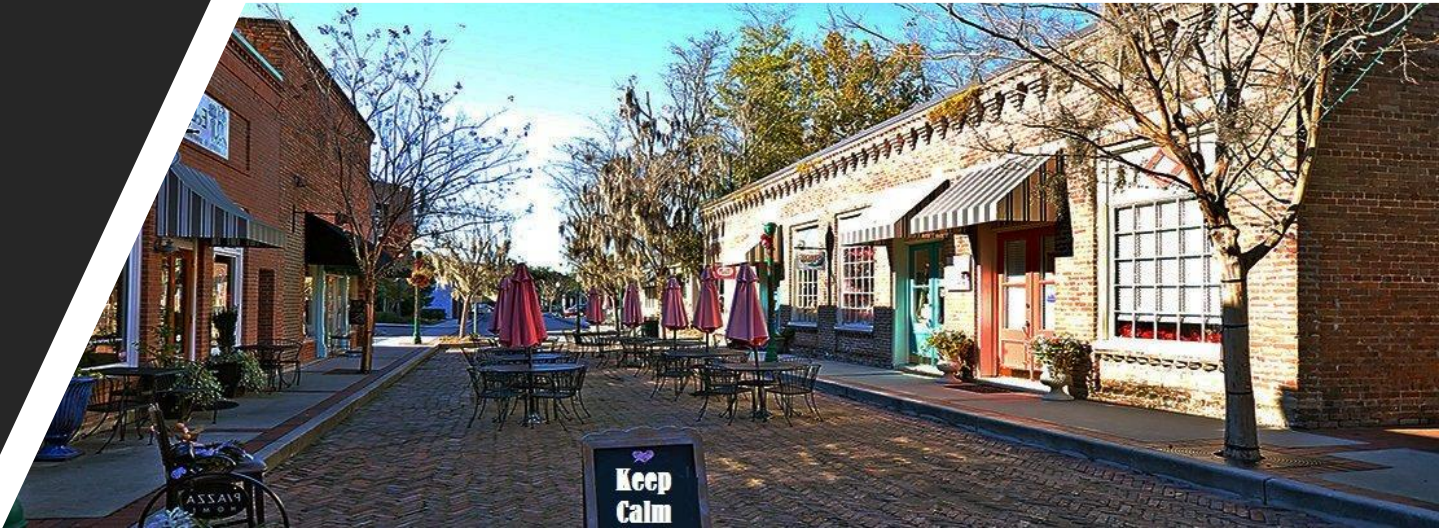
Context: themes of connection

- The built environment
 - Forms
 - Styles/ architectural features
 - Usage (residential/ businesses?)
 - Rental or owned? Multiple units?
- Culture
- Development/Planning
- Past events and land use
- Particular property type
- Age
- Roll of transportation or technology



Patterns in the built environment

- Charleston streetscapes: Structure (single houses), Hyphen/transition (piazzas), open space (driveways.)
- Summerville: rural main street (suburban character, lower density, parking



Development patterns: what is vacant and why?

- “East Side” example: Reasons for community change: Mid 20th century
 - Demographic shift beginning in the 1950s- ‘white flight’ out of urban centers
 - Poorly maintained rental properties
 - Crime issues, vacant houses, demo by neglect
 - Current changes: new development, renovating rental units, more city interest, rising values



Public Policies: Slum Clearance. Before and After from *Charleston Yearbooks* Gadsdenborough, Ansonborough Homes, Aquarium



Yearbook photographs 1940 and 1942

Working class areas and case studies:

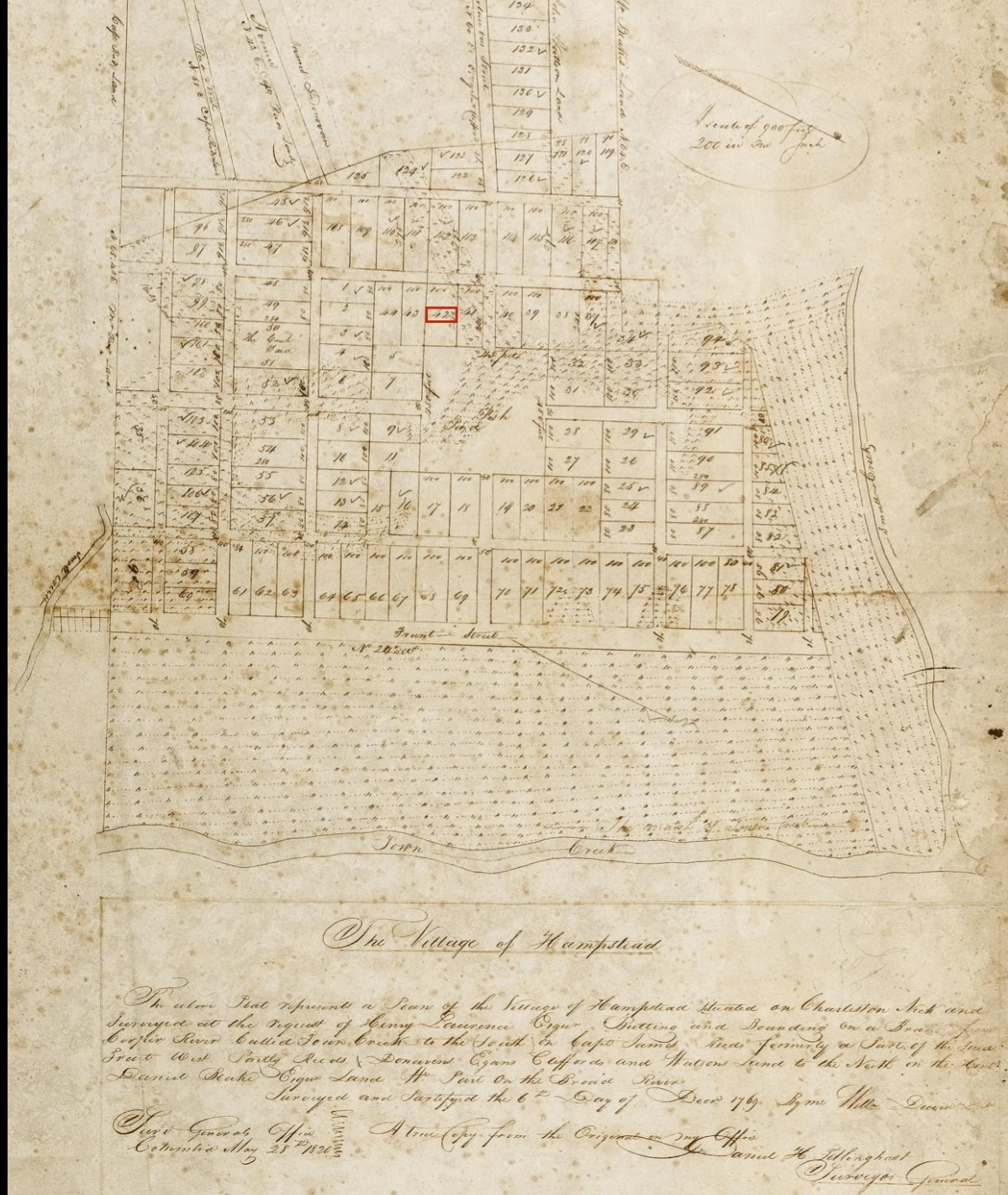


Hampstead Village, 1844

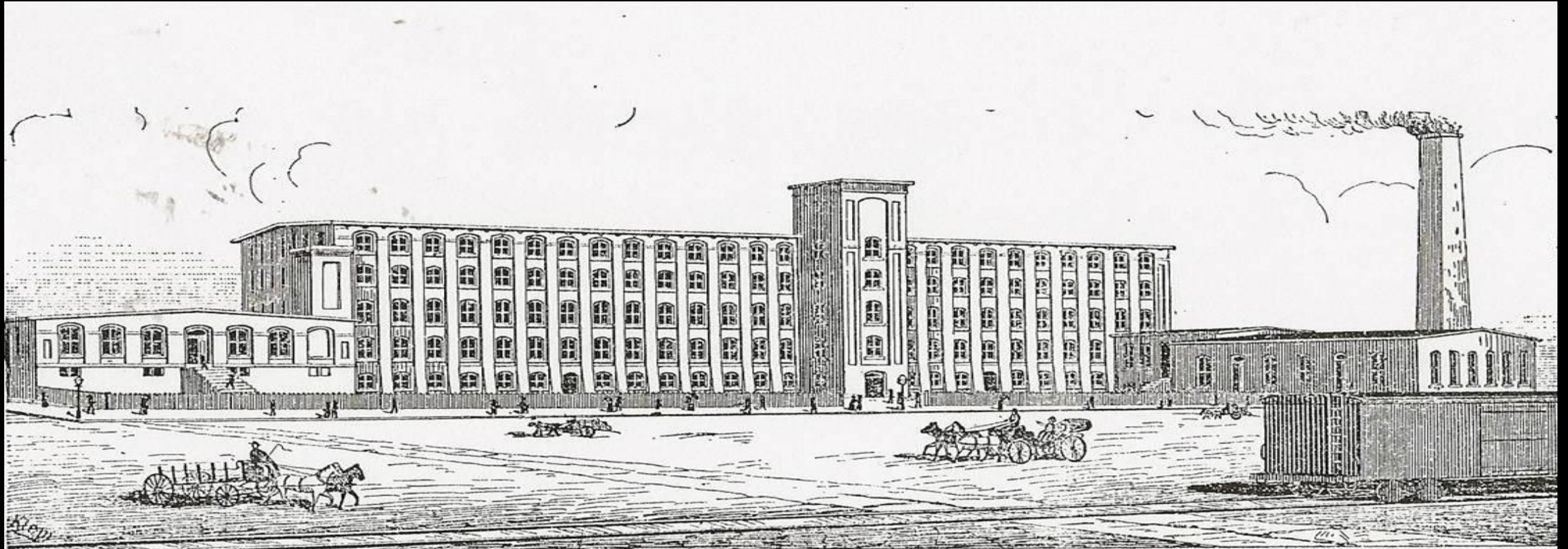


Subdivision plats

- Plat creating new developments, usually out of an earlier rural tract
- Or breaking an existing lot into smaller parcels for individual sale
- Example shown here: An 1820 copy of the 1769 plat of Hampstead Village This plat is part of the series "[Copies of Plats and Plans](#)" at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History.



Importance of community employers and businesses: Cigar Factory, built 1882



CHARLESTON COTTON FACTORY.

Who lived in 19th century Hampstead?

- Irish
- Free people of color
- Slaves “living out”
- Germans
- Charleston’s middle and working class

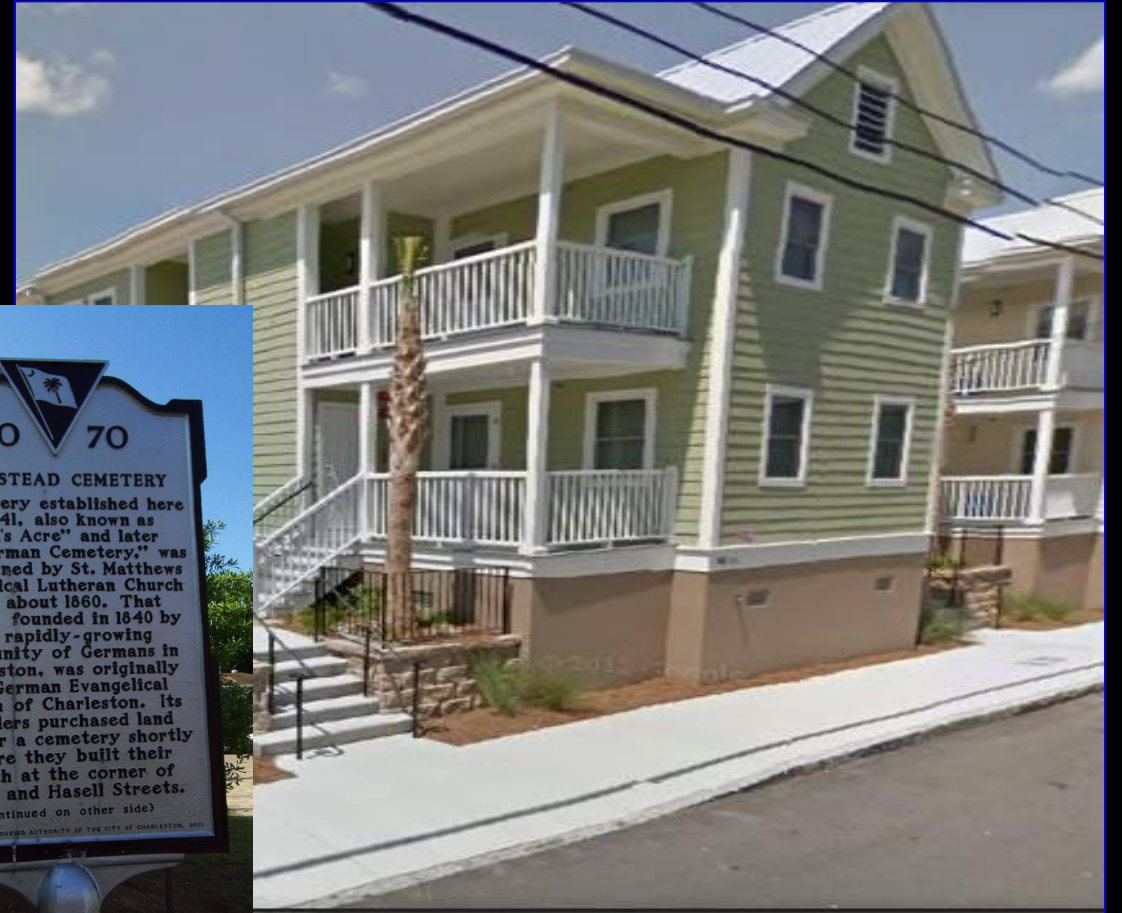
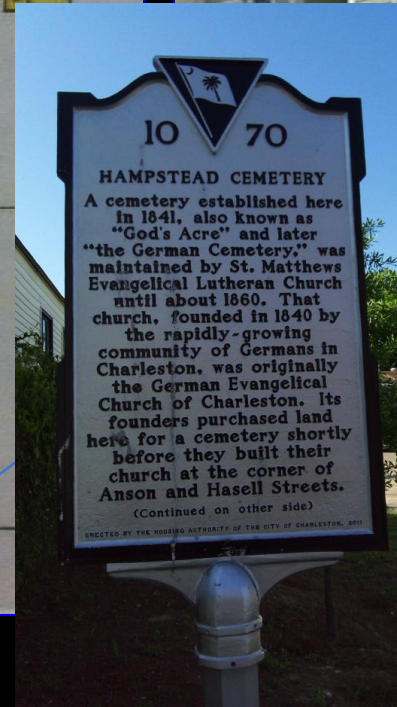
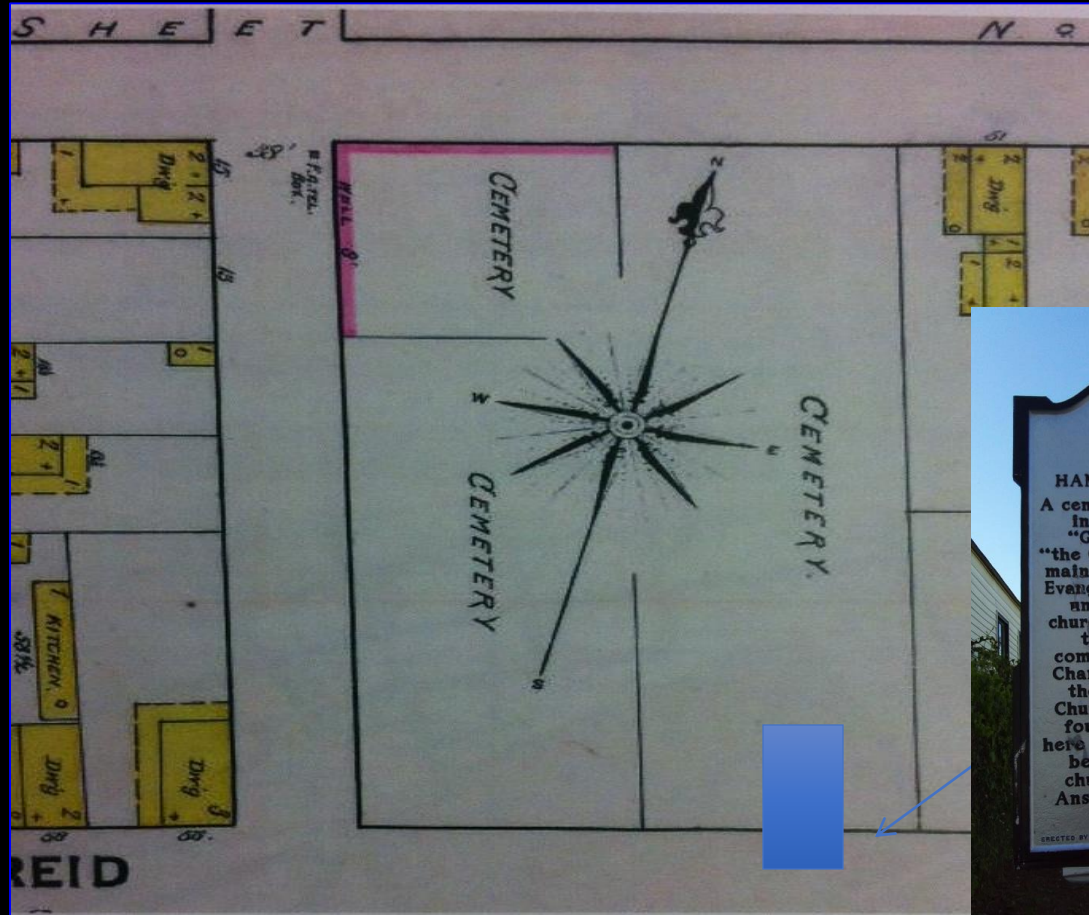


Documenting immigrants: Shipping, Immigration, and Citizenship

- Port records **DO NOT** survive for Charleston
- Newspapers include shipping news and occasionally will have passenger lists
- Embarking records destined for South Carolina
- Ancestry.com
- Naturalization records
- Ethnic organizations
 - Private institutional records
- Ethnic churches

[illegible]

Hidden History- historic cemeteries



Overview of sources for area context:

- Newspaper coverage
- Photos (historic and recent surveys)
- Subdivision plats
- City directories/demographic research
- Public records
 - City Council
 - Laws/ ordinances
 - Resident complaints/presentments
- Archaeology
 - Best for those no longer in use, or with use changes
- Oral history/ Resident interviews

Oral histories and community canvassing

- collection and study of historical information about individuals, families, important events, or everyday life using recordings of planned interviews.
- Strives to obtain information from different perspectives, and most of these cannot be found in written sources.
- A source for documenting cultural/ historical events and accounts vs. ORAL TRADITION: stories or records transmitted orally through generations

Examples of oral history finds:

- Student interview, Reid Street, Hampstead Village
- Relocated House, Nassau Street
- Forestry officer, privately owned plantation tract
- Mill Villages, NC
- James Building, Summerton SC



Resident interviews and area canvassing:

- Define the project, pick target interviewees, conduct background research
- Schedule an interview
- Research the 'subject' ahead of time
- Have questions prepared, but be ready to diverge
- Avoid talking too much- let them lead the interview
- Be aware of bias (theirs and yours)
- spontaneous 'interviews', unrecorded, are great too
- Keep it friendly and professional

Places of activity are places to seek interviews: Sweet shops, public spaces, churches, family groceries, etc.



Public Records

- Ownership
 - Deeds and mortgages
 - Ward books
- Occupants
 - Newspapers
 - Directories
- City and County Government
 - Commissions, Police, Fire Dept., etc.
 - City Council records, ordinances
 - Permits (modern/preservation and earlier safety inspired)

Tracing ownership: Deeds and creating Chains of Title

- Working class and vernacular buildings are less likely to be recorded in a timely fashion (or correctly)
 - Inheritances and heirs properties
- Until 20 century, mortgages often took place between parties who knew each other
 - Family members, trustees/paternalistic guardians, business partners,

V68-131

Estate of Marian Gervais to William E. Lucas

November 1959

- Lots 28 and 29

D25-54

Lydia Floyd Leirester to Marian Gervais

18 June 1907

- Lot 29
- Does not mention a building
- References Smith land plat (c-75)

V24-306

Julia Dart to Marian Gervais

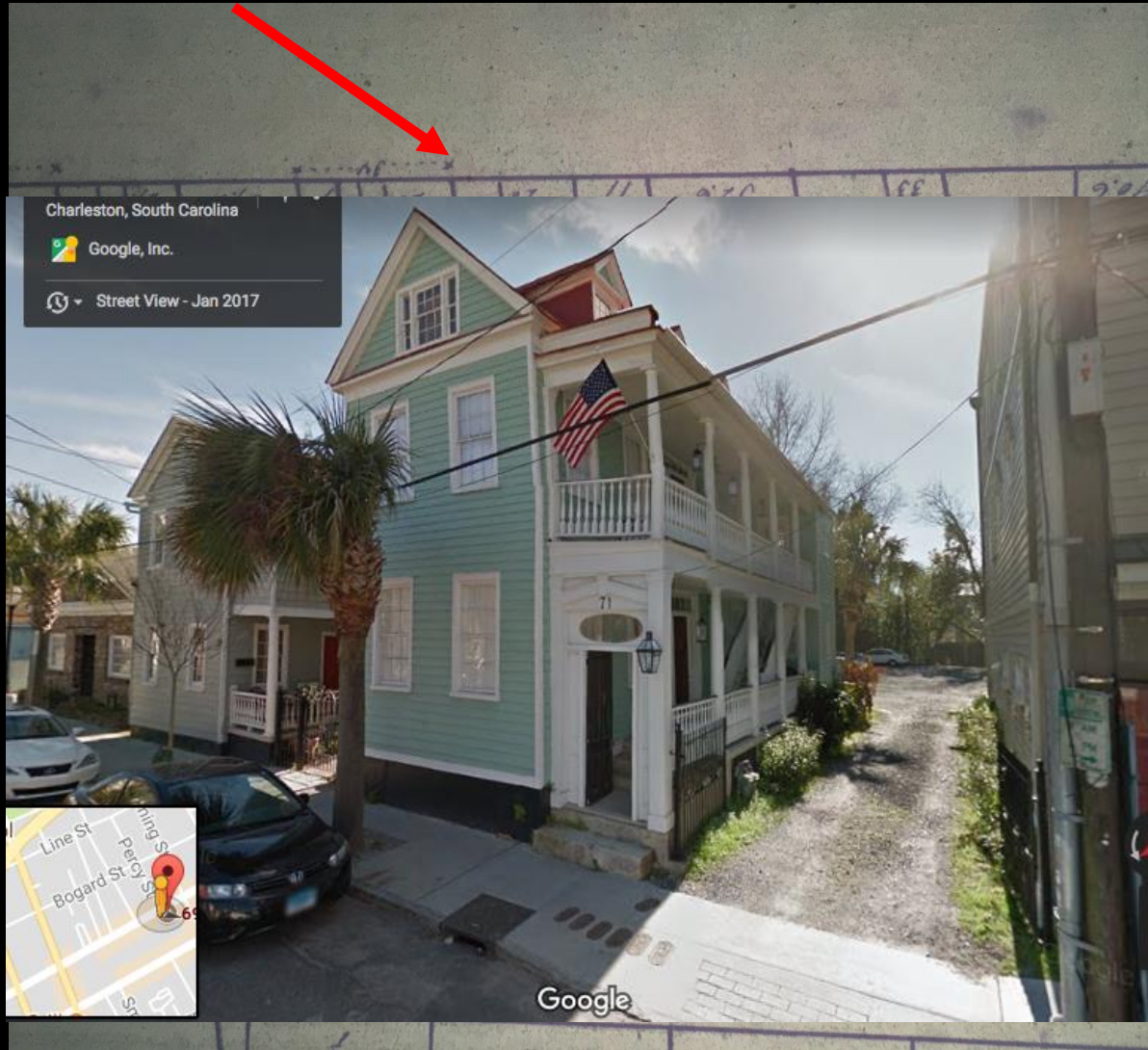
9 January 1907

- All that lot and buildings thereon known as lot number 28

V23-206

Part of a COT for 8 Maverick Street, Charleston

Public Records Case Study: Small's Alley and Spring Street: "problem" tenements at 69-71 Spring Street



- “Lamblé Block Plats” 1882–1883
- Thomas Smalls (born a free mulatto in antebellum Charleston) and his family lived in one and rented the other and the rear units
- Historic newspaper research yielded multiple arrests, stabbings, and similar incidents
- City Council Journals had numerous complaints from neighbors and police about the properties

City Directories: the original phone book

**FOURTH, from Mill North to Bee
5th West of Rutledge Avenue.**

Not opened

**FRANKLIN, from 162 Broad, North
to Magazine.**

East Side.

- 2 Gaillard Samuel W
- 4 Balaguer O J
- 6 Holmes Frank W

Short Ends.

- 8 Baker Henry F
Baker John M
- 10 Simons William W
- 12 Weiskoff Samuel
- 14 Puckhaber H, Grocer

Queen Intersects.

Medical College
Marine Hospital
County Jail

Magazine Intersects.

West Side.

- 3 Simons S Wragg
- 5 Paul John
- 9 Silcox Frank A
- 11 Walker Joseph
- 13 Smith J Wesley
- 15 Johnson John
Thatcher John

- 31 Cambridge Elizabeth, c
Small Adam, c
- 33 Monroe James J, c
- 35 Matthews Emily, Mrs
- 37 Cambridge James J, c
- 39 McLeish John
- 41 Monroe J J, c, Wood
Albrecht Hugo J
Powers Johanna, Mrs

**FRIEND, north from 118 Tradd to
Queen.**

East Side.

- 2 Ellis T J
- 4 Armstrong Archibald
Gibbes W H
- 6 Evans James
- 8 Wagener Clarence
- 12 Webb Samuel, Florist
- 14 Lewis John
- 16 Ames George
- 18 Steadman T C

Broad Intersects.

St Finbar Cathedral, s e

West Side.

- 1 Fuller Gordon M
- 3 O'Neill H J
- 7 McHugh C A
- 9 Haig F M, c
- 11 Barn
- 13 Cleary J F
- 15 Smith R A
Sea Side Poultry Yards

irectory.

Useful data

- **Name** listings also include address and occupation.
- Later issues (post Civil War) often list spouse also
- Street listings show **OCCUPANT** of the address
- Business listings show business location, and often the president/owner.
- “c” denotes “colored” resident

Schlepegrell & Son.

700,000 FEET BUILDING LUMBER.

HOU

401

HOW

House of Rest, Miss E J Wagner, matron, 97 Ashley
 Houselander F J, porter, O F Wieters
 Houston Charlotte c, dressmkr, r 25 Henrietta
 Houston Eliza E, wid William H, r 9 John
 Houston James E, c, wks N E R R, r 118 Calhoun
 Houston John, c, lab, r 2 Kennedy's row
 Houston John Jr, c, lab, r 2 Kennedy's row
 Houston Robert, c, tailor, r 53 Charlotte
 Houston Sarah, wid Dennis, r 63 George
 Houston William W, collector, r 9 John
 Houston Withers N, shoemkr, 85 Society, r 53 Charlotte
 Howard Andrew, c, foreman, C R Holmes, r rear 19 East Battery
 Howard Anguish, c, longshoreman, r 38 Woolfe
 Howard Caleb, c, lamp-lighter, r rear 45 Laurens
 Howard Duncan, c, fruits, 70 Beaufain, r 73 same
 Howard Edward, c, waiter, Chas Hotel' r rear 43 Hasell
 Howard Frank, bartender, J F Neumann, r 128 Market
 Howard Frank R, clk, Sheppard & Porcher, r 128 Market
 Howard Forrest, wks Ch Cotton Mill, bds 24 Blake
 Howard George, c, drayman, r rear 91 Washington
 Howard Henry, c, fisherman, r rear 251 Meeting

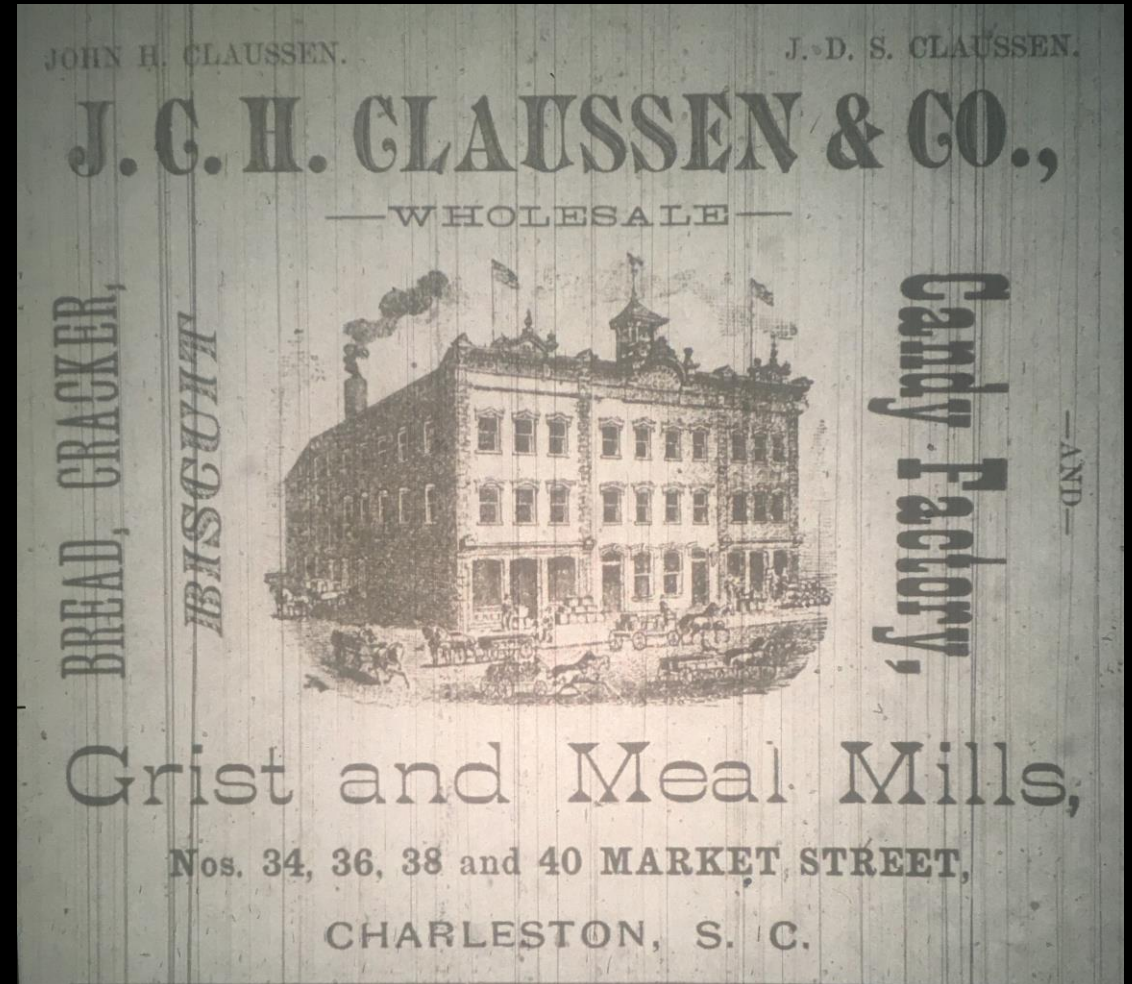
James Robertson.

GENERAL AGENT, FIDELITY & CASUALTY CO., 28 BROAD ST.
 Something new. No further use for Assessment Insurance.
 Stock Accident Insurance brought within the reach of all

TYPEWRITERS REPAIRED at the SOUTHERN

Other uses for Directories

- Documenting builders and businesses
- Construction dates and periods of vacancy
- When houses were duplexed
- Conducting demographics studies
 - Neighborhood district nominations
 - Area Character appraisals
 - Community makeup over time: race, class, ethnicity, culture, etc.



Permit records:

- Types and prevalence increased in 20th century
- City/ inspection permits
 - Usually stemmed from fire safety or use/early zoning concerns
- BAR/ Historic District permits
 - Anywhere in historic district, 1931-present
 - By address, post 1980s
 - Some oversight in overlay districts



Dock Street Theater, a well documented, federally funded restoration

Construction clues and resources for dating buildings



Dating construction with Sanborn Maps
Photo Data: SCDAH 1985 Architectural Inventory survey card)

Considering materials and assemblies

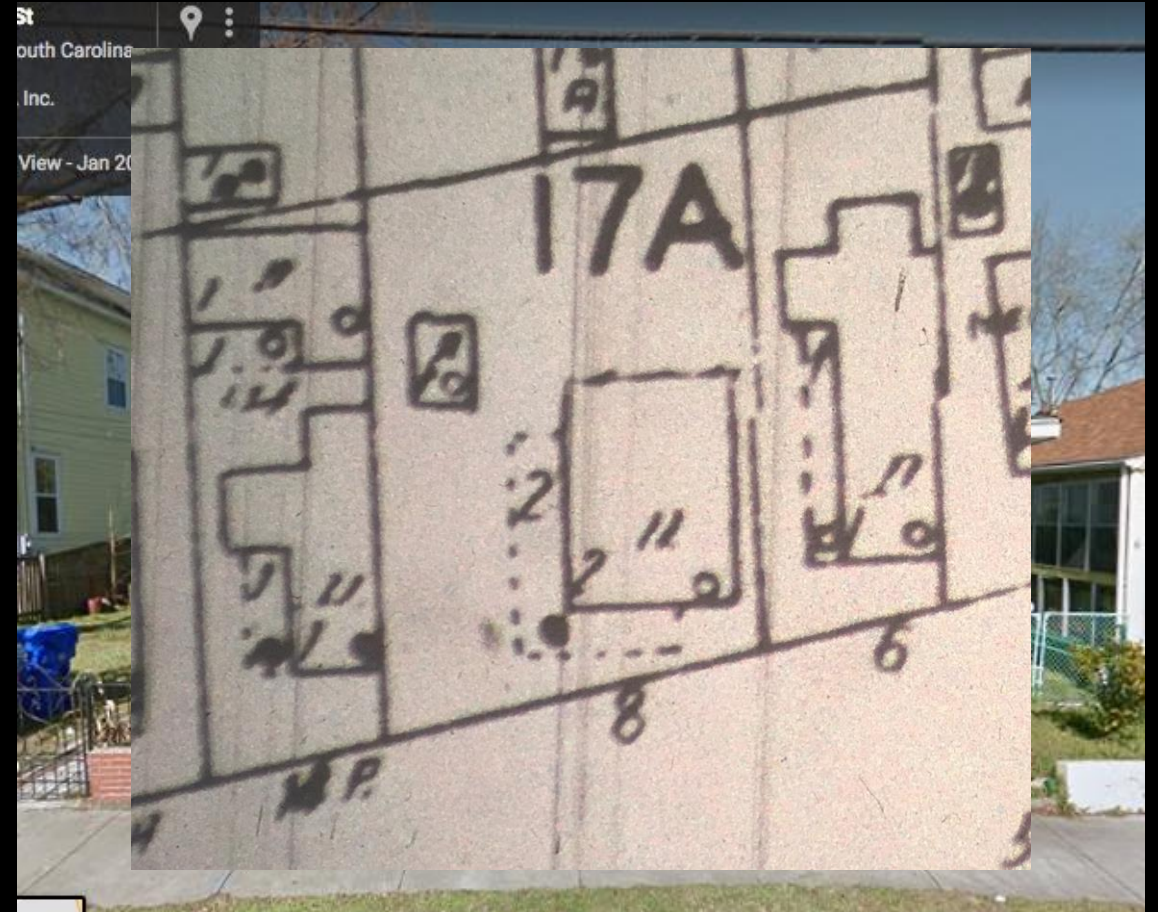
- Vernacular buildings are more likely to have salvage material, making them tricky to date
- Size of lumber (actual versus nominal)
- Marriage or joiners marks
- Use of joinery and presence of nails
- Lumber processing/saw marks



Framing of a cabin at Mcleod Plantation

Making sense of conflicting data and undocumented changes: example at 8 Maverick St.

- Oral history from the current owner, whose family has had the property for decades, indicates that the house was at one time a one-story structure that was slowly added onto and modified to its current two-story configuration
- Tax assessments from 1902 list a one story new frame house
- By 1929, the house was replaced or modified into a two story building
- Style details: roof pitch and square Craftsman posts in keeping with 1920s
 - But the porch was also changed at some time, AFTER 1973!



Resources for biographical sketches:

- **Probate records:** historic wills and inventories
- **Vital Records:** City death records, births, marriages, State Death Certificates, Cemetery Records, Obituaries
 - **Church records**
- **Records from life:** Directories, Census Records, newspaper ads, military, immigration

United State Census Records

SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in York **in the County of** York **State** South Carolina
of South Carolina **enumerated by me, on the** 9 **day of** September **1850.** John P. Briggs **Ass't Marshal.** 194

1	2	3	DESCRIPTION.			7	8	9	10 11 12			13
			Age.	Sex.	White, Black, or Colored.				Minded within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Persons over 20 years of age who cannot read & write.	
		Martha A. "	3	F				York Dist.				1
		Measurers Albright	19	M				"				2
		Wm. S. Sunday	18	M		Labourer		Georgetown				3
75-475		Wm. S. Griffith	26	M		Labourer		Christina "				4
		Melissa G. "	28	F				Lexington "				5
		Thomas E. "	18	M		Labourer		"				6
		Sarah L. "	15	F				York Dist.				7
		James T. "	12	M				"				8
		Isaac O. "	6	M				"				9
		Mary A. "	4	F				Kickland "				10
		Robert T. "	2	M				York "				11

Sample census from 1850, York County, South Carolina

Tips and problems:

Example of a Soundex index page- code M-524: Manigault, Manigo, Margeaux, etc.

HEAD OF FAMILY		CITY	
Manigault David		Charleston	
OTHER MEMBERS OF FAMILY			
NAME	RELATION- SHIP	AGE	
Virginia	w.	27	
Mary	d	6	
Addie	d	5	
Sarah	d	9	
David Jr.	s	1/2	
Tom Carroll	mil.	75	

INDEX - FAMILY U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUREAU OF CENSUS

- There are LOTS of errors in the census
- The 1870 census for much of the South is spotty at best, because the population was in flux. Lots of people were missed in this census.
- Ages of people in the household may be several years off
- “Soundex”- to aid researchers in finding misspelled names

Probate Records

- Wills
- Inventories
- Estate papers
- Trustee information
- Useful for: determining family members, church affiliations, details on properties, class background, business details.

155. A true and perfect Inventory of the Goods and Chattels
 1830 belonging to the Estate of Oliver Cromwell deceased
 as Shewn by the Executors and Appraised by us.
 This twenty fourth day of November 1812.

A Dining Table & pair of ends		10
A pair Card D.	\$10	A tea Table \$5 15
10 Mahogany Chairs		30
6 Straw bottom D.	\$4.50	6 green D. \$3 7.50
1 Easy & Back Chair	\$10	3 Mahogany Bedsteads \$30 40
3 Feather Beds &c	\$60	3 Mattresses \$12 72
A Cot	\$1.50	A pt. Looking Glass \$12 13.50
2 Toilet Glass	\$1	17 Pictures \$50 56
A set of half Drawers	\$6	A Commode \$3 9
A small Mahogany Desk	\$3	A D. Book Case \$25 28
2 pt. brass Dogs & a Fender	\$15	2 pt. tongs & shovels \$3 18
1 Mahogany Dressing Table		1
1 B. Stand	\$3	3 pt. plated Candel \$3 6
A pt. of plated Snuffers & Stands		1.50

Death records as a bio source

- Vital records: records of life events kept under governmental authority, including birth certificates, marriage licenses, and death certificates
- South Carolina began recording births and deaths in 1915; certificates from 1915-1955 on ancestry.com. These also include parents' names and secondary causes of death.

PLACE OF DEATH		Standard Certificate of Death		File No.—For State Register
County of <u>Charleston</u>		STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA Bureau of Vital Statistics State Board of Health		3854
Township of <u>Char</u>		Registration District No. <u>39 Morris</u>		Registered No. <u>39 Morris</u>
City of <u>Charleston</u>		Ward <u>39 Morris</u>		(If death a Hospital number)
Home Address <u>39 Morris</u>		City <u>Charleston</u> Yrs. <u>39 Morris</u>		Mo
FULL NAME <u>Walter Johnson</u>		No. <u>88709-12-5374</u>		City <u>Charleston</u> Yrs. <u>39 Morris</u>
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS				
SEX <u>Male</u>	4. COLOR OR RACE <u>Black</u>	Single, Married, Widowed, or Divorced (write the word) <u>Widowed</u>		
5. If married, widowed, or divorced HUSBAND of (or) WIFE of <u>Lilly Bell</u>				
DATE OF BIRTH (Month, day, and year) <u>1890</u>				
AGE <u>50</u>	Years	Months	Days	If less than 1 day, hrs. or min.
8. Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, sawyer, bookkeeper, etc. <u>Pullman Porter</u>				
9. Industry or business in which work was done, as silk mill, saw mill, bank, etc. <u>Porter</u>				
10. Date deceased last worked at this occupation (month and year) <u>1 year</u>				
11. Total time (years) spent in this occupation <u>24 yr.</u>				
12. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or Country) <u>Lawrence, S.C.</u>				
13. NAME <u>Tobias Johnson</u>				
14. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or Country) <u>Greenville S.C.</u>				
15. MAIDEN NAME <u>Venday Estlin</u>				
16. BIRTHPLACE (city or town) (State or Country) <u>Greenville</u>				
INFORMANT (Address) <u>Walter Johnson Jr. 39 Morris</u>				
BURIAL, CREMATION, OR REMOVAL Place <u> Emanuel </u> Date <u>Mar 14, 1940</u>				
UNDERTAKER (Address) <u>Fielding 132 E. Bay</u>				
FILED <u>MAR 14 1940</u> REGISTRAR <u>LEON BANOV, M.D.</u>				
MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH				
21. DATE OF DEATH (month, day, and year) <u>Mar. 10, 1940</u>				
22. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended <u>Mar. 10, 1940</u> to <u>Mar. 12, 1940</u>				
I last saw him alive on <u>Mar. 11, 1940</u>				
to have occurred on the date stated above, at <u>10:10</u>				
The principal cause of death and related causes of important onset were as follows:				
<u>Arterio-Sclerosis</u> <u>Coronary Hemorrhage</u> <u>Pulmonary Edema</u> <u>Myocardial Failure</u>				
Was this death due to pregnancy or to childbirth? If so, state which <u>X</u>				
Contributory causes of importance not related to principal cause				
Name of operation <u>None</u> Date of <u>None</u>				
What test confirmed diagnosis <u>Clinical</u> Was there an autopsy <u>X</u>				
23. If death was due to external causes (violence) fill in also Accident, suicide, or homicide? <u>None</u> Date of injury <u>None</u>				
Where did injury occur? <u>None</u> (Specify city or town, and Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home, or in public place)				
Manner of injury <u>None</u>				
Nature of injury <u>None</u>				
24. Was disease or injury in any way related to occupation or hobby? <u>None</u>				
If so, specify <u>None</u>				
(Signed) <u>J. F. Frymoyer</u>				
(Address) <u>45 E. Bay</u>				

Church records and Cemetery Inscriptions

- Tombstone inscription books
 - www.findagrave.com
- WPA church records and cemetery inscription on microform.
 - Available material differs by church and congregation
- Church Archives: Catholic Diocese, Lutheran Church, etc.
- *Problems with African American Records: defunct cemeteries and spotty church holdings.



African American specific resources

	Names	Residence	Occ	Occupation	Am't
269	✓ Williams Ann	East Bay	31		5 "
270	✓ Wood Ellen	Cumberland Street	40		5 "
440	✓ White Edward	Kinglands Lane	50	Carpenter	10 "
441	✓ " Rachel	" "	44		5 "
✓	✓ Wood Ellen	King St. Kensington	23		5 "
	✓ Williams James	King St. near Col. St. Hill	43	Taylor	00 "
443	✓ Washington Lavinia	George Street	46		5 "
321	✓ Weston Hannah	Green "	42		5 "
322	✓ " James	Green "	18		5 " dea
323	✓ " "				5 "

Capitation Tax Ledgers, 1810-1860: free people of color had to pay a tax to maintain their freedom. The ledger includes names, occupations, addresses, and tax bracket.

Freedman's Bank Record- Account Stub.

Provides name, occupation, other family members, former owner's name, residence.

No.	RECORD for	Abram Waring
Date,		May 17 1871
Where born,		Charleston S.C.
Where brought up,		de Mount Pleasant
Residence,		de Mount Pleasant
Age,	60	Complexion, Dr Brown
Occupation,	Jobbing	
Works for		
Wife or Husband,	Jemima Waring	
Children,	Bijah Lee, Charles David Mary George, Joe, " Amanetta, Matilda	
Father,	March Hayden	dea
Mother,	Maria Waring	dea
Brothers and Sisters,	None	
REMARKS	Trustee of A.M.E Church Mount Pleasant	
Signature,	Abram ^{his} Waring mark	

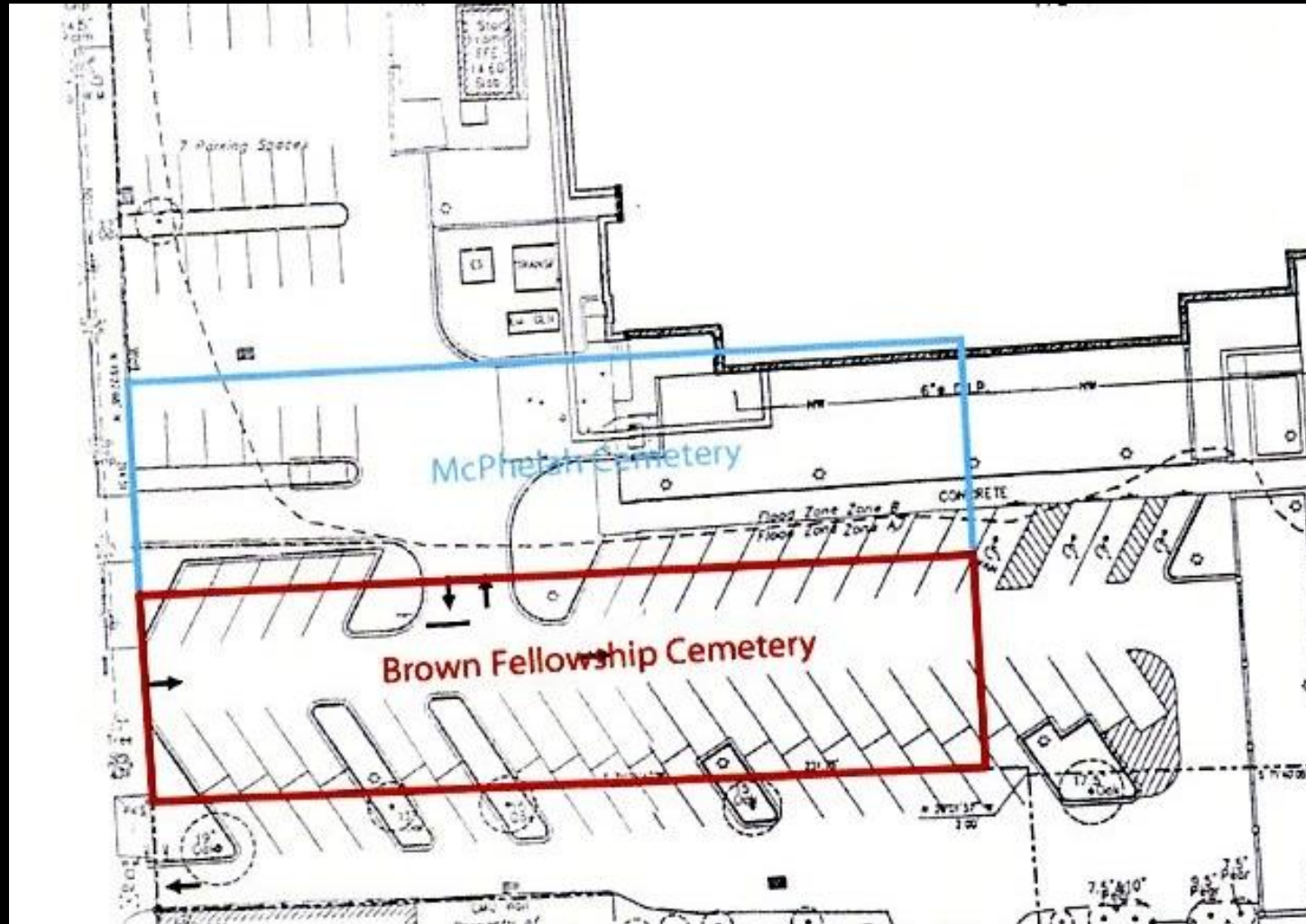
Record for	Mary Bascum
1. Name of Depositor.	Mary Bascum
2. Birthplace	Santee S.C. Parkers Plantation
3. Age.	
4. Complexion.	Black
5. Regiment.	
6. Company.	
7. Residence	Charleston S.C.
8. Married or single.	Widow
9. Name of husband or wife.	Husband. Abraham Bascum
10. Residence of husband or wife.	
11. Names and ages of their children.	

Reasons for missing records: historic cemeteries

HANOVER CENETERY BERSHEBA	Vol-90-1975	
	NAME	Barnwell, Marie (Male Infant) Male Female
	Age	00 Mar. Sin. Wt. --- White- Negro
	Place of Birth	City
	Pl. Residence	10 Lenox St. : Occupation
	Disease	Still Born
	Physician	A.C. MacGlennan Place Basheba --- of Interment
	Date of Death	November 18, 1895
	Remarks	
	REID ST. E.	REID

1902 1929

Brown Fellowship Society Burial Ground example



Case study: The Winthrop Family at 20 Short Street

- Constructed in 1879 by Thomas Winthrop, a tinsmith born into slavery
- Family owned and occupied the house for 100 years!!
- Several Winthrops were born and died in the house
 - They also carried on a tinsmith and carpentry business
- Original deed for the house and paid off mortgage found in the wall during a renovation!!



Thomas and Emma Winthrop → Albert (Maria) Winthrop → Emma Winthrop (Lee Bryan) → Gertrude Bryan

- Probate records
- Marriage and death records
- Freedman's Bank
- Census
- Deeds and ward books
- Newspaper research

3731 - 3208-J.

TINNING. guttering and roof painting. Work guaranteed. Joseph Winthrop. Successor to A. J. Winthrop. phone 2989-W, 20 Short street.

YOUR gas stove and refrigerator repairing. Phone 2438-W, J. C. Mardray.

WOMEN to paint lamp shades for

No. 28 Record for Thomas Winthrop

Date of Application, Oct 21st 1868

Where born, Charleston S C

Where brought up, an a

Residence, 4 Cornwell Court Charlestown

Age, 37 1/2

Complexion, Light

Occupation, Salesman

Works for, J. W. Bliss

Wife, Emma

Children, Thomas Winthrop, Albert & Emma & Mary, & Robert (decd)

Father, Dr Henry Winthrop

Mother, Lydia (decd)

Brothers, Samuel (decd)

Sisters, Elizabeth (decd) Catharine (decd)

Thomas Winthrop Pres
Remley Point Ferry Company

Signature, Thomas Winthrop.

The End! Thank you for your time!

Questions or comments?