

**EXPLORATION OF THE
NORTH ENTRANCE
OF THE JOSEPH
MANIGAULT HOUSE**

by

Martha Zierden

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Archaeological Contributions 15

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prepared for

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Introduction

The Joseph Manigault house, located on Meeting Street between Ashmead Place and John Street, has been operated as an historic house museum since the 1940s. In 1979, the new Charleston Museum facility was constructed one block north, across John Street from the house. The southern facade of the Museum was designed to complement the outlines of the Manigault house, and to provide a direct link between the two structures. Realization of these plans was hampered by the presence of Cook's cleaners, a one story brick building located on the northern portion of the Manigault lot. This abandoned structure, used for storage by the Museum, extended the entire length of the lot along John Street, and continued along Meeting Street to within 10 feet of the north facade of the Manigault house. This structure blocked both the view of and direct access to the northern entrance.

Great strides were made towards restoration of this area when funds were donated to the Museum to demolish the cleaners structure. This was accomplished in the summer of 1986, clearing the way for restoration of the north facade. A major aspect of this restoration is reconstruction of the steps at the northern entrance. At the present time, there are no steps and the door is unusable. Further, almost no documentation as to the size, shape, and method of construction of these steps could be located. A single plat, dated 1852, shows the location and approximate dimensions of the steps (Figure 1). Archaeological investigation was deemed an appropriate method of determining the location and dimensions of this feature. It was hoped that foundation remnants of the steps could be located through controlled excavations in the vicinity of the north door. This research was facilitated by a grant from the Barker Welfare Foundation to The Charleston Museum.

In addition to this primary goal, there were several secondary goals of the project. Archaeological research in Charleston has been guided by a broad series of research questions and goals, developed on the basis of extensive archaeological and historical background research (Zierden and Calhoun 1984). For the first four years of the program, excavations were focused in the downtown core areas of Charleston, the site of dual residential/commercial occupation throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Zierden and Calhoun 1986). In 1985, research expanded to include investigation of antebellum period suburban areas (Zierden et al. 1986a; 1986b). Most recently, research has focused on the East Side neighborhood, in the vicinity of the Museum and Manigault house (Zierden 1986). Excavations at the Museum's Aiken-Rhett house, on Judith and Elizabeth Streets, proved especially informative. It was hoped that a controlled sample from the Joseph Manigault house would serve to augment these data, and to guide future excavations at the site.

Site History

The southeast corner of Meeting and John Streets, the location of the Manigault House, is part of the antebellum suburb of Wraggsboro. Joseph and

Samuel Wragg were granted an extensive amount of land, which became known as the Barony of Wraggsboro, in return for their services in bringing large numbers of immigrants to Carolina. Following Joseph Wragg's death in 1751, his property was divided among his children (Rogers 1980:59). John Wragg inherited the 79 acres east of the "Broad Path", now known as King Street, and created the neighborhood of Wraggsborough (Rogers 1980:59,64; Zierden et al. 1986).

John Wragg died in 1796, leaving no heirs, and in 1801 the Court of Common Pleas ordered the plantation surveyed into squares, streets, and lots, and divided among Wragg's surviving sisters, nieces and nephews (Stockton 1979:33). Joseph Manigault, a nephew of John Wragg, was assigned a large lot fronting west on Meeting Street and south on Wragg Square, while his sister, Ann Manigault, received the large lot adjacent to the north on John Street. In November 1802, Joseph acquired his sister's lot.

Joseph Manigault was a rice planter, born in Charleston in 1763. In addition to his town property, he owned several plantations. The largest, White Oak, was located in Georgetown County, housed 151 slaves, and in 1850 produced 350,000 pounds of rice. Joseph married Maria Henrietta Middleton in 1788. Nine years after her death, in 1800, he married Charlotte Drayton of Drayton Hall, who bore him 10 children.

After he acquired his sister's lot, Joseph commissioned his brother, Gabriel, to design his house. A gentleman rice planter, Gabriel was also a renown amateur architect. In addition to his brother's house, he also planned his own dwelling, the chapel of the Charleston Orphan House, the South Carolina Society Hall, and City Hall.

Joseph Manigault's house was built in 1803, and is considered one of America's best examples of the Adamesque or Federal style of architecture. The Manigault brothers took advantage of the generously proportioned site to place the structure well within the lot. Along the eastern portion of the double lot, furthest from Meeting Street, were built stables, kitchen, and other service features; the remainder of the combined lot was devoted to gardens, with a classic pavilion or gate house on the south side of the property (Stockton 1979:34) (Figure 1).

Joseph died in 1843, and the Manigaults occupied the house until 1852. After this, the property changed hands several times, and the condition of the property steadily declined. The house eventually served as a tenement, housing a large number of people. The executors of his estate sold Joseph Manigault's house to George N. Reynolds in 1852 for \$13,000. In 1864, Reynolds sold the house for \$65,000 (inflated Confederate currency) to John S. Riggs (CCRMCO J-14:215). John Riggs retained the property until approximately the time of World War I (Manigault House files). John Riggs died and left his property to his sons, Sidney and Robert. Sidney conveyed his half interest to his brother in 1917 (CCRMCO Y-27:253). In 1922, Robert Riggs sold his property to the Charleston Motor Sales Company for \$35,500 (CCRMCO E-30:59). It is not clear when the northern strip (Cook's cleaners) was sold; it was not part of the property that Robert Riggs sold in 1922 (Figure 2). Therefore, it appears that George Riggs sold the property some time before his death.

John Street

158 feet.

Kitchen, &c.

W.C.

Carriage House.

Lot belonging to

W. H. Houston.

Pump

Stable.

200 feet.

W.C.

200 feet.

Lot with Dwelling-House and Outbuildings, belonging to Estate of Joseph Manigault, situated at the Corner of Meeting & John Streets, Charleston, S.C

March, 1852.



156 feet.

Wragg Square

Scale 30 ft to 1 inch.

Figure 3

Plat of property of the Estate of Joseph Manigault, 1852

From Deeds, T12:63; RMCO

No. 25

33.79'

55.87'

11.10'

12.00'

1.00'

11.10'

14.00'

25.00'

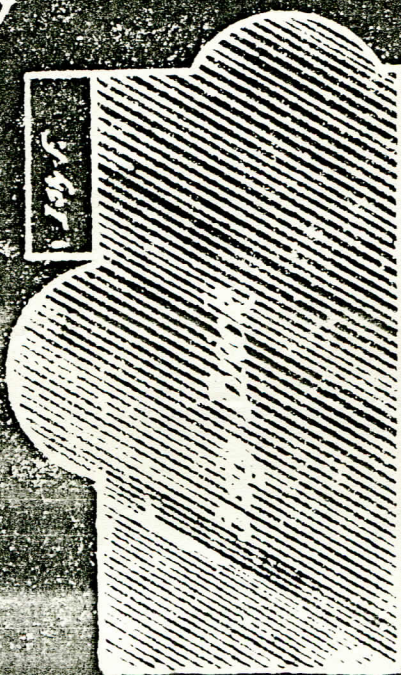
17.00'

19' Fence

19' Fence

No. 352

14.00'



Porch

Porch

No. 350

10.00'

32.47'

3.00'

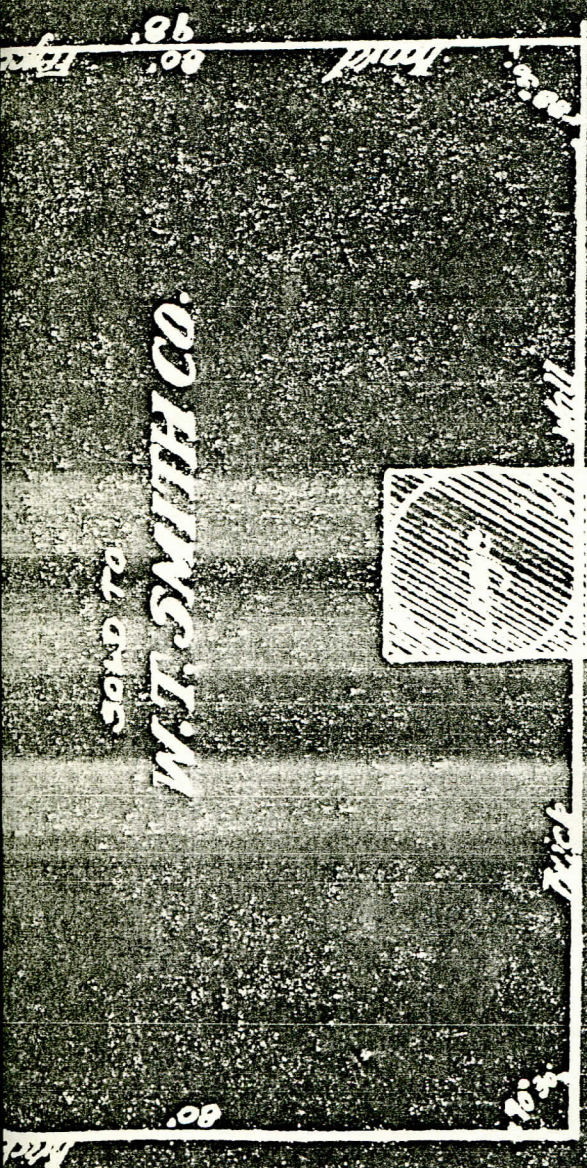
11.00'

11.10'

LINE ST



No. 2.



SEND TO

W. T. SMITH CO.

15' x 11'

ASHMEAD PLACE

MAP

of

ASHMEAD PLACE

SURVEYED FOR

MR. W. A. O'HAGAN

Surveyed by logs of occupation party 1880
Acres 1.20 or thereabouts
Quagm.

ME

Charleston Motor Sales realty company then conveyed to Susan Frost (CCRMCO F-39:23). Susan Frost conveyed to Nellie McCall Pringle in May 1922 (CCRMCO X-30:163). Eight months later the southern, or garden, portion of the Manigault lot was sold to the Standard Oil Company (CCRMCO P-31:97) and a gas station was constructed (Figure 2). The gate temple was remodeled as a rest room. A series of complicated legal entanglements ensued, and in 1933 the Manigault House was auctioned for non-payment of taxes. The Princess Pignatelli purchased the house and presented it to the Museum. E. Milby Burton, then Director of the Museum, persuaded Standard Oil Company to donate the garden property for restoration.

The house then sat idle due to lack of funds. During World War II, the U.S.O. occupied and restored the house. The first floor was used to serve coffee and donuts, the second floor for recreation, and the third as a dormitory. The house was opened to the public in 1948, and furnishings were added slowly over the next thirty years. As an historic house museum, the Joseph Manigault house is presently one of the city's major attractions.

Site Description

The Manigault lot measures 200 feet along Meeting Street and 158 feet along John Street. Extant structures include the main house, measuring 80 by 55 feet, and the summerhouse, or gate house. A brick wall surrounds the property. The front and side yards (south and east side) are maintained as formal gardens and manicured lawns; the rear, or north, yard was formerly occupied by the Cook's Cleaners structure. This area, measuring 158 feet by 30 feet, was severely truncated by first the construction and then demolition of the cleaners building. The floor of the structure was significantly lower than the present grade of the yard and removal of the foundation resulted in the rear yard ten feet beyond the back of the house ending abruptly in a 3 foot embankment. This lower elevation, however, is even with the present grade of John Street. It appears that much of this downcutting occurred at the time of construction, although it is impossible to determine the original grade of the yard area. The result of creation of this cut was severe erosion of this portion of the archaeological record; however, very few artifacts were recovered from the exposed soil.

Based on the dimensions indicated on the 1852 plat, the northern stairs measured 12 by 6½ feet. The construction of the cleaners would have impacted this area by 2 feet, while the demolition process removed an additional 2 feet. At the present time, only an 8 foot strip of original grade remains along the northern entrance. Therefore, it was doubtful that we would be able to determine the length of the original stairs, but we hoped to find evidence of the width of the feature.

Although the main house and gate temple are presently the only extant structures, the Manigault lot originally contained several additional structures. According to the 1852 plat, these included a brick kitchen, wooden carriage house, stable, and two privies. If the 1852 plat is accurate, then the Manigault compound was arranged in a very unusual manner. The predominant spatial arrangement featured a long, narrow lot with the main house situated

immediately upon, or near, the street. If the structure was a Charleston single house, then most often the narrow end faced the street. Behind the main house, auxiliary structures were arranged in a linear pattern along one or both walls (Honerkamp et al. 1982; Zierden and Calhoun 1986). The Manigault property features the house at mid lot, privy, carriage house, and stable along the east wall, both in front of and behind the house, and the kitchen set perpendicular to these structures, directly on John Street. If the southern facade was originally the front of the house, then guests passed a privy and stable on their way to the front door. If the north facade was the main entrance, then the kitchen and slave quarters were positioned on the front street, in front of the house. Either configuration is unusual for Charleston, even for upper class compounds with spacious lots (Zierden et al. 1986a; 1986b).

Methodology

Because of the limited nature of the excavations, a trench unit grid was used to establish horizontal control. Units were oriented parallel to Meeting Street. A point was established on the Meeting Street curb 50.8 feet south of the true corner of Meeting and John. From this point, three points were established perpendicular to Meeting Street, at 68.5 feet, 73.5 feet, and 78.5 feet. From these points, triangulation was used to establish two adjacent five foot squares to the north. These two units were thus positioned directly adjacent to the northern entrance. The door is 4 feet wide, so the units continue 3 feet beyond the door frame on either side, and continue 5 feet north of the door (Figure 4).

Vertical control was maintained with the use of a transit. Elevations were recorded in relation to a datum point established in the center of a water meter cover on the Meeting Street sidewalk, outside of the driveway gate. This point was in turn tied into a survey marker located at the southwest corner of the Museum building. The elevation of this point is 11.51 feet above mean sea level, and the elevation of the water meter cover is 11.08 feet above mean sea level. All elevations in this report are absolute elevations in feet above mean sea level (MSL).

All excavations were conducted by hand using shovels and trowels, according to natural levels (Figure 3). Materials from each provenience were bagged and tagged separately. All materials were dry screened through $\frac{1}{4}$ inch mesh. Planview drawings were made at each level, and each feature was photographed before and after excavation. Narrative field notes and forms were maintained.

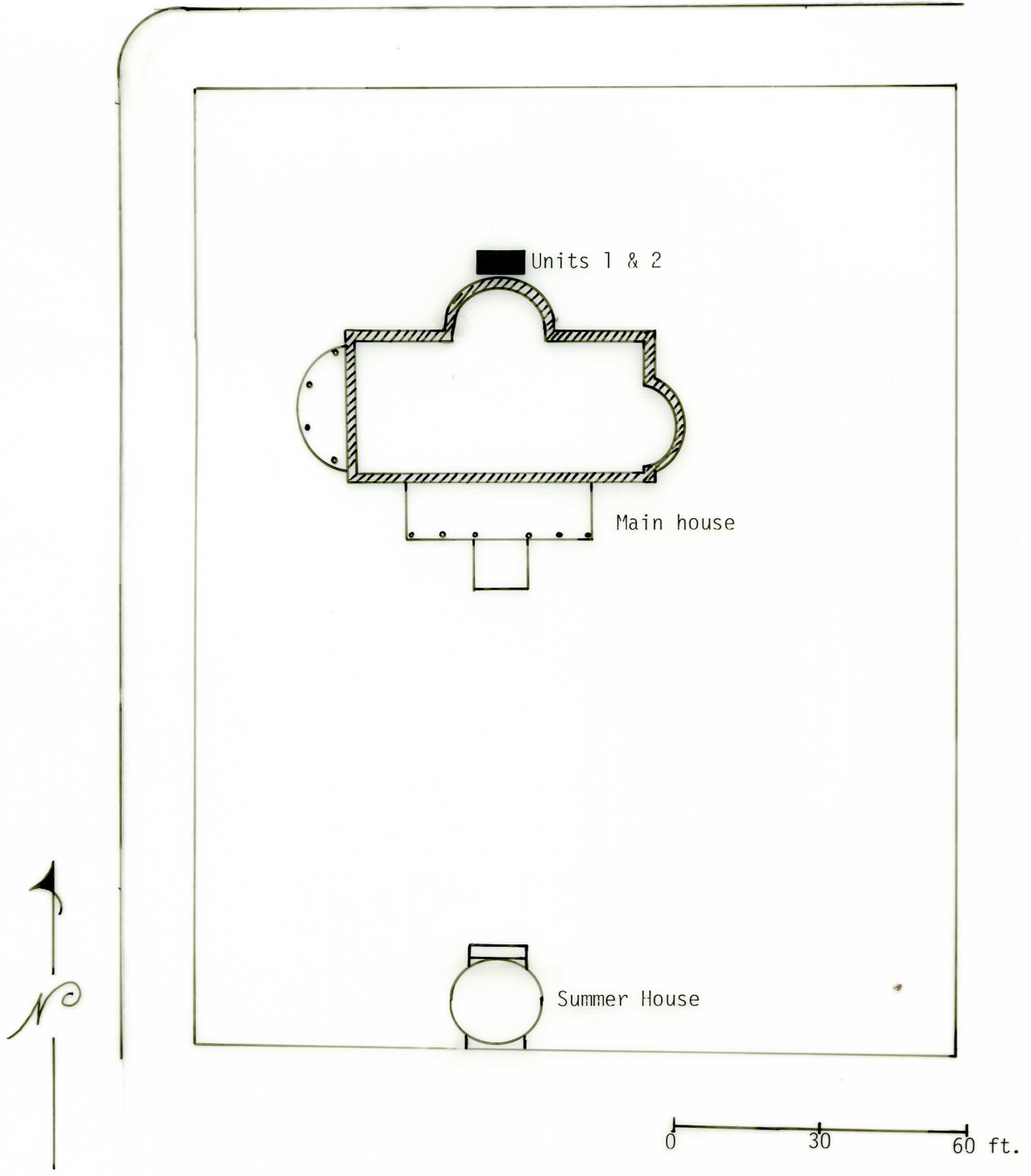
Following excavation, all materials were removed to the Charleston Museum laboratory, where they were washed, sorted, and identified. All ferrous materials were stabilized by soaking in successive baths of distilled water to remove chlorides. The materials were cataloged and boxed according to Museum standards and guidelines for final curation in the Museum storage facility. All field notes, maps, and photographs are curated in The Charleston Museum library.



Figure 3

Excavation of Units 1 and 2,
base zone 1.

John Street



Description of Excavated Proveniences

Proveniences encountered in Units 1 and 2 consisted of two zones, four features, and four postmolds. Zone 1 consisted of dark grey-black soil containing coal and slate, and was .4 feet deep. This deposit was present over the entire unit. Encountered beneath this deposit was zone 2, a mottled grey, tan, and orange sand layer, .2 feet deep. This zone was present only in the northern half of the units. Feature 1 was encountered in the southern half of the units, and consisted of a linear area of compact burned coal and shale (Figure 5). Excavation of feature 1 revealed that it was the construction trench for two parallel iron pipes. The construction trench for the lower of the two was designated feature 3. These were not investigated further.

Excavations then concentrated on the northern half of the two units. Several features initiated beneath zone 2. Feature 2 consisted of a linear area of mottled grey and tan sand, oriented at a 45° angle to the unit. The feature exhibited straight sides and a flat bottom, and was .15 feet deep. The function of this feature is unclear.

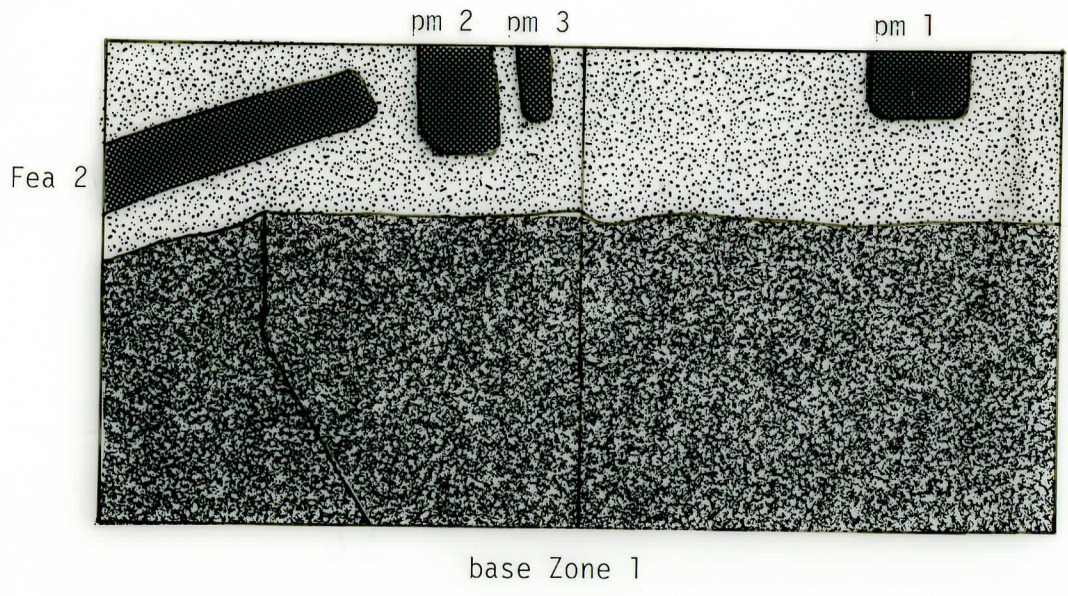
Two square postmolds were present along the northern wall of the units. These features measured 1.0 feet by .7 feet, and exhibited straight sides and a flat bottom. These posts were in line with and centered on the door frame. This alignment will be explored in greater detail later.

Beneath these features in the northern half of the units was an area of mottled orange, grey, and yellow sand; a strip of sterile orange subsoil was visible between the mottled area and features 1 and 3 (Figure 5b). Originally designated zone 3, the mottled soil deposit proved to be a feature and was designated feature 4. Feature 4 was a large trench with straight sides and a flat bottom. The fill was very loose and unconsolidated. Located at the base of the fill, which was 1.6 feet deep, was a terra cotta drain pipe. The feature was excavated in two arbitrary levels. Excavations were discontinued after a sample from feature 4 was obtained.

Materials Recovered

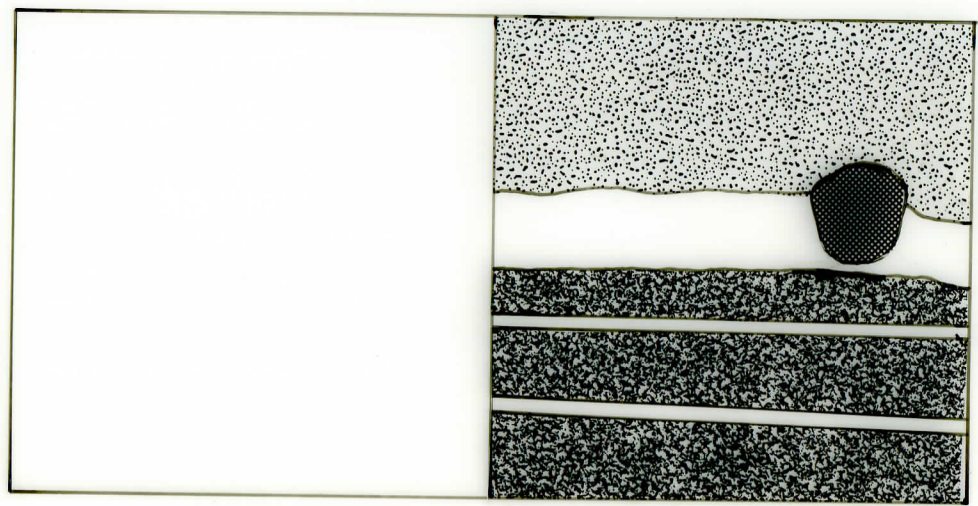
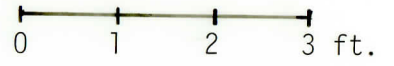
The artifact assemblage recovered from the Manigault house was extremely sparse; only 557 artifacts were recovered. In addition, almost no animal bone, a common component of the archaeological record, was recovered. This assemblage is described below.

The artifacts recovered were useful in dating the proveniences. The date of deposition is determined by the stratigraphic point of initiation (the deepest provenience is the earliest) and Terminus Post Quem (or TPQ). TPQ is defined as the initial manufacture date of the latest dating item in the provenience. The proveniences excavated at the Manigault house were deposited from the late nineteenth century through the mid twentieth century. The deepest provenience, feature 4, contained a single sherd of gilt-edged whiteware, providing a TPQ of 1890 (Bartovics 1978). Postmolds 1 through 3 contained no datable material, but the fact that they intruded into feature 4 suggest that they postdate the trench. Feature 2, which initiates at the same level, contained a crown bottle cap, indicating that it was deposited after 1903



zone 3
(top fea 4)

Fea 1



Fea 4

pm 4

sterile subsoil

Fea 3

Fea 1

Unit 2 base Zone 2 Unit 1

(Lorraine 1968). Zones 1 and 2 above these deposits contained no datable material, but the stratigraphy suggests that they date to the mid twentieth and early twentieth century, respectively. Likewise, features 1 and 3 probably date to the mid twentieth century (Table 1).

The materials recovered were grouped by function, according to South's categorization for the Carolina Artifact Pattern (South 1977). Under this method, artifacts are organized into different types, groups, and classes, based on their function. South's technique has been widely adopted by historical archaeologists, allowing for direct intersite comparison; all of the data from Charleston has been organized in this manner (Zierden and Calhoun 1986) (Table 3).

Kitchen artifacts comprise 32% of the assemblage. Included in this group are ceramics manufactured in the nineteenth century. These include creamware, manufactured in the first half of the nineteenth century, yellow ware, manufactured after 1826, whiteware, manufactured after 1830, and white porcelain, manufactured after 1851 (Bartovics 1978; Noel Hume 1969; Price 1980; South 1977). The latest dating ceramic was the gilt-edged whiteware, first manufactured in 1891. Other kitchen artifacts included container glass in a variety of colors, including black (dark olive green), light green, clear, aqua, brown, and manganese. Manganese glass is actually clear, but turns lavender with exposure to light. It became popular after 1840 (Taylor and Smith 78). Identifiable glass included two pharmaceutical panel bottle fragments, manufactured after 1867 (Lorraine 1968). The final kitchen items were two crown bottle caps, manufactured after 1903, and a fragment of a tin can, postdating 1850 (Fontana and Greenleaf 1962).

Architectural materials comprised 63% of the assemblage and included nails and window glass. Identifiable nails included hand wrought and machine cut, which were first manufactured in 1780. No wire nails, developed after 1850, were recovered.

No arms or pipes were recovered. The single clothing item was a 4 hole shell button. Personal items consisted of five fragments of mirror glass and six fragments of thin glass, from a perfume bottle. The single furniture item was a brass gas jet, dating to the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century. The activities group comprised 2.15 % of the assemblage and included a variety of items. These included scrap brass and lead fragments, coal, two screws, and two clay marbles (Table 2).

Interpretations

While the excavations did not provide any direct evidence of the original stairway, the data do provide some clues to the activities at the house during the last 100 years. The terra cotta drain pipe, feature 4, probably represents the first sewer hookup for the house, and it appears that these facilities were added some time between 1890 and 1910. Later, iron water or gas pipes were added.

For future research, it is important to learn the date of sale for the cleaners tract. This subdivision left only 10 feet between the north door and the edge of the property. The two square postmolds which intrude into feature

Table 1
Provenience Guide

FS#	Provenience	Top Elevation	Base Elevation	TPQ	Date of Deposition	Function
2	Unit 1, zone 1	14.45	14.05	washer	mid-20th cent.	
6	Unit 1, zone 2	14.05	13.90	manganese glass	early 20th cent.	
7	Unit 1, fea 1	14.05	--		mid 20th cent.	iron pipe trench
4	Unit 1, fea 2	13.88	13.73	crown cap 1903	early 20th cent	unknown
	Unit 1, fea 3	13.94	--		mid 20th centy	iron pipe
13, 14	Unit 1, fea 4	13.90	12.29	gilt ww. 1891	late 19th cent.	pipe trench, terra cotta
10	Unit 1, pm 2	13.90	13.68	green glass	early 20t cent.	postmold
12	Unit 1, pm3	13.89	13.86	nail	early 20t cent.	postmold
5	Unit 2, zone 1	14.37	14.10	whiteware	mid 20th cent.	
	Unit 2, zone 2	14.10	13.90	no matl.	early 20th cent.	
8	Unit 2, pm 1	13.90	13.73	milk glass	early 20th cent.	postmold
11	Unit 2, pm 4	13.62	13.27	yellow ware	early 20th cent.	postmold?
	Unit 2, fea 3	13.65	--	--	early 20th cent.	
13, 14	Unit 2, fea 4	13.90	--	n/e		
7	Unit 2, fea 1	14.05	13.65	--	mid-20th cent.	pipe trench
9	Unit 2, zone 3 (top fea 4)			gilt ww.	late 19th cent.	pipe trench

Table 2
Quantification of the Assemblage

Ceramics	
Canton porcelain	1
White porcelain	6
Whiteware, undecorated	22
Whiteware, transfer print	8
Creamware	1
Yellow ware	1
Annular whiteware	3
crown bottle cap	2
iron container	1
Bottle glass	
black	8
light green	17
aqua	3
brown	6
manganese	4
frosted	16
clear	75
milk	4
blue	1
other	
nails	129
window glass	224
gas jet	1
perfume bottle	6
mirror glass	5
shell button	1
brass nail	1
lead scrap	3
coal	3
wood screw	2
brass frag	1
clay marble	2

Table 3

Comparison of the Manigault Assemblage
to South's Carolina Artifact Pattern

	#	Manigault %	Carolina Pattern %
Kitchen	179	32.13	63.0
Architecture	353	63.37	25.5
Arms	1	--	.5
Clothing	1	.17	3.0
Personal	11	1.97	.2
Furniture	1	.17	.2
Pipes	0	--	5.8
Activities	12	2.15	1.7

four are interpreted as posts for a set of smaller, wooden "replacement" stairs, constructed in the early twentieth century. A shorter staircase would be necessitated by the sale of the cook's cleaners tract; the stairs indicated on the 1852 plat were over 12 feet long. There is no evidence for the date of demolition for the original stairs. They may have been removed at the time of the property sale, or at the time that feature 4 was excavated, or they may have been removed long before these two events. Therefore, while we believe the postholes represent evidence of a stairway, the data suggest that these are a replacement, probably much smaller and much less substantial than the original.

It is also quite interesting that the artifact assemblage was so small. While construction and subsequent demolition of the cleaners destroyed a portion of the archaeological record, it was expected that artifacts might be recovered in this area from erosion of the intact portion; despite a careful search, only eight items were recovered. This lack of materials may support the suggestion that the northern portion of the lot was the front yard. The front yards were often kept relatively clean, while the back yard was the scene of a variety of activities, including trash disposal (Fairbanks 1977). However, excavations at the Aiken-Rhett house (Zierden et al. 1986a), which were confined to the rear yard, suggest that refuse disposal was localized, with some units containing quantities of materials and others producing small assemblages. Likewise, the immediate surroundings of homes were often kept clean, and the location of the excavation units in such close proximity to the Manigault house may preclude recovery of quantities of refuse.

Recommendations

The limited testing at the Manigault house produced interesting results. The fact that so few artifacts were recovered suggests that major concentrations of artifacts are located elsewhere. It is possible that much of the early refuse was discarded in the former marshy area, just north of John Street. For the sake of convenience, however, a portion of the refuse would probably have been deposited on site. A dispersed testing program will be necessary to locate these concentrations. A likely area of refuse accumulation was in the vicinity of the kitchen, but unfortunately both the kitchen structure and its environs were destroyed by the cleaners. A privy pit, indicated on the 1852 plat, was encountered during demolition and appears to be intact. It should yield substantial data, with proper excavation. Until such time, it should be protected by remaining covered by topsoil.

The Manigault site has the potential to provide important data on the history of Charleston. Archaeological research can be used to further explore the unusual spatial configuration of the site. When combined with data from the Aiken-Rhett house, the Manigault site can provide pertinent data on nineteenth century upper class occupation of the Charleston suburbs. This research is central to the current focus on the Charleston suburbs and the East Side neighborhood (Zierden 1986). Such data can be used in interpretation of the house, as well as in exhibition at the Museum and at the proposed Visitor's Center.

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