

Habersham House (ca. 1800)
802-806 Bay Street
Beaufort
Beaufort County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-461

HABS
SC,
7-BEAUF
17-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C.

ALL INFORMATION
FOLLOWS...

SALTUS-HABERSHAM HOUSE
(Habersham House)
802 Bay Street
Beaufort
Beaufort County
South Carolina

Addendum to
HABERSHAM HOUSE
802-806 Bay Street
Beaufort
Beaufort County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-4461

HABS

SC

7-BEAUF,

17-

~~HABS No. SC-461~~

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

ADDENDUM TO:
SALTUS-HABERSHAM HOUSE
(Habersham House)
802 Bay Street
Beaufort
Beaufort County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-461-4

HABS
SC
7-BEAVE,
17-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to

SALTUS-HABERSHAM HOUSE

(Habersham House)

HABS No. SC-461

HABS
SC
1-BEPLIT
17-

Location: 802 Bay Street, Beaufort, Beaufort County, South Carolina. Located on northeast corner of Block No. 61 at the junction of Bay and Scott streets, the building faces north onto Bay Street. Prior to construction of the Henry C. Chambers Park during the 1980s, it looked south onto the Beaufort River.

Present Owner: 303 Associates LLC, 916 Bay Street, Beaufort, South Carolina.

Present Use: First floor occupied by retail premises. Upper stories unoccupied.

Significance: Exceptionally tall tabby structure originally incorporating three full stories over an elevated basement. Rare example of late eighteenth-century merchant's house built on a waterfront site along with stores, a wharf, and other outbuildings. Contains an elliptical timber staircase (added ca. 1825-35) and domed stair hall unique for Beaufort County.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: Ongoing construction of a dwelling house and related buildings on the site is attested by a Memorial placed before the South Carolina Senate in 1796.¹

2. Architect: Not known.

3. Original and subsequent owners: Probably built by Captain Francis Saltus and held by him until his death in 1831. Subsequent sale or sales are uncertain although local tradition associates the extant house with the Habersham family, planters and merchants of Beaufort, South Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia.

Immediately before the Civil War, the property was owned by Daniel Mann, a merchant. When or from whom Mann obtained title is not known.

Requisitioned for use as a Commissary by Federal military authorities during the Civil War, the house was auctioned for non-payment of taxes in 1862, and when it failed to find a buyer, again in 1866 when it was bought by Duncan C. Wilson the former

¹ South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina, 0010 003 1796 00014 00 and duplicate.

“Superintendent of Building” at Union Headquarters on Hilton Head Island. Wilson held the property until his death in 1903, the house and its immediate surroundings undergoing significant alteration during this period.

F.W. Sanders purchased the property for \$5, 750 from Wilson’s heirs in 1907, selling it to Julie E. Sanders in 1911. Subsequently, the house saw numerous tenants: its first floor being occupied by a car dealership, shoe repair store, restaurant, liquor store and fish market.

In 1954 the property was purchased by Belk Simpson, Inc., who then erected a steel framed department store against the original dwelling’s south facade. After 1985 the house and department store were, except for brief intervals, vacant. The property, after passing through several hands, was bought by 303 Associates LLC for redevelopment in 1999.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: No definite information is known about the builder. One possible candidate is Colonel Thomas Talbird who, among other large tabby structures including Beaufort College, probably built a very similar house on Hancock Street. It is likely that Captain Francis Saltus shipped building materials from Charleston (or elsewhere) when developing his Beaufort property, as the shipment of lumber into Beaufort by Saltus was attested to during the War of 1812.

5. Original plans and construction: Incorporating three full stories raised over an elevated basement, the Saltus-Habersham House was originally a rectangular, single pile dwelling with gabled ends. Before alteration, living accommodation above the basement level comprised two principal spaces on each floor. These spaces were positioned east and west of a central stair hall. Interior brick chimneys, centered on the end (gable) walls opened into living spaces at first and second floor levels, the basement and third floor left unheated. A raised, one-story porch (now lost except for sub-surface piers) is illustrated by Civil War period photographs to have extended along the south facade. It is not known for certain if this feature belonged to the initial construction phase. The house was abutted by a tabby ell, now significantly altered, containing one main story plus a habitable attic, all raised over an elevated basement.

6. Alteration and additions. The central stair hall gives evidence (including cut, trimmed and otherwise modified joists) of extensive re-working: the program including installation of the present elliptical staircase, associated timber framing, and an oval dome over the staircase. Carpentry details and molding profiles suggest the work was completed around 1825 to 1830. It also is possible that the coping to the east and west gables was altered during the same rebuilding episode.

A Civil War period photograph shows lunette windows, which originally illuminated the dwelling's roof space, positioned right and left of the east chimney.² These were blocked, with fired brick, sometime before 1863. The same photograph also indicates one window on the lower north facade had been made into a subsidiary doorway that was approached via stone or timber steps and that another was enlarged. These alterations may have been carried out by military authorities soon after 1861 since the stucco around the openings looks broken. Alternatively, the building's last Antebellum owner, Daniel Mann perhaps converted the lower floor areas of the house into commercial space just before the war.

Soon after the Civil War, D.C. Wilson lowered the dwelling's first floor from its original position about 2'-0" above grade to ground level; he also subdivided the new space to create two unequal areas which then subsequently became shops. The basement was sealed, the original entranceway centered on the north facade was removed, and new store front openings cut through the original tabby walls. The lower stair hall was almost certainly demolished at the same period along with the lowest flight of its elliptical staircase. At the second floor level, Wilson introduced a cast iron balcony which ran almost the entire length of the north facade. Upper spaces were now reached by a new staircase which communicated with a two-story porch running along the dwelling's south facade. This porch apparently contained materials salvaged from the earlier, single story porch it replaced.

On the north facade, store front openings at street level were enlarged periodically throughout the twentieth century. Surviving fragments of the original, first floor exterior wall were cut out and removed by Belk Simpson soon after acquiring the property in 1954. The north, east, and west facades were re-stuccoed, the stucco in many places being installed over metal lathing nailed to original tabby. Belk Simpson also took down Wilson's iron balcony, the south porch, and a large section of the lower south facade to facilitate access to retail space built against the old dwelling's river front. Tabby walls above the second floor level were supported on a series of steel beams and columns which subsequently proved undersized, deflecting by as much as 12" along their east-to-west length.³

In 1999 the north (Bay Street) facade was again altered by 303 Associates LLC., to accommodate another generation of commercial activities. A new shop front and a canopy were installed in imitation of the former Belk's entrance, which had been taken down in the interval. Plaster lathing was subsequently stripped from the dwelling's

² By Samuel Cooley, ca.1863. Beaufort County Library, Beaufort, South Carolina.

³ Roger Pinckney, General Contractor, Beaufort.

second and third floor rooms. Surviving original and early doors, doorcases, window surrounds, cornices, baseboard, and a fireplace in the second floor east space were also removed, with only the stair hall left more or less as found. Additionally, all window frames were replaced, copper roofing installed, and vertical studs introduced along interior wall faces in an attempt to protect users in the event of the building's collapse.⁴

B. Historical Context

Lots located along the north side of Bay Street were first granted in 1717. So-called water lots on the street's south side were left open to the Beaufort River until 1763 when they were granted to various members of Beaufort's mercantile community. What was to become the site of the Saltus-Habersham House first went to Francis Stuart, who on 27 September 1763 received a double water lot located opposite Town Lots No. 9 and No.10 (property he already owned) measuring "150 [feet] front and 177 [feet] depth."⁵

One of colonial Beaufort's most successful merchants, Francis Stuart died prematurely on 22 September 1766.⁶ While the estate was owed large sums by numerous planters to whom Stuart had extended credit, very little money was ever repaid. Such circumstances forced the sale of his Bay Street property. However, the name of the purchaser is not known. Indeed, almost nothing is heard about Beaufort's water front until 1796 when the construction of wharves, warehouses, and other structures related to maritime activity was under way on Bay Street's south side. The initiative had been taken by three merchants. Two of them, John Rhodes and John Bold, bought property located opposite Town Lot No. 14 while the third, Captain Francis Saltus, developed Francis Stuart's former water lot located opposite Town Lots No. 9 and No. 10.

Almost immediately, certain town residents voiced opposition, first to limitations placed upon public river access and second to building encroachment over existing north-to-south street endings previously left unobstructed. Hearing complaints, the Town's governing body halted further work, declaring that all of the Crown Grants of water lots "had been improperly obtained." Later, in December of 1795, the Town sought validation for its position from the South Carolina General Assembly, with the Intendant, Edward Barnwell writing in a petition:

⁴ R.W. Chambers AIA, Supervising Architect.

⁵ SC Archives and History, Royal Grants, Book 2 E: 285.

⁶Only about thirty-four years old, Francis Stuart died on 22 September 1766, leaving personal property (excluding real estate but including the ship *St. Helena*) worth £39,729. 10, 11 according to an inventory taken some eleven months after his death (see SC Archives and History, Charleston Inventories X :101-14, and citation by Rowland, Moore and Rogers 1996: 187). Additionally, Stuart had lent out or given credit for goods worth an £149,900.1.9, apportioned between more than one hundred different merchants and plantation owners.

Many years ago the heads of two of the streets in the said town [of Beaufort] were surveyed by some persons without the knowledge and contrary to the wish of the inhabitants residing therein; that upon an attempt of the persons surveying the same to build thereon they were prevented by the remonstrance of the inhabitants who threatened to destroy the same if built. That your petitioners have since that time considered the claim as being relinquished or that no attempt would be made to build upon the same. That however within the last year the persons holding the said streets have renewed their attempts to build upon them which would be highly detrimental to your petitioners...if said head of street are allowed to be built upon, that there will be no public landing in any part of the said town and of consequence that there can be no communication with the said town by water excepting when they may at the will of owners be compelled to pay a wharfage...

After due deliberation, the General Assembly of 1796 passed an Act (No. 1703) "to prevent certain streets in Beaufort from being stopped or obstructed." It reads:

Whereas representations have been made to the Legislature, by the inhabitants of the town of Beaufort, stating as a grievance that sundry grants have been improperly obtained for the lands lying in front of some of the streets of said town; and whereas, the parties holding such grants have, by their petitions stated they were fairly obtained, and have been bought by them for valuable considerations.

Be it therefore enacted...that from and after the passing of this Act, the streets in the said town, which run northwardly and southwardly, and which extend to Bay Street...shall be open and free, to the river, lying front of said town, and to be at all times accessible to all persons, and that all that land lying directly and immediately in front of the said streets down to the channel of the said river, whether the same be covered with the waters of the said river or not, shall for ever hereafter be considered the property of the said Town and shall not be granted ... unless it be by an Act of the Legislature passed for that purpose.

Recovery of lands deemed public but already built upon was ruled permissible but Beaufort's Commissioners of Streets were required to obtain a jury verdict on the validity of any claim as well as to pay full compensation for the land including improvements and legal costs.

More protests followed from merchants adversely effected by the new Act. Francis Saltus placed before the South Carolina Senate an impressive memorial. This document states that Saltus bought his property (measuring 150' x 170') in good faith "for valuable considerations."⁷ Having no doubt about the title, he had proceeded "to erect buildings for a Dwelling house kitchen and stores" expending "great sums of money on improvements." Work was now at a

⁷SC Archives and History: 0010 003 1796 00014 00 and its duplicate.

standstill since he was “forbidden to make any improvements on part of the said lott until an enquiry could be made into the validity of the original grant” an inquiry which Saltus believed threatened not only his personal interests but those of other citizens whose real estate titles had long gone unchallenged.

Individual legislators agreed.⁸ The General Assembly, however, took no formal action until 1800 when another petition submitted by Francis Saltus was considered.⁹ The Captain repeated his former grievances and provided additional details about improvements:

Long before the passing of the aforesaid act your petitioner in a legal manner possessed himself of certain low water lotts in the said town of Beaufort, and not doubting that in common with other citizens of our country he had an unquestionable right to place such improvements on the same as he thought condusive to his interest, there being very little high land to the said lotts but a good front, he has been at considerable expence and labour in making land to erect his outbuildings particularly on the ground so much complained of, having put his kitchen and other small buildings on said improved land, your petitioner begs leave to refer to a plan of lotts in which you will see he has erected a wharf, leaving a passageway between his store and dwelling house from Bay Street to the Wharf, which the public has access to, should your petitioner be deprived of the land alluded to he has no place to put his kitchen and other buildings, unless immediately in front of his dwelling house...

Since two years had passed and the Commissioners of Streets had taken no formal action:

The prospect before your petitioner is that he is likely to lose all his labour, without ultimately receiving that compensation which the legislature evidently intended should be made to him in an ample and sufficient degree...while it would be illegal in him to go on with his improvements...

Saltus urged the repeal of the Act or that the General Assembly find a “mode...better calculated to do... justice”; a procedure which members ultimately followed. By Act No. 1749, passed on 20 December 1800, earlier provisions were rescinded if persons “willing and desirous to retain their rights to lots opposite the streets in the town of Beaufort and not receive compensation” restrained from “ever building more buildings thereon” made no further improvements other than wharfs and left the street endings clear.

What John Rhodes, John Bold or Francis Saltus thought about this compromise measure is not recorded. Still, legal maneuvers hostile to their commercial interests ceased and the

⁸SC Archives and History. Senate Committee Report 1796-17-01; House Committee Report 1796 no. 97.

⁹ SC Archives and History. Petitions 0010 003 1800 0031/00.

General Assembly was now aware of Beaufort's mercantile improvements. Current observers are less well informed, since the south side of Bay Street has been extensively altered and a plat which accompanied Saltus's petition of 1800 is now lost.¹⁰ However, when set against extant structural evidence and archaeological findings, the general layout of Saltus's building activities can be partially reconstructed.

Building Program of Francis Saltus

In his petition of 1800, Saltus remarked upon the site's lack of elevation and implies that the dwelling house he constructed occupied a narrow strip of high ground on the parcel's north or Bay Street side. This circumstance is illustrated by the present dwelling which occupies an area located at the northeastern extremity of the original holding.

The narrowness of usable land no doubt determined the dwelling's organization and architectural expression. "T"- shaped house plans, popular among local residents after the Revolution, were excluded as was porch construction along the street facade. Instead, Saltus adopted a linear, one room deep configuration suited to the available ground. He also accepted an entrance on the north facade reached directly from Bay Street with only minimal separation from public right- of-ways and then ignoring any practical inconvenience, distributed habitable spaces in pairs about a central hall and stair well rising through three full stories.

Whether or not erection of the house was predicated upon pre-existing construction is debatable. It does seem likely that the design was such as to accommodate a long, narrow ell running along the dwelling's west facade at right angles to Bay Street. While much altered and partially rebuilt, it can still be determined that this raised, one and one-half story tabby building was constructed using 18" high form boards rather than the 24" high forms used for exterior walls of the main house. Such distinction suggests a separate building phase, which judging by the fact that the west facade of the main house had no windows at its lower levels, must have been either contemporary with or, more likely, earlier than the building phase which produced the multi-story dwelling. Besides indicating that construction on the site was perhaps more complex and covered a longer time span than extant documentation attests, the ell raises functional questions.

At the basement level, it was floored with cobbles, a circumstance suggesting the storage of casks, barrels or other heavy objects.¹¹ But this structure was not the storehouse mentioned by

¹⁰ S C Archives and History. search room staff, personal communication, 1995.

¹¹ Besides adding new steel framed construction. Belk Simpson probably cut two new arched openings through the main dwelling's west facade to provide linkage with the ell at street level. Regrettably, the ell's original cobbled basement floor (partially exposed by excavation in 1995) was first robbed and then covered with poured concrete by 303 Associates LLC in 2001. No other similar cobbled floor is known from Beaufort.

Saltus; documentary evidence places his storehouse further west. Rather, it may be that the ell was a secure lock-up, accommodating perhaps especially valuable or bulky merchandise such as rice destined for onward transit or casks of wine.

South of the dwelling house, towards the Beaufort River, no construction was possible without "improvement." Saltus therefore proceeded to "make ground" on which he subsequently erected several "small Buildings" and a kitchen.¹² According to the Captain's own testimony, this kitchen caused a public outcry, repeated reference to encroachment on "street endings" suggesting that it blocked or otherwise interfered with Scott Street.

Westward, an extant alley now bounded east by Beaufort Trading Company and west by John Cross Tavern is the best candidate for the "passageway" described as being left between the dwelling house and store, a passageway which probably provided public access to a new wharf installed by Saltus after traffic was diverted from the head of Scott Street. During the nineteenth century this wharf became the berth for steam ships, and Beaufort's first steamship service was operated by Saltus's son-in-law, Dr. Henry Thomas Willis Lubbock.

As for the storehouse mentioned by Saltus, its exterior tabby walls still stand, having been incorporated into what is now called the John Cross Tavern.¹³ A long, narrow, gable-ended tabby building erected at right angles to Bay Street, this one and one-half story structure accommodated one or more retail spaces raised over an elevated basement.¹⁴ Old photographs indicate that the attic contained living spaces, lighted by dormer windows.

¹²Civil War period photographs show a detached, two-story brick structure located south or southeast of the main house which was perhaps the kitchen, but this building has now entirely disappeared having apparently been robbed for the sake of its materials down to the lowest foundation level some time soon after the Civil War.

¹³ That this was the location of the storehouse mentioned in 1795 is confirmed by a deed for the adjacent property which mentions that it is bounded east by the Francis Saltus Store. See Charleston County Register of Mense Conveyances, G-7: 311-315. The existence of the "tabby store" is further attested by a mortgage dated 1866 when James I. Barnwell mortgaged it along with other outbuildings to Charles H. Barnwell (Beaufort County Register of Mense Conveyances, 1:447). Over the latter half of the twentieth century, the building was given a wholly fictitious history by local reporters, this story finding its way into local guidebooks and other popular publications.

¹⁴ After the Civil War the original structure was partially rebuilt at its northern end, its gable being removed and replaced by an upper story connector spanning over a passageway leading south towards the Beaufort River. This passageway is almost certainly the same one installed by Francis Saltus to give public access to his dock in ca. 1796. It was here, too, that the Marquis de Lafayette probably landed on his visit to Beaufort (18 March 1825), the Revolutionary hero arriving aboard the *Henry Schulz*, a steamship owned by Captain Lubbock, Saltus's son-in-law.

Fragments of other installations survive to the southeast as sub-surface features. In 1995, archaeological investigation exposed timber bulkheads that were built, perhaps, to protect the house from flooding by the Beaufort River and what was probably a slipway associated with docking or even shipbuilding activities. While poor preservation and daily inundation makes it difficult to assign these features to their proper time period, a late eighteenth-century date is likely on the basis of archaeological analysis.

Apparently designed to stabilize and or reclaim areas of land extending behind the main house, bulkhead construction was distanced 33'- 8" south of its rear (south) facade.

Partial excavation in 1985 and re-excavation in 1995 showed the presumed slipway to consist of untrimmed cypress limbs of variable section (diameters ranging between 8 ½" and 10") laid side by side in a north-to-south direction approximately 7' -2" below Bay Street's current sidewalk level. How far towards the Beaufort River this installation extends cannot be said. It is established that at their northern extremity, the logs created a straight line running east-to-west, located 35'- 1½" south of the main dwelling. Excavation has also shown that the logs described rest upon fills containing both building debris and domestic refuse, ceramics collected here indicating deposition during the late eighteenth century or first quarter of the nineteenth century.¹⁵

Francis Saltus. Merchant and Mariner

According to his grandson, General Francis Lubbock, Saltus came to South Carolina in the last decade of the eighteenth century.¹⁶ But this statement is slightly inaccurate since public records attest that Captain Francis Saltus and his first wife, Sarah, were owners of both

¹⁵ The logs described were seen by Danner before 1959. In a paper read to Beaufort County Historical Society (30 June 1959 :41) he observed:

Some years ago Mr. John Morall and the writer were asked to see the unmistakable remains of a timber crib work about ten feet underground which had been encountered when the Horne Motor Company was installing an hydraulic lift in their machine shop back of Bay street. It was thought at that time that these were the logs used in the construction of the Beaufort defenses. Certain it is that there was [an early 18th. century] fort within the "city limits" and that it became the base for two scout boats which comprised the "provincial navy".

Danner's interpretation is attractive since the exact site of Beaufort's original fort and scout boat station erected before 1734 has never been determined. However, it can now be said (which was not the case in 1959) that associated artifacts point towards a different purpose and later date for the installation. Apparently designed to provide a firm foundation in an estuarine environment scoured by tidal action, it is possible that it was related to ship building activities.

¹⁶ C.W. Raines. *Six Decades in Texas or Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock* (Austin: 1900), 2.

Charleston and Beaufort property during the late 1780s. Their household is first documented in 1790 by United States Census returns for St. Helena's Parish where, under the heading "Francis Salters" (a frequent misspelling) are listed three white males aged over sixteen years old, one white male aged under sixteen, five white females over sixteen, and thirteen slaves.

Francis Saltus was probably approaching middle age at the time but nothing certain about his parentage, birth place, and early history has emerged. It is not clear, for example, whether or not Francis was related to the Henry Saltus "mariner of Charleston" who drowned off the coast of Jamaica around 1713.¹⁷ Nor it is clear if he was connected to the other Saltus families mentioned as being in Dorchester County and Charleston, South Carolina, during the early eighteenth century.¹⁸ Sarah Saltus's life span is slightly better documented given that the inscription on her gravestone in the cemetery of the First Baptist Church in Charleston says that she was born in ca. 1757 and died on 1 December 1817.

Several sons are mentioned by Lubbock, but not named although it is certain Francis William Saltus (1788-1860) was the eldest.¹⁹ Registers of St. Helena's Parish Church, Beaufort, record three daughters: Mary Lawson Saltus, born 12 February 1787, Sonchey who died at the age of three years and three months in November of 1788, and Susannah who also died young (age not given) in September of 1790.²⁰

Another daughter, Susan Ann, married Dr. Henry Thomas Willis Lubbock who was the son of Captain Richard Lubbock and who was a sometime Beaufort physician, planter, and ship owner. He died at the age of thirty-seven leaving besides Susan Ann, seven children, the eldest of whom, Francis Richard Lubbock (1815-1905), became Governor of Texas on 5 August 1861.

Lubbock's autobiography provides sympathetic glimpses of his grandfather's personal life and surroundings. Although dates are often vague, characterization of Francis Saltus Senior as "a rich cotton planter ... a shipowner and wharfholder in Charleston" is accurate, local records

¹⁷ Beaufort *Gazette*, (5 March 1996).

¹⁸ For example, the Samuel Saltus who appears in Charleston records as master of the sloop *Kingston*. 25 tons built in Bermuda 1762, see *SC Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 74:189-279.

¹⁹ Raines, J.

²⁰ Married Charles Christian of Charleston, 22 January, 1809 see Registers of St. Helena Parish Church, 32:286.

providing an outline portrait which although indistinct does commemorate an individual who Lubbock states "was so jolly and good to me that I loved him very dearly."²¹

Central to the Captain's fortunes were successive partnerships linked with Charleston's maritime trade and coasting traffic which brought cotton and other staples into the port for redistribution. A taste for land speculation can also be detected, fostered perhaps through associations made among Beaufort entrepreneurs including the merchant, John Rhodes, and shipbuilder, James Black.

In Charleston, early ventures were brokered through the firm Saltus and Yates, Ship's Chandlers, located, when first recorded by the *Charleston Directory* of 1796, on East Bay Street at the wharf called No. 2 Crafts 4th. Range. From here the partners advertised that they had received:

by the merchant vessel *Juliana*, Capt. Ingraham, direct from St. Petersburg, one of the handsomest assortment of cordage ever imported into this country; consisting of Cables and Hausers from 13 to 31 1/2 inch, shroud Hausers and Running rigging of all sizes, with Spun Yarn and Worming, which they are determined to sell on the lowest terms... also... a general assortment of ship chandlery imported in Ship Rainbow, from London.²²

A few weeks later "Thirty Six Thousand Read Spanish Segars of the first quality" were offered.²³

Subsequently, in May of 1804, a deed records how "in consideration of the sum of four thousand one hundred dollars" William Crafts (residing in Boston) conveyed to "Francis Saltus and Jeremiah Yates, otherwise called Saltus and Yates of Charleston, Factors all that three storey brick store and lot of land ... on the wharf commonly [called] Crafts South wharf #2."²⁴ In 1806, Saltus and Yates were still trading from their old premises. Over the next three years major changes must have taken place, because after 1809 Jeremiah (variously termed merchant, planter

²¹ Raines, 1.

²² *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, (Tuesday 20 October 1795).

²³ *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, (Monday, 2 November 1795).

²⁴ Charleston County RMC. Deed Book M-7: 376. The purpose of the transaction is difficult to gauge since the same property occupied by Saltus and Yates since at least 1796 was sold to Dr. William Dummont less than one year later for the same purchase price. See Charleston County RMC Deed Book O- 7: 23; also South Carolina Historical Society Indenture 47-5-6 made between William Crafts and Constans Boisgerard, dated 7 April 1804, which mentions South Wharf No. 2 "lately sold to Saltus and Yates."

and ships chandler) is listed as trading on his own account from his Fort Street residence and an unspecified South Bay address.²⁵

Saltus was doubtless spending longer periods in Beaufort where, during 1808, he built five gunboats for the United States Navy with Nathaniel Ingraham (presumably the same Captain Ingraham who commanded the merchant vessel *Juliana* which, in 1795, carried cargo for Captain Saltus), acting as supervising Navy agent.²⁶ Each gunboat carried two 32-pounders mounted on circles and saw service during the War of 1812 on station along the South Carolina and Georgia coast. It is perhaps no coincidence that one of these gunboats, No. 161, was commanded by a young kinsman of Francis Saltus, SM John A. Grayson.²⁷

Still listed under the heading "Beaufort Town" in the third United States Census of 1810, the household of Francis and Sarah Saltus then consisted of one white male aged under ten; three white males aged between ten and sixteen; one white male aged over forty-five, who was presumably Francis Saltus himself; one white female aged under sixteen; one white female aged between sixteen and twenty-six; one white female aged between twenty-six and forty-five; one white female aged over forty-five, who was presumably Sarah Saltus, and twenty-five slaves.

Some proportion of the latter labor force probably worked the plantations situated in Prince William's Parish, South Carolina, where on 1 October 1810, Francis bought two adjacent tracts belonging to his son-in-law Charles Christian. This perhaps augmented earlier, undocumented purchases.²⁸

Both tracts were mortgaged in July of 1813 for \$8,127 to secure various notes signed by Francis Saltus or notes drawn against the new partnership of Rhodes and Saltus first listed as

²⁵ *Charleston Directory and Strangers Guide*, 1806.

²⁶ Spencer C. Tucker, *The Jeffersonian Gunboat Navy* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1993), 62.

²⁷ Tucker, 199. Where exactly the gunboats were built has not as yet been determined. One possibility is that they were constructed behind and immediately south of the Saltus House on Bay Street where, as already described above, archaeological investigation has revealed early nineteenth-century slip-ways installed beside the Beaufort River. A second possibility is that Saltus used the "Federal Shipyard" located on Black's Point (now "the Point") identified on a manuscript sketch of Beaufort's defenses dated 1808, a property which as executor for James Black's estate he came to control on 23 January 1819.

²⁸ Charleston County RMC, Deed Book H-8 72. One property, probably located near what is now Twickenham Plantation, "known by the name of Fairfield" contained 644 acres adjoining lands owned by Dr. James Stewart, Charles Colcock, the main road leading south, and Huspa Creek. A smaller tract "formerly Hussels" contained 250 acres bounded on its east side by a road "leading to Mr. Rhodes' Plantation" and "north and east by lands of Dr. James Stewart and John Rhodes Esquire."

factors trading in Charleston, South Carolina, at Craft's South Wharf during the same year.²⁹ Further obligations were secured by another mortgage dated 1 September 1813 negotiated between Francis Saltus; the Planters and Merchants Bank of South Carolina and Union Bank.³⁰ This time, 1404 acres in Prince William's Parish constituted the collateral.³¹

Francis Saltus and John Rhodes must have known one another for many years before entering into formal partnership. As early as 1786, the two men had owned neighboring properties on Pinckney Street in Charleston, and both parties purchased and developed Beaufort "Water Lots" before 1800. Yet their legal, though perhaps not informal, partnership was short lived. Captain Saltus moved his Charleston operations to Vanderhorst Wharf some time before 1816 when his business is listed as "Saltus and Sons, Factors" or, more grandly "The House of Francis Saltus and Sons."

The following year (1817) saw the death of the Captain's first wife, Sarah Saltus; the disposal (for \$40,500) of the 1404 acres located in Prince William's Parish described above; the sale of thirty slaves, and new trading ventures carried out under the name Bonnell and Saltus.³² "Bonnell" was probably Captain John Bonnell (1773- 1854) a mariner and native of Bermuda who entered Saltus's circle through marriage with "Miss Mary Yates on Saturday May, 31 1806."³³ The circle grew closer when Captain Francis Saltus married "Mrs. Rebecca Bonnell of the Island of Bermuda" at St. Philip's Church on 26 June 1819.³⁴

How much should be read into such Bermuda connections is difficult to say, but notice of two additional island natives – a shipwright who died at the "plantation of Captain Francis Saltus" in 1812, and the burial of Eliza Burch in the Saltus family plot in 1835 – does suggest some kind of relationship between the Saltus family of South Carolina and a Bermuda family of the same name. Be this as it may, mercantile traffic is attested between New York and Bermuda

²⁹ *Charleston Directory*, 1813.

³⁰ Including notes of Myer Moses: Charles Graves and B. B. Smith endorsed by Rhodes and Saltus

³¹ Charleston County, RMC Deed Book 1-8: 12. The land was bounded southwest by the property of Thomas Fuller, northwest and northeast by lands of William Elliot and John Wright, and southeast by a public road leading to Combahee Ferry.

³² Slaves sold to Mungo Mackay "of Fairfield at Gardens Corner, Prince William's Parish" for \$18,500. SC Archives and History, Bills of Sale, Vol. 004 M: 00123.

³³ *Charleston Courier*, 30:60.

³⁴ *Charleston City Gazette*, (13 July 1819), as quoted in the *SC Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 46:

controlled by Solomon Saltus who was almost certainly a brother of Francis Saltus according to information given by the poet William J. Grayson (1778-1863).³⁵

Gradually, the family business passed into the control of F.W. Saltus who is listed as sole proprietor after 1824. By 1830, Captain Saltus had retired, being then named resident of Prince William's Parish where he probably lived on one of his plantations with his second wife Rebecca, a daughter perhaps, and several grandchildren. According to the United States Census of 1830, the household then comprised one white male under ten years of age; one white male aged between seventy and eighty (doubtless Francis Saltus); two female children aged five or under; two females aged between fifteen and twenty, and, two females aged between forty and fifty plus fourteen slaves.

Formerly visible at Sheldon Church, in Prince William's Parish, South Carolina, the burial place of many local planters, the tombstone of Mrs. Rebecca Saltus records she died on 28 March 1832, aged sixty-one.³⁶ She outlived her husband by just over two years if the "F. Saltus" buried at Sheldon Church on 10 December 1831 was the Captain F. Saltus of this narrative.³⁷ About the latter's final will and property dispositions nothing certain is known except that Francis W. Lubbock records his mother inherited, in 1833, her father's "fine home in Charleston," a house which Lubbock found was no longer standing when he revisited Charleston in 1860.

After Captain Francis Saltus. Site Ownership before the Civil War

When the Beaufort water lot belonging to Saltus passed into other hands is not known. Lenguick asserts "this land and that nearby was used as a shipyard by Rhodes and Talbird; and there are accounts of ship launchings prior to and during the War of 1812" but she gives no references to substantiate her claims. John Rhodes and Francis Saltus were business partners in 1813 and a transfer of property between the men is not unlikely around that time. Equally, Lenguick could have confused her sources and attributed Saltus's shipbuilding activities to other

³⁵ Calhoun 1990: 249. n.1. Although related to Saltus, Grayson never mentions this fact. Instead, his autobiography stressed a planter background which excluded, at least in theory, the perceived social stigma of "trade." He does state that Saltus and Sons of New York, like their Charleston counterparts, "were dealers in ship chandlery" adding "Their large warehouse was on Front or Water street, the residence, in Pearl Street near Broadway... My old friend Mr. [Solomon] Saltus was grave and quiet." No mention is made of any links between the New York and Charleston trading establishments though we do learn that Grayson, after completing his early education, returned south in the company of Solomon Saltus who was bound for Beaufort where "he was accustomed... to spend the winter season" with his brother Francis.

³⁶ *SC Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 18:183.

³⁷ Sheldon Registers. *SC Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 57:105.

persons who may have held an interest in the site. Either way, it is impossible to be sure without the court records lost during the Civil War.

Also undocumented is the Habersham connection of popular history. According to *Historic Resources of the Low Country*, the Bay Street property was sold after the death of John Rhodes "in 1811 to John Habersham of Savannah."³⁸ In actuality however, John Rhodes died on 4 October 1827 having outlived John Habersham by just over six years.³⁹ That this John Habersham, the son of James Habersham II of Savanna, Georgia, was a resident of Beaufort District is beyond dispute.⁴⁰

It is clear that the house underwent remodeling sometime during the early nineteenth century, particular care being lavished on reconfiguring and redecorating the central stair hall. Apparently rectangular in plan before alteration, the stair hall was changed. New framing enclosed an elliptically shaped stair well and staircase surmounted by an elliptical dome fashioned in plaster over a timber armature. The entire work is distinguished by fine workmanship executed on an intimate scale. Removal of ceiling plaster has revealed that original ceiling joists were carefully cut to accommodate the stair dome on the building's south side. Replaced floor boards in the stair hall further attest that an older stair, presumably rectangular in plan, was demolished as a preliminary to the program.

Rounded moldings of a markedly Regency flavor suggest the stair was reconstructed in ca. 1825 when William Jay's style, which had developed in London through the influence of John Nash and John Soane, had become pervasive throughout Savannah, Georgia. Lack of any direct parallel in Beaufort suggests that one or more immigrant carpenters active in Georgia, especially around Milledgeville and Augusta during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, were responsible for the work.⁴¹

Later Antebellum development is poorly documented. A map prepared for the United States Direct Tax Commissioners in 1863 does show that the original double lot granted to

³⁸ *Historic Resources of the Low Country* (1979: 58).

³⁹ See St. Helena's Parish Church, Beaufort, where Habersham's tombstone attests his birth in 1780 and death on 11 August 1821.

⁴⁰ United States Census for 1820 which under the name "John Habersham" lists one male over age twenty-five, one female over age twenty-five, two females under age ten, and sixty-six slaves.

⁴¹ Compare with the staircase at John W. Gordon's House, Jones County, Georgia, built ca. 1822 (which features a semi-circular plaster dome over its well) and an elliptical stair, four stories high, spiraling through the Ware House Augusta, Georgia, erected ca. 1818.

Francis Stuart and bought by Francis Saltus had been divided by then into two unequal parts.⁴² At the opening of the Civil War, the larger eastern portion on which the Saltus-Habersham House stands was owned by D. Mann and the smaller western segment on which stands the present John Cross Tavern was owned by an unspecified Barnwell family member.

Daniel Mann is said by a descendant to have emigrated from Germany around 1830, but little is known of his life except that he was aged twenty-six in 1850 when listed by the United States Census as living in St. Helena Parish with his wife Agnes, three children, and another, perhaps unrelated, adult male.⁴³ In a claim for property "left in the hands of the enemy" during the Civil War, Mann valued his Beaufort house and lot, presumably the one on Bay Street, at \$5,000. Also listed are items suggesting that he was trading out of the house, selling groceries, dry goods, "iron and tins wares" foodstuff, and shoes.⁴⁴ A photograph taken by Samuel A. Cooley during November of 1864 confirms that the Saltus-Habersham House had then seen substantial alteration at its lower level.⁴⁵ While the original street entrance with its timber doorcase still remained intact, one window to the east had been made into a subsidiary doorway approached via stone or timber steps and another window enlarged.

Civil War, Reconstruction, and Twentieth-Century Development

A few hours after the Union Navy defeated Confederate units at the Battle of Port Royal on 7 November 1861, Beaufort was abandoned by its white inhabitants who fled inland taking only those possessions they could carry or load onto wagons. Deserted houses were soon looted, first by "contraband" slaves and then by Union soldiers following their entry into the town on 9 November 1861. Property requisitions followed. A new military administration, moreover, under General Rufus Saxton who sometimes called himself "Governor of the Sea Islands" set up headquarters in Nathaniel Heyward's mansion located on the north side of Bay Street.

Overlooking the Beaufort River and what was called Pier No. 2, the house at 802 Bay Street became a Commissary Store, military authorities taking over retail space probably created

⁴³James Neighbours. Beaufort, personal communication, 1995.

⁴⁴ Claims against the United States by South Carolina Citizens for Losses 1861-62. Abstract. SC Historic Society, Charleston. South Carolina. Apart from his house and lot the most valuable items lost by Mann were dry goods (worth \$1,000) and groceries (worth \$500). A stock of fine lead, brass, zinc, and sheet iron (worth \$200) is also mentioned along with toweling, fancy items (worth \$200) and foodstuffs (corn, peas, and fodder worth \$500). House furnishings (bedding, linen, furniture, and clothing) accounted for an additional loss of \$500. Including other smaller items Mann's claim totaled \$8,810. Surprisingly, there is no mention or claim for lost slaves.

⁴⁵ Copy. Beaufort County Library, Beaufort.

by Daniel Mann at the building's first floor level. The photograph taken by Samuel Cooley in 1864 shows upper portions of the house were then unoccupied. Second floor windows are shuttered while on the floor above window glass is missing although, the original six-over-six light arrangement survived. Apparently, roof flashing had become loose, the result being moisture penetration followed by disassociation of stucco on the building's east gable end. To the west, the raised, one and one half story, tabby ell built against the main house appears intact although locked, shuttered, and perhaps out of use.

Two features illustrated by the photograph merit particular attention since, except for Cooley's image, they are lost. The first is a raised, single story porch which extended along the dwelling's south elevation. The second, located south of the main building's southeast corner, was a rectangular, two-story brick dependency covered by a gabled roof and heated by end chimneys, probably entered from Scott Street on one of its long sides.

US Direct Tax Sales, 1863 -66

Like other Beaufort properties deemed to owe Direct Taxes, the property under discussion became forfeit to the Federal government under the terms of "An act for the collection of in insurrectionary districts of the United States" approved 7 June 1862. Advertised on 17 January 1863 and put up for auction during the following year, Block 61, Parcel "A" as the property was then designated with an assessed value of \$3,000 failed to attract a buyer and was bid in by the United States for \$50 "to satisfy the taxes, which, with interest and costs amounted to \$40.02."⁴⁶

A second auction held on 1 November 1866, was successful. The District Direct Tax Commissioners certified by Land Certificate No. 25, recorded 10 February 1869, that they "did sell and strike off to Duncan. C. Wilson all of Lot A block sixty one" for \$1,525.00.⁴⁷ The legality of Wilson's purchase was later challenged by Agnes Mann who was the executrix of

⁴⁶ *The Free South*. Beaufort Edition. 17 January 1863, and 30 January 1864: Petition for Redemption. Direct Tax Case No.17.351 Agnes Mann et al v. United States. RG 58 Internal Revenue Service, South Carolina. Direct Tax Records, applications to Redeem Real Estate, National Archives.

⁴⁷ Beaufort County RMC. Conveyance Book 3: 119. Other parcels in Block 61 conveyed in 1863 or 1866 include Parcel "C": Mr. Smith to Col. Henry Moore (Beaufort County RMC. Conveyance Book A: 28); Parcel "D": conveyed by Land Certificate 59 to H. W. Cass for \$3100. 4 February 1864 (Beaufort County RMC. Conveyance Book B: 155); Parcel E: conveyed to Col. Henry Moore by Land Cert. No.2. for \$7500. 10 February 1866 (Beaufort County RMC. Conveyance Book B:254); Parcel F : William C. Bellows to W. Van Horton (Beaufort County RMC. 2: 2).

Daniel Mann, the site's last Antebellum owner, but to no avail since Duncan C. Wilson held the property down until his death in 1907.⁴⁸

Duncan C. Wilson

Born in Scotland in ca. 1830 Wilson, late of New York City, first appears listed locally under the title "Superintendent of Building" at Union Headquarters on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.⁴⁹ Hilton Head's mushroom growth after 1861 was largely the result of Wilson's expertise, an expertise he carried into civilian life through regular newspaper notices offering both building goods and services. In an initial announcement, he advertised "A lot of panel doors and window sashes, first quality for sale cheap."⁵⁰ By 16 June 1866, the now incorporated business had expanded, an advertisement of that date in *The New South* announcing:

D.C. Wilson & Co. Bay Street, Head of Pier No. 2 continue to supply to their customers on more extensive scale than formerly lumber, shingles, doors, blinds, sashes and Building Materials generally. Also groceries, provisions, boots, shoes etc. etc. etc. Particular attention will be paid as before to the Erection of Buildings. All kinds of Carpenter work done with dispatch.

This notice implies that these business premises were located on or very near the Saltus site before November of 1866 when the property passed into Wilson's ownership. Apparently, the Tax Sale purchase consolidated or expanded existing interests, cartographic and structural evidence indicating Wilson soon set about altering the house he acquired while at the same time turning adjacent land over to various commercial enterprises.

Work was well advanced by 1884 when surveyors for the Sanborn Insurance Company recorded a two-story high, wood shed and bakery built adjacent to Scott Street some distance south of the dwelling. The brick outbuilding, documented by Cooley's photograph, located immediately behind or southeast of the main house disappeared almost without a trace to be replaced by a "shanty."

Lower spaces of the house itself were divided into two unequal areas. In 1884 the larger one to the west was occupied by a jewelry store, the smaller one to the east by a confectioner who by 1889 had been replaced by a milliner. The ell built against the main building's west flank

⁴⁸ Direct Tax Claim filed 18 July 1892 according to Calender for Beaufort District.

⁴⁹ United States Census. 1880: "Hilton Head Directory." *The New South*. Port Royal Edition (18 October 1862).

⁵⁰ *The Free South*. Beaufort Edition (13 August 1864).

housed a meat market. Later photographs, taken around 1940, record that these commercial establishments or rather their successors including the "Silver Fish" fish market were then entered from Bay Street at grade level. Since the first floor timbers of the old house and its ell were originally raised about two feet above the present street, considerable alterations must have taken place before the property was adapted for commercial use by Belk Simpson in 1954.

From photographic and structural evidence, it is clear that D.C. Wilson was responsible for the initial work, lowering all first floor joists; sealing original basement areas; making good damaged walls; and removing the original entrance door surround. No longer useful in place but valuable if reused, brick pavers were probably robbed from main basement areas. On north and east facades, large store front openings on Bay Street of an undetermined date but probably the result of Wilson's work left little original tabby in place.

Floor alterations must have made the existing single story south porch unusable. It was therefore either completely rebuilt or reworked to incorporate a second story. Some time before 1884, a second alteration phase enlarged the south porch at ground level, new single story construction extending the feature further southwards.

Whether domestic as well as commercial concerns motivated these operations is not known. If the main dwelling's two upper floors served as Wilson's own residence then it was before April of 1884 when, after sixteen years of absentee ownership, General Rufus Saxton sold him (for \$4000) the John A. Cuthbert House located at the corner of Church and Bay Streets, in Beaufort, a large Federal structure which Wilson ultimately doubled in size. At the Saltus-Habersham House, Wilson's fondness for florid Victorian decorative elements was typified by cast iron balcony sections installed on the north facade, an installation which required the conversion of an existing window lighting the second floor stair hall into a doorway.

Site use intensified during the 1890s, land behind or to the south of the main house being occupied by R.A. Long's Grist Mill in 1894. Along Scott Street, the former store and bakery shown on the Sanborn Insurance Map of 1884 had been enlarged or replaced after the "Great Hurricane" of 1893. At the main house, where the lower porch construction collapsed but not the columns supporting an upper porch during the storm, extensive repairs would have been necessary. However, photographs show that a large, two-story warehouse bordering the site's southwest boundary survived high winds and storm surges intact, this being used for coal and general storage in 1894.⁵¹

Five years later (1899), R.A. Long's Ice Factory, Grist Mill, and Electric Light Plant with its coal fired steam boilers dominated the scene. Freezing and cold storage sheds are shown

⁵¹Beaufort County Library, Beaufort.

fronting the Beaufort River flanked by a repair shop and hay loft.⁵² The “Dynamo” occupied a more central position on the site. To the southwest stood an ice making machine, and to the east a feed warehouse. The Savannah Steamship Line’s dock bordering the site’s western boundary must have ensured lively traffic day and night served by the “Beer Dispensary” located behind, or south of, what is now Beaufort Trading Company.

Twentieth.Century

Duncan C. Wilson, who first married Barbara Ritchie, second to Mrs. A.D. Butler, died after a long illness in the first week of September of 1903. Most of his property was sold over the next few years, including Lot A of Block 61 which was conveyed to F.W. Sanders by Wilson’s heirs for \$5,750 in 1907.⁵³ Later, in 1911, F. W. Sanders sold the same property to Julie E. Sanders.⁵⁴

The Sanborn Insurance Map dated to 1912 shows R. A. Long’s Ice Factory, Grist Mill, and Electric Light Plant (still standing in 1905) to have been largely replaced. A garage and “Coca Cola Bottling Works” now occupied part of the site overlooking the Beaufort River, structures which had themselves disappeared by 1924 when the site was shown empty on another Sanborn Insurance map save for the old tabby house and its south porch extensions.

Two local residents give verbal pictures of the property and its surroundings under Sanders’ ownership. Lengnick (1936) writes:

On the south side of Bay street is the old tabby Habersham house, three stories high. It has a handsome iron balcony, the only one in Beaufort, and is now the property of Miss Jennie Sanders. At one time a beautiful garden extended to the water front.

J. G. Thomas adds:

Across Scott Street was the Habersham building. The eastern side was occupied by various people but at one time there was the Oakland-Pontiac Car Dealership. Then came McDonald-Wilkins grocery Store and a third was Rudiwitz Repair and Shoe Sales. Mr. and Mrs. Rudiwitz and their daughter Evelyn, who is now Mrs. Sol Neidich lived on the second and third floor, and they entered from the east on Scott Street. Behind this

⁵²Sanborn Insurance Co. Map, 1899.

⁵³Beaufort County RMC. Conveyance Book 27: 511-15.

⁵⁴Beaufort County RMC. Conveyance Book 31: 417.

building were warehouses. At the foot of Scott Street was a dock and later known as the Gulf Dock operated by Mr. Ralph Cohen. Next was the Crescent Drug Store owned and operated by Mr. B.E. De Treville. Behind him was the Beaufort and Savannah Line Dock.

Thomas further describes alteration of the main house and site after its purchase by Belk Simpson Inc.:

Beaufort's historic Pink House... is now the home of a department store whose management listened to the appeals of members of the Beaufort historical society and not only preserved the characteristic features of the old, but enhanced them... The old pink house, which last year had, as tenants a restaurant a liquor store and a fish market, was cleaned out from the rear to the front, roof and side walls. Huge steel I beams were placed in support of floors, windows and wherever support seemed necessary to the mostly tabby construction the first floor of 1½ stories height, was extended back over 100 ft. Beyond that there will be a parking space. ⁵⁶

During a second rehabilitation episode (date not ascertained) Belk Simpson Inc. installed new store front windows under a shed roof, removing at the same time D.C. Wilson's cast iron balcony from the south facade. The "original" pink paint was duplicated as near as possible, this paint disappearing beneath present exterior surfaces some years before Belk Simpson Inc., disposed of the property (to Dr. Walter Doyle) in 1985.⁵⁷ Various re-development schemes for the site were prepared thereafter but little came of these until 2000 when 303 Associates LLC began work on altering street level spaces of the old house and stripping its upper living spaces of their original trim.

PART II.. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: Raised three story, single-pile dwelling. with gabled ends. interior end chimneys. and tabby exterior walls.

⁵⁵ J. G. Thomas, "Bay Street and Beaufort as I remember it," paper. read before the Beaufort Historical Society on 25 July 1985 (typescript. Beaufort County Library, Beaufort).

⁵⁶ Frank H. Ramsey, special correspondent (Charleston) *News and Courier* 20 June 1954.

⁵⁷ Quotes from (Charleston) *News and Courier*. undated clipping. Beaufort County Library, Beaufort.

2. Condition of Fabric: Endangered. Over one hundred years of neglect and abuse has seriously compromised the building's structural integrity. Twentieth-century removal of north and south facades to a height of about 14'-0" above current street level was particularly damaging, as was the transfer of loads to undersized steel support in the 1950s causing the building to deflect almost 12" along its east-to-west axis. Consequently, tabby which is weak in tension has cracked, spalled, and torn to a significant degree around exterior wall openings.

End walls (east and west) survive more or less intact although in mutilated condition. Separation has occurred between tabby and the two brick chimneys, the process causing severe structural cracking and disassociation of the fabric at interfaces. Before recent patching, tabby was honeycombed as a result of unchecked moisture penetration and leaching, this condition indicating an appreciable loss of original load-bearing capacity.

With the exception of the stair hall, interior spaces were stripped of their plaster finishes and trim in 2001. All window frames then existing were replaced and the roof covered in copper. The latter covering has caused staining to exterior wall surfaces. Original exterior stucco is largely concealed (where it still exists) beneath mid twentieth-century, synthetic stucco applied over metal lathing. A modern shop front now occupies the lower south and west facades while spaces at ground level are divided to form two retail stores. The south facade is abutted by a steel and concrete framed structure erected during the 1950s which blocks second floor windows and distorts the dwelling's original functional and aesthetic relationship with the Beaufort River.

The ell was almost entirely rebuilt in brick and concrete block over the course of the twentieth century. Fragments of its original tabby skin which survive are in poor condition.

B. Description of exterior

1. Overall Dimensions: The Saltus -Habersham House is a gabled ended, single-pile, central hall structure measuring approximately 44'- 6" east-to-west x 24'-2" north-to-south. Originally, it contained three full stories raised over an elevated basement with principal facades organized into five bays. On its western side the dwelling was flanked by a tabby ell. Before alteration and rebuilding this structure measured about 37' -5" north-to-south x 15' - 8" east-to-west and extended 13'- 2" south beyond the main dwelling.

2. Walls: Exterior walls are of load bearing tabby, north and south facades rising approximately 33'- 8" above present street level. All facades were originally stuccoed and scored in imitation of ashlar coursed at vertical intervals of 1'-3".

3. Foundations: Except for brick end chimneys and porch piers, all below ground work is of tabby.

4. Structural System, Framing.

Tabby Wall Construction

Construction of the main dwelling's exterior tabby walls involved a sequence of vertical lifts, formwork used for successive lifts, or "rounds" as they were called, measuring 2'- 0" in height. At each floor level, wall thickness was reduced in such a way as to maintain smooth outer facades, internal ledges so produced supporting wall plates running east-to-west, floor joists spanning north-to-south, and floor boards. Basement level, exterior tabby walls which descend approximately 3'-9" below present grade measure 1'-9" in width. At the first floor level this width is reduced to 1'-6". The second floor, exterior walls are 1'-3" wide, with the uppermost (third) floor exterior walls measuring 12" in width. There is no evidence indicating that the exterior walls were founded on any kind of spread foundation.

Story height also diminished as the building rose higher. Between the first and second floors the vertical measurement is approximately 12'- 6". Between second and third floors, this reduces to 10'-11", and the third floor measuring only 7'-5 1/2" between floor and ceiling.

As usual for tabby construction, exterior door and window frames were cast into place as the work progressed. Similarly, chimney construction in brick was carried up with the exterior tabby walls. Raised above the main roof ridge to create parapets, the east and west gables were also cast in tabby, despite the fact that their shape necessitated use special formwork.

Timber framing

Nothing survives to indicate the size or spacing of framing timbers supporting the original first floor. At the second and third floors, extant wall plates measure approximately 3"x 5" in section. Spanning approximately 22'-0" across the building's short (north-to-south) dimension, all original floor joists are uniformly sized, measuring 9" x 3" in section placed about 1"-6" on center. Partitions enclosing the central

stair consist of vertical studs to which split timber laths were nailed prior to plastering.

North and south exterior tabby walls are each capped by a 10½" wide x 5" deep timber plate. Plates receive 8¼" x 2 ½" ceiling joists which are cantilevered at their extremities about 8" beyond the building face. Ceiling joists support 8 ½" wide x 1" deep false plates aligned east-to-west, the two false plates carrying 4" deep x 3½" wide rafters, pitched at an angle of about 30 degrees. Housed and pegged together at the apex, each rafter pair is braced by a 4" deep x 3" wide timber tie.

5. Porch: Civil War-era photographs show a raised, single story porch extending along the south facade. This feature has now disappeared except for ruined sub-surface brick piers which indicate the porch was about 13'-2" wide, incorporated five bays and terminated at its western end against the ell.

6. Openings

a. Doors and doorways: The original entrance from Bay Street was demolished during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Photographs predating this demolition show the main doorway and its timber doorcase to have been centered on the north facade. Access was gained via brick steps, which spilled out toward the street in a gently curved form. The door void's semi-circular head appears enclosed within a broken pediment supported on narrow, fielded Tuscan pilasters.⁵⁸ Samuel Cooley's photograph taken in 1864 illustrates another entrance from Bay Street located toward the main dwelling's northeast corner. This was probably an alteration made by Union forces (who presumably enlarged an existing first floor window to create the doorway) soon after 1861, since stucco around the opening looks ragged and broken in the photograph.

While an entrance on the south front opening to the Beaufort River seems highly likely, no evidence survives to substantiate such conjecture.

b. Windows and shutters: During casting of exterior tabby walls second and probably first floor window openings were made larger than finished window frames, each 3'-2" wide opening extending from the floor to a

⁵⁸The scheme appears closely related to the the design for a "Doric front" published by William Pain as Plate 38 of his *Practical House Carpenter* (London, 1789) which was itself based upon doorcase designs which had become popular in Britain during the 1760s.

point about 9'-3" above floor level. Brick infills one wythe deep were then laid to form spandrels about 2'-7" high beneath each window sill. Frames measuring about 3'-2" x 6'-9" overall were installed above the spandrels, all junctions and casting irregularities being masked by external trim and internal architraves. On the third floor, construction was simpler. As the external walls reached the appropriate height, window frames measuring about 3'-0" wide x 3'-9" high were set in place. Casting in tabby then resumed around them.

Fenestration established five bays on the long (north and south) facades. On the east facade, windows flanked chimneys right and left. On the west facade, fenestration was confined to the third floor where two window openings each measuring 3'-0" x 3'-9" still flank the chimney breast. A pair of quadrant window openings each measuring at maximum 3'-2 1/2" high x 3'-4" wide flanked chimneys above, these lighting the attic space. All are now blocked with brick, and Civil War period photographs showing that they were blocked before 1864.

Glazing patterns are now altered and all original window frames replaced. Photographs taken in 1864 illustrate nine-over-nine light double-hung sashes on the two principal floors, and six-over-six-light double-hung sashes on the third floor. First and second floor windows had louvered wood shutters in 1864 but these have since disappeared.⁵⁹

7. Chimneys: An interior chimney is centered on each of the building's gable ends. These were laid up in fired brick as tabby wall construction proceeded, but no attempt was made to bond the brickwork into the tabby. Consequently, through joints exist between chimney and wall construction which are disguised on exterior faces by stucco finishes originally scored in imitation of stone. At the second floor level, chimneys measure approximately 3'-4" east-to-west x 7'-4" north-to-south in plan. This dimension reduces to 2'-7" east-to-west x 3'-11" north-to-south at the third floor level. Stacks, which rise about 43'-9" above present the present street, have their uppermost two courses corbeled outwards and are stuccoed.

8. Roof

a. Shape and covering: The roof of the main house is gabled and currently covered with copper. Since few tile or slate fragments were encountered

⁵⁹In Samuel Cooley's photograph of 1864, first floor shutters on the building's north side appear solid rather than louvered, these probably having been introduced as a security measure by Union forces.

during excavation, the original covering was probably of a perishable nature, timber shingles being the most likely material. Roofing to the ell has been replaced, ghost impressions suggesting a shallow mono-pitch concealed from view by a high parapet fronting Bay Street.

b. Cornices: Original or early timber cornices survive on the north and south facades. The north facing cornice features modillions, pendants of gothicising form, and a central frieze panel carved with sprays of olive or bay leaves. On the south facade, the scheme is simplified, with carving and pendants being omitted.

C. Description of interior

1. Floor plans

a. Basement: Originally both the main house and its ell had full basements. These areas were rendered useless during the 1860s or soon thereafter when the first floor framing was lowered to street level. Both are now inaccessible, information about them deriving from an archaeological excavation conducted in 1995. The latter produced no evidence to indicate that either basement was divided by tabby walls but subdivision by timber partitions cannot be excluded.

Both areas appear to have originally been given masonry floors.

b. First Floor: Although blocked, hearth openings to the east and west end chimneys indicate that the main dwelling's first floor was originally raised about 2'-0" feet above current street level. Alteration has now completely destroyed the original plan and obscured circulation patterns. It is known from Civil War period photographs that entry from Bay Street was then made via a central doorway. Similarly, the ell has lost all its original framing at first floor level, the space now being absorbed into a retail sales area. Old photographs show entry to the ell from Bay Street was made by a doorway centered on its north facade.

c. Second floor: The main dwelling's second floor incorporates two principle rooms which each open into the relatively narrow (7'-9" wide) central hall. The central hall encloses an elliptical stair and is backed by a vestibule to the south which communicates with the landing via an unusually narrow doorway.

A fireplace is centered on the end wall of each room. In the east room, the fireplace is flanked north and south by windows. In the west room the corresponding wall is blank, the fireplace here being flanked by closets on both sides. Opposite the fireplace wall, each room has two doorways giving direct access north to the staircase and south to the central vestibule.

d. Third Floor: The third floor repeats the same basic plan but neither of the two principle rooms has a fireplace. In the west room, as in the east room, the chimney breast is flanked by a small window north and south. The central hall has a vestibule to the south but this is not connected directly to the upper landing. Built-in shelves fill spaces left between the rectilinear vestibule and elliptical staircase.

e. Attic: The attic space is neither floored or divided, but was originally lighted by quadrant windows positioned right and left of the two end chimneys.

f. Stairway: One early interior stair is known from the main house, this occupying a large part of the dwelling's central hall. What remains today is a truncated remnant, all construction having been demolished below the second floor level. In consequence, only a single flight now survives rising approximately 10'-11" between the second and third floor spaces. Elliptical in plan, this stair is more decorative than practical, dimensions of the central hall dictating relatively narrow treads uninterrupted by any intermediate landing. Balusters are slender and rectangular in section, the mahogany handrail rising in an elegant series of carefully modulated curves. Treads are cantilevered out from flanking walls of the central hall, which on its south side has been modified by insertion of secondary studs, these following the stair's elliptical form.

Above, the third floor ceiling opens into an elliptical dome. This was constructed by nailing timber lath to a timber armature, the whole being plastered smooth. A finely detailed plaster boss of wavy acanthus leaves decorates the dome's center, an enriched timber cornice encircling its base. Another broad band of wood molding encircles the stair just below the uppermost (third floor) landing, this molding with its broad, flat profiles reminiscent of Regency taste suggesting installation ca. 1825. Cutting and trimming of original ceiling joists to accommodate the dome further indicates that the present stair and its associated decorative features represent a secondary building episode. Although badly mutilated

and incompletely preserved, vertically reeded timber, most likely mahogany, wall linings installed above the second floor landing deserves mention, since they probably belong to the ca.1825 decorative scheme.

2. Flooring

a. Basement: Fragments of brick pavers bedded on two thin coats of lime plaster applied directly over yellow top soil, survive beneath the main building. In 1995, partial excavation of the ell exposed a floor of rounded cobblestones set in lime mortar at the basement level. Cobblestones were in part removed in 2001, the ell's basement then being sealed beneath concrete.

b. Second and third floors: Flooring consists of random width pine boards running east-to-west. All visible surfaces are finished smooth, no evidence surviving for any decorative treatment.

3. Wall and ceiling finish: Tabby walls were finished with plaster over split timber laths nailed to vertical studs, now removed, applied to all interior faces. Framed cross partitions of the central hall and studs enclosing the stair were also finished with plaster applied in two coats over split timber lathing.

The two principal second floor rooms received molded timber baseboards, chair rails and cornices all of which were removed in 2001. On the third floor, decorative trim was omitted except for baseboards.

Everywhere, ceilings are, or were before removal, of plaster applied over split timber lath nailed to joists.

4. Openings

a. Doors and doorways: Doors and door surrounds are now missing. Measured drawings made before their removal shows that treatment on second and third floors differed. On the second floor, doors had six raised panels with applied molding surrounding the panels on the inner (room side) face. Architraves were relatively broad measuring 6" in width, enriched by applied moldings and made with mitred angles.

Third floor doors and door surround were far less decorative. Fabricated from 4" wide tongued and grooved vertical boards, beaded on one side, doors were braced horizontally top and bottom. Architraves set flush with

wall plaster matched doors in their simplicity, consisting of 3" x ¾" boards with one beaded edge. These were decorated with narrow strips of applied molding on faces looking into the principal rooms and mitred at angles.

b. Windows: All original windows and window surrounds are now missing. Drawings and photographs show that on the second floor, window openings were enclosed by architraves matching those of the doorways in profile. Third floor window surrounds appear to have been made up from 4" wide boards set flush with plaster wall finishes.

D. Outbuilding

A photograph by Samuel Cooley dated November of 1864 shows a small, two-story gabled brick building with end chimneys located southeast of the main house. This may have been the original kitchen mentioned by Francis Saltus in the 1790s or a later replacement. Either way, the structure has now disappeared; an excavation conducted in 1995 failed to locate its foundations, which must have been completely robbed out some time during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

PART III SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings: No original drawings are known. Measured drawings were produced by Colin Brooker in 1985. The originals are held on file by Brooker Architectural Design Consultants, in Beaufort, South Carolina.

B. Early Views: The house was photographed from the northeast by Samuel Cooley in November of 1864. Copies of the image are held by the National Archives and the Beaufort County Library. Later images dating from the 1940s are held by Historic Beaufort Foundation, Craven Street, in Beaufort.

C. Bibliography

Newspapers, primary and unpublished sources

Brooker, Colin H. *Architectural and Archaeological Investigation at 802 Bay Street, Beaufort, South Carolina*. Beaufort: Brooker Architectural Design Consultants, 1996. (Typescript, Beaufort County Library, Beaufort, South Carolina).

The New South (1861-64).

Note: This is a military newspaper published weekly, in Beaufort; copies are available on microfilm at the Beaufort Country Library.

Register of Mense Conveyances, Charleston County Court, Charleston, South Carolina.

Register of Mense Conveyances, Beaufort County, 100 Ribault Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

Manuscript Collections, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina.

United States Census of Population 1790-1860, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Secondary and published sources

Brooker, Colin. *The Verdier House, Beaufort SC, an Illustrated History and Guide*. Beaufort: Historic Beaufort Foundation, 1997

The Conservation and Repair of Tabby Structures in Beaufort County, South Carolina. In The Conservation and Preservation of Tabby: A Symposium on Historic Building Material in the Coastal Southeast. Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1998.

[Cole, Cynthia, ed.]. *Historic Resources of the Low Country*. Yemassee, SC: Low Council of Governments, 1979.

Harvey, Bruce G., Colin H. Brooker, David B. Schneider, and Sarah Fick. *Beaufort County Above-Ground Historic Resources Survey of Beaufort County, South Carolina*. Brockington Associates; Inc.; Brooker Architectural Design Consultants; Historic Beaufort Foundation; and Preservation Consultants Inc., 1998. (Beaufort County Site Number U-13-977).

Lengnick, Lena Wood. *Beaufort Memoirs*. Privately Printed, 1936.

Raines, C. W., ed. *Six Decades in Texas or Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock*. Austin: 1900.

Tucker, Spencer C. *The Jeffersonian Gunboat Navy*. University of South Carolina Press, 1993.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was sponsored by the Historic Beaufort Foundation and by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) division of the National Park Service, Paul D. Dolinsky, Chief, HABS. This report is one component of a larger survey of extant examples of tabby architecture within Beaufort County, South Carolina. The documentation was undertaken by HABS under the direction of Paul D. Dolinsky with assistance from Virginia B. Price, HABS Historian, who worked with Jefferson G. Mansell, (formerly of) the Historic Beaufort Foundation, Ian D. Hill, Beaufort County Planning Department, and Colin Brooker, Brooker Architectural Design Consultants, to identify subjects of study and locate them in the field in 2002 and 2003. Colin Brooker, whose research underpinned the project, wrote the historical report. Evan Thompson, now with the Historic Beaufort Foundation, assisted Brooker in the production of the reports. Jack E. Boucher, HABS Photographer, took the large format photographs.

This

This