

LOWER CAPE FEAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc. BULLETIN

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Wilmington, North Carolina

May 1987

JAMES F. POST, BUILDER-ARCHITECT: THE LEGEND AND THE LEDGER

by Janet K. Seapker

James Francis Post has become the father of architecture in Wilmington, N.C. In recent times, this attribution came from numerous books published about the city, and earlier, from his obituary and a biography by his son, Thomas R. Post. Despite some misinformation contained in these works, Post was the premier mid to late-19th century builder-architect of the city. He designed, built and/or supervised some of the most notable buildings in the city. Post also worked on more common, utilitarian urban buildings, and it is these which tie together the city as an architectural unit. He often is credited with building and/or designing structures to which he cannot be linked; conversely, Post is not given credit for buildings which clearly are his.

Post, a builder-architect, worked for a time when professionally trained architects were few and far between. Builder-architects were what their title implies: builders, generally carpenters or masons, who had some ability to design and delineate buildings. They also had the verbal capability to describe them in written specifications.

POST THE PERSON

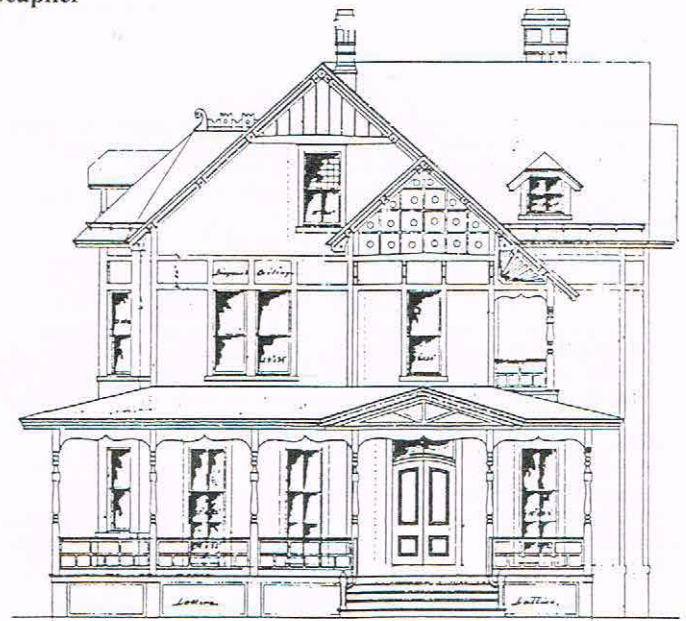
Not a great deal of human history is known about Post. He was born in Fairfield, near Caldwell, New Jersey, but the year of his birth is in question: his gravestone at Oakdale Cemetery shows September 24, 1818. The 1850 census puts his birth date in 1820.¹ His death, on July 15, 1899, is uncontested.²

Post seems to have been the only member of his family to have migrated south.³ He went first to Petersburg, Virginia, where he married Mary Ann Russell on October 8, 1843.⁴ While in Petersburg, Mary Ann gave birth to two of their sons, Erastus, who died in 1858⁵ and in 1846 to Thomas, who lived to maturity.⁶

By September 1849, Post and his family had arrived in Wilmington.⁷ Their other son, James F., Jr., was born here.⁸ Appropriately for one engaged in the building trades, Post was a Free Mason; he also was an Odd Fellow.⁹

The reasons for Post's migration south are unconfirmed. His son suggested it was due to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad and the building boom it spurred.¹⁰ That is a thoroughly reasonable hypothesis, since by 1840, Wilmington was the most populous¹¹ and busiest city in the state, a distinction it retained until 1910.¹²

Despite his Yankee birth, Post joined the Confederate cause. On June 18, 1861, Post was appointed 2nd lieutenant in the Wilmington Horse Artillery (originally Bunting's Battery.) Not "reelected," on April 27, 1862,¹³ he returned to civilian life.



*Wm. Post Archt.
40 Princess St.
Wilmington, N. C.
1887.* EAST ELEVATION.

W. B. McKoy House, 402 S. 3rd Street. East elevation as redesigned by James F. Post, 1887. One of several elevations and plans of the house, contained in the only known surviving set of architectural drawings by Post. (Courtesy of Henry Bacon McKoy, Greenville, South Carolina.)

During the war years, he was involved in shipping salt—that necessary article.¹⁴ He produced salt "in association with Jos. H. Flanner [President of Wilmington Steamship Company],¹⁵ general commission merchant . . . in hundreds of tons for the people and the troops." Also, with Major W. B. Campbell of the Confederate States Army, he purchased large "quantities of corn, hay and fodder, for general use."¹⁶

Builder-architects often were engaged in building for speculation purposes, but such seems not to have been the case with Post. A survey of his ownership of property is a confusing endeavor, because he only lived on property he owned for a short time. In 1856 Post listed for taxes, four town lots on Princess Street between 3rd and 4th streets, a portion of which he mortgaged for \$400 to Mauger London that same year and

(Cont'd on Page 3)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

LOWER CAPE FEAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN

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The year 1986-87 has been a time of new beginnings for the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society. The first year of the five-year long range plan for the Society was completed. Some of the things accomplished were: air conditioning more areas of the house, up-grading the electrical system, making inventories and documenting artifacts in the Latimer House, establishing a Grants Committee. There were other plans which were completed, but the list is too long to mention them all.

Other firsts not included in our long range plans were:

1. The Walk and Talk Tour led by JoAnne Jarrett every Wednesday began in the spring and continued throughout the summer and fall.
2. *For the Record*, the newsletter edited by Bronwyn Morgan was published several times during the year.
3. The docent program put together by Betty Boney to increase the knowledge of the docents about the Latimer House and the Historic District, and for the first time the docents wore costumes that were researched and designed by Martha Jeter.
4. The documentation of the Latimer family and the Latimer House done by Henry MacMillan and Becky Carey.
5. The party given by the Oliver Hutaffs for the Schweitzer Artistry Award winners was held in our lovely garden.
6. The Society and the N.C. Poetry Society presented a delightful evening of poetry.

The above are some of our new beginnings, but we continued our usual activities such as improving our archives, improving the garden, presenting another successful Candlelight Tour and Wassail Bowl, publishing the *Bulletin*, participating in the Inside Old Wilmington Tour and increasing our membership.

In my opinion, we have had a very successful and rewarding year due to our hard working chairmen, board members, executive director and members. You all have contributed immensely to making the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society a viable part of our community and I thank you for the privilege of being your president.

Sincerely,

Jean Anne Sutton

MEETING

Date: Sunday, May 24, 1987

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: Incorporators' Garden, Latimer House

Program: Dedication of the Latimer House Garden in honor of its Incorporators - Hargrove Bellamy, Henry J. MacMillan, and Ida B. Kellam.

GIFTS TO THE IDA B. KELLAM MEMORIAL ARCHIVES

The Society gratefully acknowledges the following gifts:

Ruth Savage Walker

Office swivel chair.

Leslie N. Boney, Jr.

Eight color photographs showing restoration work of the Hathaway-Boney House, 120 S. 5th Avenue; article on Henry Boney announcing that he won the 1987 Tucker Architectural Award for the Lincoln Memorial; speech given by Mr. Boney when accepting the award on behalf of the late Henry Bacon.

Henry Bacon McKoy

Photocopies of drawings of McKoy home, 402 S. Third Street by J. K. Vaughn (1886) and James F. Post (1887); also, drawings by Henry Bacon that were submitted to the McKoy family but rejected; also, a drawing by Henry Bacon for a competition sponsored by the American Architect and Drawing News, 1886.

(Cont'd on Page 3)

GIFTS (Cont'd from Page 2)

John Debnam

Xerox copy of "The Confederate Veteran," Vol. IX, No. 11, November 1901. This issue covers the UDC Convention held in Wilmington in 1901, and includes a speech given by Wilmington Mayor Col. Alfred Moore Waddell.

Merle J. Chamberlain

"Dandong, China," ca. 1985. This publication describes Wilmington's "Sister City."

Jewel Spangler Smaus

Stereoscope card by C. W. Yates and A. Orr that shows Cornelius Harnett's home "Maynard" that was later known as "Hilton" in honor of the Hill family, who purchased the property. "Hilton" was also the home of Dr. James Fergus McRee.

Mrs. Charles P. Graham

(From the files of Edith Graham Toms): "Historical Sketch of the Oakdale Cemetery," with the charter, by-laws and rules governing the grounds generally, 1911.

Mrs. Randolph Cary

Video tape of interview of Henry J. MacMillan by Diane C. Cashman. In this tape Mr. MacMillan describes furnishings of the Latimer House as well as many recollections of its history, and personalities and lifestyles of its inhabitants.

The Archives welcomes gifts pertinent to the history of the Lower Cape Fear. Library table chairs and office furniture could also be put to good use at this time.

JAMES F. POST (Cont'd from Page 1)

lost in 1859.¹⁷ He owned property, generally for a short time, in rural areas or at the edge of the city limits.¹⁸

From at least 1865 until his death, he maintained an office on Princess between 2nd and 3rd (210, 211, 212 or 214 depending on the numbering system in vogue) and residences on property he did not own: Princess Street between 4th and 5th and Chestnut Street between 4th and 5th. From 1885 until the time of his death, he lived with his son, James, at 112 North 7th Street.¹⁹

While the official records raise more questions than they answer about Post's property ownership, it seems clear that his career had not led to building speculation as had the careers of other builders-architects of his era.

Post's self-image, evidenced in the words he used to describe himself, is somewhat erratic. He identified himself as a "carpenter" in 1850 and ten years later, as an "architect."²⁰ In the 1860s, Post called himself a "contractor-builder" and "builder-carpenter." From the 1870s on, he most often used the title "architect," but occasionally "contractor" and less frequently, "carpenter" or "builder."²¹ The fluid nature of Post's self-described identity, underscores the developing nature of the architectural profession in the 19th century.

James F. Post died on July 15, 1899 at the home of his son, James F. Post, Jr. He was survived by his brother and sister who resided in New Jersey and his wife Mary Ann and two sons, James and Thomas R., both of whom were employed by the Atlantic Coast Line Rail Road Company, the successor of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad.²² Unfortunately for historical purposes, he left no will, and no estate papers were found in the N.C. Archives.

He was buried at Oakdale Cemetery following services conducted by the ministers of Grace Methodist Episcopal Church and St. Andrews' Presbyterian Church.²³

POST'S WORK AS REVEALED BY THE LEDGERS

Many traditions exist in the Post family which are undocumented and undocumentable—that "he went to New York when a youth, and studied architecture for five years," and that "he came from a family of architects," among them Mr. George B. Post. It also is claimed that he "designed the first residence in New York built by John Jacob Astor."²⁴ To date, none of these claims can be substantiated.

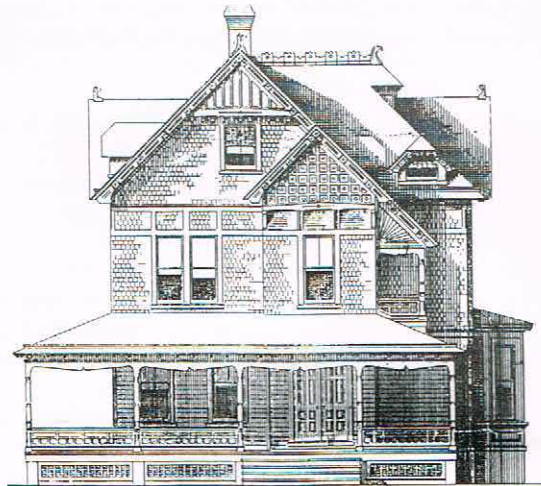
Post's early work is known and documented chiefly through a ledger (which begins in January 1847 in Petersburg, VA), a day book and another record which primarily contains cost estimates (hereinafter communally referred to as ledgers). These are in the James F. Post Collection of the Ida B. Kellam Archives, housed in the Latimer House, headquarters of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society.²⁵ The ledgers are the most important primary source of information about Post's work (or for that matter, any 19th century Wilmington architect's work,) but also, they shed light on the sorts of projects with which mid-19th century builder-architects occupied themselves and to some degree, how they operated in the community.

By 1850, within a year of his arrival in Wilmington, Post was working for leading families such as the deRossets and the Wrights, and for the Town of Wilmington. In his first decade in Wilmington, though, the bulk of his ledger entries list repairs to private and public buildings, wells, and other mundane improvements.

Post's skills as an architect and a builder were recognized and utilized early in his Wilmington career. In 1850 he accomplished his first complete construction project, designs, specifications and construction of a building for L. A. Hart. For the design and specifications, Post was paid \$10 and for the construction, \$700.²⁶

Other building projects included: "building house" for C. C. Rhodes (1850 for \$230); "building house as per contract" for Eliza Lord (1850 for \$1,498); "contract building house" for Henry Nutt (1850 for \$1,400); "building Carriage House and repairing fence and livery stable for S. P. Polley" (1852 for \$200); "contract for carpenters work of building house" for Bennet Flanner (1852 for \$1,595); "building Ingin [sic] House" for the Commissioners of Wilmington (1853 for \$417);

(Cont'd on Page 4)



FRONT ELEVATION OF STUDY SUBMITTED IN SEVENTEENTH COMPETITION BY GUI BONO. Scale, 1/8 inch to the foot.

"Gui Bono's" elevation of chosen by W. B. McKoy as the house he would build, with some alterations, on his lot on the southwest corner of S. Third and Nun Streets. The elevations and plans were published in the October 1886 issue of *Carpentry and Building*. (Courtesy of Henry Bacon McKoy, Greenville, South Carolina.)

POST (Cont'd from Page 3)

"building House" for John A. Parker (1854 for \$800); "building Privy" and "contract building ware House" [sic] for George Myers (1854 for \$23.30 and \$450, respectively); "contract building House" for Mager [sic] London (1854 for [amount obliterated]); "contract building House" for Jacob Wessell ([Wessell Hathaway House] 1854, amount not legible); "contract for building House" for David Smith (1855 for \$1,000); "building House" for Hustin of Hustin and Costin (1853 for \$350); "Contract of building Cotton Platform for Wilmington & Manchester R R Company (1856 for \$711); "Contract of Building steeple" for the M & E [sic] Church (Front Street Methodist) (1859[?] for \$1,000); "Plans for House with Specifications" and "superintending the construction of Dwelling" for Joshua G. Wright (1858 \$100 and \$750); "Plans and Specifications" and "Commission [on] \$21,000" for Dr. John D. Bellamy (1859-1860 for \$100 and \$1,050, respectively). A note at the end of the Bellamy entry states "To amount agreed upon as being due in June 1866," apparently Post's bill was not settled until after the war.²⁷

Then as today, very few building craftsmen did everything—each has a specialty. Post fits perfectly into that mold. He became involved as the carpentry subcontractor to at least three brick masons: Robert Barclay and John Coffin Wood, and Joseph L. Keen.

An entry in his ledger in 1853 notes that Post made a circular brick mold for J. L. Keen. Post subcontracted with Mr. Keen until 1856; unfortunately, none of the buildings resulting from the collaboration are known to be standing. (The possible exception is City Hall-Thalian Hall on which Keen is said to have worked.)²⁸

On the other hand, Post's association with the Wood brothers produced several notable buildings, three documented surviving domestic examples being the D. K. MacRae House (1851-1852), 108 South 3rd Street; the Zebulon Latimer House (1852), 126 South 3rd Street; and the Edward Savage House (1852-1853), 120 South 3rd Street.²⁹ In the case of the Savage House, Post subcontracted with the Wood brothers for the carpentry work, but was engaged separately by the owner to do additional carpentry.³⁰

The Wood brothers and Post collaborated on building the jail designed by R. B. Wood in 1854,³¹ and on the pre-Civil War public *piece de resistance*—City Hall-Thalian Hall (1855-1858). The cast of characters involved in designing and building City Hall-Thalian Hall, was an assemblage of the best architectural practitioners of Wilmington. Post served as supervising architect,³² the Wood Brothers as the brick masons, Robert B. Wood as the designer of City Hall, and George W. Rose as the contractor.³³ The architect, at least for the theater, was the premier theater designer of his day, J. M. Trimble of New York.

The contract called for Post to "furnish all the working plans necessary for the due execution of the work, and fairly and impartially estimate the value of work, and the materials furnished . . . inspect the materials employed in said work and reject such as in his judgment he may deem unfit to be used . . ." ³⁴ Supervising the construction of City Hall-Thalian Hall must have been an all-consuming task: during the three years Post was engaged in the construction of City Hall-Thalian Hall, he undertook virtually no other projects. Post generally worked six days a week and for his services received \$4 per day; he collected a total of \$3,500.³⁵ Since there was no limit on the amount Post could collect, the commissioners obviously trusted his integrity to perform his duties in a timely fashion.

Flush with the success of City Hall-Thalian Hall, Post acquired the private client of his career: Dr. John D. Bellamy. Post provided the plans and specifications for the Bellamy Man-

sion, although, he may not have been the concept designer.³⁶ Bellamy family tradition attributes the house design to Rufus Bunnell, a Vermont architect. Possibly, Bunnell provided a sketch which Post translated architecturally into the magnificent building which still stands. The Bellamy Mansion is unique in the city; it looks like it would be most comfortable in Natchez, Mississippi. But it shares with another building for which Post was supervising architect, City Hall-Thalian Hall, a number of features: the colossal order columns, the paired round-arch topped windows and an elaborate modillion cornice. These elements, common to both buildings, suggest the likelihood that Post was the responsible party for the appearance of the Bellamy Mansion, especially since Post was a common tie in both buildings.

Post was employed by the Confederate States of America during 1863 and 1864 to build and repair many buildings for the Southern cause, at Fort Fisher, Fort Anderson and elsewhere.³⁷ The Wilmington and Weldon Railroad employed Post to build warehouses at Dudley's, Mt. Olive, Leesburg, Warsaw, Rocky Point, and Whitakers and a passenger house at Wilson.³⁸ He also built offices and a rail shop in 1864 for the Wilmington and Manchester Railroad Company.³⁹

Following the war, Post again engaged in superintending major public buildings, specifically the United States Court House and Post Office and the New Hanover County Courthouse, designed by A. S. Eichberg. He continued designing and constructing buildings for public and private clients, among them St. Thomas Catholic Church, which in 1884, he enlarged;⁴⁰ Oakdale Cemetery Lodge (1896);⁴¹ and Alfred Martin's house (Martin Huggins House) for which he drew the plans and specifications and supervised the construction (1870).⁴²

Drawings for only two Post buildings are known to survive. A wash rendering for the Masonic Temple,⁴³ proposed in 1899, is strangely similar, especially in the use of paired round-arch headed windows, to that proposed by architect Charles McMillen, whose design was selected.

Also surviving are Post's plans for the William B. McKoy House, an adjustment of "Gui Bono's" plans published in the October 1886 issue of *Carpentry and Building*. The circumstances of the latter provide insight about the value of the local builder-architect. McKoy's brother-in-law was the then-budding architect, Henry Bacon. When W. B. McKoy decided to build his house, Bacon, a young apprentice, sent numerous proposals for the dwelling, all of which were rejected by McKoy. In September 1886, instead of selecting a Bacon design, McKoy acquired plans from J. K. Vaughn, a heretofore unheard of Wilmington architect, with which he did nothing. Apparently, he liked better the "Gui Bono" plans and hired Post to revise them in accordance with his tastes and the siting of the lot. Post's revisions involved some interior rearrangements and locating a bay window on the south side.⁴⁴

It is tempting to attribute all woodwork on a mid-19th century Wilmington building to the handiwork of the builder-architect. Such was not always the case. Post both made brackets (of which Wilmington has an abundance) and ordered them. In 1852 he ordered five iron columns from Heins & Co. of Philadelphia; in 1854 he ordered from Smith and Crane, columns, capitals and brackets. In 1865, 1869 and 1870 he ordered materials from Wm. H. Jenkins of New York. Although unspecified, the 1870 order was designated for A. Martin's House, 412 Market Street, Alfred M. Waddell, L. Vollers and 17 Market Street.⁴⁵ Without benefit of Interstate 40, we are tempted to think of Wilmington as a beautiful backwater community, isolated from the rest of the world; however, in the 19th century major metropolitan cities were quite accessible via ship or rail. Ordering building parts from New York or Philadelphia

may well have been cheaper and easier than creating them in Wilmington.

Many mid-19th century builder-architects owned slaves; however, no evidence of slave ownership exists for Post. That he didn't own slaves apparently did not prevent him from engaging them into his crew. Some were hired from other contractors who probably signed them on for a specified period of time, and when they did not need their services, leased them to Post.⁴⁶ This is not unusual in the major cities of North Carolina. Urban slaves often were skilled craftsmen, available to work for their owners or to be hired to those willing to pay for their skills.

Post often accepted goods and services in lieu of cash as payment for his work. He accepted building materials, workmen, office space, family clothing and schooling—basic goods and services—for debts owed to him.⁴⁷

The mark of the professional architect—charging a percentage of the construction cost as his profit—does not occur in the Post ledgers until 1859; that year he superintended the construction of the Bellamy Mansion for a 20% fee. Subsequently, his percentage was 5% of the construction cost, as in 1860 when he billed O. G. Parsley for “Superintending the Erection of Stores on North Water Street” and “the Erection of house on 3rd Street.”⁴⁸

Post, from all evidence, a humble man, has been under-credited and over-credited by others with building and designing projects, despite the survival of his carefully-kept records. The designs of Wilmington's First Presbyterian Church, St. John's Episcopal Church, all public schools buildings in Wilmington have been ascribed to Post.⁴⁹ The First Presbyterian Church, which stood at the time of Post's death, was the creation of architect Samuel Sloan of Philadelphia.⁵⁰ St. John's was credited to Wills and Dudley of New York.⁵¹ Post was involved with building Union School (1889) and Willison School Annex (1895), but the builder-architects of the other school buildings, save for architect John A. Fox of Boston who designed Tileston School (1870),⁵² are unknown.

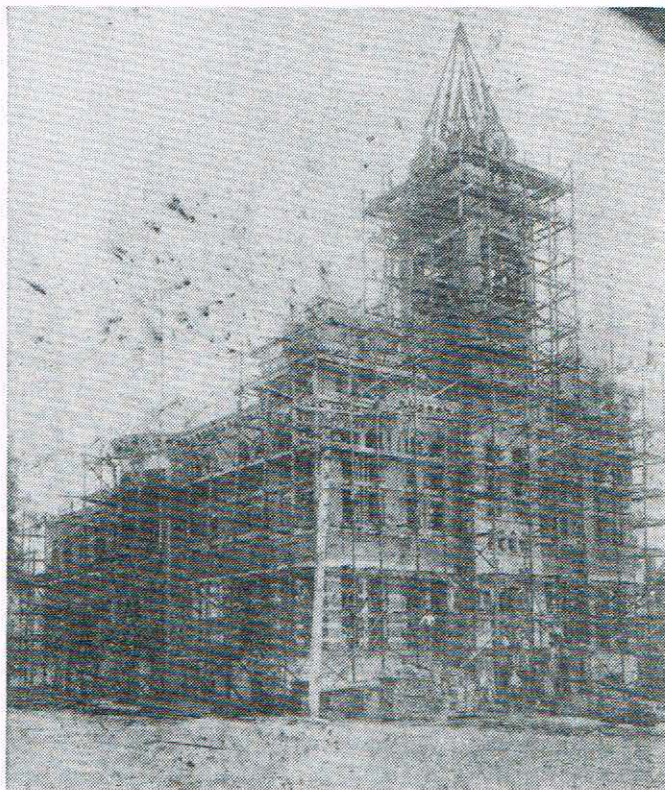
Other incorrect attributions are contained in Post's biography written by his son, Thomas. He credits his father with the design and erection of the John A. Taylor House, (documented to Benjamin Gardner),⁵³ the design of St. Paul's [Lutheran] Church (documented to L. Vollers,⁵⁴ although, Post had the post-war construction contract and supervised that era of that construction),⁵⁵ and the Wilmington and Manchester Railroad Company station in Florence, South Carolina (1867), and completion of the First Baptist Church; neither of which are attributable to Post.

Even in recent examinations of the Post ledgers, assumptions have been made about the entries. Several pages of estimates have been claimed as the authority for attributing design, when none can be proven. Some have been documented to others and some remain anonymous, specifically, the Henry Latimer House, 202. S. 3rd Street. (1882); the Edward Latimer House, 280 S. 3rd Street. (1882); the 1981 remodeling of the Heide-Bridgers House, 308 S. 3rd Street; Conoley-Hanby-Sidbury House, 15 N. 5th Avenue (1852); Bowden House, 514 Princess Street (1859); and the walks in Hebrew Burial Ground in Oakdale Cemetery (1894).⁵⁶ Often Post's role has been misinterpreted. It is tempting to assume that a known craftsmen was the architect of a building, when in fact, he may only have been carrying out the plans of another or that he was the principal contractor when he was the carpentry sub-contractor. This has been Post's fate more than once.

James F. Post is one of the few builder-architects who came to Wilmington in the boom era of the mid-19th century and stayed—until his death. With the Wood brothers, Robert

Barclay and John Coffin, he gave the port city its distinctive Italianate architectural character. His diligent, stable nature provided a paternal quality of involvement in the development of his adopted city and earned Post the appellation the father of architecture.

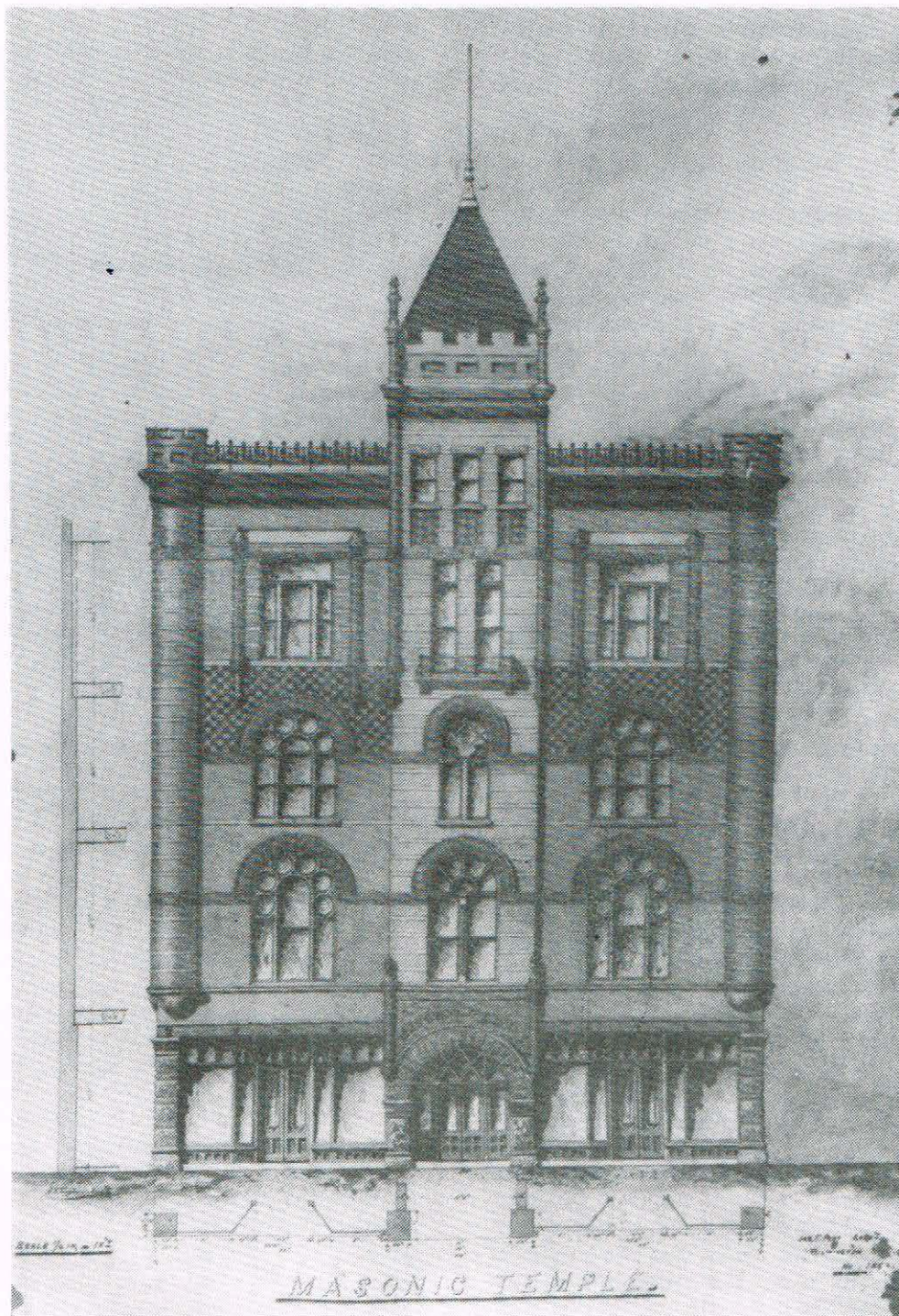
(See Footnotes, Page 7)



New Hanover County Courthouse under construction, ca. 1892; Post served as supervising architect for the project. While it is difficult to see, one of the two men standing in the entrance, may be Post; if so, it is the only known photograph of James F. Post. (Photograph courtesy, Lower Cape Fear Historical Society.)

“The natts are very troublesom here. They bite very much and swell where they bite. They call them here, ‘Muskeeters.’”

From a letter written in May 1758 by John Eedes, a visitor to Wilmington, to his brother in Sussex, England.
(North Carolina Room, New Hanover County Public Library)



Post's rendering of his 1899 design for the Masonic Temple on Front Street. Charles McMillen's proposal was chosen, but is curiously similar to Post's. (Photograph courtesy, Lower Cape Fear Historical Society Archives.)

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Seventh Census, 1850: New Hanover County, Population Schedule, 425, hereinafter cited as 1850 census.
- 2 *The Wilmington Messenger*, July 16, 1899; hereinafter cited as *Messenger*.
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Hustings Court, Petersburg, VA, Marriage License, October 7, 1843 and (Petersburg, VA) *Republican*, October 10, 1843.
- 5 1850 census and (Petersburg, VA) *Daily Express*, July 17, 1858.
- 6 1850 census and Eighth Census, 1860: New Hanover County, Population Schedule, 136; hereinafter cited as 1860 census.
- 7 James F. Post Ledgers, Ida B. Kellam Archives, Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Wilmington, NC; hereinafter cited as Ledgers. The first 56 pages of the ledger record Post's work in Petersburg, VA. The first Wilmington entry, on page 57, is the account of S. P. Polley. Ledger pages sometimes are unnumbered or the numbered corners are missing; therefore, some references to the ledgers are not identified to a specific page.
- 8 1850 and 1860 census.
- 9 *Messenger*, July 16, 1899; Thomas R. Post, "The Architect," unpublished typescript memoir, Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University, New York; hereinafter cited as "The Architect."
- 10 "The Architect," 5.
- 11 Guion Griffin Johnson, *Ante-Bellum North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1937) 117.
- 12 R. D. W. Connor, *A Manual of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1915) 230 and 236.
- 13 Louis H. Manarin, compiler, *North Carolina Troops 1861-1865, A Roster, Vol. I, Artillery* (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1966) 175.
- 14 Ledgers, account of Robert Dickinson, Darlington, SC, 1863, np; account of James Little & Co., Petersburg, VA, 1864, 155; Isabel M. Williams and Leora H. McEachern, *Salt—That Necessary Article* (Wilmington: 1973), 92; hereinafter cited as *Salt*.
- 15 *Salt*, 172.
- 16 "The Architect," 7.
- 17 New Hanover County Tax List, 1856, and New Hanover County deeds, Deed Book OO, 90 and Deed Book PP, 727.
- 18 New Hanover County Deed Books: SS, 127, October 7, 1863; SS, 110, November 19, 1863; SS, 112, December 16, 1863; VV, 456, April 14, 1868; VV, 575, June 11, 1868; YY, 270, October ?, 1869; YYY, 389, December 10, 1886; 11, 142, December 1, 1892; 11, 781, June 3, 1893; 11, 782, June 3, 1893; 16, 247, March 26, 1895; 22, 168, December 8, 1897.
- 19 Frank D. Shaw, Jr., *Wilmington Directory . . . for 1865-66* (Wilmington: P. Heinsberger, 1865) 63 and 100; William H. Bernard, *Bernard's Wilmington and Fayetteville Directory . . . 1866-7* (Wilmington: Bernard's Printing and Publishing House, 1866) 90; Frank D. Smaw, Jr., *Smaw's Wilmington Directory . . .* (Wilmington, Frank D. Smaw, Jr., ca. 1866) 125 and 165; T. M. Haddock, *Haddock's Wilmington, N. C. Directory* (Wilmington: P. Heinsberger, 1871) 188; Benj. R. Sheriff, *Sheriff & Co.'s Wilmington, N. C. Directory and General Advertiser for 1875-6* (Wilmington: Benj. R. Sheriff, 1875) 118 and 156 lists his residence and office on 4th Street between Red Cross and Campbell, probably a mistake since his son is also listed there; R. Sheriff, *Sheriff's Wilmington, N. C. Directory and General Advertiser for 1877-8* (Wilmington: Benj. R. Sheriff, 1877) 130 and 169; William H. Boyd, *Boyd's Wilmington, N. C. Directory and General Advertiser 181-82* (Wilmington: P. Heinsberger, 1881) 167 and 120, lists his residence as "Chestnut near 5th"; Richards & Co., *Directory of the City of Wilmington, North Carolina*, (Raleigh: Edwards, Broughton & Co., 1883) 102 and 141; *A Directory of the City of Wilmington, N. C., for 1885 . . .* (Wilmington: DeRosset & Meares, 1885) 104; *Directory of the City of Wilmington, North Carolina, 1889* (Wilmington: Julius A. Bonitz, 1889) 114 and 156; *Directory and General Advertiser of the City of Wilmington, for 1894-95* (Wilmington: W. H. Gerken & Co., 1894) 114, 158 and 165; hereinafter cited as City Directory and the date of the respective publication.
- 20 1850 and 1860 census.
- 21 Ninth census, 1870: New Hanover County, Population Schedule, 15; City Directories: 1865, 100; 1866, 90; ca. 1866, 125 and 165; 1871, 188; 1875, 156; 1877, 130 and 169; 1881, 120 and 167; 1883, 141; 1885, 104; 1889, 156 and 162; 1894, 158 and 165.
- 22 *Messenger*, July 16, 1899.
- 23 *Ibid.*
- 24 *Ibid.* and "The Architect," 1-3.
- 25 The records were transferred from the estate of granddaughters, Julia Post and Mary Post James, to the historical society through Virginia Jenne-wein, who disposed of the estate. Portions of the ledgers were adapted as scrapbooks by successive generations who pasted comics over many pages. The Document Restoration Lab of the Division of Archives and History treated the pages and removed the comics. Historian Tony Wrenn was the first researcher to delve into the ledgers. The author instigated the restoration of the ledgers and later made a more in-depth investigation.
- 26 Ledgers, 57.
- 27 *Ibid.* 63, 64, np, 86, np, np, 110, np, 111, 111, 121, 123, 140, 146, 149, 150.
- 28 George P. Rawick, Editor, *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography, Vol. 15, North Carolina Narratives, Part 2* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Company, 1941) 2.
- 29 Ledgers, 82, 85, 97 and np.
- 30 *Ibid.*, np.
- 31 *The Tri-Weekly Commercial*, March 16, 1854.
- 32 Agreement between Comms. of the Town and James F. Post, November 1, 1855, Ida B. Kellam Archives, Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Wilmington, NC; hereinafter cited as Agreement.
- 33 Minutes of the (Wilmington) Town Commissioners, City of Wilmington, City Clerk's Office, 1847-1855, 215; and elevation signed by R. B. Wood, removed from cornerstone of City Hall-Thalian Hall, Wilmington City Clerk's Office.
- 34 Agreement.
- 35 Ledgers, np.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 150.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 153.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 154.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 156.
- 40 St. Thomas Church Records, St. Mary Church Archive, np.
- 41 *Messenger*, April 24, 1986.
- 42 Ledgers, np.
- 43 Lower Cape Fear Historical Society Archives.
- 44 Collection of Henry Bacon McKoy, Greenville, SC.
- 45 Ledgers, Vol. II, 24 and 26; Ledgers, 163 and np.
- 46 Post's ledgers identify his slave workers by their own first names and the last names of their owners: Gerry Bishop, John Bryant, D. Collins, Bob Connor, Dave Cowin, Joe DeRosset, Cornelius Flanner, John Flanner, Don Hall, Dick Hall, Tom Hill, E. D. Jones, Henry Jones, Daniel King, Dave London, George London, John London, Ned Schonwald, Bob Stately, Henry Swan, W. E. Wright. Ledgers, Vol. II, 5, 6, 8, 9, 25, 33, 35, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 49, 52, 73, 74.
- 47 Ledgers, bricks from S. R. Ford, 59; labor from a slave of Dr. Thomas H. Wright, 62; merchandise [sic] from G. M. Robinson, 65; painting Nutt's, Mrs. Fulton's and W. A. Wilkin's houses from J. A. Parker, 66; boarding horse and horseshoes from ? H. Grant, np; brickwork and plastering from Joseph L. Keen, np; hire of hands and by note from Mager [sic] London, 111; schooling for Erastus and Thomas from L. Meginney, 112; rent of shop from Henry Nutt, 124; pressed bricks and lumber from Dr. John D. Bellamy, 150.
- 48 Ledgers, 150 and 162.
- 49 *Messenger*, July 16, 1899.
- 50 *Memorial of the First Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, N. C., Seventy-Fifth Anniversary, 1817-1889*. (Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1893) 16.
- 51 Research files of John Gerdes.
- 52 Tileston School Plaque File, Historic Wilmington Foundation, Inc.
- 53 Mills Lane, Architecture of the Old South: North Carolina. (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1985) 189.
- 54 St. Paul's Lutheran Church Records, 1859, as noted in Tony P. Wrenn and Wm. Edmund Barrett, *Wilmington, North Carolina: An Architectural and Historical Portrait* (Charlottesville: The Junior League of Wilmington by the University of Virginia Press, 1984) 217; hereinafter cited as Wrenn.
- 55 Ledgers, np.
- 56 Wrenn, 97, 98, 103, 132, 191, 299

Janet K. Seapker, Director of New Hanover County Museum of the Lower Cape Fear since 1978, was formerly an architectural historian and administrator with the Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, Historic Preservation Section. She holds a Master of Arts Degree in Museum Administration from the Cooperstown Graduate Program, State University of New York, Oneonta, and a Bachelors degree in History from the University of Pittsburgh. She has extensive field survey and research experience in Eastern North Carolina historic architecture, and in 1974 co-authored with Catherine Bishir, the nomination of the Wilmington Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. She specializes in the historic architecture of Wilmington.

This article is derived from research compiled for a biography on James F. Post written for a forthcoming book, "Architects and Builders of North Carolina: A History of the Practice of Building, 1680-1980," directed by Catherine W. Bishir, Dr. Charlotte V. Brown, and Dr. Carl R. Loundsbury to be published by University of North Carolina Press. The buildings noted are by no means an exhaustive list of Post-associated design/construction projects. The author acknowledges newspaper investigation undertaken by William Reaves, as a part of the project research; deed research by Edward F. Turberg; assistance of Beverly Tetterton, Librarian of the North Carolina Room, New Hanover County Public Library; and research by Jon H. Gerdes, Jr.

In Memoriam

Thomas V. Moseley
Mary Hannis Whitted

Edith Graham Toms
Helen MacMillan Lane



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