

RESEARCHED BY JUSTIN WATKINS

230 [234 in 1967]

Chambers Hotel

Edna McElhiney Olson, *Historical Saint Charles, Missouri* (St. Charles, MO: Olson, 1967), 36

[Note: Picture shows this as “Jack’s Sandwich Shop”]

This hotel was built by John Mullanphy in 1822 as a bridal gift to his daughter Jane Mullanphy Chambers. It was called the Chambers House. This hotel remained in that family until 1893, when it was sold and the name changed to Virginia Hotel.

The building at the rear of this hotel was the noted STONE FORT. It was built in 1804 for protection from the Indians.¹ Later, it was used as the Saint Charles Fur Trading Post. It was used in 1822 by the Masonic Lodge. Unfortunately, it was destroyed for parking space in 1960. Each stone was numbered and notched. The open beams were of walnut. The staircase was mahogany. It was so well constructed that this building could have last for hundreds of years and could have been saved for posterity.

St. Charles County Historical Society, Business File NE-20

St. Charles, MO, Aug. 3, 1876

Mr. Chas. Daudt, Ad for Hy. Winkel

To *St. Charles Zeitung*

A WEEKLY German Newspaper

\$2.00 per annum

ALL KINDS OF JOB WORK

Done neat and cheap

North Side of Clay Street, below Main St

St. Charles County Historical Society, Business File RS-20

Mary Johnson McElhiney’s notes:

Chambers House—afterward Virginia Hotel, Block No. 13 (234 S. Main), a gift of John Mullanphy to his daughter Jane Chambers in 1825 [list of historic sites, B. L. Emmons and Carr Edwards, *St. Charles Banner-News*, 12 August 1921]

1949—standing—NE corner of Main and Clay

L. Lorain sold the lot to John Mullanphy in 1819. Mullanphy built Virginia Hotel in 1824. It remained in the family until 1892. The walls are the original ones.—B. L. Emmons (written down by Mary Johnson McElhiney)

St. Charles Banner News, 26 August 1949

“Restaurant since 1818 Closes Permanently Here Saturday Night”

Tomorrow night a restaurant that was established in 1818 to be in readiness to serve prairie chicken, bear steaks, guinea eggs, wild honey or most anything else

¹ The building in the picture behind 230/234 was not built in 1804. In fact, it looks very modern, say @1920 or later. It is clearly of concrete block construction.

obtainable and eatable as ordinary food to members of the first legislature in St. Charles, in fact, what was once known as the Old Virginia Hotel, will close its doors, for all divulged to the contrary, forever.

The building referred to is “Jack’s Place,” the highly appreciated cookery and good food supply station near the corner of Main and Clay. Jack Replogle, the well-known proprietor, has made full arrangements to launch into another business. Although closing the place, he will probably lease his property indefinitely.

This “Virginia Restaurant” going back to the days of Governor McNair, has been a favorite barbershop location. First Adolph Becker and Pat McMenemy, then Ed Walkenhorst, were all tonsorial artists of note.

Following that Ma (Mrs. Sophia Schuster) received its use as a restaurant. Following that came Jack, who piloted its destiny during the late war and since.

St. Charles Journal, Thursday, 21 April 1960

“Once a Prominent Hotel”

Edna McElhiney Olson

[Note: Picture accompanying article was by Ryne Stiegemeier]

A hotel as a wedding gift was made back in 1822 and the building still stands at the Northeast corner of Main and Clay Street. John Mullanphy, St. Louis’ first millionaire, built this hotel and named it Chambers Hotel after his son-in-law.

Born in Ireland, Mullanphy served in the French army and came to the United States with his bride to seek his fortune. While in New York, their adored daughter Jane married Charles Chambers, a successful hotel operator, in 1817. Mullanphy moved to St. Louis but was lonesome for his daughter in New York. He persuaded the Chambers to come to St. Louis.

At first, the young couple lived in Florissant. Mullanphy gave his daughter a 350-acre farm that he had obtained under a Spanish land grant. Today, the old Mullanphy-Chambers Home is on Highway 66 near Old Florissant Road and is still standing.

Charles Chambers was not happy on this farm as it was the only house between Florissant and St. Louis. He was accustomed to city life and the activity of hotels.

The abstract by Emmons, title No. 3832, tells that John Mullanphy of St. Louis bought from Antoine Reynolds [Antoine Reynal—JFMW] land in 1822 and he built a hotel. He gave this hotel to Jane Mullanphy Chambers ... as his wedding gift. He furnished it in keeping with the times. It was called the Chambers Hotel and opened in November 1822. Records tell us of the large living room where the guests enjoyed musical entertainment in the evenings and cotillions that were held every Saturday night. The Chambers Hotel was in full swing when St. Charles was the first capital of Missouri. It was especially popular as a place for the legislature members to stay when they were in session.

Their menu: “We are ready to serve prairie chickens, bear steaks, guinea eggs, wild honey, or almost anything else obtainable and edible as ordinary food. Members of the legislature are most welcome. The price of a meal is 40¢. Please note: do not sit at the table by the right-hand window. That is reserved for our Governor McNair and his guests.”

The Chambers hotel was known as such a happy place to stay. Jane was very happy and Charles Chambers was in his glory running this popular hotel. The hotel

remained in the Chambers family until 1892, when it was sold to settle the estate of Jane Mullanphy Chambers. After it was sold, it became known as the Virginia Hotel.

The walls of this 138-year-old building are all ... original. The building is made of hand-made brick. Although some of the interior has been partitioned according to needs, today business houses are on the first floor and the rest is used for residence. In the archives we are told that the Chambers Hotel catered to the elite and John Mullanphy often came to spend weekends. I wonder whatever became of the small melodeon that Jane Chambers played so beautifully. We are told that after Sunday night services, it was a regular ritual at this hotel to come and hear her play the hymns, and the guests would join in singing. It is thrilling to know that the famous Chambers Hotel was advertised as the "perfect hotel with the best food" when we were the first capital of Missouri.

Carolyn Whetzel, "South Main Research Notes from Title Abstracts," John Dengler Collection (2006.017) at the St. Charles County Historical Society

CITY SQUARE #30

**LEWIS AND CLARK RESTAURANT BERTHOLD PARK
JAMES MORRISON ABIGAIL EASTON**

The N _ of Square #30 was sold with house and improvements by Jean Tayon to Jean Baptiste Perrot in 1804 for \$100. James Mackay, Commandant, signed the deed of transfer. Perrot (Perrault) sold to James and John (maybe Jesse) Morrison on 16 August 1806. James had already bought the S _ of the Square under surveys #64 and #63. Augustin Robert (dit. Poleray), who owned the SE _ of the square for 3 years, sold to Morrison in 1804 for \$170.

James and Jesse Morrison² owned several tracts of land together and by Deed in Partition in 1818, Jesse sold to James, who is identified as living in Block #30 and moved to Galena, Illinois. James and wife Emelie LaFavre sold a large lot on the NE corner to William Postal in October 1819 for \$700. In 1821, Postal took out a \$350 mortgage at 6% interest on a two-story brick building and lot on Square #30. He sold said property to Joanna Quarles for \$1591 in 1825. Quarles sold to William Russell for \$3 in 1827. In 1836, Russell sold to Abigail A. Easton for \$100. Mrs. Easton died intestate in 1849 and George Sibley and Alton Easton were appointed administrators of her estate, which included a two-story brick building and out building on the NE corner of Main and Madison. Abigail and Rufus Easton were the parents of Mary Sibley. Numerous entries in her journal of 1833-1834 record visits to her mother. A public sale was held to settle her estate and the lot with building was sold to Andrew King in 1855 for \$2077. Augustus Meyer bought the property in 1867 for \$5000. Clearly the \$3 and \$100 sales above did not accurately reflect the value of the property.³ (See Archives for City Block 30 at Heritage Title)

An inventory of James Morrison's estate was made in January 1849. He owned land on the S (E side) bank of the MO in STL Co., in Prairie Haute, in Marais Croche, and a house and lot in Square #30 (listed as his reference, approximately 160'x300') and a lot in Square #50. He also owned two male slaves, one grey horse, one yoke of oxen, one wagon, and two sets of harnesses.

² Note: Carolyn consistently spells the name "Jessie Morrison," but his name is more often spelled "Jesse Morrison" in deed records, so that is the spelling I am going with.

³ Usually such sales were indicative of selling to a relative, but not always.

According to the will of James Morrison, proven in court 27 November 1848, one-third of his property was held in trust for daughter Emile Adeline Yosti, one-third for Caroline R. Pettis, and one-third for son William R. Morrison by William M. Morrison. The children of his deceased daughters Francesca Collier (Mrs. George Collier) and Jane Bernice Lockwood each received \$250 (Book of Wills II, 303). His heirs sold a log house 80x300 (the southernmost part of the block) to Alfred Chadwick in 1849 for \$1500.

According to the footnotes on page 291 of *The Journals of Zebulon M. Pike*, edited by Donald Jackson, James Morrison was identified as “the brother of William Morrison, an affluent Kaskaskia trader and merchant.” (This is the William Morrison who sent a shipment of merchandise to Santa Fe in 1806 and the same William Morrison who was partners with Manuel Lisa and Pierre Menard in the first planned American trading and trapping expedition to the upper Missouri. Upon Lisa’s return, the three partners, along with Pierre Chouteau, Sr., Auguste Pierre Chouteau, Reuben Lewis, William Clark, Benjamin Wilkinson, and Andrew Henry, formed the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company.) After working for his brother for several years, James established a store in St. Charles in 1803 and combined this activity with a trading operation among the Osage Indians. For the next several years, he was one of the best sources of pelts for William’s extensive merchandising operation.

Lt. Zebulon M. Pike was ordered by the war department (some say Wilkerson) to explore the Louisiana Territory during 1806 and 1807. He traveled with a small military party and a large group of Osage and Pawnee Indians who had been “redeemed from captivity among the Pottawatomie.” On 17 July 1805, he called at James Morrison’s “to learn ... any news of other Indian enemies of the Osage.” Morrison possibly held the only commission to trade with the Osage, making him an influential and wealthy merchant. Possibly, the fur trading post reported to have been in the stone building (that stood across Main Street) was his warehouse.

According to the Sanborn Maps of 1917, not one building was standing on the SE _ of Square #30. An alley ran N to S, and opposite the SE lot in question sat a small stone building on the W side of the alley. The 1900 Sanborn Map, however, clearly shows a large frame structure with a brick addition. If this was Morrison’s house, surely somewhere we can find a photograph or other data describing the house and its final years.

CITY SQUARE #13

ST. CHARLES CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

JOHN MULLANPHY

MISSOURI’S FIRST STATE CAPITOL

CHAUNCEY SHEPARD

JANE CHAMBERS

The S _ of Square #13 was conveyed to Antoine Reynal in 1816. John Mullanphy had acquired ownership of the far S lot of Square 13, facing Main and extending back 250’ towards the river, in 1822. This is the property he gave to his daughter Jane Chambers in 1825. Not exactly a traditional wedding gift, but an income for her use alone was held in trust by her brother.

The chain of title begins with Louis Lorrein/Lorrain, who lived on the S _ of Square 13 in 1811, when he sold the lot in question to Richard Ripley for \$200. Ripley sold to Antoine Reynal in 1816, who was recorded in 1818 as owning the entire S _ of

Block 13. Reynal, Jr. sold to Charles Miller in 1819 for \$600 a lot with a cross street on the S and the dwelling of Reynal on the N. This property was sold by the Sheriff after a levy was made in February 1822 against Charles and Frederick Miller and in favor of John Mullanphy. Mullanphy was foreclosing on a mortgage, securing \$4000. (This mortgage was referenced, but unrecorded.) Joshua Barton made the actual bid of \$800 for Mullanphy, who sold it to his son Bryan in 1825 for \$5. "It being the lot with a brick house there on which was sold at Sheriff sale on 21 March 1822." "To have and to hold for the sole use, benefit, and behoof, however, of the said Jane for and during her natural life as her sole and separate property and as a provision for her separate and sole enjoyment uncontrollable by her husband ..." In 1888, Jane still owned the property for she sold a right-of-way to the Cleveland, St. Louis, and Kansas City Railway Company.

The N_ of Square 13 was conveyed to Osburn Knott under A. Soulard and Zenon Trudeau. Knott sold a 32x200 lot to Chancey Shepard in 1819. A two-story brick house occupied by Knott bordered on the N. Shepard and wife Hannah borrowed the \$250 purchase price from Marie Louise Duquette. Shepard was taxed as a non-resident in 1827, but was living in his brick house in Square 13 when he sold the house and lot to Phineas Bartlett in 1838.

PRESERVATION PROFILE

Reinhardt Stiegemeier

An Eye For History - Retired Photographer Held Tightly To His Vision To Preserve Heritage Of City For Next Generation

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - August 17, 1989

Author: By Marianna Riley ; Of the St. Charles Post

Through the work of a handful of dedicated visionaries, the rubble of buildings lining South Main Street has been turned into a graceful row of pleasant shops and restaurants.

Reinhardt Stiegemeier was one of those visionaries, and, along with a few other like-minded souls, he can probably be held responsible for preventing Missouri's first Capitol from being replaced by a parking lot.

Stiegemeier, 83, is a quiet and determined man who would rather talk about other people than himself and **St. Charles** history more than anything. He was president of the **St. Charles** County Historical Society when South Main Street was still a motley collection of falling-down buildings.

His friends point out his role in saving the four small buildings that make up the First State Capitol. He often negotiated single-handedly before he presented the package of buildings to the state as an accomplished deed.

"I don't think he's ever gotten credit for a lot of the work he did at this time," said **John Dengler**, executive secretary and past president of the South Main Preservation Society and vice chairman of the Special Business District Board. "All those years, he was out in

the forefront. He was there before any of the rest of us, before anything was started down here.

"Most people don't even know about his role in getting the property for the state," said Dengler, who has been in business on South Main since 1972. "He was a very early preservationist - someone who could appreciate a heritage and would work to preserve it for future generations. In those days, it was easier to tear it down and make a parking lot than to preserve something."

Stiegemeier walks slowly, with a cane. But it is hard to keep up with him as his words tumble out and recollections and reminiscences race with time.

His own stories about the negotiations for the state are about working first with the individual property owners - some interested in his vision and some more interested in profit - and then with city and state officials.

Eventually he received a letter from then-Gov. James Blair informing him that \$40,000 was available to buy the buildings for what was then the Missouri State Park Board. Stiegemeier had negotiated so successfully, he was able to refund \$2,000 of that.

Stiegemeier was president of the **St. Charles** County Historical Society from July 1959 to July 1960 and, during that time, he oversaw the beginning of the South Main Historic District between Madison Street and Boonslick Road. "Now all those buildings are on the Historic Register," he said with satisfaction.

Stiegemeier also documented all those buildings with photographs and compiled the first guide to historic buildings in **St. Charles**. "I took 4-by-5 negatives of each building," he said. He served 27 years on the Architectural Review Board, now known as the Landmarks Preservation Board, until his health forced him to resign.

Stiegemeier developed his photography skill when the profession itself was in its adolescence. In 1927, anticipating marriage and in need of a good job, he went to work for Erker Brothers Optical Co. in St. Louis.

Eventually, one of his duties was to take pictures of other pictures, from which he made lantern slides, the forerunners of today's 35mm slides. These 4-by-5 "effect" slides were used in the Ambassador Theater, sometimes for advertising and sometimes as rear-screen projections against which stage action would take place.

It was primitive. "We had to use a fan with a blower to keep the heat from cracking the slides. It was intense." The bulbs in the projectors were at least 500 to 1,000 watts, he said.

Stiegemeier worked for Erker for more than a half a century. "Fifty six years, nine months," he said.

"He was one of the first carpoolers," said his daughter, Barbara Stiegemeier.

The work producing the theater slides was only a small part of what Stiegemeier did. He made slides of just about anything anybody needed, including some for early audiovisual presentations at Washington University.

Taping the slides between the two pieces of glass was a skill of its own. "I could tape 100 slides in 20 minutes," Stiegemeier said. Then he holds up the right forefinger, which he used to squeeze the excess moisture out from under the glass slide. The finger is permanently dented from his one-man production efforts.

One of his favorite jobs was making secret "camouflage" photographs for a U.S. Army captain who needed the photographs for a class he was teaching in World War II. With those, Stiegemeier was pledged to work with the photos face down, "one at a time, so nobody could see them."

But the photography job that was to change his life was a free-lance (with emphasis on the free, according to his wife and daughters) job he did in the late '50s for the alumnae of the Academy of the Sacred Heart.

The job was to reproduce in photographs the life of St. Philippine Duchesne, then called Mother Duchesne. She founded the order's schools in the United States. Drawings of episodes of her life decorated the dining room of the old Maryville College, then located in South St. Louis.

For this project, Stiegemeier experimented with photo flood lights for his 35mm pictures. He also took pictures of all St. Philippine's belongings at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in **St. Charles**, including her tableware and the paintings she brought to this country from her native France.

Sets of the photographs were given to every Sacred Heart Academy in the United States, Canada and France.

The net effect was that Stiegemeier converted to the Catholic faith.

But something else happened about that time. His family calls it a "personal miracle." His daughter, Rita Foster tells the story: Her son, Kenneth, then about 2, was suffering a high fever and accidentally got into his own medicine, consuming what she feared was a lethal dose of morphine and antihistamine.

She rushed him to the hospital, where hospital personnel did all they could do. They packed him in ice. And, said Rita, they gave up. But she did not and called her father to bring a relic from Mother Duchesne. He did, bringing a piece of cloth that had touched the saint's body, and Kenneth's fever went down.

Stiegemeier's conversion was complete.

Along with eight brothers and sisters, Stiegemeier was born in a log cabin on his family's farm between the Missouri River and Highway 94. When he was 7, the farm was sold and the family moved to 519 Market Street in **St. Charles**.

Despite the long commute all those years working in St. Louis, he never considered leaving **St. Charles**. Those who know him say he is a walking storehouse. "If ever you need information about **St. Charles**, I imagine he's gotten it stored in his head," said Dengler.

"He knows so many little vignettes about the architecture. Everyone loved him to talk on the buildings."

Stiegemeier's photographs document much of **St. Charles** ' history, such as the original county courthouse at the corner of Main and Madison streets. His photographs show its destruction after a cyclone, which was followed by a fire.

But the steps on which slaves were once sold remain, he says. The stone steps and end stones now lead to the entrance of a building at Decatur and Second streets.

Stiegemeier is not the only one in his family with stories. His wife of 60 years, Marie Stiegemeier, has some of her own. Elm Street was once Poor House Row, she says. That was because the city's poorhouse was at the top of the hill, where the Jaycee Park is now.

And together they remember the small wooden huts in a "gully" behind the poorhouse for victims of a smallpox epidemic. The epidemic was years before their time, but the memory of the small huts, near where the **St. Charles** Fire Department's Engine House No. 3 now stands, is etched in their consciousness. Stiegemeier does not romanticize, especially in the present tense. In fact, he grunts about the former Poor House Row and the present Elm Street. "Now it's a racetrack," he says.

Caption: PHOTOS by L.T. Spence/ **St. Charles** Post ... ABOVE: Reinhardt Stiegemeier, 83, of **St. Charles**, has been credited with saving Missouri's first Capitol. PHOTO ...

LEFT: A daguerreotype that Stiegemeier preserved. The upper half is restored. **ST. CHARLES**

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Index Terms: phspence lt pxstiegemeier missouri dedication building prevention replacement sketch profile feature history background

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Reinhart T. Stiegemeier, 85; Helped In S. Main Preservation

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - May 15, 1991

Reinhart T. "Ryne" Stiegemeier, who helped preserve the buildings along South Main Street as well as the **first state Capitol building**, died Monday (May 13, 1991) at St. Joseph Health Center. He was 85 and lived in St. Charles.

Mr. Steigemeier worked for nearly 57 years as a photographer for Erker Brothers Optical Co. in St. Louis.

He was one of six founders of the St. Charles County Historical Society. He later served as its president. He spent 27 years on the Architectural Review Board, now known as the Landmarks Preservation Board.

He also was active with the South Main Preservation Society and the Daniel Boone Shrine Association.

He was a parishioner of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in St. Charles.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at noon Thursday at the Shrine of St. Philippine Duchesne, 619 North Second Street, St. Charles. Burial will be at St. Charles Memorial Gardens, 3950 West Clay Street, St. Charles.

Visitation will be from 3 to 5 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m. today at Baue Funeral Home, 620 Jefferson Street, St. Charles.

Among survivors are two daughters, Barbara A. Steigemeier and Rita M. Foster, both of St. Charles; two sisters, Gustie Oelklaus and Esther Wappelhorst, both of St. Charles; four grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Memorials can be sent to the Shrine of St. Philippine Duchesne or the Restoration Fund at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in care of the funeral home.

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Column: OBITUARY

Index Terms: death south building

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(ST. CHARLES COUNTY BRIEFS)

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - June 27, 2000

ST. CHARLES

250 historical photos are on display at Katy Depot

The Millennium Committee is launching the community's July 4 festivities with an

exhibition of 250 historical photographs from the collection of the late **Reinhardt Stiegemeier**.

Jack Elmore, vice chairman of the committee, said the exhibition will be open to the public between noon and 4 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday at the Katy Depot in Frontier Park.

He said **Stiegemeier** was a well-known local historian and preservationist who died in 1991. Elmore said the exhibition will be on display in the Katy Depot because Mr. **Stiegemeier** was instrumental in encouraging officials to preserve the old train facility.

Elmore said he served on the local preservation board with **Stiegemeier** and always wanted to arrange an exhibition of his photographs that were collected from two local photographers.

The exhibition will include the work of Rudolph Goebel, who operated a local photo studio from 1880 to 1930. Photographs by John Gossler, who took over Goebel's studio, also will be on display.

Edition: FIVE STAR LIFT

Section: ST. CHARLES COUNTY POST

Page: 1

Column: St. Charles County Briefs Column

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Note: The photograph collection of Reinhardt "Ryne" Stiegemeier is currently in the possession of his daughter Barb Stiegemeier Eller of St. Charles, Missouri.