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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Sottile, Giovanni, House

Other names/site number: Dr. Joseph Glover House; Arthur Rose House; Italian Consulate

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 81 Rutledge Avenue

City or town: Charleston State: SC County: Charleston

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A X B X C D

	<u>3/21/2019</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
Elizabeth M. Johnson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau**
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

4/30/19
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District

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Site
Structure
Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	<u>1</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 3

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/single dwelling
Government/diplomatic building

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/single dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Italianate
Italian Renaissance Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Brick and Stucco
Walls: Brick and Stucco
Roof: Asphalt shingle and metal; tin

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Giovanni Sottile House (hereafter Sottile House) is a four story brick masonry Charleston single house. It features a full raised basement, two main stories and an attic story. There is a belt course to articulate the raised basement from the second and third story, and a cornice between the third story and the attic/fourth story. The early nineteenth century house was remodeled in the Italianate and Italian Renaissance styles. It features a piazza screen door with a rusticated architrave and a rusticated basement façade. The southern facing piazza is three stories. The piazza balustrades are intricate cast iron, while the vertical supports are painted wood Tuscan columns. The east (front) façade of the house is rendered in unpainted stucco and features quoining at the corners. The other elevations are rendered in struck stucco that has been painted. The windows have cast iron pedimented cornices. The second story features full-length gallery doors that open onto the piazza on the south side and onto semicircular cast iron balconies on the east façade. The house retains numerous high style architectural features from the Italianate and Italian Renaissance remodels, including parquet and marquetry wood flooring, decorative plaster, trim work, Italian marble mantelpieces, and stairs. Original early nineteenth century service stairs are intact toward the rear of house, and original pine flooring is extant in the upper floors of the house. The Historic American Buildings Survey SC-320 describes the house as a “representative Charleston mid-nineteenth century town house of ample scale, with late 19th century modifications, in good condition.”

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Narrative Description

Setting:

The Sottile House is situated on a large lot at 81 Rutledge Avenue, in the Harleston Village neighborhood of the City of Charleston. The lot measures 110 feet on Rutledge Avenue by 159 feet in depth. There is a driveway running down the northern boundary of the lot, which accesses a rear parking area. The main house fronts on Rutledge Avenue with no setback, typical of an early Charleston single house. Adjoined to the rear/western elevation is a three story brick masonry outbuilding.

The property at 81 Rutledge Avenue is comprised of parts of lot 42 and 41 in the Harleston subdivision plat of 1770.¹ Dr. Joseph Glover purchased the lots in 1805 from Job Palmer and erected a house on part of the property by 1819. In 1835 he sold the southern portion of the lot, at the southwest corner of Rutledge and Wentworth, but retained ownership of the portion of the parcel that is currently known as 81 Rutledge, where the Sottile House is located.² It was constructed circa 1820s and was definitely standing by 1835 when Glover moved to the house after selling the corner lot.³ Glover's heirs sold the house to Arthur Gordon Rose in 1842 and Rose added the fourth story to the house in 1867.⁴

The Sottile House piazzas face south onto a large formal side garden. Records indicate that this portion of the double lot was never built upon, so it has probably functioned as a formal garden since the initial construction of the house. The original layout and garden plantings are unknown. The space is currently divided into curving geometric parterre planting beds by formal walkways paved with a sand and aggregate permeable mix. The current configuration is in keeping stylistically with the type of garden popular when Giovanni Sottile lived in the house.⁵

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

1. The Sottile House (c. 1820s, 1867, 1905) – Contributing Building

Exterior

The Sottile House is a four story brick masonry building with a struck stucco rendering that is unpainted on the east facade. The Sottile House is a representative Charleston single house, a prolific form found across historic Charleston that was popular from the mid-eighteenth to the early twentieth century. It is situated on the sidewalk and exhibits south facing piazzas with a piazza door that opens from the sidewalk. The house has three stories over a full raised basement. The front/east façade has two window bays, while the south façade has six openings

¹ "Plan to Harleston, laid out and surveyed in 1770 by W. Rigby Naylor." City Engineer's Plat No. 68-3, Charleston Archive, Charleston County Public Library.

² Charleston County Deed book P7-7 (1805); Deed book A9-133; 1819 *Charleston City Directory*.

³ Poston, *Buildings of Charleston*, 554-555 dates the house to circa 1826, while the HABS survey SC-320 dates construction to 1835.

⁴ Master in Equity to Arthur G. Rose, 30 September 1842. Deed book K11-264.

⁵ Italian Renaissance gardens typically features geometric parterre plantings, paved walks for strolling, seating areas, and ornamental plantings. Fazio, *World History of Architecture*, 293-294, 330.

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or bays. The fenestration is symmetrical and evenly spaced. It is a central hall plan house that is one room or bay wide, with the narrow façade of the house oriented toward the street.

The basement story east facade has rusticated stucco rendering and two wood sash windows with a one-over-one pane configuration. They are ornamented with delicate cast iron window grills that span the whole opening, and have simple stuccoed lintels and sills. The street entrance is a door that opens into a small vestibule, which opens onto stairs to access the second story piazza. The piazza door is an arched paneled double doorway of oak. The rounded upper panels have a carved bead and reel border and are glazed with frosted glass and feature cast decorative grills. The arched doorway has a rusticated architrave, with a flat cornice on the curtain wall or piazza screen. It is accessed from the sidewalk by marble steps. On each side of the steps is a marble plinth supporting a cast stone lion statue. The quoined stucco curtain wall continues to the top of the second story. The top of the wall has a flat frieze and dentil molding, above which is the balustrade of the third story piazza. The piazza door leads to an oval shaped vestibule with flat plaster walls, a plaster ceiling with a neoclassical plaster cornice. There is thick, hand carved rope molding around the inner door to the piazza, which is fitted with a glazed arched wooden door that opens to steps leading to the first floor piazza.

The second floor is articulated from the basement with a stuccoed belt course. The stucco facades for the second and third story are lightly struck to resemble stone block, but are not rusticated. The corners of the building have traditional quoining. The south elevation is painted stucco. The front windows on the second story south façade are full length glazed gallery doors with pedimented cornices, foliated consoles, and semi-elliptical ornamental cast iron balconies. The third story east facade windows are one-over-one pane wood sashes, with a cast sill and straight cornices and architrave trim.

The attic or fourth story was an 1867 addition and is separated from the lower stories by a flat frieze and cast cornice. The façade of the top story is “treated with Doric pilasters” flanking the two south facing windows.⁶ The low pitched hipped roof is obscured by a simple projecting cornice with an un-sculpted frieze and with an egg and dart architrave band, with a flat cornice band above, capped by a cyma recta profile.

The south elevation features three stories of Charleston piazzas. The basement level piazza has stucco piers, while the upper stories have, “slender solid wooden Doric columns and thin modillioned entablatures; the upper stories have ornamental cast iron railings,” with wooden top rails.⁷ The basement level piazza has concrete flooring at ground level. A set of stairs with a cast railing accesses the second floor piazza, from the vestibule. The second and third story piazzas have wooden tongue in groove painted flooring. The piazza roof has dentil molding and a low paneled parapet to conceal the shed roof, which intersects with the south wall of the masonry house, between the third story and the attic story. The piazza ceilings have flat paneling, painted light blue.

⁶ HABS SC 320

⁷ Ibid.

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Each story of the south elevation has six symmetrically spaced bays of fenestration. The rhythm is as follows: window, window, formal entry door with transom, window, window, window. The window openings on the second and third stories are full length and are comprised of double gallery doors that open directly onto the piazzas. They are wood frame with a flat panel on the bottom field, with three square lights in the upper field. The door/window openings are fitted with full length operable paneled shutters on the second story, and operable louvered shutters on the third story. All shutters are equipped with traditional hardware. Above each opening is a transom with a diagonal light pattern. The basement story of the southern elevation features one-over-one wood sash windows, as does the attic story.

The northern elevation is painted stucco. There are five bays of window openings, on either side of two chimneys placed to service the two main parlors or interior rooms on each floor, with the following rhythm, moving east to west: window, chimney block, window, central/hall window, window, chimney block, window. Most are one-over-one windows, with louvered operable shutters, with the exception of the second story, which has full length gallery doors in the fenestration bays. The chimneys each have a smooth stucco render at the roof level and four clay chimney pots each.

The rear or western elevation is engaged with the contributing rear building, and is mostly obscured. It is of masonry construction.

Interior:

The original footprint of the house features a central hall plan, accessed by a formal entry door opening onto each piazza level. One each side of the stair halls are large symmetrical rooms or parlors. There is a smaller room with a single bay of fenestration to the rear of the house, where kitchens and bathrooms are located today. Owner Mara Brockbank was told by Carmelina Sottile Thompson, who grew up in the house, that the smaller rooms were a laundry on the ground floor, warming kitchens, wardrobe and service areas, which is verified by the location of the service stairs in this rear bay.⁸

The pine stair treads in the central stair hall appear to be original to the house, as do the simple unturned square balusters and hand rail. The floor plan and stair placement is repeated from the basement and the top/attic story. The central hall of the second story (the piano nobile or main entertaining floor) is accessed from the piazza by a wide oak door with a flat panel in the bottom field. The upper section of the door features a large, ornate frosted glass insert with etched designs. In the center of the Italianate design patterns are the interwoven initials "GS," for Giovanni Sottile. The trim surrounding the entry door is wood with a simple neoclassical profile. The width of the entrance (due to the thick outer wall of the loadbearing masonry building) is concealed with raised wood paneling. There is a transom with a diagonal light pattern, matching those found above the rest of the south facing gallery doors.

There are internal central stairs to reach the first full floor, which open through a small door below the central stairs, in addition to the exterior stairs on the piazza to access the formal front

⁸ Interview with owner Mara Brockbank, 7 August 2018.

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entrance into the house. There are also narrow winder service stairs to the rear of the house that provided passage from the raised basement to the upper floors.

The raised basement has a central stair hall flanked by two rooms that function today as guest rooms. Each has modern tile floors and plaster walls with textured wallpaper below a chair rail that marks the beginning of the flat dado of the wall. Both rooms have a fireplace in the center of the north facing wall. The wooden mantel pieces have been faux painted to resemble black marble. The fire boxes are exposed brick, with a tiled surround. The mantels are supported by engaged Tuscan columns. The wide baseboards have an ogee top band, while the window and door trim consists of a flat casing with a bead at the jamb, and a back band. The doors are raised six panel doors with frames of solid wood. The stair hall has flat wainscoting running up the stairs, which have a wooden handrail, pine treads, and simple turned balusters. The stair turns on a small landing and terminates with a paneled door that opens to the first floor from below the formal stair between the first and second floor. The casing, doors, and stair trim appear to predate the Italianate remodels. There is a bathroom and closet in the rear bay/westernmost basement room.

The second floor consists of a central stair hall, a large parlor on each side, and a rear bay to the back/west façade of the house (now used as a bathroom, kitchen, laundry area, and hall with servant stairs.) The first floor has twelve-foot-high plaster ceilings and smooth plaster walls. The front/southern parlor has a multiple level plaster crown molding with a narrow gilded frieze below a banded architrave, capped with a simple cyma recta cornice. The room is decorated with tapestries, while the window openings are decorated with gilded cornices that date to the 1905 renovation. The oak parquet floors feature four marquetry squares to frame the herringbone pattern in the center of the room. There are full length mirrors in gilded frames between the gallery doors and an Italian crystal chandelier, which were both in place when the Brockbanks purchased the house from the Sottiles in 1997.⁹ There is a neoclassical plaster medallion for the chandelier in this and the other principal rooms on the second and third stories. The mantelpiece is black Italian marble with supporting pilasters capped with volutes. The mantelpiece field surrounding the stuccoed firebox is a convex band with a carved keystone block with white veins in the marble. The firebox features an arched Italianate coal burning grate. All of the main rooms on the first and second floor have wide baseboards with a top band, a common profile in the nineteenth century.

Across the central hall from the front parlor is a large dining room, with a matching black marble mantel. The cast iron insert in this firebox features a baroque design. The floors in the dining room are the most ornate in the house; the marquetry floors consist of square sections 12" by 12" of two tone oak, laid to create an interwoven lattice pattern. They were likely added circa 1905, as they are stylistically in keeping with the Italianate Renaissance updates to the house completed at that time. The plaster walls are divided by a painted and gilded chair rail about three feet from the floor. There is flat paneling in the lower field. The doors are six flat panel

⁹ Interview with owner Mara Brockbank, 7 August 2018; *News and Courier*, 17 May 1987; *Charleston Evening Post*, "Italian Consulate entertains the 70s." 16 January 1976.

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profile, of solid wood, with a gilded inner band to differentiate the panels from the frame. The window and door casing consists of a flat field with a back band and an ogee profile inner band at the jamb.

The central hall features wide plank heart pine flooring that may be original to the house. The door casing is painted monochromatic white but consists of three layers of molding and a back band. There is flat panel wainscoting with chair rail in the hall, which continues up the stair walls. The stained pine treads have a simple bullnose appear to predate the Italianate remodeling of the other rooms of the house, as do the pine risers. The balusters are thin unturned painted pine, and the skirt board is a flat painted band. There is a curved volute handrail supported by several narrow balusters in lieu of a newel post. The balustrade curves gracefully at a landing between the first and second floor, and there is a large window at the landing. The casing around the window engages with the floor and the field between the window sill and baseboard has a flat panel. There is a large crystal chandelier in the stair hall that dates to the Sottile occupation.

There are two bedrooms on the third floor and a rear room, replicating the plan of the lower stories. Both had twelve foot ceilings, plaster walls with flat panel wainscoting capped with a chair rail, and black marble mantels nearly identical to those on the first floor, but with simpler cast iron coal inserts in the firebox. The plaster crown molding has a simple band below a flat frieze, above which are a cyma recta profile architrave and cornice engaging with the flat ceiling.

The landing at the top of the stairs to the attic story is separated from the central stair hall by a wall of glazed windows with flat mullions, with a transom of square panes above. The glazed wall might indicate a differentiation between the children's or servant's space in the house, or might have been intended to prevent flow of heat or air circulation. The rooms on the attic story have nine foot ceilings, pine floors, simple trim work, flat plaster walls with no wainscoting, and wooden mantel pieces with engaged Tuscan columns, painted white. The back/west room is used as a sewing room but might have been a bedroom previously. Unlike the lower floor plans, the top floor has a transverse hall running the length of the house, allowing separate access to the two westernmost rooms. The hall consists of a simple wood framed interior partition wall with sheetrock.

Alterations

The Sottile House was constructed circa 1820s and remodeled in the Italianate style in the 1860s, and again in the Italian Renaissance style in 1905. A fourth story was added to the main house around 1867; the upper/attic level is demarked with an entablature. The house has a low pitched hipped roof concealed by a cornice so the roofline is not visible from the street. The fourth floor is load bearing masonry like the earlier house. The Sottile House has been electrified, plumbed, and equipped with central heating and air conditioning, which were all installed in a minimally intrusive way. The house retains its original layout and configuration. The house has had no substantial changes since the Italian Renaissance remodel in 1905; it was photographed by the Historic American Buildings Survey in the 1960s and is virtually identical to those images.¹⁰

¹⁰ See figures included in the illustration section.

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2. Rear Outbuilding (c. 1775) - Contributing Building

Secondary sources indicate that the outbuilding predates the circa-1820s front/main residence and was used as the main house or domestic building on the site prior to the construction of the Sottile House.¹¹ Instead of a typical hyphen, the outbuilding is adjoined to the main house but has a parapet gable end, giving credence to its earlier construction date. The three and a half story outbuilding appears to have been constructed in two phases and modified prior to 1902. About halfway down the length of the building, beyond the partially enclosed south facing side piazzas, there is a slight projection and the three story masonry building widens, indicating a later construction phase. The rear portion was constructed between 1872 and 1902.¹² The outbuildings appear unchanged in the 1902, 1944, and 1951 *Sanborn Fire Insurance* maps.

Part of the original front/east façade of the outbuilding is visible from the driveway along the northern side of the property. The brick building has a stucco rendering, lightly struck to resemble stone work. It appears to have been a Charleston single house form initially, with the narrow end facing Rutledge Avenue (although recessed far from the street, thus allowing for the Sottile House to be constructed to the east). The house was one room wide, with two symmetrical window bays.

The gable roofed building has a stucco parapet wall on the eastern elevation, with a belt course to mark the transition to the gable attic area. There is a gable end window with louvered shutters. The windows are wood sashes with two over two pane configuration. There are earthquake bolts exposed on the eastern façade from post-Earthquake of 1886 repairs.

The house was modified to create separate apartments for servants or additional family members by the time of Sottile's ownership.¹³ This is evident on the east facade, where window openings on the ground and second floor were pierced with exterior doors. The second floor door is accessed by a wooden stair with wooden handrails. There were three stories of wooden piazzas on the southern elevation, which have been enclosed with wood frame walls clad in asbestos siding. There are three window bays fitted with an assortment of six over six and two over two pane wood sash windows. The gable roof is clad with asphalt shingles, although a standing seam terne metal roof visible at the overhang, from the piazzas of the main house, below the modern shingles. Also visible is an extant section of a fretwork wooden balustrade on a small bay of piazza space nearest the main house partition wall that was never enclosed. The rear portion of the outbuilding to the west of the enclosed piazzas is also masonry and is rendered with smooth stucco. There are wooden exterior stairs to access the upper floors, with a small landing with wooden fretwork balustrade as found on the older portion of the outbuilding.

¹¹ In *Buildings of Charleston*, Jonathan Poston states that, "appended to the northwest corner of the building, a pedimented three and a half story dependency structure apparently stood on the site in the eighteenth century when this section of Harleston was still largely undeveloped." Pg. 555. This is repeated in Carmelina Sottile Thompson's family history pamphlet also.

¹² The back section is not present on the *Bird's Eye View of the City of Charleston, 1872* but is extant on the 1902 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map*, which was the first to survey the area.

¹³ The *City Directories* from 1890 (the first year with address listings) forward do not list tenants in the rear buildings, indicating that the building was probably not for rent but rather occupied by servants or household members. Carmelina Sottile Thompson referred to the rear building as servants' quarters *Charleston Evening Post*, Italian Consulate entertains the 70s." 16 January 1976.

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Alterations

The rear building (which shares an exterior wall with the main house and likely predates the formal Sottile House) has had modifications in the early to mid-twentieth century. The building is of masonry construction. The piazzas on the outbuilding were enclosed to create more interior space (namely, kitchens and bathrooms when systems were added.) The rear building retains its original overall scale and footprint. It was a servant space during Sottile's ownership. The service staff residing at the house maintained and operated the household and enabled the Sottile family to formally entertain. Carmelina Sottile Thompson stated that the back carriage house had three stories and stall like bedrooms "for the help," and a community room for servants. Sottile Thompson said that the earlier section (which is adjoined to the Sottile House) was constructed circa 1775, while the rear section of the building was constructed by Glover. The back section operated as a carriage house on the bottom story and servants quarters above. The 1775 date could not be corroborated.¹⁴

3. Front fence and gate (c. 1905) – Contributing Structure

The side garden is screened from the sidewalk on Rutledge Avenue by a line of young crepe myrtle trees, shrubbery, and a three-and-a-half-foot tall fence. The base of the fence is stuccoed masonry, which supports a simple wrought iron railing with scroll work in the bottom and top field, framing vertical bars. The stucco render is unpainted and visually matches the stucco work on the front façade of the main house. The rear buildings and parking area are accessed by a driveway along the northern property line. The drive entrance on Rutledge Avenue features a hand forged wrought iron gate. The bottom section of the gate has a bar grill, above which is a decorative panel of scroll work. In the center of the scrolls is a cast iron crest with the letter "S" for Sottile. The top of the gate frames have another bar grill pattern, topped with a curved bar. The pair of gates are mounted into stuccoed piers.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Garage (c. 1975)

There is a modern, non-contributing, one story frame garage/outbuilding to the rear of the lot, running parallel to the back lot line. A one story masonry detached outbuilding (probably a privy) appears in 1902, and was converted to an auto garage by 1944. It was demolished by 1955 and the current building is in roughly the same location.¹⁵

8. Statement of Significance

¹⁴ *Charleston Evening Post*, "Italian Consulate entertains the 70s." 16 January 1976. No building is mentioned in the deed from Glover to Palmer, and the *Ichnography of Charleston* surveyed in 1788 shows that no buildings on the western edge of Harleston in the vicinity of the Sottile House.

¹⁵ *Sanborn Fire Insurance* maps; www.charlestoncounty.org tax parcel information.

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Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Ethnic Heritage: European
Architecture
Social History

Period of Significance

1905-1913
1867

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Sottile, Giovanni

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Sottile House is significant under Criterion B: Ethnic Heritage – European and Social History for its association with Giovanni Sottile, the Italian consular agent to Charleston, who lived in the house from 1905 until his death in 1913. Sottile was an advocate for the Italian community of North Carolina and South Carolina and successfully brought two peonage cases involving exploitation of Italian immigrants to court, and he was instrumental in promoting Italian culture and heritage in Charleston. Sottile was an active statesman and used the Sottile House to entertain Italian dignitaries and local politicians. Sottile was knighted by the Kingdom of Italy for his diplomatic service to the country in 1909.¹⁶ The Sottile House further qualifies under Criterion C: Architecture as an excellent example of residential Italianate and Italian Renaissance styles in Charleston, applied to the vernacular dwelling form known as the Charleston single house. The house was remodeled and enlarged in the Italianate style in 1867 and updated with Italian Renaissance details in 1905, and retains a high level integrity on the interior and exterior to convey both Italianate and Italian Renaissance architectural themes. The Sottile House, including its late 18th century outbuilding and early 20th century fence, was previously listed in the National Register as a contributing property to the Charleston Historic District.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion B: The Italian Immigrant Community in Charleston (Ethnic Heritage: European; Social History.)

The Sottile House is significant under criterion B for its association with Giovanni Sottile, the Italian consular agent to Charleston, who lived in the house from 1905 to his death at home in 1913. Giovanni Sottile and the immigrants he advocated for were part of a wave of migration from Italy in the late 19th century. While the majority of Italian immigrants entered the United States through New York City and settled in the industrial cities of the North, some Italians migrated to the South. Few settled in Charleston in the antebellum era; only three ships from Italy docked in Charleston harbor between 1837 and 1848.¹⁷ The 1861 City of Charleston census recorded only 45 Italian born men and 14 Italian born women, but the numbers of Italian immigrants increased in the later decades of the nineteenth century. Italians flocked to America to escape rural poverty, political instability, and a series of earthquakes and droughts on mainland Italy and Sicily in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Catholic historian Father Richard Madden noted that, “the immigration of Italians to the state [of South Carolina] becomes noticeable in the early 1870s. By 1871 there were enough in Charleston to form an

¹⁶ “Consul Sottile is Decorated: knight of order of crown in recognition of his services here,” *Charleston Evening Post*, 16 July 1909; Thompson, *Sottile Family*, 3.

¹⁷ Dawson and DeSaussure, *Census of Charleston 1848*, 76-77.

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Italian society called St. Joseph's Latin Society."¹⁸ The city was home to 300 Italians in 1911, in addition to numerous second and third generation Italian-American families.¹⁹

Like many of his countrymen, Giovanni Sottile left Sicily for the United States in search of financial advancement in a new nation. Sottile was born in Gangi, Sicily in 1866. His father, Salvatore, was a locksmith and iron worker known for his wrought iron designs. Salvatore Giovanni later served with Italian Revolutionary Garibaldi in the fight for Italian liberty in 1870. Salvatore and his wife Carmela had seven children, all of whom immigrated to the United States as young adults. While a boy in Sicily, Giovanni was tutored by his aunt, who was a superintendent in the Gangi school system.²⁰ He studied math at a college in Palermo, then served in the Italian Army for four years, where he was promoted to a non-combatant position as an accountant. He immigrated to the United States, initially arriving in New York. Sottile came to South Carolina in 1889, where he worked briefly in the phosphate industry. Before his appointment as Consul, Sottile taught Italian and Latin as a private tutor and amassed wealth importing liquor. He married Carmela Restivo on a return visit to Sicily in 1896. They had four children, all born in Charleston: Salvatore, Rosina, Giovanni, and Carmelina, the last of whom was born at 81 Rutledge in 1910 and resided there until her death in 1991.²¹

In Charleston, Sottile was able to establish substantial wealth and a prominent position in society:

Sottile achieved eventually the material success and high personal standing, and became not only a representative business man of Charleston but also served with distinction as Italian consular agent in this city, appointed by the Italian government May 31 1899 he continued service until his death, 28 June 1913 . . . he did much to strengthen the cordial relations between the two governments and to aid those of his countrymen, who like himself, had sought the opportunities afforded in America. In just appreciation for his services the Italian government conferred him upon him an order of knighthood, with the title of chevalier.²²

While the Sottiles were enterprising and worked hard at several ventures, the family's advancement and financial success in Charleston was not the common Italian immigrant experience in the American South, which was typified by agricultural or industrial work and financial hardship, especially during their first years in the United States. All four of Sottile's brothers became wealthy in their adopted city of Charleston. Nicholas arrived in the city in 1890 and became president of a retail China and glassware emporium on King Street, and a real estate investor. He served on City Council and the Ways and Means Committee for the City of Charleston. Santo arrived in 1894 and founded Sottile Cadillac Company. Albert arrived at the

¹⁸ Madden, *Catholics in South Carolina: A Record*, 125.

¹⁹ *Charleston Evening Post*, 30 September 1911.

²⁰ Snowden, *History of South Carolina, Vol. III*, 83; Sass, *Stories of the Lowcountry*, Sottile entry.

²¹ *News and Courier*, "Sottile family: achievers from Italy," 17 May 1987; *Post and Courier*, "Carmelina Thompson Dies in Charleston," 19 December 1991.

²² Untitled biography located in Sottile biographical file at South Carolina Room, CCPL; page inset dated 1920, "Lewis Publishing Company."

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age of fourteen in 1891. He founded the Pastime Amusement Company and was a prominent theater owner. James came to the United States in 1899 and became founder and president of Charleston-Isle of Palms Traction Company (of which Giovanni and his brothers were major stockholders) and vice president of the Charleston Hotel Company. He was also involved in the development of Hampton Park Terrace and Wagener Terrace.²³ Thus, Giovanni and his brothers were prosperous men and served as models for other hopeful Italian immigrants of the potential for upward mobility in the United States, rising from a middle class background in Italy to positions of great wealth in their new country. Because of his personal success, Giovanni Sottile was in a unique position to advocate for his fellow, less fortunate Italians.

As a majority Catholic group usually unable to speak English, coming from backgrounds of poverty, and sometimes viewed as a non-white race, Italians immigrants experienced prejudice throughout the United States. At the turn of the century, railroad and industrial agents from the southern states began to prey on newly arrived Italians, enticing them with job offers and lucrative wages, only to trap them into an exploitative system of peonage, in which they labored in servitude to pay off a debt for their job placement. Labor recruiting agents sought Italian, Jewish, and Greek immigrants in New York who had worked through the northern winters and were lured by the promise of warmer climates in the South. Notably, rail companies were accused of peonage in the Florida swamps, and lumber companies exploited Italian workers in Alabama lumber camps.²⁴ As foreigners fighting a language barrier, the Italian workers often had little recourse.²⁵ As an immigrant himself, who had seen discrimination against Italian laborers first hand in the South Carolina mines, Sottile's platform while Consul included advocating for Italian immigrants' rights and access to safe and gainful employment in the South.

After the American Civil War, the Lowcountry had a brief but lucrative phosphate mining industry. The rocky material was a desired fertilizer, but river and land mining for phosphate were labor intensive industries. South Carolina phosphate companies employed newly freed slaves widely during the Reconstruction era, paying an average of one dollar a day for unskilled labor positions. The work was exhausting and potentially dangerous. Many of the native-born African American phosphate miners had small farms to run, and mined for supplemental income; this meant they were only available part of the week and were off for months at a time when the agricultural cycle demanded more of their attention for planting and harvesting. Phosphate magnates began to look for another labor source, especially after local African Americans began organizing in labor unions and striking for better wages, culminating in the multiple-mill strike of September 1873. By the following month, letters to the editor appear in the *Charleston News and Courier* advocating for Italian and German immigrants as a new and superior labor source for South Carolina plantations and industries.²⁶ In the early 1880s, Charleston Mining and Manufacturing Company (and its northern financiers) led an effort to import Italian workers from New York as replacements for local black laborers. In 1884, for example, a N. Gabrini of 26 Market Street advertised in the Charleston newspapers for "one thousand Italians wanted for

²³ Snowden, *History of South Carolina, Vol. III*, 84; Preservation Consultants, *Sullivan's Island Historical and Architectural Survey*, 4.

²⁴ Reynolds, *A Long Quavering Chant*, 54, 58, 62.

²⁵ "An important question: Italian Consul Sottile has Written to Washington", *News and Courier*, 10 June 1906.

²⁶ Shick and Doyle, "The South Carolina Phosphate Boom", 12.

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employment on phosphate lands.”²⁷ Though the phosphate labor force remained predominantly black, an Edisto Islander of the postbellum era remembered “a rough crowd of Irish, Italians, and Colored” mining workers.²⁸

When Giovanni Sottile arrived in New York City in 1889, he immediately travelled to South Carolina to take a position as accountant for a phosphate company. During his brief employment in the phosphate industry he witnessed the poor treatment of immigrant laborers. This experience became “the basis for the great service which he was later enabled to endeavor to render service for his countrymen in America” as an advocate for his fellow Italians.²⁹ Historian Yates Snowden noted the “deplorable treatment of the laborers, most of whom, like Sottile, had been imposed upon by crafty ‘padrones.’”³⁰ It is unclear how the phosphate company took advantage of Sottile personally (he was not a laborer, but possibly experienced wage exploitation). He left the industry and by 1895, he was in Charleston and involved in liquor sales. He opened a bar and refreshments stand called the Jetty House on Sullivan’s Island with one of his brothers in May 1895, and began advertising himself as a beer and spirits agent in 1897. Sottile also amassed wealth in real estate speculation, investing on Sullivan’s Island and purchasing properties in Charleston.³¹ Sottile was appointed consul in 1899 by the Consul General in New York, “who recently wrote to influential parties here [Charleston] and asked the name of a responsible Italian to whom the place could be given.”³² The position of consul is an official appointment between two territories or countries. The role of consul is generally to protect, assist, and advocate for the citizens or immigrants of the consul’s country to the other nation, and to reinforce trade and political relations between the two nations.³³

As Italian Consul, and as a wealthy man with business and political connections, Sottile was in a position to help his fellow immigrants escape exploitative practices. Sottile and the Consul General Branch in New York were contacted in 1900 by an Italian immigrant who had escaped exploitation in the Pon Pon Phosphate Mine on the Edisto River outside Charleston, South Carolina. The newspaper reported, “according to the unfortunate Italians, who are lured to this city to the mines on the promise of good pay, they are restrained there by armed guards and compelled to work well or sick, under pain of beating or even death, if they refuse, and by an ingenious system they are kept always in the debt of the padrone.” One sick worker who could not return to work was shot dead for disobeying a work order. Sottile appealed to South Carolina

²⁷ *News and Courier*, 8 September 1884.

²⁸ Shick and Doyle, “The South Carolina Phosphate Boom”, 15-17.

²⁹ Untitled biography located in Sottile biographical file at South Carolina Room, CCPL; page inset dated 1920, “Lewis Publishing Company.”

³⁰ Snowden, *History of South Carolina Vol. III*, 83. Padrone is a pejorative term for master or Mafia boss, or an employer who exploits immigrant workers.

³¹ *Charleston Evening Post*, 18 May 1895; *Charleston Evening Post*, 3 September 1897. The cross indices to property conveyances at the Charleston County Register of Deeds show Sottile and his brothers purchasing several properties at the turn of the century.

³² *Charleston News and Courier*, “Consul G. Sottile. A well-known Charleston will represent the Italian government here in the future.” 4 February 1899.

³³ Finding aid for “Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State”, National Archives. <https://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/084.html>. Accessed 9 January 2019.

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Governor McSweeney and investigations ensued.³⁴ This was the first of three exploitation incidents that Sottile was involved in investigating for possible prosecution.

In 1903 Sottile was contacted by five Italian phosphate miners who had run away to escape peonage and harsh conditions in the Bulow Phosphate Company mining camp on the Ashley River in Charleston County. He brought the evidence to the District Attorney who issued warrants for three “bosses” who were arrested on peonage charges for holding Italian immigrants against their will as laborers.³⁵ In 1905 the case went to trial and Sottile gave testimony on behalf of several Italian laborers. The Charleston newspaper reported that the Italians had been forced to work for starvation wages in “virtual slavery”. Several were not paid because their wages were confiscated as a debt by the men who imported them from New York, while others were drastically underpaid what they had been promised. The “bosses” were convicted.³⁶ In March 1906, Sottile’s territory was increased and he was to “take charge of affairs of concerning his people in North as well as South Carolina . . . evidently a reward for the ability already displayed in the discharge of the duties devolving upon him in South Carolina.”³⁷

In June of 1906, Sottile heard of another peonage camp and traveled to Greensboro, North Carolina to pursue an investigation. He successfully brought the case to the attention of the district attorney. Charleston papers reported that, “a community of 1,500 Italians located in that section, engaged chiefly in railroad construction . . . were brought to Greensboro under false pretenses and forced to work against their will and otherwise treated cruelly. The matter has been under investigation and now the machinery of the law has been put into motion to accomplish desired reform and secure fair treatment to foreign laborers.”³⁸ Historian Pete Daniel summarized the case (which ended in victory for the Italians) and Sottile’s role in using diplomatic pressure to fight peonage in the South:

In May 1906, U.S attorney A.E. Holton of Winston Salem received a complaint from Giovanni Sottile, Italian consular agent in Charleston, South Carolina, that some 1500 Italians were held in peonage. Sottile demanded immediate action and met Holton at the Marion, North Carolina jail, where nine Italians were held for conspiracy to kill a superintendent of the South and Western Railway Company. Holton quickly got to the facts of the incident. A group of Italians, evidently underfed and unpaid, had attempted to convey this complaint to the superintendent. “The Italian was insisting on his being paid”, Holton explained, “with a sign pointed to his mouth, then to his stomach and marked upon the ground with his feet to indicate a grave.” Lacking an interpreter, the Italian hoped to convey that unless he ate he would need to be buried. The superintendent misinterpreted the drama, thinking that unless the Italians were paid the superintendent would need to be buried. Believing a mutiny was brewing, the superintendent gathered a posse complete with a deputy sheriff and invaded the tents of the Italians; two died in the

³⁴ *Charleston Evening Post*, “Mine Outrages: Gov. McSweeney promises to do what he can in the matter,” 9 April 1900; *Charleston News and Courier*, “Should Be Investigated,” 9 April 1900.

³⁵ “Bound over on peonage charge,” *Charleston Evening Post*, 7 January 1903.

³⁶ “Peonage case ready for jury,” *Charleston News and Courier*, 6 April 1905.

³⁷ *News and Courier*, “Given more territory,” 25 March 1906.

³⁸ “Consul Sottile Hailed as a Boccaccio by the foreigners”, *Charleston Evening Post*, 7 June 1906.

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fracas. In August 1906, due largely to Italian diplomatic pressure, the railroad settled out of court for \$7,500 in damages to the families of the murdered men.³⁹

Incidents of peonage declined thanks to the efforts of progressive “muck-raking” journalists and politicians like Sottile, changing demographics, and better federal regulation of working conditions and workers’ rights.⁴⁰ There were no further Italian peonage cases reported in the South Carolina newspapers after the 1906 trial, and Sottile turned his attention to Italian-U.S. diplomatic relations, fostering Italian business ventures, and attracting Italian immigrants to South Carolina for more lucrative work. In 1911, for example, Sottile welcomed and entertained two “Italian gentlemen” who were exploring the possibility of importing and selling Roman cheese through the Port of Charleston.⁴¹

At the turn of the twentieth century, there was a brief interest in importing Italian immigrants directly to the South for agricultural work, with the goal of supplementing or replacing the African American labor force, as was also taking place in the phosphate and other industries. At state farmers’ meetings in South Carolina in 1870, Tennessee in 1873, and Louisiana in 1876, landholders suggested immigrants as a labor source to replace African American labor shortages; “this call for immigration by southerners coincides with the period of mass migration from Europe that began in 1880.”⁴² African Americans were wary of the wave of immigration and the Atlanta newspaper, *The Voice of the Negro*, reported that calls for immigration by white southerners, “has as its object to either starve the Negro or make him willing to work under any and all conditions that the white man may see fit to impose.” Historian Arnold Shankman noted that, “these suspicions seemed to be confirmed when news came in 1898 that Italians in Horry County, South Carolina, had established an agricultural colony to raise strawberries, lettuce, cucumbers, and potatoes.”⁴³

Italians worked as agricultural laborers on large land holdings cultivating cotton, sugar cane, and tobacco in the South and Southwest. In 1909, Alberto Pecorini wrote:

At Alexandria a few Italian families are occupied in the cultivation of rice. At Lake End the Italians are all from Sicily and rent the land, on which they raise cotton almost exclusively; they pay all the expenses and give the owners of the land one-fourth of the crop as rent; they are increasing rapidly and many of the families established there live comfortably and save every year from \$500 to \$1,000. To sum up, the Italians as agricultural laborers have given remarkably good results in almost every locality, especially where the climate is mild and where they can soon become land owners. If it is asked why then the Italians have not become agricultural laborers in larger proportions I answer that at the time of their coming agriculture is not so inviting a proposition as industrial work. They are practically penniless on landing and need to work not for the distant future but for the immediate present. Among those who already have their

³⁹ Daniel, *The Shadow of Slavery: Peonage in the South, 1901-1969*, 94.

⁴⁰ Reynolds, *A Long Quavering Chant*, 230-234.

⁴¹ *News and Courier*, “May Start Cheese Factory,” 28 November 1911.

⁴² Giordano, “Italian Immigration in the State of Louisiana,” 161-162.

⁴³ Shankman, “This Menacing Influx: Afro-Americans on Italian Immigration to the South, 1880-1915”, 65.

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families here, who are relieved of the anxiety of the future, who have saved a little and have learned something of the laws and the spirit of the land there are undoubtedly many who would prefer the independent and healthy life of the country to the dependent and unhealthy life of the city. But in all cases the agricultural proposition must be laid before them fairly; they must not see exploitation where others speak of colonization, and in every way they must have fair play. Colonization companies and railroads which want to develop healthy and fertile regions in the South, Southwest and West should understand that in developing their lands it will pay them to extend to the Italians the greatest and most sympathetic assistance and give them an opportunity to become prosperous in the shortest possible time.⁴⁴

A strong supporter of the initiative to find appropriate gainful employment for immigrants, Sottile purchased land to establish a model farm in Ladson (about fifteen miles outside the City of Charleston), where he employed Italians to cultivate produce. Sottile managed the farm through the Gangi Progressive Agricultural and Industrial Society that he founded (and named for his native town in Sicily) and purchased 751 acres of “fine truck growing lands near Ladson” to experiment with grape and silk cultivation with a grove of mulberry trees. Ten Italians were working there in 1905; the local paper reported, “no colored hands will be employed”, and the workforce would be comprised of “carefully selected” Italian immigrants.⁴⁵

Later in the year, the *Charleston Evening Post* reported, “Sottile may increase the colony, for the Italians are especially fitted for this particular line of work. He now has all the people of his race that his farm justifies, but with an interest in promoting the immigration of desirable agriculturalists, he can be depended upon to help along any movement of the kind, as far as he is able to do so.”⁴⁶ Sottile’s endeavor was lauded by visiting economics lecturer Eliot Lord in 1906 in his article, “The Italian in America”, who described the project as follows:

Might I suggest a somewhat more careful and interested study than Charleston has yet given to the possible utilization of sifted immigration in the development of the arable districts around the city? May I call attention to an experiment now under way, though the public spirited enterprise of Signor Giovanni Sottile, the highly intelligent consular agent in Charleston? He has already in thriving condition on his model farm full ten thousand mulberry trees, for the promotion of silk culture, under the cultivation of a few skilled Italian growers. While waiting for the development of these trees diversified truck farming is supporting the family of the gardener. Italians such as Signor Sottile, has picked and can pick, are the best gardeners in the world. They will make even a desert bloom with the help of a little irrigation, and what can they not effect on the fertile, well-watered lands around Charleston!⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Pecorini, “The Italian as an Agricultural Laborer,” 165-166.

⁴⁵ *Charleston Evening Post*, “Grape and Silk Culture Farm to be worked by Italians near Summerville,” 11 February 1905.

⁴⁶ “Trying to bring Italians here: movement to turn tide of immigration to the South”, *Charleston Evening Post*, 18 October 1905.

⁴⁷ “Consul Sottile’s good work approved”, *Charleston News and Courier*, 25 January 1906.

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Giovanni and his brother Albert applied for and received a charter commission for the Gangi Company to raise \$18,000 in stock for “an agricultural development.”⁴⁸ Giovanni Sottile was president and treasurer and Mr. D. Chisena was secretary and manager.⁴⁹ Sottile had also invested \$10,000 of his own money to set up the farm and stock it with mules and farm machinery.

The Italians are now hard at work clearing the land and arranging for the planting of their crops. Mr. Sottile expects to increase largely the strength of his colony, and will divide his lands into small farms, and sell these farms to deserving and industrious Italian immigrants on easy payments through a period of five years, supplying them meantime with the means with which to prosecute their agricultural labors, and in this way he is confident that he will be able to establish a most successful and thriving colony of desirable citizens.⁵⁰

Through his farm, Sottile was offering fellow Italian immigrants safe and secure work, and also a means to property ownership and a vested interest in their new home in South Carolina.

Despite Sottile’s efforts, Italian immigration to South Carolina for farm work did not flourish. Most immigrants chose the northern states in pursuit of factory work. Unlike Sottile’s enterprise, many farms were exploitative. Many immigrants were not content to remain as plantation laborers and aspired to land ownership. There was also a general distrust and disdain of residents from outside the South in the wake of the Civil War, and discrimination against Italians as culturally inferior, and even non-white.⁵¹ Anti-Italian sentiment was strong in the parts of the South, and South Carolina actively sought immigrants from western and northern Europe instead of Italy. The state closed its department of immigration in 1908.⁵² Historian Paolo Giordano noted, “Senator Frank B. Carry of South Carolina preferred that ‘our uncultivated lands should forever lie fallow, and our water power go unharnessed to the sea, than that we should be overrun by a lot of aliens from southern Europe.’ Other southerners feared that admission of unassimilable races would be a repetition of their greatest error, the importation of Negroes.”⁵³ *The Charleston Evening Post* noted that “state statutes prevent the state commissioner soliciting Italians but others are active- Consul Sottile is likely to bring more to his farm in Ladson.” Sottile entertained the Italian ambassador and took him to tour the farm facilities but he seems to have been the sole local support for bringing Italians to the state as farm labor, as “under the laws of South Carolina, the immigration commissioner is not permitted to solicit the immigration of people from southern Europe, so the Italian movement is restrained as far as active efforts from the state are concerned.”⁵⁴ A writer in *The State* newspaper of Columbia lamented that because of prejudice against Italians and the belief that they were ill equipped for farming and “unfamiliar with any kind of work except heavy manual labor . . . we have lost, in the South,

⁴⁸ *News and Courier*, “Charters”, 25 June 1906.

⁴⁹ This is probably Dominick Chisena, a naturalized Italian immigrant living in New York City, who acted as agent in finding immigrants for the farm. 1910 Federal Census lists him and his wife in Yonkers, New York.

⁵⁰ *News and Courier*, “An Italian Colony,” 12 February 1905.

⁵¹ Giordano, “Italian Immigration to Louisiana,” 162.

⁵² Shankman, “This Menacing Influx: Afro-Americans on Italian Immigration to the South, 1880-1915”, 85.

⁵³ Giordano, “Italian Immigration to Louisiana,” 162.

⁵⁴ *Charleston Evening Post*, “Trying to bring Italians here,” 18 October 1905.

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many opportunities for the development of agricultural lands that our own farmers have neglected for more easily cultivated areas.”⁵⁵

Despite discriminatory hiring practices and prejudiced opinions against his people in the South, Sottile remained proud of his Italian heritage. In August 1900, he led a memorial event for King Humbert of Italy, who had recently been murdered. The day’s events included Sottile’s address, a funeral procession, and a “high pontifical mass at the Pro-Cathedral.” One hundred Italians attended the address at Hibernian Hall on Meeting Street, and the paper reported that, “Consul Sottile spoke with beautiful expression and impassioned feeling and the music of the Italian language sounded his every word. His speech was a tribute to the late king’s qualities, a denunciation of the foul crime that took his life and a eulogy of the new king. The Italians much appreciated Mr. Sottile’s address and many shed tears at his tender reference to the dead king.”⁵⁶ In 1905, the local news reported, “Flag flies for Prince: Italian Consul displaced colors in honor of heir’s birthday. Giovanni Sottile had the Italian flag raised over the consulate on Rutledge Avenue today in honor of the first birthday anniversary of Prince of Piedmont, heir to the throne. Mr. Sottile keeps a close watch on the Italian holidays and festivals, and he never fails to show the Italian flag to the breezes on all natural occasions. Mr. Sottile is giving attention to the matter of the deaths of Italians in South Carolina that they may be very promptly reported in Italy to avoid frauds . . .”⁵⁷ After a catastrophic earthquake in Italy, Sottile urged Italian immigrants in South Carolina, as well as other Charleston residents, to send aid to the earthquake victims.⁵⁸

As the consulate headquarters, the Sottile House was the setting for diplomatic gatherings and Sottile’s efforts to insert Italian immigrants and culture into the American South. For example, in August 1905 shortly after purchasing 81 Rutledge Avenue, Sottile entertained Captain Capomazzi, in port on the cruiser *Degali* on its way to the West Indies and South America on an “undisclosed” important mission. Sottile entertained the captain, his officers, Charleston mayor Hanckel, and several alderman at his home; “a delightful reception was tendered to the officers at Consul Sottile’ residence last night, when a number of the Italian colony in the city was present and were presented to the officers. The residence of Mr. Sottile was brilliantly illuminated, and presented a very animated appearance, the officers being in full uniform. The members of the Italian colony were glad to meet their countrymen, and the evening was spent every pleasantly.”⁵⁹ The *Charleston Evening Post* also reported that this was the first event at Sottile’s recently purchased and renovated Rutledge Street home:

The reception at Mr. Sottile’s handsome home on Rutledge Avenue last night was a very pleasant event. The reception was given for the purpose of allowing representative Italians of the city to meet the officers, and a party of ten were present from the vessel at the residence. A number of the local colony were in attendance and the evening was pleasantly passed. It was the first function which has been given at Sottile’s home, since he recently

⁵⁵ *The State*, “The Italian as American Farmer,” 13 November 1910.

⁵⁶ *Charleston Evening Post*, “In Memory of King Humbert,” 27 August 1900.

⁵⁷ *Charleston Evening Post*, 15 September 1905.

⁵⁸ *Charleston Evening Post*, 31 December 1908.

⁵⁹ *News and Courier*, “Received Italian Colony: Capt. Capomazzi met his countrymen at consulate,” 22 August 1905.

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purchased and repaired the house, and the beautiful home showed to much advantage last night in its tasty decorations and furnishings and brilliant illuminations. An orchestra dispensed some delightful numbers and in the course of the evening, a tempting collation was served. It was quite the evening, when the function was brought to an end and the officers driven down to the wharf to board their vessel.⁶⁰

In July of 1909, the Italian ship *Etruria* was in Charleston and Sottile again hosted diplomatic events at his house. Sottile's daughter Carmelina remembered that while the *Etruria* was in port, "there were parties [at the house] all week."⁶¹ The newspaper reported that after a carriage ride to the Country Club, "Consul Sottile will entertain at the consulate at 8:30 o'clock and the affair promises to be a brilliant one. Consul Sottile will entertain the officers [of the *Etruria*], the officers of the Navy Yard, the officers at Fort Moultrie, the city authorities, and especially invited guests. The following invitations have been issued: Cavaliere Giovanni Sottile, Royal Consulate Agent of Italy, requests the honor of your presence at a Smoker [men's only evening party with drinks and cigar smoking] to be tendered to Captain Count Leonardi Di Casalino and officers of His Majesty's Ship the *Etruria*, Thursday evening at his residence, eighty-one Rutledge Avenue." The *Evening Post* offered more details: "the concluding function of the stay will take place tonight in the form of a smoker at the elegant mansion of Consul Sottile on Rutledge Avenue. The lower piazza of the residence, and the garden and lawn, has been especially wired for the occasion and with the decorations which have been provided, a fitting setting has been arranged for the occasion."⁶²

In the height of his diplomatic career, Sottile died unexpectedly at home in 1913, at age 46. He was eulogized as "a man of large means who had for the past year been retired from active business pursuits," and "was of a genial, hospitable disposition, and had a wide circle of friends."⁶³ His widow and children kept the Gangi Agricultural Company in operation at least into the 1930s.⁶⁴ During his short life and tenure as Italian consul, Sottile advocated for his fellow Italians in a number of ways, from testifying in court to end the suffering and exploitation of Italian peons in North and South Carolina, to actively creating gainful employment opportunities for Italian immigrants through his model farm in Ladson. His recruitment efforts ultimately failed due to state level prejudices and restrictions against organized Italian immigration to South Carolina, an unfortunate circumstance considering the environmental and economic hardships facing Italy at that time that warranted a wave of immigration. Despite immigration recruiting setbacks, Sottile continued to reinforce diplomatic relations between Italy and the United States, entertaining at the consulate and fundraising on behalf of fellow Italians in their mother country after the earthquakes at the turn on the twentieth century. Sottile was a wealthy man who not only served as a role model for other aspiring immigrants, but also used his place of political and financial advantage to advocate for his fellow countrymen for the duration

⁶⁰ *Charleston Evening Post*, "Italians Being Shown the City," 22 August 1905.

⁶¹ *Charleston Evening Post*, "Italian Consulate Entertains the 70s", 16 January 1976. 1C

⁶² *News and Courier*, 22 July 1909, "Visited Country Club- pleasant afternoon spent by officers of Etruria." CEP 22 July 1909, "visit of Etruria long round of pleasant entertainment. Final function tonight."

⁶³ *Charleston Evening Post*, 28 June 1913.

⁶⁴ *Charleston Evening Post*, land transfer from Carmela Sottile et al to Gangi Company, 12.5 acres in Goose Creek, 45, 13 September 1935.

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of his life, and the Sottile House was the place from which most of his endeavors were planned and his diplomatic work took place.

Criterion C: Architecture

While the Sottile House dates to circa 1820, its period of architectural significance is associated with the extensive exterior Italianate stylistic updates of 1860s, and the Italian Renaissance updates to the exterior and interior by Sottile in 1905. The house retains features from the 1860s renovations, including Italianate mantelpieces, doors, and plasterwork. The house also retains integrity from the era of Sottile's residency, including details added during his renovations in 1905 in the Italian Renaissance style such as the cut glass entry door and marquetry floors. The retention of interior and exterior integrity occurred because Sottile's daughter, Carmelina Sottile Thompson, remained in the house until 1991. The current owners, Kelvin and Mara Brockbank bought it in 1996 and have made no significant changes to the interior or exterior of the main residence.

Residential Italianate Architecture in Charleston

Historical Italian influence in American architectural design burgeoned in the early nineteenth century with an interest in incorporating Roman elements into Federal era neoclassical buildings, such as Thomas Jefferson's campus pavilions at the University of Virginia or the details on his private residence, Monticello. Most early domestic examples were large villas in a rural setting, such as those espoused in *The Builder's Assistant*, published in 1818. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, a new Italianate style began to emerge.⁶⁵ Typical design features included asymmetrical towers, blocky palazzo building forms (more popular for government and commercial examples than residential), arched window and door openings, wide cornices with brackets, cast iron decorative elements, and tall Italian windows two panes in width. Italianate villa designs were popularized by Andrew Jackson Downing in his pattern book, *Architecture of Country Houses*, while John Notman designed an early and influential Philadelphia building in the palazzo form in 1845. It was a two story building with an attic story built of stone, "featuring a rich entablature with modillion blocks supporting the cornice in addition to dentils, quoins at the corners, hoods over the windows, a balcony at the second floor level across the front, and rustication below, the principal entrance considerably elaborated."⁶⁶ During the period of eclecticism in mid-19th century American design, Italianate was appreciated for its flexibility.⁶⁷ The Italianate style remained popular in the United States from 1840 to 1885. Townhouse examples such as the Sottile House typically feature low pitched roofs with wide cornices, and lacked the asymmetrical towers commonly found on Italianate houses with larger suburban lots.⁶⁸

In the decade prior to the American Civil War, wealthy Charlestonians constructed new houses to showcase their wealth and their knowledge of the latest architectural fashions, and some were willing to break with the more conservative neoclassical traditions of the Greek Revival

⁶⁵ Lancaster, "Italianism in American Architecture Before 1860," 132-134.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 134.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 143-144.

⁶⁸ McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses*, 228.

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movement that flourished from the 1820s until 1860. For example, Isaac Jenkins Mikell constructed a large mansion with heavy Italianate ornamentation, replete with formal front parterre gardens in 1853. The National Register-listed house is located one block from the Sottile House and features a well-proportioned Composite order temple front facing Montague Street. It is believed to be designed by Edward Brickell White, one of the most prominent architects in South Carolina in the mid-nineteenth century, known for his versatility and proficiency with Greek Revival, Italianate or Roman Revival, and even Gothic Revival design.⁶⁹ Edward Trenholm also began an Italianate residence at 93 Rutledge at the corner of Rutledge Avenue and Montague Street in the early 1850s. “Reflecting the transition between Greek Revival and Italianate influences in Charleston,” the house features a monumental south facing portico with giant Tower of the Winds columns, and “a pedimented doorway on the Rutledge Avenue side leads to a stair hall rising to the principal entertaining floor, which has large double drawing rooms.”⁷⁰

Also in the 1850s, Edward C. Jones, of the prestigious Jones and Lee firm practicing in antebellum Charleston, designed an Italianate facility for Roper Hospital in Harleston Village, and an Italianate stuccoed residence for the Ashe family at 26 South Battery, which drew heavily from Downing’s designs. Possibly also by Jones, the Huger-Maybank House was constructed in 1857 at 8 Legare Street. It is a massive unpainted stucco house with a side hall plan, south facing piazzas, and Italianate details, including an asymmetrical tower on the front façade and arched double entry doors. Builder Patrick O’Donnell also began an Italianate mansion at 21 King Street, which was begun in 1852 and completed in 1870.⁷¹ The large side hall villa features balustraded southern facing piazzas, an arched entry door at street level flanked with pilasters, a rusticated base story and rusticated quoins extending the full height of the three story façade, and arched window cornices with console brackets. Thus, the architect or builder who designed the stylistic enhancements for the Sottile House would have had nearby inspiration for Italianate details. Jones and Lee also designed the Italianate/Italian Renaissance style State Bank of South Carolina Building at 1 Broad Street in 1855. It is a three story brownstone building with a rusticated ground story and arched windows at the ground level. The pair of oak entry doors have rounded upper glazed panels fitted with cast iron grillwork, similar to the piazza door at the Sottile House. Above the bank doors is an arched transom window.⁷²

Unlike the previously listed buildings, however, the Sottile House was a product of the diminished Charleston economy following the Civil War, in that it was a stylistic renovation of an earlier house into the modes of the day. The Sottile House represents a fusion between the Charleston single house form (a widely used vernacular plan with Barbadian roots that is virtually unique to Charleston) and the architectural preferences of the mid to late nineteenth century, through consciously high style Italianate alterations to the house. Most single houses have south or west facing piazzas or porches running the length of the house. The piazzas are typically accessed by a street level door with a solid screen or piazza wall to differentiate between the private space of the piazza and yard, and the public space of the sidewalk. Single

⁶⁹ Mikell, Isaac Jenkins House, National Register.

⁷⁰ Poston, *Buildings of Charleston*, 555.

⁷¹ Huger-Maybank House National Register; Poston, *Buildings of Charleston*, 227-228.

⁷² Poston, *Buildings of Charleston*, 55.

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houses are usually flush with the sidewalk, with private yard space in the rear and, for larger lots, a side yard facing the piazzas.⁷³ The Sottile House exhibits all of the features of the single house typology. It is representative of both the place and the era in which it was renovated, the eclectic architectural age of mid to late nineteenth century Charleston.

Though few grand homes were constructed in the decades immediately following the Civil War, and most renovations were frugal repairs to war damaged properties, Arthur Gordon Rose's circa 1867 renovations to the house were substantial. Rose retired as director of the Bank of Charleston in 1866 and added a masonry fourth story to the house around that time, and the property's value increased from \$9,600 to \$13,200, indicating a series of major improvements.⁷⁴ He advertised the house for rent in 1867, confirming that the addition of the fourth story had taken place: "Furnished residence to rent for one or more years, that four story dwelling No. 15 Rutledge Street (between Wentworth and Montagu) ready furnished, containing twelve rooms and all suitable outbuildings."⁷⁵ The interior central stair balustrade continues uniformly from the second to fourth story and there is no clear break or change in style as it ascends to the fourth floor addition, so it is likely that the original configuration of the house included a garret space that was accessed via the central stair. During the construction of the addition, the earlier roof was apparently removed, the exterior walls extended upwards, and a lower pitched hip roof installed to create the blocky façade with cornice typical of the Italianate style.

Rose likely added the cast iron piazza balustrades during his renovation, as they are representative of the cast iron ornamental styles of his era.⁷⁶ The Italianate piazza oak entry door with its arched jamb, rusticated wooden surround, and cast iron grills also appears to date to Rose's renovation; they bear similarities to Italianate details found in Charleston (such as the entry doors on the State Bank of South Carolina Building), rather than later Italian Renaissance style entrances. The inner vestibule door, by contrast has more ornate carvings and square panels, as it was part of the Italian Renaissance remodel by Sottile in 1905.

Architectural historian Clay Lancaster notes that, "the better houses of every description possessed one Italian feature in common- the kind of mantel in the parlor and perhaps in other rooms as well. These mantels were either imported from Italy or made by stone carvers of Italian lineage in America. Sometime before 1856 another group of Italian architectural embellishers had established themselves and were doing a thriving business [as painters and decorators]."⁷⁷ The Sottile House has stone mantelpieces of Italian black marble with simple neoclassical engaged columns to support the mantel and Italianate arched stucco fire boxes fitted with cast iron

⁷³ Poston, *Buildings of Charleston*, 37-41.

⁷⁴ Charleston Ward Book Tax Assessment ledgers, 1852-1856 (updated after Civil War) and 1871-1875 book list the house as changing from three to four stories in 1867; 30-4 Rose biographical file, South Carolina Historical Society.

⁷⁵ *Charleston Daily News*, 11 April 1867. 15 Rutledge was later renumbered at 81 Rutledge when the street was extended southward to Murray Boulevard in the 1910s.

⁷⁶ Preservation Brief 27, "Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron", notes the rising popularity of cast iron railings, store fronts, and architectural elements in the United States in the 1850s.

⁷⁷ Lancaster, "*Italianism in American Architecture before 1860*, 147.

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inserts.⁷⁸ There are five Italian marble mantles in the house, as well as plaster cornices and medallions in the third story bedrooms that date to the Italianate remodel in the 1860s.

The Italianate renovations to the Sottile House represent stylistic preferences and revival movements in the United States in the mid to late nineteenth century. Further, the house reflects the architectural and historical context of the community in which is located, as a Charleston single house ornamented in a particular style, and a renovation rather than a new construction in the post-Civil War era South.

Italian Renaissance Residential Architecture in Charleston

Harleston Village experienced another flurry of building at the turn of the twentieth century. After Colonial Lake was begun in 1881, elite property owners erected new mansions in the vicinity along Beaufain, Rutledge, and Ashley Avenues, and remodeled earlier houses in the latest fashions. The Gibbon House at 97 Rutledge was constructed in 1885 as an ornate Italianate version of a side hall house. Mayor William Ashmead Courtenay purchased 95 Rutledge Avenue and remodeled the antebellum single house circa 1886 with Italianate details and new windows. In 1900 Albert Todd, South Carolina senator and noted Colonial Revival architect, built a mansion with the front neoclassical façade facing Colonial Lake. The Creighton family, who owned one of the largest lumber companies in Charleston, built a house at 52 Rutledge on the lake the following decade.⁷⁹ There are large, high style Victorian houses in the vicinity, and Italianate mansions, such as the four story villa neighboring the Sottile House to the south, with its quoining, piazzas, and austere details. Giovanni Sottile moved to the fashionable Harleston Village and updated his new house in the Italian Renaissance mode, a fitting style for the Italian Consul to Charleston.⁸⁰

The Italian Renaissance style was popular in the United States from 1890 to 1935 and features low pitched or flat roofs, and arched door surrounds with delicately proportioned classical columns or pilasters. Italian Renaissance houses, “tended to more closely mimic their Italian predecessors than did the free interpretations of the preceding Italianate style.” Reasons for this authenticity include a rise in travel to see Italian examples, more architect involvement, perfection of masonry veneering, advances in photography that allowed people to study Italian originals remotely, and an influx of Italian masons and craftsmen to the United States in the late nineteenth century. The earlier Italianate style was largely based on pattern books, which usually did not reference actual Italian buildings.⁸¹

Italian Renaissance houses were always masonry (unlike Italianate houses that might be wood, masonry, or a combination of both). Other characteristic features are full length first story windows or gallery doors above the rusticated raised basement, quoining, pedimented windows that differed on each story, belt courses, molded cornices, and flat plaster work in the interior with ornate crown molding, all of which the Sottile House exhibits. Italian Renaissance houses

⁷⁸ *Charleston Evening Post*, Italian Consulate entertains the 70s.” 16 January 1976; Thompson, *Sottile Family*, 8.

⁷⁹ Poston, *Buildings of Charleston* 482, 487, 548-551, 557.

⁸⁰ Sass, *Stories of the South Carolina Lowcountry*, Sottile entry.

⁸¹ McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses*, 398.

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with a flat or low pitched roof feature a wide cornice at the roof line, sometimes with bracket or corbel supports, or a balustrade above the cornice. The Sottile House is simple compared to New England and New York examples, which were “almost always architect designed landmarks of stone, [and] are closely related to flat roofed Beaux Arts style houses, which are similar but have more ornate façade detailing.”⁸² The Sottile House also lacks an arcaded porch which is common of the style, because it was a preexisting house updated by Sottile rather than a textbook example constructed anew.

One of the best examples of the style in Charleston is the Post Office building at the intersection of Meeting and Broad Street, which was constructed in 1888 with a rusticated granite façade. John Devereux acted as superintendent during construction, following plans by New Orleans-born architect James Freret. The *News and Courier* called the building “a splendid addition to our architectural treasures, of the style of the Italian Renaissance with three stories and a tower.”⁸³ There are few Italian Renaissance residences in Charleston, and the limited examples are found in the South of Broad neighborhood, especially near South Battery and Murray Boulevard. Murray Boulevard and the surrounding forty-seven acres were reclaimed between 1911 and 1919, during the era of popularity for Italian Renaissance in the United States. The Boulevard lots are large and thus allowed an ideal setting for stately mansions. The best local example of the style in Charleston is the Villa Margherita at 4 South Battery Street. It was designed in 1895 by Frederick Dinkelberg, a New York architect most famous for the Flat Iron Building. The client, Andrew Simonds, was a bank president.⁸⁴ The house is a blocky villa form, with a stucco rendering. It features a front portico with Composite order columns and a dentiled cornice. Sottile’s daughter Carmelina stated that, “when Giovanni Sottile brought his wife to Charleston to choose a home suitable for the Italian consul, his first choice was the Villa Margerhita. But Carmela Sottile envisioned hurricane tides washing up to the front steps, so the couple decided to buy a home farther from the harbor at 81 Rutledge Avenue.”⁸⁵

Though no architect has yet been attributed to Sottile’s Italian Renaissance upgrades, the property’s value appreciated from \$3,800 to \$5,000 between 1905 and 1906 when Sottile bought it, indicating that he was responsible for several improvements.⁸⁶ The *Charleston Evening Post* noted Sottile’s repairs and “tasty decorations and furnishings” in August of 1905.⁸⁷ Sottile’s stylistic enhancements to the house are still present today: hand carved vestibule doors with rope molding and fruit designs (imported from England), the delicate cast iron handrail from the vestibule door to the main floor piazza, the etched glass front door with the initials “GS” for Giovanni Sottile, gallery doors with transoms, and parquet and marquetry floors.⁸⁸ Charleston writer W.J. Lesesne described subtle French Baroque Revival influences on the interior as having “been called the most beautiful example of Cadet Rouselle (French architecture) in

⁸² McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses*, 397.

⁸³ *News and Courier*, “Our New Post Office,” 16 December 1888.

⁸⁴ *News and Courier*, “Beautifying the Battery: A Magnificent Palace on South Bay,” 9 January 1893; *Post and Courier*, “117 Year Old Battery Landmark Sold for \$3 million”, 18 October 2012.

⁸⁵ *Charleston Evening Post*, Italian Consulate entertains the 70s.” 16 January 1976.

⁸⁶ 1902-1906 Ward Book tax assessments; 1906-1910 Ward book.

⁸⁷ *Charleston Evening Post*, “Italians Being Shown the City,” 22 August 1905.

⁸⁸ *News and Courier*, “Regency home features on home tour”, 17 February 1970.

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America, by many architects and French visitors,” including the grandson of famous South Carolina architect Robert Mills. Some examples of the French influence are the large front parlor mirrors and gilded interior window cornices that were imported from France.

The Sottile House has remained a single family residence and is remarkably intact, with integrity to convey both the stylistic preferences of the nineteenth century Italianate stylistic movement as added to the house in 1867, and the more ornate ornamentation of the Italian Renaissance Revival, displayed through alterations made by Sottile in 1905. The house consciously reflects these two Italian-influenced American architectural movements. It is also a unique product of its location, as the stylistic elements are applied to the Charleston single house form. Consul Giovanni Sottile lived in the house from 1905 till his death in 1913, and the Italianate and Italian Renaissance details could not be more fitting for an Italian consular headquarters. Sottile’s daughter Carmelina Sottile Thompson noted in 1976 that, “we have made very few changes to the house, so in essence, it’s still the Italian consulate.”⁸⁹

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The Sottile House was constructed circa 1820s by Dr. Joseph Glover, a prominent South Carolina born physician who occupied the house with his family when in Charleston, from its construction to his death in 1840.⁹⁰ It then passed to Arthur Gordon Rose Sr., who lived in the house from the 1840s until the 1870s. Rose was president of the Bank of Charleston. A fourth story was added to the house during Rose’s ownership. The house was next occupied by Benjamin F. Moise, a prominent Jewish druggist, and was purchased from his heirs by Giovanni Sottile in 1905.

The Harleston neighborhood was laid out as a subdivision 1770 by namesake John Harleston, who inherited the land from the Coming family. It was situated west of the original walled portion of Charlestown, but was linked to the older developed part of the city by new street extensions, such as Beaufain Street, authorized by the Commons House of Assembly in 1770.⁹¹ Harleston is bounded on the south by Broad Street, on the north by Calhoun Street, on the east by the west side of King Street, and on the west by the Ashley River and its marshes. The neighborhood developed slowly in the eighteenth century because of the Revolutionary War and the numerous creeks and marshes that ran through the area. Early plats show that the block of Rutledge Avenue where the Sottile House is located did not exist in the early nineteenth century.⁹² Harleston experienced a building boom in the early 1800s and the neighborhood slowly grew as marshes were filled. Most of the early houses were of the single house form, although some houses with large lots were constructed in the double house form.⁹³

⁸⁹ CEP. “Italian Consulate Entertains the 70s”, 16 January 1976. 1C; Thompson, *Sottile Family*, 8.

⁹⁰ *Buildings of Charleston* dates the house to circa 1826, while the HABS survey dates construction to 1835, when Glover sold part of the lot. *Directories* list Glover residing on part of the lot in 1819, so circa 1820s date has been selected for this PIF form.

⁹¹ McCord, *Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Vol. 7*, 93-95.

⁹² Poston, *Buildings of Charleston*, 479.

⁹³ Ravenel Huger Smith, *Dwelling Houses of Charleston*, 321-322.

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Dr. Joseph Glover, who was responsible for constructing the Sottile House, also owned extensive plantation lands and other houses in Harleston, which he willed to his children. He died in 1840 on one of his Walterboro properties.⁹⁴ A short biography of Dr. Glover by the Waring Medical Library is as follows:

“Joseph Glover was born in Colleton County in 1778. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania in 1800, he returned to the Lowcountry where he practiced for the rest of his life. He was said to be the first physician in Charleston to specialize in surgery, eventually sub-specializing in eye surgery and lithotomy. He served as Surgeon General of South Carolina in 1819 and 1824. An active member of the Medical Society of South Carolina, of which he served as president, he was instrumental in setting up the Shirras Dispensary in Charleston where he worked for many years. He was also involved in establishing the short-lived Botanic Garden which provided local physicians with medicinal plants.”⁹⁵

Arthur Gordon Rose, the second owner, was responsible for the Italianate upgrades and addition of the fourth story circa late 1860s and complete by 1871. He was born in 1793 in South Carolina. Rose was elected as president of the Bank of Charleston in 1850, serving until 1856. He was then director of the bank until his retirement in 1866.⁹⁶ He lived in the house from the 1840s until he sold it in 1877.⁹⁷ He died while abroad in Kensington, England in 1880 and was eulogized in Charleston:

Arthur G. Rose. The father of Dr. A B Rose of this city, died in London on the 5th instant, in the 87th year of his age. He is connected with the past of Charleston and was one of her most prominent citizens in the days of her brightest history. He was an officer in the old United States Bank of this city, and upon the suspension of that bank he was elected the first cashier of the Bank of Charleston, which was organized soon after 1830. He remained cashier of this bank until 1851 and upon retirement of Mr. Henry W Conner in that year he was elected president of the bank, but remaining as one of its directors. Mr. Rose was a man of high tone, good sense, and great integrity. The bank of which he was a president for many years had a capital of \$3,000,000, the largest that any bank has ever had in this city, and by its wide spread influence in the West, his bank did more for the prosperity of Charleston than any similar institution has ever done, either before or since. In 1866 he went to London to spend the remainder of his life with his married daughter. The announcement of his death, which has just reached Charleston, will be received with genuine sorrow by all who knew him in the days that are gone and who were wont to look up to him as a gentleman of the old school, a man of pure moral character and business integrity.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ *City Directories*, Charleston County Will Book (proven 9 June 1840), *Charleston Courier*, 11 June 1840.

⁹⁵ Biography of Dr. Glover, from Waring portrait gallery. <http://waring.library.musc.edu/portraits/Glover.php>

⁹⁶ *Charleston Courier*, 18 February 1850.

⁹⁷ *Charleston City Directories*.

⁹⁸ *News and Courier*, 19 August 1880. *London Gazette*, 10 August 1880.

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Rose sold the Sottile House to **Benjamin F. Moise** (1830- January 1887) in 1877.⁹⁹ Benjamin and his son Benjamin F. Moise Jr. were both listed as heads of the house (59 Rutledge before the address change to 81 Rutledge) in 1891. Benjamin F. Moise was a prominent Jewish druggist in the city, who co-owned the drug and dry goods firm, Dowie and Moise, located on Meeting Street. Moise was chairman of the Board of Health under Mayor Courtenay in 1880 until his resignation in 1882. Under his leadership, cemeteries were placed under Board supervision, disinfection routines for contagious houses were expanded, and numerous city drains were cleaned. The City of Charleston eulogized him in the annual *Charleston Yearbook* upon his death: "Moise was for several years a member of the Executive Committee of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina, and he was an earnest and thorough worker. He had a quaint belief that the office should seek the man. Alive, however, to the obligation, he kept himself well informed on all civil and political matters and issues, so as to be able to intelligently discharge any call that might be made. His death was sudden and unexpected. Attacked with pleurisy, he went to Aiken, seeking the assistance of its climate; but it was unavailing and he died 15 January 1887, in the 57th year of his age."¹⁰⁰ After Moise Sr.'s death, his widow Amanda remained at the house until around 1899, and then the heirs sold the property to Giovanni Sottile.¹⁰¹ During Moise's ownership of the house, Charleston was hit with the catastrophic Earthquake of 1886, in late August. The newspaper reported that "the brick front of Mr. B.F. Moise's residence in Rutledge Street is being repaired."¹⁰²

Potential for archeology: The Sottile House has a large side garden which was never built upon and has likely been a formal garden since the house's construction. There is a one story outbuilding and yard to the rear of the lot. There is a potential for garden archaeology in the side garden to determine original configuration and plantings, and potential for simple archaeology in the rear of the yard to document the working parts of the lot.

⁹⁹ Deed book F17 pg. 319.

¹⁰⁰ *Charleston Yearbook* 1887, pg. 32-33; findagrave.com lists him interred at the Coming Street Jewish burial ground.

¹⁰¹ *Charleston City Directories*. Lopez to Sottile, 6 May 1905. Deed book F24-465.

¹⁰² *News and Courier*, 16 September 1886.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # SC-320
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property _____ 0.4 acres _____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 32.779976° | Longitude: -79.942021° |
| 2. Latitude: 32.779707° | Longitude: -79.941869° |
| 3. Latitude: 32.779519° | Longitude: -79.942345° |
| 4. Latitude: 32.779803° | Longitude: -79.942482° |

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The address for the Sottile House is 81 Rutledge Avenue, in the City of Charleston, South Carolina. The lot is located on the west side of Rutledge Avenue and measures 110 feet on Rutledge Avenue by 159 feet in depth. The Tax map parcel number for the house is 4570304083. The boundary corresponds to parcel number 4570304083 on the attached Charleston County tax map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries were derived from the current legal description of the property filed with the Charleston County Register of Deeds and the Charleston County Assessor's Office. The current lot boundaries and size are identical to the lot dimensions during Giovanni Sottile's ownership.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Christina R. Butler
organization: Butler Preservation L.C.
street & number: 6 Hampden Court
city or town: Charleston state: SC zip code: 29403
e-mail c.rae.butler@gmail.com
telephone: 843-469-9623
date: January 11, 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Sottile, Giovanni, House
Name of Property

Charleston, SC
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Sottile, Giovanni, House

City or Vicinity: Charleston

County: Charleston State: SC

Photographer: Christina R. Butler

Date Photographed: September-October 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 62: East (front) facade of Sottile House, facing west
- 2 of 62: Balconettes and French doors on east (front) façade, facing northwest
- 3 of 62: East (front) piazza door, facing west
- 4 of 62: east (front) wrought iron and stucco fence
- 5 of 62: piazzas on southern elevation, facing north, as viewed from garden
- 6 of 62: perspective view of piazzas, facing northeast, from garden
- 7 of 62: southern garden wall, facing east
- 8 of 62: southern garden, viewed from third story piazza, facing south
- 9 of 62: driveway gate featuring a cast S for Sottile, located on northern property line, facing north
- 10 of 62: driveway on northern side of property, looking west
- 11 of 62: north façade of Sottile House from driveway, facing south
- 12 of 62: non-contributing building near western (rear) property line, facing east
- 13 of 62: east (front façade) of outbuilding facing west
- 14 of 62: west/rear elevation of outbuilding wood frame addition, facing west
- 15 of 62: north elevation of outbuilding, facing west, taken from driveway
- 16 of 62: north elevation of outbuilding showing recycled fretwork balustrade, taken from rear yard, facing west

Sottile, Giovanni, House

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- 17 of 62: south elevation of outbuilding, facing northwest, taken from Sottile House
third story piazza
- 18 of 62: intersection of main house and outbuilding, standing in garden, facing
north
- 19 of 62: door to ground floor from piazza, facing north
- 20 of 62: first floor windows on south elevation, with solid panel shutters
- 21 of 62: Looking through piazza door into vestibule from sidewalk, facing west
- 22 of 62: Vestibule door and stairs with cast iron railing, as viewed from second
story piazza, facing east
- 23 of 62: Ceiling in vestibule
- 24 of 62: front/east guest room on ground floor facing west, looking into stair hall to
back guest room
- 25 of 62: front/east guest room, as viewed from stair hall, looking east
- 26 of 62: newel post and stairs from ground floor to second story, facing north
- 27 of 62: second story piazza, facing west
- 28 of 62: gallery doors with louvered shutters on third story piazza, facing north
- 29 of 62: third story piazza facing east toward Rutledge Avenue
- 30 of 62: perspective view of cast iron piazza balustrades, facing southeast
- 31 of 62: front door to second story from piazza, showing the etched GS glass,
facing north, looking into stair hall
- 32 of 62: front door to second story from piazza, facing north
- 33 of 62: stairs from second to third story, facing north
- 34 of 62: door below main stairs, leading from ground floor to second story
- 35 of 62: stair hall on second story, facing east toward front parlor
- 36 of 62: parquet and marquetry flooring in front second story parlor, looking east
into the room
- 37 of 62: front second floor parlor facing east, showing chandelier, cornice molding,
and Sottile era mirrors
- 38 of 62: detail of plaster cornice and gilding in front second floor parlor
- 39 of 62: plaster and gilded medallion and crystal chandelier
- 40 of 62: six panel door, as viewed from front parlor, facing west toward stair hall
- 41 of 62: dining room on second story, facing west from stair hall
- 42 of 62: dining room looking through gallery doors to piazza, facing south
- 43 of 62: Italian black marble mantel with baroque cast insert, dining room
- 44 of 62: detail of marquetry flooring in dining room
- 45 of 62: looking into kitchen (rear bay) of house from dining room, facing west
- 46 of 62: rear hall to servant stairs in rear bay of the house, facing west
- 47 of 62: servant stairs from ground to second story, facing northeast
- 48 of 62: detail below stair landing from second to third story in main stair hall
- 49 of 62: front bedroom on third story, facing north, showing cornice and mantel
- 50 of 62: black Italian marble mantel in front bedroom
- 51 of 62: detail of plaster cornice in front bedroom
- 52 of 62: rear bedroom on third story, facing east to stair hall
- 53 of 62: mantle in rear bedroom

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54 of 62: remains of rear servant stairs from second to third story, from closet framed in the rear bay of the third story
55 of 62: stair hall from third to fourth story, looking north
56 of 62: glass wall at top of fourth story landing, facing south
57 of 62: glass doors, looking north toward stair hall
58 of 62: front bedroom on fourth story, facing northeast
59 of 62: door from front bedroom to hall on fourth story, facing west
60 of 62: fourth story partition hall, facing west toward rear bedroom and rear bathroom bay
61 of 62: wood mantle in rear bedroom on fourth story
62 of 62: sewing room in rear bay of fourth story

Index of Figures

Figure 1 of 15 Lots 41 and 42 where Sottile House is located, as shown on City Engineer Plat pg. 68, image 3. (Charleston Archive, Charleston County Public Library.)
Figure 2 of 15 1902 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* showing building footprint and outbuildings
Figure 3 of 15 1944 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* showing building footprint and outbuildings
Figure 4 of 15 1951 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* showing building footprint and outbuildings
Figure 5 of 15 Perspective view of east (front) façade from *This is Charleston*, published by Samuel Stoney, 1940
Figure 6 of 15 Benjamin F. Moise Jr. in 1881. Courtesy of Special Collections, College of Charleston.
Figure 7 of 15 Portrait of Giovanni Sottile published in *Stories of the South Carolina Lowcountry, Volume III* by Herbert Ravenel Sass, 1956.
Figure 8 of 15 Portrait of Carmelina Sottile published in *Stories of the South Carolina Lowcountry, Volume III* by Herbert Ravenel Sass, 1956.
Figure 9 of 15 Undated portrait of Giovanni Sottile. SCBF- Sottile vertical file, South Carolina Room, Charleston County Public Library
Figure 10 of 15 Carmelina Sottile Thompson seated in the front parlor of Glover Sottile House. *Charleston News and Courier*, 19 May, 1987
Figure 11 of 15 Perspective view of east (front façade), HABS survey SC-320
Figure 12 of 15 Perspective view of attic story Italianate details on east (front façade), HABS survey SC-320
Figure 13 of 15 Wrought iron gate to driveway down northern property line, HABS survey SC-320
Figure 14 of 15 First floor east (front) parlor facing east, viewed from central hall, HABS survey SC-320
Figure 15 of 15 First floor east (front) parlor facing northeast toward mantel, HABS survey SC-320

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



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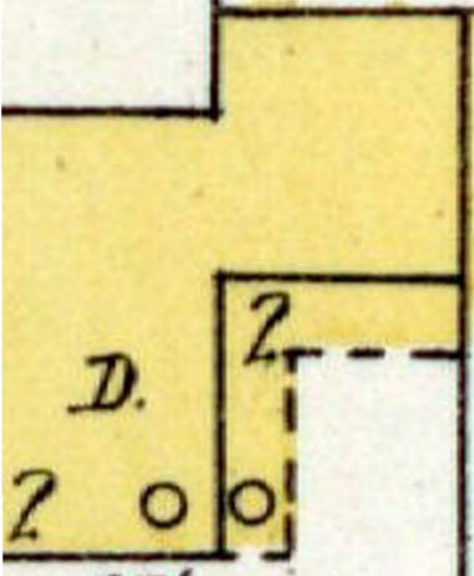
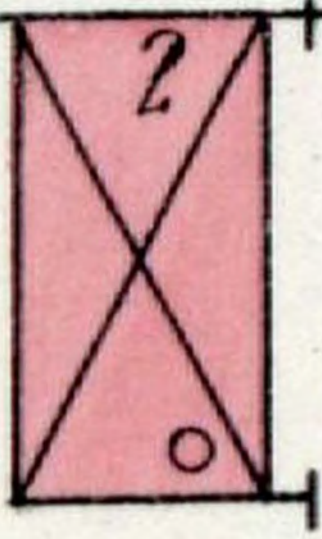
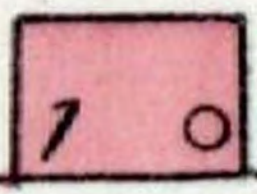
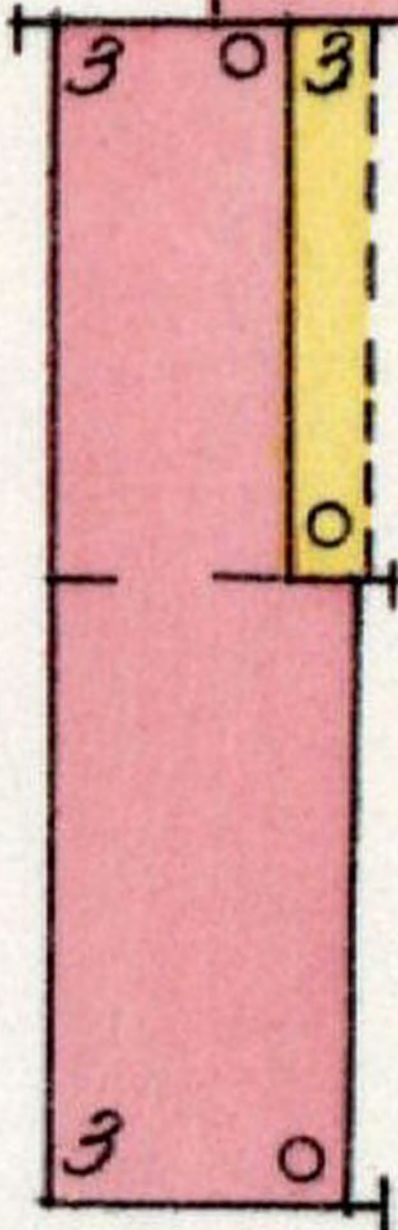
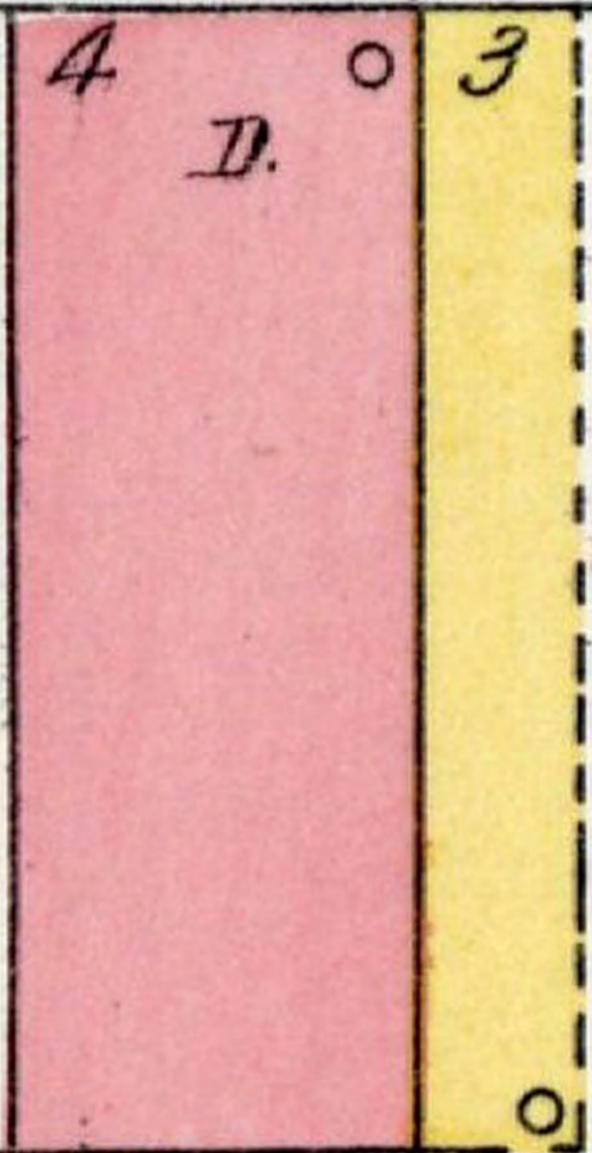








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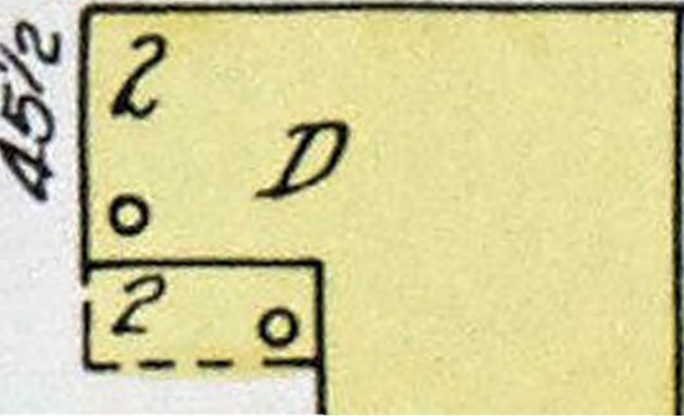
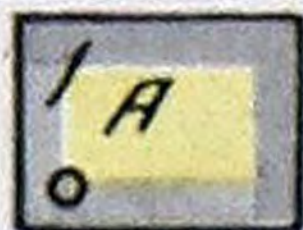
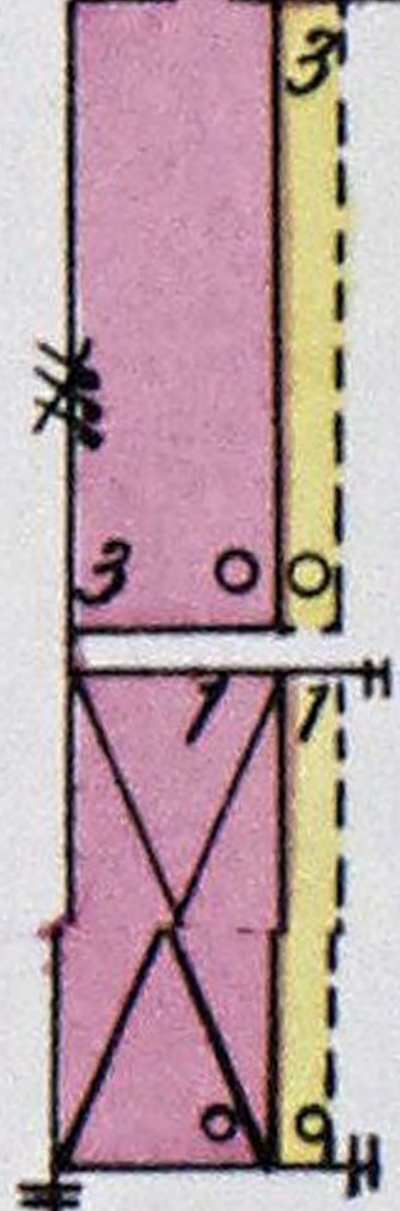
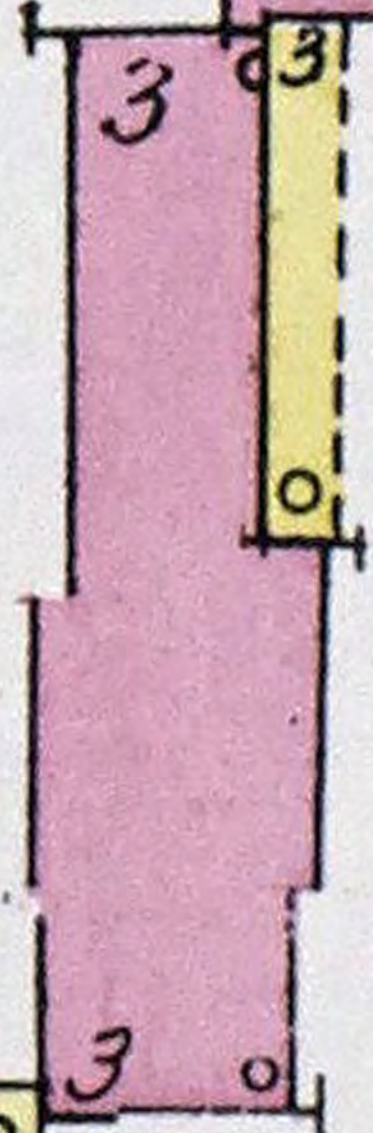
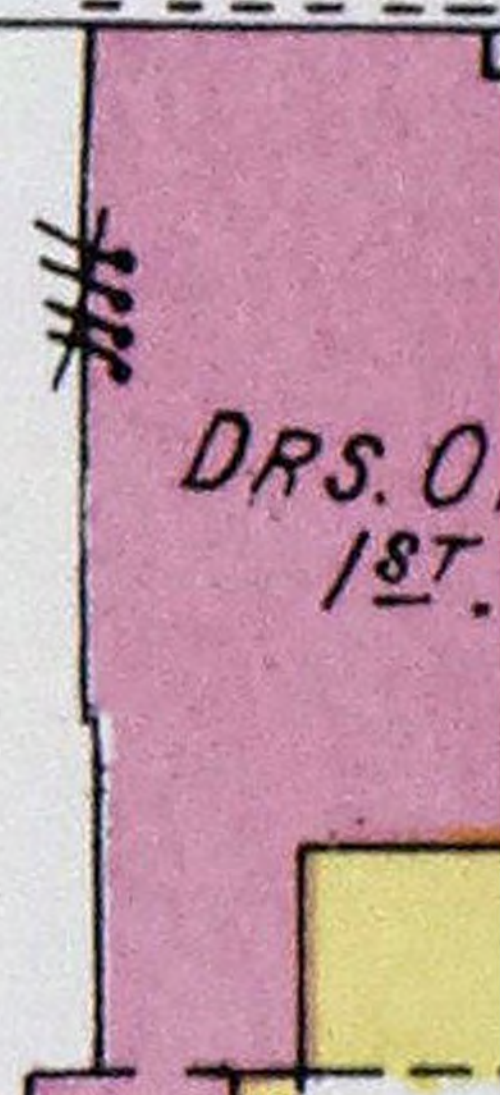
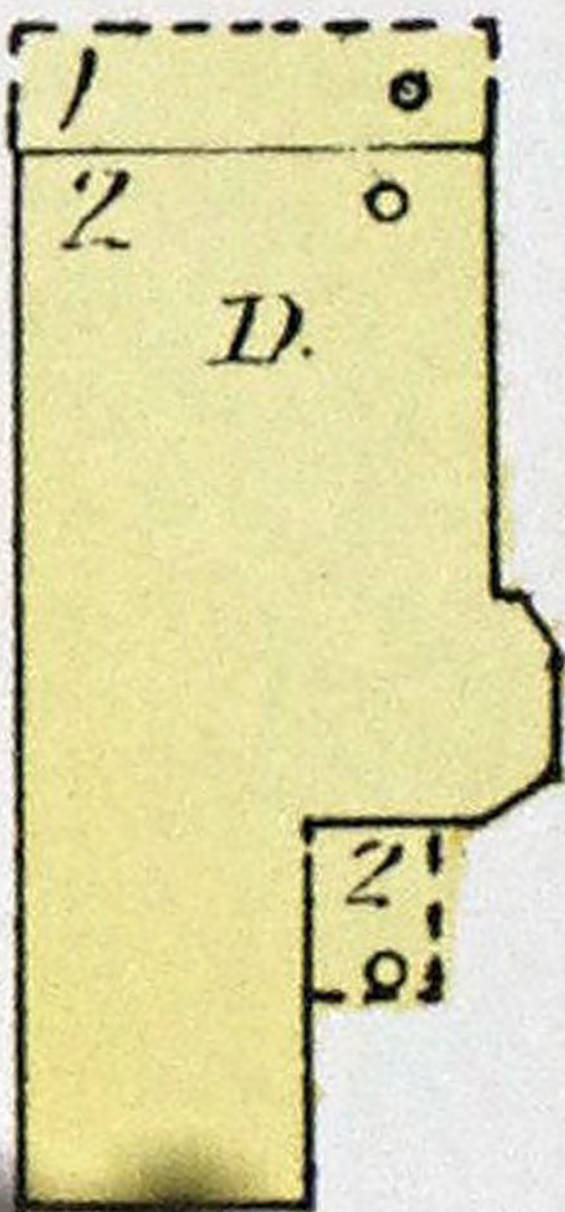
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6" W. PIPE

16" W.P

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81



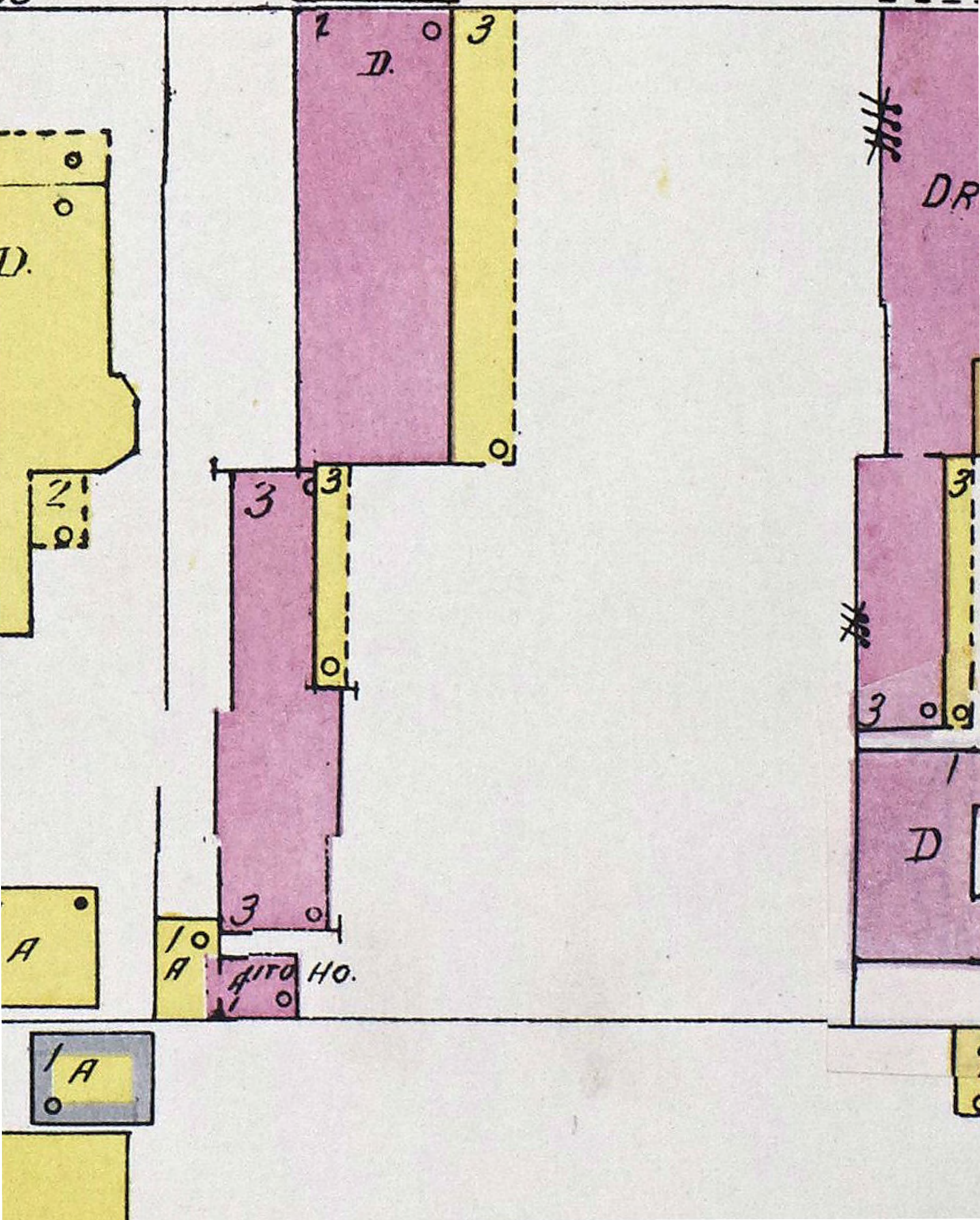
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81 Rutledge Avenue
Ante Bellum. Notable











ABS # SC-320



HABS N. SC-320-10





HABS # SC-320



HABS #SC-320



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination
Property Name: Sottile, Giovanni, House
Multiple Name:
State & County: SOUTH CAROLINA, Charleston

Date Received: 3/22/2019 Date of Pending List: 4/5/2019 Date of 16th Day: 4/22/2019 Date of 45th Day: 5/6/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100003690

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 4/30/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary AOS: Ethnic Heritage: European/Italian, Social History, Architecture; POS: 1867, 1905-1913; LOS: local. Significant person: Giovanni Sottile, Italian consular agent to Charleston.

Recommendation/ Criteria: B & C.
Criteria

Reviewer Lisa Deline Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2239 Date 4/30/19

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
ARCHIVES & HISTORY



March 21, 2019

Ms. Joy Beasley
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley:

Enclosed is the National Register nomination for the Sottile, Giovanni, House in Charleston, Charleston County, South Carolina. The nomination was approved by the South Carolina State Board of Review as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B and Criterion C at the local level of significance. We are now submitting this nomination for formal review by the National Register staff. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Sottile, Giovanni, House to the National Register of Historic Places.

If I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below, call me at (803) 896-6179 or e-mail me at vharness@scdah.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

Virginia E. Harness
Architectural Historian and National Register Co-Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office
8301 Parklane Rd.
Columbia, S.C. 29223