

Charles and Estelle Miller House, Built 1899 **1826 Avenue K**

Galveston Historical Foundation acquired this two-story L-plan frame house after it was damaged by fire in 2018. Located in the Lost Bayou Historic District, Charles and Estelle Miller built the house in 1899. The building's original insurance record, dated 10 June 1899, described a single-family house "about ten days" from completion elevated 6 ½ feet above a basement that contained servant's quarters and lavatory. The two main floors of the house supported nine rooms, two halls, six closets, one bathroom, a water closet, one fireplace and five porches.

Charles Miller was born in New Orleans and came to Galveston after the Civil War with his brother, Jacob. In 1874, they established the clothing firm, Miller Brothers, manufacturers of men's work clothing tailored to sailors and longshoremen. By 1890, the *Galveston Tribune* reported the firm employed more than fifty skilled workers at their facility on Mechanic Street.

In June 1880, Charles married Estelle Schram, daughter of pioneer Galvestonians Meyer and Henrietta Schram. The Millers were active in social and civic affairs of the city and were members of Temple B'nai Israel. After Charles' sudden death a month after the house was completed, Estelle maintained the family residence on Avenue K with her three daughters. She sold the house in 1921 to Faustine Tacquard. John and Adele Holmes bought the house from the Tacquard estate in 1940. During their ownership, the house was subdivided and converted into a duplex. The Holmes family maintained ownership of the property until 2018.

Purchase and rehabilitation of the Miller House is supported by the Foundation's Residential Revolving Fund. During rehabilitation GHF reconstructed approximately 30% of the building, built a new roof structure and stabilized the foundation before work on the interior began. While most of the smoke damage to the interior was superficial, a significant portion of the original trim and molding was milled to match the original and replaced. Interior doors were also replaced and the original windows were re-glazed. Period appropriate windows and salvaged wood from GHF's Architecture Salvage Warehouse were used to replace windows too damaged to save and to repair and patch the original long leaf pine floors. New electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems were also installed.

Hidden architectural features were also discovered during the process. Necessary demolition to remove damaged portions of the interior exposed a panel wall on the interior staircase that was saved while examination of historic images and maps revealed an upstairs porch had been enclosed on the south façade of the house. The enclosed porch was reversed and new spindles were turned to match the original design for the porch as well as the interior staircase.