

## History of 252 St. George Street 'The Bronson Cottage'

November 29, 1875

"My dear Mr. Davis,

I don't know whether the news of my very quiet wedding has reached you...for love of the delightful climate of Florida, Mr. Bronson & I are about establishing ourselves in this old town of St. Augustine, for the winter months each year, & we wish to build a cottage....

Very Sincerely,

Isabel Donaldson Bronson"

The above excerpt is from the personal correspondence between Isabel Bronson and the renowned architect Alexander Jackson Davis. It was found in the archives of the St. Augustine Historical Society. The result of Isabel Bronson's initial request is the elegant, timeless 252 St. George Street, which was described in the society newspaper *Tatler* as "the very attractive residence known as Bronson's Cottage". Several references in *Tatler* chart the history of The Bronson Cottage, all fascinating glimpses into the rich life of this home which boasts only 6 owners since 1875.

*Tatler* 1892 – "One of the most delightful entertainments of this season was the breakfast given on Saturday at the Bronson Cottage...breakfast was served at small tables most artistically decorated in different colors, beautiful flowers harmonizing with the color of each table was placed upon them."

*Tatler* 1898 - "A Brilliant Reception given by the Woodruffs at Bronson Cottage: Capt. & Mrs. Woodruff occupy the Bronson Villa, one of the handsome houses of the city, having large, lofty rooms and broad halls opening into each other, thus admirable fitted for entertaining. The beautiful rooms with their artistic furnishings were bright with flowers and lights and merry with voices of happy people all the evening..."

*Tatler* 1902 – "This Bronson property has every desirable feature, and all the improvements of a fine home, and no better location in the city. It is well worth seeing, and the consideration of anyone who would buy or lease something large and choice."

## Alexander Jackson Davis

1803-1892

Alexander Jackson Davis was one of the most widely acclaimed American nineteenth-century architects. His interpretation of Greek Revival style can be seen in his designs of villas and townhouses along New York's Fifth Avenue, the New York Customs House, North Carolina's State Capitol, and even Yale University's Skull & Bones Society's clubhouse. 'The Bronson Cottage' was built in 1875 and remains the only building in Florida designed by Alexander Davis due to his close personal relationship with the Bronson Family from New York.