

# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

February 3, 1997

Mr. Uhland Redd  
747 North Wood Avenue  
Florence, Alabama 35630

Re: Forks of Cypress Stabilization  
Project No. 97011

Dear Uhland:

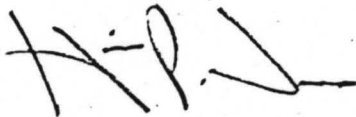
It was a pleasure to visit the still-beautiful ruins of the Forks of Cypress House with your committee on January 31. It is very desirable to stabilize these ruins so that some sense of this important early nineteenth century house and plantation remains with us.

In our brief look the following items are apparent:

1. All but one radial-brick column is standing, to most of the original column height.
2. Due to thirty years of water penetration into the unprotected tops of the columns and freeze-thaw cycles of the soaked column tops, it appears that the top two feet or so of most columns is now simply a stack of unbonded bricks. The mortar has deteriorated and the triangular bricks have been pushed apart and outward by freezing (expanding) water. Many top bricks are on the verge of falling in a strong wind, and of course many have already come down. One column has collapsed.
3. The sides of the limestone column bases toward the 1960's fire were decomposed by the fire's heat and have sloughed off, leaving a chopped-off appearance on those sides.
4. The 1930's Historic American Buildings Survey drawings show the column heights to be 22'-6-1/2" from the veranda floor to the tops of the Ionic capitals. It would be good to measure the present heights to see how much of the columns remain.
5. The limestone edging of the veranda floor has deteriorated to some degree, putting the columns which it supports in jeopardy.
6. It appears that a majority of the veranda brick flooring remains.
7. The basement cavity edge is unprotected with regard to site visitors and would require an inconspicuous rail if the site is to be opened to the public to any degree. The basement is partly filled with soil and collapsed brick retaining walls. See Note 12 re archaeology.
8. The huge tree west of the house (which shows on the 1930's HABS plans) needs the care of a trained tree-surgeon.
9. There is at present no access road to the site. A good location for this would be by the road that shows on the 1930's plan which runs near the east edge of the hill, by the stone chimney of the burned log house. Even better, if feasible, would be to approach the ruins from the southeast so that you rise up the hill to the plateau and the house. This would approximate the similar approach from a tree-lined axis directly south of the house as shown on the 1930's site plan.

10. There is a resilient natural-cement (no plastics) pressure-grout system ("Jahn" Restoration Mortar) made to strengthen and stabilize fragile and soft historic masonry. We used it with excellent results in about 1987 on the then-fragile 60-foot high brick bell tower of the 1859 Church of the Nativity in Huntsville. This could be used on the deteriorated stone veranda-edge to strengthen the support of the columns. After the loose top approximately 2' of the column shafts is relaid by hand (using resilient hydrated-lime and sand mortar, not Portland cement mortar), this same system might be helpful for strengthening the column shafts if normal repointing (hydrated lime and sand mortar) is not sufficient. This system is fairly expensive. The cost is mostly based on the quantity of the grout required, plus set-up. The grout was developed in Holland especially for restoring fragile and weak historic masonry. It has high resiliency and adhesion and fills tiny cracks. It is very harmful to use hard, brittle Portland cement mortar with soft historic masonry. It tends to further damage the masonry due to trapping water, and temperature-movement stresses.
11. The tops of the columns, after stabilization, need to have neat and inconspicuous flashing caps, probably of 16 oz. copper formed to fit the top and securely anchored and sealed against wind-uplift.
12. Before any excavation is done on the grounds, veranda or basement, archaeological exploration should be done to the limits of funding and recommendations of the Alabama Historical Commission.
13. Plans should be formulated as to whether and how often the public will be allowed on the site. This will affect access and security provisions and many other aspects.
14. No engineer can state with certainty that the stabilized columns will be absolutely safe from collapse in some situation. While we need to get the best opinion we can on this, safety and liability must be addressed, with appropriate legal and insurance advice.
15. A more thorough examination will probably bring more items for consideration.
16. This beautiful and evocative ruin should be preserved. Please let me know if I can be of further help.

Respectfully,



Harvie P. Jones, FAIA  
HPJ/trn

copy: HJ  
file

attachments



STATE OF ALABAMA  
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

468 South Perry Street  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-0900



F. LAWRENCE OAKS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

\*\*\* FACSIMILE COVER SHEET \*\*\*

TELEPHONE NUMBER  
334-242-3184

FAX TELEPHONE NUMBER: 334 240-3477

\*\*\*\*\*

DATE: 9 Sept 1997 FROM: Bob Gamble

TO: Harvie Jones, FAIA  
Jones & Herrin, Architects  
Huntsville

FAX NO. 205/534-2289

COMMENTS:

Harvie - Hope the annexed comments will help.

NO. OF PAGES TO FOLLOW: 5

\*\*\*\*\*

PLEASE DELIVER IMMEDIATELY

334-242-3184-01-7134

Bill Ray Warren  
FAX - 205-760-0317



STATE OF ALABAMA  
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

468 South Perry Street  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-0900



F. LAWRENCE OAKS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TELEPHONE NUMBER  
334-242-3184

9 September 1997

Mr. Harvie P. Jones, FAIA  
Jones Herrin, Architects  
104 Jefferson Street  
Huntsville, AL 35801

Dear Harvie:

As I said in our telephone conversations of yesterday and last week, the people in Florence -- more specifically Heritage Preservation, Inc. (HPI) and the ad hoc Forks of Cypress preservation committee -- are eager to proceed with at least some stabilization work on the ruins before another season of cold and rainy winter weather sets in.

Toward this end (and despite continued vacillation on the part of one of the prospective donors of the property), everyone involved would like to get the specific "bricks-and-mortar" planning over and done with as quickly as possible now that there is grant money to do so. This should enable Craig Construction Company in Florence to proceed quickly; in fact, Billy Warren, current president of HPI, is advising Craig that they would like to get underway with some of the work as early as mid-October if this is possible. At the same time, completion of the plans should hopefully allay some of the ongoing concerns of the reluctant donor. Once he can see "something on paper," arranged in a literal, step-by-step way, we should get past a last major stumbling block.

I know it is asking a lot given your forthcoming trip to Italy, but if you could give this project a priority, we would all be deeply grateful. Everyone hates to see the fall work season completely lost and still further deterioration of the ruined colonnade as a result.

As regards a tangible "game plan" for stabilization, to be presented on paper to the current Forks owners, the starting point would obviously be your February letter, which is already quite complete. You may wish to update, supplement or supplant the letter. At any rate, including a clear *step-by-step* summary of the work to be done, along with a tentative time frame and estimated cost of each phase, should suffice. It would be well if this written data were accompanied by a schematic sketch of the site (either a ground plan based on the HABS data or a perspective showing the ruins with their permanent fencing or barrier around them), an interpretive marker or two, and -- thinking longrange -- possibly even lighting for night-time illumination, though this latter is definitely "frosting on the cake" at this juncture. Incidentally, all seem to agree that the basement area within the perimeter of the ruined columns should simply



Page Two

be filled in and attractively sodded, rather like a park area. Craig Construction will obviously need shop drawings, but to satisfy the current qualms of the present owners, the kind of initial information I describe above should suffice.

When I talked with one of the owners, Dr. Gilbert Melson, over the weekend, he mentioned that a temporary protective fence might be put up around the outside of the columns -- roughly 30-40 feet away -- until local preservationists can in the future afford something more aesthetic and permanent. My own view is that anyone really determined to get across a fence can do so; thus the permanent enclosure could *suggest* "no trespassing" rather than being constructed so as to try to absolutely prohibit entry; the latter would be both costly and very intrusive visually.

As I said yesterday, Dr. Melson was also indecisive as to the exact right-of-way into the property, though I am pushing hard to get him to make up his mind within the next few days. On the sketch you might simply dot an access way in -- either along the old road by the log cabin site or west toward the present barn and existing lane system on the property. The right-of-way need not be fenced off or defined in any other way except via the legal description, since one of the stipulations in the donation is that access to the ruins via the right-of-way will always be requested beforehand anyway.

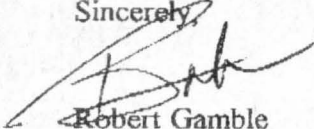
As to the fenced periphery around the ruins, this too can be a rough approximation. Dr. Melson wants to adjust the periphery a little here and there. At the same time, he hinted strongly over the weekend that this and his other concerns are simply refinements; that eventual donation of the ruins site itself is virtually a foregone conclusion. But a few "kinks" still need to be ironed out. It is on the strength of this assurance that we are now proceeding as quickly as possible.

Camille Bowman made a tape of Norman Weiss' comments when he visited the Forks ruins back in June. She is sending a copy to Billy Warren, and we can get a copy for you as well if you like.

Annexed are three maps of the Forks ruins site with a few notes that may help you a bit. If you have any questions or concerns about the points mentioned above, or anything else, please give me a call either this week before you go or when you get back.

Meanwhile, I wish you and Lynne an enjoyable trip to Vicenza and Tuscany.

Sincerely,



Robert Gamble  
Historian

cc: Robert Redd, Billy Warren

Forks of Cypress

Fluvial & glacial landforms

UTMS:

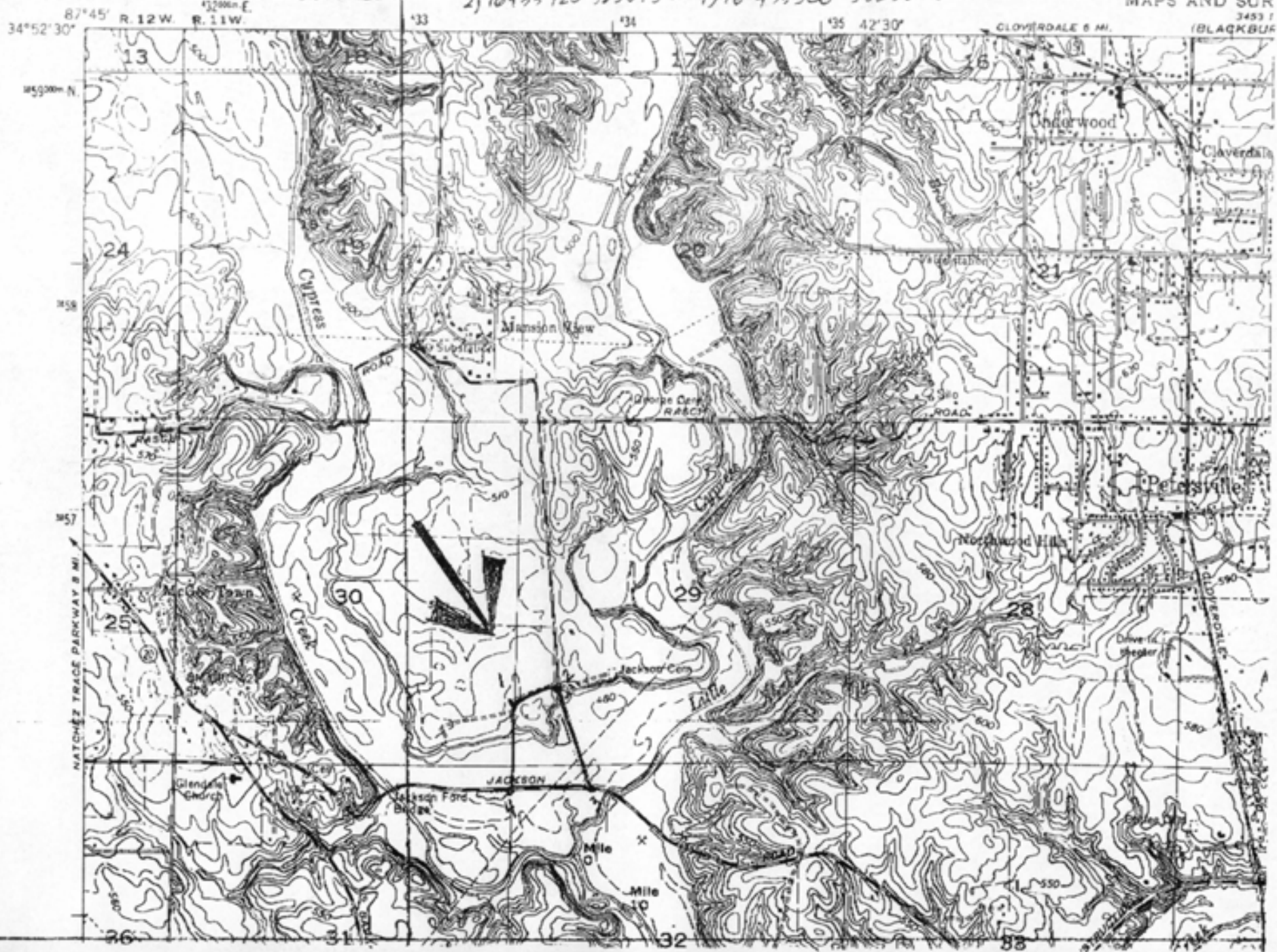
1) 16 433500 3856080 2) 16 433880 3855690

3) 16 433720 3856150 4) 16 433500 3855690

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

UNITED STATES  
TENNESSEE VALLEY  
MAPS AND SURVEY


3452 BY DE  
(THREE 35-NE)



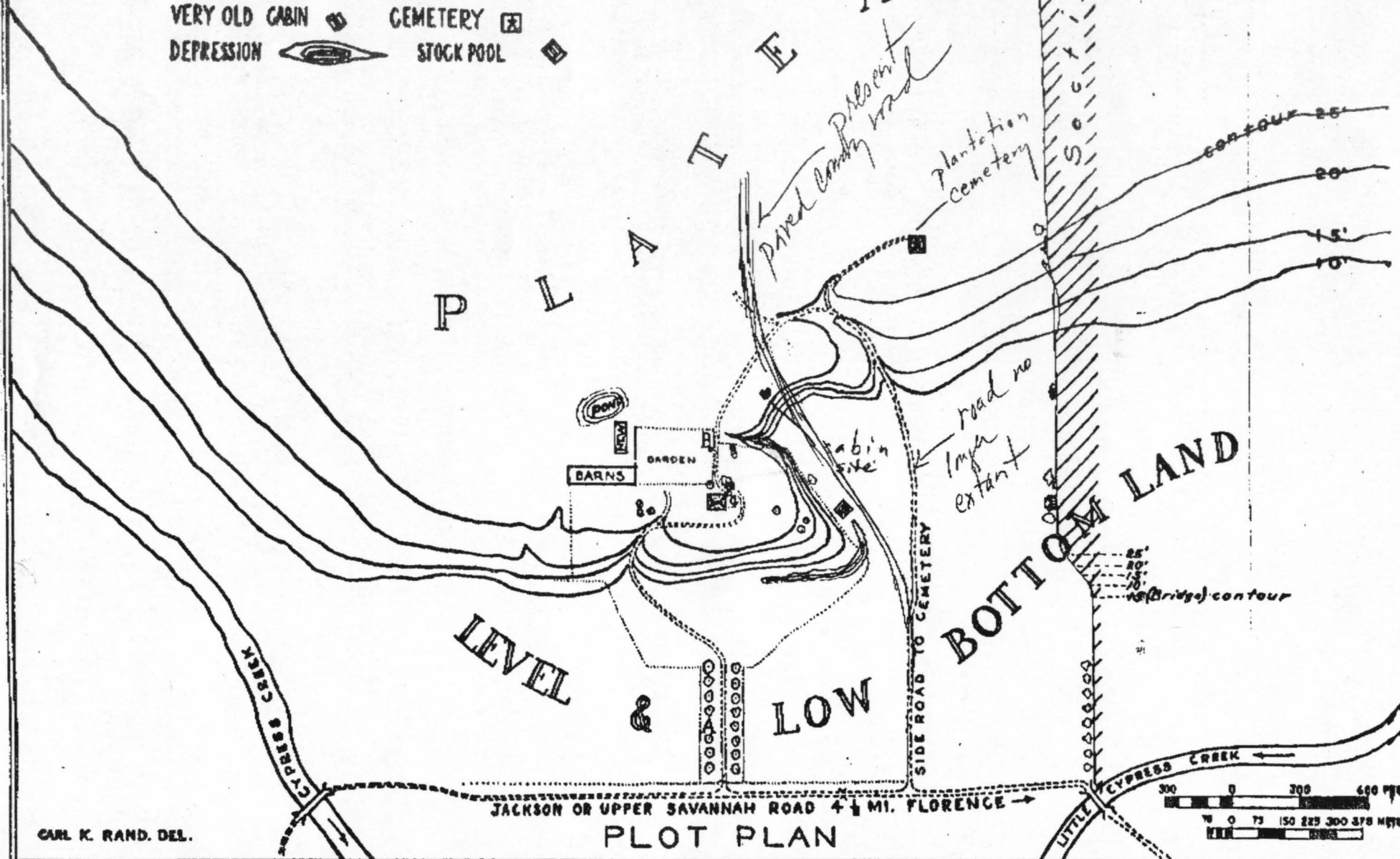
09/09/97 TUE 16:29 FAX 334 240 3477 334 240 3477

AL HISTORICAL 0004

# HABS Plan

- LEG. D A SAWD BURNED WALNUT STUMP 65 ANNUATIONS VISIBLE  
 PART OF AVENUE OF WALNUTS ORIGINAL PLANTINGS  
 B. RUINS OF ICE HOUSE  
 C. RUINS DETACHED KITCHENS  
 GRAVEL ROAD INDICATED ---- GISTERN ○  
 OLD FENCE LINE ..... SMOKEHOUSE ■  
 VERY OLD CABIN ◆ CEMETERY ☒  
 DEPRESSION  STOCK POOL ◆

P  
L  
A  
T  
E  
A  
U



BOTTOM LAND

LEVEL & LOW

JACKSON OR UPPER SAVANNAH ROAD 4 1/2 MI. FLORENCE →

## PLOT PLAN

CARL K. RAND. DEL.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NAME OF ATTRACTING

09/09/97 TUE 16:30 FAX 334 240 3477 334 240 3477 AL HISTORICAL

005



(A) + (B) are optional rights-of-way

1001  
106 Ac.±

roughly site of ruined mansion

30 29  
31 32

Present road system (1997)

03  
44 Ac.±

04  
114 Ac.±

25' EASEMENT

ROAD 17

POND

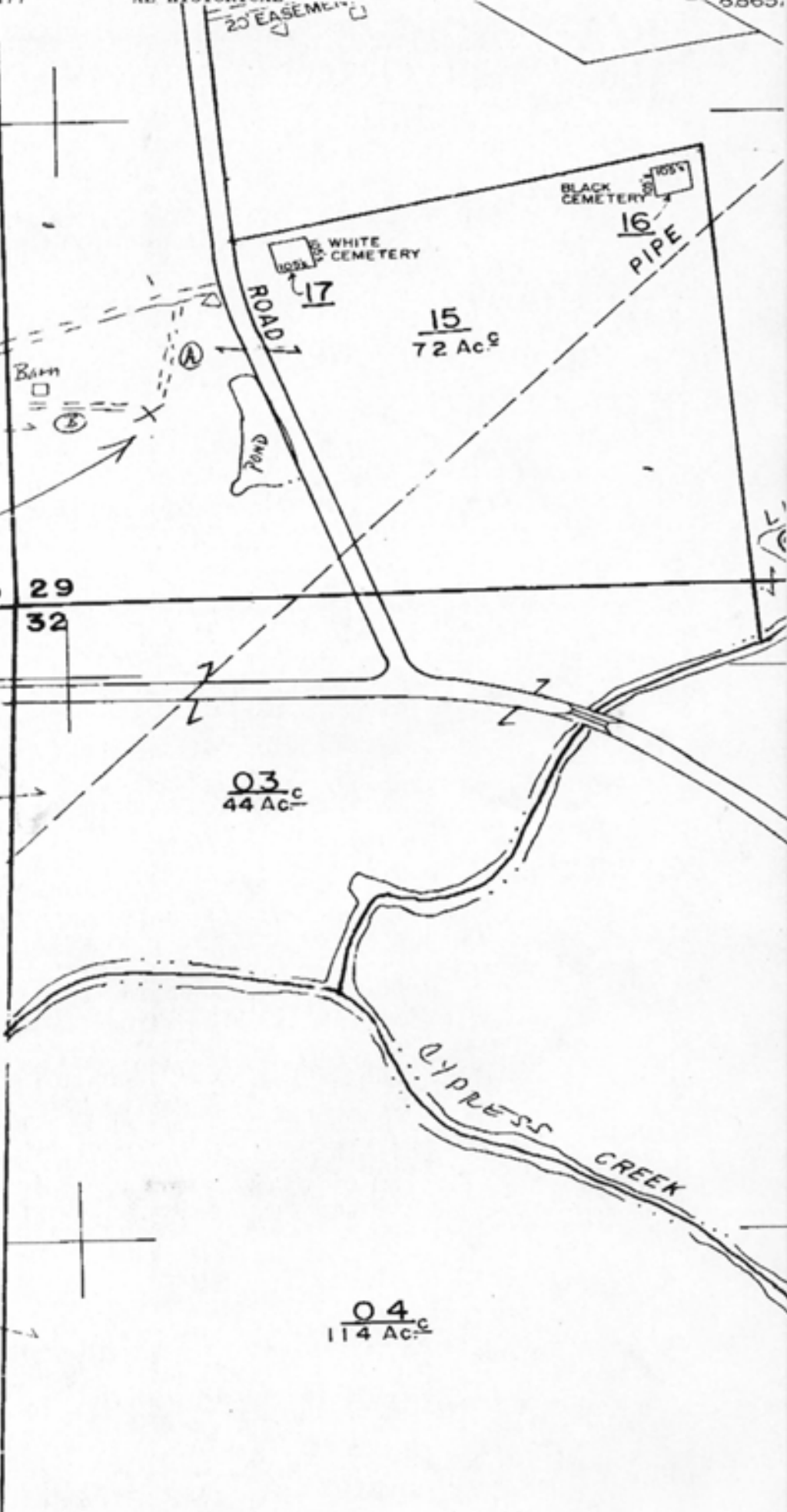
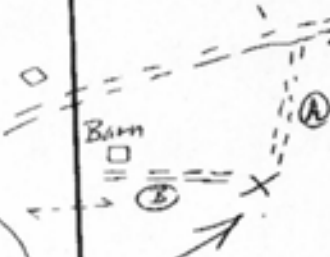
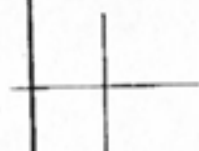
WHITE CEMETERY

BLACK CEMETERY

15  
72 Ac.±

16  
PIPE

CYPRESS CREEK





# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

## TRANSMITTAL

Date: 10 Sept '97

To: AHC - Mart

Bob Gumble

FAX 334-240-3477.

From: A Jones

Project: Forks of Cypress St. A.

Project No: 97-134

Re:

Copy:

Enclosed Herewith

Under Separate Cover

Via Fax (No. Pages Including Cover) 1

### Quantity/Description/Remarks:

Bob - W.M. do report & sketch today.

2. Costs must be wild guesses (force in particular - how long? What matl.? etc.)

3. W.M. send copy to you & Billy Ray Warren.

4. Need Norman Weiss' type copy.

P.S. - These are not "construction plans". These will take much more time, particularly if bids are required.

C-HJ

# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

Robert Redd  
Ann South Bank  
321 Seminary St.  
Florence ~~761-6240~~  
35630

1-205-760-6203 #7011

## TRANSMITTAL

Date: 10 Sept. 97

To: Billy Ray Warren  
FAX 205-760-0317

Heritage Preservation Inc.  
P.O. Box 2836  
Florence, AL, 35630

From: Harvie P. Jones

Project: Forks of Cypress

Project No: 97134 or 97011

Re: Prelim. Concept  
Copy:

Enclosed Herewith

Under Separate Cover

Via Fax (No. Pages Including Cover)

5

### Quantity/Description/Remarks:

Billy Ray —

Per our conversation plus information from  
Bob Gamble, attached is "Prelims. Outline of Work"  
& "Prelims. Estimate".

(3) Colored & B/W perspective views will be mailed  
Sept 11 (omit FAX).

(4) These documents cannot be used for constr.  
(No details are resolved).

All be out of office Sept 12 - Oct 2.

H. Jones

# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

**PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE  
THE FORKS OF CYPRESS  
STABILIZATION OF THE RUINS  
PROJECT NO. 97011**

September 10, 1997

At this early stage, many questions are unresolved, such as the location and length of the access road, size of the area to be fenced, type and height and cost of fence or wall, quantities of materials, survey of ruins damages and quantification of work and materials needed, etc. Therefore, the following items are only to be used as a rough approximation of items required and their costs. Considerable detail work and decisions by the current property owners and Heritage Preservation Inc. are required before a closer cost approximation can be obtained. Cost input from a contractor will also be required to determine more accurate costs.

1. Site enclosure fence (or wall) and double gates approximately 12' wide. An absolute minimum of 300 linear feet of fence or wall is required for a 30 foot minimum clearance from the stylobate. A wider clearance is highly desirable to avoid a cattle-pen effect around the ruins. Therefore, the linear feet could vary from 300 feet to 600 feet. Height should be 4 to 6 feet for minimal security. The cost of this item could vary from \$20,000 to \$50,000 depending on the above variables, with the minimum being a neat enameled vertical-light steel rod manufactured fence. Ideal would be brick piers about 10 feet on centers with 1/2 inch diameter vertical steel rods and rails between, as shown on the perspective sketch dated September 10, 1997.

A lower-cost alternative is the vinyl plus wire "rail" fence as used on the polo grounds east of Florence that was developed some years ago in Florence by Robins. However, this type fence would provide no security except from horses in the adjoining pasture.

Fencing of a "farm" type (net wire and cedar posts) may be needed to separate the access road/walk from the pasture. Cost perhaps \$2,000 depending on length.

2. Stabilization of the twenty-three remaining columns will require scaffolding, or many days of bucket-truck rental. This item, including repointing, grouting, capping etc. could cost about \$25,000.
3. Cleanup and repair of the brick veranda paving (3,350 square feet plus or minus) could cost about \$18,000.
4. Filling the basement, plus topsoil and sod (2,300 square feet of sod and about 18,000 cubic feet of compacted fill) could cost about \$8,000. This has to be done carefully to avoid further damage to the columns, stylobate, brick paving and brick basement walls.
5. Stabilization of the limestone stylobate walls, including resetting numerous stones, repointing, re-inforcement to support columns, some stone replacement etc. - 290 linear feet. Perhaps \$5,000.
6. Access road/walkway - See if the County or City will donate this. A river-gravel road of 12' width will suffice. No parking lot by the ruins should be made as it would detract greatly from the reason for this preservation project. Parking should be by the main road. Crushed limestone surfacing should not be used on the access drive/walk for its gray appearance would detract.

7. Security lighting activated by motion detectors (and perhaps alarms) should be provided, as at rural museums elsewhere. Cost?
8. Establishment of a minimal lawn around the ruins and planting of at least twenty appropriate hardwood shade trees (not small ornamentals such as dogwood). \$5,000.
9. Historic marker and signage - \$3,000.
10. Archaeological explanation of disturbed areas. Cost?
11. Tree-surgeon care of the two large shade trees by the ruins. Cost?
12. Other items will be brought to light in further examinations and consideration. Cost ?

Harvie P. Jones, FAIA



# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

**PRELIMINARY  
OUTLINE OF WORK  
FOR  
THE FORKS OF CYPRESS STABILIZATION  
FLORENCE, ALABAMA  
September 10, 1997**

**Project No. 97011**

The objective of this project is to stabilize the ruins of the early nineteenth century "Forks of Cypress" mansion, which was destroyed by a lightning fire in the 1960's.

The ruins consist of twenty-three of the original twenty-four periptal stuccoed-brick column shafts and limestone bases and plinths, the limestone stylobate and brick veranda, and the partly-filled brick basement.

1. All but one radial-brick column is standing, to most of the original column height.
2. Due to thirty years of water penetration into the unprotected tops of the columns and freeze-thaw cycles of the soaked column tops, it appears that the top two feet or so of most columns is now simply a stack of unbonded bricks. The mortar has deteriorated and the triangular bricks have been pushed apart and outward by freezing (expanding) water. Many top bricks are on the verge of falling in a strong wind, and of course many have already come down. One column has collapsed. Numerous bricks are missing due to souvenir-gathering, burial or deterioration.
3. The sides of the limestone column bases toward the 1960's fire were decomposed by the fire's heat and have sloughed off, leaving a chopped-off appearance on those sides. Without significant expenditure, this condition must be accepted.
4. The 1930's Historic American Buildings Survey drawings show the column heights to be 22'-6-1/2" from the veranda floor to the tops of the Ionic capitals. It would be good to measure the present heights to see how much of the columns remain.
5. The limestone edging of the veranda floor has deteriorated to some degree, putting the columns which it supports in jeopardy. These should be stabilized in a way that does not detract from appearances.
6. It appears that a majority of the veranda brick flooring remains. This should be cleaned of sod and debris and repaired for pedestrian traffic.
7. The basement cavity edge is unprotected with regard to site visitors and would require filling with soil if the site is to be opened to the public. See Note 12 regarding archaeology.
8. The huge tree west of the house (which shows on the 1930's HABS plans) needs the care of a trained tree-surgeon.
9. There is at present no access road to the site. A good location for this would be by the road that shows on the 1930's plan which runs near the east edge of the hill, by the stone chimney of the burned log house. Even better, if feasible, would be to approach the ruins from the southeast so that you rise up the hill to the plateau and the house. This would approximate the similar

approach from a tree-lined axis directly south of the house as shown on the 1930's site plan. The access route must be resolved with the property owners. An alternate route would be from the north, past the site of the slave-cabin that was burned by arsonists in circa 1992.

10. There is a resilient natural-cement (no plastics) pressure-grout system ("Jahn" Restoration Mortar) made to strengthen and stabilize fragile and soft historic masonry. This firm used it with excellent results in about 1987 on the then-fragile 60-foot high brick bell tower of the 1859 Church of the Nativity in Huntsville. This could be used on the deteriorated stone veranda-edge to strengthen the support of the columns. After the loose top (approximately 2') of the column shafts is re-laid by hand (using resilient hydrated-lime and sand mortar, not Portland cement mortar), this same system might be helpful for strengthening the column shafts if normal repointing (hydrated lime and sand mortar) is not sufficient. This system is fairly expensive. The cost is mostly based on the quantity of the grout required, plus set-up. The grout was developed in Holland especially for restoring fragile and weak historic masonry. It has high resiliency and adhesion and fills tiny cracks. It is very harmful to use hard, brittle Portland cement mortar with soft historic masonry. It tends to further damage the masonry due to trapping water, and temperature-movement stresses.
11. Where the mortar has eroded out of the brick joints, these joints need to be properly repointed, using hydrated lime based mortar that is compatible in its physical characteristics, joint profile and color with the original mortar. The joints should be neatly tooled to match the existing exposed joints. The mason for this would need to be instructed by the architect since this is not in a mason's usual experience.
12. It is assumed that the stucco surfaces are to remain without repairs or infilling of missing stucco. One area of modern Portland cement stucco is assumed to remain for now.
13. The tops of the columns, after stabilization, need to have neat and inconspicuous flashing caps, probably of 16 oz. copper formed to fit the top and securely anchored and sealed against wind-uplift. A cheaper but impermanent method (perhaps two - ten years) would be a stucco cap, sloped to drain.
14. Before any excavation is done on the grounds, veranda or basement, archaeological exploration should be done to the limits of funding and recommendations of the Alabama Historical Commission.
15. A permanent and appropriate fence or brick wall and gate should surround the site to provide some degree of security. The height should be at least six feet. Security lighting is also desirable. The exact location of the fence must be verified with the owners. It should be as far as practicable from the ruins.
16. No engineer can state with certainty that the stabilized columns will be absolutely safe from collapse in some situation. While the best opinion on this that can be obtained is needed, safety and liability must be addressed, with appropriate legal and insurance advice.
17. A more thorough examination will probably bring more items for consideration.

Harvie P. Jones, FAIA

# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

November 26, 1997

Camille Bowman  
Alabama Historical Commission  
468 S. Perry Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130-0900

Re: Forks of Cypress  
Project No. 97134

*was of  
no value*

Dear Camille:

I can only discern about 40% of the taped Weiss discussions on the Forks of Cypress. I would appreciate it if you could write notes on the most important non-obvious points that were discussed. I hear from Robert Redd in Florence that the property transaction is almost complete.

Thanks!



Harvie P. Jones, FAIA  
HPJ/am

cc: Robert Redd  
HJ

# JONES & HERRIN

Architecture/Interior Design

Dear Robert,

As of January 1, 1998 I will begin working from my home studio in order to be able to devote more time to civic work in historic preservation and to selected historic preservation professional projects. Professional work will be done in my home studio as:

Harvie P. Jones, FAIA  
Architect  
420 Eustis Avenue  
Huntsville, Alabama  
(205) 534-6671

The rate for professional services will be \$50.00 per hour plus expenses such as photographs, printing, out-of-town mileage (29 cents per mile) or similar travel costs.

*Pro-bono-publico* preservation work will be done as available time and the needs of the particular historic structure indicate.

Respectfully,



Harvie P. Jones, FAIA  
HPJ/tm



State of Alabama  
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
468 South Perry Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900  
telephone (334) 242-3184  
F. Lawrence Oaks, Executive Director

ALABAMA CULTURAL RESOURCES PRESERVATION TRUST FUND

Application to the Alabama Historical Commission

- PREAPPLICATION
- APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION

- 1. Applicant Name Heritage Preservation, Inc.
- 2. Applicant Address: Street \_\_\_\_\_ P O Box 2836  
City Florence State AL ZIP 35630
- 3. Applicant Federal Employer Identification Number: HPI does have this; I will obtain from files.
- 4. Applicant's Status:
  - Nonprofit Organization
  - Local Government
  - Institution of Higher Education
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_

- 5. Contact Person Billy R. Warren FAX 205-760-0317 Telephone (205) 766-3234
- 6. Project Director Robert Redd Telephone (205) 766-5211
- 7. Chief Administrative Officer Billy R. Warren Telephone (205) 766-3234

REQUEST PROFILE

1. Request Category (select one):

Survey and Planning:

Development and Mitigation:

- SURVEY AND REGISTRATION
- PLANNING
- PREDEVELOPMENT
- PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION
- HISTORIC
- ARCHAEOLOGICAL

- 2. Project Title or Name of Property - Forks of Cypress
- 3. Project Dates - Beginning October 1, 1997 Ending September 30, 1997
- 4. Amount Requested \$ 5,000.00
- 5. Amount of Match \$ 5,000.00
- 6. Total Budget for Project \$ 10,000.00
- 7. Project Work Area/Location: Florence Lauderdale  
(City) (County)

**INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES:**

**SURVEY AND REGISTRATION:**

Survey:

Square miles to be surveyed \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of standing structure forms to be completed \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of site forms to be completed \_\_\_\_\_

Registration:

Type: ( ) Single Structure ( ) District ( ) Multiple Property

Number of nominations to be prepared \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number of contributing properties contained in nomination(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**PLANNING:**

( ) Comprehensive Planning

( ) Main Street

( ) Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**HISTORIC RESTORATION:**

Will project involve ground disturbance of any kind? Yes No

Applicant is (Not applicable to facade improvement programs.):

( ) Legal Owner of Property

( ) Lessee of Property. Length of Lease Agreement \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Legal Owner of Property:

Alabama Historical Commission

**PROJECT NARRATIVE**

Provide concise description of project.

The Forks of Cypress, a grand antebellum house that was located on a commanding hillside in rural Lauderdale County until it was destroyed by fire in 1966, is now an impressive ruin because 23 of its original slave-made brick columns still stand proudly to remind visitors of a bygone era in Alabama's history. Dr. and Mrs. Gilbert Melson and Dr. and Mrs. Rick Irons, owners of the 300+ acres surrounding the columns, have recently donated the ruins and the immediate property around them to the Alabama Historical Commission.

This project proposes to fund the preparation of architectural plans and engineering studies necessary to stabilize the columns and preserve them from further deterioration as well as to design a sympathetic overall plan for the ruins themselves in keeping with their original appearance.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA -**

Attached to this form are a set of Criteria Schedules. On Page 1 of this Form you selected one Request Category. Find your Request Category's Criteria on the attached Criteria Schedules (Survey and Registration, Planning, Predevelopment, Public Awareness and Education or Development and Mitigation) -- Identify and address each criterion from your selected Request Category.

1. This project will protect historic property owned by a non-profit entity that is ineligible for federal investment tax credits.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. This project deals with a site deemed eligible for the National Register; appropriate paperwork is now being done.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The community - the entire country - will benefit from this project since Queen, the central figure of the television special based on the life of Alex Haley's grandmother, lived here as a slave.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The project fits within the Alabama Historical Commission's statewide preservation plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The budget is appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The applicant has a demonstrated ability to meet AHC budget reporting requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The columns have withstood, fairly well, 30 years of exposure to weather and people. They are now on a downward spiral, however.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The property will be open for viaitors, both general and scholarly.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The threat to the columns is described in #7 above.	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Few antebellum structures in Alabama were totally surrounded by columns as was the Forks of Cypress.	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. The property will be open year-round to the public, mostly by appointment for guided tours.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Since Caucasians, Native Americans and African-Americans (both locally and throughout the country) trace their ancestry to the Forks of Cypress, the project will cut across cultural lines.	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>

**PROJECT WORK**

Survey and Planning Projects - Do not complete this page. Instead - attach proposal that describes methods, materials, and procedures. Historic Restoration Projects use the format below. Include site work, new construction, alterations, etc. Use continuation sheets if necessary. (See Instructions for Completing the Application Form for examples.)

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF REHABILITATION/PRESERVATION WORK**—Includes site work, new construction, alterations, etc. Complete blocks below.

<b>NUMBER</b>	Architectural feature _____	Describe work and impact on existing feature:
	Approximate date of feature _____	
Describe existing feature and its condition:		
Photo no. _____ Drawing no. _____		

<b>NUMBER</b>	Architectural feature _____	Describe work and impact on existing feature:
	Approximate date of feature _____	
Describe existing feature and its condition:		
Photo no. _____ Drawing no. _____		

<b>NUMBER</b>	Architectural feature _____	Describe work and impact on existing feature:
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Photo no. _____ Drawing no. _____		

<b>NUMBER</b>	Architectural feature _____	Describe work and impact on existing feature:
	Approximate date of feature _____	
Describe existing feature and its condition:		
Photo no. _____ Drawing no. _____		

Make as many copies of this sheet as needed to describe project.



**PROJECT BUDGET**

EXPENSE ITEMS	CASH OUTLAY	INKIND DONATIONS
	\$	\$
<b>TOTALS</b>	\$	\$

**RECAP OF PROJECT BUDGET**

TOTAL PROJECT COST (Cash Outlay plus Inkind Donations)	\$
MATCHING SHARE	
GRANT SHARE APPLIED FOR	\$

**BUDGET NARRATIVE**

Provide summary of work accomplished with each expense item.

**MATCHING SHARE:**

**Donor** - Indicate "grantee" if applicant is donor, or list name(s) of other donor(s).

**Source** - Indicate where funds are coming from (i.e. "operating funds," "private donation," "appropriated funds," "CDBG," etc.).

**Kind** - Indicate the type of match (i.e. "cash," "in-kind services," "in-kind equipment," "volunteer services." If non-cash, indicate the rate at which it is valued (individual's rate per hour, etc.)

**Amount** - Total of all matching share must be same as matching share in budget above.

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Kind: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Kind: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Kind: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Kind: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Kind: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Kind: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Source \_\_\_\_\_

Kind: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT PERSONNEL**

List principal project personnel: name, title and address. If the Contact Person and/or Project Director (page 1 of the Application Form) have an address other than the Applicant Address, include it below. If the applicant's existing staff qualify, vitae should be attached. If the applicant plans to obtain qualified professional services subsequently (either as staff, consultants, or pro bono workers), grant award may be subject to acquiring qualified professionals.

These individuals/agencies have been involved in the project and are supportive of it:

1. Heritage Preservation, Inc.
2. Florence Historical Board
3. Mr. William J. McDonald, Historian for the City of Florence
4. Alabama Historical Commission

**FINANCIAL PROFILE**

Award of grant funds is made by contract between you and the Alabama Historical Commission. Each grant reimbursement to the Grantee will require Matching Share from the Grantee at not less than 50% of total project costs.

Accountant/Bookkeeper - Name the contact person assigned to the grant project who will be able to provide photocopies of source financial documentation during period of this grant project. This grant must be separately accounted for in the applicant's financial records.

Name Robert Redd Title President, AmSouth Bank of the Shoals

Telephone (205) 766-5211

Attach sample of time record forms used to account for applicant's personnel to be charged to this project. If consultant has already been selected, list other consultants contacted, with price or rates quoted. What method is used to insure a fair and open selection process for procurements of goods, services and restoration contractors.

Signature: Robert Redd Title: President, AmSouth Bank of the Shoals

Signature: Billy R. Warren Title: President, Heritage Preservation, Inc.

**INVOLVEMENT**

Describe the involvement (either support or opposition) of the following organizations: official preservation agency, public agencies, local government, cosponsoring/cooperating organizations.

These individuals/agencies have been involved in the project and are supportive of it:

1. Heritage Preservation, Inc.
2. Florence Historical Board
3. Mr. William L. McDonald, Historian for the City of Florence
4. Alabama Historical Commission

**CERTIFICATIONS**

I certify that I will abide by regulations of the U. S. Department of the Interior which prohibit unlawful discrimination in federally-assisted programs on the basis of race, color, handicap and/or national origin. I will inform any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility operated by a recipient of federal assistance that they should write to: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.

Chief Administrative Officer:

Billy R. Warren  
Signature

Name Billy R. Warren  
Title President, Heritage Preservation, Inc.

Project Director:

Robert Redd  
Signature

Name Robert Redd  
Title President, AmSouth Bank of the Shoals



## BEFORE AND AFTER "MOTHBALLING"

EVEN WHEN THERE is no surefire way to save a landmark, preservationists may be able to stabilize or "mothball" the building until a permanent preservation plan can be worked out. A case in point is the long-abandoned Murphey house (c. 1820) in Morgan County, one of Alabama's oldest



frame houses. It was mothballed in 1996 through the joint efforts of the Alabama Historical Commission, the Morgan County Historical Society, and the owner of the property—the multinational Trico Steel Company. Undergrowth was cleared away, the sills reinforced and

treated for termites, the roof patched, and the windows and doors boarded over. To convey some idea of how the house would look if original windows were restored, plywood coverings were painted to look like



glass sash. The whole project cost less than two thousand dollars. Listed as one of Alabama's "Places in Peril" in 1996, the Murphey house is a rare example of eighteenth-century Atlan-

tic seaboard residential design transplanted to early nineteenth-century Alabama. Despite its small scale, the house was the seat of a large plantation. Dr. Murphey's wife, Julia, was the sister of Confederate General James Longstreet. *(Before and after photographs by Robert Gumble)*

◆ **Moore-Hill House, Lamar County.** Looking good. The plight of this important early Alabama folk house caught the eye of Col. and Mrs. Dean Wilson after state-wide publicity. In 1995 they purchased the house from the previous owner, Mrs. Beulah Hill, who had stabilized the structure in hopes of finding a sympathetic restorer. The Wilsons, who plan to use the house as a retirement home, have begun a long-term restoration project.

◆ **Alabama State Penitentiary, Elmore County.** Owned by Elmore County, this historic facility, a model of penal reform in its day, continues to deteriorate. Innovative solutions to the problem—such as selling the parcel for adaptive rehabilitation or gutting the ruinous structures and inserting modern office facilities within the historic shell—have not been pursued.

◆ **Old Memphis and Charleston Depot, Scottsboro, Jackson County.** After lengthy negotiations with the Norfolk-Southern Company, owner of this Civil War-era landmark, the Jackson County Historical Society has developed a preservation plan. The company has agreed to transfer the property to the Society, a process not yet complete. An application for assistance in restoring the facility with an Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancement Act (ISTEA) grant was rejected by the Alabama Department of Transportation.

◆ **Cedar Haven, Marengo County.** Bad to worse. The picturesque c. 1850 Black Belt plantation house has been badly vandalized and stripped since 1995, after fruitless attempts by several would-be restorers to buy it from a Birmingham land speculator.

◆ **The Forks of Cypress Ruins, Lauderdale County.** A local task force, headed by Florence AmSouth banker Robert Redd and assisted by the Alabama Historical Commission, has negotiated with the owners of the Forks of Cypress ruins. The hope is to protect the ruins—a picturesque reminder of one of antebellum Alabama's most notable estates—from further deterioration and vandalism through a public-private partnership.

◆ **Mount Vernon Arsenal/Searey Hospital Complex, Mobile County.** No comprehensive preservation/rehabilitation plan has been developed to safeguard the historic qualities of this important nineteenth-century military and institutional complex (first developed in 1830). But publicity regarding the historical value of the complex has raised awareness of the site's importance and will have a beneficial effect on work done at the site in the future.

◆ **Aldrich Mines, Shelby County, and Virginia City Mines, Jefferson County.** Situation remains largely unchanged. At the Aldrich Mines site, the grandson of one of the miners has purchased part of the former mine

© Dec. by HJ - 1996

H.A. Arch - H. Jones

H.A. Arch - H. Jones



# FORKS OF CYPRESS SITE TO BE SAVED THANKS TO PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The 1995 listing of the Forks of Cypress ruins as an Endangered Property by the Alabama Preservation Alliance and the Alabama Historical Commission has ignited a spark resulting in the site's long term preservation. Built in 1822, it is the only antebellum plantation house in the state built with peripteral columns—ones that completely surround the structure. It was struck by lightning in 1966 and burned to the ground. However, 23 of the 24 columns remain, resulting in a character reminiscent of a Roman ruin. The site was recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Thanks to diligent efforts of **Bob Gamble**, Architectural Historian with the Alabama Historical Commission, a \$25,000 grant from the AHC, the cooperation of the property owners, and corporate support from AmSouth to match the grant, the ruins will be stabilized and deeded to the state.

After a site visit with Gattie and other AHC staff members, **Trina Binkley** and **Nathan Farris**, APW Executive Director, **Brandon Brazil** remarked, "I think it's funny that Americans will travel across the world to see ruins of other civilizations but we easily dismiss ruins of our own culture. Lucky that's not happening in Alabama! This project is a model of cooperation between the private and public sector and a blueprint for success."

Two of the important players in this project are the property owners who live on, and work, the surrounding land, and AmSouth Bank whose Florence branch was inspired by the original Forks of Cypress structure. **Robert Redd** of AmSouth Bank said of the project, "AmSouth tries to promote partnerships in all of our communities. Public-Private partnerships are a great and fair way to get things done." He jokingly added, "Believe it or not, big business often does the right thing for all the right reasons." This is definitely one of those instances as well as a great example of good corporate citizenship.

*AmSouth donated all pres. consult. servs.*

## BOOK REVIEW

### Home From Nowhere

by James Howard Kunstler  
(Simon and Schuster, 1996)

Kunstler takes the preservation ethic on the offensive against sprawl and what he feels is the flawed mindset by which it is facilitated. Kunstler, a noted fiction author, first ventured into preservation world with the *Geography of Nowhere*. Now he has allied himself with a movement called New Urbanism, taken the gloves off, and come out swinging at a lot of conventional wisdom.

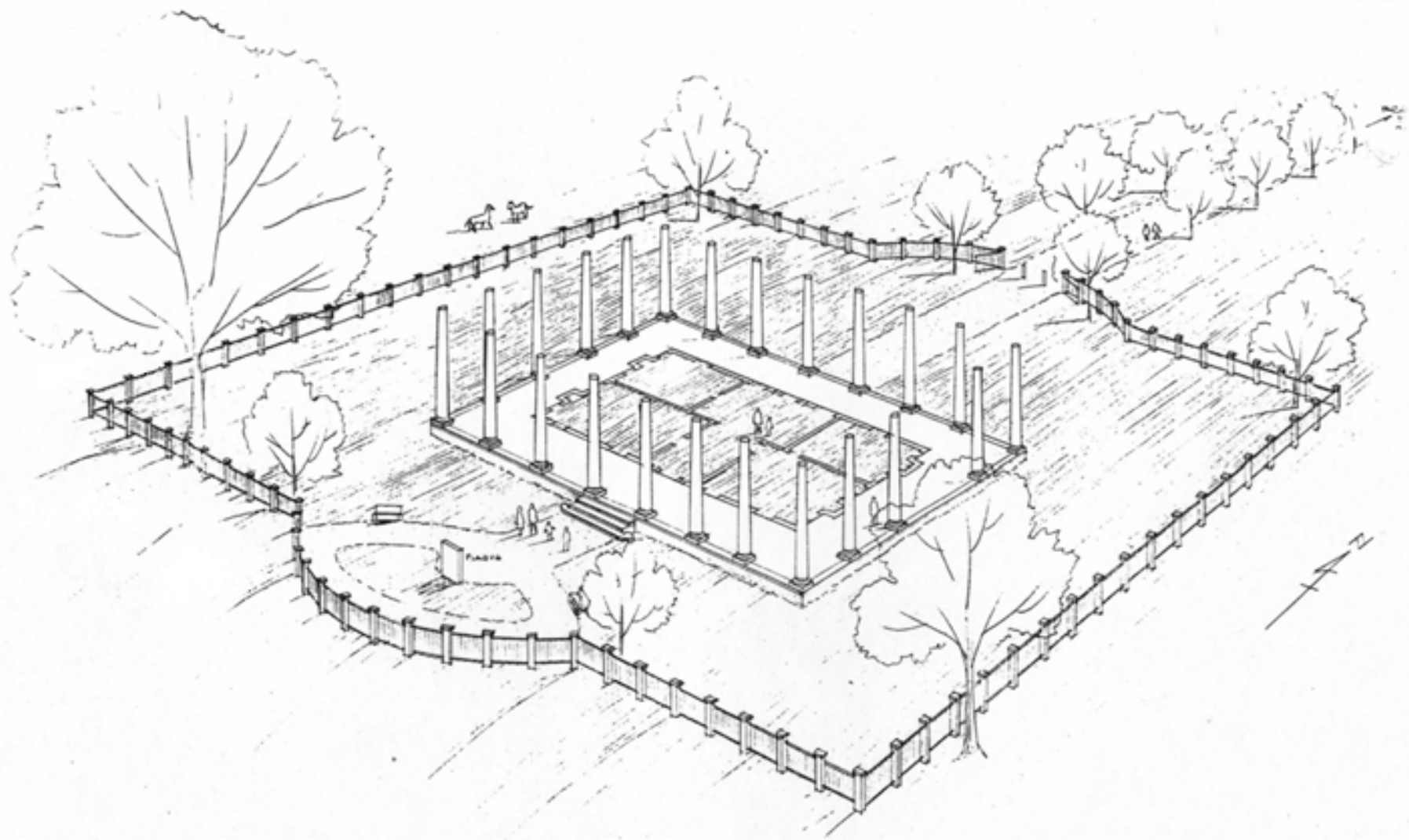
Kunstler invites us to join him in "a movement among young architects and civic designers, and environmental

ists and politicians, and even journalist-ribbon-cutters (referring to himself) to reform the human ecology of America." He declares "the best solution to an ecologically unsustainable, spiritually depressing, socially inequitable, economically unaffordable, politically suicidal way of life is to restore the traditional walkable neighborhood, and to do it, artfully to make sure that they are places worth caring about."

On his homepage Kunstler even has an "eyesore of the month" posted. This, along with many of his observations in *Home From Nowhere*, underscores his humorous and sometimes caustic approach to

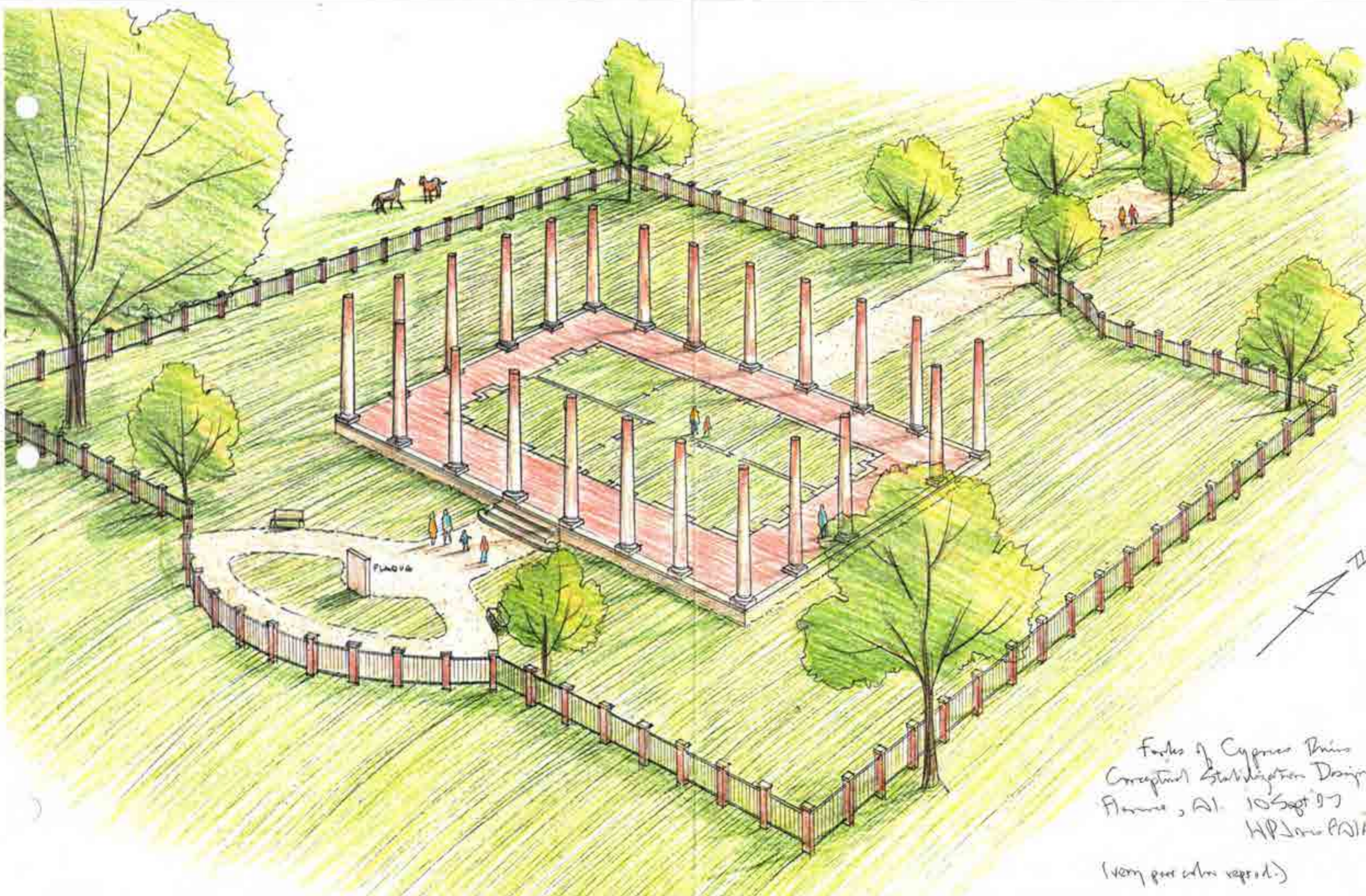
preservation. Reached by e-mail for this review, Kunstler wrote back about the APA, "In the absence of decent standards about how we build our everyday world, it is very important for organizations like yours to defend what precious little remains of American civic design traditions."

Interview by Brandon Brazil



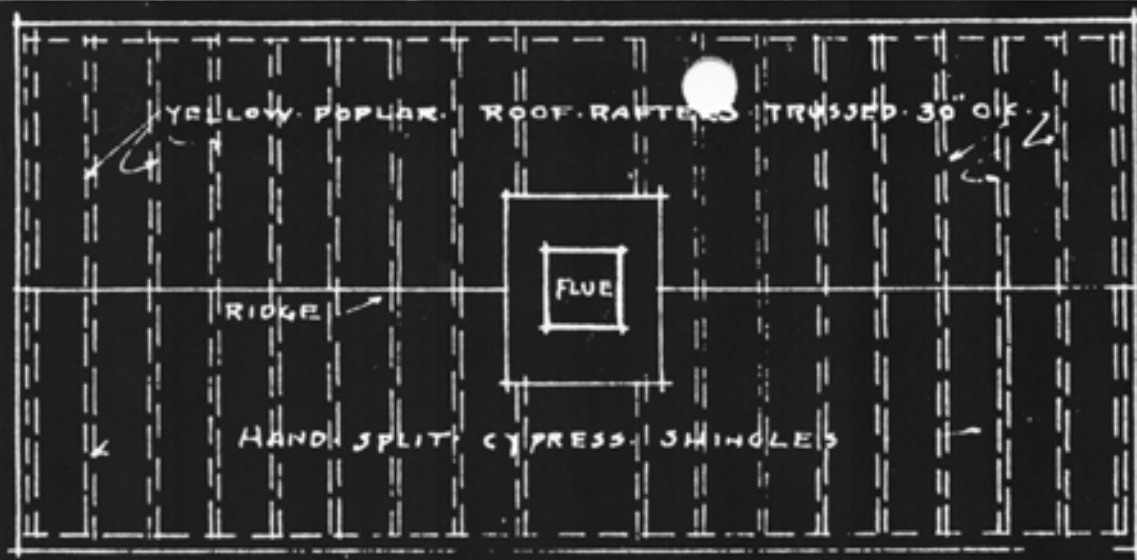
Conceptual Design, Stabilization of  
The Forks of Cypress (1820s house ruin)  
Florence, AL. 10 Sept '97 HPS and FDK  
J & H Arch - Huntsville, AL





Foxes of Cypress Point  
Conceptual Stabilization Design  
Florence, AL 10 Sept 97  
HP/John PWA  
(Very poor when reproduced.)

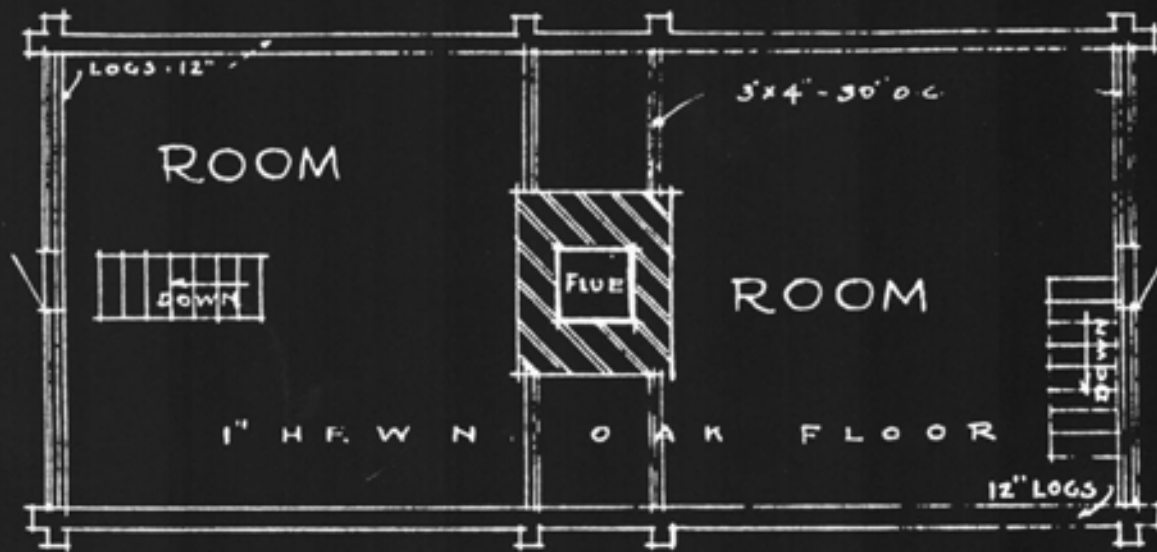




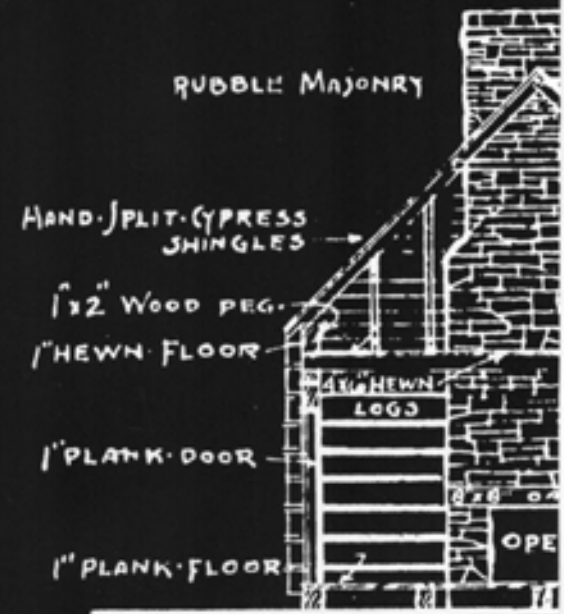
ROOF PLAN



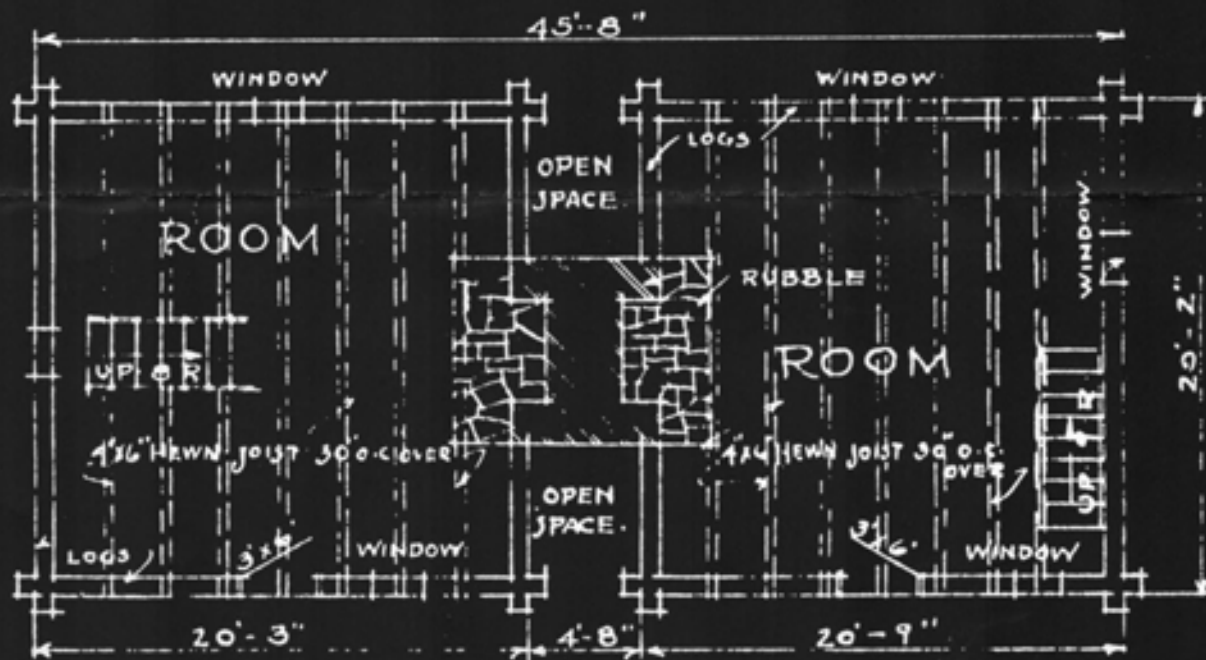
NORTH-WEST  
- SOUTH-EAST ELEVATION



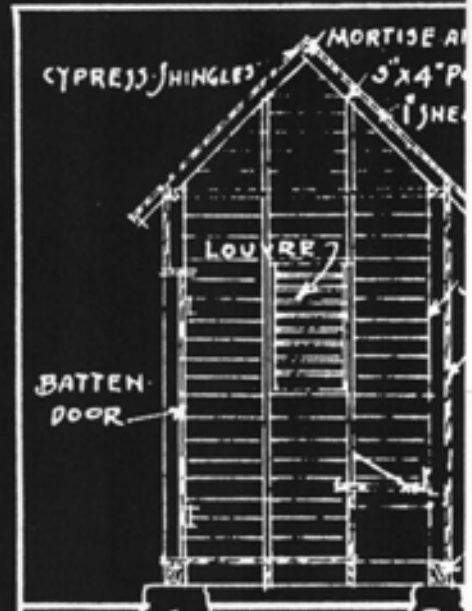
ATTIC FLOOR



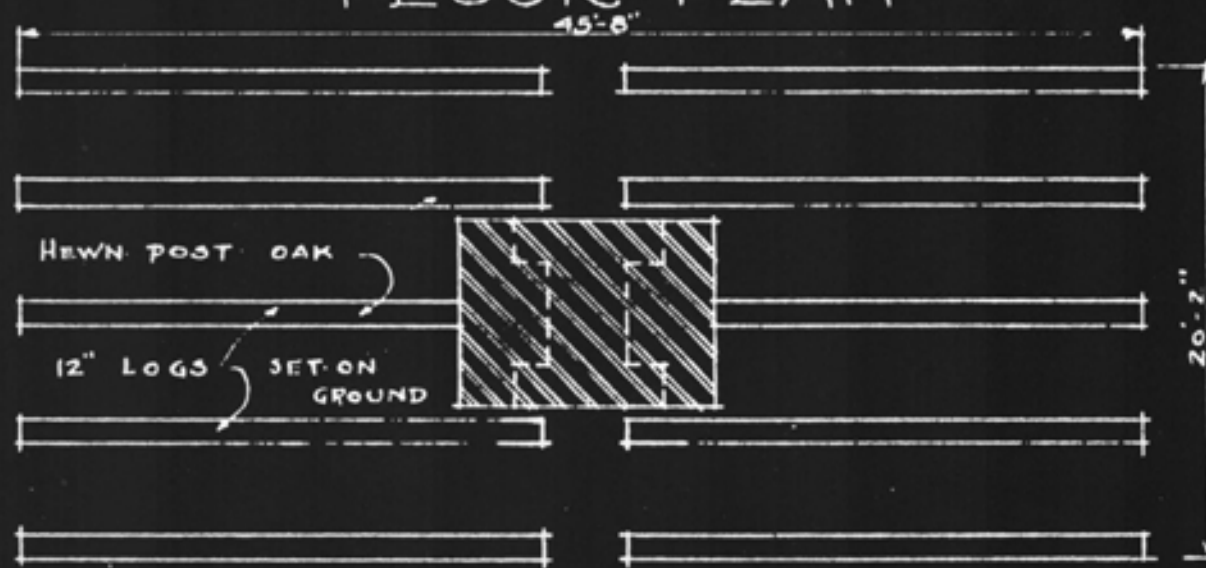
CROSS SECTION



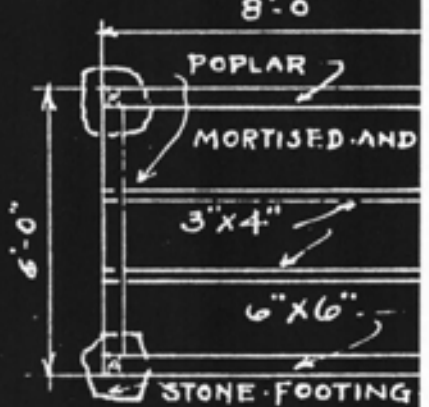
FLOOR PLAN



CROSS SECTION



FOUNDATION PLAN



FOUNDATION PLAN

LEGEND

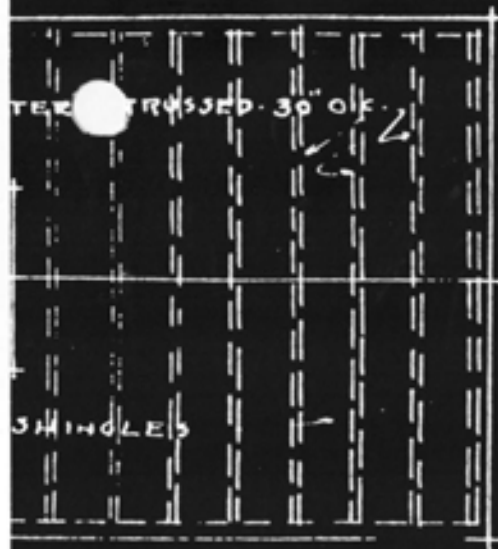
RUBBLE MASONRY

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 65-1715

HARRY J. FRAHN

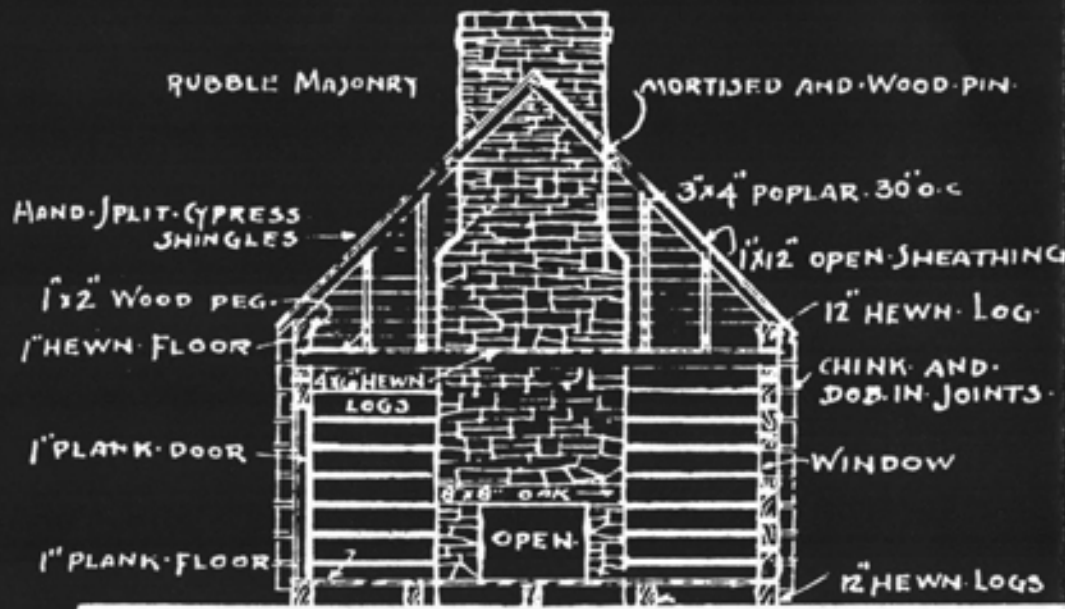
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS  
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

NAME OF SITE  
**THE JACKSON**  
FLORENCE - LAUDERDALE



NORTH-WEST ELEVATION  
- SOUTH-EAST ELEVATION SIMILAR.

SOUTH-WEST ELEVATION

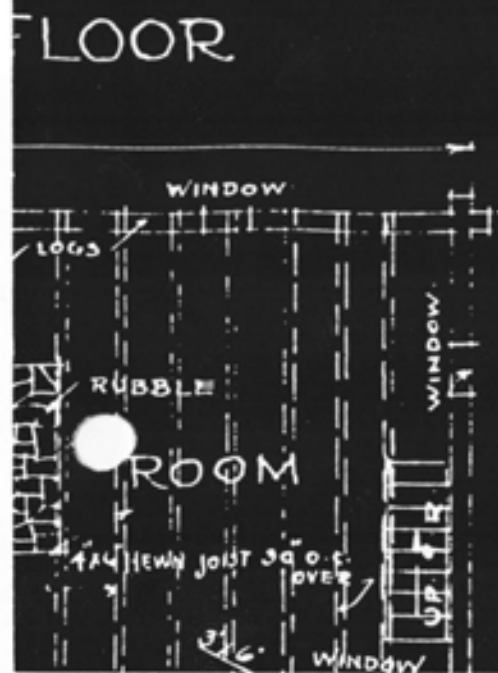


CROSS SECTION

NOTE:  
ORIGINAL CHINK AND DOB-CHIPS AND MUD.  
SPLIT RAILS AND SOME PARTS HAND BURNT BRICK DISCERNABLE.  
LOGS MAIN BODY OF HOUSE 8" TO 10" HEWN IRREGULAR AND CRUDE.



NORTH-EAST ELEVATION





1972

"Forks of Cypress" - 1930's - Florida, AL  
Ewins Stabilization photos - Aug 1998  
Arch. services donated by A.D. Jones

Z



Z



caped caps to  
keep water  
out of  
chimneys

top 2 or 3 feet  
of lower bricks  
with color retained  
in lime mortar

← early mortar  
repainted in  
lime mortar





↓



H.S.

Fragmented limestone base being restored with "Jahn" restor. material (a natural con. from Holland with the same properties as limestone - no plastic)

2/22



N. E.  
GARDNER

↙

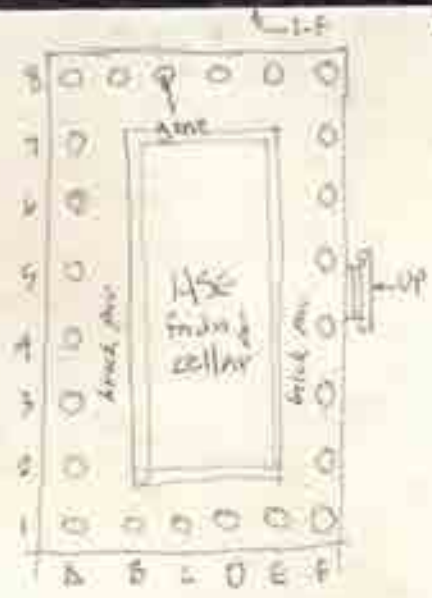
low stones to be reset as much as limited \$ allow



1 6th 1 10th W. side 11th



1 10th 1 11th



← S. FRONT

Ruins of the 1822  
 "Forks of Cypress"  
 Florence, AL  
 (attacked by lightning & burned  
 in 1966)  
 photos Dec. 1997  
 H.P. Jarvis, FAI/IA  
 for stabilization



Col. bases were hydrated  
by the 1950s fire  
& eroded - off on the heat side



same limestone? L1-A

L1-A



top 12-16 courses have  
little or no mortar due  
to water & freeze-thaw action

247

L1-A

L1-A



L1-A

L1-A



← 2A

27A



← 3A



←

3A





52C  
11/2



51A



51C  
(fell during fire,  
chim. fell on it, repeated)





15-F  
 Limestone S. front steps  
 19-F



17-F  
 sawn limestone plinth  
 18-F



8-F 11+  
 salmon brick (w/ cradled top)  
 limestone





6-f? →

Note  
sand-  
marks in  
limestone  
plinth



→ 4-f

S. front steps w/ Ionic volute →



→

6-f-7-f

Stucco coating!  
Black pieces are bits of  
charcoal  
(for granite appearance?)  
Contains animal hair f.  
(reportedly) molasses binders

6-f-7





L1-A      L1-F      W



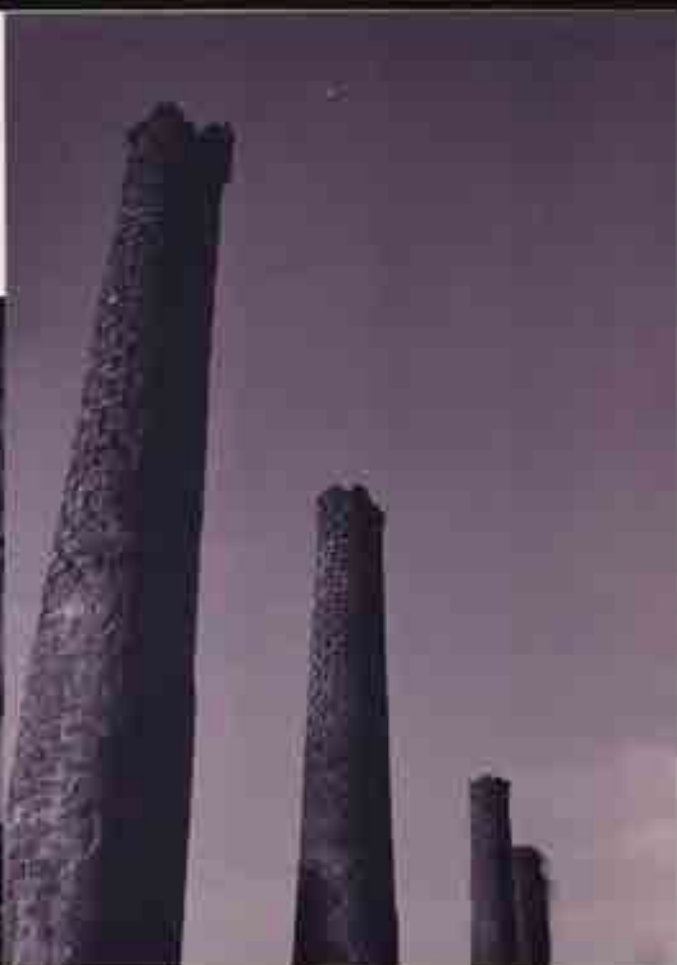
W      L1-F

5 steps  
W



L1-A      W      L1-D





14  
 1830's "FOREST OF CYPRESS" has vines, N. of Florence, Al.  
 struck by lightning in 1866 & burned. Dec. in 1930's Hist. Am. Bldgs. Survey  
 photos Feb. 1937 A.D. Jones Falls-Huntsville



→ 14  
 Robert Field, Iran  
 Am. State Bank of the South  
 321 N. Spring St., Florence  
 291





photos at Col. top showing master bedfall in core