

around the house, inside and out, to no avail. The mule in the lot snorted. Mrs. Gamble came home and sat down to listen. The sound came again. It had been her custom to go to the henhouse alone in the late afternoon, but on this day she asked that her husband accompany her. When they reached the henhouse, their dog was cowering under the floor and would not come out.



GAMBLE HOUSE, FED. PERIOD

One night the Gambles were kept awake by the continued sound of a door being opened and closed, accompanied by the sound of a chain rattling. All the doors were checked and found to be tightly locked.

None of the perplexing sounds have been heard for several years, and their absence remains as much a mystery as their former presence. Neither have the Gambles seen the balls of foxfire which were once seen frequently rising from the nearby cemetery. The balls would rise and travel through bushes without veering from their course at all. Aunt Mat, a black neighbor nearing the century mark, believes that the automobiles and airplanes have scared these apparitions away.

There is even a mystery as to the actual builder of this house. The land, located in the area known as Dogwood Flat, was purchased by Joseph Johnson at the Huntsville Land Sales of 1818, and in 1837 it was sold to James M. Lane for \$10,000. The price would indicate that the house had been built by this time as would architectural details, which closely resemble those in the Matthews, Malone, and McDonald houses nearby. Adam mantels, chair-rails, small windows with tiny panes and thick muntins, a convex brick watercourse, and brick dentil work along the exterior roof line are a few of the details indicative of the architecture of the early 1930s in North Alabama.

James M. Lane also owned the octagon house in Athens and evidently used this house on occasion only. James M. Lane married two daughters of Benjamin and Darthula

Peete; Jane and Eliza. He died in 1870, and Eliza, in 1882, at which time the house became the property of Rhoda and Camilla Peete, spinster sisters of Jane and Eliza.

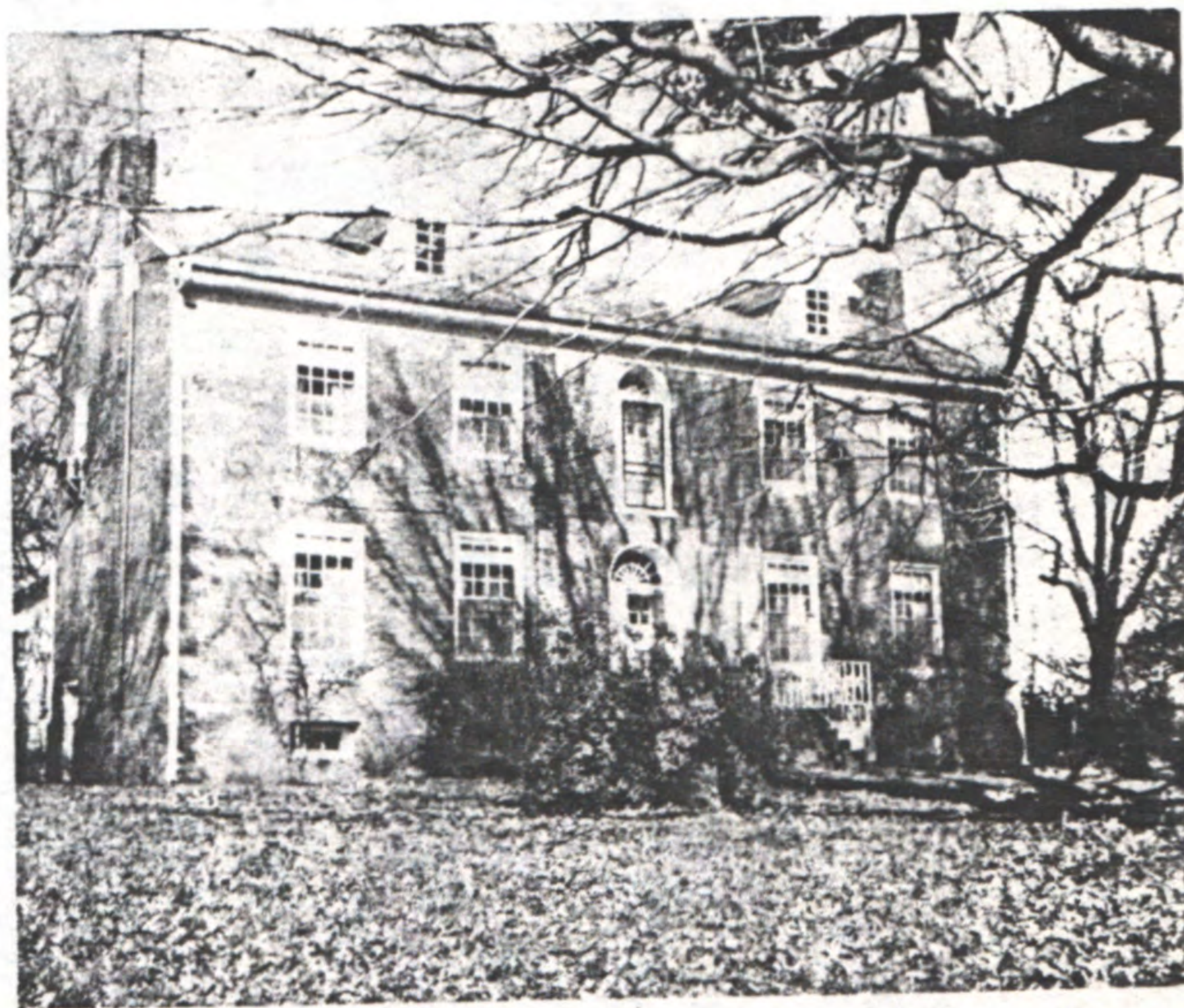
The home was then willed to their niece, Kate Garrett Gamble, daughter of Peter Francisco and Mary Peete Garrett, and wife of John Girault Gamble, Sr., who was the son of Ruffin and Helen Dunbar (Girault) Gamble (see *Gamble House*).

For some time the house was occupied by Augusta Bibb Garrett, widow of Edmond Peter Garrett (see *Garrett House, "The Cedars"*). It was during this time that Augusta's younger brother, Benajah (see *Bibb-Richardson House*) and a young friend dug up the brick floor in the basement in the mistaken belief that gold was buried there.

John Girault Gamble, Jr. inherited the house and continued to live there until a few years before his death in November, 1975. He and Lovie (Kemp) Gamble were parents of:

- I. Gerald, who now owns and occupies the house with his son, Mark.
- II. Gilbert md. Betty Crouch and had Lisa and Xana.
- III. Helen md. William Bowles, of Durham, N. C., and had Jo Anne and Marie. Helen discovered that a Garrett plantation adjoins their property in North Carolina and that both families are listed in the book on the Garrett family which was published several years ago.

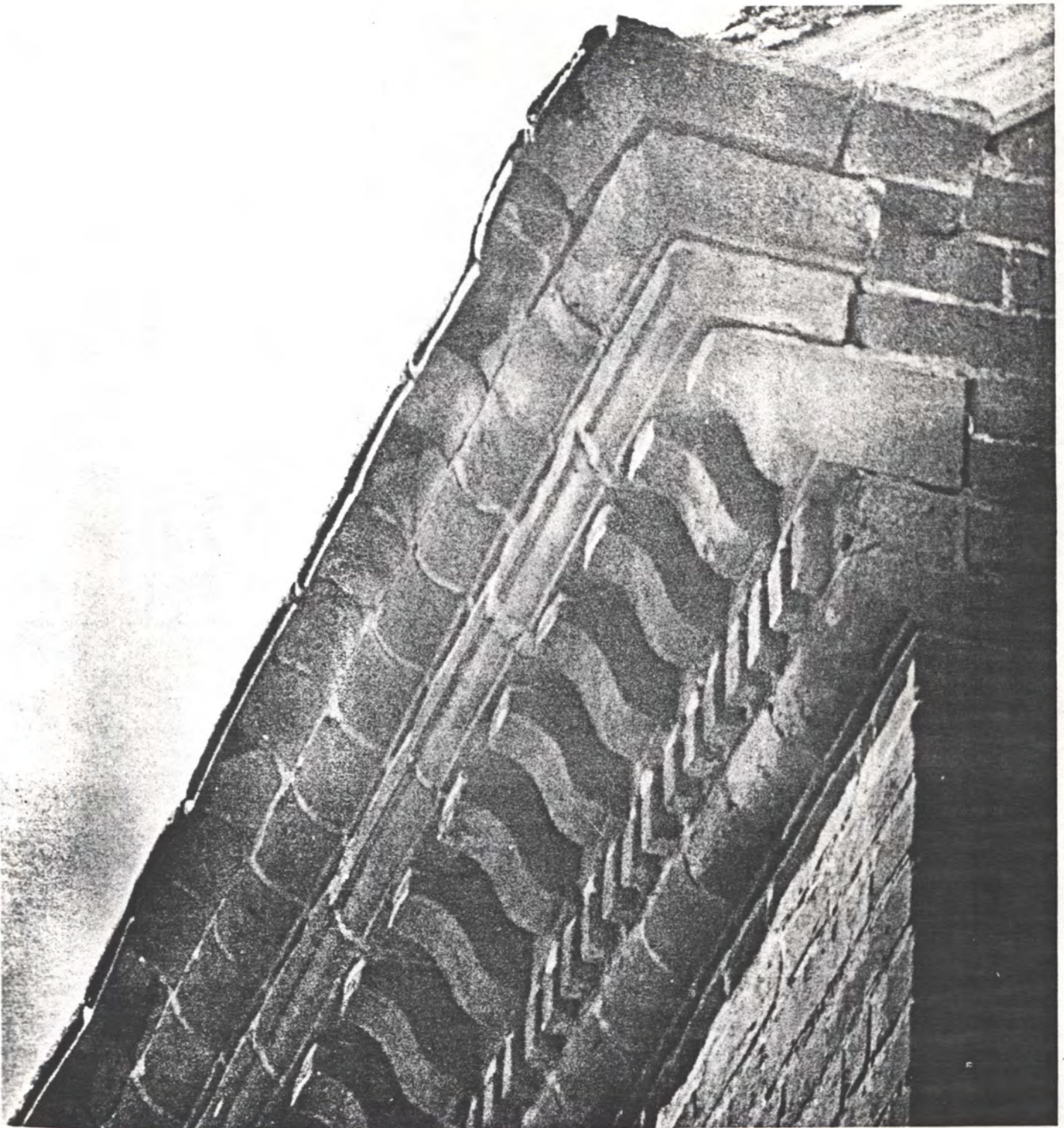
MATTHEWS-ROWE-SUMMERFELT (ca. 1832)  
"COTTON HILL"



Two horses from a discarded merry-go-round in Chicago enhance the decor of the "Cotton Hill Works," an unusual manufacturing plant located on the "Cotton Hill" plan-



Figure 6



Brickwork in early Limestone County was often of exceptional quality, as seen in the elaborate brick cornice of the Lane-Gamble house, built about 1830. This extraordinary cornice is probably unexcelled in Alabama as a statement of the brickmason's art. Each of the six elements composing the cornice required the use of specially-moulded bricks. Note in particular the teeth-like brick dentil course and, just above, the brick modillions with their *cyma recta*, or double-curved, moulding. The nearby McDonald house, now demolished, boasted a similar cornice. (Photo by Bob Dunnavant)



Figure 5



Massive exterior end-chimneys and a tall, narrow profile are features characteristic of the type of domestic architecture brought to Limestone County by early settlers from Southside Virginia, and adjacent North Carolina. (Photo by Bob Dunnivant)



Gamble Hse  
S.E. Limestone Co.  
Fed Period  
photos 1974, HS

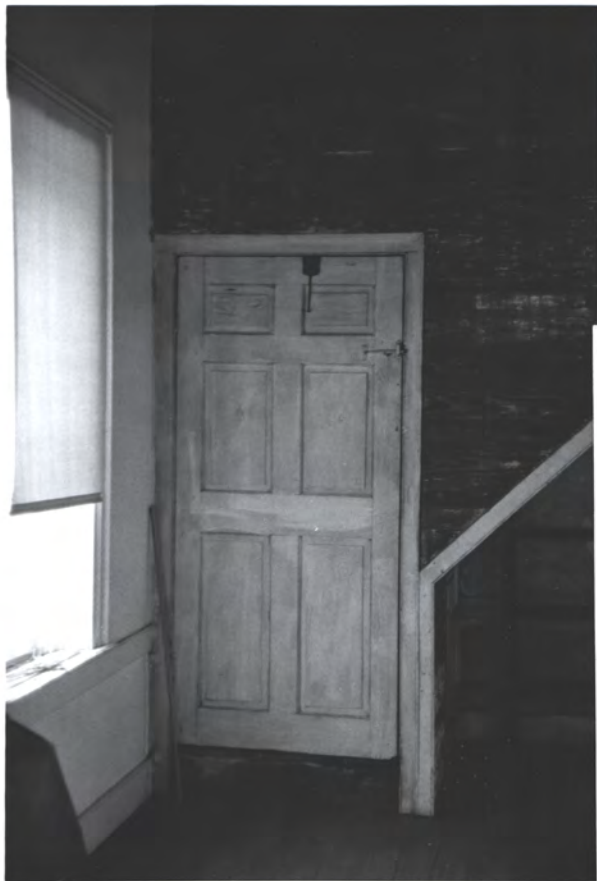
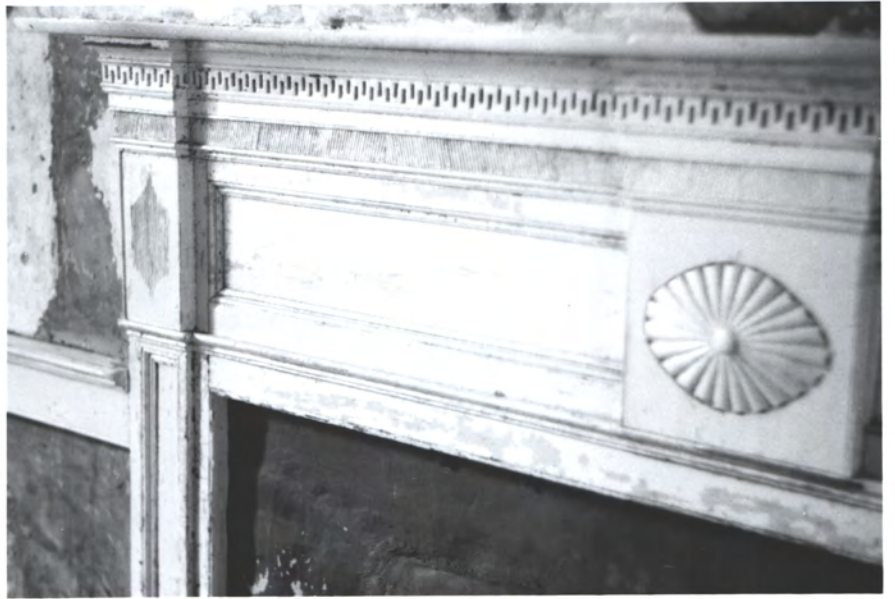
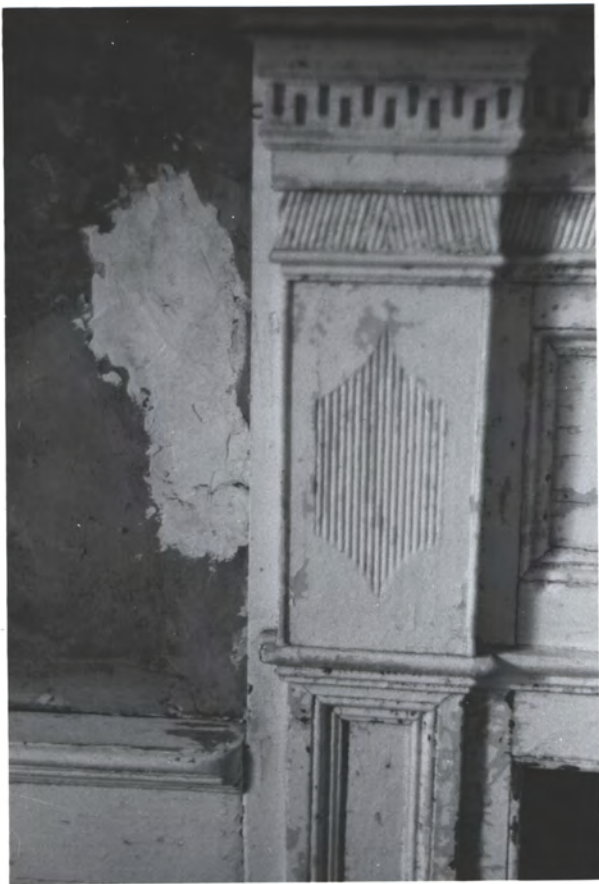
Note hearth  
brick pattern  
(typical of Fed. Period)



Door to attic stairs

Left-latch  
on door shown  
at left











Stairs to attic

Roof Joist Ridge  
Note peg. Is mortise  
& tenon jt.  
Deck is mid 20th c.

Gamble Hse  
S.E. Limestone Co.,  
Fed. Period  
photos 1974, HJ

Attic

Stairs to  
Attic

Fl. (attic)  
(unusually wide bds)



Ceiling is probably original.  
1850's Donnell Hse in Athens has one like it, on N. porch ceiling

Gamble Hse

Fed. Period

SoE, Limestone Co.

1820's - 30's

photos 1974, HJ

Note dark paint (or graining?) under white paint.









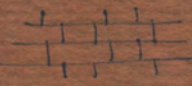


2nd. Story  
Attic fl. above  
has whitewash or white paint remnants

Cris Edwards

Gamble Hse  
S.E. Limestone Co.  
photos 1974, HJ

Stair rail  
in attic  
balusters are  
turned 45°  
off square.

Note paint-stripe ("perilled")  
accented pts. + Flemish bond   
Typical of early 19th cent  
hous in N. A.  
(is original)