



POST-1846
DEERING-
SWAIN HSE
TVSCHL005A



Deering-Swain Hse, post-1846 (probably 1850's) Tuscaloosa, AL. H.R. Jones photos
Mar 1983 1 of 6





post 1846 Derringer Swain, Tuscaloosa

MM 1980-346



+

Serv. Bldg. →



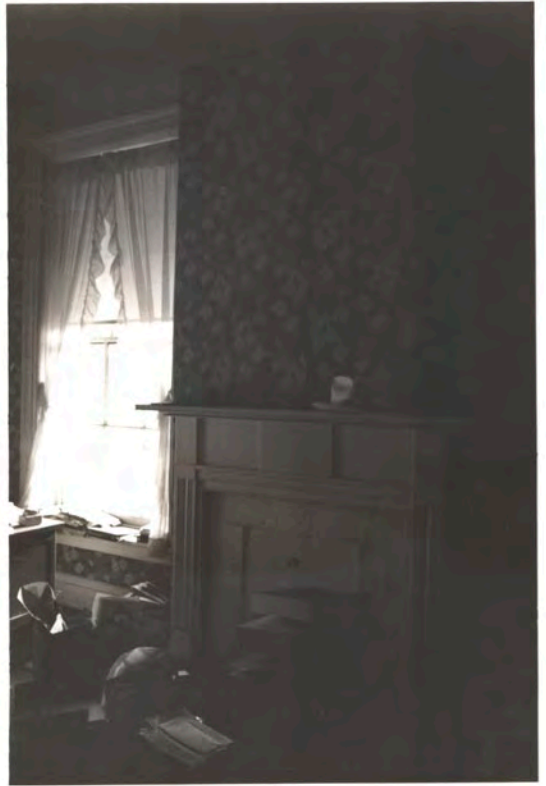
→ Main
hall

"Link" between has view of serv. bldg
(also opens porch)



Post 1846 Daring - Swain, Tuscaloosa

5076 May 1980





c. 1835 Deering-Swain Hse, Tuscaloosa. Restor. planning by JFH, H Jones in 1980, w/ Jim Feltz, local arch
These photos March 1993 (HJ) at dusk

48. Dearing-Swain House c. 1835
2111 14th Street

ca 1846

Built in 1835-36 by A.B. Dearing with slave labor and an "educated slave" foreman, this structure is said to be the best example of Greek Temple-type (with columns around three sides) architecture remaining in Alabama. It has never had to be "restored." The original sheet metal roof lasted about 125 years and was duplicated exactly when replaced.

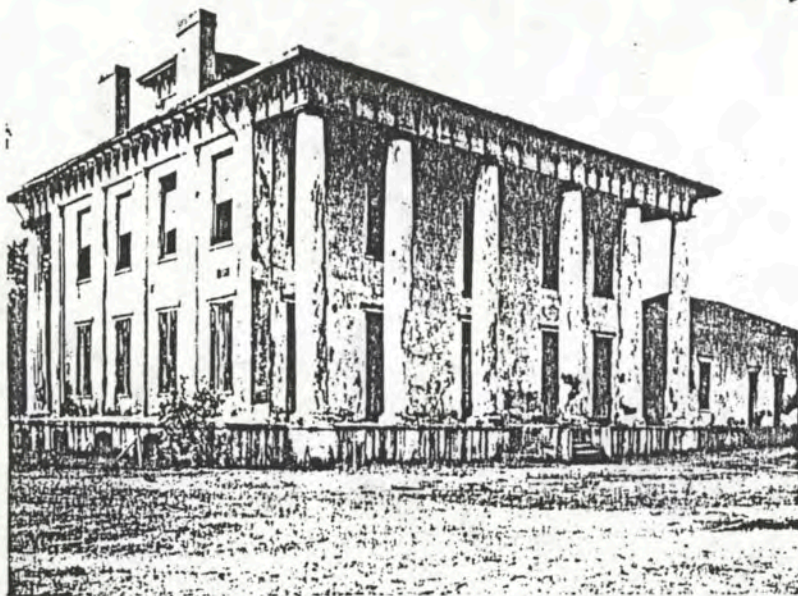
The house has marble mantles, silver door knobs, and plastered frescoes.

In 1864, the home was not burned by Federal troops because the lady of the house scrambled her last "setting" of turkey eggs and fed the tired, hungry youths in the group sent to burn her home. For her kindness, they thanked her and left her home and children untouched.

This was at one time the home of Dr. W.S. Wyman, once President of The University of Alabama, and is the boyhood home of Congressman Walter Flowers, Fifth District, Alabama. Dr. Wyman was the son-in-law of the builder and Congressman Flowers is the grandson of the last owner.

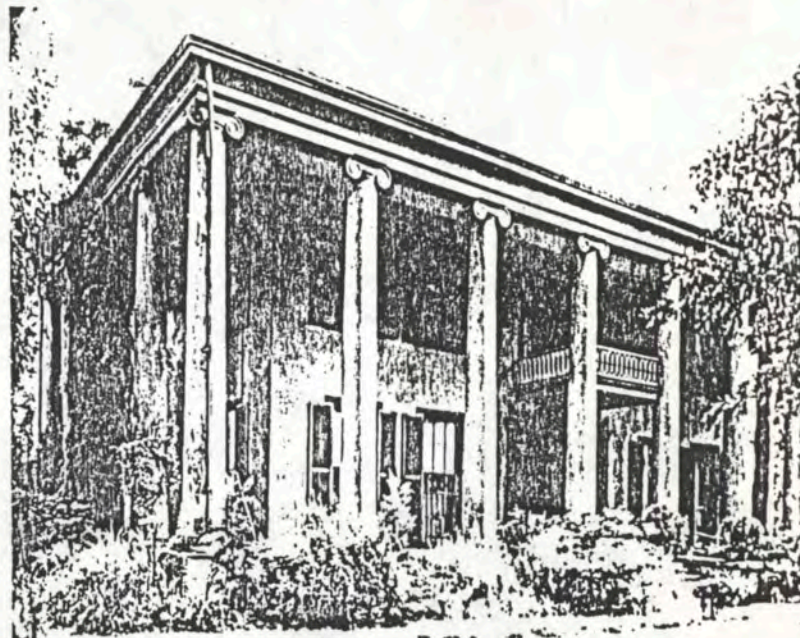
The building represents a period in the development of the South that is important to America's history. It was built while Tuscaloosa was the state capital; Tuscaloosa was the head of navigation of the Black Warrior River at the time. This type of building will not (and cannot) be replaced in this later day.





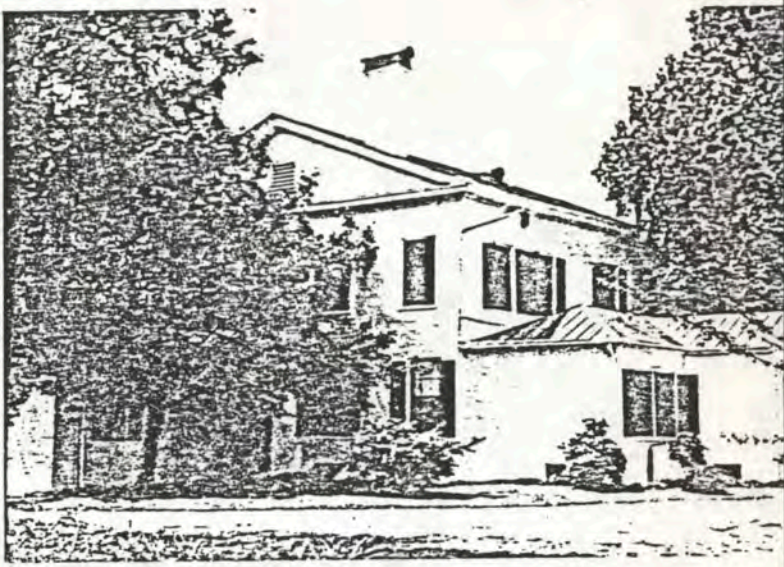
30.
 Dr. John R. Drish House, "Monroe Place," South end of
 17th St., Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa Co., Ala. Rear portico.
 Photograph by Frances Benjamin Johnston for the
 Carnegie Survey of the Architecture of the South, Library
 of Congress LC- J7-ALA-1135.

"Monroe Place" was built ca. 1830 probably under
 William Nichols' supervision. The form of this structure
 was considerably altered in the 1850s by the addition of an
 Italianate tower, bracketed cornice and other details.

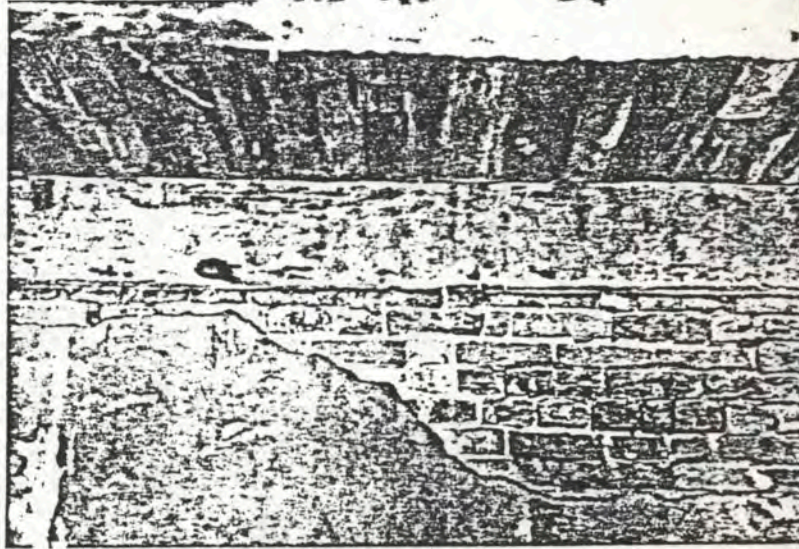


31.
 Alexander Dearing House, 2111 14th St. at Queen City
 Ave., Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa Co., Ala. Photograph by
 Frances Benjamin Johnston for the Carnegie Survey of the
 Architecture of the South, Library of Congress LC-J7-
 ALA-1131.

"Wm. Nichols, Arch."



Typical
Ok. Rev. Stair (some) - ends vary
ca. 1845 "Darkroom" - Hunts with



Smokehouse
1st fl. ceil., west wall

Jones & Herrin

Architects, A.I.A.

Harvie P. Jones

William W. Herrin, Jr.

May 5, 1980

Ralph H. Allen, Associate
Larrell D. Hughes, Associate
Larry L. Bricker, Associate
Debra F. Cross, Office Manager

Mr. Mose Swaim
P. O. Box 2468
Tuscaloosa, AL 35403

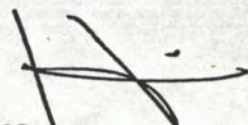
Re: Dearing-Swaim House
Tuscaloosa

Dear Mose:

Attached is the following information which should be of help in the restoration of the Dearing-Swaim House:

1. Bibliography of some pertinent books.
2. Contemporary views of mid-19th. century landscaping.
3. Mid-19th. century hardware available from "Ball & Ball".
4. Latter 19th. century lighting fixtures (original & reproductions) which are available. We have found no regular source of mid-19th. century lighting fixtures. I would suggest checking with dealers.
5. Sources for: historic millwork and blinds, blacksmith, flue-liners and dampers, historic color consultant (accurate determination of pigments & period), hardware, ironwork, etc.
6. Examples of mid-19th. century gas lights, dated, for reference as to style.
7. Painting specification for terne-metal roof.
8. Photographs of the house as-is.
9. Comments on various aspects of the house and its history and restoration, and on the revisions of the service wing for current living needs.

Respectfully,



Harvie P. Jones
Huntsville, AL 35801

HPJ/dfc
104 Jefferson Street

(205) 539-0000

HISTORICAL & RESTORATION COMMENTS:

1. The copy of the old letter in your possession indicates that the house was built after 1846. The Tuscaloosa Historical Society should be furnished a copy of this letter so that their publications and records can be corrected (they list it "ca. 1835").

This particular type of house was certainly more common in Alabama in the '40's and '50's than in the '30's, and the presence of the square-proportioned ceramic-knob rimlocks supports the later dates, since I have previously not found locks of this type in '30's houses, whereas they are usual by the '50's. It would be unlikely that the locks would have been changed within 10 or 15 years after construction, and I saw no evidence of an earlier lock on the door or jamb that I examined.

2. The 9/9 sashes in the service building are not original to that building. The muntin bars in these sashes are of the shape most common up to about 1835. Also the glass is much more irregular than the glass in the main house. Since out-of-fashion mould shapes were commonly used in service areas, perhaps these sashes were installed in the original one-story rectangular service wing shown on the 1887 birds-eye view drawing of Tuscaloosa. It would have been economical and logical to re-use them in the post-1887 (present) service wing, along with the 2/2 late Victorian windows elsewhere in the service wing. It is also possible that these Federal-style sashes were salvaged from a building older than the main house. The late 1800's "Sanborn" insurance maps (prints available from the Library of Congress) should be obtained and checked to see what buildings are shown. These maps show a wealth of information, usually quite accurate: Number of floors, type of construction, porches, outbuildings, size, shape & location of buildings.



The Library of Congress also has information from the "Carnegie Survey of the Architects of the South, LC-J7-ALA-1131. This house may also be in the Historic American Buildings Survey (H.A.B.S.). If so, measured plans, elevations and details as well as 1930's photographs would be available for reproduction cost. These would include outbuildings.

The Tuscaloosa Library and Historical Society may have additional information.

3. The brick arch-topped openings in the service wing, the 2/2 sashes, the high ceilings, irregular plan shape, and the 1887 birds-eye view of the house all confirm that the present service wing is late Victorian, probably just after 1887 when the house was sold and the Victorian millwork (now removed) was installed in the main house.
4. The 3 over 1 sashes at the present dining room behind the main entry were common in the 1920's, and support your recollections of when this area (originally part of the rear porch) was enclosed.

HISTORICAL & RESTORATION COMMENTS: (continued)

5. I feel that all the mantles are probably original, since they are of proper design & proportion for this period and this house.

The black marble mantles are in proper style for the first half of the 19th. century. Almost all mantles that we have been able to scrape of this period have been painted black. It would be interesting to scrape the wood mantles to check their color.

6. Paint colors in the first half of the 19th. century were much richer and brighter than most people think. Wines, pinks, gold, turquoise, & forest-green are a few of the colors we have uncovered. Black mantles complemented these colors nicely.

I suggest that in each room and on the exterior, paint color layering be investigated and recorded and chips saved. I would strongly consider re-using these colors wherever you feel you can. Trims, doors, sashes & walls should be investigated separately since they were most frequently differing colors.

Doors were usually artificially wood-grained in this period. Graining can be recognized in a scraped spot by a layer of pink or beige base paint under the brownish graining, under a layer of varnish (to protect the thin graining).

The several original exterior colors that were visible on our visit evidence a rich original color scheme. I would recommend using it, and never mind the comments you will hear from those who are positive the house was "always" white, or "should be" white. Under the portico in an inconspicuous spot, you could block off some squares to show these original colors to doubting visitors. In fact, I'd do the same inside, behind the doors.

Most of us are meek and mousey in our color choices in comparison with our more sophisticated ancestors.

7. The entry stair appears to be original except for the late Victorian heavy balustrade. I would recommend replacing this since it is the only Victorian millwork in the entry & intrudes on the original delicacy of the stair. The original rail would have been round with two slim ($\pm 5/8" \times 1 1/4"$) balusters per tread, similar to the enclosed photocopy. There are several examples in Tuscaloosa as I recall, and it would be good to examine them for your model.

The scroll-ends of the treads are original, I feel. They are in character for the first part of the 19th. century.

8. The late 19th. century glass in the entry is very attractive and does not intrude unduly on the character of the house. I recommend retaining it.

HISTORICAL & RESTORATION COMMENTS: (continued)

9. The trim on the exterior face of the entry may be original, I believe. This can be easily checked by removing one piece of the perimeter face trim to see if there is paint behind it. If not, the trim is original. The basic design is derived from Greek motifs, which leads me to believe it may be original. I would be interested in what you find. See attached photocopies of similar Greek Revival entries.

 10. The double-beaded boards at the portico soffit (ceiling) and on the inner face of the portico architrave (beam), while not original, are probably not worth changing. The soffit most likely was plaster. You could remove one board and look for evidence of lath strips and plaster stains on the soffit joists to verify this. If not plaster, it would typically have been boards about 8"-12" wide, butt-jointed T & G.

 11. Landscaping of yards in this period was spare & simple. If there was any elaborate planting, it would have been in a specific area for a formal garden in a side or rear yard. The "foundation plantings" that we see around most houses today were done in the 1920's or later; & indeed "foundation planting" is called "bungalow bushes" by historical landscape architects. We attach just a few contemporary 19th. century views of houses to illustrate the type of landscaping which is appropriate.
- Again, you should be prepared for numerous comments by persons who "know" that these bungalow bushes should be there.
12. The terne-metal roof has previously been painted with red-lead, which is peeling and cracking. Terne metal has considerable movement in temperature variations and is properly primed with a "long-oil" (slow-drying) paint which can take this movement. Red lead is not a "long oil" paint, and this is undoubtedly why it is peeling.

Terne-metal is simply sheet-iron coated with a thin alloy of 80% lead and 20% tin, which protects the sheet-iron from rust. It is imperative to not scratch the thin alloy coating in cleaning off the peeled paint. Therefore no wire brushes or metal tools can be used in scraping. Even with fiber brushes or wood scrapers, care must be taken.

The best that can be done is to regularly remove the loose red-lead & spot-prime with "long oil" paint. All companies have these. Two are Glidden 5229 and Gliddens' Chromate primer. The red-lead paint should be checked at least yearly. Gum-soled shoes must be worn by anyone working on the roof to avoid scratches.

If kept painted, terne-metal will last many decades. I've seen some at least 60 years old, and have heard of others much older.

HISTORICAL & RESTORATION COMMENTS: (continued)

13. Paint-peeling problems on house exteriors have become pandemic in the past decade. In my opinion a major culprit is latex paint. Some feel that the removal of lead from oil paint is also a factor. Preservationists at the National Parks Service feel that alkyd-base paints are a suitable substitute for lead-&-oil paint. In frame buildings, the pumping of insulation into walls without an inner vapor barrier is also a major factor since this results in condensation inside the wall which then vaporizes and pushes the exterior paint off in escaping to the exterior.

I recommend the avoidance of latex paint on any wood surfaces inside or out. It shouldn't be used inside because it can't be easily stripped when, at some future time, excessive build-up needs to be removed.

14. In re-pointing masonry, the following factors are important:

- A. Don't re-point joints with faces intact. They may last for a long time.
- B. Clean out deteriorated joints at least 1" deep to a square, clean cavity.
- C. Do not allow the use of power tools in cleaning joints since this invariably grinds into brick edges & faces & alters the appearance of the brick for the worse. So-called "masonry restorers" normally use power tools.
- D. Do not sand-blast brick to remove paint. The brick will be eaten-up, exposing the soft, porous core to freeze-thaw deterioration, and not all of the paint will be removed anyhow.

High-pressure water may be satisfactory, but watch to make sure that the brick isn't pocked. Again, all the paint will not come off. Spots of paint can be camouflaged by staining the entire wall with "Olympic 726 semi-transparent oil-base stain" which is reddish-brown and won't noticeably change the brick or joint appearance since the stain is transparent. The joints will bleach out (due to the lime) the first year to light beige, and the brick color will lighten in the first six months. Therefore the stain must look a shade "too dark" when it is applied. The stain will tint the paint spots to beige.

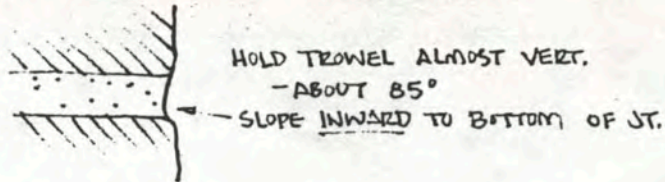
We have used this method with good success for over ten years. Once stained, the brick will probably never need restaining - we know of one house here stained 35 years ago that still looks fine.

- E. Do not use Portland-cement mortar. High-lime mortar must be used since it will "give" with temperature movement and not crack the old soft brick. Portland cement mortar is very hard & I've seen many old brick faces cracked-off where it has been used. Portland cement mortar also creates a water-ledge at the joints of porous brick which causes freeze-cracking of brick faces.
- F. Mortar color should match the aged lime mortar (light tan). Be careful with powder additives since they usually result in either pink or yellow joints.

HISTORICAL & RESTORATION COMMENTS: (continued)

14. (continued)

G. Joints should be troweled to match existing joints.

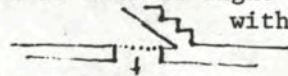


Do not brush-down the joints. Trowel-edge marks should show. Do not allow the masons to lay new walls with fat joints. For some reason all of them think "old brick" means 5/8" to 3/4" joints. A look at the old walls show that the joints average 3/8" wide.

H. Study the existing joints closely and carefully in all the above aspects. Go over each point with the mason who is to do the actual work (not his boss—the word never filters down). Have the mason build a + 3' square sample placed against an existing wall. Let the sample dry (to see mortar color) and clean it. Then compare with the existing wall.

The major obstacle is to get across to the mason all the above points. Once he understands, its' simple. It may take a couple of samples to reach that point of understanding, however.

15. Airconditioning ducts can easily be totally concealed in this house. 4 systems are needed to do this, and to give good zone control and allow unused portions of the house to have energy-conserving thermostat settings. A unit and its ducts would go in the crawl space of both the main house 1st. floor and the service wing 1st. floor. The main return would be located tight behind the stair soffit in the floor & against the wall



brown-painted filter grille. Floor grilles should be dark brown (not the standard mustard color).

The second floor systems should be located in the attics with the ducts run around the attic perimeter so as not to block access to or use of the attic. Ceiling grilles should be painted to match the ceiling (use low-gloss paint on grilles). The attic units must be mounted in a metal pan with a 3/4" diameter minimum condensate overflow drain (smaller pipes may stop up with dust). Water heaters may be similarly mounted in the attic.

Outdoor condenser-compressor units should be placed in an area which can be easily screened from view & which does not create a noise interference with outdoor-use areas. This location needs to be coordinated with your landscape design. Probably the area at the west side of the north room of the service wing would be best (with screen fence) to keep the units within about 50' of the attic blowers and to be away from the S.E. yard & porch & out of normal view.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. "The Restoration Manual" - Orin M. Bullock, Jr., F.A.I.A.
Silvermine Publishers Inc., Norwalk Conn.
Excellent manual for the restoration process
2. "The Modern Builder's Guide" - Minard Lafever
Dover Publications, 486-22260-8
Reprint of 1833 architectural handbook
3. "Cyclical Maintenance for Historic Buildings" - J. Henry Chambers, A.I.A.
Office of Archeology & Historic Preservation
National Park Service
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
4. "Wallpapers in Historic Preservation" - Catherine Lynn Frangiamore
Office of Archeology & Historic Preservation
National Park Service
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
5. "Historic Landscapes & Gardens" - John J. Stewart
American Association for State & Local History, Nashville
(leaflet) - also contains selected bibliography on this subject
6. "Gaslighting in America" - Denys Peter Myers
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Heritage Conservation & Recreation Service
Office of Archeology & Historic Preservation
Technical Preservation Services Division
7. "Early Illustrations & Views of American Architecture"
Edmund V. Gillon, Jr.
Dover Publications 0-486-22750-2
8. "The Beauties of Modern Architecture" - Minard Lafever
DeCapo Press
Reprint of 1835 architectural handbook

Jones & Herrin

Architects, A.I.A.

Harvie P. Jones
William W. Herrin, Jr.

Ralph H. Allen, Associate
Larrell D. Hughes, Associate
Larry L. Bricker, Associate
Debra F. Cross, Office Manager

March 25, 1980

Mr. Mose Swaim
2111 14th Street
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Re: Dearing-Swaim House
Tuscaloosa, AL

Dear Mr. Swaim:

Inasmuch as the Dearing-Swaim House was done by the prominent architect William Nichols and is documented in the Library of Congress, I strongly recommend that this documentation be obtained prior to restoration. This data will be valuable in the proper restoration of the house and might also save many hours of measuring and photographing at the site. You will also want to keep the data for yourself as a matter of interest after the restoration is completed.

The Library of Congress reference number is:

Alexander Dearing House, LC-J7-ALA-1131, Carnegie Survey of the Arch. of the South

Library of Congress
10 1st. Street
Washington, D.C. 20540

I will meet you at Jim Fitts' office on April 18 at about 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully,



Harvie P. Jones, AIA

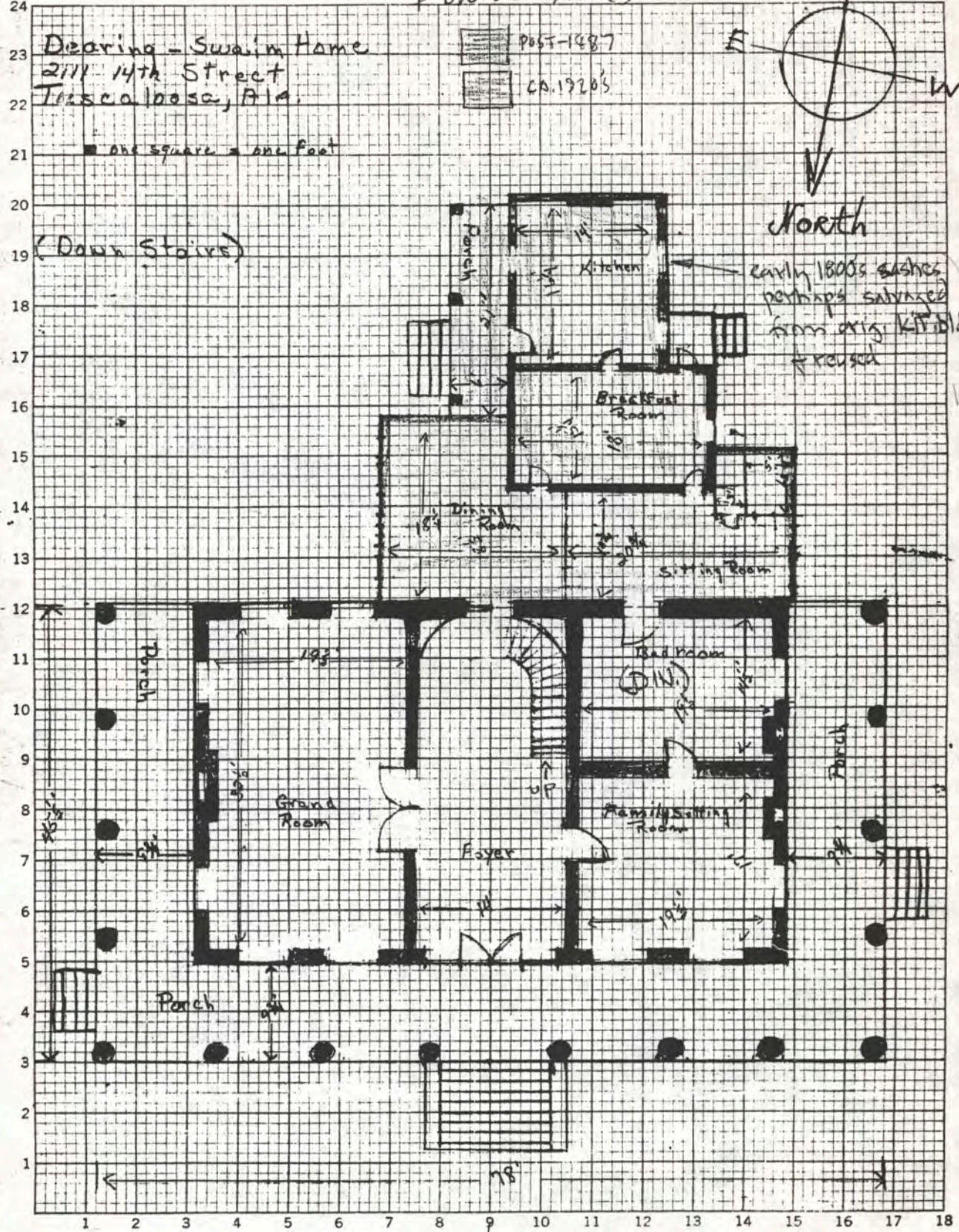
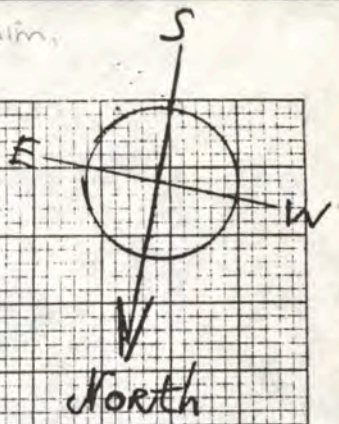
HPJ/dfc

cc: Jim Fitts

Drawn by Swain
DOWNSTAIRS

Dearing - Swain Home
2111 14th Street
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

POST-1887
CA. 1920's



1cm = 5'

Main Asc reputedly is ca. 1846 - may be 1850's based on cut kerf

5 Squares to the Centimeter

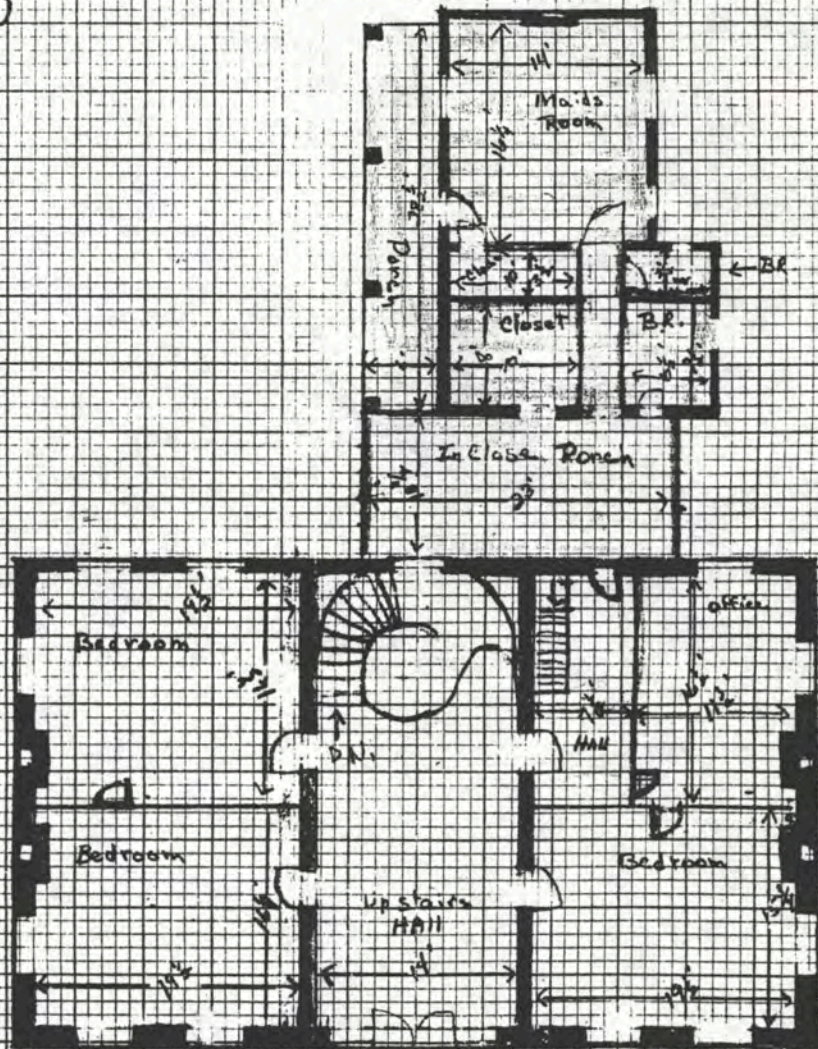
Swain says this was a main lot - ca. 1845 - 1850

by Swain

UPSTAIRS

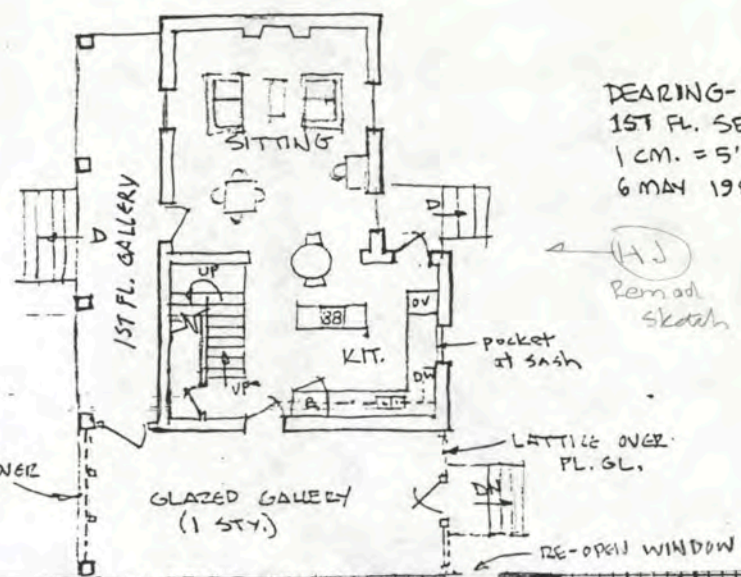
Deering-Swain Home
2111 19th Street
Tuscaloosa, ALA

(Upstairs)



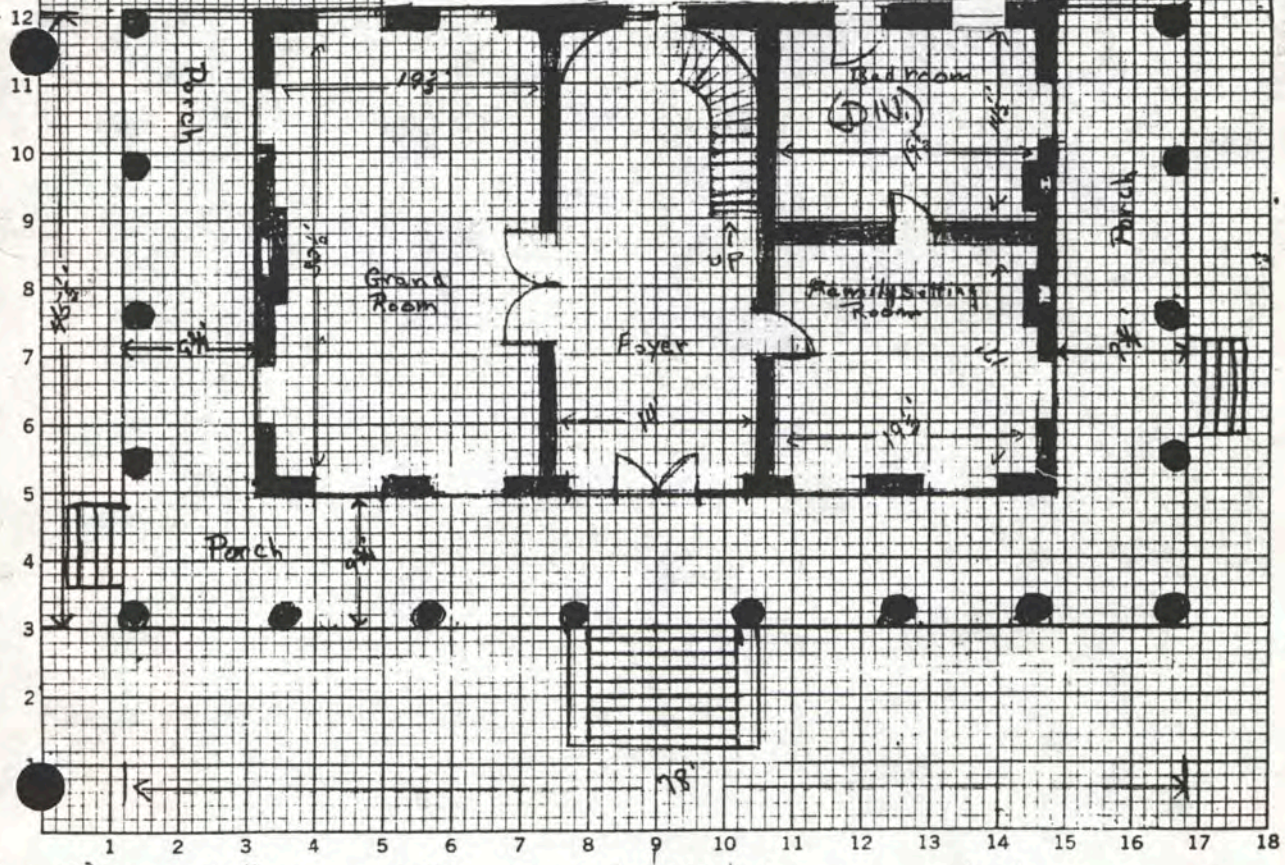
1CM
= 5'

24
23 Dearing - Swain
2111 14th Street
Tuscaloosa, Ala
21 one square = one
20
19 (Down Stairs)
18
17
16
15
14
13
12



DEARING-SWAIM HSE
1ST FL. SERV. WING OVER
1 CM. = 5' ±
6 MAY 1980

N



Main Hse reputedly is ca. 1946 - may be 1850's based on cast knobs

to the Centimeter

Swain - a the you - show 1st floor on 1887 birds-eye

view of Tuscaloosa

by Swain

Jones & Herrin

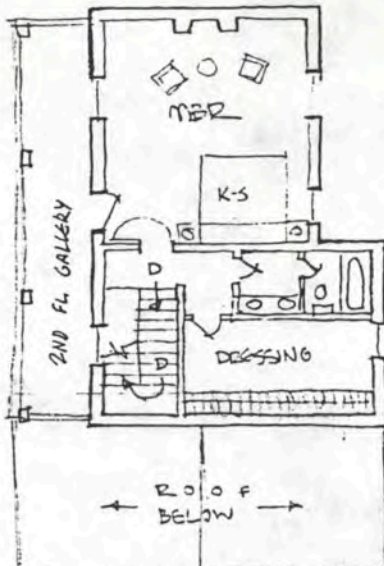
Architects, A.I.A.

104 Jefferson Street

Huntsville, AL 35801

Drawing
217 797
Fuscalo

Up Stair

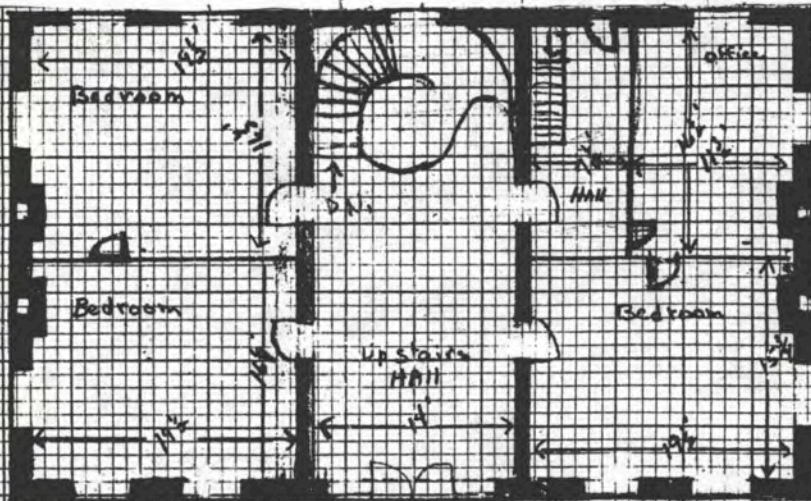
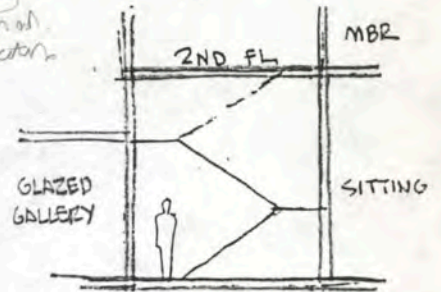


DEARING-SWAIN USE
2ND FL. SERV. WING OVERLAY

1 CM = 5' ±

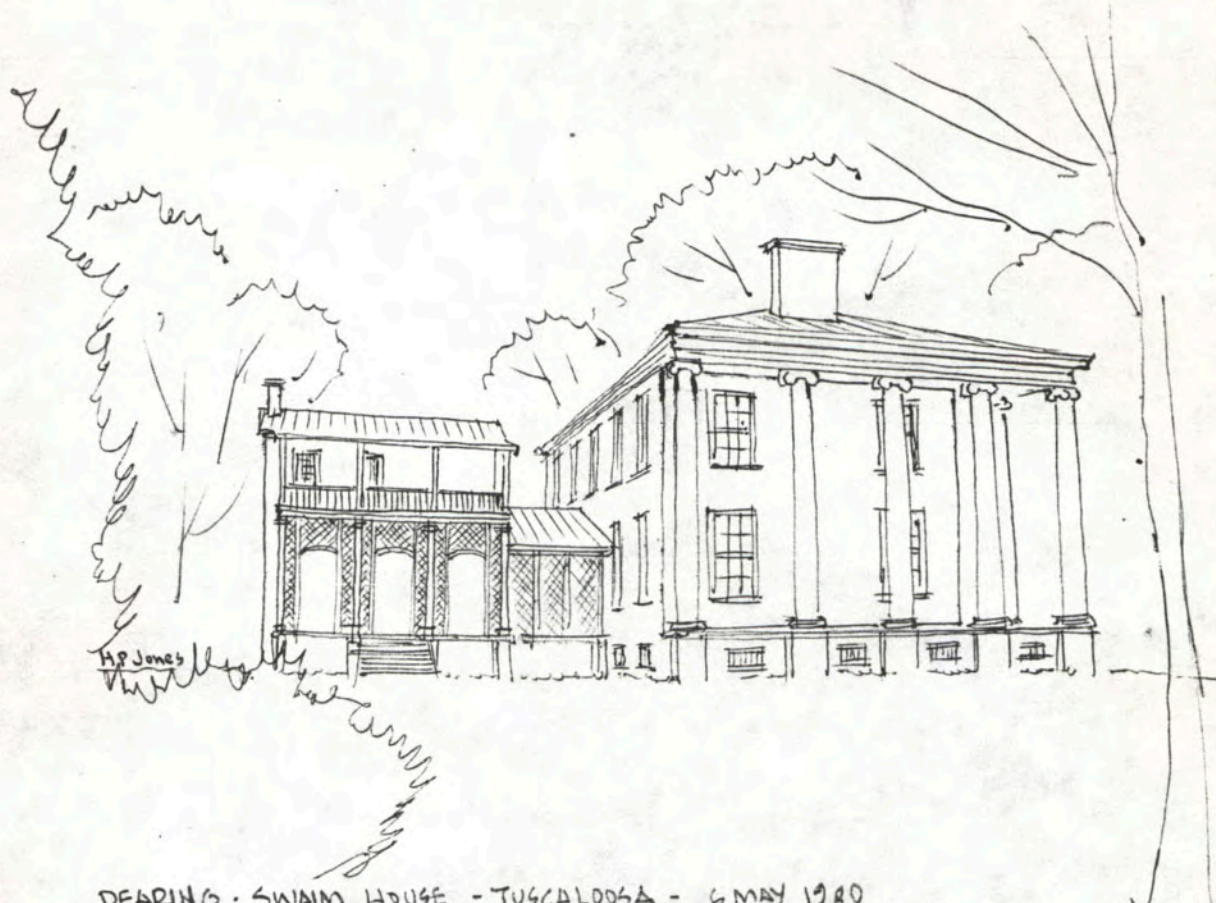
6 MAY 1980

(H) Demol. Section



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

by Swain



DEARING - SWAIN HOUSE - TUSCALOOSA - 6 MAY 1980

SERVICE WING ALTERATIONS - SCHEMATIC

JONES & HERRIN, ARCHITECTS, A.I.A. - HUNTSVILLE - ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANT - H. Jones

(Execution by Jim Fitts, AIA, Tuscaloosa)