

WHITE HALL

CIRCA 1844

Welcome to White Hall. White Hall is on the National Register of Historic Places and is listed with the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities. It was built in 1844 by Henry White for his brother Aaron. This Greek Revival, central-passage home boasts excellent examples of local carpentry and retains its original integrity. It is the largest surviving frame structure within the corporate limits of the town of Spring Hill and the best frame example of classical architecture. The original portion of the house consisted of the front hallway and the rooms on either side of the front hallway both upstairs and down. In the 1890's, the rear porches were enclosed and dependencies were added. In 1863, White Hall was the first Spring Hill headquarters of Confederate General Earl Van Dorn. Wounded soldiers were brought here and laid in the hallways after the Battle of Franklin. Over the years, White Hall has acquired the distinction of being haunted by ghostly hoofbeats in the night. White Hall is currently the in process of being restored. As a visitor to White Hall, please honor us by signing our guest register.

The small house out back was moved to this location in recent years from Franklin, Tennessee. It probably predates White Hall. Since it was located on Columbia Avenue not far from the Carter House, it quite possibly saw much action during the Battle of Franklin. The current owners hope to restore this house also.

DOCTOR'S BUGGY

The buggy was a popular form of transportation before the invention of the automobile. This light carriage was probably similar to the one used by Dr. Aaron White, original owner of White Hall, when he went to visit the sick in the area. Rufus Campbell, the father of Jean Gaddes, current owner of White Hall, drove for his uncle John Bryant who was a country doctor in Lincoln County, Tennessee, in the 1920's.

Dr. Bryant had the first automobile in the area. However, Mr. Campbell said that he also had a buggy which they used to access areas unable to be reached by automobile. This buggy was manufactured in Henderson, Kentucky, by Delker Brothers.....F. H. and A. G. Delker.....and was purchased from Oaklawn in Spring Hill, Tennessee, when the estate was auctioned in May, 2001.

FRONT HALLWAY

The **front door** is the one reportedly that Mrs. White answered and found Jessie Peters who announced that she wished to see General Van Dorn. Instead of waiting for Mrs. White to tell the General that he had a visitor, which was the proper etiquette of the day, Jessie brushed past Mrs. White, went upstairs to the General's room, and stayed for quite a while. Her actions prompted the General's moving his headquarters to Ferguson Hall, current site of the Tennessee Children's Home. Note the unique **door bell**. The outside door knob, the inside lever, and eyelets appear to be original to the house. The bell inside was missing and has been replaced with the current one. The **floors** in this room are original. The **doors** have their original wood graining. The **box locks** on many of the doors were removed by the previous owner, but the rest of the house retains its original integrity. The **six-arm oil chandelier** is not original to White Hall; it came from a church in McMinnville, Tennessee. It is oil burning and is dated 1857. Since it has not been converted to electricity, it functions as it did over 100 years ago. The **empire table** is probably from the mid 1800's. The **grandfather clock** belonged to the owner's father and has Westminster chimes. The **pump organ** is at least 100 years old. The top was removed long ago.

PARLOR

Above the transom over the French doors is a portion of the **original 1844 wallpaper** and the original border. It is rag paper and contains gold and must have been very beautiful when the light shone on it. The owners have attempted to use these original colors in this room. The **floor** is just as the current owners found it...note the beautiful patina...and may possibly be the original. If so, it was probably covered with carpet since wide boards were used when the floors were to be carpeted and narrow ones were used when the floors were not carpeted. The **door** into the front hallway has its original wood graining. The **oil hanging lamp** was once oil burning but has been converted to electricity. The red cased glass shade is embellished with 14 carat gold. It probably dates back to the 1870's to 1890's. The **mantel** is a fine example of early Tennessee craftsmanship. The **print** over the mantel was a gift from the Lisa Pardon, the artist. In 1997, when White Hall was on the Majestic Middle Tennessee Fall Tour, she toured the house. In gratitude for our opening the house and sharing it with others, she returned later in the day and presented this print to us. We do not know the origin of the **five-piece, matched parlor set**. It was purchased in Decatur, Alabama, from a family that had owned it for twenty-two years. It was of the anti bellum era as can be seen by the over-sized petticoat chair made especially to accommodate the big, hoop skirts. The **square piano** was made in the 1800's. It came from Oaklawn, which was the headquarters of General

J. B. Hood and his staff on the eve of the tragic Battle of Franklin, in Spring Hill. We do not know if the piano was original to Oaklawn. The **fiddle** was hand carved by Joe G. Quarles, grandfather of Joe Ed Gaddes, in the late 1800's or early 1900's. He also made the bow and the case. He is pictured here operating a lathe that Joe Ed Still uses in his own machine shop. The **small dish with the tiny pink roses** on the mantel is the only piece from the White family that is currently in the house. It was a gift to the present owners from local Spring Hill resident, Mattie Laura Harris, who said it needed to come home.

FIDDLE

This fiddle was hand carved by Joe G. Quarles, Grandfather of Joe Ed Gaddes, in the late 1800's or early 1900's. He also made the bow and the case. He is pictured here operating a lathe that Joe Ed still uses in his own machine shop.

PIANO

The square grand piano was made in the 1800's. It came from Oaklawn, which was the headquarters of General John Bell Hood and his staff on the eve of the Battle of Franklin, in Spring Hill. We do not know if the piano was original to Oaklawn.

WALLPAPER

A portion of the original wallpaper and the original border remains above the transom over the French doors. It is rag paper and contains gold. It must have been very beautiful when the light shown on it.

FORREST AT CHAPEL HILL”

In 1997, when White Hall was on the Majestic Middle Tennessee Tour of Homes, artist Lisa Pardon came as a guest. Upon departure, she expressed her sincere appreciation for our gracious hospitality and wanted to give us a print of her work “Forrest at Chapel Hill”. She said it just belonged in a house like this. She returned later that afternoon with her husband and presented us this signed print. Her actions were very touching, especially since Forrest was a frequent visitor to White Hall and since the Whites and their neighbors served Forrest and his troupes fried chicken on black tin trays and buttermilk on the eve of the Battle of Franklin.

PARLOR SET

The five-piece, matched parlor set was purchased in Decatur, Alabama, from a couple who said it was pre-civil war. The oversized chair in the southwest corner of the room was made to accommodate the ladies with big skirts and is called a petticoat chair.

THE PARLOR

The floor is probably original. If so, it was likely covered with carpet since wide boards were used when the floors were carpeted and narrow ones were used with the floors were not carpeted. The door into the front hallway has its original wood graining. The light fixture was once oil burning but has been converted to electricity. The shade is embellished with 14 carat gold. The mantels in the parlor and in the dining room are fine examples of early Tennessee craftsmanship. Originally, there was no side porch so the reason for the double doors was a mystery since they opened outside to a dropoff. Then a lady who toured the house said that they were probably there to accommodate the buggy that would carry a coffin from the parlor to its final resting place in the cemetery. Incidentally, each family usually had its own coffin in which individual family member would lie in state. The body was put into a plain box for burial, and the family coffin was stored until needed again.

THE PORCH

This room was originally part of the outdoor porch that extended across the back of the house. The **display case** came out of country store in Wartburg, Tennessee. The **bench** was from the Tennessee Central Railroad and was redone by Herbert Vaughan for Charles Buford Gotto. Both were employees of the Tennessee Central. This bench probably was in a railroad station during the first part of the twentieth century since the TC operated from the turn of the century until 1968. The **light fixture** is a converted, oil-burning, Aladdin lamp. The **door**, made in 1940, is from a closet in the home of Ed and Annie Lee Gaddes on Crestview Drive in Nashville, Tennessee. It replaces a modern door that was added to White Hall many years after it was built. The room, after the porch was enclosed, became a bedroom and was heated by a coal-burning stove with a flue out the south wall. The room currently houses a small gift shop.

DINING ROOM

This room was part of the original portion of White Hall. Two of the **doors** have their original wood graining. The **floor** has been replaced in past times and is old but not original. The **dining room table and matching buffet** were specially made in Grand Rapids, Michigan. They are over 100 years old. Note the legs which have the pineapple motif which symbolizes hospitality. The green and white **textiles** are from the Cane Creek Farm near Fayetteville, Tennessee. The **buffet** is probably from the late 19th century and is extremely functional since it can store dishes and linens and can also be used to serve food. The **mantel** is a fine example of Tennessee workmanship. The **light fixture** was once oil burning but has been converted to electricity.

LIBRARY

This cozy room is lighted by an oil, hanging **lamp** that has been converted to electricity. The **display** in the corner is a tribute to a great Christian gentleman and friend, Charles Buford Gotto. Mr. Gotto was a noted historian on the Civil War. The **barrister's case** was a gift to us before his death. It contains memorabilia associated with his life. His Grandfather Savage was a soldier in the Confederate Army. His **picture** and a **citation** from the State of Tennessee recognizing his service is displayed. A **handmade box** from his wife proclaims that it was made for "My Hero Husband." The **medal** was presented to Mr. Gotto when he served as Commander of the Sons of the Confederate Veteran. A **book** written by Mr. Gotto's mother, Martha Savage Gotto, and her sister, along with handmade **corn shuck flowers** made by Mrs. Gotto, can also be seen. The **cannon ball** was found in Mr. Gotto's garage after his death and weighs about nine pounds. The **Bible** is dated 1833.

BACK DOWNSTAIRS

HALLWAY

The original structure build in 1844 has an open porch across the back. The pillars can still be seen. The stair case was outdoors. Think of the very frigid weather we have had this past winter and imagine how it would feel to go up to bed on a cold, snowy, winter night! In the late 1800's the porches upstairs and downstairs were enclosed. The portrait on the wall is a family portrait of the grandparents of one of the current owners of White Hall. As you go up the stairs, notice their stability and the wear that is very evident on them.

KITCHEN

This room was the original kitchen area that was attached to the main house structure probably in the late 1800's. It later served the owners as a dining room. The **dye box** on the tall cabinet is from a country store which Cowan L. McMillan, grandfather of Jean Gaddes, ran in the 1920's in Camargo, Tennessee. The **crystal** displayed in the tall cabinet was a wedding gift to Annette Hudy, the daughter of Joe Ed and Jean Gaddes, from Ona Thornberry. It was given to Mrs. Thornberry when she married her husband Arthur Thornberry, who incidently knew the Wright Brothers, who flew the first airplane. They were neighbors in Dayton, Ohio. The **teapot, platter, and bowls** belonged to the maternal grandmother of Jean Gaddes, as did the **muffin pan, tea kettle, and iron.**

The **teapot with accessories** was from Jean's mother. The **clock** on the mantle was a gift made by Dan Yearwood. The **coffee grinder** on the mantle was given to Jean when she was a child by her greatgrandmother. The other **coffee grinder**, the **sugar scoop**, and **butter mold** came from Jean's grandmother's home. The antique **nut cracker** was a gift from Jim Bill and Betty McInteer. The ice tongs belonged to Joe Ed's grandfather. The **quilt** on the small table was made by the aunt of the grandmother of Joe Ed Gaddes and is quite old. The **pictures** on the piano are family members. The **high chair** was made for Jean's uncle shortly after his birth about 75 years ago by a family friend.

BATHROOM

The **bathtub** and **sink** are old and have been reporcelained. The **faucets** are also old. Of course, the original bathroom was not located in the house and may have been similar to the four holer currently on the premises.

BACK DOWNSTAIRS ROOM

This room was once the office of Dr. White. We are told that he kept his patients with communicable diseases in this area, either in this room or the one over it. He probably had great sympathy for these people since his first wife died at an early age of yellow fever. The walls were covered with sheet rock when the current owners purchased the house. However, they removed it and have left them as is with the exposed beams overhead. Marks from early saws are visible on the boards of the walls. When the floor was sanded, dark stains which appear to be blood stains were very noticeable on the floor. As far as can be determined, this portion of the house has its original tin roof. We do not know when it was attached to the rest of the house. While preparing to paint the house recently, the owners found the name of John White carved on the clapboard on the back, outside wall of this room. John Fain White was one of the six children of Dr. White and his second wife, Margaret Fain White. He was probably named for his grandfather, John Fain---father of Margaret, who was a merchant and the owner of Forest Hill, a large plantation on the French Broad River.

BACK UPSTAIRS

HALLWAY

Note the **pillars** that are still visible. This was an open porch before being enclosed in the late 1800's. The **trunk** belonged to Vera Worsham Hardison, mother of Carolyn Gotto. Mrs. Hardison died in 1918. The **quilt** displayed on the trunk was made by the grandmother of Jean Gaddes. If she were alive today, she would be well over 100 years old. The **oak rocking chair** was given to Mrs. Martha Savage Gotto by a neighbor named Mrs. Wells in Nashville, Tennessee, many years ago.

SOUTHWEST UPSTAIRS

BEDROOM

The old iron **light fixture** in this room is electrified but was once oil burning. The top of the shade holder has two dates, 1876 and 1883 (as best we can read), on it. The **white rocking chair**, the **bed**, and the **dresser** belonged to the great aunt of Joe Ed Gaddes. The **quilt** on the bed was made by Mary Yarborough McMillan, maternal grandmother of Jean Gaddes. She made it out of tobacco sacks. She is pictured in the photograph on the mantle. The **lamps** on the dresser were in the bedroom of Jean Gaddes when she was a child.

WEST UPSTAIRS BEDROOM

This room was the location of the first Spring Hill **headquarters** of Confederate General Earl Van Dorn in 1863. Jessie McKissick Peters came to White Hall to visit him. When she called at the front door, Mrs. White offered to tell the General that he had a visitor. However, Jessie brushed past Mrs. White, went up the stairs, and visited the General for over an hour. Her indiscreet behavior was appalling to Mrs. White so she asked Dr. White to ask the General to leave. He did leave White Hall and set up his headquarters at Ferguson Hall, current site of the Tennessee Children's Home. It was there that, approximately a week later, he was shot to death allegedly by the husband of Jessie Peters. Plans are being made for the restoration of this room. The bed is a **rope bed** and probably dates back to the 1700's. Rope beds gave rise to the saying, "Sleep tight; don't let the bed bugs bite." That meant to tighten the ropes on the bed so that the bed wouldn't sag. Since the mattresses back then were made of straw and corn shucks, they were quite apt to have bugs living in them who liked to munch on sleeping victims. Therefore, many times, our forefathers would have a **bug bag** in their bed such as this one. It is made with rosebuds, rosemary, penny royal, and calamine. The **quilt** was made by a family friend, Delia Jackson, over sixty years ago. Mrs. Jackson is a fine Christian lady who has had a very difficult life, having buried two children at birth and her husband at an early age. She never had many earthly belongings, and this quilt was probably one of her most valuable possessions. Note the tiny stitches and her note.

ROPE BED

Mrs. Brook's grandmother's bed. The Brooks died in 1947. He was 102 years old and a little over 5' tall. She was over 100 years old at death and was 4' 9" tall. Mr. Tomlinson bought the bed from a relative in 1966. This bed has been well preserved possibly because most old homes, no matter how humble, usually had two nice pieces in them, a bed and another item, often a loom. Mattresses in pioneer days were made of corn shucks and straw. Such rope beds with their mattresses of "natural" material gave rise to the old saying,

"SLEEP TIGHT AND DON'T LET THE BED BUGS BITE."

"SLEEP TIGHT" meant to tighten the ropes on your bed so it wouldn't sag. *"DON'T LET THE BED BUGS BITE"* was a reminder to take your "bug (repellant) bag" to bed to keep the bugs that liked to live in the natural materials in your mattress from biting you during the night. The "bug bag" was made from rosebuds, rosemary, penny royal, and camomile.

FRONT UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

This was one of the **hallways** where soldiers were laid after the Battle of Franklin. Their moans are said to have frightened the children of Dr. and Mrs. White. In fact, history tells us that Dr. White and his children buried in the cemetery at the end of Walnut Street which runs along side White Hall a young soldier who died and was very far from his home. Incidentally, Dr. White and his family are also buried there. The **doorways** open onto a cantilevered balcony with decorative rail. Note the four, square pillars with Tower-of-the-Wind capitals. Also, note the corncobs that have long ago been placed in the crevices apparently to keep out squirrels and birds. The rocking chair on the porch belonged to John White, son of the first owners of the house and pictured in the photo. The photo was a gift from Mattie Laura Harris, a Spring Hill resident. The **trunk** belonged to the mother of Paul Tucker, Church of Christ minister, and was a gift from his widow Edith U. Tucker. It is at least 100 years old or older. The **dress** was made by Lou Woodard Huffstutter, the grandmother of Mrs. Tucker. Mrs. Huffstutter died before 1900. The wide, herringbone brick **walkway** that leads from Duplex Road to the front entrance of White Hall can be viewed from here; as can the lawn where the White's served fried chicken to the troops of General Nathan Bedford Forrest before the ill-fated Battle of Franklin. Perhaps some of those same soldiers were the ones who were brought here wounded and laid in this hallway after that battle. When this house was purchased by the current owners, the **floor** was covered in linoleum that had to be removed by hand in pieces no larger than an inch or two in diameter.

EAST BEDROOM

The matching **bedroom suit** is empire style which is mid 1800's. Note the beautiful beveled mirror on the dresser. The dresser drawers are put together with wooden pegs. The **spread** on the bed was handmade by Annie Lee Gaddes approximately sixty years ago. Each square took three hours to crochet. The **night gown** on the bed was the wedding night gown of Vera Thigpen Roberts when she married in 1910. She was the aunt of Aubrey Daugherty, a friend who gave it to us. Note the **built-in closet**. This was not a common feature in antebellum homes. Inside one of the doors is written *Melbourne Smith, April 10, 1898*. The **hats** displayed in the closet are from Mary Louise McMillan Campbell, the mother of Jean Gaddes. They date back to the 1950s and 1960s. The **mantel** is another example of early Tennessee craftsmanship. The **chest** came from the home of Hall Calhoun, a very well-known church of Christ preacher in the Middle Tennessee area. It is over 100 years old and was purchased by the grandmother of Joe Ed Gaddes from his daughter after his death. The **book** is the story of the life of Hall Calhoun.