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The Original Architectural Details of the Hamilton Mansion

The residence was built for Samuel Pugh Hamilton. Architect J. D. Hall of Brooklyn, New York, designed the attractive 3 story Victorian mansion (known today as a Mid-Victorian). Estimated cost of building this most attractive and ornamental house \$75,000 to \$100,000.

The building and carpentry contract was awarded to Abraham J. Snedeker, a transplanted New Yorker whose building accomplishments in Savannah included the carpentry work on the old Masonic Temple (which formerly stood on Liberty Street west of Whitaker Street) and the present Wesley Monumental Church. The brick work contract was awarded to C. C. Casey, a local brick layer of considerable workmanship.

The residence was built on a basement with 3 stories and a Mansard roof. The total height from the ground to the cupola is 60 feet. Height of the floors are as follows basement 11 feet in height, 1st floor 13 feet in height, 2nd floor 12 ½ feet in height and 3rd floor 10 feet in height. On the south side of the house there are 15 windows with 32x60 glass with a handsome verandah covered on the 1st floor and open on the 2nd floor. On the north side there is a fine bow window on the 1st floor through 2nd floor and ten 32x60 windows. The front contains 10 windows with 32x60 glass and glass paneled doors with a pazzar [wall?] on the front and back of the house.

Floor Plan:

The basement contained a kitchen, wine cellar and cooling room with 2 dumb waiters connecting the kitchen to the butler's pantry and speaker tube. The walls of the basement wall are 24 inches thick. The basement is half below ground and half above ground.

The Parlor floor (or 1st story) contained the central hall flanked by the drawing room, music room, reception room, library, butler's pantry and dining room. At the back of the central hall is the broad stairway with mahogany handrail and balustrade.

The family rooms floor (or 2nd story) contained 6 bed rooms with large closets and privy near the master's room. All the bedrooms contain speaker tubes.

The 3rd story had 5 rooms and a large Billiard room with speaker tube. Servants stayed on the 3rd story of the mansion and in the carriage house 2nd story.

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Jane and Rob Sales, owners of The Hamilton-Turner Inn, commissioned the research for this summary in August and September 2004. Compiled by historical researcher Felicity Joy Beall -- (912) 228-4131

Architecturally Notable Park Mansion, Savannah Luxury Inn & Romantic Bed and Breakfast
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Roof, Railing and Skylights.

The Mansard roof is a flat roof with iron fleur-de-lis railing and skylights for ventilation. The roof is covered with heavy quality tin.

Yard Fencing.

The North, South and front yards were fenced with wrought iron fences supplied by the McDonough & Valentine Foundry.

Fireplace Mantles.

The fireplace and effacements are of fine white Italian marble.

Livery Stable.

The livery stable stands across the courtyard with living quarters for the grooms on the 2nd floor of the carriage house. The carriage house housed the horses and the brass and black leather brougham.

Interior of the house consisted of solid wood paneled doors, bas relief hand carved wainscoting, high oriel & bay windows, and carved wall panels decorated the polished leather to resemble marble and blocked wall paper. The parlor floor rooms contained Belgian cut glass chandeliers. Hard wood floors through out the house. The entire design of the interior of the house is representative of the Second French Empire.

Furnishings of the home.

Furnishings were of fine craftsmanship, both local and imported pieces made especially for Mr. Hamilton and family. The Billiard room housed one of the finest billiard tables in Savannah and several baccarat tables. The music room contained a pianoforte and harp for the entertainment of family and guests. Gilded mirrors graced the mantles of the fireplaces and wall sported the works of contemporary painters of the time. Floor to ceiling curtains hung at the windows. The estimated cost for the furnishing of the house is \$50,000.

Craftsmanship.

All the arts and skills of local and imported craftsmen went into the 3 stories and basement showplace. There are approximately over 100,000 gray Savannah Bricks. The bricks were covered with stucco when it became the rave in Savannah to stucco the brick buildings.

Construction Timeline.

According to a newspaper article talking about the house that was being built by S. P. Hamilton, in June 1872 they had estimated that the house was progressing well and that all indicators pointed to the house be finished about Christmas of that year. The tax

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records indicate that the house was under construction in 1871-1872 and finished by 1873 at the time of taxes assessed.

Notable Modifications:

Sometime between 1918 and 1930 the mansion was reconfigured to three bedrooms.

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