

HENRY B ^{USE}
Chase Home
Huntsville, Ala.
Madison Co.

HABS No. ^{ALA} ~~18~~-409
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PHOTOGRAPHS
District No. 16

Historic American Buildings Survey
E. Walter Burkhardt, District Officer
Ala. Polytechnic Inst., Auburn, Ala.

THE HENRY B. CHASE HOME.
517 Adams Avenue.
Huntsville, Madison County, Alabama.

Ownership:

Present Owner: Henry B. Chase.

Previous Owners: Howard B. & Frances M. Burwell.
Willie Parrett Shreve.
Claude Leverett Coleman.
Annie E. Leverett.
Francis J. Leverett.
William McDowell.

Date of Erection: 1848 - 1850.

Architect: Unknown.

Builder: William McDowell.

Present Condition: Good; having recently been remodeled.

Number of Stories: Two.

Materials of Construction: Brick and frame.

Other Existing Records:

Source of Material: "HISTORIC HOMES" by Pat Jones in the Huntsville Times, January 1, 1933

Compiled by: Katherine Floyd, Auburn, Ala.

Approved: E. Walter Burkhardt, District Officer, HABS
9/19/1936

Architectural Merit: This building during recent alterations has the front changed. The changing of the front does not portray the true type of Ante-Bellum structure of the Tennessee Valley of a hundred years ago.

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Additional Data:

William McDowell:

A cotton commission merchant in Mobile, doing business with his brother-in-law, James M. Withers. He spent most of the year in Mobile, living in Huntsville just a part of the year.

In 1848, he drew up the plans for his home. He left these plans for his overseer to carry out, while he and his wife went to Europe. When he returned, he found that the overseer had misunderstood the plans. He had built the house backwards, with the front facing the hills and the rear turned toward the street.

By this time McDowell's business began to fail. This is probably why he was not able to correct this mistake. The small plain porch, facing the street, became his main entrance, while the rooms on the front of the house remained plainly finished. Those to the rear had been finished in quite a lavish manner.

Also, the second floor was never finished in the beautiful manner of those back rooms of the first floor. Upstairs all was very simple and plain.

In 1860, McDowell put the home up as a security to obtain money with which to continue his business in Mobile, which had reached a bad state of affairs.

Civil War:

During the war this home was chosen by General O. M. Mitchell, the first Federal general to reach Huntsville, as his headquarters.

Henry B. Chase:

Has completely restored the home to even more than its old time glory. Without changing the beautifully finished portions of the home at all, he had the front of the house finished with a beautiful colonnaded porch, windows were added, a side porch, etc.