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**THE
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QUARTERLY

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2 projects
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Editor's Comment We are most happy to

announce that Miss Cindy Sims is the winner of our first Historic Huntsville Foundation Essay Contest for High School Students.

Miss Sims is a senior at Randolph School, and plans to enter the University of Alabama in Huntsville this fall. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph L. Sims, and lives with her parents and a younger sister on McNeal Lane near New Market.

Miss Sims maintains a very active interest in archeology. Currently she is secretary-treasurer of the Huntsville Chapter of the Alabama archeological Society and has participated in the Weeden House dig (1974) and the Constitution Park dig (1976). We are delighted to present our readers with her essay.

The Aspen Place

The Weeden Home, also known as Aspen Place, is located on the corner of Gates Street and Green Street in Huntsville. It originally occupied half a block, between Gates and William Street, and was within the first twenty block area of Twickenham

Originally on the property there was the main house, the kitchen and servants' quarters building, a smokehouse, and a well house. The kitchen was separate from the house because of the danger of a fire spreading. This building was also used as a quarter for slaves.

The main house was built in 1819 by H. C. Bradford who obtained the property from John Jones. After Bradford built the house, he lost it in 1824 by mortgage to John Brahan. The house was two-story with walls eighteen inches thick, of four rooms and was made of solid masonry. It was originally not white washed on the exterior. Two rooms were downstairs, on the opposite sides of the central hall, and the other two were directly above these.

The house was built with a design of the Federal period which dated from 1780 to 1820. Soon after it was built, two more rooms were added, one upstairs and one downstairs.

↑ No - all are of the original fabric. No signs of being added in either attic or walls

Historic Huntsville Quarterly

EDITOR Henry Marks

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This formed an "L" design, with three rooms upstairs and three rooms downstairs.

Of the three rooms downstairs, two were parlors and the third was a dining room. The dining room was behind the parlor on the right, in the "L". The three rooms upstairs were used as bedrooms.

The rooms were twenty feet square, with ceilings that were eleven feet high on the first floor, and twelve and a half feet high on the second floor. The ceilings were plastered on the wood lath strips. The plaster was reinforced with horse and human hair. Each room had a fireplace. Three of the fireplaces were of the Adam style and the other three were Greek revival style indicating changes with the time. The floors were quarter-sawn heart pine with an exposed edge.

The central hall, facing Gates Street, was the main entrance and it contained a circular stairway, leading to the second floor. There was a back stair which led from the dining room to the third bedroom. The stairway in the central hall had no

visible means of support and was a rare architectural feature on the house. This staircase, with the exception of the Lee home (on the Arsenal) was unique in Madison County. On the backside of the hall above the stair, there was a window which was in the house originally, but later bricked in. It is now re-opened to light the stair hall. During an archaeological dig at the Weeden home in 1974, some red stained glass with flowers cut in it was found. This is believed to have been from the window above the stair, and used as a Victorian decoration.

Inside the house are wood mouldings of the Roman Order which are located on the door facings, window frames, fireplace mantels and baseboards. These mouldings are part of a more delicate Federal period than the bolder Colonial features on the house.

The Colonial, or Georgian, features date to 1778. These features are: the glass fanlight window (above the entrance at the central hall), dentil mouldings under the gutter soffits, and features on the circular stairway. The front door was made of wood, with eight panels, and there were glass panes, protected by shutters, on both sides of the door. There was a glass fanlight

window above the door. It was made of lead glass, mounted in a metal brace and surrounded by a hand carved wood trim.

The window glass used was hand made and very thin, thus causing waves and imperfections which can still be seen where the original glass has still survived.

The shutters on the outside of the windows were used to control the light and air

entering the room and also helped to protect the windows. The windows had a three inch sill. The bricks above the window,

called a lintel, were placed like this:  rather than horizontally so that the wall would not collapse on the window.

The roof was made of wood shingles of cedar or cypress and cut with a froe and draw knife. There were two metal downspouts located on the front. A moulded metal cornice was placed at the edge of the roof.

In addition to the main house there were other "out" buildings in the back. The masonry smokehouse, twelve feet square, the well house of wood frame, ten feet square, the necessary house of wood, six feet square, and the kitchen and servants'

building of masonry, eighteen by fifty feet, were the other buildings. Surrounding the lawn, there was also an iron fence which was melted down during the Civil War.

In 1824, John McKinley, twenty-ninth Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, bought the house and additions were made. The Federal detailing was modernized to the then fashionable Greek revival style. Inside the house, on the windows and shutters, there were many carvings. They were of the Greek revival style and the majority of the carvings have flutes or reeds. The shutters have four flutes to every section and the windows have six flutes and seventeen reeds.

In 1829 Bartley M. Lowe bought the house and had more improvements made. The front porch was added sometime during the 1830's. The porch had brick columns covered with stucco with wood bases. The platform and the top of the porch were made of wood with a wood railing which had a wood balustre. There were handcut stone steps leading to the porch, now removed. A six paneled door was put in on the second floor which led to the balcony above the porch. *1840's or 50's, house design*

In 1845 the building was passed on to Martha C. Betts, and in the same year Dr. *no this was Vic.*

Weeden purchased the property from her. Mrs. A. Stockton bought the property in 1955, removing the remaining kitchen and servants quarters building and adding a garage.

By now, the house had eleven rooms, two parlors, and a garage. On August 28, 1969, "Aspen Place" was heavily damaged by fire. Two of the rooms upstairs, in the back, were burned and many of the rest of the rooms were damaged by smoke and fire.

In 1971, the Twickenham Historic Preservation District Association bought the

house from Mrs. Stockton. There was a Daughters of The American Revolution plaque placed on the corner of the building in 1910. The front porch was removed in 1974. The house is in the process of being restored now. Some of the later additions have already been removed. It might be a while until the Weeden house is transformed to its original beauty, but it still stands a historical monument to the "Old South"

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Ground Breaking Ceremony
 Constitution Hall Park *J.H. Arch. (H)*

Although we are primarily interested in the preservation of existing structures we certainly applaud the reconstruction of the buildings comprising Constitution Hall Park. We will benefit from the awakening of interest in history and the preservation of buildings occasioned by this reconstruction. Particularly the renovation of buildings on the South side of the Square and the reconstruction should help to keep buildings in the area from being torn down. This awakening of interest shows to me how many diverse organizations can work together for common goals and that we MUST cooperate with other societies to accomplish our objectives.

The walking tours of the Twickerham historic district and the opening of public buildings and historic churches in the downtown area to the general public after the ground breaking ceremonies for Constitution Hall greatly added to the

occasion. Those participating must have been made more aware of our architectural and historic heritage. We are proud to have been a major force in the opening of these buildings to the general public. For posterity, I have taken the liberty to reproduce in this issue of the Quarterly the program for the ground breaking ceremony.

Henry Marks



Groundbreaking Ceremony

J.H. Arch.
(H.S.) →

CONSTITUTION HALL PARK

Huntsville, Alabama

April 24, 1977

Philip M. Mason, President
Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society
Presiding

Gathering Music Huntsville Association of Folk Musicians

Call To Order

Invocation The Reverend Donald L. Bailey
First Presbyterian Church

Opening Remarks

"Blessing, Glory, Wisdom and Thanks University of Alabama/Huntsville Choir
Alleluia, Amen" G. G. Wagner Dr. Royce Boyer, Conducting

Introduction of Guests Honorable James Record
Chairman
Madison County Commission

Remarks Honorable Joe Davis
Mayor
Huntsville, Alabama

Address Dr. Frances C. Roberts
Professor of History
University of Alabama in Huntsville

Ground Breaking

Singing "Alabama" All

Closing Announcements

Benediction The Reverend Lee Hudson
Heritage Baptist Church

"ALABAMA"

Alabama, Alabama,
We will aye be true to thee,
From thy Southern shore, where growth
By the sea thine orange tree,
To thy northern vale where floweth,
Deep and blue, thy Tennessee.
Alabama, Alabama!
We will aye be true to thee!

TOURS and EXHIBITS

2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

WALKING TOURS of TWICKENHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT — Walking groups to be guided by Huntsville Convention and Visitors Bureau Volunteer Twickenham Hostesses.

EXHIBITS specially arranged in the MADISON COUNTY COURTHOUSE LOBBY — The display includes rare documents relating to the organization of the State of Alabama and the 1819 era.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS and **HISTORIC CHURCHES** in the downtown area will be open, as indicated on the map below. Hosts and hostesses in each building will provide historical data. (These buildings are not included in the guided tour.)



* Site of CONSTITUTION HALL PARK

1. Madison County Courthouse — Special Exhibit of 1819 documents in lobby
2. Law Library — Madison County OLD RECORDS DEPARTMENT (first time open on Sunday)
3. Randolph Church of Christ, 1887
4. First United Methodist Church, 1870
5. Central Presbyterian Church, 1889
6. Temple B'Nai Shalom, 1897
7. First Presbyterian Church, 1858
8. Episcopal Church of the Nativity, 1859
9. First Alabama Bank, 1835
10. Utilities Building, 1957 — Historical display Huntsville Waterworks 1823-1973
11. Clements House, 1825 — Restored by Huntsville Utilities, 1976
Occupied by Madison County's Legislative Delegation

Dates shown are approximate dates buildings were constructed.



**Membership in the Historic
Huntsville Foundation**

Membership in the Historic
Huntsville Foundation

If you want to become a member of the Historic Huntsville Foundation, and to assist in enhancing Huntsville's future by preserving its significant architectural and historic heritage, send your name, address, telephone number (home and office) and check in the appropriate amount (made payable to the Historic Huntsville Foundation Inc.) to: Mrs. Richard Van Valkenberg, Jr., Chairman, Historic Huntsville Foundation, 104 Williams Ave. S.E. Huntsville, 35801

MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

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Business	50.00
Patron	25. - 99.00
Benefactor	100. or more

While searching for illustrations to accompany Miss Sim's article, I came across the following advertisement for the Weedon House, published probably in 1936.

As I perused it, feelings of revulsion began to attack me. It is the best example of why we so desperately need our organization in Huntsville, to preserve our architectural heritage intact.

Please read all the information provided in the brochure. I think you will see what I mean.

The Editor.



At Auction

THURSDAY
AUGUST 9th
10 A.M.

Storyed and Famous 137-year-old Home of Alabama's Beloved Poet-Artist — Truly one of America's Architectural Gems!



Property of
Mr. and Mrs.
Ben Bibb

Howard Weeden Home

HUNTSVILLE, ALA. 301 Gates Street at Green Street, only two blocks of Court Square, one block south of Episcopal Church, one block southwest of First Presbyterian Church, 92 miles north of Birmingham. Home of Redstone Arsenal in the TVA area.



A fabulous collection of treasured heirlooms—vast array of rare and beautiful antiques. Not one piece available before!

- ★ Howard Weeden Home — built in 1819 and embodying the purest form of Colonial Architecture. Minute details of plans on display in Library of Congress — featured in scores of columns and stories. Great tangible value because of its location and good condition.
- ★ Limited number of paintings by one of South's most talented daughters, Howard Weeden. Many books going.
- ★ Perfect spot to live graciously, to build a fine restaurant with incomparable atmosphere, to start a business or hold as an investment.
- ★ Never before such a treasure trove of antiques — Come to Huntsville for the greatest sale in a decade.



Photo shows entrance hall with its architecturally perfect circular staircase that winds unsupported to the second floor.

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COLORFUL HISTORY DATES BACK OVER 137 YEARS



America won independence, set up housekeeping on her own, and architecture flowered most impressively in Dixie. One of the South's finest homes—fully expressing the romance and lavish hospitality of this bygone era—stands today . . . proud . . . beautiful . . . full of nostalgic charm.

The brilliant architect, George Steel, son of the war hero who fought under Washington, executed this design embodying the purest form of Colonial Architecture. Finished in 1819, it has great historic consequence—not only for its age—but for its awe-inspiring beauty and the imprint of its notable owners.

H. C. Bradford, the first owner, mortgaged the home and lost it to John Bragan. In 1824, the latter owner sold it to John McKinley, a Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Bartley Love and Martha Betts were successive owners. Then in 1845, the deeds show ownership was bestowed on Dr. William Weeden, whose descendants own it today. Only when Major General D. M. Mitchell commandeered it for use as Federal Headquarters in 1862 has occupancy by the Weeden family been broken.

HOME OF ALABAMA'S BELOVED POET-ARTIST—HOWARD WEEDEN

Here, Alabama's famed poet-painter lived and died. This gentleman, in poems and sketches, gave the world a sensitive and sympathetic portrayal of the character and dignity of old-time Negroes that has never been equaled. Only Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind," made a greater impact on the nation than did the publication of her illustrated volumes: *Shadows on the Wall*, *Plantation Ballads*, *Songs of the South and Old Values*.

Joel Chandler Harris wrote in the foreword of one book: ". . . I thank heaven for the beautiful genius that has snatched from the past and presented the handful of memories preserved in this book." Critics the nation over were lavish with praise. Said the *New York Times* . . . "This is genius." One edition after another was brought out.

Howard Weeden lived all her life in this delightful home, finding her subjects among her servants and the servants of neighbors. She brought distinction to its portals, and this is why people will always point with pride and say: "That is the Howard Weeden home."

Special Notice

HOWARD WEEDEN HOME shown by appointment only from Aug. 2 to Aug. 7, 1 P.M. to 5 P.M.

Open House on August 8th from 1 P. M. til 5 P. M.

EXCITING NEWS FOR ART LOVERS!

A large collection of Miss Weeden's paintings which won such wide critical acclaim still hang in the home. The South's foremost collectors now cherish the other paintings by one of the South's most talented daughters. A limited number owned by Mrs. Bibb will be sold. This news has important meaning to those who would like to enrich their collection with originals of merit and value.

ATTENTION BOOK LOVERS: Beautiful volumes of the classics and scores of books by contemporary authors. Letters of Sidney Lanier, works of Shakespeare, Johnson's Narratives to mention a few. Set of encyclopedias going for what they bring!

FABULOUS COLLECTION OF TREASURES History-Hallowed Items And



KNOWN THE NATION OVER—DETAILED DESIGNS PRESERVED IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Few homes anywhere have resisted such wide and universal acclaim. Students of Colonial Architecture, those who appreciate fine designs, lovers of art and historians have found it a veritable treasure trove of interest. Thousands have read of its peerless beauty and noted its part in stories and articles. The Advisory Committee of the Historic American Buildings Survey selected the Howard Weeden Home as one possessing exceptional historical and architectural interest, worthy of careful preservation for the benefit of future generations, and to this end, a detailed record of its appearance was made and deposited for permanent reference in the Library of Congress. Now, you can own this architectural gem, and remember, the years will enhance its value.

Its Sound Sturdiness Today is a Tribute to Craftsmen of Yesteryear

Gates and Green Streets . . . named for two Revolutionary War Generals. The corner of these streets was the site chosen for this magnificent show place. Slaves made bricks right on the premises to go into the exterior and interior walls which are 18 inches thick and form eleven delightful rooms. The original wide poplar floors are about as sound as when the trees were felled. Even the twenty-four windows with outside blinds contain many of the original panes. Great pains were bestowed on every detail. First, the classic columned porch will impress you. Then there's the double door entrance with a fanlight of masterful design overhead. Step inside the entrance hall. The circular staircase, winding totally unsupported to the second floor, is awe-inspiring. It is architecturally perfect—unmistakably the South's prize stairway. Six hand-carved Adam Mantels and hand-carved baseboard trim with a herringbone design are harmoniously combined to create indescribable beauty.

Thousands Spent on Modernization; Every Feature for Gracious Living

Mr. and Mrs. Bibb, aware that they possessed one of the South's rarest architectural gems, recently set out to increase both its tangible and intrinsic value with a modernization program. Special care was used to preserve the original grace, beauty and spirit of the home. For example, the ancient fireplaces were kept intact, yet modern conduit wiring was installed throughout and recessed electric heaters (each on separate fuse) makes it easy to keep every room cozy. Steel plumbing was installed, a new lifetime roof was added along with other features. Now no home anywhere provides more completely for modern living. Its choice and convenient location, its charm and character, means it offers unlimited possibilities to the new owner. A few suggestions are given on the back page of this brochure. Mr. Bibb is now in business in another state and Mrs. Bibb will join him. This is why you can be the new owner.

Not One Single Item Will Be Sold Before Sale Day — Aug. 9th

RED HEIRLOOMS . . . 11 ROOMS OF RARE, BEAUTIFUL ANTIQUES . . . Not One Piece Has Ever Been Available to Antique Lovers Before

There are treasures manifold at the Howard Weeden home, where the charm and culture of ante-bellum days achieved its highest expression. Fine and exquisite pieces that were family heirlooms when the Weeden family moved here well over a century ago remain to this day. These, and original furnishings of succeeding generations, are going at the price you set. Here are pieces with subtle grace unmatched by those turned

out in batches by soulless corporations. Check the patina! You'll find color and mellowness of surface that only age could impart. Never before at any price could you own even one of these romantic remnants of a colorful age. Now every lovely item and the home are going. Never will you have an opportunity to choose from such a treasure trove of antiques. It's the most fabulous sale of the Century.



ish Red Room Furnishings

Beautiful pieces with appeal for those with fine sensibilities—subtle grace of line and proportion in which the old craftsmen excelled. You can now own the massive 18th Century Mahogany Secretary with a top drawer which opens out into a desk. It's flawless as are the Mahogany drop leaf table, the tilt-top bedside candle stand, and the beautiful Victorian Sofas. There's a heavy gold leaf mirror thousands have admired, an exquisite oak table, a handsome brass clock, cocoa wall brackets and a Chandelier that is a model of symmetry and beauty. The luxurious velvet drapes are going. All wool, moth-proof rug cost \$1,000 recently.



Dining Room Masterpieces

Great pains were bestowed on the smallest details of these hand carved pieces. The solid mahogany corner cupboard is an heirloom handed down for many generations. There's beauty integral with every line of the mahogany sideboard. Lovely goldleaf oval mirror goes, 2 exquisite Empire chairs with lyre backs, and an ornate oval bed are yours to choose from. Here are pieces that reflect the lavish hospitality of ante-bellum days . . . here are pieces of timeless beauty. 3-leaf mahogany dining table that was handmade along with 6 cane bottom chairs of graceful symmetry a 100 years old will be sold. Never before such an opportunity.



Timeless Beauty in Yellow Room

Here's the handiwork of sensitive European craftsmen who worked with a proper pride while patiently hand carving this matching mahogany set. Alabama's illustrious Gov. Patton of reconstruction days imported this suite, sent wagons to the coast and brought it to grace his home in Florence. Double wardrobe, the marble top dresser and table are shown above. Not shown is the bed with the Lion's head carved to stand out in bold relief, the matching "His" and "Her" chairs, the clock and many other treasured objects of art. All these pieces and hundreds of others are going August 9th! If you love antiques, you'll want to be at this sale of sales.

Never Before Such a Treasure Trove of Fine Antiques!



The South's prize suspension stairway—unsupported in any way and acclaimed by architects for its architectural perfection. Car-pets for floor and stairways cost \$1,000. Mahogany hat and umbrella stand with beautiful concentric design at top goes.

A sensitive slave put his heart and soul into the creation of this bed that retains its original splendor. Hand carved for Governor Patton's bride, Marble top tables, Mahogany chest, dresser, wash stand and assorted chairs in Blue Room with the bed upstairs.



Never Before Such a Grand Collection of Items so Good!

Throughout the South, we've conducted sales of cherished antiques, but never before have we had the honor of offering so many items so good as you'll find in Alabama's Howard Weeden Home. There are literally hundreds of items we can't list, but they will be numbered and itemized by sale day. Choose from beautiful imported china and crystal with exquisite pineapple and left designs. You'll find all kinds of book cases, trivets, marble top tables, chairs, chandeliers, clocks, and a wide array of bric-a-brac and treasured art objects. It's the antique sale of sales. If you appreciate beauty . . . if history fascinates you . . . come to Huntsville! Everything to make an antique lover's heart beat faster!

LOCATION YOU COULD NEVER DUPLICATE IN BOOMING TOWN

90' x 150' LOT 2 BLOCKS OF DOWNTOWN

Agriculturally and industrially, Huntsville is booming, and the future looks bright indeed. Here, at Brdstone Arsenal which sprawls over 40,000 acres, over 3,000 physicists, chemists and electronics engineers have moved in to help develop America's rockets and guided missiles program. Attracted by cheap TVA power, over a dozen new industries, making everything from stockings to stoves, help keep payrolls skyrocketing. Few cities anywhere are growing faster. Advance and progress are apparent in every direction. This is why this property, located only 2 blocks of the city square, is so highly desirable. Its worth in a few years is incalculable. Now, make it yours where you set the price!



Photo above shows rear view of the Weeden Home, nestled beneath a canopy of splendid and ancient trees. Plenty of breathing space here.

PROVIDES COMPLETELY FOR MODERN LIVING

This famous home, sound and in a good state of repair, offers every convenience, and is a perfect close-in haven for full, free family life. Downstairs, there's a sensible floor plan: Kitchen, playroom with 1/2 bath, sun room, dining room, living room and bedroom with adjoining modern bath. A cellar, the size of the dining room, is never damp and has an outside entrance. There is a double garage and one and a half baths. Upstairs, there's 3 bedrooms, a bath and a kitchen. The kitchen is wonderfully streamlined with a big attic fan, Bendix washing machine and drier, GE range, dishwasher, & refrigerator and sink. Upstairs, there's also some contemporary furniture that is good, but of course, is not comparable with the antiques.

Many have wanted to rent this home. It is readily adaptable for apartments if you choose, and you will realize good interest on your money, and all the time, the property's value will be going up. It's going at absolute auction, so be on hand if you're alert to opportunity.



INCOMPARABLE ATMOSPHERE FOR A NEEDED, EXCLUSIVE RESTAURANT

The spot that would give a new dimension in elegance . . . the atmosphere it takes to create an exclusive place to dine. Hundreds of business and professional people in growing, booming Huntsville would be quick to support such an enterprise. Cater to private parties, tourists and townspeople — build a reputation that would make you a fortune. Plenty of parking space.

DRESS SALON: The booming North Alabama Trading Area means an exclusive Dress Shop is in demand. Here's the ideal location and layout for luncheons and fashion shows. Plenty of room downstairs for display and space upstairs to store your stock. The spiraling stairway would provide the perfect backdrop for models.

COUNTLESS OTHER USES: Location for any one of a hundred enterprises; Offices for professional people, a doctor's clinic, an insurance office, sales agency or retail outlet.

MEETS EVERY TEST OF A PRIVATE CLUB. Remember, the value will rise as the years go by. Make this Jewel of History yours.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, CALL, WIRE OR WRITE OUR OFFICE

On Display!

Shown by appointment only from August 2nd through August 7th — 1 P.M. 'til 5 P.M.

OPEN HOUSE: August 8th from 1 P.M. 'til 5 P.M.

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Painted Floors



NATURALLY FINISHED FLOOR BOARDS were not as highly regarded in the 18th and early 19th centuries as they are today. When hardwood floors were used, as in a parlor or a ballroom, they were waxed. But early American floors were often softwood and left bare. Before the Revolution, the few carpets used in a household were generally on the tables. The early floors were often painted to add color and enrichment to a colonial room.

THERE ARE FLOORS IN OLD HOUSES TODAY that are made of wood that is too old and stained to be finished nicely—that would have to be bleached too much or would splinter excessively or have a flat, uninteresting softwood grain. An easy, interesting, and authentic alternative to a natural finish is a painted floor.

OFTEN THE FLOOR WAS PAINTED in a solid color. Sometimes only a border was painted on a bare floor. As floor cloths, rag and hooked rugs, straw matting and carpets came into use, they were usually placed on painted floors. The most popular colors in use in the latter part of the 18th century were gray, dark green, gray-greens, pumpkin yellow, chocolate brown, and terra cotta red.

THE FIRST KIND OF ORNAMENTATION to the painted floor was freehand work. An itinerant painter, who usually grained the woodwork and perhaps decorated the walls, would often paint patterns that simulated mosaic tiles, or the English "turkey carpet" with geometric designs. A popular freehand pattern found in many old homes is a painted representation of marble, sometimes having a scroll border. A black and white checkered pattern is seen in many colonial rooms. This black and white checkered or diamond pattern, imitating expensive black and white marble floors, is found into the Victorian era.

STAIRS HAVE BEEN FOUND in old houses with a painted, figured strip running down the middle of the stairs with contrasting border edges, designed to give the appearance of a stair runner.

Stencilled Floors

AFTER THE REVOLUTION, stencilled floors became quite popular and remained fashionable until about 1840. Stencilling was more complicated than freehand designs. Strong paper or cardboard, with a design cut out of it, was placed on the floor and the paint applied to the open space. When these stencil patterns were meant to imitate carpets, the stencil was a square pattern designed to match on all sides. A small star or flower was sometimes used at regular intervals of about 3 or 4 feet. The stencilled floors found in historic homes testify to the variety and colorfulness of the designs:

- An eight-petaled black flower on a deep pumpkin ground



- Black and gray octagons (done with two stencils—the gray inside the black) on a dark green ground
- A border pattern showing a vine in two shades of green with a red-brown fruit.

Spatter Painting

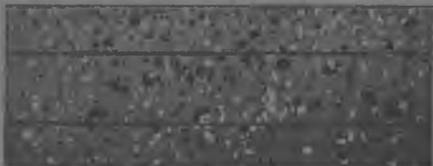
SPATTER PAINTING or "spatterdash" was a widely used 19th-century method of decorating floors. It is still a very practical method of covering a floor as well as an authentic restoration technique. Originally, dark spots were spattered on a gray ground, but later examples show the reverse, with dark floors spattered in two or more light colors, giving a cheerful quality to a room. Some of the more typical early color schemes were:

- Copper brown ground with black, white, yellow and green spatters.
- Black with any variety of colored spatters.
- Blue ground with white, red and yellow.
- "Pepper and salt"—a popular New England combination for halls and stairs. Gray ground with small spatters of black and white.

To spatter paint, the ground color is applied and allowed to dry thoroughly. For the spots, flicks from a whisk broom give the best effect. It is wise to practice on a few pieces of newspaper first, to get the feel of it. Be sure to protect the baseboards and wall to at least two feet up the walls. Each set of spatters will have to dry thoroughly before the next set is applied.

FOR A SOFTER, TEXTURED EFFECT, the colors can be applied to the ground color with a pad of steel wool or a natural sponge instead of spattering them on. A thin coat of paint is applied to any flat surface (a pie plate will do) as if it were a stamp pad. Then dab the steel wool on the paint pad and apply like a rubber stamp to the floor.

IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO USE ENAMELS if a coat of light varnish or polyurethane is applied for protection. However, one of the virtues of the old-fashioned, unprotected painted floor is that worn spots can be simply touched up or painted over without eventually having to remove a coat of dirty varnish.





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