

Sandwiching in History
Fred and Lucy (Alexander) Schaer House
13219 Hwy. 70, North Little Rock
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Intro

Hi, my name is Rachel Silva, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. Welcome to the Sandwiching in History tour of the Fred and Lucy Schaer House! I'd like to thank John Cather and Jane Nilz for allowing us to tour their family home (they grew up in this house).

The Schaer House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007 as an excellent example of a Craftsman-style house with Spanish Revival details.

Galloway community

The Galloway community was located about 10 miles east of Argenta (or downtown North Little Rock) on the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad. An 1878 General Land Office map spelled the community's name "Galloway" instead of the present-day spelling of "Galloway." Galloway was named in honor of Walter Aston Galloway, an early resident and merchant in the community. Walter Galloway's great-uncle was William Savin Fulton, Arkansas's last territorial governor (1835-36) and later a U.S. Senator from Arkansas. Governor Fulton was the brother of Jane Juliet Fulton Shall Holt, Walter Galloway's grandmother. If you

have been to other tours, you've probably heard me tell the story about Fulton's death. William Savin Fulton owned 240 acres in what is now the Governor's Mansion Historic District. About 1840 Fulton built his retirement home, "Rosewood," on the current site of the Governor's Mansion. According to family lore, Fulton died unexpectedly in 1844 while sleeping in a freshly painted room at Rosewood—the story goes that he inhaled the paint fumes and died from asphyxiation.

William Savin Fulton came to Arkansas in 1829 after he was appointed by President Andrew Jackson to serve as Secretary of the Arkansas Territory. Fulton's family followed him to Little Rock. His widowed sister, Jane Juliet Fulton Shall, came to Little Rock with her three children: David Fulton Shall, Margaret Ann Shall, and Elizabeth Shall. [David Fulton Shall was killed by a stray bullet during the final days of the Brooks-Baxter War in 1874 (Joseph Brooks v. Elisha Baxter for AR governor during Reconstruction).] The eldest child, Margaret Ann Shall, married James Blair Galloway on March 1, 1838. James B. Galloway was a planter and owned land in Pulaski and Lonoke counties. He also journeyed to California during the 1849 Gold Rush. James and Margaret Galloway had three children who survived to adulthood: Walter Aston Galloway, Mary "Molly" Aston Galloway, and Elizabeth Shall Galloway.

Walter A. Galloway was born in Pulaski County on November 22, 1844, and at the age of 17, he enlisted in Company F, First Arkansas Mounted Riflemen, during the Civil War. After the war, he returned to Pulaski County and farmed. In 1871 he opened a general store at present-day Galloway. Because of its location near the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad, the area became known as Galloway Station. Walter Galloway married Lorena Terrell Eanes of Mississippi in 1867, and the couple had 6 children who survived to adulthood. Sadly, Lorena Galloway died on May 16, 1882, and later that year, Walter married Susan S. Smith of Georgia. Two more children (who survived to adulthood) were produced from this union. Galloway established a post office in his store in 1871 and served as postmaster. He also served as a justice of the peace in Pulaski and Lonoke counties.

The 1878 LR City Directory contained an Arkansas Railroad Business Guide, which described “Galloway” as a community of about 30 people clustered around a passenger station. According to the guide, Galloway had a Presbyterian church, Charles F. Brunck was postmaster, H. C. Lawson ran a general store, and Joseph F. Schaer (father of Charles F. “Fred” Schaer, who married Lucy Alexander) operated a grocery store.

By 1887, the community’s name was spelled with an “o” as “Galloway,” and remained very rural. The Galloway post office was discontinued in 1903. If you look at the 1906 county land ownership map for the area, you will see a church, school, a couple residences, stores, and gins. It’s also interesting to see who owned which pieces of property at that time.

[The first M&LR was sold to the Memphis and Little Rock Railway Company in December 1873. It was again sold to a second Memphis and Little Rock Railroad Company in 1877. Then in 1887, it was sold to the Little Rock and Memphis Railroad Company. In April 1897, the Mississippi River washed out forty miles of track on the eastern division of the railroad. Though operations continued via the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad, the cost of rebuilding was simply too great a burden, and the railroad was sold at foreclosure on October 25, 1898, to the Choctaw and Memphis Railroad Company for only \$325,000. The Choctaw and Memphis was in turn sold to the Choctaw, Oklahoma, and Gulf Railroad Company—nicknamed the Choctaw Route—in 1900. The Choctaw Route was purchased in 1902 by the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway Company (which went bankrupt in the late 1970s; most of the track was taken up in the 1980s).]

Ownership history of this property

Based on information in the abstract for this property, Chester Ashley (attorney, early LR resident, and U.S. Senator from AR, 1844-1848) purchased a large tract of land, including this parcel, in 1836. As some of you may know, Ashley owned a lot of land in the Galloway-Scott area. Chester Ashley died in 1848, and after the

death of his widow, Mary W. W. Ashley, in 1865, a portion of his land near “Hill’s” Lake was sold to David Fulton Shall (Shall was killed in 1874). The land changed hands a few times in the 1870s, belonging to Charles F. Brunck (one-time postmaster of Galloway) and later William N. Young. In the late 1870s and early 1880s, William Young sold some land to Joseph F. Schaer, who in turn, sold land to his eldest son, William H. Schaer.

In 1905 William H. Schaer and his wife, Marion T. Schaer, sold their place to Mrs. Catherine Adams. Just two years later, in 1907, Charles N. Alexander purchased the interests of Catherine Adams. The next year (1908), Charles Alexander turned around and sold the plantation to Charles F. “Fred” Schaer.

Charles F. “Fred” Schaer and his wife, Lucy G. Alexander Schaer

Charles F. “Fred” Schaer was born in January 1866 in Pulaski County to Joseph F. and Emily Schaer. Joseph F. Schaer was a farmer and operated a grocery store in the Galloway-Scott community. Fred Schaer married Lucy Alexander in 1890. Schaer was a prominent cotton planter in the area. He and Lucy Schaer farmed and lived in Ashley Township in the 1900 census. By 1910, they operated a farm here in Young Township (Young and Ashley townships are in eastern Pulaski County, right on the Lonoke County line).

Lucy G. Alexander was born in April 1866 at Asheville, North Carolina, to J. W. and Magg (Madge?) Alexander. Lucy Alexander’s siblings came to central Arkansas in the mid-1880s, and she followed them here. Her brothers were James Robert Alexander, who owned Land’s End Plantation south of Scott (built J. P. Almand-designed house there, 1925-1927); Charles N. Alexander, prominent planter and builder of Longbridge (just down Hwy. 70 to the east with big columns); David T. Alexander, Frances Alexander McCalla, and Harriett Alexander Young. [If you came to last month’s Sandwiching tour at the J. Rogers Young House, you will appreciate this bit of trivia...Harriett Alexander Young, mother of hotel proprietor J. Rogers Young, was the sister of Lucy Alexander Schaer, who built this house.]

Lucy Alexander initially lived with her sister, Harriett Alexander Young (married to William N. Young) before she married Fred Schaer in 1890.

Fred and Lucy Schaer built this house about 1920. They are listed in the 1920 census at Galloway along with a boarder (a local teacher), farm laborer, farm manager, cook, and the cook's two young children. Before this house was constructed, the Schaers lived in a home to the east of here (on the site of the Harold Young, Sr., and Lena Belle Moore Young House—current home of Kip Moore). The first Schaer House burned, and the Young House was constructed on its site about 1910 (maybe a little later?). Fred Schaer died on April 15, 1920 (age 54), leaving his property to Lucy. After Fred's death, Lucy invited her sister and brother-in-law, Frances Alexander McCalla and Rev. W. M. McCalla to live here with her. Lucy Schaer was a leader in social and civic circles and was a founding member of All Souls Church in Scott (organized 1905 and built 1906). In November 1925, Lucy Schaer fell in her home (here) and fractured her hip. She was hospitalized (at Trinity Hospital on Main St. in LR) and appeared to be recovering well. However, she suffered a heart attack in the hospital and died immediately following. Both Fred and Lucy Schaer are interred at Mount Holly Cemetery.

Ownership history after Schaers

Fred and Lucy Schaer did not have children, so when Lucy died, she left her "new home on the Galloway Pike" consisting of about 8 acres to her sister, Frances Alexander McCalla. The remainder of her property (290 acres) was divided among her other heirs, which included her brothers and several nieces. In 1929, Frances McCalla sold the Schaer place to W. L. Freeman, who turned around and sold to Stanley M. and May Moore Keyes. Cora A. Moore acquired the Schaer place in the mid-1930s for back taxes and failure to pay the mortgage. In the 1940s, Guy and Naomi Cameron owned the house. Mertie A. Harris and her husband, Alexander M. Harris, bought the property in 1952. In June 1963, the Harris family sold the house to William N. Cather and his wife, Effa Laura Wooten Cather. The deed stipulated that the buyer got to keep the drapes, carpets, and the lawn mower.

Effa Laura Wooten Cather was from North Little Rock. In fact, Wooten Road toward Rixey is named after her family. Effa Laura Cather was a writer for the *Arkansas Democrat*. William Cather was retired from the Army (WWII vet) and worked for the VA loan processing department. William Cather met his wife while she was teaching a journalism class at UALR after WWII (he was in the class).

Effa Laura Cather died in 2005, and the property went to her children, John Cather and Jane Cather Nilz (other daughter, Julann Cather, did not take ownership of property). The Cathers had three children: John, Jane, and Julann. The property was called "3 J Acres" after the children's names.

Architecture

Craftsman houses were designed to give the impression of human craftsmanship and were built to be practical and livable. In the early 20th century, the Craftsman style was popularized in several magazines, including *House Beautiful*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Architectural Record*, and of course, Gustav Stickley's publication, *Craftsman Magazine*. The Schaer House features Craftsman characteristics like massive square porch supports, exposed rafter tails, decorative beams in the side gable ends, use of mixed materials, false half-timbering in the dormer gables, and a trellised porte cochere. It also has some Spanish Revival-style elements in its red tile roof and the lack of a prominent cross-gable, as well as the full front porch.

This house may have been designed by well-known Arkansas architect Charles L. Thompson, but it has not been confirmed. There is a listing for C. F. Schaer at Galloway in the Thompson book, but there is no address or year.

Specifics on house

5,000 sq. feet

Panel molding throughout house

Plaster walls with high-quality finish—painted canvas stretched over plaster (designed to hide cracks in plaster, which would inevitably form, and to be decorative)

Tiled sunroom—used to hold 4-H meetings there. William N. Cather and his wife, Effa Laura Cather, were 4-H leaders.

Barrel vaulted ceiling in dining room with unsigned murals of Hill Lake at sunrise and sunset

Mantle in living room was given to Lucy Schaer by Gov. Charles H. Brough (1917-21).

Outbuildings and fountain, 1960s swimming pool

Safe

French doors

Buzzer in the floor at the head of the dining room table to call the help

Upstairs has a bedroom, bath, and efficiency kitchen—off limits today

Next tour is Nov. 2 at the Faucette Bros. Bank Building (now Argenta Community Theater). Thanks!

Scott, Arkansas

Early settlers in the Scott area were enticed by the rich bottomlands of the Arkansas River. William Scott emigrated here from Kentucky in the early 19th century. His son, Conoway Scott, was born here in 1815. By 1862 the Scott family owned 2,000 acres, 10 slaves, and other property valued at about \$38,000. Conoway Scott died in 1866 just before the birth of his son, Conoway Scott, Jr.

Conoway Scott, Jr., grew up to operate the family plantation that had been established many years earlier by his father about 10 miles southeast of Little Rock, and he also owned a general store. In 1870 the Memphis & Little Rock Railroad was built through a portion of Mr. Scott's property, shifting the focus of area commerce from the Arkansas River to the railroad. His landholdings were eventually crossed by the St. Louis & Southwestern Railroad, or the Cotton Belt line, and the railroad crossing became known as "Scott's Station" or "Scott's

Crossing.” At some point, the sign at Scott’s Station was damaged, so the name was shortened to “Scott’s” and then just to “Scott,” giving the town its name. By the turn of the 20th century, a thriving community dominated by cotton plantations was well established. As the cotton farms grew in size and number, merchants opened several general stores.

In 1912 Conoway Scott, Jr., built a large, red brick building to house a general store, but neither he nor any members of his family ever managed it. Instead, it was operated by several other owners. A small wing was added to the northwest side of the building in 1929 to house the Scott post office. At some point, the general store was known as the Steele-Dortch store, and then it was called Foster’s store from sometime in the 1930s until the early 1960s. The general store building exhibits characteristics of the Craftsman style with its exposed rafter tails, large brackets, massive square porch supports, and multi-pane transom windows—now part of the Plantation Agriculture Museum.

Charles Louis Thompson

Charles L. Thompson (1868-1959) created the most influential architectural firm in Arkansas during the early 20th Century. Thompson’s firm designed a wide variety of building types, including personal residences, churches, commercial buildings, and courthouses. The firm also mastered a vast array of architectural styles and was well-known for combining different styles. The firm designed more than 2,000 buildings, and hundreds of those remain in Arkansas today.

Charles L. Thompson was born in November 1868 in Danville, Illinois, the third of James C. and Henrietta Lightner Thompson’s seven children. When Thompson was 14, he and his 6 siblings were orphaned. The children moved in with relatives in Indiana, and Charles went to work at a mill. During his extra time, he worked as a draftsman for an architect named Hunt. Eventually, he sought employment elsewhere, and advertised his services in a lumber journal. He received job offers from New York, New Orleans, and Little Rock. He chose LR because it was “the farthest in the wilderness,” and offered the most opportunity for his architectural

practice. In 1886 Thompson began work for LR architect Benjamin J. Bartlett, and in 1888 he became a full partner in the firm. In 1890 Bartlett left for Mississippi and the firm became known as Charles L. Thompson, Architect and Superintendent. Throughout the next several decades, Thompson worked by himself and with a variety of partners. Many homes in the Governor's Mansion HD were designed or modified by Thompson or his firm. Thompson retired in 1938. He died in 1959 at the age of 91.

[The firm continues to operate today under the name of Cromwell Architects Engineers, Inc., named in honor of Edwin B. Cromwell, Charles Thompson's son-in-law, who was a part of the firm from 1941 until his retirement in 1984. Cromwell died in 2001. The firm is one of the oldest architectural firms in the nation.]

Antique fire extinguisher

The C-37 model, made by the AutoFyrStop Co. of Philadelphia, was manufactured in the 1940s.

Basically, the liquid extinguishing agent is housed in a fragile glass container that can be thrown at the base of a fire. The earliest examples contained saltwater and are very collectible and highly desirable. Over the years, many companies produced a variety of shapes, sizes and colors, a collection of which can make for quite an impressive display today.

The globe, heralded as both a manual and automatic extinguishing device, was designed to hang on a wall in a special bracket. If a fire broke out, it could be removed from its holder and heaved into the blaze. Or, in the case of a less intimidating fire, the tip could be knocked off the neck of the bottle and its contents squirted or sprinkled over the flames.

The C-37 could also provide 'round-the-clock protection automatically. Its wall bracket had a spring-loaded puncturing device that was held in a cocked position

by a fusible link. Once the heat source reached 165 degrees, the link would melt and the arm would snap up, shattering the glass bottle and dumping its contents over the inferno below. Other holders had similar fusible straps that would melt and simply allow the bottle to fall through and onto the heat source.

They could be used anywhere, but its target markets were mainly businesses, factories and public facilities such as hotels and schools.

Yours features an attractive frosted glass, but the bottles were also manufactured in clear, ruby, orange and blue. This model is filled with a chemical called carbon tetrachloride, which suffocates the fire by consuming the oxygen that feeds it.

Kids just love to hear the alarming sound of glass breaking, but should your grenade detonate by accident, be sure to tell the young'uns and family pets to twenty-three-skidoo! That sweet-smelling carbon tetrachloride is a naughty carcinogen that can easily be absorbed into the lungs and skin. Never mind the immediate headache and drunken stupor, it's toxic to the liver, brain, nerves and other fairly important bodily parts. Though exposure rarely ends in death, when it does, it's most often attributed to kidney failure.

People who are fascinated by antique firefighting equipment do collect these, though mostly the rarer, less dangerous examples of the 19th century. The later ones, like yours, were mass-produced, are fairly common and not very valuable (\$25-\$50). You could empty its contents, but that will reduce its worth. I'm afraid that for most folks, the desirability of owning one diminishes as their trepidation over harboring a hazardous material increases. In fact, many antique shops steer clear of them entirely due to the increased risk and liability.