

Sandwiching in History
White-Baucum House
201 S. Ivard Street, Little Rock
October 2, 2015
By Rachel Silva



Intro

Good afternoon, my name is Rachel Silva, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. Welcome to the “Sandwiching in History” tour of the White-Baucum House. Before we get started, I’d like to thank John Chandler for allowing us to tour this wonderful house. I’d also like to thank Susie James, Tanya Fitzgerald, and Kathy Bradley for their help. Some of you may have noticed that we have special guests today—I’d like to thank Senator Mark Pryor and his wife, Joi, for being here today and for opening up their offices.

This tour is worth one hour of HSW continuing education credit through the American Institute of Architects. Please see me after the tour if you’re interested.

The White-Baucum House was built about 1869 for Robert J. T. White, then-Arkansas secretary of state. In 1876 Col. George F. Baucum purchased the home, and members of the Baucum family lived in the house until the mid-1920s. The

White-Baucum House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 for its Italianate-style architecture.

Early History

Little Rock experienced a building boom after the Civil War. Between 1865 and 1870, the city's population tripled, growing from about 4,000 to 12,000.

Understandably, there was a housing shortage, resulting in new construction on previously undeveloped blocks. By the late 1870s, Second and Third streets west of Broadway had emerged as a fashionable residential district. In addition to the White-Baucum House, the Italianate-style Daniel Fones House (Fones Bros. Hardware) at 902 W. Second, built in 1878, is listed in the National Register.

Constructed on lots 1 and 2 in block 141 of the Original City of Little Rock, the White-Baucum House was built about 1869 for Robert J. T. White. White served as Arkansas secretary of state from 1864 to 1873. In 1876 Col. George Franklin Baucum purchased the house for \$5,000. Baucum enlarged the house, adding two rooms on the south side separated by a grand staircase. The north porch was also added by Baucum.

George Franklin Baucum

George Franklin Baucum was born on February 1, 1837, to Daniel and Kathryn Baucum at St. Charles, Missouri. In 1853 the Baucum family moved to Searcy, Arkansas. Before the Civil War, George Baucum worked as a grocer in Searcy. In 1861 Baucum joined the Eighth Arkansas Infantry as a lieutenant. He was soon promoted to lieutenant colonel, and after the Battle of Murfreesboro in Tennessee, which ended on January 2, 1863, Baucum was promoted to the rank of colonel. He fought in the bloody Battle of Chickamauga (Georgia), where he was wounded in the foot. Baucum also took part in the fighting around Atlanta, and during the July 22, 1864, Battle of Atlanta, he was shot in the face. The bullet passed through his right cheek and neck before lodging under the collarbone. He survived the wound but retired from active duty. Although he had retired from

fighting, Col. Baucum remained with the Confederate Army, serving as a recruiting agent until the end of the war, and surrendered in June 1865 at Grenada, Mississippi.

After the war, Baucum returned to Searcy, where he engaged in the mercantile business. In 1876 he moved to Little Rock and started a wholesale grocery business called G. F. Baucum & Company. Shortly thereafter, Baucum worked as a cotton broker and purchased an 1,800-acre plantation ten miles east of Little Rock at the community that would come to be known as Baucum (Baucum is just west of Scott). Col. Baucum Road, which is also AR Hwy. 391, was named in his honor. A portion of the old Baucum Plantation is now operated by the Arkansas Forestry Commission as the Baucum Nursery, one of the largest hardwood nurseries in the southern United States. Col. Baucum also owned a plantation near the Arkansas River at Woodson (southern Pulaski County).

Col. Baucum was married twice. While he was home in 1864 recuperating from his wound in the Battle of Atlanta, he married Glovenia Critz, daughter of a Confederate officer from Searcy. This union produced one son, who died in infancy, and a daughter, Katherine Baucum Greenfield. Glovenia Baucum died in 1874.

On December 28, 1874, Col. Baucum married Rebecca Darrington McRae at West Point in White County. Rebecca McRae Baucum was from a prominent Mobile, Alabama, family that had relocated to White County in 1849 after her father's death. She was the younger sister of Confederate General Dandridge McRae. Col. and Mrs. Rebecca Baucum had two daughters, Margaret Baucum and Georgie Baucum Fulkerson (who married Floyd H. Fulkerson), as well as a son who died in infancy.

After Reconstruction, Col. Baucum served as president of the Bank of Little Rock. He was one of the founders of the Arkansas Board of Trade and served as vice-president of that organization in 1887 and 1888. Col. Baucum died at his IZARD Street home on July 29, 1905, and is buried at Oakland-Fraternal Cemetery in

Little Rock. His widow, Rebecca Baucum, continued to live at 201 S. Izard until her death on June 28, 1922.

Occupants of the House after Baucums

Col. and Mrs. Baucum's daughters, Margaret and Georgie, had stayed in the home with their mother and continued to live there in the 1920s. Georgie Baucum Fulkerson's husband and children also lived in the home. Some of you may know Little Rock real estate man Floyd H. Fulkerson, Jr. Col. and Mrs. Baucum were his grandparents, and he lived here as a small child (he was born in 1921). [Floyd and Georgie Baucum Fulkerson had three children: George Baucum Fulkerson, Floyd H. Fulkerson, Jr., and Margaret McRae Fulkerson Cooper. Baucum Fulkerson was a Rhodes Scholar and the youngest prosecutor at the Nuremburg War Crimes Trials. Floyd Fulkerson, Jr., was a fighter pilot in the Japanese Theater during World War II. His plane went down 50 miles north of Manila, Philippines, where he hid with Philippine guerillas until orchestrating his own rescue. Floyd Fulkerson, Jr., and Margaret Cooper are still living. Margaret Baucum and the Fulkerson family moved out of the White-Baucum House in the late 1920s and relocated to the Baucum Plantation near Scott.]

By 1928, the property was used as a boarding house, offering furnished rooms for rent. From 1935 to 1957, Cora Bell Busick operated a boarding house here. In 1954 this area was rezoned for commercial use, but it remained an apartment building until 1961. In 1962 the Continental Restaurant opened in the house. The restaurant failed and was followed in the mid-'60s by W. Randall Byars Interiors. In 1970 and '71 a nightclub called The Club occupied the home. The house was then vacant for a couple years until 1973, when it was purchased by Bill Holland, an advertising executive in his early 30s.

Holland rehabilitated the house, which had deteriorated considerably, and constructed the two-story addition on the east side of the house where the original one-story kitchen had been. The addition had matching clapboard siding and a metal roof, making it a 1974 reproduction of an 1870 building. In 1974 the

offices of Holland and Associates, an advertising, marketing, and public relations firm, moved into the restored White-Baucum House. In December 1975 the White-Baucum House received a Quapaw Quarter Historic Structure plaque. It was the 23rd structure in the Quapaw Quarter to receive a plaque and was recognized as being an outstanding example of “adaptive use.” In September 1976 the Holland Agency was reorganized into Holland-Wallace Co. and moved to the Union National Bank Building. Bill Holland, founder of the firm, died in May 1977 at the age of 36 after a long illness.

Little Rock Mayor Don Mehlburger bought the White-Baucum House in July 1977 for \$320,000 to house his engineering and architectural firm. Mehlburger added the built-in bookshelves and ladder for the library. In 1980 the original second floor porch railing was replicated based on analysis of historical photographs. The work was done by Tom Davis and Randy Jeffery, who used a magnifying glass to pick out details on the original porch, including hearts, teardrops, and tulips in the panels. No balustrade was placed on the first floor of the front porch because old photos indicated that none was present.

The Mehlburger firm owned the property until 2007, when it was sold to Harrison Development, LLC, which then sold the property to a Russellville bank in 2010. At that point, the house had deteriorated due to some deferred maintenance issues, and once it was vacant, people started breaking in. In July 2010, the Little Rock Police Department escorted several squatters out of the White-Baucum House, which was full of trash and drug paraphernalia. At least 25 homeless people had been living in the house--every room showed signs of occupation. In 2011 the White-Baucum House was included in the Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas’s Most Endangered Places list.

Recent Rehabilitation

The house was purchased in the fall of 2013 by John Chandler, who rehabilitated the building using federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits. CM Construction, Inc., was the contractor for the project, and Amber Jones served as

tax credit consultant. They were lucky to save this house—the front porch columns were rotten and on the verge of collapse, and the house sustained fire damage soon after Chandler purchased it. But they did a beautiful job! In fact, J. Chandler & Company received an award of merit in 2014 from the Quapaw Quarter Association for the rehabilitation of the White-Baucum House. The house now serves as offices for Chandler’s clothing manufacturing business and The Pryor Group.

Architecture & Details

The White-Baucum House is one of the oldest Italianate-style houses in Arkansas. The Italianate style was popular in the United States during the mid-to-late 19th century and imitated the 16th century architecture of the Italian Renaissance. Some characteristics of the style on this house include:

Low, pyramidal roof

Decorative paired brackets at the cornice

Multiple porches

Square, paneled columns

And the bay window

- 8,068 square feet
- Original pine floors as well as teak parquet. Some wood laminate flooring was added during the latest rehab in areas where the original flooring didn’t exist or was damaged.
- Beautiful Mahogany staircase
- Four sets of pocket doors downstairs and one set upstairs
- In addition to the interesting history of the house itself, the first floor is full of memorabilia belonging to the Pryors.
- John Chandler’s clothing business is also very interesting—they have fabric and/or garment factories in China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and El Salvador. The company is one of only 4 or 5 licensees of Real Tree Camo

in the world. You'll see their fabric rooms and sample garments as you walk through the back part of the addition and the second floor.

Next tour is Nov. 6 at the Thomas Clifton House, 1423 S. Summit, Little Rock.