

- SCARBOROUGH HOUSE -

(Scarborough House)

- SAVANNAH GEORGIA -

CHATHAM Co.

HABS NO. ^{CA-2127}
14-127

HABS

GA.

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Georgia

Historic American Buildings Survey
Harold Bush-Brown, District Officer
Georgia School of Technology, Atlanta, Ga.

SCARBOROUGH HOUSE
(Scarborough House)
Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia
West St.

Owner: City of Savannah.

Date of Erection: Approximately 1806.

Present Condition: Not good.

Number of Stories: Three and basement. Faces East.

Materials of Construction: Foundation brick stuccoed,
exterior walls brick stuccoed.

Other Existing Records: Records by P. Thornton Marye, District
Officer, HABS 1934. WARE, THE GEORGIAN ARCHITECT, VOL. II, P. 234.

Additional Data: Detail of cast iron work of the balustrade
of the south portico and of the cresting over the rear portion
is fine. The interior has been marred by changing stairway
to front hall. Now used as negro school. Tendered to Pres.
James **Montroe** for residence during his visit to Savannah in
1819.

Harold Bush-Brown
HAROLD BUSH-BROWN
DISTRICT OFFICER HABS

(SCARBROUGH HOUSE)
SCARBROUGH HOUSE
Savannah, Chatham County
Georgia

HISTORICAL NOTES:

William Scarborough, Jr., built this house about 1806 on a property on West Broad Street acquired by him in 1803. The building is now owned and occupied as a negro school by the city of Savannah¹.

Ware² states that the place is commonly spoken of as the Scarborough house and that it ~~is~~ is situated in Yamacraw, the oldest section of the city. Under his photograph of the house he gives the date as 1815 and the architect as Jay. In the text he states that the building was completed about 1815 -18.

¹ Given by P.Thornton Marye, District Officer, HABS.

² Ware, W.R., The Georgian Period, volume 1, pages 238, 239.

BY Henry Chandler Forman
March 1936

SCARBOROUGH HOUSE
Savannah, Chatham County
Georgia

ARCHITECTURAL NOTES:

Another Of William Jay's striking buildings, Scarborough House stands three full stories and attic high. The windows are perhaps the most unusual features. There are quarter round windows in the attic, a large lunette over the Greek Doric portico and round-headed windows with round-headed sash along three sides of the first floor. At the rear is a wing whose first floor carries a Doric pilastered order, marking the banqueting hall.

The floor plans are illustrated in The Georgian Period by Ware, and show William Jay's love of curved walls and stairs.

Of additional interest is the gateway for carriages. With its squat Doric columns and round arch it looks like some ancient triumphal arch.

by Henry Chandlee Forman
March 1936

Addendum to
William Scarbrough House
41 West Broad Street
Savannah
Chatham County
Georgia

HABS No. GA-2127

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ADDENDUM TO
WILLIAM SCARBROUGH HOUSE

HABS No. GA-2127

Location: 41 West Broad Street, Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia.

Present Owner: Historic Savannah Foundation, P.O. Box 1733, Savannah, Georgia 31402 (912) 233-7787.

Present Occupant: Historic Savannah Foundation.

Present Use: House Museum, Offices.

Significance: An unusual Regency-Greek Revival house designed by Savannah architect William Jay. The house was built for a prominent merchant, planter, and inventor, William Scarbrough.

*Note: Foundation and
Savannah Foundation
in 1990.*

(Amends 1936 historical report, transmitted to Library previous

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1818-1819 (deduced from documents). "Our house is quite in readiness for him [President Monroe]. It is most tastefully and elegantly decorated and furnished - and seems to bring to the recollection of all who have lately visited it the House of Lord Grosvenor in the neighborhood of Chester and Liverpool." William Scarbrough, letter of May 6, 1819 (see below).
2. Architect: William Jay, of Savannah. William Jay was among the first professionally trained architects to practice in Georgia. His work reflected the growing interest in the motifs and forms of ancient Greece rather than the Roman Classicism of the Adams brothers.

Jay's other works in Savannah include the Savannah Theater (1818), the Richardson-Owens-Thomas House (HABS No. GA-14-9, 1819), Telfair Academy (HABS No. GA-217, 1820), and the Wayne-Gordon House (attributed 1820, HABS No. GA-211).

About 1820, Jay began to divide his practice between Savannah and Charleston, and was appointed architect of the State Board of Public Works of South Carolina.

3. Original and subsequent owners: Lot bought by William Scarbrough in 1803. Lost in bankruptcy in 1820. Willed by Robert Isaac in 1827 to Mrs. William Taylor (Scarbrough's daughter, see Charlotte de Berniere Scarbrough in Dictionary of

American Biography). Sold by Willim Taylor in 1851 to Mrs. Dominick O'Byrne. Abandoned by the O'Byrne family as a residence after fire of 1865. Sold in 1870 to the Rt. Rev. Augustine Verot, Bishop of Savannah and used as a boys' orphanage. Bought by Bernard F. McKenna in 1876, and sold by him in 1878 to Georgia W. J. Derenne, who that year conveyed it to the Board of Education for use as the first public school for black students in the area. The house was known for 84 years as the West Broad Street School. After the school closed in 1962, the Board of Education used the house as storage space for three years until title reverted to Derenne's heirs. One of the heirs, Mrs. Craig Barrow, gave her share of the house to Historic Savannah Foundation in 1966, and the Foundation purchased the remaining shares for \$42,000.

4. Original plans and construction: No original plans have been located.
5. Alterations and additions; A third floor was added by Scarbrough's son-in-law, Godfrey Barnsley, in 1836. A central stairway was probably added at this time.

Two great central wooden stairways were added between 1878 and 1885 for school use.

In 1972, the Historic Savannah Foundation began to restore the house. In 1973 John Milner, a restoration architect from West Chester, Pennsylvania was hired. During restoration the third floor was removed and the skylight reconstructed. As the design of the original roof line was unknown, the architect provided a conjectural drawing (see HABS photograph GA-2127-11).

When the parlor was restored, the floors were replaced with heart pine boards similar to the originals from a River Street warehouse. The plaster walls were stripped to the studs and the atrium to its brick. Missing portions of the original balustrade around the atrium gallery and the cresting of the cornices were reproduced from original remnants.

The main staircase is a reconstruction of the original.

Restoration of the garden was begun in 1982.

For information on the house prior to restoration see HABS measured drawings GA-2127, sheets 1-22.

B. Historical Context:

The Scarbrough House was built by William Scarbrough in 1818. Scarbrough was a leading figure in the Savannah Steamship Company,

at a time when Savannah was rich from a cotton boom. In 1819, the Savannah Steamship Company financed the first voyage of the Savannah, the first trans-Atlantic steamship. The house was host to President James Monroe during his inspection tour of the steamship.

Scarborough suffered economic reverses soon after 1819, and was thereafter supported by his son-in-law, Godfrey Barnsley. Barnsley's family continued to live in the house until the 1850s. In 1872, it became the first public school for black students in Savannah, and since 1972 has been a house museum.

Original historical data prepared by Charles E. Peterson and Walter C. Hartbridge in 1962, and updated for transmittal to the Library of Congress by Eleni Silverman in June of 1984.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: An elegant Regency/Greek Revival style townhouse.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Two stories over a semi-raised basement, two story rear wing; 62', with a three bay front on a T-shaped plan.
2. Foundations: Stuccoed brick.
3. Wall construction: Stucco over brick, painted bluff.
4. Porches, stoops: A heavy masonry portico with two Greek Doric columns in antis and a double stairway with balustrade.

There is a south porch on the rear wing with cast iron columns, Corinthian capitals and decorative railings.

5. Chimneys: Two interior chimneys and two chimneys flush with the rear wall of the second story.
6. Windows and doorways: Typical windows are sash with stucco surrounds. The two windows on the first floor of the main and side facades are arched within arched reveals.

A semicircular window just above the entrance portico and a

reconstructed skylight provide light to the atrium entrance hall.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: A two-story entrance hall (atrium) with a balustraded balcony on the second level opens into rooms on three sides.
2. Stairways: The main stairway is a reconstruction of the original in mahogany and pine.
3. Flooring: Heart pine boards.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls are plaster with plaster cornices.
5. Doorways and doors: The original doors and trim are generally still in place. Some of the doors are curved six-panel doors which conform to the radius of the rounded rooms in which they are used.
6. Heating: The fireplaces with original marble mantels are still in place.

D. Site:

1. General setting: The house faces east on West Broad Street and south on Congress Street. The area is locally known as Yamacraw, the oldest section of Savannah.
2. Outbuildings: Two modern frame school buildings remain. The old Classic Revival carriage house which faced Broad Street (see HABS No. Ga-2127-1) disappeared some years ago.
3. Landscaping, enclosures: The rear yard is enclosed by a brick wall; the flagstone terrace, greensward, trees and plantings will acquire a pavillion during restoration of the garden.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Updated information obtained from Cathy Fleming, Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc., June 1984.

Prepared by: Eleni Silverman
Architectural Historian, HABS
June 1984

ADDENDUM TO
WILLIAM SCARBROUGH HOUSE
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41 W. Broad Street
CHATHAM COUNTY
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