

Old Home Studied in Survey



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One of the three old houses in Chattanooga of which complete drawings are being made by architects in the historic American building survey is shown above. It is the original building at the Bonny Oaks Industrial school, where Supt. and Mrs. W. S. Keese now live. Built by the builder of two railroads here, the house is one of the few remaining examples of antebellum architecture in Chattanooga.

William Crutchfield is Chattanooga administrator of the survey, which is being made nationally by the department of the interior. Mrs. Penelope Johnson Allen, historian, has written brief sketches of the old houses specially to accompany publication of the photographs in *The Times*, and her sketch of the Bonny Oaks building follows:

"The beautiful old mansion at Bonny

Oaks was one of the Hamilton county's finest residences in the antebellum period, and was the home of Col. Jarret Dent, a railroad contractor who built several of the railroads leading from Chattanooga.

"Col. Dent came to Hamilton county in the late forties as he had secured the contract for building the Western and Atlantic railroad and the Tennessee and Georgia railroads. While engaged in this work his wife died and he married Mary Donahoo, a sister of the wife of Col. Lewis Shepherd.

"Being impressed with the desirability of this locality for a home, Col. Dent bought from Col. Shepherd the farm which is now the Bonny Oaks property and built the substantial brick house that is now used as the superintendent's home.

"In the days preceding the Civil war, Col. Dent was one of this county's wealthiest citizens. Upon the organi-

zation of the Confederacy, he was southern in sympathy and cast his lot with the south. His oldest son, Charles, ran away and joined the Confederate army. Col. Dent was forced to leave his home because of the strong Union feeling in his neighborhood.

"The bushwhackers of this section, under the leadership of a Maj. Moss, used the Dent house as a rendezvous during the war. With Moss were associated many desperadoes who ravaged the plantations of the affluent citizens in this locality, and after they had taken possession of the Dent home, they held their sales in which they disposed of their plunder.

"After the war Col. Dent moved to Dallas, Tex., where he died. Col. Dent had one child by his first marriage, Mary Ann Dent, who married Hugh Swann. His children by the second marriage were Charles, Sam, Joe and Sallie, who died a few years ago in Los Angeles, Cal.

—Times Staff Photo by Hull.