

Historic Home Research paper: Hills and Dales Estate

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Hills & Dales Estate sits on 35 beautiful acres in LaGrange, GA. The 13,000 square foot home was completed in 1916 and sits amongst the cherished and abundant Ferrell gardens. This “Southern Colonial” style home was designed and inspired by the gardens that surround it. Just a few examples of what the well-preserved gardens hold are the 5 boxwood lines terraces, herb garden, and the 3-room greenhouse that holds several rare species of plants. The estate has been preserved by the Callaway Foundation and is open for the public to enjoy.

Fuller Callaway Sr., a respected businessman in the textile industry, purchased the Ferrell gardens (House, Gardens, and 90 Acres) for \$8,000 at an auction in 1911. His wife, Ida Callaway takes the Gardens and brings them back to life. 2 years later, the Architectural firm of Hentz & Reid were commissioned to design the Callaway’s new home. Ida was heavily involved in the designing of the home and enjoyed her many trips to New York for furniture and other furnishings. In 1916, On



Figure 1- Overhead picture of Hills & Dales

Fuller Sr. and Ida’s 25th wedding anniversary, the home was completed, and the name was changed to Hills & Dales, after the rolling hills and shady dales. They were blessed with two sons, Cason Callaway and Fuller Jr. Callaway. The Callaway’s loved to entertain and enjoyed their life at the gardens, always having family and friends visiting. After the passing of Ida and Fuller Sr., Cason and Fuller Jr. submitted sealed bids for the house and gardens. Fuller Jr. won the house and in exchange Cason was given land only a 30-minute drive from the gardens. There Fuller Jr. and his wife, Alice Hand Callaway, begin their life together at Hills & Dales. In 1948 Alice then made significant design changes to the home with the help of

Interior Designer, Sarah (Sally) King Small. She lived there until her death in 1989. Through the Callaway Foundation she created, Hills & Dales went under restoration until its opening in October of 2004, along with the new visitor's center.



Figure 2- East Portico Entrance

Construction of the house began in March of 1915 and ended in July of 1916. The East Portico is the main entrance of the home, right next to the original entrance to the gardens. Built from materials such as stucco, limestone, terracotta, and wood. The Classical Exterior is made from stucco, Indiana Limestone and Terracotta roof tile tiles to accentuate the Italian villa style and to complement the gardens. Mr. Callaway's Ideas and thoughts were heavily in the design, "Fuller wanted an elegant but simple look to the house. For example, instead of choosing more elaborate Corinthian columns, he chooses simpler, Iconic ones." (Dolen, S, pg. 2)

Neel Reid served as the lead designer, along with his firm, Hentz and Reid of Atlanta. Both Hentz and Reid attended Columbian University before traveling to Europe for a time and studied briefly at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. After returning to the states, they started



Figure 3 - Garden Grounds

their firm in 1909. This Commissioning was a the biggest that they had ever received at that time. From studying at Columbian university, Reid was aquatinted with a Charles Follen Mckim, who was commissioned in the help of the white house renovations, which was an advancement for the colonial revival movement. These classic styles were often referred to as "Southern Colonial" and inspired Reid in the

design of the Callaway's home. "Representing and eclectic classicism that looked to ultimate Italian Renaissance prototypes that had inspired Mrs. Ferrell's Italianate boxwood garden, it suggests the Palladianism of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century behind American neoclassicism Reid described the final project to the Callaway's as "Georgian Italian," according to Alice Hand (Mrs. Fuller E. Jr.) Callaway, the current resident." (Mitchell, W. R. ,1997, p. 46) He felt as if this style would truly complement the gardens.

Alice begins renovations in 1948. When she moved, she knew she wanted to immediately change to a central heating system and updated a large part of the kitchen. A change that is



Figure 5 - Living Room Mantel Before Renovation

largely recognized is the fireplace in the living room. The Faux stone fireplace was surrounded by a cast stone mantel, and it was changed to a wooden mantel and paneling. Philip Trammel Shutze was an apprentice architect working under Hentz & Reid at the time, he helped with these changes and designed the moldings that were applied. Around this time, Alice also

commissioned Interior Designer Sarah (Sally) King Small, to help with furnishing recommendations. Sally helped add the wool tufted rugs that were in most main spaces of the home, as well as helping with the layout of furniture. The most significant item that Sarah added was the curved sofa, placed in the center-back of the living room. "The sofa was made by Saybolt and Cleland, a small Philadelphia furniture maker, and added to the modeled after the stone bench in the sunken garden."



Figure 4- Living Room Mantel After Renovation

(Dolen, S, p.14) Alice loved this design as it was inspired by the bench where her and Fuller met and courted. ““We fell in love on the curved stone bench in the sunken garden.” Alice and Fuller married in August of 1930” (2009, pg. 8).

The gardens were originally owned and designed by Sarah Ferrell who created the formal, Italian renaissance revival style landscape. Mrs. Ferrell was largely inspired by her Christian faith, as most of her garden designs have a biblical meaning or story behind it. One example of this is

the boxwoods that spell out “GOD” at the end of the magnolia walk and the intended beginning of her garden, coming from Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning GOD created the heavens and the earth...” i.e., English Standard Version, 2001/2016, Genesis 1:1).



Figure 5- Greenhouse and Herb Garden

Three women; Sarah Ferrell, Ida Callaway, and Alice Hand-Callaway all loved and cherished the gardens. Their dedication and hard work have preserved the legacy of the grounds to what they are today. Through every design and detail, the craftsmanship and care show through the “Georgian Italian” house, and the gardens that surround it. Hills & Dales is a place where people can come to reconnect with nature and learn about a family who loved their community, and their home.

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