

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Beaux-Arts Classicism/American Renaissance

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Japonica Hall is located on the north side of South Main Street in Society Hill, a small community in rural northeast Darlington County. This two-and-one-half-story, brick residence was built in 1896-97, and was designed by the notable South Carolina architect, Charles Coker Wilson. It is an early example of Wilson's use of classicism in a residence and a good example of the American Renaissance or the Beaux Arts style in South Carolina.

Additional Information

Japonica Hall is an asymmetrical two-and-one-half-story, hipped-roof, brick residence on a raised brick basement. Reminiscent of Italian Renaissance palazzos, Japonica Hall features a rusticated first story and a second story emulating a piano nobile with paired pilasters demarking the bays on the second story. The first and second stories are separated by a molded brick band. The cornice is composed of overhanging molding supported by modillions above a denticulated brick course. The projecting hipped-roof central entrance bay has a double door entry with flanking fluted pilasters, sidelights and transom-lights on the first floor, and double-glass paneled doors with semi-circular transom-light, a rusticated surround and small flanking windows on the upper floor. Above this second story door is a band with a central panel flanked by paired pilasters and roundels. A one-story Tuscan veranda is accessed by a wide stair. It features a turned-post balustrade, paired columns at the entrance bay, and extends partially across the southeast facade. These columns are placed on paneled pedestals. The central bay is flanked by a one-story canted bay with a brick parapet with recessed panels located under a triple window grouping and a symmetrical two-window arrangement. Typical window openings contain one-over-one-light double-hung sash with an exaggerated keystone in a jack arch and granite sills. Other window openings have plain jack arches and stone sills. The northeast, northwest, and southwest facades have various asymmetrical arrangements with hipped-roof projections, hipped-roof dormers, and one-story canted bays. A modern wooden deck is located on the northeast facade replacing an earlier one-story veranda. The rear or northwest facade has a central one-bay hipped-roof porch with replacement supports. The southwest facade has an infilled porch and a screened porch with shed roof. The four chimneys

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1896-97

Significant Dates

c. 1896-97

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Charles Coker Wilson

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Japonica Hall was built in 1896-97 for Major James Jonathan Lucas, a prominent local railroad builder and businessman. This two-and-one-half-story over basement brick residence is significant architecturally as an important early residential design of Charles Coker Wilson, noted South Carolina architect. Its primary significance, however, is an an academic expression of turn-of-the-century Beaux Arts or eclectic classicism. Though located within the boundaries of the Welsh Neck-Long Bluff-Society Hill Historic District, listed in the National Register, this property does not clearly fall within that district's period of significance, and therefore warrants individual nomination.

Additional Information

Major J. J. Lucas (1831-1914), who represented Charleston in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1856-1862, and was a prominent Confederate artillery officer in the defense of Charleston during the Civil War, settled in Society Hill in 1865.(1) He had married Caroline Eliza McIver, a native of Society Hill, in 1861.(2) Major Lucas soon achieved notoriety in local business as a railroad builder, and after its 1898 formation, as a director of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company.(3) An active member of the Darlington County Agricultural Society, Lucas owned and operated vineyards and a winery in Society Hill. He was among the first in Darlington County to plant camellias (Genus: *Camellia japonica*), which lent their name to the property.(4) Once abundant, some of the original plantings remain on the grounds.

Major Lucas' first home, a frame residence located on or near the site of the present-day house, burned c. 1892. By 1896, Lucas had commissioned Charles Coker Wilson (1864-1933), a native of Darlington County and city engineer of Columbia, to design a large brick residence.(5) Wilson had only recently returned to South Carolina from Roanoke, Virginia, where he had practiced architecture and engineering since 1890.(6) Construction on the new house began in 1896, but was not completed until the following

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

S. C. Dept. of Archives and History

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 4.94 acres

UTM References

A

1	7
---	---

6	0	4	6	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	8	1	8	6	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

D

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nomination is shown as the plat line on "Plat of Lot of Richard Lucas Baird, Society Hill, S.C.," in Darlington County Plat Book 70, Page 9, a copy of which accompanies the nomination.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the historic house and its immediate setting, including the historic landscape.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrew W. Chandler, NR Manager; Frank Brown, III, NR Architectural Historian
 organization S.C. SHPO, S. C. Dept. of Archives & History date June 30, 1989
 street & number 1430 Senate Street, P. O. Box 11669 telephone (803) 734-8610
 city or town Columbia state South Carolina zip code 29211

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

have corbeled stacks and the hipped roof features finials at the termination of roof ridges.

The interior has a wide central hall with a large quarter-turn stair and a semi-circular arched opening leading to the rear stairhall. The front stairhall is flanked by the living room and dining room while the back stairhall is flanked by two bedrooms. The upstairs has five bedroom suites, a hall with an alcove accessing a balcony. The interior woodwork and molding is fairly common for a house of this size and period. Features include sliding paneled doors in the major living areas and the hallway, wainscoting in the hall and dining room, crown molding and ornamental mantels with freestanding columns, pilasters, and mirrored overmantels. Wide window jambs have recessed areas allowing the shutters to fold into them. Arched alcoves, present in most of the larger first floor rooms, access the projecting bay areas.

No historic outbuildings remain on the property.

The grounds contain some landscape features including historic plantings, such as camellias (japonicas), oaks, and various coniferous trees.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

year. Japonica Hall may exist as one of Wilson's earliest extant designs in South Carolina, and possibly his earliest residence in the state.

Japonica Hall was also the home of Major Lucas' son, Captain Thomas Smith Lucas, until his death in 1939.(7)

Architecture

Few, if any, houses of this scale, design, and material exist from the 1890s in this part of South Carolina. The architect's academic approach to the design and his deliberate attempt at combining the asymmetry of Victorian-era models and the symmetry of the Classical Revival achieve a unique, yet curious, balance. It may also be suggestive of an early attempt by the architect in American Renaissance design. The use of rustication on the first floor and the simulation of the piano nobile on the second floor, are evidence of Wilson's interest in classicism before his study in the Atelier Duray at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris (1899-1900).(8)

NOTES

(1) Walter B. Edgar, editor, Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Vol. I, Session Lists 1692-1973 (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1974), pp. 374-384; Warren Ripley, editor, Siege Train: The Journal of a Confederate Artilleryman in the Defense of Charleston (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1986), pp.309-310; and "Fort Pringle," a National Register nomination as part of the "Civil War Defenses of Charleston" thematic resources nomination, National Register Office files, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

(2) William Dollard Lucas, "A Lucas Memorandum," unpublished typescript, Society Hill, S.C., n.d., National Register Office files, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

(3) Ibid.; Charles F. Kovacik and John J. Winberry, South Carolina: A Geography (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1987), p. 120.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

(4) Eliza Cowan Ervin and Horace Fraser Rudisill, Darlingtoniana: A History of People, Places and Events in Darlington County, South Carolina (Spartanburg, S.C.: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1976), p. 48.

(5) David Duncan Wallace, The History of South Carolina, Biographical Volume (New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1935), p. 1010; Charles C. Wilson, C.E., Architect, "Residence for J.J. Lucas," architectural drawings in possession of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lucas Baird, Japonica Hall, Society Hill, S.C.

(6) Wallace, The History of South Carolina, Biographical Volume.

(7) Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lucas Baird, Japonica Hall, Society Hill, S.C., June 6, 1988.

(8) Wallace, The History of South Carolina, Biographical Volume.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chandler, Andrew W., National Register Manager, South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lucas Baird, Japonica Hall, Society Hill, SC, 6 June 1988.
- Edgar, Walter B., Editor. Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, Volume I: Session Lists 1792-1973. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1974.
- Ervin, Eliza Cowan, and Horace Fraser Rudisill. Darlingtoniana: A History of People, Places and Events in Darlington County, South Carolina. Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company, Publishers, 1976.
- "Fort Pringle," in "Civil War Defenses of Charleston" Thematic Resources, National Register of Historic Places, in National Register Office files, South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC.
- Kovacik, Charles F., and John J. Winberry. South Carolina: A Geography. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1987.
- Lucas, William Dollard. "A Lucas Memorandum." Unpublished typescript, n.d., Society Hill, SC, in National Register Office files, South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC.
- Ripley, Warren, Editor. Siege Train: The Journal of a Confederate Artilleryman in the Defense of Charleston. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1986.
- Wallace, David Duncan. The History of South Carolina, Biographical Volume. New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1935.
- Wilson, Charles Coker, C.E., Architect, "Residence for J.J. Lucas." Architectural drawings, in possession of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lucas Baird, Japonica Hall, Society Hill, SC.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page 1

The following information is the same for each of the photos:

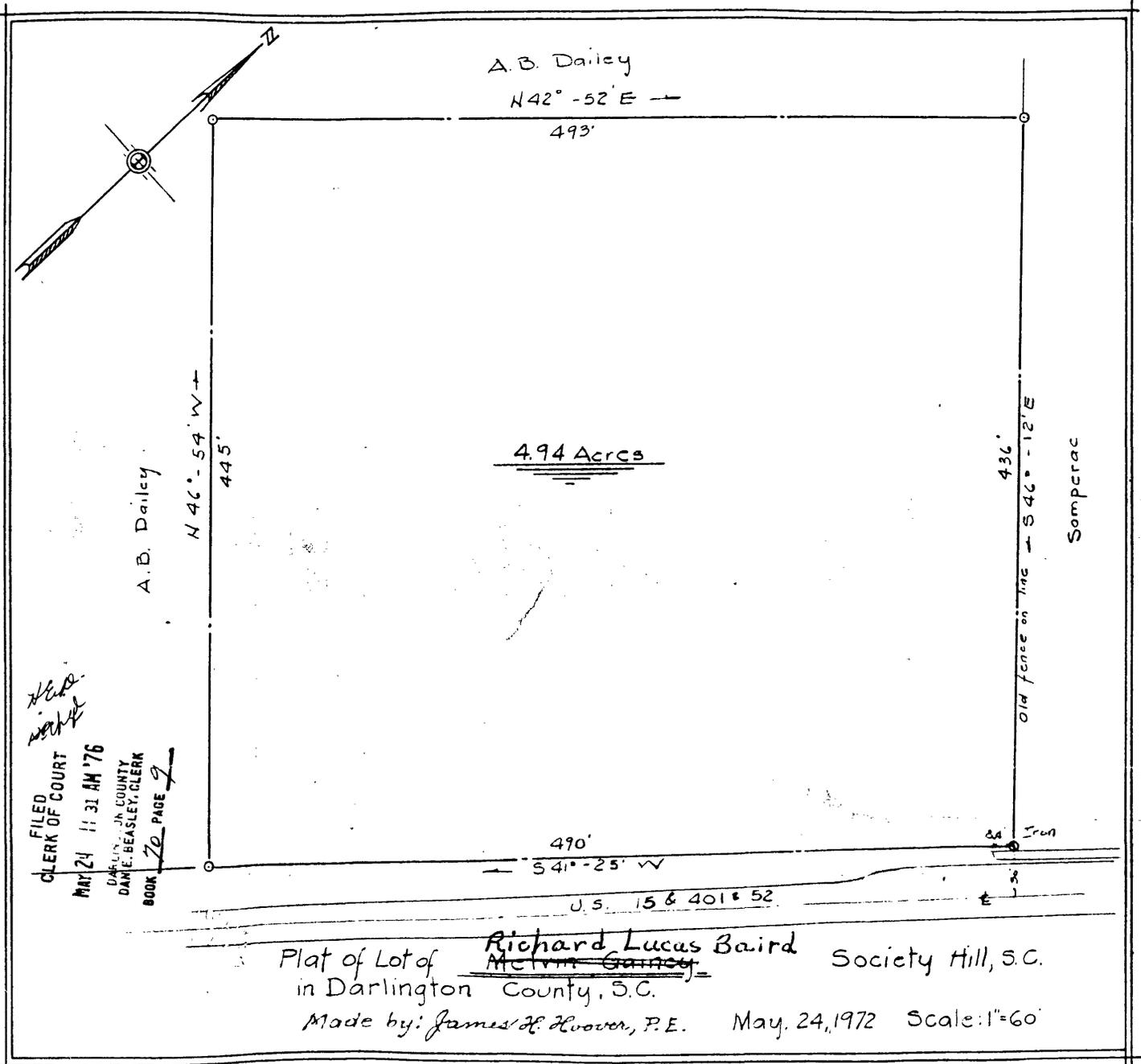
Japonica Hall
Darlington County, S. C.
Photographer unknown - Richard Lucas Baird (owner)
Society Hill, S. C.
Spring 1989

1. Southeast (principal) facade
2. Northwest elevation
3. Northeast elevation
4. View from west (oblique)
5. Detail of porch and entrance
6. One of several canted bays
7. Central hall toward entrance
8. Main stair in central hall
9. Sliding pocket doors between central hall and dining room
10. Dining room with window detail
11. Mantel, Dining room
12. Mantel, Living room
13. Upstairs hall, looking toward southeast

CERTIFIED
TRUE COPY

Marvin Lawson

Clerk of Court of C. P. & C. S.
Darlington County, S. C.



Handwritten
FILED
CLERK OF COURT
MAY 24 11 31 AM '76
DARLINGTON COUNTY
DARLE BEASLEY, CLERK
BOOK 70 PAGE 9

Plat of Lot of Richard Lucas Baird Society Hill, S.C.
McVinn Gannoy
in Darlington County, S.C.

Made by: James H. Hoover, P.E. May. 24, 1972 Scale: 1"=60'

Recorded in the office of the Clerk of
Court, Darlington County, S. C., this

24 Day of May 19 76

And Recorded in Book 70 of plats

Page 9

Marvin I. Lawson
C. C. C. P. & C. S.