



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
725 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130
PHONE: 261-3184



ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE
Nomination Form

COUNTY Calhoun

NAME: Present Gunnels-Wingo House Historic Gunnels House

LOCATION: Street and Number 225 East Oak St.

Town (Give directions if rural) Oxford, Alabama 36203

\*A MAP WITH THE LANDMARK MARKED MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM\*

CATEGORY: Building (x) Structure ( ) Object ( ) Site ( ) District ( )

USE: Present Family Dwelling Historic Family Dwelling

OWNERSHIP: Public ( ) Private (x)

Owner's Name H. Calvin and Patricia Wingo

Mailing Address 225 East Oak St.

Oxford, Alabama 36203

INTEGRITY: Original Site (x) Moved ( ) When?

From where? (Give details in significance.)

CONDITIONS: Excellent (x) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Ruins ( )

THREATS: No (x) Yes ( ) By What?

RESTORATION WORK: Being considered ( ) Underway (x) Completed ( ) Not planned ( )

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Open land ( ) Woodland ( ) Scattered buildings ( )
High building density ( ) Commercial (x) Industrial ( )
Residential (x) Rural ( )

Acreage "less than one"

For all categories other than a district and object give a site plan with a North arrow.
Show related buildings. See Map B

For a district give a verbal boundary description and attach a sketch map of the district.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Why is this landmark significant? (X) associated with events, persons, or movements  
Local (X) State (X) National ( )  
(X) a good example of a type or style of structure  
( ) other

D.P. Gunnels was a key figure in the economic and cultural development of the area.

Explain: (Briefly state why the above is true) His son, H.C. Gunnels was especially important in the field of education on the state and local levels. Also, the Gunnels House is "Calhoun County's best example of Gothic Revival domestic architecture and possibly one of the more significant extant examples in entire state."

Date of Construction or Period of major importance. 1860-1870

Architect or Builder (Give name and biographies, if known)

Give a complete but concise history of the Landmark. Include information on important people and events associated with the landmark. (USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY)

SEE ATTACHMENT I

State sources of information, giving full bibliographical data:

SEE ATTACHMENT I.A.

DESCRIPTION: PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE LANDMARK MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM.

Complete as directed below for each category.

BUILDING:

Number of stories 1 1/2 Foundation Brick and rock piers Basement Partial-Raised brick  
~~across front half of~~

Wall Material: (Note changes from one floor or wing to another) house. Had original service rooms.  
(clapboard, brick, stone, wood shingle, board and batten, stucco over wood or brick, metal, logs)

Main House- Clapboard  
Kitchen Ell- Brick

Structural System: (If known)

Wood frame (X) Load-bearing masonry (X) Iron or Steel ( )  
Brick Kitchen Ell

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

Roof Type: (Gable, Gambrel, Mansard, Flat, Hipped, Combination)

Roof Covering: (Wood shingle, Asphalt, Tile, Metal, Slate)

Roof Trim: (Cornices, bargeboard, brackets, etc.)

Porches: Front (type and description) 5-bay front porch raised on brick piers with lattice work between. The porch is ornamented by scroll-cut trellis supports with brackets and connected flatwood balustrade.

Rear (type and description) Shed porch at rear connecting to ell. The main portion of the rear porch has been enclosed.

Side (type and description) \_\_\_\_\_

Doors: Main entrance (location, description) Central, wide double-leaf door with side-lights and transom framed by channeled architrave.

Other entrances (location, description) Central, wide double-leaf door with transom leads from original rear porch into main central hallway. Singled, paneled door leads from rear porch to basement stairway. Three other doors from original rear porch into brick ell.

Windows: Types and number of each floor of facade

Narrow, double-sash, 6/6-- Two on 1st floor; three on 2nd floor

Types and number per floor for sides and rear

Double-sash, 6/6-- East Side--4

Kitchen Ell--5

West Side--5

Two window openings in Kitchen Ell have bars.

Rear-----2

Other

Interior: Describe mantels, stairways, wainscoting, plasterwork and any unusual features.

SEE ATTACHMENT II

Other: Use this space to describe any additions, alterations, outbuildings or other features of the structure and its surroundings. Original structure altered by

1. Bath installed between house and kitchen ell

2. Bath and closet installed at north end of upstairs hall

3. Most of back porch enclosed

4. Window added on west side

5. Two cement block rooms added to original ell

6. East chimney removed to just inside roof.

7. Upper panels removed from entrance doors and glass inserted.

On an additional sheet make a sketch of the floor plan of the building, showing dimensions if possible.

THIS IS NOT REQUIRED!

SEE ATTACHMENT III

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

- STRUCTURE: On a separate sheet of paper give a complete as possible verbal description of the structure. (See examples)
- OBJECT: On a separate sheet of paper give a complete as possible verbal description of the object. (See examples)
- SITE: On a separate sheet of paper give the present description of the site and how the site is believed to have looked during its period of importance.
- DISTRICT: On a separate sheet of paper give a general description of the district. Also needed is a numbered list of the structures in the district corresponding to the sketch map. This listing should include a name for the structure, a date of construction, a brief description, a statement of why the structure is significant, if it is.

\*A MAP WITH THE LANDMARK MARKED AND PHOTOGRAPHS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM\*

Map: A U.S. Geological Survey Map is preferred, but if you are unable to obtain one a county highway map may be used.

SEE MAPS A, B, and C

Photographs: Black and white, glossy finish, 5 x 7, or 8 x 10, is preferred.

SEE PHOTO FOLDER

FORM PREPARED BY

Name H. Calvin Wingo Date 6/5/85  
Address 225 East Oak St. Telephone 831-0298  
Town Oxford, Alabama 36203  
Organization Calhoun County Historical Society

For Alabama Historical Commission use only

STAFF COMMENTS:

MAP REFERENCE: MAP \_\_\_\_\_

U. T. M. Reference      Zone      Easting      Northing

Thematic Category \_\_\_\_\_

Added to ALABAMA REGISTER \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER Potential

## Attachment I

### History of the Landmark

In its present Gothic Revival form, the house would appear to date from sometime between 1860 and 1870. Quite likely, the center portion pre-dates the Civil War and became the nucleus around which the structure as it exists today was built. Architectural remnants, a mantel and several doors, suggest that a Greek Revival structure was the original form. The identity of the first owner of the original structure is uncertain.

Daniel Perry Gunnels acquired the property, probably in the 1850's. It was he who then remodeled the house into its Gothic Revival mode. The Gunnels family increased significantly during the 1860's with the births of seven children.

D.P. Gunnels was a leading merchant, planter, and investor in the Oxford area. He was born October 6, 1823 near Bold Spring, Franklin County, Georgia. He was the son of Nathan and Nancy (Hunt) Gunnels, natives respectively of Wilkes and Franklin Counties Georgia. Nathan Gunnels moved to Franklin County early in life and became a planter by occupation. He was an officer in the War of 1836 and was a member of the Georgia Constitutional Convention. Politically of the Clay and Webster faith (Whig Party), he was a person of some influence in the vicinity where he lived.

D.P. Gunnels was reared on his father's farm, and received an academic education. In 1845, he moved to Boiling Springs in Calhoun County (known as Benton County then) in Alabama. For several years he was a clerk in the mercantile establishment of F.J. Caver. After some time, he purchased an interest with his employer, and still later became sole owner of the concern. Gunnels moved to Oxford in 1854, where he continued in the mercan-

tile business until 1872. However, from 1862 until the close of the war in 1865, he found it expedient to suspend the mercantile business. During that period, he entered the employ of the Oxford Iron Company. In fact, it was Gunnels who sold the property located north of the town of Oxford to the Oxford Iron Company. The purpose of the company was to mine iron ore and manufacture pig iron which was shipped to Selma to the Confederate Ordnance Department. The site of the Oxford Iron Furnace later became the nucleus of the Woodstock Iron Company and the city of Anniston. Although the war swept away much of Gunnels's fortune, he was able to prosper in the post-war era. After, 1872, he devoted most of his time to planting.

Among his other services to the community, Gunnels served as Intendant (Mayor) of Oxford when it was incorporated for a second time in 1860. This second incorporation resulted from the break-up of Benton County and the formation of Calhoun County. He also played a leading role in the founding of Oxford College in 1867 and became a Trustee of that institution. Gunnels was one of the earliest members of the Oxford Methodist Episcopal Church, South and contributed to the construction of the 1872 edifice which still serves the community.

Throughout his life, Gunnels played a prominent role in the economic life of Oxford. He was a leading investor in the Blue Spring Textile Mill in 1885. In 1890, he was a key figure in the formation of the Oxford Lake Electric Trolley Line. In the late 1800's, his son-in-law joined him in a mercantile establishment known as "Gunnels and Warnock." And, he is said to have erected the first brick store in Oxford in 1869. He was a Mason and an Odd Fellow.

In March, 1857, D.F. Gunnels married Susan Elizabeth Cunningham, member of a pioneer family of Calhoun County. She was the daughter of

Willaim N. and Nancy E. (Pratt) Cunningham, natives of South Carolina. The children of D.P. and Susan Gunnels were 1.Nancy E. , m. Mr. Warnock 2.John N. 3.James N. 4.Esther L. 5. Elmira P. 6.Harry C. 7.Willie Francis.

A generous man, Gunnels discovered and brought to Oxford a Clay County lad named Hoyt Smith DeFries. Recognizing the young man's brilliance, Gunnels gave him a job and a place to live so that DeFries could attend school in Oxford. A remarkable person, DeFries later attended Harvard and still later became Privy Counsel to Queen Victoria.

On Jan. 19, 1895, D.P. Gunnels died at his home in Oxford of heart failure.

Harry Cunningham Gunnels, son of D.P. and Susan, was a noted lawyer, educator, and State Superintendent of Education. He was born October 1, 1868 at Oxford, Calhoun County. He died September 19, 1911 at a hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. Harry Gunnels was educated in the common schools of Oxford, and graduated A.B. from Oxford College in 1886. He also took special courses at Vanderbilt. In 1891, he graduated LL.B. at the University of Alabama.

Although graduating in law, his whole life was devoted to educational work. In October, 1886, he began teaching as co-principal of the Ashland High School. Later for two years, he was professor of natural sciences and history at Oxford College. He then served as principal of the Anniston High School and from 1896 to 1898 as superintendent of Anniston city school. He was chief clerk in the Department of Education from 1899 to 1902. At that point, he was appointed State Superintendent of Education to succeed Dr. John W. Abercrombie, who was elected President of the University of Alabama. Gunnels was again appointed chief clerk in 1903, serving until 1907 when he entered upon a full term as Superintendent of Education by election.

In 1900-01, he was a member of the State House of Representatives from

Calhoun County. He served on the Committee on Education and was the author of the important bill providing five months free schools. He was chairman of the committee on legislation of the Alabama education committee and was director for Alabama of the Southern Educational Association.

Harry Gunnels was successively 1st Lieutenant and Captain of Co. I, 2nd Infantry Regiment, Alabama National Guard. From 1896 to 1906, he was inspector on the staff of Gen. L.V. Clark with the rank of Major. He was a Democrat, a Methodist, Shriner, and Knight of Pythias. On November 25, 1895, he married Ladie Emily Goss of Commerce, Georgia. Their children were Louise Elizabeth and Edith Helen.

The house remained in the Gunnels family until 1941 when it was sold to Mrs. J.L. Rice, who managed it as a successful boarding house until 1970. In 1977, the property was sold to L.E. Clark, local real estate speculator. In 1981, Drs. Calvin and Patricia Wingo purchased the house and with their son Clark have been occupying and restoring the home.

### *Attachment I. A.*

#### Sources of Information:

1. Thomas McAdory Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography. Vol. III, p. 715.
2. Northern Alabama, Historical and Biographical. Smith and Deland, 1888, Birmingham, Ala. pp. 115-116
3. The Anniston Star, July 30, 1923
4. Anniston The Weekly Times, Jan. 24, 1895
5. Bessie Coleman Robinson Folders, Alabama Room, Lyles Memorial Library, Anniston, Ala.
6. Frank Little, "History of Oxford College". Oxford Public Library.
7. "Historic Survey of Oxford," 1979. (See attached copy.) I.A.
8. Montgomery Advertiser, Sept. 19, 1911, p. 1; Sept. 20, p. 12.
9. Interviews with Miss Aleeta Walker, age 93, who has always lived across the street from the Gunnels House.
10. Interview with Mr. Tull Allen, native of Oxford some 70 years, and neighbor to Gunnels property.



## Attachment II

### Interior Description:

There are eight original mantels in the house. The parlor mantel is cast iron with a fretwork summer cover for a coal burning fireplace.

Five of the wooden mantels are identical and feature a Gothic ogive curve; they also have <sup>cast iron</sup> summer covers. One wooden mantel is Federal in style with wide hand-carved grooves. The wooden mantel in the original dining room in the kitchen ell is Grecian in tone.

The interior woodwork is particularly notable. The stairway is straight run rising from the rear of the main hallway toward the front. It features a turned octagonal newel of walnut, a handrailing of walnut, and balusters of oak. There is also a similar balustrade enclosing the stairwell to the basement which descends from the rear of the central hall. The riser of one step of the main stairway is hinged so as to provide a storage area at the base of the stairs. Wainscoting surrounds both stairways and original false-graining remains in one area. The walls beneath the main stairway are sheathed with vertical panels terminating in a very unusual ogive curve. These panels originally featured false-graining.

The doors are panelled and of peg construction. The upstairs doors retain the false-graining while those on the first floor have been painted. There are transoms over all the interior doors.

Chair rails are found in the main hallway, the kitchen ell, and four other rooms. Door facings and window facings contain narrow grooved moldings. The door moldings are of one type on the inside of the rooms and of another on the outside.

Except for two rooms downstairs, the walls are plaster on lathing. The plaster contains hog hair and sand. The walls of the two <sup>different</sup> rooms are wide pine boards. Most of the ceilings are wide, tongue-in-groove "board and bead." In the kitchen ell, the ceiling is plaster; <sup>walls are plaster on brick.</sup>  
The woodwork throughout the house is hand-planed.

The flooring is wide board, tongue-in-groove heart-pine. The board widths vary from 5 inches to 7½ inches. <sup>House rests on 12" x 12" heart pine sills hewn with (1) ax or foot adze.</sup>

## Attachment II

### General Description:

The structure is a rectangular, 3 bay front, with tall steeply-pitched gable roof broken at the rear to cover shed extension and with steep triple subordinate cross-gables on the front slope of the roof framing half-story windows. There are Gothic louvered vents at the gable ends. The house has seven gables. It also features a center-hall plan.

A similar design can be found in A.J. Downing, Cottage Residences, Design IV, "An Ornamental Farm House" (See attached illustration). However, the Gunnels House follows the advice of Calvert Vaux and employs horizontal clapboard sheathing rather than Downing's preference for stone or board and batten sheathing.

DESIGN IV.  
AN ORNAMENTAL FARM HOUSE.



Fig. 31.

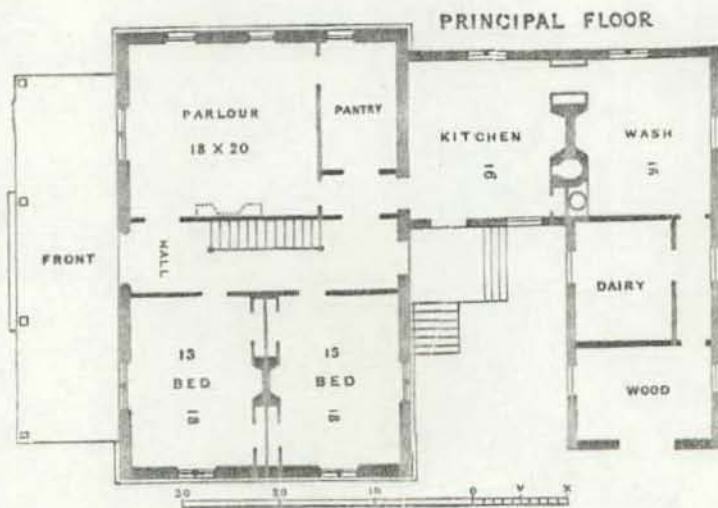


Fig. 32.

*A. J. Downing, Cottage Residences*



F. LAWRENCE OAKS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF ALABAMA  
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

725 MONROE STREET  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-5101

August 26, 1985



TELEPHONE NUMBER  
261-3184

Mr. and Mrs. H. Calvin Wingo  
225 East Oak Street  
Oxford, Alabama 36203

Re: Gunnells-Wingo House  
Calhoun County  
August 22, 1985

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Wingo:

The Alabama Historical Commission is pleased to inform you that the referenced property has been favorably reviewed and added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage. The Alabama Register is a prestigious listing of historic, architectural and archaeological landmarks. These selected Alabama landmarks are worthy of both recognition and restoration. The Alabama Historical Commission appreciates your interest in Alabama's historic preservation program.

Sincerely,

F. Lawrence Oaks  
Executive Director

FLO/MMB/cgh

HISTORIC SURVEY  
1979  
Houses, buildings, sites & ruins

CITY OF OXFORD  
ALABAMA

1. NAME: GUNNELS HOUSE
2. LOCATION: 225 East Oak St. (NW corner Mountain Ave.)

*Known as Mechanic's  
St. earlier*

3. PRESENT OWNER: ~~Mr. Earl Clark~~  
~~Robin Hood Drive~~  
~~Oxford, AL 36203~~ ~~later 001-2260~~  
H.C. Wingo and Patricia W. Wingo  
225 E. Oak St.  
Oxford, AL 36203

4. LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Lots 2 & 3, Block D Gunnels Addition to Oxford, Calhoun County, Alabama  
Sec 19 T16 R8 East. Fronting approximately ~~107'~~ on Oak St; 213' on  
Mountain Ave.; ~~178'~~ on Gunnels St.; 150' on W side.

*→ 213'*

5. DATE: ca. 1860-70
6. TYPE OF ARCHITECTURE: Gothic Revival
7. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Clapboard; rectangular (3 bay front) with semi-detached 2-room brick ell, 1½ stories over high brick basement set into hillside, tall steeply-pitched gable roof broken at rear to cover shed extension, steep triple subordinate cross-gables on front slope of roof framing half-story windows, bracketed eaves, Gothic louvered vents at gable ends, 5-bay front porch raised on brick piers with lattice-work between and scrollcut trellis-supports with brackets and connecting flatwood balustrade, wide double-leaf door with sidelights and transom framed by channeled architrave, shed-porch at rear (connecting to ell) with irregular double-gabled massing breaking rear slope of roof behind porch, narrow 6/6 sashing throughout; center-hall plan.

*(plus several  
smaller rooms)*

Later modifications include ~~partial~~ <sup>back</sup> enclosure of porch, small bath addition at NE rear, ~~metal awnings~~. Calhoun County's best example of Gothic Revival domestic architecture and possibly one of more significant extant examples in entire state.

DEPENDENCIES:

10. SIGNIFICANCE:

Although the construction date of this house is uncertain, its architectural merit is indisputable as one of the very few examples in this area of the Gothic Revival or "Pointed" style for "cottages" popularized through the works of Andrew Jackson Downing, Calvert Vaux, and others during the mid-19th century. In its present form, the house would appear to date from sometime between 1860 and 1870; perhaps a few years later. One tradition holds that the center portion pre-dates the Civil War and became the nucleus around which the structure as it exists today was built. Because of its hillside site, the main part of the house is underlain by a raised brick basement containing original service rooms. As with many other Oxford houses built in the late 19th century, there is a one-story brick kitchen ell at the rear. The interior woodwork is particularly notable; the turned octagonal newel <sup>(walnut)</sup> and balusters <sup>(oak)</sup> of the straight-run stair which rises from the rear of the main hallway toward the front and the turned balustrade enclosing the adjoining stairwell to the basement rooms. Walls beneath the main staircase are also sheathed with vertical panels terminating in a very unusual ogive curve. Original mantel-pieces also remain. *Areas of original false graining on wainscoting and doors also remain. Hand-planed woodwork.*

The first owner of the house was Daniel P. Gunnels (1823-1895), who came to Oxford in 1854 to enter the mercantile business. Soon afterward he married Susan Elizabeth Cunningham. Prior to his arrival in Oxford, he was a "merchant-clerk" employed by the planter-merchant Thomas Caver, of nearby Boiling Springs. Throughout his life, Gunnels played a prominent role in the life of Oxford, being a leading investor in both the Oxford Lake electric trolley line in 1890 and, a few years earlier, in the corporation of the Blue Spring Mills. During the late 1800's, his son-in-law joined him in the mercantile business under the name of "Gunnels & Warnock".

The tall hill to the rear of this house is today known as Gunnels Mountain.

This property remained in the Gunnels Estate until 1941 when it was sold to Mrs. James L. Rice.

Today <sup>1984</sup> (1979), the owners <sup>are Dr. and Mrs. H.C. Wingo</sup> is ~~Mr. Earl Clark~~.

11. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Mr. Earl Clark, ~~present~~ <sup>former</sup> owner.

Mrs. Katie Walker (age 90's) descendent of Mr. Gunnels.

The Oxford Echo, 17 January 1890.

Mr. Tull Allen, native of Oxford some 70 years, neighbor to Gunnels property knew all local descendents of D.P. Gunnels.

~~12. ENCLOSURES:~~

- ~~1. 1 8x10 b/w glossy photo~~
- ~~2. small photos (22)~~
- ~~3. 1 set negatives~~
- ~~4. floor plans~~
- ~~5. map, The Gunnels Addition to Oxford~~

*Robert Gamble served as consulting architectural historian in this survey.*