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WIRICK MANSION IN MONTICELLO

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## Monticello Mansion Being Restored

MONTICELLO — A classic ante-bellum home, the oldest dwelling in this historic community, today serves as headquarters for the Jefferson County Historical Society, as a museum and an attraction for persons interested in historical sites.

It is the Wirick-Simmons mansion at Jefferson and Pearl streets, sitting right on U.S. 19 and a stone's throw from U.S. 90. In its day, this sturdy two-story structure was the center of religious and social life in pioneer Monticello.

Erected in 1831 by the Rev. Adam Wirick, its Greek Revival Architecture is in the best tradition of ante-bellum home-building. The Rev. Mr. Wirick was Florida's first Methodist Circuit Rider.

A history of the county describes the pioneer preacher as a man "of powerful physique and wonderful qualities of mind."

The account continued, "His eloquence in preaching, his entertaining conversation and the unflinching hospitality of himself and his wife, Adeline C. Wirick, were ever subjects of conversation among older residents of the town."

Later the Rev. Mr. Wirick moved to a plantation at Lloyd and at the time of his death, in 1863 at the age of 96, was living in Palatka. The home was sold to Dr. J. Lawrence Simkins and later another owner, then to Thomas Simmons and his descendants.

The Historical Society raised \$20,000 to pay off the mortgage and is continuing its efforts to restore the elegant old home. An Albany, Ga., man who is an authority on architecture of the Old South, is supervising the restoration without a fee.