

403 Division

[Please keep to the right when entering and go from the foyer into the right parlor.]

This is the House Tour's "just getting started house"—the "before" of a "before and after" comparison. Careful photodocumentation of demolition and restoration is being done. The current owners hope to restore this to a single-family home by its 100th anniversary in a few years.

The house was built in 1892 as a parsonage for the First Congregational Church. Rev. Joseph H. Selden (D.D.) and his wife, Mary, were the first to live here. He led the church for eight years until 1900, when he accepted a position in Greenwich, Conn.

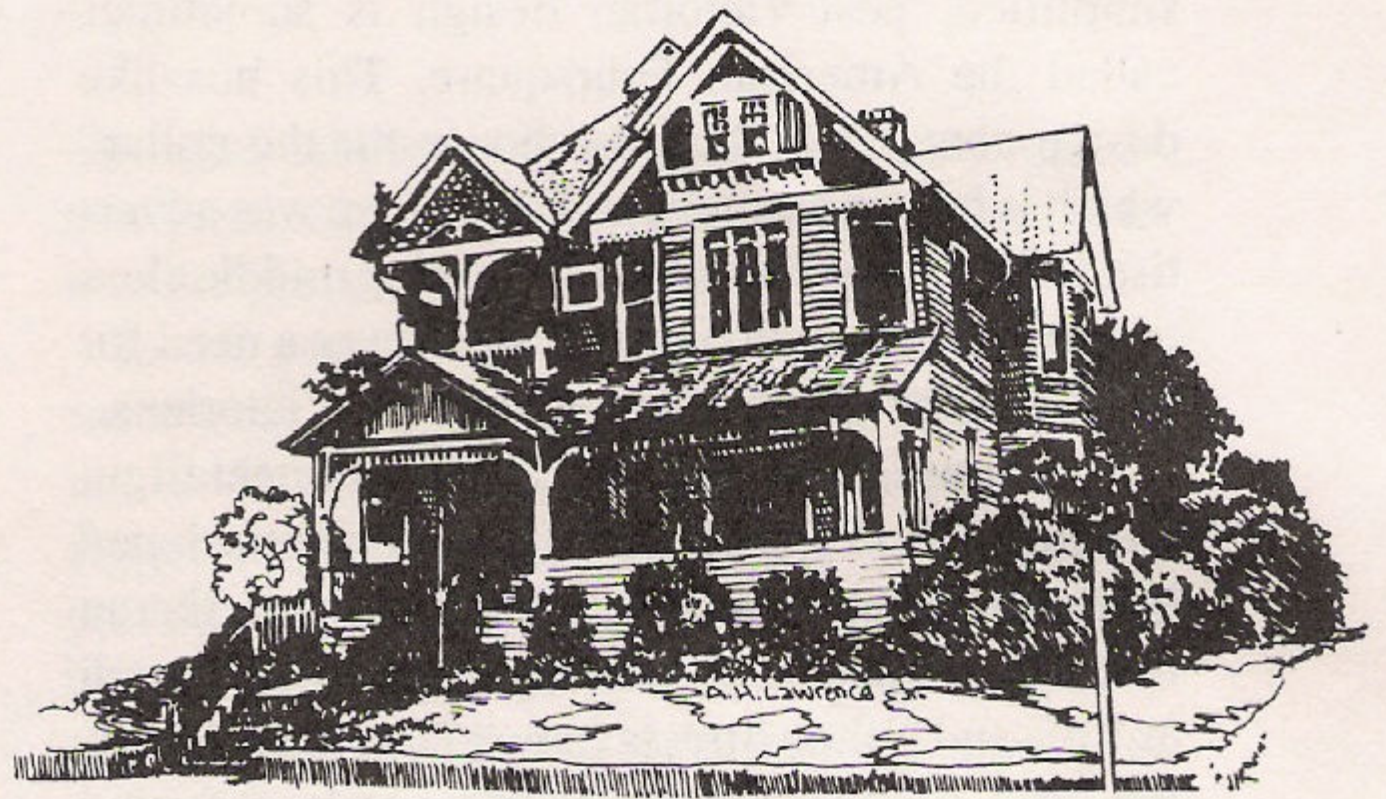
Rev. John J. Welsh was the pastor when the infamous Palm Sunday tornado struck the church in March of 1920. While most of the worshippers had left the church shortly before noon, two women and a young girl were buried in debris when the twister demolished part of the church. The last residents of the parsonage at 403 Division were Rev. Alfred J. Barnard and his wife, Mary. In 1927 the church sold the property, and the house was subdivided into two rental units. (From The First Congregational Church—Its First Hundred Years)

During the Depression, the house provided five small apartments. Two years ago, there were seven units with residents sharing three bathrooms. The home was for sale as a rooming house when the current owners bought it in September.

Typical of Victorian architecture, the home reflects detailing of several styles, but primarily Queen Anne:

- the variety of wall surfaces includes clapboard, butt shingles, fish scale shingles, and diamond shingles as an accent
- the front facade is defined by a second-story bay with truncated corners
- the roof overhang is cantilevered
- dormer and variety of roofs are visible
- second-story bays appear on east and west facades
- intricate detailing is seen on second floor porch
- the first porch features Eastlake detailing, a sunburst motif, and turned spindle work

The interior reveals evidence of changes made when the large home was converted to a rooming house, especially with the variety of flooring and



wall treatment. For most rehabbers, much of the enjoyment of obtaining an older home comes from deciphering the pattern of past "home improvement projects." (There is a wallpaper "display" of sorts in the kitchen.)

The entry doors (the originals were found in the basement) just recently have been relocated to the west (right) to align with the existing transom and threshold remaining in place. The vestibule doors were also relocated to match the entry doors. Existing woodwork yields clues as to the original design.

The next major project, now that the walls between rental units have been demolished, is the rewiring of the home. The restoration of the front rooms is in progress. Look closely to see that the fireplace mantle is adorned by a "rope" decoration.

Now being restored to its original configuration, the stairway will be reconstructed with the same spindles and newel post. While earlier days found this window lost in the maze, the cut/bevelled leaded glass on the landing will be a highlighted feature of the home.

One of the most interesting transformations will appear on the second floor where the owners will create a large bathroom complete with dressing room and jacuzzi—what the owners refer to as a "Yuppie bathroom" where a spa atmosphere can create relaxation for busy (and exhausted) residents.

"To Be Continued...."