

The T. Y. Williams House (1876-1968)

In 1959, The T. Y. Williams House became the first home of USCL. The home had a long and interesting history before that however.

Much of the following information is from "Lancaster County : South Carolina Tours" by Viola Floyd, 1968:

The brick veneered residence known to the present generation as the Williams home stands on the location of the old Ira B. Jones home and in fact has a portion of the old Jones home foundation.

Judge Ira B. Jones (later Chief Justice of the SC Supreme Court) and his wife came to Lancaster in 1876. Mr. Jones erected his home on the lot that same year. As the years passed he added to the house till it became a thirteen room three story affair. There were broad piazzas both upstairs and downstairs on two sides of the house.

"In my memory," says Pauline Worthy (Mrs. Ford), a...granddaughter of Judge Jones, "these porches were always covered with wisteria. "For more than forty years, this house was a center of hospitality. Many distinguished people were entertained in it. I recall from my childhood specific guests from Boston, New York, Connecticut, Mexico, India and Japan."

A fire badly burned the house in 1918. After the death of his wife, the Judge gave the house to his son, Charles DePass Jones, then state senator. C. D. Jones began to rebuild the place on the same foundation. Much of the downstairs was usable and was left as it originally had been. The house was brick veneered and occupied in 1919. Senator Jones died in 1929.

Dr. A. F. Mahoney of Monroe soon set up a hospital in the house. In 1932 he brought a young surgeon, Dr. J. D. Pittman, and his wife to Lancaster. Dr. Pittman operated the hospital in the Jones home from 1932 until 1936. After Dr. Mahoney's death the Jones estate was settled and the house sold at public auction. It was bought by T. Y. Williams and his wife both civic leaders of Lancaster. Mr. Williams was also one of the town's leading lawyers.

The Williams were both in their latter years when they purchased the house so neither lived long. In his will, Mr. Williams left the house to the town of Lancaster with the provision that it be used for cultural purposes.

The town accepted the gift and for several years it was a cultural center. It became the first home of University of South Carolina Lancaster from 1959-1964. The City of Lancaster demolished the home in 1968, and the Lancaster County Public Library now stands on the site.