



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

The Swann-Daingerfield mansion along Prince Street

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Image: 706 Prince Street. Photo, Alexandria Library, Special Collections.

Around 1802, Thomas Swann, a prominent Alexandria attorney who also served as the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, built a two-story house at the southeast corner of Prince and South Columbus streets. The brick home was built in the Federal style popular at that time.

In 1833, Henry Daingerfield purchased the property for \$6,250. A successful importer and shipping merchant, Daingerfield was likely responsible for some of the remodeling that took place over the next 50 years. A third floor and a grand ballroom were added to the original structure, as were a mansard roof and Italianate elements typical of the Victorian period.

The home remained in the Daingerfield family until the late 19th century. In 1899, St.

Mary's Academy, which had been operating on North Fairfax Street, purchased the Daingerfield property for \$10,500. Within in couple years, a three-story addition, also with a mansard roof and matching windows and cornice brackets, replaced the east wing. By 1907, the boarding school had added another with the south facing South Columbus.

In the early 1940s, St. Mary's sold their school building for \$100,000 to Alexandria Hospital, then located a block to the south on Duke Street. Alexandria Hospital used the building as housing for students in its School of Nursing and renamed it Carter Hall in honor of Fannie Carter who had served as the superintendent of nursing and director of the school for more than 20 years. Even after Alexandria Hospital moved to its new location on Seminary Road in the early 1960s, Carter Hall continued to be used by student nurses for several years.

In the late 1970s, the original Swann-Daingerfield House returned to use as a private residence and the wings were converted into condominiums.



“Out of the Attic” is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as “Marking Time” and explored Alexandria’s history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into “Out of the Attic” and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.