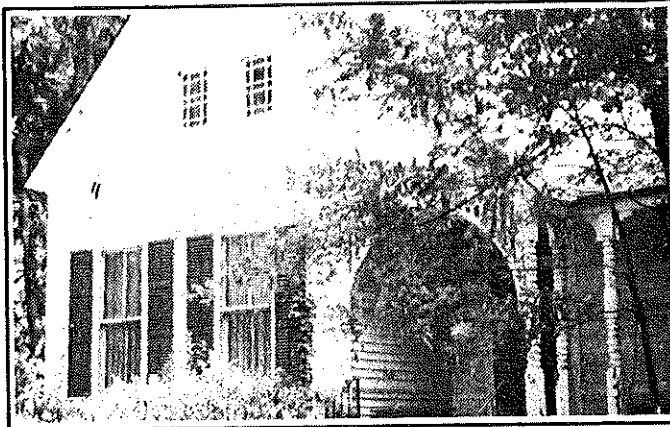


Home on National Register



by Dick Funderburk

Huge magnolia trees screen the small Victorian house at 146 Candler Road from the busy traffic and the campus of Agnes Scott College. Since 1889, however, the Candler-McKinney-Clarke home has watched over the changes and growth of both the college and the growing town of Decatur. Its builder, Milton Candler, was a powerful political leader of the "old school" during the post-Civil War years but the home's longest occupant in this century, Milton's granddaughter Caroline McKinney Clarke, led the way in several fields for women in non-traditional jobs.

Trenches and breastwork from the 1864 battles around Atlanta marked the five acres of land purchased by Milton Candler for a town house in 1889. Having served in the Civil War as a captain of cavalry and later in the State Senate and the United States Congress (1875-79), Candler decided to move off his DeKalb County farm after most of his children were grown. He selected a site just a block from the Decatur train depot, thus making his commute to his downtown Atlanta law office more convenient.

Candler also employed one of Atlanta's most distinguished architects, Edmund G. Lind, to design his \$2,400 cottage (in 1890 an additional \$1,000 was spent on alterations by the same designer). Lind had been educated in London and was a prominent architect in Balti-

continued on page 7

Home, continued from page 1

more before moving to Atlanta in 1882. His most remarkable work here was the Central Presbyterian Church but he also designed the Decatur Presbyterian Church in 1891 as well as the depot for the Georgia Railroad in Decatur, Gwinnett County Courthouse, the Edgewood home for Governor Alfred Colquitt, and many buildings in the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill complex.

Before her health failed in 1994, Caroline McKinney Clarke wrote a description of the home she had lived in and meticulously taken care of during her long life. There were "Eight big rooms with a 50 foot central hallway, seven fireplaces, including one in the front hall, twelve foot ceilings, and four porches." Lighting was by candles and kerosene lamps and chandeliers and the grounds included a well, carriage house and stable, hen house, rabbit house, greenhouse, servants house, gardens, an orchard, and muscadine arbors. As Mrs. Clarke wrote in 1981, even town homes had to be "highly self sufficient" at the turn of the century, at least when it came to food.

Caroline McKinney graduated from Agnes Scott College in 1927 and never stopped working. She took jobs that were just opening up for women or were brand new territory for them. In the 1930s and 1940s, she was the first woman employee in Community Services and later worked for the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the telephone company, and was the four county director of the National Youth Administration. She took a short period off to get married to golf course developer and manager Forrest Hill and have a daughter. When her husband died during World War II, Caroline McKinney Hill took over the management of the Forrest Hill Golf Course for several years.

In later years, the remarried Mrs. Clarke was the director of the DeKalb County Department of Family and Children's Services. In 1973 she published "The Story of Decatur, 1823-1889", a popular and well used history of her beloved city. At the same time that she was breaking new ground as a female historian and leader of important government agencies, she continued to live at her birthplace on Candler Road, making few changes in the rambling Victorian cottage except for modern conveniences such as electricity and indoor plumbing. Her home, listed on the National Register, still stands and looks much as it must have appeared in 1889, a tribute to her grandfather Milton Candler and architect E. G. Lind.



Staff Photo—Billy Downs

PARKLIKE ATMOSPHERE IS MAINTAINED THROUGH JUDICIOUS TREATMENT OF TREES AND SHRUBS
Mrs. O. T. Clarke Retains Dignified Beauty of Nature at Her Home on Candler Street in Decatur

1998
Centennial Houses
of Decatur
A Growing List of Historical Homes

7. The Candler-McKinney-Clarke House, 1889
146 South Candler Street

In 1889 when Milton and Eliza Candler decided to sell their 250 acre Kirk Road farm, they sought to "move into town and build a little modern house". They chose five acres of land on South Candler Road, a block from the Depot and next door to the new home of their oldest son, Charles Murphy Candler. The Candlers brought with them their two youngest daughters, Claude and Ruth, and they brought with them their 14 cats and kittens, and other assorted pets and livestock-horses, cows, and chickens.

The house although only one story, would not appear today to be either "little or modern". Eight rooms with a 50 foot central hallway, seven fireplaces, including one in the front hall, twelve foot high ceilings, and four porches. The pride of the builder was the monogram of the owner, M.A.C. on the dining room gable.

The Candler daughter, Claude inherited the house from her mother, Eliza. Claude's daughter Caroline McKinney Clarke was born in the house in 1905 and lived there her entire life. She is the author of The Story of Decatur 1823-1899. At her death in 1994 ownership was assumed by Agnes Scott College.

The house is included in the South Candler Street-Agnes Scott National Register District.

Owner: Agnes Scott College

Source: House History project
provided by
Caroline McKinney Clarke
for National Register Application
1989

The Candler - McKinney - Clarke House

By Caroline McKinney Clarke

The old two story farm house, still standing on what is now Kirk Road, had become too much house for the once big family of Milton and Eliza Candler. The older children had married and left the home where they had been born and grew up, and had now set up homes of their own. Five babies and older children had died. The years, and especially the Civil War Years, had taken their toll. Only the two little girls, Claude 12, and Ruth 10 were left in the home. Milton and Eliza decided it was time to sell the 250 acre farm they had purchased in 1858, the year after their marriage, and "move into town and build a little modern house."

Several years earlier Milton had bought from the Thomas Holly Chivers estate, 5 acres of land up on Candler Road a block from the Depot, and next door to the new home of his oldest son, Charles Murphey Candler.

Remains of the old Federal breast works and trenches still ran through the wooded property. On the day before the Battle of Atlanta, General Joe Wheeler's Confederate Cavalry had surprised the occupants of these trenches, and driven them thru the town as far as the Decatur Burial ground when he received peremptory orders to come at once to the relief of General Hardee.

In 1889 the new home was built, heart of pine through out, and the family moved "out of the woods" as one of the boys wrote, with the two little girls and their 14 cats and kittens, and other assorted pets and livestock - dogs, horses, cows and chickens.

The old trenches had been smoothed over, and in part became the bed of the driveway from the road up to the "lot" where the carriage house and stables were built. (Rumors persisted among the servants that the ghost of a Yankee soldier killed in the fighting of July, 1864 "hanted" the driveway.)

The house, although only one story, would not appear to us today to be either "little or modern." Eight big rooms with a 50 foot central hallway, seven fireplaces, including one in the front hall, twelve foot high ceilings, and four porches. The roof cut up into valleys, ridges, and gables is a roofing nightmare. The pride of the builder was the monogram of the owner, M.A.C. on the dining room gable.

Like many homes in the deep south, this one was apparently built with more thought for comfort in summer than in winter. The long center hallway with transoms over the doors, the high ceilings, the wood shutters which were often closed when the afternoon heat bore down, vine shaded porches, and palm leaf fans all helped.

Winter brought its own problems. But coal, wood and labor were plentiful and cheap. Shawls, flannels, woolens, blankets came out of moth ball storage. Footstools at the fireside chairs kept cold feet off cold floors. Summer matting was replaced by carpets and rugs. Hot water jugs or flat irons heated during the day on trivet shelves hooked over the grates were often wrapped in heavy wool coverings to take the chill off the cold sheets at bed time. But in those days people expected to be hot in summer and cold in winter, and took some discomforts philosophically.

There were no indoor water works. A well on the back latticed porch provided water for the family for drinking, cooking, baths and laundry, reeled up laboriously bucket by bucket. (Another well down in the "lot" took care of the livestock and poultry). Tin tubs in front of the fireplace - in winter - provided the Saturday night bath, and a washstand in each bedroom with china bowl, pitcher, soap dish, shaving mug and waste jar were the means of daily cleanliness. The "outhouse" of course was down the garden path.

Electricity was still in the future. Candles, kerosene lamps and chandeliers suspended from great iron hooks in the ceiling lighted the rooms. As a young lady, it was Claude's responsibility to mount a step ladder every Monday morning, trim the wicks and replenish the kerosene in these chandeliers.

Even town homes then must be highly self sufficient. Many daily needs, especially foods, had to be provided on the place. Up in the shady back "lot" was the carriage house and the stable for the horses and cows. Their well was nearby. There was a big, whitewashed hen house for the laying hens, and a separate room for the setting hens where they could hatch their chicks in peace and quiet and not be annoyed by other hens wanting to crowd into the nest too. There was a rabbit house, six small rooms in a row, painted dark red, and a "poultry" house for growing young broilers or

fryers. A scuppernong arbor, fenced in with small poultry wire made a shady, safe run for mother hens and their chicks. Muscadine vines with sweet, dark fruit climbed to the tops of two big oaks. When ripe the ground underneath was black with their grapes.

Nearer the house was a coal and woodhouse for the winter fuel. The lower corners of both doors had been cut out for cats to come and go. The same conveniences for the cats had been provided also in the doors which led under the big house.

The property ran on through to what is now Avery Street. An old map however, shows only "Avery Lane to Mineral Springs." This back area was terraced for planting. Along each low terrace were peach and apple trees with whatever crops were needed planted in between.

The rose and vegetable gardens shared their space with fig, quince and mulberry trees.

A well built servant's house was near the big house. This was a usual part of most of the homes on the street and elsewhere in town. It was one large room, plastered walls, a built in closet and fireplace and mantel on the east wall, windows on two sides of the room, and the door opening on the south.

Close to the south side of the big house was Eliza's greenhouse for her plants and seedlings.

The house itself has seen very few structural changes during its 92 years. The original solid brass knobs and key plates are on the doors. The heart of pine floors are still beautiful. During those years it has sheltered four generations of the family, and a fifth generation, the grandchildren now come and go on visits.

The old house has been the scene of weddings, births, death and family funerals. Happy times and hard times have been part of the lives under its roof.

All the old outside buildings have gone. Electricity, gas heaters, super markets and automobiles have taken over most of their reason for being. Labor to maintain the old way of life has gone too.

U.S. CENSUS DEKALB COUNTY, GA

1860 Decatur District

Dwelling #288 page 41

Head of Household:	M.A. CANDLER	age 23	occupation atty.	place of birth	GA
	Eliza "	" 20		" " "	GA
	Charles M. "	" 2		" " "	GA

1870 Decatur District

Dwelling # 229 page 44

Head of Household:	Milton A. CANDLER	age 33	" lawyer	" " "	GA
	Eliza "	" 30		" " "	GA
	Murphy C. "	" 12	"	" " "	GA
	Samuel "	" 10		" " "	GA
	Milton E. "	" 8		" " "	GA
	Laura E. "	" 6		" " "	GA
	Florence "	" 3		" " "	GA
in same house	Sarah SPRINKLER	" 12		" " "	GA

1880 Decatur District

Dwelling 102 page 86

Head of Household:	M.A. CANDLER	age 43	" lawyer	" " "	GA
	Eliza C. "	" 40		" " "	GA

(Note: M.A. Candler's parents born in Georgia; Eliza's parents born in S.C. according to this census.)

	Murphy CANDLER	age 22	lawyer	born	GA
	Samuel C. "	" 20	clerk in druggists store	"	GA
	Milton A. "	" 18	student	"	GA
	Laura "	" 16		"	GA
	Florence "	" 12		"	GA
	Maury Lee "	" 7		"	GA
(a female)	Claude "	" 2		"	GA
	Ruth "	" 4 months		"	GA



Roofside
Signature
The builder of the
Candler-McKinney-
Clarke House was
given to fancy detail
wherever his fancy
struck. Over the col-
ored glass windows of
the dining room are
ironwork initials of
original owner Milton
A. Candler.



GOLFMORE
DRIVING RANGE
3500 N. Decatur Rd.
At 1-285
292-9149
HOURS:
10-10, Mon. - Sat.
Noon - 10, Sunday
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PGA Pro
Broyles Plemmons
Full Time Instruction
Also Challenging MINATURE GOLF
18 HOLES - \$1.00

15 YEARS AT THIS LOCATION

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Special Price On
Cherry Bedroom
With Rice Carved
High Poster Bed

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(Self-Measuring)

Candler-McKinney-Clarke House Built In 1889 Has No Ghosts, Just Family

**House Has
Love And Laughter
In Its Corners**

Director of the Dekalb De-
partment of Family and
Children's Services, she au-
thored "The Story of Deca-
tur" for the city's Sesqui-
centennial celebration, and
still gives much of her time
to preserving Dekalb's heri-
tage.

That Dekalb's heritage is
generally intertwined with the
story of the Candler-Mc-
Kinney-Clarke House is
house just south of the
railroad tracks in Decatur,
it's just family.

It's not ghosts that in-
habit the rambling old
house, but the families
who lived there for more
than a century.

Best known of those chil-
dren today is present occu-
pant Caroline McKinney,
and plans to remain in the
old house, was the first
and plans to remain in the
old house, was the first

was born, raised, married
and plans to remain in the
old house, was the first

Clarke, Mrs. Clarke, who
and plans to remain in the
old house, was the first

For the new place, since
all but two of their children
had grown or died, Milton
and Eliza decided on a
smaller, one-story frame
cottage — although it
hardly seems small today.

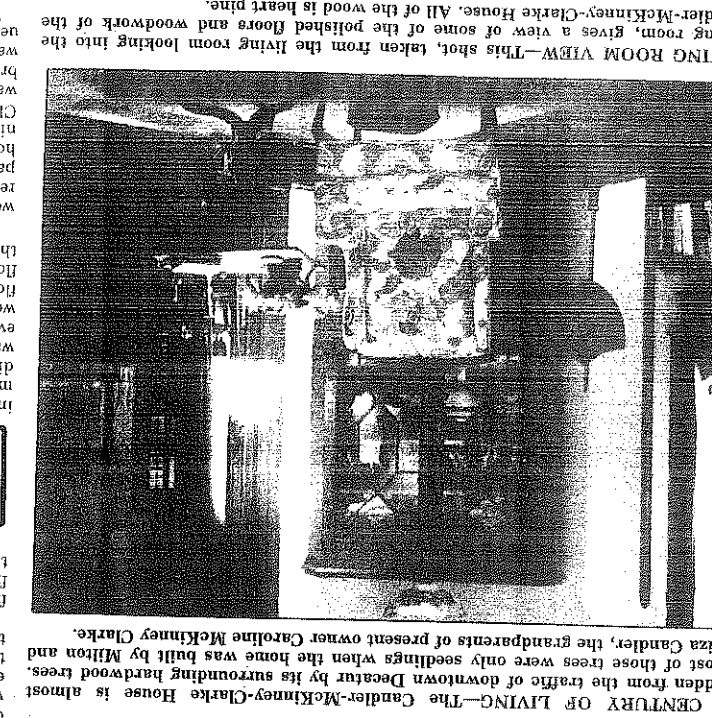
Hot water jugs or flat
irons heated during the day
on rivet shelves hooked
over the grates were often
wrapped in heavy wool cov-
erings to take the chill off
the cold sheets at bed
time.

And there were plenty of
fires. The house has seven
fireplaces, including one in
the front hall.

Mrs. Clarke's early
memories are
of those
Grandfather
Candler have-
ing family prayers every
morning in front of the
dining room fireplace. It
was an occasion to which
everyone came, and if it
were a little chilly on the
floor, everyone knelt on the
floor anyway, and that was
that.

Claude and Ruth Candler
were 12 and 10 years old,
respectively, when their
parents moved into the city
house. One bitterly cold
night in February, 1902,
Claude (a girl whose name
was chosen by grown big
brother, Murphy Candler)
was married there to Sam-
uel McKinney.

The newlives went off
to Atlanta on the electric
train, leaving the cold



In addition to the as-
sorted dogs, cats and live-
stock that have always
made themselves at home
around the property,
Claude McKinney had for a
time a parrot named Laura,
and a cat named Laura.
In the summers there's
nearly always a breeze for
keeping cool, helped along
by twelve-foot ceilings.

Winters, before central
heat came into the picture,
were another matter.
"In those days," Mrs.
Clarke explains, "people ex-
pected to be hot in summer
and cold in winter, and took
some discomforts philo-
sophically."

"But coal, wood and
labor were plentiful and
cheap. Shawls, flannels,
woolens, and blankets came
out of mothball storage.
Footstools at the fireside
floors. Summer matting
was replaced by carpets and
rugs.

Hot water jugs or flat
irons heated during the day
on rivet shelves hooked
over the grates were often
wrapped in heavy wool cov-
erings to take the chill off
the cold sheets at bed
time.

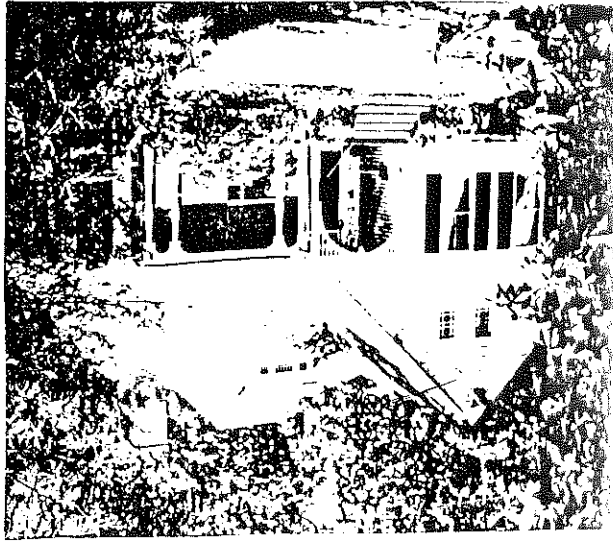
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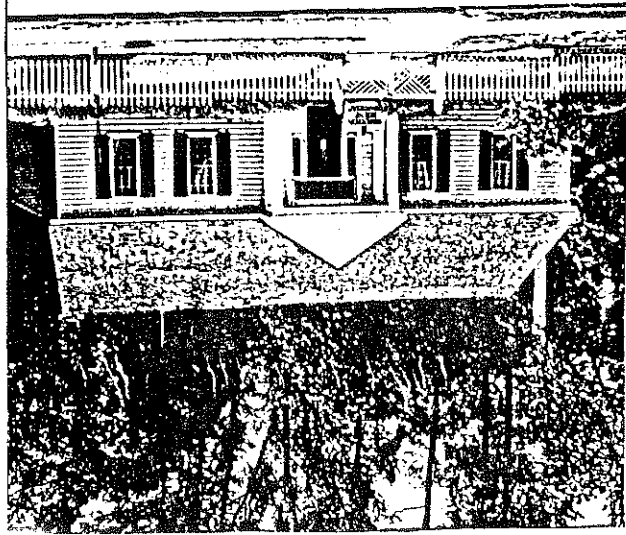
The newlives went off
to Atlanta on the electric
train, leaving the cold

Some things are gone
now: the coal and wood-
house for winter fuel, a
servant's house, and Eliza's
greenhouse; more things are
unchanged: the heart pine
floors, the original brass-
door knobs and key plates.
And even though it's
county heritage, it's still
the newlives went off
to Atlanta on the electric
train, leaving the cold



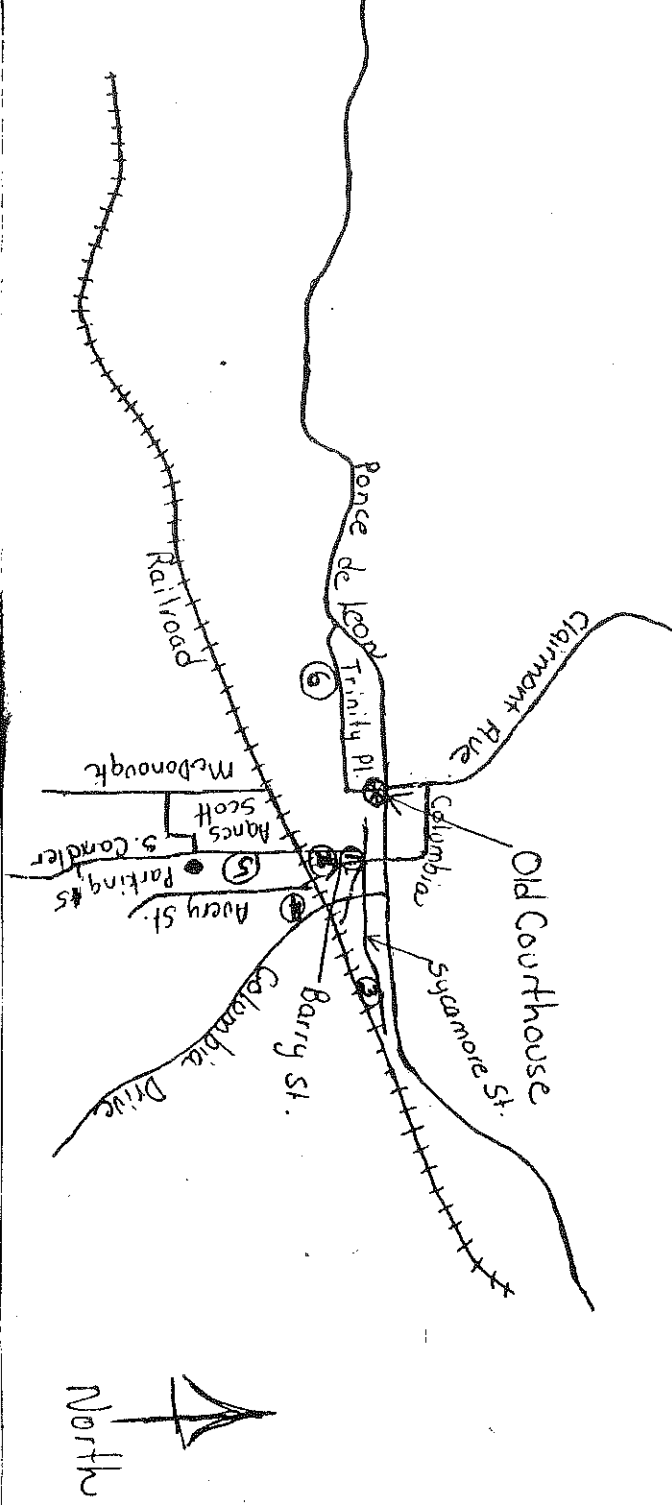
5. CANDLER-MCKINNEY-CLARKE HOUSE
116 South Candler Street

Mrs. Caroline McKinney Clarke, author of The Story of Decatur has wonderful memories of growing up in this beautiful old house where her mother had also grown up and married. Counting grandchildren who come and go, this house has been home to five generations of this illustrious Decatur family. The house has seven fireplaces including one in the wide spacious hallway. Milton Candler built this house in 1889 after he and his wife Eliza decided to sell their 250-acre farm on Kirk Road "and move into town and build a little modern house." Remains of the old Federal breastworks and trenches still ran through the wooded property and were smoothed out to become the bed of the driveway. Rumors persisted that the ghost of a Yankee soldier killed in the fighting of July 1864, "haunted the driveway." Parking available in area indicated on map.



6. SWANTON HOUSE
720 West Trinity Place

This little town house takes you back to the earliest times in Decatur when the courthouse was a log house and Decatur was a small settlement. Its wide-board floors rest on log foundations. Its earliest known owner was Anna Williams from whom Benjamin Swanton purchased the house during the Gold Rush of the 1840s. Ten little girls lived in the house during the War Between the States and Sherman spared it for this reason we are told. Upstairs is the long low closet under the eaves where a Yankee soldier hid. A footbridge connects this historic house to Biddle Cabin, home of a soldier of the Revolution after he moved to this area. Next door is the Mary Gay house now being restored by the Junior League of Dekalb. Formerly all three dwellings were located at other sites but now have been gathered together in Decatur's Adair Park.



Subject File:
CANDLER-
MCKINNEY-CLARKE
HOUSE
DEKALB HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

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Decatur, Georgia

Tour Ticket \$8.00
Each house \$1.50

1	2	3	4	5	6
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