

Today in Columbus History: On July 31, 1875, Mary Howard, daughter of Henry Lewis and Mary Howard Jones Benning put a notice of the sale of her grandfather's property in the *Daily Times*. Her grandfather was Columbus worthy Seaborn Jones, who had died in 1864. Jones was an attorney, but he died intestate! His grandson Seaborn Jones Benning handled the estate until he died in 1875, then his sister Mary took over as administratrix. Jones owned a lot of property – some near the river, some downtown, some in rural areas. The piece of property highlighted in this clipping was Seaborn Jones' residence, the house now known as St. Elmo. Jones started building St. Elmo (then called Eldorado) in 1828 and finished it in 1833. It was and still is magnificent. In 1875 Mary Benning sold the house to James J. Slade, who opened a school for girls there. After the Slades, the Mobley family purchased the house in 1946. Dr. Philip T. Schley bought it in 1966 and still owns it.

Compiled by Callie McGinnis, Muscogee Genealogical Society

Our snippets of Columbus history are usually based on a few days-worth of searching through the most popular sources for Muscogee County history. Meant to inspire readers to explore more about Columbus history, they are not exhaustive dissertations on the topic and may contain mistakes. If you have corrections or additional information, feel free to share them with the group.

Clipping from Georgia Historic Newspapers (GALILEO).

<https://gahistoricnewspapers.galileo.usg.edu>

Administratrix's Sale
OF
VALUABLE PROPERTY!

WILL be sold on the first Tuesday in September, 1875, without reserve, at Rosette, Ellis & Company's auction room, at the southwest corner of Broad and St. Clair streets, in Columbus, Ga., between the hours of 10 o'clock in the forenoon and 4 o'clock in the afternoon, by me, Mary H. Benning, as Administratrix *de bonis non* of the estate of the late Seaborn Jones, deceased, the following property, namely:

Also, the residence of said Seaborn Jones, in the 8th district of Muscogee county, with the following described land attached: The northwest quarter of lot No. 51, in said 8th district, containing thirty-eight acres, more or less, and twenty-three acres west of and in front of said northwest quarter, making in all sixty-one acres, more or less; said residence has a slate roof, and cost at least \$20,000; it has fifteen rooms, including the basement, one well fitted up for a green house.



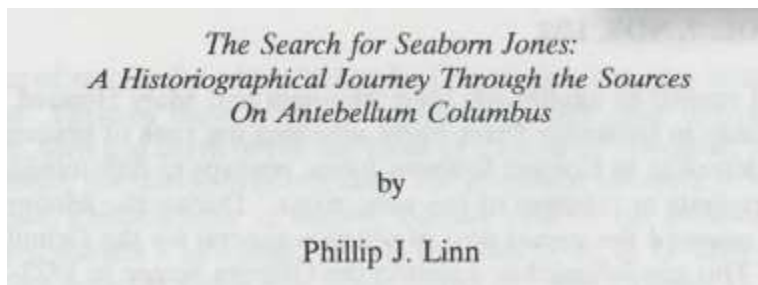
From Findagrave.com.



From Wikipedia article on St. Elmo.

Colonel Seaborn Jones, the builder of the house, spared no expense to make "Eldorado" the most elegant and luxurious house in the vicinity. The massive columns - three feet thick and forty feet high - and the 18" thick walls of the house were built with great pieces of brick dug from a strata found on the property. Slaves dug the clay, molded the bricks, and left them to dry in the sun. The house has two separate roofs: one is shingle and covers the house proper only; the other roof stands five feet above the shingle roof and extends over the side and front porches to the columns. Of the original outbuildings, only the brick building with dove-cote above and smokehouse below, remains. This building stands just at the back door of the house, and its many small ventilation holes give it the appearance of a fortress. There are three stories: the first opens on the ground level, the second begins just above head height, and the third stands above it in regular fashion.

From National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. For entire applications see: <https://npgallery.nps.gov/.../1579824c-5e12-4362-bcd7...>



Phillip Linn wrote a very interesting article on Seaborn Jones, published in *Muscogiana* in 1996. He looked up many records -- including his estate papers -- to learn as much about his as he could. Linn admits, there's still a lot missing from the story of Seaborn Jones. Read his article at <https://csuepress.columbusstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi...>