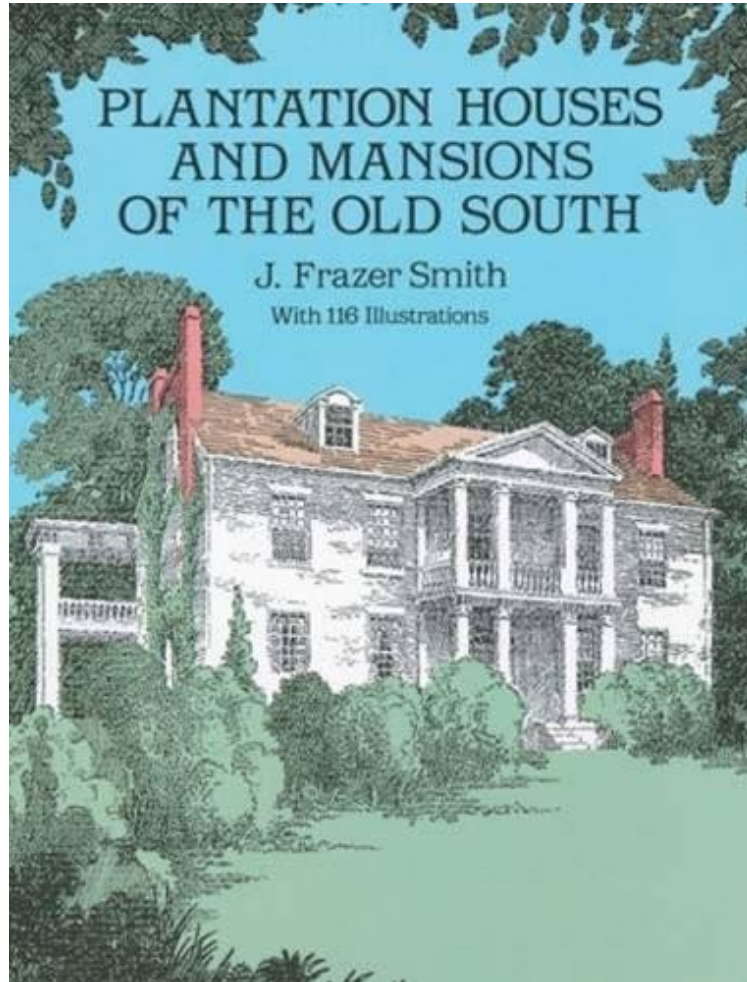


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Plantation Houses and Mansions of the Old South (Dover Architecture)

J. Frazer Smith

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J. Frazer Smith : Plantation Houses and Mansions of the Old South (Dover Architecture) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Plantation Houses and Mansions of the Old South (Dover Architecture):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Plantation architecture By Mongya Anderson I bought this book hoping to see beautiful photos, but found black and white sketches which are very tastefully done and serve the purpose of the book, which is a textbook in architecture. The author travelled the South visiting these old mansions, some of which are now gone. So his sketches have preserved valuable information. I enjoyed the knowledge about the types of architecture and how it evolved from region to region and period to period. The basic thing I took away from this book is that architects were not professionals in the United States when these homes were being built. Many

owners hired architects from France and Italy and you can easily see that in their forms. Also, some of the homes, though huge and beautiful, were not well-designed. I learned about types of staircases and which types were prominent in which regions, the types of brick used and how the skilled builders were hired from New York and Pennsylvania and lived on the plantation until the home was done. The slaves were used only to do the rough work such as molding bricks, digging basements etc. The sketches of the grounds and the garden layouts were most intriguing. This is a good book for those who want to know how a beautiful white-pillared mansion was built. For those who want glossy photos, there are better products out there. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. This is a book for every historian of Southern History. By DB This is a reprint of the book *White Pillars* published in 1941. In the 70's I purchased the book *White Pillars* with the thought in mind that I am going to visit these places when I retire. I have since retired and about wore out the *White Pillars* book and I retired it so I bought this reprint to take with us on our trips to the antebellum South. This book is outstanding and very well written with some information I have not found elsewhere. The write ups are well done and loaded with interesting facts. This book also contains additional information about culture, a glossary of architectural terms, excellent illustrations of floor plans and of most of the plantations in the book. The illustration of *Shadows on the Teche* is fantastic - - it drew me to it. We were thrilled to find it open for tours. Have been there twice and plan to visit there more. We have visited 21 of the homes in the book and hope to find more. Not all are open for tours, but we have been fortunate in obtaining permission to walk the grounds and take photos. Sadly some of the homes herein have fallen to neglect or due to "progress" shoved into history by a bull dozer blade. This book is a must for anyone interested in Southern architecture, plantations, and history. The only improvement I would like to see in this book would for it to have more plantation homes shown in it. For a traveller it is an outstanding tour guide. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A classic, despite its racist language. By Jon L Albee I bought this book for several reasons. I'm a committed amateur architectural historian, and I have a specific interest in the sociological elements of high-style architecture from the deep South. This book is a good study of the sociological elements that came together to form the great houses we know today. Next, the illustrations include floor plans for each of the houses studied, which is a feature that exists in no other book, at least for these particular sites. And finally, this book includes a few houses that were important examples of their respective style and time, that no longer stand either because they were neglected or wantonly demolished, such as *Mount Brilliant* in Kentucky. So those are the reasons for reading this book, but there is a major caveat: The author is racist. The text itself runs from merely irritating in places to downright deplorable in others. The racist slant of the writing may be a product of the times, but that does not excuse its vanity and insensitivity. As it is, understanding the sociological elements of the book requires a somewhat dry, clinical approach in order to avoid offense. The chapter about the technical elements of design are really quite good, and tend to be free of racist allusions. This is not a coffee table book or a casual browse of sites. It's not a tourist or travel guide. It is something of a dry academic treatment of architecture from the deep South. I say the "deep South" because the sites featured in the book are from what we would call the Old Southwest - Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana - and not from the more ancient eastern states like Virginia and South Carolina. It is really a study of the Federal style as it developed on the frontier, and of the Greek Revival style. There is no discussion of Colonial. This book will find most interest from architectural historians and local historians, but will be of limited interest to the casual reader.

In this profusely illustrated book the reader will "journey through a wide section of the South with an architect as companion: from Lexington to Nashville, then along the Natchez Trace and down the great Mississippi River to New Orleans, with little by-way excursions to homes set back from the main highways." Embracing a variety of styles from pioneer cabins to French Provincial and Neoclassic revivals the houses described here recall a bygone era of gracious living and aristocratic privilege. Over 100 detailed illustrations, including 36 floor plans, depict such venerable residences as *The Hermitage*, Andrew Jackson's white-pillared homestead near Nashville; *Annandale*, a Mississippi mansion in the Italian Renaissance style; *Rosedown*, the Greek-revival state in Louisiana where John James Audubon completed *Birds of America*; *Belle Alliance*, a splendid plantation house of wrought iron and white pillars; the lovely Gothic chapel of *Old Jefferson College*, and many more. The author has provided a rich commentary on each house, offering colorful historical anecdotes and perceptive architectural analysis, along with additional material on carpentry, masonry, the portico, staircases, and other topics. Architects will find this an especially revealing tour of the building styles and technical features of the great homes of the Old South. But general readers will also find it an insightful and absorbing look at a time long past in the lower Mississippi Valley, when the stately white-pillared mansions of the well-to-do graced the Southern landscapes and provided a bastion of security, comfort, and prosperity in a vast and promising new land.