

Old Homes of South Carolina

Drawings and Text by Joy Stagg Rust

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BRATTON PLACE (WYNNE DEE)

204 Bratton

Bratton Place has been the home of some of Winnsboro's most prominent families for more than two hundred years. It was built in 1781 on land that was part of an original land grant from King George of England to Joseph Owen in 1768. The land was surveyed by Richard Winn, a Royal Deputy Surveyor, who came from Virginia to settle in the area. Winnsboro was named for him. He persuaded Owen to sell the land to him, and in 1777 he deeded one hundred acres from his purchase for an academy.

Winn had an outstanding role in the revolution. He was associated with the battles of Fort Moultrie and Fort McIntosh, Georgia; and York and Hanging Rock near Lancaster. In 1780 he helped to defend Charleston.

He was twice elected lieutenant governor of South Carolina and served in the United States Congress from 1793 to 1797. Later he was re-elected and served from 1803 to 1813.

In 1805 the home and land were deeded to his daughter, Christine, as a wedding gift when she married Col. William Bratton. He was a member of a very important York County family. Gen. John Bratton, the son of Christine and William, served with Lee at Appomattox during the War Between the States. His wife, Betty DuBois of Roseland Plantation, took refuge at Bratton Place during those difficult months. On February 21, 1865, General Sherman moved his army to Winnsboro after burning Columbia. They drove their horses through the hallway of the house, breaking down the front

door as well as the center stairway. The imprint of the horses' hooves can still be seen in the wide plank pine flooring.

There have been some changes made in the house, but the original part remains virtually unaltered. Both the interior and exterior walls are of heart pine and are held together with pegs and handwrought nails. The windows are nine over nine and still retain the original handblown glass.

The three chimneys are made from English ballast brick used to weight the ships sailing to this country from England. They were brought by oxcart from Charleston.

The design of the doorway is outstanding. The details (triangles and circles within the squares) in the sidelights involve all the various designs used in the colonial period. The pilasters are of the Adamesque style. The present door replaced the door torn out by Sherman's men in 1865.

The dadoes and trim inside the house were all done by hand. The Adam mantel "sunburst" design was carved with a penknife and gauge. It is paneled to the ceiling. In the dining room the hand-carved mantel is the Fan and Daisy design.

In the original part of the house are the "Christain" doors such as are found in the Scotch-Irish homes of the pioneer period. These doors have panels in a cross shape. The "lean-to hinges" are constructed in such a way as to allow the doors to swing open over the rugs.

From the patio the original outside kitchen may be seen. It was used until 1868, when a kitchen was added to the main part of the house.

