

1-30-1960

Mrs. Virginia Bratton, 92, York Civic Leader

YORK — (Special) — Mrs. Virginia Mason Bratton, 92, a leader in the Daughters of American Revolution and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, a friend of governors and legislators and a prominent member of a pioneer York County family, died Thursday night in Divine Saviour Hospital in York after a long period of declining health.

She was the widow of Robert Moultrie Bratton of York. "Miss Virginia", as she was known, was born at Brattonsville Plantation near York, the ancestral home of the Bratton family in the historic Revolutionary house where her grandfather and great-grandfather and great-grandmother, Col. William and Martha Bratton, lived at the time of the Revolutionary War. It was her pride that Miss Virginia recalled she had lived in all three historic homes at Brattonville.

Her parents, the late N. B. and Minnie Mason Bratton moved to York nine days after she was born. It was in the left drawing room of the brick house that Miss Virginia married her cousin, Moultrie Bratton of York.

The couple then resided in the homestead next door. Mr. Bratton engaged in planting. Miss Virginia's mother was a member of the distinguished Mason family of Virginia. She was a direct descendant of George Mason of Gunston Hall near Mt. Vernon, who wrote the Virginia Bill of Rights and who was a delegate to the early conventions that founded the United States government.

In 1914, the Brattons at Brattonsville moved to York, where other members of the family lived for many years. Miss Virginia was a charter member of the York Chamber of Commerce and was a dues paying member until her death.

She was a charter member of Kings Mountain Chapter, Daughters of American Revolution, of which she served as local and state regent. In addition, she was national vice president general of the DAR. Miss Virginia was also a charter member and president of the Winnie Davis Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy. She served as state president of this organization at one time and held varied national offices in both DAR and UDC.

She was active in the Centennial Celebration of the Battle of Kings Mountain. In 1880, when Kings Mountain was designated a national military park, it was largely through work of the York DAR. At the dedication ceremony in 1930, Miss Virginia introduced Gov. John G. Richards, who in turn introduced President Herbert Hoover. She was a founding

spirit for Tamassee National D.A.R. school at Tamassee. She served as chairman of the board of directors of the school for a number of years and was a director of the Confederate Home in Columbia.

Miss Virginia was on the board of women visitors of the University of South Carolina for many years. While in her 80's and suffering from poor eyesight, she would take a bus alone to attend meetings in Columbia and other cities. Miss Virginia contacted governors and legislators to enlist their support of Tamassee, the Confederate Home and the University. She was active in the Red Cross, serving as chairman of the York chapter during World War I and on the executive board during World War 2.

Miss Virginia collected material on York County and South Carolina for many years. She was charter member of the Old York Historical Society. She often said that if she had selected a profession she would have chosen journalism. While a young woman she once locked herself in the Revolutionary House at Brattonville, closed the solid wood shutters and remained for several days to get the proper feeling for a story she was writing for a national contest. She won the contest.

As long as she was able, she visited Brattonville and took an active interest in its maintenance. A young friend drove her to the plantation once a week for a number of years. Her close association with Brattonville and the community caused her to maintain her membership in Bethesda Presbyterian Church, though since 1914 she had attended First Presbyterian Church in York.

Funeral services will be held Saturday in First Presbyterian Church in York by the Rev. Neale Leech and the Rev. Sam Hoyt of Bethesda. Burial will be in Rock Hill Cemetery at York.

Survivors include three nieces Mrs. Margaret B. Moore of York, Mrs. Ernest Carroll of Rock Hill and Mrs. B. D. Staton of Spartanburg and a number of other relatives in York and throughout the state.

R. A. Willis, 89, Executive Of Mill, Dies

ROCK HILL — Richard A. Willis, Sr., 89, of Hendersonville, N.C., died Thursday night at Hendersonville hospital after

J. P. Spires

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