

207-Year-Old House Has Interesting Past

N/H 8/16/78

Imagine if you can, the sense of history one must have living in a house that is over two hundred years old, and which has reverberated with the sound of many footsteps down through the years, including those of three year-old Alston Wilkes of Alston Wilkes Society fame.

Museum curator Bill Taylor and this reporter visited Mrs. Mildred Brown on Thursday at the historic Hawthorne-Brown house, located in the Union Community of Fairfield. The family of Mildred's late husband, Bob Brown, has owned the house since 1877, and Mildred has lived there for forty years, since she came to the house as a young bride.

The house is doubly interesting, because it combines the original log land bounty cabin with barracks from the old Furman Institute. Records reveal that the land on which it stands, in the amount of 100 acres, was deeded by land grant to James H. Adams in January of 1770, by the Governor-in-chief of this province, Greville Montague. Later, Adams deeded the land and cabin, which was built around 1771, to James Hawthorne for the princely sum of fifty dollars.

The original structure boasted of one large room with a huge fireplace and a smaller room, plus a sleeping loft overhead. In 1851, when nearby Furman Institute was moved to new quarters in Greenville, the Hawthorne family moved one of the student barracks to their property and attached it to the cabin. In intervening years, the Brown family added on two more rooms. Sometimes during the years, siding boards were put up on the outside of the house, covering the huge old logs.

Not much is known of the history of the house prior to 1851; however, thanks to a book written by Eli Alston Wilkes in 1910, some of the trials of the Wilkes family during the Civil War are revealed. The book was printed by the R.L. Bryan Company, and the nine copies given to family members. Unfortunately,

Mildred does not own a copy of the book, which is entitled "Echos and Etchings".

Mrs. Elizabeth Hawthorne Wilkes, daughter of the Hawthornes who inhabited the house in the mid 1800's, lost her husband in 1863, just after the battle of Gettysburg. He had fallen ill with fever in Virginia and had been taken in, according to Alston Wilkes' account, by a "Christian family", and Mrs. Wilkes went to tend him. In spite of her tender nursing and the kindness of his hosts, the senior Wilkes died. Mrs. Wilkes then returned to Fairfield County, where she and her young son remained throughout the war years.

Alston Wilkes gives a vivid description of the days in the spring of 1865 when Sherman's troops came through Fairfield. The Hawthornes, fearing for their daughter's and grandson's safety, urged them to flee to relatives in the northwestern part of the county before the Federal troops arrived. Mrs. Wilkes' beloved horse "Old Rob" was hitched to the buggy and the mother and son set out on their journey. Before they had gone very far, the king bolt broke and they had to return to their home. They arrived in coincidence with the Union soldiers, and found the household humming with activity as family valuables and food stuffs were hidden. Mrs. Wilkes buried her jewelry, along with her husband's papers, in the ground, and upon returning to the house discovered that in her haste she had forgotten to hide his watch. This was hastily buried in another spot.

At that time were huge boulders in that part of the county, and Mrs. Wilkes and Alston took the horse, "Old Rob", and hid him behind some of these boulders, in hopes that the Yankees would not find him. Food was hidden in the ceiling of the house. However, all this was to no avail, as Wilkes recorded that everything was discovered by the Yankees ex-

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THIS IS THE Hawthorne-Brown House, home of Mrs. Mildred Brown in the Union Community. The house was originally a land grant cabin, built around 1771, is one of the oldest houses in Fairfield County.

MORNING DEVOTIONS HEARD OVER WCKM

August 14-18 — Rev. Benjamin Bishop

August 21-25 — Rev. John R. Thompson

AUGUST 17-18

Lions Mobile Eye Clinic at Town Clock in Winnsboro. No charge for screening your eyes.

THURSDAY, August 17

7:30 p.m. — Bingo at Armory sponsored by NCO Club.

6:00 p.m. — B&PW members to meet at ARP Church for trip to Hiers Dinner Theatre.

MONDAY, August 21

5:30 p.m. — Medical Advisory Commission meets at Bank of Fairfield.

SUNDAY, August 27

2-4:00 p.m. — Photographs of S.C. historic sites from the S.C. Museum Commission. All are invited.

NOTICE: Fairfield Garden Club wants recycleable aluminum. Bring to container at Southern Railway Depot.

NOTICE: St. John's Thrift Shop is open Friday from 10 a.m. til 5 p.m.; and each Saturday from 10 a.m. til 12 noon.

MUSEUM HOURS: Monday-Wednesday-Friday 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.; 1:30-4:30 p.m. Second and fourth Sundays 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Convention at The Citadel were guests of the club. Shep Bone, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Bone and Andy Ligon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Ligon, told the club of some of their activities. Palmetto Boys State is a project of the American Legion. Boys are selected on the basis of moral character, sportsmanship and potential leadership abilities.

During the week, the boys traveled to Columbia to tour the capitol and observe

the i
ing Lions for the year
78: Berry Arnette, Clark
ten, Joe Burley, Gerald C
man, Ed Culbreth, J. E. E
Randall Foster, Ed
Mills, Robert Patrick, Cl
Ragsdale, Gunnar Ran
James W. Stephenson, Ma
Stephenson and W. D. Mit

Lion Batten urged
members to support the
of the Mobile Eye C
sponsored by the Lions Cl

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Old House' Past

From Page 1

cept his father's watch. Even "Old Rob" was taken by the enemy.

At one point, the house was in danger of being burned; indeed, soldiers had built a fire in the middle of what is now the living room floor. Mrs. Wilkes, a

Mildred, also, has her collection of old bottles and other articles, and it would seem that the Brown family of the 1900's have also put their stamp upon the house.

Playground Site News

Everything went beautifully during the last week of the Verett Playground Program. For the first two days the

News & Herald.

With a few lasting remarks, I must say that I really enjoyed the kids and the

Gordon Elementary
Playground News
Stanley Kennedy

On Monday the kids and I went up to Old Fairfield Ball

Wednesday we all enjoyed a day of volleyball and kickball.

The kids were less enthusiastic about the games so we organized dodgeball games. Thursday, we all enjoyed a day of relaxation at Fortune Springs Park as the kids