

SOME FAIRFIELD COUNTY NAMES OF PLANTATIONS AND HOUSESEATS

Since Fairfield County was formed in 1798, legend has claimed that it was named by General Cornwallis. The British officer made his headquarters at Winnsborough, from October, 1780, until January, 1781. However, historians have doubted the authenticity of the legend. Originally, what is now Fairfield County was part of the vast Craven County when the British Lords Proprietors ruled the Province of Carolina. When the Province was divided into seven judicial districts in 1769, the present Fairfield was part of Camden District. Then in 1798 from the Camden District was formed Fairfield, Chester, Lancaster, Kershaw, and Sumter Districts. In 1799 Richland was taken from Kershaw. The 1868 State Constitution changed the term District to County. In later years, a southern portion of Fairfield comprising the present town of Blythewood was annexed to Richland County.

Fairfield's county records in the stately Robert Mills' Court House at Winnsboro go back to the 1730's. They are among some of the most important legal documents of upper South Carolina and of great value and interest to historians, genealogists, researchers, and scholars. Although the Court House was not built until 1823, many of the early county records were brought to Winnsboro from Charleston, Camden, and Columbia.

In the Winnsboro area of Fairfield County are handsome residences and plantation houses, some in the town itself and others in its environs:

Tocaland, near Rockton, south of Winnsboro, now the home of the John Johnsons, was built in 1854 by Major Woodward for his daughter Regina, who married Christopher Gadsden, Jr., of Charleston, the son of the Episcopal Bishop Christopher Edwards Gadsden, friend and Yale classmate of John C. Calhoun. Christopher, Jr., a horticulturist and landscape gardener, designed and planted many gardens in Fairfield. The grounds of Tocaland he beautifully landscaped with boxwood, flowers, and rare shrubs. The orchards here were also famous for apricots, pears, peaches, and pomegranates. But most famous of all were the vineyards of Tocaland. There were grapes of many varieties but most highly favored were the Tokay vines, native of Hungary, and renowned for their sweetness and the excellent wines made from them. From these rare grapes the plantation takes its name.

Christopher was killed in the Confederate War and he is buried in the Woodward-Gadsden burying ground just across the railroad and highway from Tocaland.

Hunstanton, above Rockton on the Columbia

Highway, is the home of C. E. Strange, Jr., whose father gave this old home its name in 1906, after his family seat in Norfolk, England. Hunstanton had earlier been known as Sweet Briar when it was a Robertson home after the 1820's. It was later owned by the Rabb family.

Another Robertson home, now the home of the Misses Doty, is **Rural Point** on the edge of Winnsboro on the old Camden Road. It was built by Judge Robertson in 1852. The handsome gardens are like those at Drayton Hall, near Charleston, having also some of the finest camellias in the up-country.

Woodland, the present home of James Morris Lyles, Jr., is an architecturally important house built in 1870 by Samuel Johnson, an architect and builder, who designed and erected several outstanding houses in Winnsboro for Captain W. G. Jordan. Later owners, Miss Lila Traylor and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Crawford retained all this fine home's splendor, as have the present owners, who have enhanced its charm and authenticity through restorations and decoration.

Wynn Dee is one of the town's historic homes with associations of its most famous figures. The land on which it stands was a grant from King George to Joseph Owen, who came to Fairfield in 1768. The land was surveyed by Richard Winn, the man for whom Winnsborough was named. Winn later acquired the property and gave it to his daughter Christina as a wedding gift when she married Colonel William Bratton of York County. At the time of the Confederate War, Wynn Dee was the home of General John Bratton, Fairfield's highest ranking Confederate officer, who had married the former Betty DuBose of Roseland Plantation. The Cathcart family which now owns and occupies Wynn Dee is descended from these three families, the Winns, Brattons and DuBoses.

Farmington, ten miles north of Winnsboro on Wateree Creek, was purchased by Theodore Marion DuBose about 1836. Born in the low-country St. John's Parish, a descendant of French Huguenots and kinsman of General Francis Marion's brothers, Job and Gabriel, Mr. DuBose was a graduate of Yale College. Soon after his marriage to Jane Porcher, he and his wife moved to Winnsboro, living on Congress Street, where their son, William Porcher DuBose was born April 11, 1836. This son became the eminent Episcopal theologian and professor at The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. The house in which Dr. DuBose was born on Congress Street has since been moved to College Street. It was soon after

their son's birth, that the elder DuBoses built Farmington, which became one of the important scientific farms of the up-country. In describing life at Farmington, Bishop Theodore DuBose Bratton, another Fairfield native, wrote in 1936, "The classics were the common possession of the household, often read aloud in the family circle of an evening. . . . The agricultural treatises were the Master's study. . . . About the patriarchal family life, with its rounds of duties and happy social twilights, a steady religious influence was thrown by Mr. and Mrs. DuBose, and by their children as they grew in age and grace, through Bible reading and teaching, as by example in Godly living."

Farmington was later the country home of General John Bratton after he married Betty DuBose, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Samuel DuBose, and sister of Dr. William Porcher DuBose. The Rt. Rev. Theodore DuBose Bratton, Episcopal Bishop of Mississippi, and head of St. Mary's College, Raleigh, and Chancellor of The University of the South at Sewanee, was born here; the son of the former Betty DuBose and General Bratton. Farmington was the Brattons' country home while Wynn Dee was their town house, near Mount Zion, convenient for their sons attending the College here in winter.

Some of Fairfield's noted plantation houses near Winnsboro that no longer exist are:

Roseland, located about three miles from Winnsboro, was bought in 1844 by Theodore Samuel DuBose since he wished a home near Mt. Zion College where his sons would be educated. Roseland burned in the early 1900's.

Dovecot, a plantation just across Wateree Creek from Farmington, was bought by another Samuel DuBose, a younger half-brother of Theodore DuBose.

Spring Vale Plantation, about sixteen miles north of Winnsboro, was the home of David St. Pierre Gaillard, whose seven sons and six daughters grew up here. One of these sons was Samuel Isaac Gaillard, father of Colonel David DuBose Gaillard of Panama Canal fame, and whose name is perpetuated in Gaillard Cut, which he engineered. Spring Vale was burned by Federal Troops in February, 1865.

Clifton, the home of the David Gaillards after they also moved near Mt. Zion College, was located just one mile south of town on the old Camden Road, near Rural Point, the present home of the Misses Doty. The Clifton house was burned in 1887.

PLANTATIONS IN THE NEW HOPE SECTION

Balwearie takes its name from the Douglass Castle in Scotland, the ancestral home of the Fairfield Douglass family who settled here under

a grant from George III. The date of its building is lost, though the first owner identified was James Douglas, a wealthy bachelor. Although the house has suffered through war and cyclone, it is still owned by the Douglas family and is now being restored.

Albion, the largest and most elegant home in the New Hope section, was built about 1840 by Alexander Douglas. It is now owned by the widow of his grandson. Since it has been continuously owned and occupied by the builder's family, it has been well kept. It is one of the important architectural buildings of the up-country.

JENKINSVILLE-MONTICELLO PLANTATIONS

The Oaks is located five miles from Winnsboro on the Jenkinsville road. It was built by a Mr. Hellems, who sold it in 1856 to John Montgomery Lemmon who married Mary Ann Yongue. It takes its name from a magnificent oak grove which surrounds the stately mansion. It is now occupied by a granddaughter, Marie Lemmon Wells and her husband Johnnie Wells.

Heyward Hall takes its name from its present owners, as it has previously been known as Kincaid Manor and Anderson Manor. It was built by Captain James Kincaid in 1774 of English brick with a mahogany stairway. Eli Whitney, the inventor of the cotton gin, visited Kincaid, and saw the first water-powered cotton gin in operation. It was soon after this visit that Whitney patented his gin. A Kincaid daughter married an Anderson, who operated the nearby granite quarries. The house was later occupied by the Dan Heywards, whose family own and operate the famed quarries now.

Happy Valley was the home of the late Mrs. Jeannie Gladney Roberts. This delightful country place with the lovely name was the home of this local historian, who left no record of Happy Valley.

High Point is another Monticello-Jenkinsville plantation with a grant from the English Kings, dated 1773. William Thompson built the present house in 1800. It is said to be on the highest point between Columbia and Spartanburg. Mrs. Thompson deeded the property to her son-in-law, H. A. Glenn in 1845. It is now the home of Miss Kitty Glenn and her sister, Mrs. E. Claude Jeter. The family cemetery is near the house.

Fair View is another Thompson home built about 1800, and sold to Dr. John Milton Glenn in 1830. It was owned by the Glenn's only daughter, Louise, who married Furman McEachern. It is now occupied by the Rev. L. K. Martin, a retired Presbyterian minister, who has owned it since about 1930. This is not to be confused with Fair View Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center on the Longtown-Camden road below Ridgeway. The latter was built

about 1900 as a hunting club by Eastern men, who spent their winters here. It was later the home of the Howard Snellings who called it Chatlewood. It took the name Fair View when it became a hospital and rehabilitation center about ten years ago.

Mayfair was designed and built by Colonel William Alston in 1824. He was of the low-country Waccamaw River, Georgetown County family of that name, which has given the state two governors and many other influential leaders. It was the home of Col. Alston's daughter, Mrs. Burrell Cook until 1883. Thomas Chappell bought Mayfair at auction in 1883 and lived here until 1945. It was then purchased by his granddaughter, Mrs. R. C. Bruce. She has recently sold it to Silas McMeekin of Columbia, a relative of the Chappells and a native of the Jenkinsville-Monticello area. The low-country influence can be seen in the style of this fine house, the carvings and decorative designs being among the finest in the county.

Fonti Flora is thought to have taken its name "Fountains and Flowers" from its numerous fresh water springs surrounded by wild flowers. This was a Pearson family home of the ante-bellum period, built by Dr. George Butler Pearson. This family was an early Fairfield County settler and a leader of the two Seventh Day Adventists congregations who settled here before the American Revolution. Scarborough portraits of the early 19th century Pearsons remain in the house, which is still owned by the descendants. Mrs. George W. Tomlin of Columbia, who was Katherine Pearson, is the present owner.

Rose Hill was the home of Colonel David Providence when he married Elizabeth Hall *circa* 1836. An eccentric man, he is buried in a lone grave near his home, across the road from the Rock Creek Baptist Church and cemetery. The house was acquired many years ago by the Blairs, who still own and occupy it.

One of the more elegant houses of the Jenkinsville-Monticello community was White Hall, Colonel Hugh Stevenson's home, which is said to have rivalled Nicholas Peay's Melrose in Longtown. Like the latter, White Hall has been lost.

In the Blair area of the county on one of the highest hills stands another Fair View along the Broad River. This old house was built soon after the Revolutionary War by General Thomas Means of Colonial and Revolutionary fame. When he died in 1807, he was buried in his garden, where a commanding monument among the overgrown shrubs and wild roses marks the site today. The General's son, John Hugh Means, was governor of South Carolina from 1850 to 1852.

The house is of brick, burned in a kiln on the place by the Means slaves. It must have been one

of the great houses of its period. The solid brick walls are twenty inches thick. In the drawing-room is a handsome molded chandelier ring in the center of a plaster floral design. Over the front entrance is a molded American eagle bearing the shield of the United States. Fair View has been owned by the Blairs, whose Frazier descendants now own it, although it is now open to the elements and getting into a bad state of repair.

Ivy Hall is one of the old Blair section homes and was built by Arromanus Lyles, the first white child born in Fairfield County before the Revolution. It was owned by the Lyles until 1902, when it was purchased by L. M. Blair, who has since restored and occupied the old house.

FEASTERVILLE SECTION PLANTATION

Clanmore was built about 1845 by John C. Feaster, whose family gave the area its name—Feasterville. After the Confederate War in 1868, it was purchased by Major Charles Washington Faucette, who gave the place its present name. This fine Georgian style home is on the old main road between Columbia, Union, and Spartanburg—now Highway 215 and known as the Monticello Road. The house is still owned by the Faucette family and furnished with family antiques. There is furniture here from White Hall, since the families of Clanmore and Whitehall were kinsmen.

Oakland is a Woodward area home built by John Mobley in the 1820's. It was purchased many years later by T. G. Patrick of White Oak, and is now owned by his granddaughter, Jane Matthews Rees of Fayetteville, Tennessee. Nearby but no longer standing was John's father's home Cedar Shades.

RIDGEWAY HOUSESEATS AND PLANTATIONS

Ridgeway's Century House acquired its name in recent years after having weathered one hundred years of war and storm. Built by the Coleman family in 1853 in what is now the center of the town of Ridgeway, it was first known as the Brick House.

The house was acquired in recent years by the Ridgeway Garden Club and now serves the entire area as a gathering place for all kinds of meetings, as well as housing the local library.

On this site also had been the old John Rosborough home which James Buchanan Coleman acquired *circa* 1842, when Dr. James Thomas Rosborough moved to Texas. It was ten years later when James Coleman built the present Brick or Century House. This old house also carries memories of the Confederate War since it was here that General Pierre G. T. Beauregard had his headquarters from February 17 to February 19, 1865, when Sherman after shamelessly burning

Columbia was beginning his march northward. The Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce has recently placed an historical marker on the site to indicate this event.

Valencia has been the country seat of the Palmer family since it was built by Edward Gendron Palmer in 1834. Mr. Palmer, the first of the low-country families to settle in the county, married Caroline Davis of Columbia in 1824. He acquired 6,000 acres of land and called his plantation Bloomingdale at New Lands. The area of Ridgeway was then known by the name of New Lands. When Mrs. Palmer's brother, James Davis II, visited his sister's new home after a grand tour of Europe, he felt that the view reminded him of Valencia, Spain. Hence, the name of the handsome old country seat, where the family still lives. The plan of the house is very like low-country plantation houses. Many rare and fine pieces are in the house, among them a table which belonged to Thomas Jefferson.

Cedar Tree plantation house was built about 1853 by Edward Gendron Palmer of Valencia for his son Dr. John Davis Palmer. It was on the southern extremity of the Valencia property near the new Charlotte and Columbia Railroad of which Mr. E. G. Palmer was the first president. It is a charming one and a half story house with a splendid garden that shows the results of one hundred years of nurturing care. In later years it has been owned by the DesPortes and the Bulows. It is now the home of Mrs. Van Exem. After the death of her first husband, Congressman Allard H. Gasque, she was the first woman from South Carolina elected to Congress.

Mount Hope was built by Dr. John Peyre Thomas between 1835 and 1840, just south of the Winnsboro highway one and a half miles west of Ridgeway. Dr. Thomas died here in 1859, the father of eighteen children. His descendants still own the plantation house and much of the original land, including the adjoining Kennedy-Craig plantation with its old graveyards where slaves of the two plantations are buried along with early Kennedys and Craigs. After the Confederate War two of Dr. Thomas' daughters, Miss Henrietta Eleanor Thomas and Miss Emily Walter Thomas, conducted the Mount Hope School in the ground floor rooms of the house for twenty years until the state's public schools were reopened. Many of the local youths received their entire education here, and others went to colleges and universities throughout the country from the Mount Hope School.

Longleaf is situated below Ridgeway between the Camden and Columbia Highways, taking its name from the splendid pines that grow in the area. It was built in the early 1850's by Colonel

Henry Campbell Davis. He married Isabella Harper Means, daughter of the Rev. Robert Means, D. D., and niece of Governor John Hugh Means. Colonel Davis was one of the Fairfield signers of the Ordinance of Secession. With the Palmer and Thomas families, the Davises were among the builders of St. Stephen's Church at Ridgeway. His mother Mrs. James Davis gave the land on which the church was built. Among Col. Davis' sons was Prof. Robert Means Davis of the University of South Carolina, and another was the early West Point graduate, Col. Harry C. Davis, Jr. A daughter, Catherine married Colonel David DuBose Gailard of Panama Canal fame. Daughter Eloise was Mrs. William Herbert Ruff, grand lady of Ridgeway until her death in 1957 in her ninety-seventh year. Longleaf is now owned by one of the Davis-Ruff descendants, Mrs. Palmer Matthews of Winnsboro.

Among Ridgeway's old homes which no longer remain is Ivy Hill, also a Davis home. It stood on the hill which the Ridgeway public school now occupies, and where a private school was operated more than a hundred years ago. Mrs. James Davis lived at Ivy Hill after the death of her distinguished husband, Dr. Davis, in Columbia. Here her bachelor son, Edward William Davis, conducted a boys' school before the Confederate War. He prepared many local boys for college and for life with an especial grounding in grammar, English, Latin, and Greek; the curriculum also included science, mathematics and astronomy, as well as the rudiments of spelling, punctuation, and fine penmanship. Examples of the latter can be seen in many early local documents today.

Springwood, was the Ridgeway home of Mrs. Elizabeth P. Bones, formerly of Winnsboro, who moved to Springwood in order to be near her granddaughter, the former Harriett Woodward, who married Dr. John Davis Palmer of Cedar Tree. Mrs. Palmer inherited Springwood from her grandmother who had reared her after her mother's death.

Mrs. Bones was the daughter of Mrs. Rebecca Yongue, widow of Parson Yongue, who in 1834 had given Elizabeth Bones the present Caldwell house in Winnsboro on the corner of Zion and Hudson streets near Mount Zion School. Mrs. Yongue owned considerable property in that section of Winnsboro and lived in the present Cathcart house.

Dr. and Mrs. Palmer made their home at Springwood, except for a short time in the 1880's when it was rented to Major Charles Edward Thomas and his family. In later years the Palmer estate sold Springwood to Dr. LeGrand Guerry of Columbia, who occupied it as a summer house. Shortly after Dr. Guerry purchased it, the fine

old house burned and the splendid boxwood and other plantings were lost. There is in the Palmer family at Ridgeway now an oil painting of Springwood done by the late Halbert Palmer, in which the house and former gardens are shown. Dr. Guerry rebuilt on the same site, but this house has also burned. Mrs. Norman Hart Palmer now lives in a modern house near the site of Springwood.

Valley Grove, another Ridgeway area house lost by fire, was built by Samuel Peyre Thomas in 1835 on what is now the Great Falls Highway, northwest of Ridgeway, near Dutchman's Creek.

After graduating from Harvard College in 1825, Mr. Thomas returned to his low country home at Betaw on the Santee River for the settlement of his late parents' estate. With his inheritance of "ten Negroes and \$2,000" he came to Fairfield and purchased the plantation on which he built Valley Grove. The lands adjoined Mr. Palmer's Valencia Plantation and John Rosborough's lands. The year before building Valley Grove, Mr. Thomas married Mr. Rosborough's daughter, Jane Fears Rosborough. Valley Grove burned in 1841, a loss which Mr. Thomas described as "very costly." He later built Magnolia on land his wife had inherited from her father on the Longtown-Camden Highway, where his descendants lived until the 1930's. This land adjoined the St. Stephen's Church property and is now owned by the Larry Thompsons. The present house is built on part of the foundations of Magnolia, which was razed in the 1930's by the purchaser, Mr. Waring Carrington of Charleston.

LONGTOWN PLANTATIONS

Longtown, the easternmost settlement of the county, and one of the oldest, has lost many of its earliest and finest homes.

Malvern Hall in Longtown was built by Nicholas Peay about the time of the Revolution, when he came from Hanover County, Virginia, to Pine Tree, now Camden. About the same time, Charles Tidwell came down the Indian Trail to Longtown from the area of Jamestown, Virginia, and built **Bryant Hill**. His monument in the Bryant Hill Cemetery, with his birth date of 1690, might well be the earliest gravestone in the county extant today.

Solitude, noted as a "luxurious and imposing structure and the scene of lordly hospitality, many celebrities being entertained there," was the Longtown home of John Jacob Myers, M.D. Dr. Myers was a surgeon of the regiment that escorted the Marquis de LaFayette from the North Carolina border to Columbia on his visit to the state in 1824. Tradition has it that General LaFayette

was entertained at Solitude in Fairfield County en route to Camden and Columbia.

The County Historian McMaster wrote, "Before the Confederate War much wealth was accumulated, finer, larger homes built, and so the name of Log-Town became Longtown." There is no mention of the former name on early maps, however.

Austin Ford Peay, the son of Nicholas Peay of Malvern Hall, lived at Flint Hill and was known as the "wealthiest man in that section." It is recorded that he made a sale of cotton once in Philadelphia, hauled there in his own wagon train, for \$25,000.00. His son, Nicholas Adamson Peay, built **Melrose**, called "the grandest plantation house in upper South Carolina." It has been described as a "massive structure of brick, stone, and marble of thirty rooms, broad piazzas and wide halls." There was said to be a garden on the roof, with a pool in which fish were kept. Water was pumped by an hydraulic ram from springs. When Sherman's Army marched through the County in February, 1865, Melrose was burned. Its granite gate posts are now at the Longtown Presbyterian Church and at Ridgeway's Methodist Church, formerly Ruff's Chapel.

Wisteria was a Tidwell-Myers family home near the present Harrison-Dixon home in Longtown. It was burned about 1935. These lands are now part of the vast Bowaters Paper forests, and none of these old Longtown homes remain.

Fortunately for the area **Blink Bonnie** remains high on the old Longtown-Camden Road, now overlooking the waters backed up by the huge hydroelectric dams of the Wateree River. This splendid house was built by Darling Jones, a Camden banker, in 1822 as his summer residence. After the Confederate War, Blink Bonnie was bought by W. O. Robertson and occupied by his family for many years. In 1950 it was purchased by the M. A. Kirklands and handsomely restored. In addition to the fine woodwork and elegant chandelier rosettes in the ceilings of the main house, there is a unique old brick kitchen in the yard.

The present-day Mistress of Blink Bonnie now puts up many hundreds of jars of Blink Bonnie artichoke pickle, relish, and spiced tomatoes here, which are found in delicatessen shops throughout the area. The view of the Wateree River and adjoining lakes from the front piazza of Blink Bonnie is one of the grandest in the state.

The origin of the name Blink Bonnie is explained in a letter (August 9, 1965) from Mrs. Marion Adickes Kirkland to the author:

"This name was suggested to us many years ago by Bedford Moore (the late W. Bedford Moore of York and Columbia). He and Liz had picnic lunch with us one Sunday long before we moved

out here and he was so impressed with the view that he thought **Blink Bonnie, Scotch** for beautiful view, would be an ideal name. So when we retired and decided to make this our home we began searching for a suitable name and remembered his suggestion."

—CHARLES E. THOMAS

REFERENCES

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- ²Fitz Hugh McMaster, *History of Fairfield County* (Columbia, 1946).
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⁴Theodore DuBose Bratton, *An Apostle of Reality: the Life and Thought of the Reverend William Porcher DuBose* (New York, 1936).

⁵Julian Stevenson Bolick, *A Fairfield Sketchbook*, With Introduction by Kathleen Lewis (Clinton, S. C., 1968).

⁶*David DuBose Gaillard: A Memorial Compiled and Published by the Third United States Volunteer Engineers* (Saint Louis, 1916).

⁷*In Memoriam: Robert Means Davis* (South Carolina College, 1904).

⁸Letter to the author from Miss Louise Ellison, February, 1965.

⁹*The News and Herald*, Winnsboro newspaper.

¹⁰Numerous undated clippings from scrapbooks covering the past one hundred years preserved at Mount Hope Plantation among the collection of Thomas Family Papers.