

The Harrison Family .

The Harrison family was one of the first to come into what is now Fairfield County. Some say they were here even before the Woodwards. Land grants from the Crown bear this out - one to James Harrison, moving to Georgia from this section.

They were attracted to this County because of its charm, beauty and fertility and settled on the Wateree River - as the Lyles' did on the Broad River. They had inter-married with the Kirklands before the colony of South Carolina called on Virginia and North Carolina for assistance against the Cherokee Indians. They came from Berkely Co. Virginia and were closely related to the Pres. Wm. H. Harrison; one of the descendents has a ring with the initials W.H.H. engraved in it, said to have been given to one of the ancestors by this President. They were fine, well-to-do, cultured people when they came to this section and soon were people of influence and importance, taking a prominent part in the development and progress of this part of the County.

The first members of the family engaged in stock-raising. Mr. Kirkland, the grandfather of Reuben Harrison was said to have owned 50 brood mares, also large herds of cattle.

After the difficulties with the Indians had been settled, many dishonest men banded together for the purpose of stealing cattle and horses. As there was no court nearer than Charleston to try these men after catching them, the Kirklands, Harrisons and Tom Woodward (1st Tom) organized a band of "regulators" similar to the afterwards famous K.K.K. - Made Woodward the head of it, - as one accustomed to command - he having been a Captain in the French Indian War. Tradition says they put 500 lashes on the back of every thief for a horse and 200 lashes for stealing a cow. On one occasion, two men, Watts and Distol, were given 500 lashes each when caught with two of Kirkland's mares; there are reports of many such punishments.

W. Reuben Harrison, the progenitor of the Longtown Harrisons, was a young man during the Revolution and according to the record he served on an expedition at Four Holes and Edisto River in Gen. Henderson's brigade under Capt. Starke. He received his pay for this service in 1785 - came back to this section and began to buy cheap land. We find deeds to land bought by him, every year until his death in 1835. This land was on the Wateree River and its tributary Creeks. It is interesting to note the names of some of the creeks named in the deeds, - Goose, Morrison's, Dutchman's, Thorntree, and Rochelle. He soon began to buy slaves and plant cotton. He was smart, aggressive, thrifty and he prospered. One of the first records is of the purchase of a stud horse, sorrel in color, and from one Lewis Marr Today the Harrison race track is shown to strangers - and 20 years ago I talked to a very old negro, Walker Harrison, who was once a jockey for the first John Harrison

Ruben Harrison married Sarah Burgess first and after her death married Nancy <sup>Kirkland</sup> reared a large family, and lived in the manner of the Virginia gentry. He died in 1835 and his interesting will is recorded in Winnsboro. He provides for each child by name, also his beloved wife Nancy ---? Attached to the will is a list of his slaves, named and valued at \$25,000; also a list of his mules and horses and their value. Before he died he gave each of his three daughters a plantation and built them large homes; these houses are still standing (similar in architecture)- one of them a two story frame house may be seen from the Longtown highway, and is now occupied by some of his descendants. The Dixons. The names of his children were as follows:

William - died 1827 - had children -- no record

James - unmarried - grave well marked on his plantation

*Wm. Harrison Kirkland  
N. Reuben Harrison  
Came to S.C. about 1730  
from Reuben*

David -- No record

Kirkland --No record

Willoughby -- Married, had a son Richard; probably wife and son moved to Alabama.

3. Longtowers

Frances - Married Brevard --no record, but negroes by that name living in community.

Nancy - Married Anderson Rochelle - moved to Texas, descendants now living there.

Mary --Married C. Moores - moved to Texas, descendants still living there.

John - Married Lucy Rives -(More later)

The remains of Ruben and his family were buried on Dutchman's Creek near the first home site. When the Duke Power Company built the present lake, the great grand-son, John Douglass Harrison moved their remains and the old vault to the Longtown Presbyterian cemetery and it may be seen from the highway.

John, built long houses.

This large family of Harrisons lived and prospered in that golden era before the Civil War. The Harrisons' and Peays' owned most of the land in that part of Fairfield, accumulating land, slaves and large fortunes, and living in grandeur- today it has truly gone with the wind - The old grave yards were well marked and as the custom was, each large land owner had his own burying ground. The roads to them are almost impassable and the undergrowth dense and some of them are under water - others only visited by a few hunters and fisherman. - Would like to tell here of the name Long town; - these planters had their homes on the creeks and streams and many died of malaria - then called the "dread Miasma". It was discovered by some of them that the high ridge back from the river, covered in sand and pines, seemed to be healthier - not realizing it was the scarcity of mosquitoes - so they built summer homes of logs on this and called it Log-town; but the name has been changed to Longtown. I wish it could be again called by the old name. Pinopolis, near the Santee River was built on the same way.

We are sorry that all the records, and family Bible were burned in the John Harrison house and except for his family, the descendents of the other children are unknown. John Married Lucy Rives, a member of the prominent family of that name in Columbia (Could some one supply the date of marriage?) He lived on a part of his father's land, built a fine house and was the richest man in Fairfield County - according to the census of 1850 - his land was then valued at \$100,000 and he had 500 slaves; He is referred to as "Old John" and I wish we knew more about him. He had several children, We have the record of three, John Rives Harrison was a Captain in the Civil War - in Belton's Battallion, Co. B. He moved away and some of his descendants live in Florida. Richard, who moved to Alabama, - the story goes that after his death he was buried there and his body became petrified. Later his people wanted him brought back home for funeral; the body was carried in a wagon, drawn by six mules, and after the arrival was shown at the home of Capt. Eli Harrison; this created quite a lot of curiosity and the people came for miles to view the petrified body.

Notes

Capt. Eli Harrison married Elizabeth Flemming Douglass, daughter of Dr. John Douglass of Blackstock. Mrs. Harrison's three brothers were surgeons in the Civil War. All of Capt. Eli Harrison's sons were in the war. He bought the home and plantation from his Aunt who had moved to Texas. There he reared a large family and the children were as follows;